

Advance Policy Questions for General John F. Campbell, USA
Nominee to Commander, International Security Assistance Force and
Commander, United States Forces Afghanistan

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)?

The Commander, ISAF (COMISAF) is the senior NATO uniformed officer in Afghanistan. He is the in-theatre operational commander exercising operational control of all ISAF forces in Afghanistan. COMISAF employs assigned forces, through a strategic partnership with GIRoA, to conduct functionally based security force assistance (train, advise, assist) to enable credible, capable and increasingly sustainable Afghan Security Institutions and Afghan National Security Forces that are capable of preventing terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan.

ISAF is a NATO-directed operation conducted under UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1386 (2001), which authorizes the establishment of ISAF to assist the Afghan government in maintaining security in Kabul and surrounding areas and to take all necessary measures to fulfill this mandate. Following a UN and NATO/North Atlantic Council agreement, NATO assumed strategic command of ISAF on 11 August 2003 under the authority of UNSCR 1386 and successor UNSCRs. Subsequently, UNSCR 1510 (2003) geographically expanded the ISAF mandate established in UNSCR 1386 to cover all of Afghanistan.

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and how do those duties and functions relate to those of the Commander, NATO ISAF?

The Commander of USFOR-A is the senior U.S. officer in Afghanistan with duties distinct from his duties as Commander, ISAF. The USFOR-A Commander exercises National Command Element and National Support Element authorities and responsibilities for ensuring that U.S. forces have the guidance, equipment, and funding they need to conduct their missions. He ensures unity of effort among all U.S. forces including those under the ISAF command and those forces not under ISAF command, such as those U.S. forces conducting U.S. detention operations and U.S. counter-terrorism operations.

COMISAF employs the forces that troop-contributing nations provide to ISAF of which the United States remains the largest troop-contributing nation. The Commander, USFOR-A, directs and oversees the United States' military contributions within ISAF while COMISAF duties include ensuring the operations of all troop-contributing nations, including those of U.S. forces, are coordinated.

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

I have had the opportunity to work very closely on Afghanistan in several of my assignments as a general officer to include my current position as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and my previous position as the Deputy Chief of Staff G3/5/7, specifically focused on personnel, retrograde, and

resourcing our forces. I commanded RC-East in 2010-2011 as the Division Command of the 101st Airborne, and also deployed my Brigade there in 2003 when in Command of 1st Brigade, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. My command in RC-East in 2010-2011 was during the surge and consisted of a combined force of approximately 30,000 U.S. and allied service members in 14 provinces in Eastern Afghanistan, and shared more than 300 miles of border area with Pakistan. This provided me with critical coalition leadership experience and relationships. We also successfully partnered with two Afghan National Army Corps, a large contingent of Afghan Police and Afghan Border Police, and routinely worked with the Pakistan Army to facilitate complementary operations against insurgents in the border areas.

Since leaving command in 2011, I have traveled to Afghanistan on multiple occasions and dedicated a great deal of time to self study of the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. In my current assignment I frequently represent the Chief of Staff of the Army in Tank sessions where our Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy is addressed and I contribute to the development of best military advice to the Secretary of Defense and the President. I have also interacted extensively with Congress as the Vice Chief of Staff and feel I understand the Civil-Military relationship that must exist to achieve success.

Finally, I believe my experience as a deputy Division commander and a General Officer in Iraq in 2006 and 2007 was valuable combat leadership experience and enhanced my understanding of the nature of counterinsurgency operations and the associated challenges. All of these experiences, if confirmed, will serve as a foundation for my leadership as the ISAF Commander.

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, NATO ISAF, and/or Commander, USFOR-A?

A professional military officer should never stop listening or learning. If confirmed, I will continue to deepen my knowledge of the strategic environment and seek input from a wide range of military and civilian experts. If confirmed and before taking command, I will also spend a great deal of time visiting our forces on the ground and leaders from across NATO to enhance my understanding of the fight and to assist me in refining my personal framing of the problem.

Relationships

Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, to the following:

The Secretary of Defense

The USFOR-A Commander reports to the USCENTCOM Commander, who, in turn, reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. This reporting relationship is prescribed in 10 USC Section 164(d)(1). COMISAF does not have a formal relationship with the Secretary of Defense because COMISAF reports to the NATO chain of command through the Commander of Joint Forces Command – Brunssum, who reports to SACEUR.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The USFOR-A Commander does not have a formal command relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff but coordinates with him through the USCENTCOM Commander on a regular basis. The Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council and while he is the nation's senior military officer, he is not in the chain of command. The USFOR-A Commander sends his advice and opinions on military operations to the Chairman through the USCENTCOM Commander.

Commander, U.S. Central Command

The Commander, USFOR-A works very closely with the Commander, USCENTCOM on all aspects of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. By law, the Commander, USFOR-A reports directly to the Commander, USCENTCOM. The Commander, USCENTCOM exercises authoritative direction and control over all U.S. Forces in the CENTCOM area of responsibility, which includes all U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. The Commander, USCENTCOM provides authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics. He has delegated National Command Element and National Support Element authority and responsibilities to the Commander, USFOR-A.

NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, is the NATO strategic-level commander of all NATO forces, including those assigned to the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He provides the Commander of Joint Forces Command-Brunssum with strategic guidance and direction. Joint Forces Command-Brunssum is NATO's operational level command responsible for the mission in Afghanistan. In short, SACEUR provides strategic direction and campaign objectives and the Commander of JFC-B directs COMISAF to attain these objectives and perform key military and supporting tasks, as mandated by the North Atlantic Council.

Commander, ISAF Joint Command

IJC is ISAF's operational-level command and is subordinate to HQ ISAF. As such, the commander of ISAF Joint Command (IJC), reports to COMISAF. The IJC Commander is also dual-hatted as the Deputy Commander of USFOR-A, and retains certain U.S. command authorities. IJC was established in November 2009.

Commander, NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan

NTM-A oversees training and equipping of Afghan forces across Afghanistan and is subordinate to ISAF Joint Command (IJC). NTM-A trains, advises, and assists ANSF training in order to support the creation of a capable and enduring force that protects the Afghan population and denies safe haven to the insurgency. NTM-A was established in April 2009, merged into the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) in March 2010, and then reassigned to IJC in 2013.

Commander, Joint Interagency Task Force Afghanistan

Commander, Combined Joint Interagency Task Force-Afghanistan (CJIATF-A) is a subordinate HQ to HQ ISAF. CJIATF-A provides operational advice, recommendations, and synchronizes strategic Counter Corruption, Counter Narcotics, Counter Threat Finance, and No Contracting with the Enemy activities in order to deny resources to the enemy, enhance transparency and accountability within GIRoA, and strengthen the International Community's confidence in GIRoA. CJIATF-A accomplishes these missions through two sub task forces, two mentoring teams, and two partnered interagency units.

U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan

The USFOR-A Commander provides operational assistance and advice, to include U.S. military views and recommendations, to the U.S. Ambassador. He maintains a close working relationship with the Ambassador to ensure that military and civilian efforts are synchronized and mutually supporting. This is particularly important in the Rule of Law arena where the Department of State has the lead for the United States Government. The Commander, Combined Joint-Interagency Task Force 435 (who reports directly to the USFOR-A Commander), provides support to the Coordinating Director for Rule of Law and Law Enforcement, who reports directly to the U.S. Ambassador.

U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan

The USFOR-A Commander provides operational assistance and advice, to include U.S. military views and recommendations, to the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He maintains a close working relationship with the Special Representative to ensure that military and civilian efforts are synchronized and mutually supporting. This relationship is particularly important to the ongoing security and political transition, as well as re-integration and reconciliation efforts, which will facilitate an inclusive Afghan political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.

The Secretary General of NATO

The NATO Secretary General chairs the North Atlantic Council, the highest political authority in NATO. The North Atlantic Council is responsible for the overall decisions and direction of NATO policy and operations and is comprised of ambassador-level representatives of all NATO members, including the United States. The Council is advised on military matters and the conduct of operations by the Military Committee, which is also composed of senior military representatives from each member state. The North Atlantic Council, under the Secretary General's leadership, provides overall direction and guidance to the military chain of command. In practical terms, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) leads all NATO military operations and advises NATO's Military Committee. Thus, in the case of the ISAF mission, the Secretary General, following consultations and decisions by the North Atlantic Council, provides guidance and direction to SACEUR through the Military Committee, and the SACEUR communicates those directives and guidance through NATO's military chain of command. COMISAF and the Secretary General confer and consult regularly, including formal updates to the Secretary General and the North Atlantic Council on the progress of military operations in Afghanistan.

NATO Senior Civilian Representative for Afghanistan

The NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) for Afghanistan is the civilian counterpart to COMISAF. As the NATO Secretary General's direct representative in Afghanistan, the SCR is charged with carrying forward the political aspects of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan. Although there is no formal command relationship, the SCR and COMISAF work in close concert and with full transparency in accordance with the North Atlantic Council-approved Terms of Reference for the SCR and SACEUR as well as JFC-B's guidance for COMISAF. In short, this cooperative relationship is critical to underwrite NATO's operational military and political engagement in Afghanistan and can help to improve cooperation between ISAF and international civilian agencies in Afghanistan.

United Nations Special Representative in Afghanistan

UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Afghanistan is an important leader in the international community's efforts in Afghanistan. While no command relationship exists between COMISAF and the UN SRSG, the ISAF mission was authorized by UN Security Council Resolution to assist the Afghan government in the establishment of a secure and stable environment. Similarly, the UN SRSG has a mandate to lead the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) supporting the Afghan government in its efforts to improve critical areas, including security, governance, economic development, and regional cooperation, as well as to support the full implementation of mutual commitments made on these issues at the London Conference in January 2010 and the subsequent Kabul Conference in July 2010. The SACEUR OPLAN states that COMISAF is expected to work in close coordination with both the NATO SCR and the UN SRSG. These partnerships support efforts to work with the Afghan government to ensure progress towards the goal of a self-sufficient Afghanistan.

Major Challenges

What are the major challenges and problems you foresee, if confirmed as the next Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, in the implementation of the mission in Afghanistan?

I believe there are three major challenges. Our first challenge is to manage the transition from the ISAF mission and force level to the 2015 Resolute Support mission and force level. The Resolute Support mission posture reduces our footprint to fewer bases in four regions and the Kabul-Bagram area. This will be a significant transition for both the Coalition and the Afghans, as the ANSF takes full responsibility for security even as they work to build long-term capability. The second challenge involves the shift of advisory efforts from combat advising to developing the Afghan Security Institutions to sustain a modern army and national police force. Our third challenge will be to continue effective counter-terrorism operations to dismantle, defeat and disrupt Al Qaeda in the region.

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

If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Government, NATO and other troop-contributing nations, and our Afghan partners to execute a mutually agreed-upon framework for the transition process and capacity-building within the ANSF and the broader Afghan system. I will work closely with security ministers and other key leaders to help them prioritize requirements and focus on developing Afghan self-sustainability of an effective security force. We will decisively counter insurgent narratives of coalition abandonment through these and other transition actions.

What is your understanding of U.S. vital interests and strategic objectives in Afghanistan currently and the changes, if any, after 2014?

The U.S. presence in Afghanistan aims to defeat Al Qaeda and its affiliates, contribute to regional and international peace and stability, and enhance the ability of Afghanistan to deter threats against its sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity. Our mission provides time and space for the ANSF and GIRoA to increase capacity and assume full responsibility for Afghanistan's security by the end of 2014.

Diplomatic efforts continue to complement military efforts. The United States and the international community continue to encourage Afghan reconciliation efforts with the Taliban as a means to a political solution to the conflict.

What is your understanding of U.S. strategy to achieve these objectives?

The International Security Assistance Force's primary task is to develop the capacity and capability of the ANSF to provide security for Afghanistan. The campaign remains a comprehensive counter-insurgency but is now Afghan-led. The coalition continues its efforts to deny safe havens for AQ and supports expanding GIRoA efforts to disrupt terrorist safe havens. The primary means to achieve this is through the development and fielding of a capable, sustainable ANSF.

Security Situation in Afghanistan

What is your assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan and the nature, size, and scope of the insurgency?

The insurgency is an enduring threat to Afghanistan. However, the insurgency's operational effectiveness has been degraded in some parts of the country so far this year, due in part to improved ANSF performance and growing divisions within the Taliban. As a result, the 2014 summer fighting season violence levels are below historical norms. Most notably, the Taliban failed to derail the Afghan Presidential elections, as Afghans voted in record numbers despite Taliban threats of violence. However, the insurgents are resilient. They maintain safe havens in Afghanistan and leverage them to train and plot future attacks. Additionally, the presence of numerous insurgent/terrorist groups (e.g., Taliban, Haqqani Network, Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, etc.) allows for the sharing of tactics, techniques and procedures. The insurgents also have access to significant internal resources through religious taxation, illicit mining, narcotics trade, and other criminal enterprises (kidnapping, human trafficking, etc...).

While the insurgency is by no means popular among the Afghan population, it continues to attract Afghans to join its ranks through coercion, disenfranchisement, or the lack of an alternative means to support their family. Recruitment may decline as the ISAF presence decreases and as battle fatigue sets in amongst Taliban rank-and-file. Nonetheless, expect the insurgents to attempt to capitalize on any political missteps to undermine popular faith in GIRoA.

What is your assessment of the role and importance of Pakistan to the security situation in Afghanistan? In what areas do you think Pakistan could improve to enhance the security situation in Afghanistan?

Pakistan is postured to occupy a significant role in the security situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan's first priority is its eastern border with India, but it also continues to be concerned over growing Indian influence in Afghanistan. Pakistan is and will continue to be a critical partner in the region. The stability of the entire region requires cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both nations face common threats that attack their civilian populations and threaten their long-term development. Both nations must work together to reduce cross border militancy and resolve conflicts to enhance the security of each nation and the region as a whole. I will continue to work with both nations to support a constructive bilateral relationship to support these two allies and enhance long-term stability throughout the region.

U.S. Military Presence in Afghanistan after 2014

In May, President Obama announced that, if the U.S.-Afghan Bilateral Security Agreement is concluded, the United States would plan to retain 9,800 U.S. service members in Afghanistan, along with our allies and partners. The mission of these U.S. forces would be training, advising and assisting Afghan security forces and supporting counterterrorism operations against al-Qa'ida. The President also announced that this U.S. troop level would be reduced by approximately half by the end of 2015, consolidating forces in Kabul and at the Bagram air base. By the end of 2016, U.S. forces would be drawdown to an embassy presence in Kabul, with a security assistance component.

Do you support the President's decision on the size of the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan after 2014?

Yes, I support the President's decision.

24. Do you support the pace for the reduction of those forces between the end of 2014 and the beginning of 2017?

Yes, with an understanding that we should continue to validate the assumptions and assess the conditions on the ground as the drawdown takes place.

The President said that "our military will draw down to a normal embassy presence in Kabul" by the end of 2016.

What is your understanding of what a "normal embassy presence" looks like?

A normal embassy presence will consist of a Defense Attaché Office and a Security Cooperation Office under a Senior Defense Official with a military reporting chain through the CENTCOM. A deliberate and measured transfer of enduring security cooperation activities is required to maintain continuity of ANSF development and maintain our relationship with Afghanistan as an enduring Counter-Terrorism partner. Planning for the Security Cooperation Office – Afghanistan is underway at CENTCOM and its size will depend upon factors such as security cooperation objectives, ANSF capabilities, GIRoA requests, security assistance funding oversight requirements, and force protection concerns.

What is your understanding of what a “normal” security relationship with Afghanistan will look like?

A normal security relationship with Afghanistan will come to resemble security cooperation organizations that operate in other parts of the world out of U.S. Embassies. The Security Cooperation Office-Afghanistan will contain a security force assistance capability tailored to the needs of the ANSF and Afghan Security Institutions. Over the long term, I see the US and Afghanistan establishing an enduring strategic partnership, with many facets in addition to the military, that furthers US strategic objectives in the region.

What are the major challenges you foresee, if confirmed, in the implementation of the plan announced by the President?

I believe there are three major challenges. Our first challenge is to manage the transition from the ISAF mission and force levels to the 2015 Resolute Support mission and force level. The second challenge involves the shift of advisory efforts from combat advising to developing the Afghan Security Institutions to sustain a modern army and national police force. Our third challenge will be to continue effective counter-terrorism operations, both training, advising, and assisting our Afghan partners and through bilateral operations with the Afghans to dismantle, defeat and disrupt Al Qaeda in the region.

If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing those challenges?

If confirmed, I will work with U.S., NATO and other troop contributing nations, and the Afghans to ensure we posture the force for Resolute Support. I will continue the effort with NATO and the Services to build a Resolute Support advisory team that will strengthen the Afghan Security Institutions. I will ensure the counter-terrorism mission in Afghanistan remains effective through the transition period.

You have experience leading combat operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan. What are the key lines of effort and key dynamics that will ensure Afghanistan security conditions will be better after 2014 than the circumstances we are seeing in Iraq today?

Afghanistan and Iraq are two different places, with different cultural and security dynamics at play. The key dynamic is the possibility of a stable political transition that results in a new Afghan President who is seen as legitimate both in the eyes of the Afghan people and of the international community. The Afghan people have demonstrated their rejection of the insurgents through their overwhelming participation in the recent elections. The Afghan Security forces have developed a sense of responsibility and accountability for the security of all of the Afghan people. The Afghan people have returned this sentiment with a sense of national pride and ownership of the security forces. The ANSF have proven their combat capability through success in two fighting seasons, two national elections, and multiple high profile events. The key line of effort I see after 2014 is ministerial level training, advising, and assistance, which will ensure the sustainability of the ANSF and institutionalize long-term security for Afghanistan. An effective counter-terrorism partnership between Afghanistan and the United States is essential to address our most dangerous adversaries in the region.

NATO and Partner Nation Presence in Afghanistan after 2014

What do you anticipate will be the NATO and other partner force levels in Afghanistan after 2014?

For 2015, the total NATO contribution will be approximately 12,500 troops. For military planning and force generation purposes, a two thirds/one third methodology is expected to apply, where the US will contribute roughly two-thirds (up to 9,800 personnel) and NATO will provide one-third (approximately 4,500) of the total Resolute Support mission force.

Will those forces be covered under the Bilateral Security Agreement or under their own agreements?

The BSA covers US forces. The draft NATO-Afghanistan SOFA covers all NATO forces, as well as non-NATO operational partners. Non-NATO operational partners include nations such as Australia and New Zealand. US forces will be covered under both the BSA and the NATO-Afghanistan SOFA. Both agreements stipulate that the sending state, in our case the United States, will retain exclusive jurisdiction over their forces.

What roles and missions do you anticipate for partners and allies after 2014?

In addition to the US mission in southern and eastern Afghanistan, other Framework Nations will control three of five Areas of Responsibility across the remainder of the country. Germany will lead the Train Advise Assist Command (TAAC) in the North, based out of Mezar e Sharif; Italy will lead the TAAC in the West, based out of Herat; and Turkey will command the Central area of operations from Kabul. The execution of train, advise and assist (or TAA) will entail the development of the Afghan Security Institution programs and processes, through facilitation and counseling. It will also develop the provision of assistance in administration, planning, and financial management.

Non-Framework Nations will also contribute to the mission through bilateral initiatives in support of the train, advise, and assist effort; such as the UK-led training team at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy in Qargha. Other Troop Contributing Nations will provide individual augmentees across the full spectrum of staff functions, having bid for specific appointments through the NATO 'Flags to Posts' process. These personnel will contribute to the combined minimum target of 12,000 for the Resolute Support mission. In addition to these roles, partner nations will continue to provide training and advising assistance to the Afghan Special Security Forces within the terms of the NATO SOFA authorities.

Bilateral Security Agreement

Do you support the conclusion of a bilateral security agreement with Afghanistan?

Yes.

Do you agree that, without the legal protections against prosecution in Afghan courts that the Bilateral Security Agreement would provide our troops, the United States should withdraw its military forces from Afghanistan?

Yes, I do. If we are unable to secure adequate status protections for U.S. Department of Defense military and civilian personnel, critical operational authorities for U.S. forces, and necessary U.S. access to and use of Afghan facilities, we will need to withdraw.

Progress of Afghanistan over the Past Decade

What is your assessment of Afghanistan's progress over the past decade that our troops have operated in that country?

The people of Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and international supporters have contributed to the significant progress within Afghanistan over the last decade. Of note, the ANSF has taken full responsibility for the security of Afghanistan and earned the respect of the population, while improved access to education and medical care has increased the quality of life for Afghans. The November 2013 Loya Jirga's overwhelming endorsement of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) and the high turnout for the April and June 2014 elections were indicative of popular support for representative government and a continued international partnership and presence.

Performance of the Afghanistan National Security Forces

In mid-2013 the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) assumed lead responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan.

What is your assessment of the performance and capabilities of the ANSF since assuming the lead for Afghanistan's security?

The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have more than held their own against the insurgency, sustaining the gains made in the 2013 fighting season. They successfully secured the presidential and provincial council elections on April 5, 2014, as well as the run-off elections on June 14, 2014. The ANSF continue to demonstrate that they are a competent and confident force, and have embraced their role in securing Afghanistan. The ANSF enjoy the support and confidence of the majority of the Afghan people. While their capabilities have expanded rapidly since 2009, they are not yet self-sustainable. Based on current assessments I have reviewed, four key high-end capability gaps that will remain after the ISAF mission ends on December 31, 2014: close air support; intelligence enterprise; special operations; and Afghan security ministry capacity. International funding and coalition force assistance will be critical to sustaining the force after 2014 and ensuring that Afghan Security Institutions continue to marginalize the insurgency by maintaining ANSF's tactical overmatch. If confirmed, I will focus the forces' efforts towards these challenges, building on the progress that has already been made.

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges the ANSF face in assuming and maintaining their security responsibilities in the next few years?

Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) must adapt to operations without coalition enablers as ISAF forces phase out of the battle space over time. Our primary task has changed from leading combat operations to providing Security Force Assistance (SFA) to the ANSF. As we enter the final stages of the ISAF mandate and prepare to execute Resolute Support, the ANSF have reached an important

threshold. Evidence increasingly indicates that over four years of investment in combat-oriented mentoring and advising has paid off. The ANSF still have room for improvement, but there are capable leaders at every echelon who understand the fundamentals of their profession; despite this, many significant challenges remain.

Gaps and developmental shortfalls exist within the Afghan Security Institution (ASI). Capability gaps remain in ANSF aviation, intelligence, and special operations, along with developmental shortfalls in systems maintenance, requirement forecasting, and human capital. The ASI lacks the capacity to conduct tasks such as planning, programming, multi-year budgeting and execution; logistics; acquisitions; and human resource management. Systemic issues require advisory support for sustainment, specifically in Inspector General/Transparency Accountability Oversight and strategic plans and policy. ASI development may slow down without robust advisory support during the anticipated period of high personnel turnover associated with the post-election transition of power.

Critical ANSF capability gaps include: aviation, intelligence and ISR, and special operations, Casualty Evacuation and Medical Evacuation (CASEVAC/MEDEVAC), engineering (sustainability, bridging), Combined Arms Route Clearance Operations (CARCO), and Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices(C-IED).

Additionally, the Afghan Security Institution will need to evaluate their force posture with respect to maintenance of its infrastructure. A significant amount of their budget and manpower could be consumed in power generation, facilities maintenance, sustainment and force protection if this issue is not addressed.

The ANSF will continue to play a crucial role in securing what could be Afghanistan's first peaceful transition of political power. While the Afghan population spoke clearly during the electoral process, the fact is the Taliban led insurgency remains a resilient and relevant threat and will continue to threaten a peaceful transition of power.

Building and Sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces

The ANSF are near their target end strength level of 352,000, consisting of an Afghan National Army (ANA) of 195,000 and Afghan National Police (ANP) of 157,000.

In your view, do the ANA and ANP have the right size and capabilities to address the current security situation on the ground in Afghanistan?

Yes, the ANA and ANP are the right size and are developing the right capabilities, with our enabling support, to address the security situation in Afghanistan. Based on current assessments, the ANSF still requires aviation, intelligence, and sustainment support beyond this year. We continue to work with the ANSF and GIRoA to address these capability gaps.

What in your view are the greatest challenges to building and sustaining the capabilities of the ANSF over the next two years?

There are two major challenges the government will face in the next two years that could threaten the sustainability of the ANSF; budgeting and accountability.

Planning, programming, budgeting and execution capabilities are seen as the greatest challenge to the building and sustaining ASI sustainability over the next two years. Resource Management and Procurement departments across ANSF suffer from lack of qualified and experienced leadership and low institutional prioritization for planning and budget matters.

Second, the Afghans are building processes and systems that will ensure a transparent and accountable budget execution process. International community requirements for third party oversight of government processes are central for continued International Community (IC) support. Without that support the government risks losing IC funds required to build and sustain the capabilities of the ANSF and the ASI.

If confirmed, what would be your priorities for building the capabilities of the ANSF, including the key enablers that the ANSF need to develop and maintain?

The size, structure, and posture of the Resolute Support mission is configured towards the development of sustainable Afghan systems focused at the Corp level and reaching up to the ministerial and institutional levels. The Resolute Support plan is built around functionally-orientated advising, designed to facilitate the horizontal and vertical integration of Eight Essential Functions:

- 1) Plan, Program Budget and Execute; generate requirements, develop a resource informed budget and execute a spend plan.
- 2) Develop and implement internal controls to assure Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight.
- 3) Maintain/enhance civilian governance of the ASI, including adherence to the rule of law.
- 4) Force Generate: recruit, train, retain, manage and develop a professional ANSF.
- 5) Sustain the force through effective facilities management, maintenance, medical and logistics systems.
- 6) Plan, resource and execute effective security campaigns and operations.
 - a. Inter-ministerial and joint coordination, and
 - b. Command, control and employ Ground, Air and Special Operating Forces.
- 7) Develop and mature sufficient Intelligence capabilities and processes.
- 8) Maintain internal and external Strategic Communications capabilities.

These functions are interdependent and, taken as a whole, contribute directly to Afghan sustainability. They span across all levels of conflict, from the tactical to the strategic. The key enabler to this effort is the ongoing provision of quality advisors to focus on the delivery of Functionally-Based Security Force Assistance (FB-SFA).

Through the advisory efforts associated with the Eight Essential Functions we will improve the Afghan Security Forces' capabilities in those areas where we are currently providing enabler support: aviation, intelligence, and special operations.

At the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit in Chicago in 2012, the ISAF participating countries discussed a model for the future size of the ANSF of around 228,000, a reduction of about one third from the current ANSF end strength.

What is your understanding regarding current assumptions for the size of the Afghan security forces during and after the completion of the post-2014 train, advise and assist mission?

The current authorized “surge” end strength of 352,000 will be maintained at least through the end of 2015. We will continue to coordinate with the Afghans and international partners on force planning beyond that point based on a review of the anticipated security environment, ANSF performance and capacity, and available funding.

Do you agree that any future reductions in the size of the ANSF post-2014 need to be based on the security conditions in Afghanistan at the time those reductions would occur?

Yes.

If confirmed, do you agree to conduct a review of the plans for the future ANSF force levels to assess whether the size and capabilities of those forces are appropriate to address security conditions in Afghanistan post-2014?

If confirmed, I will continue the process of assessing future ANSF force levels to determine what size and capabilities are appropriate to address evolving security conditions in Afghanistan. As conditions on the ground change we will, in partnership with GIRoA, continue to assess the necessary size of the ANSF to ensure the success of the mission and the success of the ANSF post-2014.

How long after 2014 do you anticipate that the United States and international donors will have to provide significant funding to sustain the ANSF?

We helped build an Afghan Security National Force to meet the current security environment. We believe that as the security environment continues to improve and the ANSF becomes more efficient, forces can be scoped differently and thereby allow GIRoA to meet the cost of the ANSF sooner. However, I expect that GIRoA will require significant contributions to support their national security forces for a number of years beyond 2014. Although most major equipment purchases and facilities construction are all but complete, there are significant sustainment costs associated with maintaining the current force structure and capability of the ANSF. While I cannot say exactly how long, or at what level, these contributions will be required, I can describe what we are doing to address it.

Train, Advise and Assist Mission

What is your understanding of the role that U.S. and coalition trainers and advisers will play in building the capabilities of the ANSF after 2014?

US and coalition personnel will continue to train, advise, and assist the Afghan Security Institutions and the Afghan National Security Forces to improve systems, processes and organizations, with the goal of developing a self-sustainable ANSF and decreasing the need for US and Coalition support. The majority of Afghan systems and processes are functional; however, there are friction points and maturity issues within these systems. If confirmed, I will conduct further review on these efforts to determine possible improvements to the process.

What is your understanding regarding the percentage of the train, advise and assist mission force structure that will be for actual trainers and advisors, and what percentage will be for other functions, such as force protection, support, or command and control?

The 12,500 NATO personnel that will constitute the Resolute Support mission in January 2015 will be broadly attributed to one of the three campaign Lines of Effort: the development of the ANSF and the Afghan Security Institution; protection of the force; and posturing of the force. Of the 12,500 personnel, 18% will be in a direct train, advise, and assist role, developing the ANSF and the Afghan Security Institution. Protection will be provided by 32% of the overall force. Enablers, or those responsible for posturing the force, will constitute approximately 50% of personnel.

At West Point on 28 June, President Obama said “And at the end of this year, a new Afghan President will be in office and America’s combat mission will be over.”

What is your understanding of what specific lines of effort (e.g. close air support, medevac) that would be terminated as a result of the combat mission being over?

U.S. forces will continue to have enabler support, including close air support, medevac, and intra theater lift.

What are the key institutional development areas that must be addressed after 2014 to ensure sustainability of the ANSF?

The Afghan Security Institutions, namely the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, are lacking in two key areas. First, the lack of experience with Plan, Program, Budget and Execute (PPBE) processes is holding back their ability to sustain security and combat forces within the Afghan National Security Forces. The second key institutional development area is Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight.

Post-2014 Counterterrorism Mission

What is your understanding of roles and missions for U.S. military personnel engaged in counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan after 2014?

With appropriate authorities and a signed BSA, U.S. military personnel will continue a counterterrorism (CT) mission against the remnants of Al-Qaeda after 2014. Additionally, U.S. SOF will continue training, advising and assisting Afghan CT forces to develop their CT capacity.

Insider Threat

What is your assessment of the measures that have been taken by ISAF and Afghan leaders to address the insider threat?

The combined efforts of ISAF and the ANSF have stopped numerous insider attacks before they could occur and limited casualties through adherence to force protection policies. No single countermeasure can prevent insider attacks; therefore, ISAF and the ANSF have introduced a program of countermeasures which, when applied collectively, can reduce the threat posed by insider attacks.

These measures include: strengthened vetting and screening processes for ANSF new recruits and those returning from leave; increased numbers and training for counterintelligence agents; cultural awareness training for both ISAF and ANSF personnel; and enhancing force protection for personnel advising Afghans or in remote areas. Insider attacks by ANSF against ISAF (Green-on-Blue) have declined substantially since 2012. This is partly due to the reduction of ISAF personnel in contact with ANSF forces and partly due to increased force protection and ISAF counterintelligence measures. Insider attacks by ANSF against ANSF (Green-on-Green) spiked in 2013. As a direct result of ISAF counterintelligence training of ANSF forces, Green-on-Green attacks in the first six months of 2014 have dropped 25% when compared to the same six month period in 2013. Positive metrics for both Green-on-Blue and Green-on-Green insider attacks indicate our force protection efforts are working. The joint, integrated ISAF-ANSF approach and the level of the Afghan government's commitment to reducing this mutual threat are encouraging. For example, ISAF and the ANSF have a 3-star Insider Threat Action Group; they have formed joint casualty assessment teams to study incidents and identify lessons; and the ANSF vetting programs have stopped hundreds of insider threats before they became attacks by identifying suspected attackers.

If confirmed, what additional steps, if any, would you recommend to address this threat?

If confirmed, I will continue to make countering this threat a top priority. There is nothing more important than protecting the force. I intend to maintain the complex, layered, security system in place in Afghanistan today which leverages not only coalition force protection capabilities but also those of the ANSF and other governmental agencies. I will continuously monitor and assess the nature of insider threats and potential vulnerabilities and ensure coalition personnel are properly resourced to counter this threat, particularly as ISAF becomes smaller. We are not alone in suffering the effects of insider attacks; our Afghan partners have also suffered considerably from this threat. Therefore, I will continue to strengthen and leverage our partnership with the Afghan government in implementing a comprehensive, combined, and integrated approach by continuing our support for cultural awareness and language training for both coalition and ANSF personnel as well as strengthening intelligence sharing.

Afghan Special Operations Forces

According to the most recent quarterly report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan (the "Section 1230" report), Afghan Special Operations kandaks now lead 99 percent of all special operations in Afghanistan. The report also states "while they are tactically proficient units, they continued to operate closely with NATO Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) partners to conduct missions."

What is your understanding of the progress in training the Afghan Special Operations kandaks and the timeline for achieving full operational capability of these units?

NATO Special Operation Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) remains focused on the continued development of the Afghan Special Operations Kandaks (SOKs) to ensure their viability as a long-term counter-terrorism force. The SOKs continue to play a crucial role in the security of Afghanistan and have proven their ability to conduct complex special operations with limited coalition enabler support.

The Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC) School of Excellence (SOE) has evolved from a coalition-led effort to an all Afghan-instructed training institution which provides an organic force generation capability for the SOKs. The Military Intelligence Kandak (MIK) and General Support Kandak (GSK) are currently at their Initial Operational Capability (IOC) and both will achieve Full Operational Capability (FOC) in 2015. Moreover, ANASOC is developing an operations center which will reside at ANASOC HQ and provide a command and control capability for SOK independent operations.

As ANASOC demonstrates progress in core warfighting skills, the NSOCC-A advisory effort remains focused on the development of Afghan sustainable systems and SOK critical capabilities, such as intelligence, fires, sustainment and mobility. Through these combined efforts, the SOKs continue to meet development milestones and are projected to achieve full operational capability in early 2016.

What are the most critical enabling capabilities needed by the Afghan Special Operations kandaks to ensure successful mission execution post-2014?

The most critical enabling capabilities needed by the Afghan Special Operations Kandaks post-2014 are intelligence support and tactical mobility.

U.S. Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan

How do you see the role of U.S. Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan evolving as conventional forces continue to draw down post-2014, assuming a Bilateral Security Agreement is in place?

It is my view that Special Operations Forces (SOF) will continue to play a vital role in Afghanistan in a number of ways. SOF will be the only force conducting the Train, Advise, and Assist (TAA) mission at the tactical level. NSOCC-A will continue its TAA efforts with Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) while the Resolute Support (RS) basing will enable tactical TAA, and then transition its focus to institutional TAA in later phases of RS. Through their advisory efforts, they will enable the ASSF to disrupt insurgent networks, maintain ASSF operational tempo, and build capable, self-sustaining Afghan SOF. SOF TAA of the ASSF will also help mitigate the operational risk associated with a drawdown of conventional forces.

If confirmed, how would you ensure adequate enabling capabilities for special operations forces as general purpose forces continue to draw down in Afghanistan?

Providing SOF with adequate enabling capabilities is one of my highest priorities. Most SOF will be stationed at or near conventional bases. These bases will provide all requisite logistic requirements and medical evacuation. As the regional bases are closed or transitioned to the ANSF, SOF will retrograde with conventional forces. ISR requirements for SOF will be also addressed based on the operational need. I am confident that the allocated ISR capabilities located in-theater, as well as additional ISR support available from outside the theater will meet the SOF requirements.

Afghan Local Police/Village Stability Operations

The Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police (ALP) programs have been called critical to ISAF's counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan.

What has been the effect of these programs on rural Afghan populations and what has been the response from the Taliban?

Per Presidential Directive, the ALP is a force composed of Guardians, recruited from the same local villages where they work, who can readily distinguish locals from insurgents. Since the ALP are recruited, vetted, and employed locally, the Elders and local populations trust them for protection. The ALP has contributed to an increased perception of security by denying insurgent access to the population and disrupting insurgent freedom of movement. Public perception polling from December 2013 reflected that the "ALP's value to community security are overwhelmingly positive." Furthermore, the same polling found that local Afghans have referred to the ALP as being "The first enemy of the Taliban." The Taliban remain focused on targeting the ALP because they threaten insurgent access to the population and insurgent freedom of movement.

What is your understanding of the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to continue its support of these programs through 2014 and beyond?

The Government of Afghanistan recognizes the value of ALP in providing security in rural areas. The ALP served a significant security role during the recent national election and subsequent Presidential run-off. The Government of Afghanistan noted the ALP in the two-year National Police Plan (NPP) and the five-year National Police Strategy (NPS). Both the NPP and NPS call for keeping the ALP through 2017 and then transitioning the ALP into the other Afghan National Police pillars in 2018. The best way for the GIRoA to demonstrate commitment to the ALP would be for Ministry of the Interior to take full responsibility for the command and control, administration, and logistical sustainment of the ALP.

If these programs continue beyond 2014, what is your understanding of the role, if any, that U.S. Special Operations Forces will play in supporting them?

After 2014, NSOCC-A will support the ALP Headquarters in Kabul through the ALP Special Operations Advisory Group (ALP SOAG). The ALP SOAG will continue mentoring the ALP Headquarters Commander and Staff in the areas of administration, training, pay, budget, and logistics. Additionally, ALP SOAG will conduct command and staff assistance visits to the Provincial Police Headquarters where feasible.

Contract Oversight

The United States has implemented a number of efforts to reduce the risk that U.S. contracting practices will be subject to corruption, which helps fuel the insurgency and undermines the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. These efforts include the establishment of the Combined Joint Interagency Task Force –Shafafiyat (Transparency) to coordinate ISAF anti-corruption activities.

What is your assessment of ISAF's anti-corruption efforts and understanding of criminal patronage networks, and what additional steps, if any, do you believe should be taken to improve those efforts and to ensure adequate oversight of ISAF and U.S. contracts is in place?

Corruption poses a strategic threat to the long-term stability of Afghanistan as it undermines security, government legitimacy, and prospects for economic development. Recognizing that Afghan political will is a necessary component of dealing with corruption, I believe ISAF has implemented a number of essential steps for addressing this issue. For example, countering corruption and organized crime is a specific line of operation in the ISAF campaign. If confirmed, I will reinforce a command climate that takes those responsibilities seriously.

Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 provided CENTCOM with new tools to avoid contracting with the enemy, as requested by the Department of Defense. This authority has been expanded in subsequent National Defense Authorization Acts.

What is your understanding of the extent to which the new authorities authorized in section 841 have been implemented?

Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 provided CENTCOM with new tools to avoid contracting with the enemy, as requested by the Department of Defense. This authority has been expanded in subsequent National Defense Authorization Acts. Since section 841 does not sunset until the end of 2014, the anti-corruption Task Force 2010 has continued to use 841 authorities in their proposals and has matured its vendor vetting processes to the point that it fulfills the requirements that section 841 addresses. Vendor vetting has been implemented successfully to prevent contracting with the enemy.

What role do you expect to play, if confirmed, in carrying out the authorities provided in section 841?

Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2012 prohibits contracting with the enemy in the CENTCOM theater of operations. If confirmed, I will uphold my responsibilities required under Section 841, to include fulfilling reporting requirements, and will support the efforts of others, up and down my chain of command, in the execution of their duties.

What are any lessons learned from use of this authority both within CENTCOM and for other combatant commands?

While Section 841 has been an effective tool in preventing US monetary support to the insurgency, there are two key lessons for other combatant commands worth noting. The first lesson is that combatant commands should place strong emphasis on thorough vendor vetting processes which, if implemented properly, preempt fraud and prevent contracting with the enemy. The second lesson has to do with the importance of coordination between the COCOM, the intelligence task force, and the Head of the Contracting Activity (HCA). Each of these links provides vital information on the second and third order effects of the program at both the operational and strategic levels.

Afghan Public Protection Force

In March the Government of Afghanistan announced that it would dissolve the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF), the government-established guard force for protecting convoys and international reconstruction projects.

What is your understanding of the impact of the Government of Afghanistan's decision to dissolve the APPF on the security of our military and civilian personnel in Afghanistan?

The security of our military and civilians is at the forefront of everything we do. Our Commanders on the ground, at the tactical and operational levels, constantly analyze their respective operational environments, building in risk mitigation strategies, and aligning their forces to accomplish their missions.

While the dissolution of the State Owned Enterprise has created points of concern, the impacts to fixed site security have been mitigated as our legal, financial, and advisor teams reconcile the processes and our leaders engage the ministries to bring them in line with agreed upon acceptable standards. Site security operations continue for both ISAF and other Coalition developmental projects as these matters are worked through with GIRoA.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you recommend for addressing any security concerns arising from the dissolution of the APPF?

Convoy and site security services will remain a small but important subset of the larger security concerns and anti-corruption efforts we have in Afghanistan. Our Afghan partners are in the lead for the security of their country and our efforts should remain focused on the development of Afghan security forces capability.

DOD-Funded Counternarcotics Efforts in Afghanistan

According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, drugs from Afghanistan account for more than 90 percent of the world's heroin trade.

As it relates to the drug trade in Afghanistan, what is your understanding of the role of the Commander of ISAF and Commander of USFOR-A respectively in counternarcotics efforts?

Under U.S. and NATO authorities, COMISAF/COMUSFOR-A counters the drug trade in Afghanistan by strengthening, developing, and enhancing the institutional capabilities of key Afghan ministries, like the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics. By working across interagency and International Community lines of effort, ISAF/USFOR-A assists GIRoA in preventing the Afghan drug trade from funding the insurgency, fuelling corruption, and undermining security, governance and development.

In your view, what role, if any, should the Department of Defense have within broader U.S. Government counternarcotics efforts beyond the current calendar year?

DoD has assets and resources that it can apply to counternarcotic efforts that are helpful and supportive. In Afghanistan, CENTCOM is actively engaged in mentoring the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan and other specialized Afghan counternarcotics units. If confirmed, I will evaluate how USFOR-A might be able to contribute to improving counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan.

What is your understanding of the nexus, if any, between the drug trade and the various insurgent groups in Afghanistan? Is the nexus, in your view, sufficient to conclude that the drug trade is a primary source of funding for the insurgency?

The Taliban has been involved in opium and hashish cultivation and trafficking for years in Afghanistan. In many areas of Afghanistan, the insurgency intimidates the farmers to cultivate additional acres. By working and controlling drug trafficking organizations and other criminal elements associated with the Afghan drug trade, the Taliban has profited greatly. We have also seen the inclusion of criminal patronage networks into this narcotics-insurgency nexus.

Counter Threat Finance Activities in Afghanistan

What is your assessment of the efforts by the U.S. Government to identify and counter the sources of financing for the insurgency in Afghanistan, including the financial networks of the Haqqanis?

Since the fall of 2013, the level of interagency communication and allocation of resources has significantly increased in an effort to combat Haqqani Network (HQN) financial mechanisms and revenue streams. However, despite increased interagency collaboration, no major financial actions have been completed against the HQN since the network was designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the U.S. Department of State in September 2012.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to enhance U.S. counter threat financing efforts in Afghanistan?

To safeguard U.S. interests in Afghanistan, we must maintain and improve our capacity to track and disrupt threat finances originating in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and from the Persian Gulf states. Future efforts need to be focused on targeting sources of terrorist funding and providing evidence to support criminal indictments and law enforcement prosecutions.

General Purpose Forces used for Security Force Assistance

Building the security forces of foreign nations has traditionally been a special operations forces mission. However, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, general purpose forces have been performing this mission for some time.

What is your understanding and assessment of the preparation and performance of Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces operating in Afghanistan in a security force assistance role?

In my current position as the VCSA, and in my previous assignment as the Army G3, I have been responsible for ensuring Army general purpose forces were well prepared for the SFA mission. In

Afghanistan, the performance of Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces in a security force assistance (SFA) role has been outstanding, as evidenced by the ANSF's development into a confident force capable of securing their nation. This progress would not have been possible without the training, advising, and assisting efforts of Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces.

How do you envision the use of general purpose forces in the security force assistance role, if at all, as U.S. forces complete the drawdown through 2014 and as part of the planned residual force for supporting the continued building of the capabilities of the Afghan security forces?

General purpose forces will continue to train, advise and assist (TAA) their Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) counterparts for the remainder of 2014; however the emphasis will shift to improving ANSF organizations, systems and processes. We refer to the new mission as functionally based-SFA (FB-SFA), and we have developed eight essential functions to focus our FB-SFA efforts. Specifically, these functions include: 1) Plan, program, budget and execute; 2) Assure transparency, accountability and oversight; 3) Civilian governance of Afghan Security Institutions, including adherence to the rule of law; 4) Force generate; recruit, train, retain, manage and develop a professional ANSF; 5) Sustain the force through facilities management, maintenance, medical and logistics systems; 6) Plan, resource and execute effective security campaigns; 7) Sufficient intelligence capabilities and processes; and 8) Maintain internal and external STRATCOM capability. By using the eight essential functions to focus FB-SFA, we will help the ANSF develop and strengthen institutional capabilities and capacity, while vertically integrating systems and processes from the national to the regional-level for the remainder of 2014 and beyond. To augment our functional specialists, AF-PAK hands and Foreign Area Officers will be integrated into task-organized functional advising teams to ensure that our functional expertise can be appropriately transmitted in a way that our Afghan partners can assimilate. In some specific roles, we will reach back to our professionals in our civilian DoD force to provide critical expertise for particularly technical processes, like the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution function.

Assignment Policies for Women

What restrictions, if any, do you believe should be imposed with respect to the assignment of combat-related duties to women in uniform, or the assignment of women to combat units?

I fully support the efforts of the military services to assess all military occupational specialties and unit assignment restrictions and look forward to seeing their recommendations for policy changes.

Deployment Health

The Committee is concerned about the stress on military personnel resulting from deployments and their access to mental health care in theater to deal with stress, as well as the prevention and care for traumatic brain injury.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of health care and mental health capabilities supporting service members in Afghanistan?

It is USFOR-A's mandate to provide a level of health care that is on par with the care our service members receive at home, and we are achieving that standard for primary and specialty care regardless

of location. In the area of trauma care, USFOR-A greatly exceeds that standard; our Joint Theater Trauma System, as well as the Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) guidelines for point of injury care, are among the best trauma systems in the world. We adhere closely to the 'golden hour' standard for our MEDEVAC missions, and the speed with which we evacuate patients out of Afghanistan, whether after combat injury or for care beyond what is available in theater, is exceptional. If confirmed, I will endeavor to maintain this high standard.

United States Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) provides both in-person and virtual resources to care for our deployed Service members with behavioral health concerns. We consistently exceed the recommended provider-to-deployed Soldier ratio (Standard is 1/700 and we are currently at 1/531). We continue to utilize video technology that allows access to behavioral health specialists for service members even in remote locations. Additionally, the Military Crisis Line headquartered in CONUS provides reach-back to Afghanistan, and affords 24/7 access to counselors via phone and computer. USFOR-A maintains vigilance to identify service members at risk both before and after deployment through rigorous medical screening and frequent contacts in both formal and informal settings. I am confident that we are meeting the mental health needs of our deployed personnel in Afghanistan.

What is your assessment of suicide prevention programs and resources available to support these programs in Afghanistan?

USFOR-A maintains a significant effort to develop and deploy suicide prevention programs and resources for service members and civilians serving in Afghanistan. These programs are in place and personnel know where to get help. We keep our behavioral health assets mobile in order to effectively push services forward where they are needed, and we provide crisis intervention as well as the full spectrum of psychiatric services that would be available to service members at risk in any environment. Command involvement is critical for the successful employment of these programs and the support from commanders has been key to getting the word out and reducing any stigma from seeking behavioral health services. Suicide prevention is something that I take very seriously, and, if confirmed, it will be a high priority for me.

What is your assessment of the implementation of the Department of Defense policy on management of mild traumatic brain injury throughout Afghanistan?

USFOR-A is consistently monitoring the comprehensive in-theater evaluation process for mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) and has shown significant progress in how we screen for and treat these injuries. The medical treatment system begins at the point of injury with MACE screening for all suspected mTBI through unit providers who perform extended evaluations. If necessary, they can refer cases to one of two fully staffed 24/7 Concussion Care Centers, one at each of our Role III medical facilities. These centers are equipped with CT scans for evaluation and diagnosis and can treat service members for up to 21 days. They are staffed by a neurologist as well as occupational therapy support staff to optimize rehabilitation and have demonstrated consistently high return to duty rates. mTBIs are closely tracked throughout the CJOA-A (Combined/Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan) via the BECIR (Blast Exposure Concussion Incident Report). Additionally, we are investigating and employing technologies such as helmet and vehicle sensors to identify potentially concussive events among our service members.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Department has developed comprehensive policies and procedures to improve the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assaults, including providing appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault.

What is your view of the steps taken to prevent and respond to sexual assaults in Afghanistan, including assaults by and against U.S. civilian and contractor personnel?

Victims of sexual assault need to be protected and receive timely access to appropriate treatment and services, regardless of their location. The current policy, education, training, and commander involvement at all levels ensure we're on the right course in eradicating this crime from our force, including all U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, whether military, government civilian, or contractor. If confirmed, I will ensure that if any deployed service member, civilian or contractor is assaulted, he or she will receive appropriate and responsive support and care. As importantly, I will do all I can to prevent incidents of sexual assault.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources in place in Afghanistan to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault?

The services recently enhanced their resources for investigating and responding to allegations of sexual assault. Combat zones and other overseas environments present special challenges that require coordination to ensure we are applying those resources effectively and efficiently. If confirmed, I will review our sexual assault prevention and response program to ensure it meets the needs of our deployed service members and commanders; that resources are appropriately provided so that reports of sexual assault are fully investigated and commanders are fully capable of appropriately adjudicating allegations of sexual assault; and I will ensure deployed victims have full access to treatment and victim care services.

What is your view of the willingness and ability of military leaders to hold assailants accountable for their acts?

While I have served as Vice Chief of Staff, Army commanders have prosecuted the most serious sexual assault cases at a rate more than double that of our civilian jurisdictions, including many cases that civilian authorities refused to pursue. If confirmed, I will expect all military leaders to ensure allegations of sexual assault are referred for independent law enforcement investigation, to provide appropriate care for the victims, and to ensure that alleged perpetrators are held appropriately accountable. The Department's policy emphasizes the command's role in an effective response. Special training is provided to commanders, investigators and prosecutors to ensure they are prepared to address incidents of sexual assault. Our policies seek to balance victim care with appropriate command action against offenders in order to build victim confidence in assisting investigations.

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

Victims of sexual assault need to be protected and receive timely access to appropriate treatment and services, regardless of their location. The current policy, education, training, and commander involvement at all levels ensure we're on the right course in eradicating this crime from our force, including all U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, whether military, government civilian, or contractor. Requirements vary across the services, but currently, all units in Afghanistan are required to provide Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates. The Secretary of Defense has directed each service to establish Special Victims Counsel (SVC) to provide victims the option of legal advice, representation, and advocacy services. If confirmed, I will ensure that if any deployed service member, civilian or contractor is assaulted, he or she will receive appropriate and responsive support, care, and legal assistance. As importantly, I will do all I can to prevent incidents of sexual assault.

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

Initiatives reinforce the Department's commitment to eradicating sexual assault from our ranks. If confirmed, I will promote a leadership climate that encourages reporting without fear and holds perpetrators appropriately accountable for their actions. Whether deployed abroad or at home, commanders and leaders at every level must fully understand their authority, responsibilities, and obligations to establish positive command climates that safeguard all members within their units from predatory behavior. Facilitating this climate is an inextricable part of that bond of trust we share with our fellow brothers and sisters in arms. If confirmed, I will ensure commanders have the resources they need to provide care and support for victims and fairly adjudicate each case.

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

Combating sexual assault and harassment remains our top priority. The commander of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan developed a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Information Plan that requires leaders to engage Coalition Forces, DoD civilians, contractors, and third country nationals about the DoD position on sexual harassment and sexual assault. Units conduct focus groups, sensing sessions and sexual assault review boards quarterly to foster an environment based on mutual respect and trust. The sexual assault review boards are instrumental in demonstrating that leaders will take action in sexual assault cases. We continue to take this issue very seriously, and also know how much work remains to be done.

In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command to determine whether allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted?

Removal of the commander's authority to prosecute sexual assault removes a key mechanism to respond to the needs of Soldiers within the command, especially the victims.

The commander's role in the military justice system is simply essential. The Commander is responsible for good order, discipline, health and morale and welfare of the force. And the commander needs the ability to take timely and appropriate action, locally and visibly, which impacts the overall discipline of the force. Particularly in a deployed environment, adding a complex, external approval process for appropriate action will impede the commander's ability to deal swiftly and fairly with investigated incidents of sexual assault, and consequently impede the commander's ability to protect

victims and prevent further assaults.

Do you consider the current sexual assault policies and procedures, particularly those on restricted reporting, to be effective?

The Department has put considerable effort into the development of policies and procedures designed to address sexual assault and improve reporting. The Department faces the same challenges that society faces in dealing with incidents of sexual assault – balancing care to victims with offender accountability. The Department’s restricted reporting allows victims who wish to remain anonymous to come forward and obtain the medical, legal, and advocacy support they need following an allegation of sexual assault.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to reassess current policies, procedures and programs and to ensure senior level direction and oversight of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assaults in Afghanistan?

If confirmed, as part of my assessment, I will ensure that all commanders in theater evaluate the sexual assault prevention and response capabilities for their areas of responsibility. Further, this assessment will solicit feedback from those below Commander-level to ensure we create an atmosphere which aims to eliminate assault.

Standards for Treatment of Detainees

Section 1403 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 provides that no individual in the custody or under the physical control of the United States Government, regardless of nationality or physical location shall be subject to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

If confirmed, will you take steps to ensure that all relevant Department of Defense directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures applicable to U.S. forces in Afghanistan fully comply with the requirements of section 1403 and with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. forces in Afghanistan fully comply with all relevant provisions of Department of Defense directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures applicable to U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and that they fully comply with the requirements of section 1403 of the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005 and with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. Conducting detention operations in the most humane manner possible remains a strategic component of our campaign that directly reflects upon our nation’s values and the ideals we espouse to our Afghan counterparts.

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?

Yes, if confirmed, I understand and support the existing standards for the treatment of detainees and will adhere to them. All detainees shall be treated humanely, and in accordance with U.S. law, the Law

of War, and applicable U.S. policy. Humane treatment entails the following: no violence, no cruelty, no torture, and no humiliating or degrading treatment. Under U.S. law, humane treatment also consists of providing detainees with adequate food, drinking water, shelter, clothing, medical care, and protection of personal property. I believe these humane treatment policies, as practiced at the Detention Facility in Parwan, have adequately protected detainees, provided for actionable intelligence, contributed to mission success, and enhanced U.S. forces' reputation in the global community.

How would you ensure a climate that not only discourages the abuse of detainees, but that encourages the reporting of abuse?

I believe that engaged and active leadership grounded in the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention and DoD Directive 2310.01E is required for the secure and humane care, custody and control of detainees. If confirmed, I will ensure these elements remain the cornerstone of U.S. Law of Armed Conflict detainee operations. I will also reinforce the obligation to prevent abuse and the duty to report abuse as non-negotiable elements in our guard force training and ensure all detainees are informed of their rights upon entry into the detention facility, to include their right to report any type of abuse free from retribution. The use of medical providers to screen for signs of abuse, and the integration of a robust self-assessment program bolstered by external assessments from the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent further creates an open and transparent command climate fused with timely feedback. Finally, if confirmed, I will ensure my command team has internalized their professional responsibility to track and investigate any allegations of abuse and take swift action when appropriate. Furthermore, we will continue to assist the Afghan National Army (ANA) in developing their detainee abuse reporting systems and sustain the use of U.S. advisors in ANA controlled facilities.

What is your understanding of the agreement between the United States and Afghanistan regarding detainees in Afghanistan currently and going forward after 2014?

As noted by the President on June 12, 2014, in a letter submitted to Congress pursuant to the War Powers Resolution, U.S. forces have turned over all Afghan nationals detained by U.S. forces in Afghanistan to Afghan custody pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding executed on March 25, 2013. In accordance with this memorandum of agreement, U.S. forces in Afghanistan transfer any new Afghan captures to Afghan custody and control within 96 hours after capture. Additionally, U.S. forces in Afghanistan continue to detain less than 40 non-Afghan nationals under the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) (Public Law 107-40). After 2014, U.S. forces will retain the legal authority under the AUMF to detain both Afghan nationals (for less than 96 hours) and non-Afghans in accordance with the Law of Armed Conflict. However, it is my understanding that the draft Bilateral Security Agreement contains language that would limit the ability of U.S. forces to conduct detention operations after 2014. If the Bilateral Security Agreement is signed, U.S. forces will not be permitted to arrest or imprison Afghan nationals or operate or maintain detention facilities after 2014. However, if the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan continues to operate the Afghan National Detention Facility at Parwan as part of a National Security Justice Center, I anticipate U.S. forces will retain the ability to expeditiously transfer dangerous insurgents who may be captured in self-defense situations to this secure location for investigation, prosecution, and possible incarceration by Afghan authorities in accordance with Afghan criminal law.

Prisoner Exchange for Sgt. Bergdahl

What are your views on the prisoner exchange of five Afghan Taliban detainees for the release of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl?

Our Nation demonstrated what we have told our people for years: we don't leave a service member behind.

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 position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Yes.

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

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the ISAF Commander/Commander, USFOR-A?

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.