

**Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Xavier T. Brunson, USA**  
**Nominee to be Commander, United Nations Command,**  
**Commander, United States Combined Forces Command,**  
**and Commander, United States Forces Korea**

**Duties and Qualifications**

- 1. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea, and what is your understanding of how these different command responsibilities interrelate?**

The United Nations Command (UNC), Combined Forces Command (CFC), and United States Forces Korea (USFK) support each other and need to work closely together. The missions and staffs of these three commands are closely intertwined, but each command has its own distinct set of authorities, missions, and chains of command.

UNC serves three main purposes. First, it enforces the Armistice Agreement. Since 1953, UNC has been responsible for maintaining and enforcing the terms of the Armistice through close coordination with the U.S., the Republic of Korea, and other UN member states. Second, it coordinates multinational contributions. This cooperation is vital for regional security, with 18 countries currently contributing to UNC's mission as Member States. Third, it carries out functions assigned by U.S. National Authorities through the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is important to note that UNC is not a UN peacekeeping organization but rather a multinational military command led by the United States.

CFC is a unique, bilateral warfighting command. With its establishment in 1978, CFC assumed command of combat operations from UNC. Under the direction of the United States and the Republic of Korea National Authorities, the CFC Commander leads the joint military efforts of the two nations. The goal is to deter external aggression and, if deterrence fails, defeat our adversaries in combat.

USFK demonstrates the United States' ironclad commitment to the U.S.-Korea Alliance. As part of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, USFK trains and supports U.S. service members stationed in Korea. Operating as a sub-unified joint force under U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), USFK has several key responsibilities: managing the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of U.S. forces reinforcing CFC and sustaining these forces as needed during both peacetime and conflict; conducting non-combatant evacuation operations if required; and coordinating all U.S. military support to the Republic of Korea.

None of these three commands can effectively advance security on the Korean Peninsula without the support of the other two.

**2. What background and experience, including joint duty assignments, do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?**

For the past 33 years, my family and I have been honored to serve this great nation. My service includes deployments in Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Freedom's Sentinel, and Inherent Resolve. I have commanded at every level in support of global deployments and combat operations, working with both conventional and special operations forces. This experience has allowed me to train, lead, and fight alongside combined and joint forces, interagency partners, and allied nations worldwide.

In my current role as the Commander of America's First Corps and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, which supports U.S. Army Pacific Command and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, I contribute to operational readiness and stability in the Pacific Theater. I am well-versed in collaborating across joint, combined, and interagency teams to support integrated deterrence in alignment with Department of Defense guidance, the National Defense Strategy, and the National Security Strategy.

If confirmed, I look forward to leveraging my experiences and working with this Committee, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commander of USINDOPACOM, and the Republic of Korea.

**3. Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea?**

If confirmed, I believe continuous development is crucial to effectively perform the duties of this role. Here are the steps I plan to take to enhance my expertise:

**Deepen Regional Knowledge:** I will invest time in understanding the latest geopolitical dynamics, cultural nuances, and security challenges specific to the Korean Peninsula. This includes engaging with experts, reviewing recent assessments, and staying informed about regional developments.

**Strengthen Multinational Coordination:** I will focus on enhancing my knowledge of the intricacies of multinational operations and alliances. Building strong relationships with key partners and allies will be essential for effective coordination and joint efforts. I plan to engage with representatives from partner nations (Republic of Korea, UNC Member States, regional allies) and international organizations to ensure seamless collaboration.

**Expand Understanding of Command Structures:** I will familiarize myself with the operational procedures and command structures of UNC, CFC, and USFK. This includes reviewing past operations, understanding the interdependencies of each command, and studying how they integrate to achieve collective security objectives.

**Enhance Interagency Collaboration (Integrated Deterrence):** I will work on strengthening my collaboration with interagency partners, including U.S. government departments and other international agencies involved in security and defense. Effective interagency coordination is vital for comprehensive and unified responses to security challenges.

**Focus on Emerging Technologies and Tactics:** Staying abreast of advancements in military technology and modern warfare, especially multidomain operations, will be critical. I will ensure that I am well-versed in these areas to effectively lead and adapt to new threats.

**Prioritize Leadership Development:** Continuous self-assessment and development in leadership will be a priority. This includes seeking feedback, participating in leadership training, and learning from past experiences to lead effectively in a complex and dynamic environment.

By taking these steps, I aim to ensure that I am fully prepared to lead UNC, CFC, and USFK, and to contribute effectively to the security and stability of the Korean Peninsula.

### **Major Challenges and Problems**

- 4. In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea?**

North Korea's rapid advancement of its nuclear and missile capabilities, combined with its stated ambition to "exponentially" expand its nuclear arsenal, is the single greatest challenge facing the tri-commands. North Korea is working to perfect a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile to threaten the United States and the UNC Member States. In addition, North Korea has an extensive stockpile of chemical weapons. Also prominent are the threats posed by North Korea's two treaty allies – China and Russia – who could influence or intervene in a conflict on the Korean Peninsula or conduct simultaneous and opportunistic aggression in other theaters. Lastly, Kim Jong Un's formidable Cyber capabilities pose a threat worldwide.

- 5. Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges and problems?**

If confirmed I will proactively apply lessons learned from the global security environment, including Russia's war of choice in Ukraine and the conflicts in the Gaza Strip, Yemen, and the Red Sea to best deter aggression and reassure our allies. This includes continually updating operational plans to ensure they fully incorporate Alliance advantages in technology and other capabilities and strengthening all alliances and partnerships by sharing information to the limit of our authorities. Moreover, we will continue to increase the complexity and realism of our exercises and training events. Working closely with the Republic of Korea military, we will continue progress with the Conditions-based Operational Control Transition Plan (COTP) to enhance our partner's critical capabilities while preparing them to assume operational control of CFC. Finally, I will build upon recent developments in UNC to incorporate new and greater contributions from its Member States to enhance its role as a force multiplier for the capabilities and legitimacy of this venerable coalition.

**6. Other than the nuclear portfolio, what capabilities and capacities of the North Korean government and military give you the most concern as a military commander?**

In terms of scale, North Korea holds a quantitative advantage with an active troop population of over 1 million, along with a formidable reserve. North Korea's numerical superiority presents a credible conventional threat through their submarine fleet, air and missile defense, long range artillery, and Special Operations Forces. North Korea continues to mature their ballistic and advanced cruise missile capabilities, which pose an expanded threat to our homelands. Additionally, North Korea's significant investments in developing asymmetric capabilities, particularly in the cyberspace domain, enables them to achieve parity against our maturing multi-domain capabilities.

DPRK also maintains a robust chemical and biological weapons capability. North Korea has the capability to produce nerve, blister, blood, and choking agents and has several thousand metric tons of them stockpiled. North Korea likely could employ chemical weapons agents by modifying a variety of conventional munitions, including artillery and ballistic missiles. Furthermore, North Korea can employ these capabilities in conjunction with nuclear weapons, posing an existential risk to our ROK Allies.

**Chain of Command**

**In accordance with title 10, U.S. Code, the President and Secretary of Defense exercise authority, direction, and control of the Armed Forces through two distinct branches of the chain of command. One branch runs from the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the combatant commanders for the execution of missions with forces assigned to their commands. For purposes of organizing, training, and equipping**

**forces, the chain of command runs from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the Secretaries of the Military Departments.**

**7. Do you believe this dual structure provides for clear and effective chain of command?**

Yes, I believe the dual structure outlined in Title 10, U.S. Code, provides a clear and effective chain of command. This dual structure is designed to ensure both operational effectiveness and organizational efficiency within the U.S. Armed Forces.

The chain of command (Operational Command) running from the President through the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commanders is essential for the effective execution of military missions. It allows for direct communication and decision-making that is crucial in dynamic and rapidly changing situations. This branch of the chain of command ensures the USFK commander has the direction needed to execute the mission and address immediate operational needs under the INDOPACOM Commander. The roles of the UNC and CFC commander also report through the Secretary of Defense to the President in times of crisis or conflict and gain the same advantages.

The separate chain of command (Organizational Command) for organizing, training, and equipping forces—running from the President to the Secretary of Defense and then to the Secretaries of the Military Departments ensures that the focus on force readiness, development, and support is maintained. This structure allows the Military Departments to effectively manage resources, develop capabilities, and prepare forces to meet the demands of the combatant commanders.

The dual structure facilitates a balance between operational command and organizational support, ensuring that both the execution of missions and the preparation of forces are managed efficiently. This division of responsibilities helps maintain clarity in command authority and ensures that strategic, operational, and tactical objectives are met effectively.

**8. If confirmed, on what types of issues and decisions would you coordinate with the USINDOPACOM, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and civilian officials within the Department of Defense?**

It is difficult to imagine a significant issue within UNC/CFC/USFK that should not be coordinated with senior leaders. If confirmed, I would coordinate with USINDOPACOM, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and civilian officials within the Department of Defense (DoD) on several critical issues and decisions:

**Strategic Priorities and Operational Plans:** I would work closely with USINDOPACOM and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to align our operational plans and strategic priorities with broader U.S. defense objectives and regional

strategies. This includes coordinating on the development and execution of contingency plans, joint exercises, and strategic initiatives relevant to the Korean Peninsula and the Indo-Pacific region.

**Resource Allocation and Force Readiness:** Coordination with USINDOPACOM and DoD civilian officials is essential for ensuring that resources are appropriately allocated and that forces are adequately equipped and prepared. This involves discussing force posture adjustments, budgeting, and the integration of new capabilities to address emerging threats.

**Diplomatic and Political Considerations:** Given the multinational and interagency nature of our operations, I would collaborate with civilian officials within the DoD, Department of State, and other government agencies on diplomatic and political issues. This includes coordinating on policies that affect our alliances, working with the Republic of Korea and other regional partners, and ensuring that our military actions align with broader U.S. foreign policy objectives.

**Coordination with International Partners:** The United Nations Command currently has 18 Member States spanning Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. I will work with these nations, their Embassies, Ambassadors, and Ministers to uphold the Armistice Agreement that has given the Korean Peninsula tenuous peace for the last 71 years.

**Crisis Response and Contingency Operations:** In the event of a crisis or conflict, I would coordinate with USINDOPACOM, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and DoD officials to ensure a unified response. This includes decision-making on the deployment and management of forces, strategic communications, and the integration of interagency efforts.

**Compliance with National Defense Strategy and Policy:** Ensuring that our operations and initiatives align with the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and other key policies is crucial. I would engage with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and DoD civilian leaders to review and adjust our strategies and actions as needed to meet national security objectives and policy directives.

**Joint and Combined Operations:** Effective coordination with USINDOPACOM and other military branches is necessary for joint and combined operations. This involves working on interoperability, joint training programs, and the integration of multinational forces to enhance operational effectiveness and readiness.

By maintaining close coordination with these entities, I would ensure that our efforts are synchronized with U.S. strategic goals, that we respond effectively to emerging challenges, and that we uphold the highest standards of operational and strategic alignment within the three commands.

## USFK Priorities

**9. In your assessment, what capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the current Joint Force present the most significant challenge to executing USFK's operational plans?**

If confirmed, I will evaluate the current force posture, concepts of operations, and combined force posture. Without fully understanding the nuances of the security environment on the Korean Peninsula or the combat capabilities of the ROK military, I cannot provide a credible assessment of potential capability or capacity shortfalls to include authorities and approvals in the Joint Force that might impact the operational plans of UNC, CFC, and USFK.

**OPLAN completion and releasability:** I understand that the operational plans (OPLAN) are nearing finalization. It is essential to provide a releasable version of these plans to the United Nations Command (UNC) Member States so they can understand how their capabilities will be utilized by CFC. If confirmed, I will work with the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff and the ROK Minister of Defense to release these plans to the UNC Member States so they can better understand their mission and the capabilities they should bring to the conflict should that happen.

**Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations:** Evacuating non-combatants in the Korean Theater is complex and will require a whole-of-government approach, supported by regional and global allies, including UNC member states, to ensure timely execution.

**Manning:** A minimum force level of 28,500 is essential for USFK to sustain and operational plans depend on that baseline of capability and capacity. Moreover, the ROK has a declining birthrate that will impact the size of their military in the next 20 years.

If confirmed, I will review all noted challenges and their potential effects on USFK's operational plans.

**10. What military options should the United States explore to improve deterrence against North Korea? In your assessment, what changes to U.S. force posture and activity in the Indo-Pacific region would improve U.S. deterrence against North Korea?**

At the Unclassified level, without having had the opportunity to fully assess the North Korean threat, I am unable to yet provide a comprehensive answer. If confirmed, I would immediately conduct an assessment of the threat, USFK's operational plans, and U.S. capabilities on the Korean Peninsula to determine what adjustments in force size, structure, or posture are necessary to improve deterrence and combat capability. I would defer to the commander of

INDOPACOM for force posture changes needed in the greater Indo-Pacific region. That said, the United States should focus on enhancing military partnerships and operational synchronization.

**Alliance and Partnership Strength:** Leverage and strengthen alliances and global partnerships. By integrating efforts with allies and partners, we can create a unified and credible deterrent strategy with greater strength and endurance. Increasing opportunities for our allies to participate in operations, activities, and investments (OAI) will enhance the overall effectiveness of our deterrence.

**Operational Synchronization:** Ensure that all plans are synchronized and adaptable to the changing operational environment. This includes updating operational plans, as necessary, to align with current threats and capabilities and incorporating emerging technologies.

Additionally, the United States should focus on force posture in the Indo-Pacific region to reflect the latest technological advancements and emerging threats. This includes ensuring that USFK maintains the right capabilities across all domains—land, sea, air, space, and cyber—to effectively deter adversaries. If confirmed, I will focus on these areas to refine U.S. military options and improve deterrence against North Korea.

**11. In your view, what are the highest priority missile defense needs of U.S. Forces Korea and Combined Forces Command?**

USFK and CFC's highest priority missile defense needs are as follows:

**Protect Key Assets:** Safeguard combat power projection, reinforcement capabilities such as air and sea ports, Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation sites in Korea and Japan, and major population areas, while defending U.S. and Republic of Korea forces, personnel, and families.

**Ensure Effective Resourcing:** I anticipate the North Korean drone threat will become acute in the near term. USFK needs a large inventory of relatively inexpensive ways to detect and defeat drones of all sizes and capabilities. The conflict in Ukraine has demonstrated the innumerable ways in which drones can be configured to collect intelligence, deliver explosives, or even drop molten metal.

**Advance Defense Capabilities:** Combat a growing and sophisticated North Korean missile threat with both layered defense systems and pre-launch capabilities. Develop cost-effective technologies in all domains that go beyond traditional missile engagements with interceptors. We must explore lasers and other electromagnetic ways of defeating ballistic and cruise missiles in a cost advantageous manner.



If confirmed, I will advocate for increased missile defense assets and advanced pre-launch capabilities with USINDOPACOM, ROK, and United Nations Command Member States.

**12. What missile defense capabilities do you believe are needed in the near term to meet the operational needs of these commands, and what systems are available to provide such capabilities?**

The ability to integrate existing upper-and lower-tier systems has greatly improved through capabilities developed through the Joint Emergent Operational Needs process. Capabilities have been fielded or are in the process of being fielded to the warfighter that promise to optimize our interceptor inventory.

Our joint and combined allies and partners continue to make progress in efforts to find and fix enemy systems prior to launch. We need a Combined Joint All Domain solution to an advanced enemy which will allow us the capability to utilize any sensor and any shooter to extend operational capability and battlefield against an emerging threat that can conduct a complex, no notice, 360 degree attack. These efforts would greatly enhance our overall defense against the immediate missile threat.

Beyond initial stages of conflict, the Alliance requires the ability to defend critical US and ROK assets from additional adversary missile engagement throughout subsequent phases of the operation. USFK requires the ability to neutralize ballistic missile threats before launch for effective defense of critical assets and, if confirmed, I would continue to emphasize innovation in this critical area.

**13. In your opinion, how should the U.S. employ its forces in the Republic of Korea (ROK) to provide for regional presence and engagement, and to best respond to regional threats, provide support for out-of-area contingencies, and maintain readiness?**

While the ROK-US Alliance is committed to defending the homeland(s) against the persistent DPRK threat, the Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of Korea does not name a specific adversary. Current global conflicts have demonstrated that the world is getting smaller, more connected, and regional conflicts may become global conflicts quickly. As the only 4-star joint headquarters on the Asian continent, USFK maintains a floor of 28,500 personnel. USFK's presence, posture, and capabilities forward in the Northeast Asia region serve as a deterrence to our adversaries, reassure the Republic of Korea population we are ready to defend the Korean homeland, and enables us to create multiple dilemmas to DPRK, PRC, and RUS. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for inclusion of USFK forces and capabilities in USINDOPACOM exercises, wargames, capstone exercises, contingencies, and operational plans supporting U.S. interests and objectives in the region.

## North Korea

### **14. What is your assessment of the current security situation on the Korean peninsula?**

New risks posed by North Korea's WMD program, state-sponsored cyber actors, and expanding military relationship with Russia add to standing tensions and the sizeable North Korean conventional military force that threatens the Republic of Korea.

North Korea has continued down the path of developing nuclear weapons with the aim of combining them with ballistic missiles that can reach the Republic of Korea, Japan, and the United States. As North Korea expands its missile program, it is increasing the sophistication and reliability of its weapons and probably has the capability to produce hundreds of missiles of all major system classes in the coming years.

North Korea's state-sponsored cyber actors now threaten institutions worldwide with espionage, cybercrime, and offensive cyber capabilities. These cyber actors target defense, aerospace, nuclear, and engineering entities to obtain sensitive technical information and generate hundreds of millions of dollars annually through cryptocurrency theft and ransomware attacks. North Korean cyber actors also threaten DoD IT infrastructure and that of our allies and partners through advanced cyber means such as sophisticated spearfishing and other social engineering techniques.

North Korea's deepening cooperation with Russia is another source of risk. Pyongyang has provided Moscow direct materiel support, including at least 3 million artillery rounds in addition to dozens of ballistic missiles, to sustain Russia's war on Ukraine. In return, Moscow has provided Pyongyang diplomatic support at the UN by vetoing sanctions enforcement mechanisms and the opportunity to gain insight into how North Korean-made missiles perform in combat, including against advanced missile defense systems.

In addition, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is still the most influential actor to North Korea. It remains North Korea's largest trading partner and has the capacity to significantly influence the region or to again intervene should conflict occur on the Korean Peninsula.

These developments require a combat credible force consisting of a strong, professionally trained, and equipped U.S.-ROK alliance to deter threats and to sustain peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

**15. What is your assessment of North Korea's conventional capabilities and readiness?**

North Korea's military provides Pyongyang a range of options to deter perceived threats and coerce its neighbors. Though the effects of sanctions, aging equipment, and declining training levels degrade North Korea's combat readiness, its investment in key capabilities probably ensures its force will remain able to execute wartime missions.

North Korea's conventional military consists of over a million active-duty personnel augmented by 7 million reserves and other auxiliary forces and has the capability to inflict tremendous damage on the Republic of Korea. About 70 percent of its forces are postured in the southern portion of the country near the demilitarized zone, including its long-range fires that threaten most of the Republic of Korea's population and economic centers.

While the North Korean military primarily uses Soviet-era equipment, each service is in the process of developing new, modernized systems. Since last year, North Korea has publicized testing of modernized UAVs, long-range artillery, tanks, and surface vessels and submarines capable of launching new missiles, leaving little doubt that North Korea is preparing its conventional force for war should its leadership choose.

**16. What is your assessment of the threat posed to South Korea, Japan, and the United States by North Korea's ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction capabilities?**

In 2023, North Korea displayed what it claimed was a tactical nuclear device that probably is compatible with the new missiles that threaten the Republic of Korea and Japan. In 2022, Pyongyang passed a law codifying nuclear use conditions – including the possible pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons – and conducted claimed nuclear use exercises and simulated tactical nuclear strikes. Since 2020, North Korea has paraded and displayed hundreds of ballistic missiles and launchers, demonstrating the country's ability to expand its arsenal despite economic challenges and sanctions.

In addition, North Korea has historically sold ballistic missiles or missile technology to at least Burma, Iran, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. The Kim regime remains willing to provide ballistic missiles to countries for use in furthering conflicts, exemplified by its shipment of dozens of ballistic missiles to Russia to sustain Moscow's ongoing conflict against Ukraine.

## **North Korean Nuclear Program and Extended Deterrence**

**The North Korean regime is building nuclear weapons primarily to deter American attack and ensure regime survival. However, some experts also warn that the regime may seek to use its nuclear weapons to engage in coercive diplomacy to force eventual reunification on its own terms.**

**17. What is your understanding of the motivations for North Korea’s pursuit of nuclear weapons? And what implications do those motivations have for how the regime may seek to use its nuclear arsenal?**

North Korean President Kim Jong Un’s enduring strategic priority very likely is to achieve a level of military force and deterrence that assures the survival of the Kim regime, international relevance, nuclear capabilities development and self-reliance. Kim could also use nuclear weapons in an attempt to deter the United States or UNC Member States from becoming involved in a conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Lastly, Kim Jong Un may view nuclear and chemical weapons as a counter to the U.S.-ROK alliance’s significant advantage in conventional air, sea, and land military capabilities.

As Kim’s confidence in his nuclear arsenal grows, he may increasingly be willing to employ higher risk conventional military options, believing that nuclear weapons will deter a U.S. or Republic of Korea response.

**The United States currently deters nuclear attack and/or nuclear coercion by Russia and China, countries with far greater nuclear capabilities than North Korea is ever likely to achieve.**

**18. In your view, are there unique challenges to deterring nuclear attack and/or nuclear coercion by North Korea that make deterrence a less effective policy option for the United States?**

As reaffirmed in the 2022 National Defense Strategy and Nuclear Posture Review, U.S. deterrence strategy remains sound. At the same time, the requirements for effective deterrence vary given each adversary presents different challenges for U.S. strategy. Consequently, the U.S. is adopting an integrated deterrence approach to leverage flexible nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities to tailor deterrence approaches under specific circumstances with simultaneous threats in mind. Deterring threats will always be the first step in preventing aggression, and that is the mission of UNC, CFC, and USFK. Further, through venues such as the Nuclear Consultative Group, U.S.-ROK extended deterrence cooperation is continually assessed and strengthened. I would defer to the Office of the Secretary of Defense for additional details.

**19. In your view, do you believe the mutual aid pact between Russia and North Korea will alter the ability of the United States to provide effective extended deterrence options to South Korea?**

I do not believe North Korea, Russia, the PRC, or the ROK question U.S. military capabilities, especially our nuclear capabilities. The U.S. currently has the tools necessary to deter adversaries, assure allies and partners, and achieve objectives if deterrence fails. Our challenge will be to ensure we continue to maintain the necessary, modern capabilities, force structure, and posture to adequately deter and assure, especially in the space and cyber domains, as the threat evolves. Deterring nuclear attack is a whole of nation effort and will require the U.S.-ROK alliance to achieve the vision of integrated deterrence to best deter adversaries and re-assure our allies.

**Polling shows a majority of South Koreans believe that the Republic of Korea should develop its own nuclear weapons.**

**20. What is your military assessment of such options?**

The South Korean domestic discourse on acquiring nuclear weapons is complex and a sovereign issue. However, the Alliance is making changes to its extended deterrence arrangements that are very real. Under the Washington Declaration of 2023, the Republic of Korea reaffirmed its “full confidence in U.S. extended deterrence commitments”, as well as its commitment to uphold its obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The U.S. commitment to the ROK is enduring and ironclad and any nuclear attack by the DPRK against the ROK will be met with a “swift, overwhelming, and decisive response.” The United States has further underscored its commitment to engage in deeper, cooperative decision-making on nuclear deterrence with the ROK through the establishment of the Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG).

**21. What is your military assessment of a submarine launched nuclear cruise missile as an extended deterrence option and are there other extended deterrence options you believe are needed?**

If confirmed, I will coordinate with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to understand potential policy considerations for the capability and other extended deterrence options available.

**The U.S. and South Korea now have a nuclear consultative group to “to strengthen the U.S.-ROK Alliance and enhance extended deterrence on the Korean Peninsula and in the region.”**

**22. In your view, are there additional steps that DOD could take to reassure allies and counter North Korean nuclear provocations by improving the readiness, training, and effectiveness of U.S. nuclear forces assigned to**

### **support the nuclear deterrence mission in the Pacific?**

U.S. leaders and military forces need to significantly improve their readiness to confront a nuclear adversary. We need to further expand the reintroduction of nuclear weapon effects and capabilities into our professional military education courses at every level from basic training to that for general and flag officers. The combat training centers should consider adding nuclear scenarios into their experiences, and the DOD's large-scale, globally-integrated exercises could better incorporate nuclear coercion and adversary use of nuclear weapons into their scenarios to improve the readiness of our joint force to operate in a nuclear environment. With sufficient resources, the services could address the significant medical considerations, such as large numbers of casualties with burns and radiation sickness, as well as the radiological detection and decontamination challenges associated with a nuclear attack.

### **23. In your view, are there additional steps that DOD could take, including with our allies and partners, to ensure that North Korea does not proliferate missile and nuclear technology to countries such as Syria, Iran, and others?**

USFK supports the broader Department of Defense effort as part of a whole-of-government approach to countering nuclear and missile technology proliferation. The DOD has taken and will continue to take steps to cooperate with the Republic of Korea and regional allies to counter DPRK activities prohibited by numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with our Alliance partners in addition to other allies and partners to ensure our whole-of-government efforts in limiting proliferation activities are supported.

### **24. In your opinion, will sanctions alone lead to the denuclearization of North Korea? If not, what other incentives or disincentives could help lead to better outcomes?**

North Korea's economy is growing after years of decline enabled by several factors, including the end of the COVID pandemic, the DPRK's deepening relationship with Russia, and North Korea's long ties with the PRC. While sanctions may place pressure on the regime, North Korea's nuclear program is now deeply intertwined with its national security strategy, constitution, and the regime's survival. All elements of national power, along with support from the international community, are likely necessary to encourage North Korea to negotiate on denuclearization.

## **Role of Other Regional Countries**

### **25. How would you assess the current state of China-North Korea relations?**

North Korea relies on China for most necessities such as food and fuel but is increasingly insulated from Chinese influence by Pyongyang's expanding relationship with Moscow. China refuses to join new international sanctions against North Korea and aims to use its influence with North Korea to ensure stability on the peninsula. Beijing has not publicly criticized Pyongyang for its recent missile and space tests, which probably reinforces Kim's perception that he has a wide latitude for future weapons testing without losing Chinese support.

**26.How would you assess the current state of China-South Korea relations?**

Both countries greatly value their economic and trade relationship. China remains the Republic of Korea's top trade partner in both exports and imports. The trilateral summit this year among China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea indicates the relationship is stable. China's views on North Korea, the U.S.-ROK alliance, and Taiwan diverge from those of most states that seek to maintain the rules based international order and are potential friction points with the Republic of Korea. South Korea seems to be taking small steps to diversify its economy in order to reduce its dependence on China.

**27.What is your understanding of China's policy objectives as they relate to the Korean Peninsula? How would you describe China's strategy to achieve those objectives?**

China's policy as it relates to the Korean peninsula is to challenge U.S. regional influence. China uses all elements of national power and coercion to advance its aims and will attempt to diminish and undermine the U.S.-ROK alliance by applying pressure to the Republic of Korean economy. Such economic coercion may resemble what China applied toward Republic of Korea equities in response to the deployment of our Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system.

**28.How would you assess the current state of Russia-North Korea relations?**

This year, Russia-North Korea relations are heightening to levels not seen in recent years. North Korea is one of only a handful of countries to have voted against a UN resolution condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and to have recognized Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territory. In March, Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution to maintain the panel of experts that monitors North Korean UNSC sanctions violations. In June, Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the Treaty on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that included a pledge to provide military assistance if either side is in a state of war. North Korea is one of the few countries providing direct lethal aid to Russia in its war in Ukraine, having exported millions of artillery rounds and dozens of ballistic missiles to Russia.

**29. What are Russia's policy objectives as they relate to the Korean Peninsula? How would you describe Russia's strategy to achieve those objectives?**

Russia probably aims to use North Korea as a weapons supplier and expand Moscow's efforts to counter U.S. influence. Russia's strategy to achieve these goals is to drop calls for North Korea to denuclearize and subvert international sanctions on North Korea. In violation of UNSC sanctions for which Russia voted, Russia announced it would aid North Korea's satellite program and provided North Korea with a small number of Russian UAVs during the 2023 Putin-Kim summit. Russia is probably providing technical assistance to North Korea's space program, and its UAVs contributed to the R&D of the developmental one-way attack UAVs North Korean media recently showcased Kim inspecting.

**Chemical and Biological Weapons**

**30. What is your assessment of North Korea's Chemical and Biological Weapons capabilities and the ability of DOD and the interagency to counter such capabilities?**

In 2017, North Korea assassinated Kim Jong Un's half-brother in Malaysia using the nerve agent VX, demonstrating Pyongyang's willingness to use a Schedule I weapon under the Chemical Weapons Convention. North Korea has a chemical warfare program that could comprise up to several thousand metric tons of chemical warfare agents, and the capability to produce nerve, blister, blood, and choking agents. North Korea probably could employ chemical warfare agents by modifying a variety of conventional munitions, including artillery and ballistic missiles, along with unconventional, targeted methods.

North Korea has a longstanding biological warfare capability. Despite being signatory to the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention, North Korea has never declared any relevant developments and since 1990 has failed to provide, as the convention requires, confidence-building measure declarations. North Korea may consider the use of chemical and biological weapons during wartime or in an unconventional or clandestine attack.

**31. What is your assessment of the ability of the U.S. to conduct military operations if called upon in a chemical or biological threat environment?**

The U.S. is well-equipped for current chemical and biological threats through advanced technology, training, and specialized units such as the Army's 20th CBRNE Command and specialized CWMD special operations forces. Additionally, the Department continues to modernize capabilities to adapt to the changing chemical and biological threat environment, as reflected in budgetary requests to Congress. To best leverage this equipment, U.S. forces—especially



non-specialized forces—must increase their readiness with specialized chemical and biological defense training.

North Korea's capabilities add complexity to building readiness. The regime reportedly has several thousand metric tons of chemical agents, including nerve, blister, blood, and choking agents, and can deliver these agents through various conventional munitions, such as artillery and ballistic missiles. This ability to modify and deploy chemical weapons through multiple delivery mechanisms poses a direct threat to U.S. forces and allies, complicating military planning and requiring a broad spectrum of preparedness.

North Korea's use of chemical weapons, even on a small scale, signals a concerning erosion of international norms that prohibit the development and use of WMD. This could affect how the U.S. and its allies assess the likelihood of future North Korean WMD use.

Currently, USFK along with our ROK counterparts and interagency organizations execute three yearly CWMD tabletop exercise to address concerns, gaps, and opportunities for enhanced CWMD operations against the North Korean WMD threats. In addition, CWMD operations are practiced and rehearsed during two major exercises per year; Ulchi Freedom Shield and Freedom Shield. If confirmed, I will focus on assessing the readiness, sustainment, and training required to counter these capabilities and advocate for advances in collective protection measures for both combatants and non-combatants.

**32. What is your assessment of the Joint Force's ability to secure North Korean weapons of mass destruction sites in the event of a contingency? What capability and/or capacity shortfalls present the most significant challenge to executing such an operation?**

At the Unclassified level, securing North Korean weapons of mass destruction sites in a contingency scenario poses significant challenges. While the Joint Force has notable strengths, including advanced surveillance, specialized units, and strong regional alliances, key capability and capacity shortfalls could impact the success of such an operation.

If confirmed, I will review the major operational plans, contingency plans, training, and associated execution orders outlining the joint force's ability to counter and secure North Korean weapons of mass destruction to identify capability or capacity shortfalls. I will work with our regional partners and allies, interagency, and USINDOPACOM Service Components to forge a comprehensive approach to addressing the North Korean nuclear, weapons of mass destruction, missile, and proliferation threats.

**United States - Republic of Korea (ROK) Alliance**

**33. What is your assessment of the current U. S. security relationship with the ROK?**

The U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance relationship is founded on our ironclad commitment and is underpinned by shared values, our Mutual Defense Treaty, and deep defense cooperation that have maintained over seven decades of peace on the Peninsula. Korea's Indo-Pacific Strategy highlights the country's support for the rules based international order and lays out many areas for potential cooperation between our two great nations. The Republic of Korea is meanwhile deepening its relationships with other U.S. allies – notably through trilateral cooperation with Japan, and cooperation with NATO.

**34. If confirmed, what measures, if any, would you take to improve the U.S.-ROK security relationship?**

I see many opportunities to build upon the already-strong U.S.-ROK security relationship. If confirmed, some of the key areas where our efforts can be focused include enhancing joint exercises and training by integrating emerging Republic of Korea and U.S. military multidomain capabilities, improving mechanisms for sharing information, and providing assistance and support for the Republic of Korea's own defense strategies and capabilities – including cybersecurity and their new strategic command. By focusing on these areas, the U.S. and the Republic of Korea can strengthen their defense cooperation, ensuring a robust and effective partnership to address shared security challenges.

Additionally, the Republic of Korea's growing interest in building regional security partnerships highlights an opportunity to align more closely with broader regional stability goals, which can further strengthen the U.S.-ROK alliance

**35. What is your assessment of ROK warfighting capability and modernization efforts? Do you believe the ROK is investing appropriately in its defensive capabilities?**

The Republic of Korea defense expenditures remain one of the highest among our allies and partners as a percentage of their GDP. In 2024, the Republic of Korea increased its defense spending by 4.2%, the highest increase in recent history, with planned spending of approximately 2.54% of its GDP on defense and 13.2% of its government budget. Korea is implementing a modernization effort, "Defense Innovation 4.0," to prepare for a complex future security environment. This includes investments in artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned systems, telecommunications, and advanced sensors. Expanding into these innovative areas will enhance both nations' strategic capabilities and adapt to the evolving threat landscape. By fostering advancements in these technologies, the Alliance can better address emerging security challenges and maintain a competitive edge.

**36. What is your understanding of the command relationships between U.S. and ROK forces?**

Combined Forces Command, as the combined warfighting command, represents the most direct and tangible manifestation of the U.S.-ROK command relationship. CFC assumes operational control of the Republic of Korea military forces when conflict occurs. The CFC commander reports to the Presidents of both the United States and ROK through the Secretary and Minister of Defense from each nation. Though it does not have operational control of the Republic of Korea forces before a conflict, the Commander, Combined Forces Command, does have the authority to guide planning and training requirements for both the Republic of Korea and U.S. forces through development of operational plans and combined doctrine. This includes formalized and mutually agreed upon crisis action procedures for transitioning from Armistice to war.

**Transfer of Wartime Operational Control**

**37. Do you believe the transfer of operational control should be conditions-based? If so, under what conditions do you believe must be achieved?**

Yes, I fully support the bilaterally agreed-upon Conditions-based Operational Control Transition Plan. I firmly believe all three conditions of the Conditions-based OPCON transition Plan must be fully met prior to the transition.

**The three (3) conditions bilaterally agreed to are:**

**Condition #1:** Military Capabilities required to lead the combined defense.

**Condition #2:** Comprehensive Alliance Response Capabilities against North Korean nuclear and missile threats.

**Condition #3:** Security environment on the Korean Peninsula and in the region is conducive for a stable transition of wartime OPCON.

**38. What is your understanding of the ROK's current and projected military capabilities and the ability of ROK forces to assume a greater role in the defense of their homeland including responsibility for command and control of the readiness, operations, and war fighting of their own forces in wartime?**

The Republic of Korea military continues to make steady progress to assume a greater role in defense of their homeland. The Republic of Korea continues development efforts but understands there remains considerable work to be done to fully acquire the capabilities necessary to meet critical combined defense leadership roles and correct current capability gaps.

The U.S. provides support to mitigate these gaps, and the expectation is the Republic of Korea will take concrete steps to address these shortfalls and assume a greater role in the defense of their homeland. Many of the requirements associated with meeting the conditions of the Conditions-based Operational

Control Transition Plan are designed to accomplish this. If the Republic of Korea completes all these requirements, which USFK expects will take several years, I expect that Republic of Korea forces will have significantly greater ability to deter, fight, and win against North Korea, even with less support from the U.S.

**39. In your view, how can U.S. Forces Korea assist the ROK to develop these capabilities in the near-to-medium term?**

If confirmed, my staff and I will work closely with our Republic of Korea Allies to continue the ongoing efforts and identify capability gaps by using combined assessments, joint studies, and senior-level discussions. Our goal of reducing these gaps will inform how the U.S. and the Republic of Korea pursue acquisition strategies, including potential FMS cases, training, and logistics support. It is imperative that any solutions are sustainable, interoperable, and effective in the combined defense.

**Host Nation Burden-Sharing Programs**

**40. In general, do you believe the ROK has equitably shared the burden of defense and deterrence on the Korean Peninsula in recent years?**

The equity of U.S. and the Republic of Korea burden-sharing is best determined by policy makers. It is unquestionable, however, that the Republic of Korea contribution to the Alliance is substantial.

In recent years, the Republic of Korea's financial contributions under various arrangements have supported the successful relocation and consolidation of U.S. forces across the Korean Peninsula. I understand the ongoing negotiation of the next Special Measures Agreement will ensure an appropriate burden-sharing arrangement that meets U.S. requirements for providing ready U.S. forces to defend the Korean Peninsula if called upon.

**41. To what extent is an active multi-year Special Measures Agreement necessary to ensure appropriate burden-sharing by the ROK?**

Since 1991, the Republic of Korea has helped offset the costs of stationing U.S. forces through the Special Measures Agreement mechanism. The Special Measures Agreement has provided a mechanism for the Republic of Korea to burden-share the cost of defending their country. Special Measures Agreement contributions play a key role in maintaining force readiness and thus promoting security and stability on the Korean Peninsula by funding Korean National workers needed to support the force, making valuable supplies and services available for use by the force, and building and modernizing facilities needed by the force.

**ROK-Japan Relationship**

#### **42. What is your assessment of the ROK-Japan relationship?**

The bilateral cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Japan is growing. Both countries recognize ROK-Japan and US-ROK-Japan security cooperation is becoming increasingly important, considering the necessity to responding to regional and global challenges and the DPRK's nuclear and missile threat. Both countries have taken unprecedented steps to foster bilateral and trilateral security relations. In June, the Republic of Korea and Japan Defense Ministers agreed to hold annual Defense Vice-Ministerial Meetings, resume Japan-ROK defense bilateral talks, and resume high-level exchanges between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the Republic of Korea Armed Forces. Additionally, both countries have worked to resolve issues that occurred between the Republic of Korea Navy and Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces that stem from an incident in December 2018, which has resulted new measures that improve communication and safety at sea.

Both countries recognize the bilateral security cooperation benefits that come from the shared values and common strategic interests of the two countries, and this helps strengthen US-Japan-ROK cooperation. This cooperation will help further deter the DPRK but also serves to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue to promote bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral cooperation with both the Republic of Korea and Japan and take on a leadership role that can further foster Republic of Korea and Japan security relations. I will pursue collaboration and cooperation within the military domains between these important allies, to foster stability in the region and enhance deterrence against the DPRK.

Although historical sensitivities remain, the Republic of Korea and Japan have put their relationship on an upward trajectory. Continued U.S. promotion of bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral cooperation with the Republic of Korea and Japan will enable us to identify shared threats and challenges and opportunities to cooperate on initiatives that make all three countries and the region safer. If confirmed, I will endeavor to encourage and amplify positive gains, turning new avenues of collaboration within the military domain into long-lasting cooperation that enhances stability in the region and deters North Korea.

#### **43. What opportunities for cooperation do you foresee for the bilateral (ROK-Japan) and trilateral (ROK-Japan-US) relationships?**

Deepening U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral cooperation, collaboration, and partnership is vital for addressing the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. The Republic of Korea and Japanese national security has been inextricably linked by common threats and both countries' alliances with the United States. Trilateral cooperation serves as a tool used by the three countries to promote freedom and prosperity in the region by combining capabilities to combat regional threats.

I understand there are three lines of effort for the trilateral security relationship: 1) Dialogues and key leader engagements, 2) Real-time DPRK missile early warning data sharing, and 3) Exercises, training, and exchanges. In each of these areas, our trilateral cooperation has grown. If confirmed, I will pursue areas of mutual interest that promote interoperability and enhance security for our allies and partners as well as further institutionalize trilateral security relations.

### **Training of U.S. Forces in the Republic of Korea**

#### **44. In your assessment, what is the value of regular, large-scale exercises for U.S. and ROK forces?**

Large scale exercises are not just valuable, they are a necessity to build and maintain combat readiness. Regular, large scale, combined, joint, all-domain, interagency exercises on the Korean Peninsula allow the coalition to execute command and control and to increase interoperability across all of the warfighting functions. While the nature of warfare has not changed, the character of warfare has and is changing. As both the U.S and the Republic of Korea services seek to execute force design in order to build an optimized force that is capable of winning against a peer adversary, it is imperative to provide the force with a venue to exercise these advances in live, virtual and constructive exercises. These exercises are a venue to test and refine the Alliance and combined coordination procedures for the Republic of Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, UNC, CFC, and USFK.

**Specifically in the Republic of Korea, the joint force has an opportunity to train and exercise on the Asian continent and on the terrain the joint force may be called on to defend.**

#### **45. In your estimation, on balance, do military exercises that demonstrate readiness and interoperability between U.S. and ROK forces do more to deter North Korean aggression than they do to provoke it?**

Militaries have trained for thousands of years to be prepared to do their jobs if called upon, and military exercises are a key element of training. Military training is not provocative in and of itself. The conduct of joint, combined, all-domain, inter-agency exercises build readiness and provide U.S., the Republic of Korea, and Allies and Partners the necessary platform to test interoperability and the integration of the joint warfighting functions. These exercises are deterrents because they are part of a synchronized training and exercise plan rather than a reaction or response to specific North Korean activities. As such, we should expect that North Korea will also conduct military training to exercise their tactics, techniques and procedures. If confirmed I will continue to build combat readiness through well planned and synchronized exercises that are focused on the defensive actions required to support the Republic of Korea.

North Korea's longstanding claims that U.S.-ROK military exercises increase tensions almost certainly aim to constrain our training and divert the conversation among the international community away from denuclearization toward tension reduction. The North Korean military does not increase its defensive posture during our training events. Their made-for-TV firepower demonstrations and rhetoric barrages are long-planned, scripted events rather than real-time defensive measures or reactions.

**46. What is your assessment of the adequacy of training opportunities for U.S. forces in the ROK, including the availability and access to training ranges for large ground unit maneuver and fires, close air support, and other training requirements? What opportunities do you see that could improve that access?**

The Republic of Korea has the best training areas in Northeast Asia, but challenges exist stemming from an increasing population, urbanization, and lack of large ground maneuver training areas. To offset these combat readiness limitations, the Joint Force maximizes opportunities to conduct large-scale live combined, joint, and multilateral training integrated with the use of state-of-the-art synthetic training systems.

The Pacific Multi-Domain Training and Experimentation Capability (PMTEC), a USINDOPACOM multi-year initiative to increase live, virtual, and constructive training capability throughout the Indo-Pacific Theater, will further enhance our ability to realistically train large forces.

If confirmed, I will continue to assess these challenges and seek a mix of engagement, innovation, experimentation, and investments in future training opportunities aligned with force relocation and urbanization trends as a means of ensuring range and training area-related issues do not compromise combat readiness.

### **Tour Length**

**47. In light of the security threat posed by North Korea, do you believe the Department should continue to encourage accompanied tours in South Korea? In your view, what would be the positive and negative impacts of adopting shorter, unaccompanied tours for military personnel in South Korea?**

Given the current dynamics, I believe the DoD should continue to encourage accompanied tours in the Republic of Korea. Accompanied tours significantly enhance mission continuity and proficiency. When military personnel serve alongside their families, it fosters greater stability and support crucial to maintaining high readiness levels. This stability not only benefits servicemembers

but also strengthens our overall commitment to our ROK allies. It sends a strong signal of enduring support and commitment to our alliance, which is vital for regional stability and deterrence.

If confirmed, I likely would not support unaccompanied tours of longer than one year.

A steady shift toward normalizing accompanied tours in the Republic of Korea to a duration of three years while maintaining an appropriate contingent of unaccompanied tours provides a balanced approach. This strategy offers family stability, helping servicemembers focus on their duties with consistent leadership, while keeping shorter rotations for missions conducive to such a tour construct.

I firmly believe taking care of our servicemembers and their families is a critical priority. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring each servicemember's time in the Republic of Korea is both professionally rewarding and personally fulfilling, while also maintaining our strategic objectives and alliances in the region.

### **Quality of Life Issues**

#### **48. What is your assessment of housing available to both command and non-command sponsored family members in South Korea?**

I have not yet had an opportunity to assess the housing for family members in South Korea. It is my understanding that housing on and off-post in the Republic of Korea is meeting the requirements for both command and non-command sponsored service members and their families. I will work closely with higher headquarters, the host nation, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) to seek necessary support and solutions for access to housing for our service members and their families.

#### **49. If confirmed, how would you assess the management and delivery of health care services in South Korea for both command and non-command sponsored family members?**

I take the delivery of healthcare to our Service Members and Families very seriously and it is a top priority of mine. With the transition of healthcare delivery to the Defense Health Agency (DHA) service components have less direct control over execution of the healthcare mission. If confirmed, I intend to request that DHA conduct a full assessment of physical and mental health care delivery across the Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, and pending the outcome of the DHA assessment, I will require quarterly updates from medical leaders on the trends, metrics, and actions taken to improve the delivery of healthcare to all beneficiaries.



## **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

**Despite significant efforts by the Department and military services over the past decade to enhance their prevention of, and response to, sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the current data continues to show increasing prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24. These findings echo reports this year of increases in the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault at the Military Service Academies.**

**50. Do you believe the policies, programs, and resources that the Department of Defense has put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working? If not, what else must be done?**

I believe the DoD has made significant strides in implementing policies, programs, and resources to prevent and respond to sexual assault and protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation. Further, in May 2024, the DoD released the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military. The report shows that the estimated prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment declined in the active force, compared to levels last measured in 2021. The next report with data on the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment at the Military Service Academies will be released in 2025. To continue improvements, and if confirmed, I would conduct a thorough assessment of the current measures in place within USFK to identify any gaps or areas that require further attention. To ensure the effectiveness of these efforts, it is crucial to maintain an ongoing review process, solicit feedback from service members and the civilian workforce, and adapt as necessary to address emerging challenges.

I will also continue to support the hiring of the Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW). This full-time credentialed workforce takes a holistic approach to reducing risk factors and promoting protective factors to prevent harmful behaviors, such as sexual assault and sexual harassment. The IPPW work directly with leaders to change policies **when appropriate**, implement prevention activities, and promote the health of the military community.

**51. If confirmed, what specific role would you establish for yourself in preventing sexual harassment within USFK, including within its civilian workforce?**

If confirmed, I would establish myself as a strong advocate for a culture that does not tolerate sexual harassment within USFK, including its civilian workforce. I would lead by example, demonstrating zero tolerance for such behavior and fostering an environment where everyone feels safe and supported. I would engage with all levels of the organization to ensure understanding and

implementation of prevention strategies, provide regular training and resources, and maintain open lines of communication to encourage reporting and swift action when incidents occur. Additionally, I would ensure that appropriate resources are dedicated to addressing sexual harassment, and that victims have access to necessary support services.

**52. Do you believe that you need additional authorities from Congress to improve upon existing programs to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault?**

While I believe the DoD has been given sufficient authorities to address sexual harassment and sexual assault, I recognize that the nature of these issues may necessitate further refinements or adjustments to existing policies and programs. If confirmed, I would work closely with relevant stakeholders to identify any potential areas where additional authorities from Congress could enhance our efforts to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault within USFK. However, I believe that a significant portion of the improvement can be achieved through effective implementation, resourcing, and leadership focus on the existing authorities and initiatives.

**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.**

**53. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**  
Yes

**54. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications), and other information as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**  
Yes

**55. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes

**56. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes

**57. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes

**58. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes

**59. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes