

**Advance Policy Questions for Admiral Philip Davidson, USN
Expected Nominee for Commander, U.S. Pacific Command**

Department of Defense Reforms

The Senate Armed Services Committee has initiated an intensive review of the organization of the Department of Defense—both military and civilian, including the elements created by the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—in order to enhance the effectiveness of the Department of Defense in the execution of the National Defense Strategy going forward.

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

The requirements development process lacks the agility required in the current dynamic operational environment. I have observed systemic challenges with delivering warfighting capability at the necessary speed to meet the evolving global challenges. I agree with the National Defense Strategy's assertions that we must deliver capabilities at higher speed and that the Department must embrace a willingness to fail fast. The solutions likely reside both in changes to the Department's management structure and statutory processes outlined in Goldwater-Nichols.

The DOD builds its budget nearly two years before execution; a lot can change in the time between planning and execution. Goldwater-Nichols places clear responsibility on the commanders of combatant commands for the accomplishment of assigned missions. However, given the fact that the budget is normally built two years prior, the combatant commander's ability to affect in-stride changes based on urgent and emergent needs is often limited. I would assert that the DOD needs greater agility in adjusting to changes in the operating environment.

Duties and Qualifications

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM)?

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command is responsible for deterring attacks against the United States and its territories, possessions, and bases, to protect Americans and American interests and, in the event that deterrence fails, to win our Nation's wars. The Commander is also responsible for expanding security cooperation with our allies, partners, and friends across the Indo-Pacific region and should be prepared to defend allies in accordance with mutual defense treaties and agreements.

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

I believe my thirty-six years of military experience, culminating in command of U.S. Fleet Forces Command/Naval Forces U.S. Northern Command, have prepared me for assuming command of U.S. Pacific Command.

Over my career, I have served in every geographic combatant command region, which has given me a broad understanding of the United States' military, economic, and geopolitical challenges and opportunities around the globe. Prior to my current assignment as Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, I commanded the U.S. Sixth Fleet and Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO, while simultaneously serving as the deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa.

I have served as the senior military advisor to the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP) at the State Department and as the deputy director for Strategy and Policy in the Joint Staff/J-5. I have numerous operations, strategy, and policy tours at major Navy headquarters, including two tours on the OPNAV staff and two tours on the U.S. Pacific Fleet staff. I have made multiple ship deployments to the Pacific as well. In summary, my sea and shore assignments over my career have given me practical and in-depth operational experience and a firm understanding of the military's role in the whole-of-government approach to global and regional challenges.

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the PACOM Commander?

If confirmed, I will take every opportunity to enhance my knowledge of the region and develop key relationships with our allies and partners across the Indo-Pacific. I look forward to engaging senior leaders within the Department of Defense and the Department of State, regional security experts, leading think tanks and universities, and military and civilian leaders throughout the Indo-Pacific in order to improve my understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the region.

Relationships

If confirmed, what will be your relationship with:

The Secretary of Defense

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command performs his duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. He is directly responsible to the Secretary of Defense for the ability of the Command to carry out its missions.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense performs duties as directed by the Secretary and performs the duties of the Secretary in his absence. The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, ensures the Deputy has the information necessary to perform these duties and coordinates with him on major issues.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Under Secretaries are key advocates for combatant commands' requirements. The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, coordinates and exchanges information with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy on strategic and regional security issues involving the Asia-Pacific theater.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, coordinates and exchanges information with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence as needed to set and meet the Command's intelligence requirements.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Chairman functions under the authority, direction, and control of the National Command Authority. The Chairman transmits communications between the National Command Authority and the U.S. Pacific Command Commander and oversees the activities of the U.S. Pacific Command Commander as directed by the Secretary of Defense. As the principal military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman is a key conduit between the Combatant Commander, Interagency, and Service Chiefs.

The U.S. Pacific Command Commander keeps the Chairman informed on significant issues regarding the U.S. Pacific Command Area of Responsibility. The Commander communicates directly with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on a regular basis.

Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, maintains a close relationship and communicates directly with the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command on issues of mutual interest. U.S. Pacific Command coordinates requirements and operations of Special Operations Forces within the U.S. Pacific Command Area of Responsibility through Commander, Special Operations Command, Pacific. As a subordinate unified command of U.S. Pacific Command, Special Operations Command, Pacific and its component units deploy throughout the Pacific, supporting Commander, U.S. Pacific Command's Theater Security Cooperation Program, deliberate plans, and real world contingencies.

The other Combatant Commanders

Commander, U.S. Pacific Command shares borders with and maintains close relationships with the other combatant commanders. These relationships are critical to the execution of

our National Military Strategy and are characterized by mutual support, frequent contact, and productive exchanges of information on key issues.

The Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs

The Service Secretaries are responsible for the administration and support of forces assigned to combatant commands. The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command coordinates with the Secretaries to ensure that requirements to organize, train, and equip Pacific Command forces are met.

The successful execution of U.S. Pacific Command's mission responsibilities requires coordination with the Service Chiefs. The Service Chiefs are valuable sources of judgment and advice for the combatant commanders.

Commander, United Nations/Combined Forces Command/U.S. Forces Korea

As a subordinate unified commander, the Commander, U.S. Forces Korea receives missions and functions from Commander, U.S. Pacific Command. I recognize his role as Commander, Combined Forces Command and United Nations Command and will fully support his actions in that sensitive and demanding role.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel

In 2014, the Department realigned all efforts related to Prisoners of War/Missing Personnel under USD Policy. The realignment established the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) – a single, accountable organization with comprehensive oversight of past conflict personnel accounting resources, research, and operations. I fully understand the priority our nation places on this issue and, I will fully support this organization and the Department's efforts to account for personnel from past conflicts, if confirmed.

Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan/Commander, International Security Assistance Force

When needed, the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command communicates and exchanges information with the Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan/Commander, International Security Assistance Force via the Commander, U.S. Central Command.

The Commander U.S. Pacific Command maintains a close relationship and communicates directly with the Commander, U.S. Central Command on issues of mutual interest that affect both of their AORs so that respective strategies, policies and operations are coordinated and mutually supportive. India-Pakistan issues have heightened the importance of close cross-COCOM coordination.

Director of the National Guard Bureau

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Command communicates and exchanges information with the Director of the National Guard Bureau to support his responsibility for organizing, training, and equipping forces. Like the Service Chiefs, successful execution of U.S. Pacific Command's mission responsibilities requires coordination with the Director of the National Guard Bureau.

The Chief of Naval Research

The Office of Naval Research is a valuable source for technologies that help the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command counter developing threats in the Asia-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will maintain a close relationship with the Chief of Naval Research as well as the other service research organizations and national laboratories to ensure the requirements for developing technologies for U.S. Pacific Command are understood.

Major Challenges and Priorities

In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next PACOM Commander?

The December 2017 National Security Strategy outlines five key challenges for the United States, four of which are resident in the Indo-Pacific: China, Russia, North Korea, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Each of these threats presents very different challenges, but to protect the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life, we must deter aggression while confronting these threats before they have the potential to reach our borders or cause harm to our people or our allies. America cannot ignore these challenges and should not allow any nation or non-state actor to impinge upon a free and open rules-based order that has yielded tremendous benefits for our nation and its allies and partners.

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

If confirmed, I plan to execute the National Defense Strategy tenets to Compete, Deter, and Win alongside our allies and partners. In order to achieve these, my approach will encompass five elements:

Maintain credible combat power and work with the Services and Departments to build the right force of the future;

Continue to fully support the State Department-led pressure campaign against the DPRK;

Maintain a network of like-minded allies and partners to cultivate security networks which reinforce the free and open international order;

Continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows and encourage other to do the same. Be ready to counter the coercive influence of regional competitors;

Counter transnational threats and challenges, including terrorism and illegal/illicit trafficking, and be ready to respond to natural disasters.

Together, fully aligned with our interagency, joint, and combined partners, I intend to ensure that PACOM is prepared to meet any challenge.

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish in terms of issues that must be addressed?

If confirmed, my first priority will be to defend the homeland.

Second, I will work to recalibrate U.S. force posture in the Indo-Pacific to align with the recently released 2018 National Defense Strategy. This effort entails ensuring the continued combat readiness of assigned forces in the western Pacific; developing an updated footprint that accounts for China's rapid modernization; and pursuing agreements with host nations that allow the United States to project power when necessary.

Third, I will continue to work to strengthen our alliances and bilateral partnerships as well as our current and emerging multilateral relationships.

Finally, I will collaborate with other elements of the U.S. government and our allies to confront regional competitors and transnational threats.

Relations with Congress

What are your views on the state of PACOM's relationship with the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?

In my view, PACOM, as well as the entire Department of Defense, enjoys a strong partnership and productive relationship with both the Senate Armed Services Committee and Congress in general. I firmly believe that productive and collaborative relationships between the Department of Defense and Congress form a vital element of fulfilling our Constitutional duties to the nation and to the American people. If confirmed, I will ensure that PACOM continues to maintain and cultivate strong relationships with Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, their staff, and the professional staff members of the defense committees in both houses of Congress.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and PACOM?

If confirmed, I will make it a priority to sustain a productive and beneficial relationship between Congress and PACOM. I look forward to doing so through regular outreach and open communication, including making myself available to provide testimony and proactively communicate the Command's budget and policy priorities to Congress. I will endeavor to maintain close relationships with Members of Congress and ensure that my Legislative Affairs team continues to work effectively with professional and personal staff. I will also ensure that PACOM continues its responsiveness to congressional queries, conducts briefings and office calls with members and staff, and supports congressional and staff delegation visits throughout the PACOM area of responsibility.

Torture and Enhanced Interrogation Techniques

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 August 19, 2014, and required by section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92)?

I do. The standards specified in the Army's Interrogation Manual allow the U.S. military to conduct effective intelligence interrogations while at the same time allowing us to live our values by treating captured individuals humanely.

National Defense Strategy (NDS)

The NDS refers to the return of great power competition with China.

From the PACOM perspective, what capabilities do you believe the Joint Force needs to prevail in competition with China?

PACOM supports a whole-of-nation approach in the long-term competition with China by maintaining a modern and combat ready Joint Force, capable of deterring aggression, defending U.S. interests in the region, and securing U.S. objectives should deterrence fail. Due to China's rapid military modernization, PACOM is heavily dependent on high-end warfare capabilities, including: 5th generation aircraft; munitions capable of penetrating China's anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) environment; undersea warfare dominance capabilities; and survivable logistics and mission partner networks. Lastly, PACOM requires a robust network of allies and partners and the necessary permissions to project combat power from host nation bases when necessary.

The NDS references "expanding the competitive space." China has been successful competing with the United States below the threshold of conflict.

What does "expanding the competitive space" mean for competition with China? Do you believe additional resources or new authorities for PACOM are required to support this line of effort?

The concept of "expanding the competitive space" refers to the United States' ability to seize the initiative in great power competition by taking on our adversaries in areas where we possess advantages and our adversaries lack strength. With China, the United States should expand the competitive space by investing in next-generation capabilities (e.g., hypersonic technology) while simultaneously recognizing that China is already weaponizing space and cyber. In many of these areas, it is China that has already expanded the competitive space (e.g., intermediate range ballistic missiles and counterspace capabilities), and the United States must strive to meet the existing challenge.

Expanding the competitive space also speaks to the need to develop an integrated whole-of-government approach toward countering Chinese malign influence across all instruments of national power. DoD will assist the efforts of the interagency to identify and build partnerships to address areas of economic, technological, and informational vulnerabilities.

The NDS has significant implications for global force posture.

What impact do the strategic and operational environment identified in the NDS have for how U.S. forces are postured in the PACOM area of responsibility (AOR)? What changes do you believe will be necessary to force posture in the PACOM AOR to align with the Dynamic Force Employment and Global Operating Model concepts in the NDS?

The strategic and operational environment outlined in the NDS clearly identifies the importance of developing and fielding a force posture that is capable of countering Chinese malign influence in the region. With respect to their actions in the South China Sea and more broadly through the Belt and Road Initiative, the Chinese are clearly executing deliberate and thoughtful force posture initiatives. China claims that these reclaimed features and the Belt and Road Initiative will not be used for military means, but their words do not match their actions. Our defense strategy provides the necessary guidance that will drive our actions.

The Dynamic Force Employment and Global Operating Model concepts inform how the Joint Force is employed across the spectrum of military operations from deterrence operations to crisis response. Due to the distances involved in the Indo-Pacific, we cannot rely solely on surge forces from the Continental United States to deter Chinese aggression or prevent a fait accompli. PACOM must maintain a robust blunt layer that effectively deters Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will regularly reevaluate our footprint and access-agreements to ensure PACOM can meet the requirements outlined in the NDS.

The NDS's Global Operating Model and Dynamic Force Employment concepts emphasize sustaining capabilities for major combat, while "providing options for proactive and scalable employment of the Joint Force."

In your assessment, how will this differ from current models of employment of force?

Within the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution Process, the NDS establishes the objectives for military force structure, force modernization, business processes, supporting infrastructure, and required resources (funding and manpower). The 2018 NDS seeks to reshape the Joint Force posture to provide a credible deterrent coupled with operational unpredictability and a revised Global Operating Model. A new concept of Dynamic Force Employment will prioritize maintaining the capacity and capabilities for major combat, while providing options for proactive and scalable employment of the Joint Force. This concept requires a flexible global posture and agile employment model. Together, the strategy and force-planning construct posit a different operating model compared to the last strategy.

How do you intend to work with the Services to implement these concepts while balancing the need to rebuild readiness?

If confirmed, I will work with the Services to ensure force generation across the range of military operations and readiness to deploy within specified time periods to defeat aggression by any adversary. I will also advocate for consistent multiyear investments to improve war fighting readiness, maintain an appropriately sized joint force, and modernize key capabilities.

Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)

Do you support the NPR and its recommendations?

Yes, I fully support the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and its recommendations. The NPR addresses U.S. nuclear policy and strategy in an increasingly challenging and volatile international security environment, while recognizing the need to prepare for future uncertainties.

Admiral Harris has testified previously that “aspects of the INF Treaty...limit our ability to counter Chinese and other countries’ land-based missiles....”

As China continues to produce DF-21 and DF-26 missiles, as well as other advanced capabilities, do you believe the challenges Admiral Harris has described are increasing in difficulty?

Yes. China continues to improve its ballistic missile capabilities, with the DF-21 and DF-26 missiles offering improved range, accuracy, lethality, and reliability over legacy Chinese systems. Simultaneously, China is pursuing advanced capabilities (e.g., hypersonic missiles) which the United States has no current defense against. As China pursues these advanced weapons systems, U.S. forces across the Indo-Pacific will be placed increasingly at risk.

Do you believe the recent advancements in Conventional Prompt Strike (CPS) systems that the Navy will be developing will alleviate some of this concern and will you advocate for it in PACOM’s Integrated Priority Listing?

I view the long-range, hypersonic weapon capability that Conventional Prompt Strike would provide as essential to our ability to compete, deter, and win against a strategic competitor such as China. I know that Admiral Harris has advocated for this capability in his Integrated Priority List submissions and, if confirmed, I expect that I will continue this advocacy.

Do you believe ground-launched missiles like those prohibited by the INF Treaty would help us meet military requirements in PACOM, if the treaty were no longer in force or do you believe the advancements in the aforementioned CPS systems will permit the

United States to stay within the INF Treaty and, per current administration policy, force Russia back into compliance?

The Conventional Prompt Strike system will help meet military requirements in PACOM, but I think we need to also look at additional systems in order to balance against the large numbers of conventional missiles that China has already fielded. In the Indo-Pacific, the absence of the INF Treaty would provide additional options to counter China's existing missile capabilities, complicate adversary decision making, and impose costs by forcing adversaries to spend money on expensive missile defense systems.

What would be your role as PACOM Commander in making recommendations concerning the U.S. approach to the INF Treaty going forward?

If confirmed, I will use my role as PACOM commander to make recommendations concerning the INF Treaty based upon my assessment of the military risk in the Indo-Pacific. I believe the INF treaty today unfairly puts the United States at a disadvantage and places our forces at risk because China is not a signatory.

China publicly maintains its doctrine of nuclear “no first use,” and describes its nuclear forces as solely for the purpose of a secure second strike. Yet, as the NPR says, China has increased the “number, capabilities, and protection of its nuclear forces.”

Do you believe these changes in force structure are consistent with a “no first use” doctrine?

The developments within China's nuclear missile force are consistent with a "no first use" policy, and China shows no sign it intends to abandon this policy. China's modernization of its nuclear program has focused foremost on modernization and refurbishment, consistent with a requirement to ensure a credible counterstrike threat as a deterrent. For this reason, the PLA Rocket Force is committed to making its nuclear-capable units, launchers, and missiles as mobile, protected, and survivable as possible.

China has developed or is developing advanced/precision IRBM and MRBM systems. These systems could support a variety of nuclear strike options, tactical-to-strategic and preemptive-to-retaliatory. However, they are not-themselves-indicative of any shift in China's no first use policy.

U.S. Military Capabilities and Force Posture in the PACOM AOR

Dave Ochmanek of the RAND Corporation testified before this Committee in November 2017 that “U.S. forces could, under plausible assumptions, lose the next war they are called upon to fight.”

Do you agree with this assessment when it comes to a potential conflict with China? What are the most significant strategic and operational factors that have led you to either support or disagree with such an assessment?

The outcome of war is never certain, and I have increasing concerns about the future. China has undergone a rapid military modernization over the last three decades and is approaching parity in a number of critical areas; there is no guarantee that the United States would win a future conflict with China. However, I also believe that the United States still maintains significant advantages in the quality of our personnel, the quality of our training, and in our ability to plan and integrate across the joint force. To prevent a situation where China is more likely to win a conflict, we must resource high-end capabilities in a timely fashion, preserve our network of allies and partners, and continue to recruit and train the best Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coastguardsmen in the world.

What capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the current Joint Force present the most significant challenge to addressing the threats in the PACOM AOR?

A more effective Joint Force requires sustained investment in the following critical areas: undersea warfare, critical munitions stockpiles, standoff weapons (Air-Air, Air-Surface, Surface-Surface, Anti-Ship), intermediate range cruise missiles, low cost / high capacity cruise missile defense, hypersonic weapons, air and surface lift capacity, cyber capabilities, air-air refueling capacity, and resilient communication and navigation systems. In addition to improving the current systems stated above, we must also work to reduce the logistics constraints on our modern high tempo force. PACOM only has about a quarter of the ISR it needs in the AOR. Additional requirements include the command and control (C2) and integration of long-range, high-speed, lethal, survivable, and precision munitions capabilities in ships, submarines, patrol craft, land-based formations, bombers, and fighters.

Which programs, in your assessment, are the highest priorities for mitigating current and emerging warfighting capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the Joint Force?

Each year PACOM provides the Chairman with the command's concerns regarding the emerging warfighter capability and capacity shortfalls that most adversely affect PACOM's ability to execute missions and plans. These concerns include a number of shortfalls including critical munitions capacity, undersea warfare dominance capabilities, countering A2/AD environments, and persistent ISR. Additionally, the Combatant Commanders Exercise Engagement and Training Transformation (CE2T2) program offers an invaluable way of enhancing interoperability with critical allies and partners, which could help mitigate capacity shortfalls in the Joint Force.

Do you have any concerns about the timing and readiness of follow-on forces arriving in PACOM to meet operational plans? If yes, what are they and how can they be resolved?

I do have concerns about the manning, training, and equipping of all of our follow-on forces; timely and robust operations and maintenance, manpower, and enabler accounts are critical

to building the sustained readiness that makes the total force credible and deterrence possible. Continuing resolutions, delayed appropriations and sequestration directly impact the size and speed of our response.

If confirmed, I will advocate for the necessary forward deployed forces and the associated readiness that meet the intent of the blunt forces concept outlined in the NDS. I will also advocate for improvements in strategic sea and air lift to reduce the timeline necessary for surge forces to arrive in theater.

The NDS specifically mentions challenges posed by robust anti-access, area denial capabilities (A2/AD). What would be your approach to overcoming these challenges in the PACOM AOR?

Advancements in air-to-air and air-to-ground munitions – such as the AIM-120D, AIM-9X, and small diameter bomb – combined with robust numbers of 5th generation platforms and the necessary tankers and transports will provide us an advantage in a denied environment in the near term. We must also continue to modernize and improve our torpedo and naval mine capabilities to help maintain our undersea advantage. Crucial to our ability to operate in increasingly contested and austere locations is the velocity of fuels and munitions support from source of supply to the point of use. Strategic positioning is a key pillar of our logistics posture as well. In the future, hypersonic and directed energy weapons, resilient space, cyber and network-capabilities, and well trained Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coastguardsmen will be crucial to our ability to fight and win.

How important is a forward basing strategy to the ability of PACOM to execute its day-to-day mission? What about its operational contingency plans?

The Indo-Pacific region has enjoyed economic prosperity driven by the security provided by U.S. forward-based forces over the past seven decades. A forward basing strategy plays a critical role in PACOM's day-to-day mission execution and timely contingency response. I believe forward basing helps exercise our operational readiness, reinforces our interoperability with allies and partners, and demonstrates U.S. interest in the region.

How do you view the relative value of permanent versus rotational forces in the PACOM AOR? How does that relative value change for different kinds of units/formations (for example, a fighter squadron versus a destroyer versus an ARG/MEU)?

I believe permanent, forward-based forces provide the most visible sign of U.S. resolve and commitment to regional peace and stability. That said, PACOM critically depends on both rotational and permanently stationed forces for day-to-day operations and the ability to respond quickly and effectively to contingencies.

In both cases, the vast expanse of the Pacific requires that all of our forward forces have access to CONUS and forward-stationed infrastructure that can help maintain, sustain, train and test Pacific forces for high end warfare.

Do you believe there is a need for additional forward-stationed or rotational forces in the PACOM AOR?

Yes, PACOM needs more of both. Current force structure and presence do not sufficiently counter the threats in the Indo-Pacific, particularly a resurgent China that leverages military modernization, influence operations, and predatory economics in pursuit of regional hegemony and displacement of the United States over the long term. Aligned with the concept of blunt forces in the NDS, the size of the Indo-Pacific region and the diversity of threats warrant a stable and sizable forward presence. Additional rotational forces allow for more engagements and help increase the readiness of the forward stationed forces.

What additional ISR capability and/or capacity do you believe would be most helpful in mitigating present shortfalls in the PACOM AOR?

While we can't discuss the specifics of ISR shortfalls here, PACOM only has about a quarter of what it needs in the AOR. Those shortfalls are identified and have been highlighted in PACOM's regular contacts with the Joint Staff.

What are your views on the current number and types of ships forward-stationed in the PACOM AOR? Are current forward naval forces sufficient to support PACOM requirements for current operations and contingency plans? Do you foresee the need to increase or change current naval force structure in the PACOM AOR?

Due to global demands, I believe current forward-stationed naval forces do not provide sufficient support to PACOM requirements. NDS priorities make it clear that the Indo-Pacific will require additional capability and capacity from all services as well. If confirmed, I will examine the number and types of ships forward stationed and the infrastructure to sustain them quite closely.

How does the planned relocation of U.S. forces from Okinawa to Guam and other locations in the Pacific align with U.S. security objectives in the PACOM AOR? What about the planned relocation of U.S. forces on the Korean Peninsula?

Relocation of U.S. forces from Okinawa to Guam, and within the Republic of Korea, serves two key purposes. First, it increases the resiliency and survivability of the joint force by moving key capabilities further away from adversary threat systems. Second, the moves disperse the force to enable greater and faster responses to areas outside Okinawa and Korea. The relocation to Guam also provides an additional benefit with increased training opportunities with other allies and partners.

What is your understanding of the plans for rotational deployments of U.S. Marines to Australia and how, in your view, will such a presence advance U.S. security interests?

Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D) is a U.S.-Australia Force Posture Initiative establishing an annual rotation of a U.S. Marine Corps Marine Air Ground Task Force

(MAGTF) to northern Australia in order to posture capability for crisis response and train with Australian Defence Forces and other partners in the region. MRF-D is beginning its seventh and largest, most capable rotation to date. The rotation will include just fewer than 1,600 Marines, eight MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft, and an artillery battery of six M777 Howitzers. Growth in future rotations will be informed by capability requirements, available infrastructure, and budget resource availability. The presence of MRF-D in Australia is significant at both the strategic and operational levels. From a strategic standpoint, this initiative reaffirms U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and enhances cooperation with Australia as a key ally in maintaining a free and open international order. At the operational level, MRF-D enhances U.S. interoperability with Australia and other partners in the region, provides additional training opportunities to improve readiness, postures forces forward for crisis response, and increases resiliency by providing additional locations where our forces can operate.

China

How would you characterize the current U.S. relationship with China?

As stated in the National Security Strategy, the United States advocates for a free and open Indo-Pacific, supported by regional partners and allies that respect international law, freedom of navigation and overflight, and the free flow of commerce and ideas. China can choose to support these principles and the economic prosperity these principles enable, or reject them. While the United States remains committed to cooperating with China on our shared national interests – North Korea, counterpiracy, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, etc. – it is increasingly clear that China wants to shape a world aligned with its own authoritarian model and inconsistent with these principles. Through coercive diplomacy, predatory economic policies, and rapid military expansion, China is undermining the rules-based international order. We must be willing to cooperate with China where we can, while consistently and unapologetically confronting China when it engages in behavior that undermines the international order or harms U.S. interests in the region.

What is your assessment of the current state of U.S.-China military-to-military relations? What do you believe should be the objectives of U.S.-China military-to-military dialogue? What are the limitations on this kind of dialogue?

I view a tailored military-to-military relationship with China as an important aspect of the overall bilateral relationship and, if confirmed, I will seek to ensure it remains a stabilizing element, within the current statutory limitations. With the U.S. and China possessing competing national interests and world views, military-to-military dialogue serves an important role in promoting transparency, improving understanding, and reducing the risk of miscalculation or unintentional conflict. However, the effectiveness of the dialogue depends on both militaries basing the relationship on transparency, candor and clear-eyed pragmatism, which does not always happen.

What do you believe are the objectives of China's steady increase in defense spending and its overall military modernization program?

China is pursuing a long-term strategy to reduce U.S. access and influence in the region and become the clear regional hegemon, and Beijing has already made significant progress along this path. China is no longer a rising power but an arrived great power and peer competitor to the United States in the region. In his 2018 State of the Union Address, President Trump called China a "rival," and I fully agree with this assessment.

In pursuing its goals, China seeks to displace the U.S. as the security partner of choice for countries in the Indo-Pacific. Specific to the military instrument of power, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is using its rapidly increasing defense budget to fund the most ambitious military modernization in the world. The PLA is heavily focused on advanced platforms and long-range strike weapons, including anti-ship ballistic missiles, intermediate-range ballistic missiles capable of targeting U.S. and allied bases, advanced space and cyber capabilities, and hypersonic glide weapons. These counter-intervention weapon systems are designed to push U.S. forces out beyond the First Island Chain, isolate China's neighbors, and prevent the United States from intervening in any regional conflict on China's periphery.

I am also concerned about Beijing's clear intent to erode U.S. alliances and partnerships in the region. Beijing calls them a relic of the Cold War. In fact our alliances and partnerships have been the bedrock of stability in the Indo-Pacific region for the past seventy years, and they remain a core element of our defense strategy.

How would you assess the threat to U.S. forces and bases from Chinese missile forces? In your assessment, have U.S. investments, concepts of operations, and/or posture shifts to date sufficiently addressed this threat?

The threat to U.S. forces and bases is substantial and growing. The People's Liberation Army Rocket Forces have a growing inventory of medium- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles that can threaten U.S. bases in the region, including those in South Korea, Japan, and Guam, as well as naval forces operating inside the Second Island Chain. Many are purpose-built for specific targets, such as aircraft carriers or air bases, and PLA Rocket Forces maintain a high degree of combat readiness. Moreover, China is constantly evolving its missile technology, increasing their range, survivability, accuracy, and lethality.

I believe that recent U.S. actions, particularly through the FY18 National Defense Authorization Act and the FY18 Omnibus appropriation, have generated the focused direction and urgency to better address this threat, but we have a long way to go to be able to deter against and counter ever improving ballistic missiles and the hypersonic weapons to come. Technology investments such as boost phase intercept development, increased interceptor lethality, and land as well as space based sensors will improve the capability and reliability of U.S. missile defense.

The United States maintains a critical advantage in undersea warfare. What investments is China making to erode this advantage? What is your assessment of how successful these efforts have been?

The United States maintains a significant asymmetric advantage in undersea warfare, but the PLA is making progress. China has identified undersea warfare as a priority, both for increasing their own capabilities as well as challenging ours. The Chinese are investing in a range of platforms, including quieter submarines armed with increasingly sophisticated weapons, unmanned underwater vehicles, new sensors, and new fixed-wing and rotary-wing submarine-hunting aircraft. Ultimately, this is a perishable advantage for the United States. Absent sustained, consistent investment and constant innovation, the PLA will catch the United States in this critical regime.

What is your assessment of the development of China's air forces? What implications does China's improving capability and capacity have for U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy investment priorities?

China's air forces are rapidly modernizing as part of a long-term effort to transform the force into one that is able to control and defend the airspace in and around China and also project power over longer distances. While Chinese air forces are not as advanced as those of the United States, they are rapidly closing the gap through the development of new fourth and fifth generation fighters (including carrier-based fighters), long range bombers, advanced UAVs, advanced anti-air missiles, and long-distance strategic airlift. In line with the Chinese military's broader reforms, Chinese air forces are emphasizing joint operations and expanding their operations, such as through more frequent long range bomber flights into the Western Pacific and South China Sea. As a result of these technological and operational advances, the Chinese air forces will pose an increasing risk not only to our air forces but also to our naval forces, air bases and ground forces. Given these developments, PACOM prioritizes advanced 5th-Generation fighters, upgrading 4th Generation aircraft with 5th-generation capabilities, developing more lethal air-to-air missiles, enhancing missile defense, and investing in increased resiliency in forward deployed force posture. If confirmed, I will look closely at the need for improved battle management capabilities and resilient tactical networks as well.

What is your assessment of China's cyber warfare capabilities? What do you believe the role of the PACOM Commander should be in ensuring U.S. forces have the necessary capabilities to compete in the cyber domain?

China possesses significant cyberspace capabilities that go well beyond basic intelligence collection against U.S. diplomatic, economic, and defense industrial base sectors. People's Liberation Army writings note the effectiveness of cyber warfare in recent conflicts and advocate targeting an adversary's C2 and logistics networks to affect its ability to operate during the early stages of a conflict. I believe that China will continue to use its cyberspace capabilities for intelligence and cyberattack preparation purposes, serving as a force multiplier for its other activities short of armed conflict, and to constrain adversary actions by holding vital networks at risk.

In my view the PACOM Commander has key roles in advocating for trained and ready cyber forces, procuring the necessary equipment to command and control forces, and establishing the offensive and defensive requirements for cyberspace capabilities. The PACOM Commander must also work across the interagency to integrate cyberspace operations with activities in all other domains to achieve PACOM objectives in the Indo-Pacific, leveraging assigned cyber forces as well as other forces assigned to CYBERCOM.

What is your assessment of China’s space and anti-space capabilities? Do you believe China is weaponizing space? How would you characterize the level of risk to U.S. space-based assets?

China is weaponizing space. China is rapidly improving its abilities to use space as an enabler of all of its military operations and to deny an adversary's use of space, thus increasing the level of risk to U.S. space-based assets. Supported by a growing space launch capability, China is expanding its space-based C4ISR and precision navigation architecture with new, increasingly capable satellites. The PLA is also developing an array of counter-space capabilities that provide a range of options – both kinetic and non-kinetic – to disrupt or destroy adversary space systems during a crisis or conflict. These counter-space capabilities include directed-energy weapons and satellite jammers, as well as the anti-satellite missile system demonstrated in 2007 and again tested in 2014.

What is your assessment of China’s capabilities in electronic attack or electronic warfare? What practical operational implications does this have for U.S. military forces in a potential conflict?

PLA electronic warfare (EW) capabilities and systems represent a significant and increasing threat to U.S. forces. The PLA views degrading or denying adversary command, control, and communications as a key enabler of modern combat operations. As such, the PLA has developed and fielded multiple EW jammers that can deny and degrade most U.S. tactical and strategic communications, radar, and weapon systems across the electromagnetic spectrum. The PLA routinely deploys and practices EW in a realistic training environment. I assess PLA proficiency in EW is rapidly improving, both in terms of its ability to jam adversary systems and in its ability to operate in a denied environment.

In the South China Sea, the PLA has constructed a variety of radar, electronic attack, and defense capabilities on the disputed Spratly Islands, to include: Cuarteron Reef, Fiery Cross Reef, Gaven Reef, Hughes Reef, Johnson Reef, Mischief Reef and Subi Reef. These facilities significantly expand the real-time domain awareness, ISR, and jamming capabilities of the PLA over a large portion of the South China Sea, presenting a substantial challenge to U.S. military operations in this region.

What is your assessment of China’s militarization activities in the South China Sea? What potential challenges do these activities pose to PACOM’s current operations and operational plans? How do these militarization activities change China’s ability to project power in the region?

China's development of forward military bases in the South China Sea began in December 2013 when the first dredger arrived at Johnson Reef. Through 2015, China used dredging efforts to build up these reefs and create manmade islands, destroying the reefs in the process. Since then, China has constructed clear military facilities on the islands, with several bases including hangars, barracks, underground fuel and water storage facilities, and bunkers to house offense and defensive kinetic and non-kinetic systems. These actions stand in direct contrast to the assertion that President Xi made in 2015 in the Rose Garden when he commented that Beijing had no intent to militarize the South China Sea. Today these forward operating bases appear complete. The only thing lacking are the deployed forces.

Once occupied, China will be able to extend its influence thousands of miles to the south and project power deep into Oceania. The PLA will be able to use these bases to challenge U.S. presence in the region, and any forces deployed to the islands would easily overwhelm the military forces of any other South China Sea-claimants. In short, China is now capable of controlling the South China Sea in all scenarios short of war with the United States.

How does the presence of the U.S. Navy in the South China Sea influence regional maritime disputes? In your view, would an increase in U.S. activity serve to stabilize or destabilize the situation?

The U.S. Navy's presence in the South China Sea demonstrates U.S. commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the region, as do the frequent patrols by aircraft from multiple services in the skies above the South China Sea. These efforts show that we are dedicated to protecting the freedoms and lawful uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed to all nations, to include the ability of lawful commerce to transit unimpeded throughout the shared domains of the Indo-Pacific. The United States has said time and again that territorial disputes in the region should be resolved peacefully and without conflict or coercion. The United States continues to encourage claimants to use diplomatic means to resolve disputes. To ensure stability, U.S. operations in the South China Sea—to include freedom of navigation operations—must remain regular and routine. In my view, any decrease in air or maritime presence would likely reinvigate PRC expansion.

What is your assessment of China's increasing military activities in the East China Sea in the vicinity of the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands?

China is continuing to press its sovereignty claims to the Senkaku Islands. As part of its effort to pressure the government of Japan, China continues to send aircraft and ships – both Navy and Coast Guard – into the waters and airspace around the Senkakus. This activity shows no sign of abating; however, neither does it show signs of any significant increase, reflecting China's intent to coerce Japan without sparking a crisis or conflict. I expect this trend to continue.

What is your assessment of China's increasing military presence overseas, including its base in Djibouti and other infrastructure projects across the Indian Ocean?

While primarily a regionally-focused military, China aspires to project power worldwide. China's expanding global interests, especially its Belt and Road Initiative-associated projects, have Beijing increasingly looking beyond the region.

China is expanding its access to foreign ports to pre-position the necessary logistics support required to regularize and sustain deployments in the Indian Ocean region. This larger overseas logistics and basing footprint will enable Beijing to project and sustain military power at greater distances from China.

What is your assessment of the strategic and military implications of China's Belt and Road Initiative? For the United States? For countries in the PACOM AOR?

At face value, I am supportive of any efforts that help developing countries around the region improve the quality of life for their people. However, the predatory nature of many of the loans and initiatives associated with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) lead me to believe that Beijing is using BRI as a mechanism to coerce states into greater access and influence for China. The nations that accept China's offer of low interest loans, grants, and other financial incentives risk Beijing later manipulating economic deals into future security arrangements, and when these countries are unable to pay, Beijing often offers to swap debt for equity (e.g., the Port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka). Ultimately, BRI provides opportunities for China's military to expand its global reach by gaining access to foreign air and maritime port facilities. This reach will allow China's military to extend its striking and surveillance operations from the South China Sea to the Gulf of Aden. Moreover, Beijing could leverage BRI projects to pressure nations to deny U.S. forces basing, transit, or operational and logistical support, thereby making it more challenging for the United States to preserve international orders and norms.

How do you assess the current cross-strait relationship between China and Taiwan, and how can we help prevent miscalculation on either side?

Relations between China and Taiwan remain cool since the election of Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen in 2016. Since that time, Beijing has continually pushed Taipei to accept the so-called '1992 Consensus' as a precondition for friendly cross-Strait ties. This is something the Tsai administration is unwilling to do. Neither side will accept a compromise on Taiwan's status, but China insists upon recognition of 'one China' by Taiwan before any senior dialogue will occur. China has increased its diplomatic pressure on Taiwan, actively working to erode Taiwan's international space by poaching diplomatic partners and blocking Taiwan's participation in international organizations. The Chinese military continues its aggressive military modernization with capabilities intended to deter any move by Taipei to pursue independence, and if necessary, unify Taiwan by force. Though the cross-Strait situation is more stable than in 2008, the situation remains tense, and the prospect for significant near-term improvement in the cross-Strait relationship remains dim.

Though the U.S. does not play a mediation role between Taiwan and the PRC, nor do we exert pressure on Taiwan to enter into negotiations with the PRC, our commitment to

Taiwan's security in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act provides Taiwan the confidence needed to engage mainland China from a position of strength.

North Korea

What would be your approach to military posture and activities in the PACOM AOR to deter North Korean aggression and support U.S. diplomatic efforts?

If confirmed, I will support the Administration's Department of State-led Maximum Pressure Campaign. PACOM will continue to develop all operational plans in conjunction with USFK, USFJ, and our allies and partners in the region. I will continue all required exercises to ensure the alliance remains fully integrated; and I will ensure that PACOM forces remain ready to execute the full spectrum of military operations if directed by the National Command Authority. I will also work to strengthen and operationalize our treaty alliances and partnerships in the region to enhance support of UN and U.S. led efforts at a diplomatic solution. Further, I will build upon the efforts of previous commanders to improve the Japanese and Korean relationship, especially military-to-military, which I view as critical to stability in Northeast Asia.

What is your assessment of the strategic and military risks of a potential conflict on the North Korean peninsula? Do you have any doubt that such conflict would have enormous human and financial costs not only for the United States, but also for our allies, South Korea and Japan?

Clearly there are enormous strategic and military risks associated with a potential conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Risk identification and management are an integral part of all military planning efforts, and this is no exception. If confirmed, I will make regular assessments of the risk and report that risk to the National Command Authority. Internal to PACOM, I will simultaneously pursue efforts to reduce the risk to U.S. strategic objectives and U.S. military forces should deterrence fail. As a critical element of these objectives, I will also continue the work of previous commanders on noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) planning as the situation on the Korean Peninsula develops.

What is your current assessment of the Joint Force's ability to conduct a noncombatant evacuation of approximately 250,000 U.S. citizens from South Korea? Has the United States ever conducted a noncombatant evacuation of this scale? What capability and/or capacity shortfalls present the most significant challenge to executing such an operation?

Recent Table Top Exercises have demonstrated the need for continued analysis on this matter. However, if directed, the Joint Force would execute the existing plan to the best of its ability. The United States has never before executed a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) of this scale. Operation Frequent Wind in 1975, a NEO conducted during the fall of Saigon, presents the closest and most familiar example. I would also highlight that the U.S. might evacuate citizens from our Allies and Partners as well, which adds to the amount of

personnel and resources required. Additionally, other nations such as the PRC would likely evacuate large numbers of citizens from the ROK at the same time which could further complicate the operation.

Do you believe PACOM should examine options for expanded international cooperation in the maritime domain to increase pressure on North Korea?

Yes. PACOM has begun work to increase coordination with FVEY partners as well as Japan, Korea, and France to make collective UNSCR enforcement efforts more effective. Currently, the focus remains on information sharing and coordinating complementary enforcement efforts. These efforts are synchronized with and in support of the Department of State led pressure campaign.

In your assessment, what military options should the United States explore to maintain and improve the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence should North Korea successfully demonstrate a viable nuclear strike capability against the United States?

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) calls on the United States to modernize the Nuclear Triad, Nuclear Command Control and Communication systems, and to recapitalize the Department of Energy's nuclear scientific and production facilities. The NPR also calls for a new Low Yield Ballistic Missile and to pursue a modern nuclear-armed Sea Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM). These actions will send a strong deterrence message to our adversaries including North Korea. These provide additional diversity in platforms, range, and survivability, and a valuable hedge against future nuclear "break out" scenarios.

Do you believe restoring our nuclear cruise missile capability as recommended by the 2018 NPR will strengthen our extended deterrence in the PACOM AOR?

Yes, I believe the low-yield Sea-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) warhead and a nuclear-armed Sea-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) as identified in the 2018 NPR will strengthen our extended deterrence in the Indo-Pacific. These systems will do so by contributing to our tailored deterrence objectives and by providing additional flexible response options particularly relevant to deterring threats of limited use of nuclear weapons. Additionally, South Korea and Japan, key recipients of our extended deterrence, have expressed their appreciation for the 2018 NPR, including the Low Yield Ballistic and Sea Launched Cruise Missiles.

In your assessment, what changes to U.S. force posture and activity in the PACOM AOR would improve U.S. deterrence against North Korea for the long term?

I believe we have the capability today to deter North Korean aggression, but given where we think the North Korean capability might be in terms of their missiles in the next five years, I think we must continue to explore, improve, and resource our entire missile defense capabilities. This includes the THAAD systems currently placed in the ROK and Guam as well as BMD ships in the Pacific, most particularly in Japan. I support planned improvements to the BMD of the Homeland architecture via the new Homeland Defense

Radar for Hawaii, additional purchase of Ground Based Interceptors, and a detailed study that ascertains the efficacy of positioning interceptors in Hawaii. Lastly, I support continued improvements in the capability and capacity of ballistic/cruise missile defense interceptors that will further enhance homeland defense capabilities and protect key regional nodes from North Korea's aggressive action against the United States.

The National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy set long-term strategic competition with China as a top priority for United States. Does a conflict on the Korean Peninsula risk our ability to effectively compete with China? How so? And how does the United States mitigate that risk?

Yes, there is a level of risk during the conflict period to effectively compete with China. Should deterrence fail, forward-stationed resources will be prioritized to deter conflict or to defeat North Korea on the Peninsula. However, PACOM is mitigating that risk by fielding additional assets, gaining access to new locations, upgrading existing operating locations, and encouraging whole-of-government approaches to deter and confront all regional adversaries, not just China and North Korea. I also support the planned efforts to improve resiliency by dispersing critical enablers, including communication nodes, fuel repositories, medical readiness centers, and logistic support equipment. As challenges in the Indo-Pacific region continue to evolve, the importance of infrastructure recapitalization and the fielding of advanced capabilities have increased.

Strengthening Alliances and Attracting New Partners

Countries within PACOM's AOR typically receive a small percentage relative to other Combatant Commands of the annual worldwide allocation of Foreign Military Financing (FMF), section 333 funding, and other security cooperation.

Given the emphasis on strengthening U.S. alliances and attracting new partners in both the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy, do you believe we need to reevaluate our security cooperation funding to ensure it properly prioritizes the Indo-Pacific region?

Yes, a reevaluation of Security Cooperation funding would be helpful in making PACOM more competitive for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and other security cooperation funding. FMF and other security cooperation funding enable PACOM to meet regional challenges, including border security issues, disaster relief, counterterrorism and maritime security. These funds also support critical partner nation capacity building and capability sustainment. I also recommend we consider attaching funding to vetted requirements in theater rather than a pre-determined dollar amount given to each country.

China is a strategic competitor of the United States, and seeks to replace it as the economic and security partner of choice in the Indo-Pacific region.

What is your assessment of the lasting impact of the U.S. decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) on our ability to compete effectively with China for influence in the Indo-Pacific region?

It is important to note that in withdrawing from the TPP, the United States has not walked away from the issue of negotiating trade agreements in the region. The Administration continues to support fair and equitable trade deals with partners who are willing to live up to the principles of free, fair, and reciprocal trade. Fair and equitable trade deals – either through a regional multi-lateral trade agreement like the TPP, or through a series of bilateral trade agreements in the region – will all serve to protect American interests in the region and diversify economies. TPP, or a similar trade agreement, should not just focus on trade liberalization and increased trade in the region; it should set the new ground rules for regional trade, investment, labor, and environmental standards along terms acceptable to the United States. It should assure primacy of the United States' interests in the future direction of economic policy development and would underpin the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy. In the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, I believe this administration makes clear that there is an interest in pursuing trade agreements with countries in the Indo-Pacific that will be mutually beneficial. Regional trade agreements like the TPP or a series of bilateral trade agreements would increase economic interdependencies, and reduce reliance on China as the region's primary trade partner.

Do you believe our allies and partners are more or less likely to view the United States as the economic partner of choice after threats to withdraw from the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the decision to impose steel and aluminum tariffs on countries like Japan, Australia, and South Korea?

The U.S. supports fair and equitable trade deals with all trade partners, including our partners and allies. Economically, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy endeavors to advance free, fair, and reciprocal market-based policies and approaches; diversify choices for trade, investment, and development partnerships; and enable partners to build sustainable, high-standard infrastructure that will increase regional connectivity while preserving individual country sovereignty. With renewed trade negotiations, our economic relationships with South Korea, Japan, and Australia should grow stronger, deeper, and more equitable.

The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) includes sanctions against countries that engage in significant transactions with the Russian defense and intelligence sectors. A number of countries in the Indo-Pacific region have a long history of procuring Russian weapons systems and/or may be considering new transactions, including India, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

What would be the impact on our defense relationships with these partners if CAATSA sanctions were to be imposed?

It is a fundamental priority for the United States and PACOM to continually develop our alliances and partnerships so that all nations benefit from an environment that safeguards security, stability, prosperity, and peace for the entire region. Russian operations and

engagements throughout the Indo-Pacific continue to rise – both to advance their own strategic interests and to undermine U.S. interests. Russia also sees economic opportunities to build markets for energy exports and arms sales in the region. CAATSA sanctions pose a concern for our defense relationships in the Indo-Pacific with countries such as India, Vietnam, and Indonesia. If the United States decides to sanction these partner nations for their purchases of Russian equipment, this decision may hinder the growth of each developing partnership and increase each partner’s dependence on Russia.

Building partner capacity remains a key line of effort for the Department of Defense in the Indo-Pacific region.

In your view, what are our strategic objectives in building the capacities of partner nations in the PACOM AOR? In a resource-constrained fiscal environment, how would you prioritize the types of programs or activities that should receive support under these security assistance authorities?

The strategic objective in building the capacities of partner nations is to promote stability in the region, to defend our homeland and citizens at home and abroad, and provide economic opportunity to the free market system we lead. Strong and independent states are the best hope for a peaceful world. Challenges are best met together; therefore, America will remain an engaged and trusted ally and partner committed to preserving the security, stability, and freedom necessary for enduring prosperity.

I would prioritize activities that promote relationships by combining material and training solutions. These activities include military exercises and day to day cooperation in delivering regional maritime security and countering violent extremist organizations. Our foremost goal is to develop partner nation self-sufficiency in accordance with their desires and capabilities, allowing them to meaningfully contribute to regional security. We, the United States, cannot and should not do it alone.

Dialogue with partner nations has revealed several common theater-wide themes of emphasis - notably maritime security/domain awareness, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations. Maritime security concerns for Japan and Korea are much different than those of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, or Vietnam and our approach to satisfy those concerns likewise differ. Japan and Korea may prioritize the sale or co-development of high end defensive capabilities like AEGIS, while Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam may focus on developing national coast guard capabilities through the transfer of Excess Defense Articles. That said, the focus is not, nor should it be on hardware, but rather on sustainability – the training, infrastructure, school houses, etc. – that turns hardware into real capacity and furthers relationships.

In your view, what should be the role of the Department of Defense, vis-à-vis other civilian departments and agencies of the Government, in the exercise of instruments of soft power (civilian expertise in reconstruction, development, and governance)?

In my view, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) clearly articulates a role for the Department of Defense in supporting other government agencies in the exercise of soft power. Long term strategic competition, the principal NDS priority, requires a seamless integration of multiple instruments of national power as we expand the competitive space against competitors like China. Our interagency partners will often have the lead in key competitive areas and the Department of Defense will stand ready to support their efforts with key capabilities, enabling relationships, and by maintaining deterrence.

Do you support the Department of Defense’s fiscal year 2019 request of \$98 million for the Southeast Asia Maritime Stability Initiative? In your assessment, what is the value of this security cooperation authority? What signal would it send to countries in the region if this initiative were to not receive full funding?

I strongly support the \$98M request for the Southeast Maritime Security Initiative. These funds will help build relationships and improve maritime domain awareness and the maritime security capacities and capabilities of our partners and allies in Southeast Asia. Building partner capacity in maritime security ensures that any malign activity by adversaries can be detected and countered (either diplomatically and/or operationally) and hence, is in the U.S. interest. Consistency in deed and action is important to assure our partners and others of our resolve. At a time when some countries in the Indo-Pacific question the U.S. commitment to the region, failing to fully fund this initiative would send the wrong message at the wrong time about our long term determination.

Japan

How would you characterize the current U.S.-Japan security relationship?

The U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and freedom in the Indo-Pacific region for over seventy years. The U.S. and Japan have recently begun a complicated force realignment process as part of a larger alliance transformation agenda which includes a review of roles, missions, and capabilities to strengthen the alliance for the next several decades. In 2015, Japan's Peace and Security Legislation, and the updated Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation expanded Japan's ability to contribute to regional stability more broadly. I view our military-to-military relationship as stronger than ever.

How does Japan’s relationship with its regional neighbors—including China, North Korea, South Korea, and Taiwan—influence the U.S.-Japan relationship?

I believe it is important for Japan to maintain and further develop constructive relations with all of its neighbors. Japan can and should increase its multilateral security and defense cooperation with South Korea, Australia, India, and Southeast Asian countries. Working with the U.S., and other U.S. allies and partners in the region, Japan can increase its contribution to global peace, security, and prosperity. Japan recognizes the importance of promoting a rules-based international order, and has demonstrated its commitment to the

region through its “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy.” Japan is a valued and essential partner in important regional security architectures. Progress made to bolster multilateral security dialogues in Northeast Asia effectively links Japanese, U.S., and South Korean approaches. That said, I remain concerned that the Japan-South Korea relationship is strained and exacerbated by historical animosities and territorial disputes. While Japan and South Korea must work through these issues on their own, I worry that other powers may try to use this friction to drive a wedge between the United States and either ally.

What steps, if any, do you believe Japan ought to take to improve its capability and capacity to deter and, if necessary, respond to North Korean aggression? What about Chinese aggression?

I believe the Government of Japan, working through its self-defense forces, must continue to develop its Air and Missile Defense capacity as its top priority regardless of North Korea or China as the aggressor. Japan must also become an interoperable partner in all domains. I would also like to see Japan develop its maritime security and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

The current plan is for the closure of the Marine Corps Air Station on Okinawa after the construction of a Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) at Camp Schwab on Okinawa.

What is your opinion of the prospects for the successful construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Camp Schwab on Okinawa?

I believe both the Government of Japan and the U.S. government remain committed to completing the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF). In February 2017, President Trump and Prime Minister Abe affirmed the commitment of both of our countries to the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan to ensure the long-term, sustainable presence of U.S. forces. They further affirmed that the United States and Japan are committed to the plan to construct the FRF as the only solution that avoids continued use of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. Additionally, the two governments' unwavering commitment to this plan was emphasized in the Joint 2+2 Statement issued in August 2017. The Government of Japan has demonstrated its resolve in working through political opposition from Okinawa Prefectural Government leaders. In December 2016, the Japanese Supreme Court overturned the Okinawa Prefectural Government's rescindment of the landfill permit that halted construction. Upon that ruling, construction resumed in early 2017 and continues today.

Is the cost-sharing arrangement between the United States and Japan to pay for the relocation of U.S. forces from Okinawa to Guam and the costs associated with the continued presence of U.S. forces in Japan equitable and appropriate? Why or why not?

I believe the cost-sharing arrangements with the Government of Japan (GOJ) to be both equitable and appropriate. Japan is paying a significant portion of the cost of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, including the move to Guam, the construction of the Futenma

Replacement Facility, and construction on MCAS Iwakuni. Guam is the only location outside of Japan where the GOJ has agreed to provide funds to offset the cost of relocation. For the GOJ, funding the construction of facilities for the use of U.S. forces on U.S. sovereign territory was an unprecedented step. Overall, Japan will provide nearly one third of the estimated cost of construction related to the move.

The Government of Japan committed resources in 2013 that continue to assist in the strategic realignment of U.S. Marine forces from Okinawa to Guam and other locations as a part of the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative. Additionally, the Government of Japan is supporting the airfield expansion work underway at the Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan and the Futenma Replacement Facility.

Is Japan carrying a fair share of the burden of the cost of the U.S. presence in Japan under the current Special Measures Agreement?

Yes, Japan is carrying a fair share of the burden associated with the U.S. presence in Japan. The Government of Japan's (GOJ) contributions under the Special Measures Agreement cover the cost of approximately 90% of the Japanese labor force that works on our bases and 61% of utilities used on our bases. GOJ also funds a significant amount of the costs to improve existing U.S. facilities in Japan and the cost of relocating training. On December 16, 2015, the United States and Japan agreed in principle on a new five-year package of Host Nation Support for U.S. forces in Japan, which represented a one percent increase in Japanese contributions from the previous year. What is crucial to the Alliance and the security of the Indo-Pacific is not so much that Japan increases the level of Host Nation Support contributions, but rather invests additional funds to increase their own services' capacity and capability in the modern threat environment.

Republic of Korea

What is your understanding of the current status of the U.S.-South Korea security relationship?

Our relationship is ironclad. The U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance serves as the linchpin of peace and security on the Korean peninsula and across the region. In this effort, our two countries are modernizing the Alliance by working to field the best capabilities, collaborating on combined and effective operational plans, and training and equipping personnel to the highest levels of readiness.

If confirmed, what measures, if any, would you take to improve this security relationship?

I believe it is important to ensure the people of the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) understand the enduring mutual benefits derived from this alliance. Furthermore, I believe it is equally important that the United States facilitates an increased role on the world stage for the ROK commensurate with its economic status and influence. If confirmed, I will

work hard to maintain close contact with USFK and ROK military and civilian leadership as we further develop this key security partnership.

What is your understanding of the U.S. obligations in the event of an attack on South Korea by North Korea, and under what circumstances do you believe U.S. armed forces should be committed to engage North Korean forces in response to an attack on South Korea?

Under the Mutual Defense Treaty, the United States and South Korea are obligated to consult together when the political independence or security of either South Korea or the United States is threatened by external armed attack. The United States and South Korea recognize that an attack by North Korea on either party in the Pacific area would be dangerous to the peace and safety of both the United States and South Korea. Therefore, both countries have pledged to act to meet the common danger in accordance with their constitutional processes.

What is your view regarding the timing of the transfer of wartime operational control from the United States to South Korea, which has been delayed?

There is currently no firm timeline for formally completing the transfer of wartime operational control. However, the United States respects the desire of the ROK government to move forward expeditiously with the necessary preparations, bearing in mind that we still have work to do in order to meet the agreed-upon capability-based milestones. The ROK military is a very capable force; if confirmed, I will support all efforts to ensure that the Alliance is ready and well-prepared for the transition when the time comes.

South Korea continues to support the work on the Land Partnership Plan and Yongsan Relocation Plan, which are estimated to be finished within the next four years.

Is South Korea carrying a fair share of the burden of the cost of the U.S. presence in South Korea?

Since 1991, the ROK has helped offset the costs of stationing U.S. forces through the Special Measures Agreement (SMA) mechanism. During that time period, the ROK has provided over \$4 billion worth of construction support to USFK through the SMA program. In addition to providing approximately 42% of the day-to-day non-personnel stationing costs for our forces in country, ROK's financial contributions support the relocation of forces on the peninsula. The United States and the ROK are currently negotiating the new SMA, and I have every expectation that the ROK will continue to provide a fair share of the burden under this new agreement.

What is your assessment of the security benefits of the force repositioning agreed to under the Land Partnership Plan and the Yongsan Relocation Plan? Is the relocation plan affordable? How does repositioning U.S. forces change the way they will operate on the Korean Peninsula?

The two plans relocate and consolidate U.S. forces from north of Seoul and from the Seoul metropolitan area to locations south of Seoul, primarily to the U.S. Army Garrison at Camp Humphreys. The ROK government is paying the majority of the costs associated with the move. The movement of units and facilities to areas south of the Han River improves force protection and survivability, placing the majority of personnel and equipment outside of the effective tactical range of North Korean artillery. In addition, the move to a central location outside of Seoul contributes to the political sustainability of our forward presence and improves military readiness on the Korean Peninsula.

Australia

What is your assessment of the current state of the U.S.-Australia alliance?

Australia is a reliable partner, friend, and ally with a 100 year history of joining the United States in every major conflict across the globe including in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The alliance is key to promoting regional and global security and anchors Southeast Asia. Australia's national military strategy focuses on promoting regional stability, protecting its interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and contributing to coalition efforts. In its 2016 Defense White Paper and the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, Australia reaffirmed its commitment to promote and protect the international rules that support stability and prosperity by supporting U.S. global leadership in practical and tangible ways. Australia actively seeks to deepen its partnership with the United States through military engagements, defense acquisitions, and force posture initiatives. Australia is also building stronger relationships with U.S. alliance partners – Japan and the Republic of Korea. Australia also prioritizes building its defense relationships with India and Indonesia. Australia's leadership and partnership are crucial to advancing our shared regional interests. The alliance continues to deepen through key engagements that stem from the Australia-New Zealand-U.S. security treaty and PACOM's principal bilateral event with Australia, the Military Representatives Meeting, which recently occurred in March 2018. The efforts of these engagements support the annual Australia-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Meeting with SecDef/SecState and their Australian counterparts, anticipated to occur in summer 2018.

If confirmed, what specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

Interoperability between U.S. and Australian forces is a top priority for both countries. A key component of our interoperability is Australia's acquisition program related to U.S. defense articles. Australia is the fifth largest importer of defense systems, ranks second in U.S. defense export markets, and is consistently in the global top ten for U.S.-sourced defense acquisitions. Additionally, Australia is a key developmental partner in fifth generation programs. Sixty percent of Australia's 10-year \$145 billion defense acquisition and modernization effort will be from the United States, with Australia uniquely postured to integrate new capabilities into defense activities at a rate faster than most nations. PACOM will have an essential role in building greater U.S interoperability with Australia through engagements, training, and exercises to ensure combined readiness between our forces. Australia is an influential partner in shaping regional architecture, with close ties to the

United States in defense, trade, counterterrorism, and law enforcement. Additionally Australia's growing relationship with India and strong relationship with Japan present opportunities to advance multilateral cooperation toward strengthening combined readiness and protecting and advancing the region's rules-based order.

What is your assessment of Australia's relations with China? What impact does that relationship have on the U.S.-Australia alliance?

Australia views the United States and China as its two most important relationships. Bilateral relations between Australia and China are based on a strong trade relationship with 21% of all Australian imports coming from China and 32% of all Australian exports destined for China. Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper underlined its commitment to a strong and constructive relationship with China. Australia manages a relatively stable mil-to-mil relationship with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and continues to encourage China to use its growing influence to act in ways that support regional and global security. Australia vocally opposes the assertion of territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea and elsewhere which are not in accordance with international law and delivers messages in its interactions with China on the importance of transparency, the maintenance of rules-based order, and adherence to international norms. Australia's relationship with China presents an opportunity to encourage China to respect international laws and rules-based norms.

In your assessment, what is the strategic and operational value of recent U.S.-Australia cooperation on initiatives such as the Marine Rotational Force-Darwin and Enhanced Air Cooperation?

U.S.-Australia cooperation on initiatives such as Marine Rotational Force-Darwin and Enhanced Air Cooperation is significant at both the strategic and operational levels. From a strategic standpoint, these initiatives message U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and enhance cooperation with Australia as a key ally in maintaining a free and open international order. At the operational level, initiatives such as Marine Rotational Force-Darwin and Enhanced Air Cooperation enhance U.S. interoperability with Australia and other partners in the region, provide additional training opportunities to improve readiness, posture forces forward for crisis response, and increase resiliency by providing additional locations where our forces can operate.

Taiwan

What is your view of U.S.-Taiwan security relations?

Taiwan's open economy, its free and democratic society, and its respect for human rights and the rule of law reflect shared values between Taiwan and the United States. I view the United States as committed to maintaining a robust unofficial relationship with Taiwan that helps ensure the continued peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. Our commitment

to supporting Taiwan's self-defense capability, as established in the Taiwan Relations Act, stands as solid as ever.

What is your opinion of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA)? Enacted 30 years ago this year, do you see any need to modify the TRA to reflect the current state of affairs in the region? If so, how?

For nearly 40 years, the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) has played a key part in protecting Taiwan's freedom of action and U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The TRA declares that peace and stability in the Western Pacific area "are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern." The TRA also asserts the U.S. policy to "maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan." In my view, the Taiwan Relations Act provides a solid foundation on which to continue to strengthen our robust unofficial relationship. I do not see a need to modify it.

Would you seek approval for general officers assigned to PACOM and/or its component commands to visit Taiwan consistent with the Taiwan Travel Act?

The Department of Defense has sent general and flag officers to Taiwan on a case-by-case basis in support of specific objectives intended to help Taiwan improve key aspects of its self-defense capabilities. Flag officers from PACOM have visited Taiwan in the past and will likely do so in the future. If confirmed, I will continue to work within the Department to identify the right individuals with relevant expertise to visit Taiwan for engagement on key defense issues.

What do you believe should be the priorities for U.S. military assistance to Taiwan? What military capabilities do you believe would be most effective in improving Taiwan's self-defense capability over the next 5 to 10 years?

We should help Taiwan focus on the right balance of conventional and asymmetric forces that create dilemmas and challenges for China. We can help in some areas; in other areas, Taiwan should consider indigenous systems that do not rely on outside support. U.S. military assistance should provide credible, resilient, and cost-effective enhancements to Taiwan capabilities.

Given the increasing military imbalance across the Taiwan Strait, do you think Taiwan is making appropriate investments in its defensive capabilities?

Yes. Taiwan has embarked on a defense transformation that provides encouraging signs that it takes the threat seriously. This includes steps that empower its military to adopt innovative thinking and a new asymmetric strategy for island defense.

India

What is your view of the current state of U.S.-India security relations?

The current state of U.S.-India relations presents a historic opportunity to deepen ties and solidify what could develop into the defining partnership of the 21st Century. In less than three decades, India and the United States have moved from “estranged democracies” to a budding strategic partnership. The recent National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy highlight the prominence of India and encourage India’s development as a net security provider in the South Asian subcontinent and the Indian Ocean region.

U.S.-India defense ties are strong and growing stronger; the United States and India have a range of common security interests that include maritime domain awareness, counterpiracy, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. A robust slate of dialogues, military exercises, defense trade, personnel exchanges, and armaments cooperation characterizes the military-to-military relationship. While ties between our militaries have increased, there remains considerable room for growth. The continued growth of our partnership should focus on closer collaboration on common security interests, expanding India’s Major Defense Partner status (MDP), and concluding key foundational agreements that will increase interoperability between our forces and facilitate high-end cooperation.

If confirmed, what specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

An enduring strategic partnership with India comports with U.S. goals and objectives in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will maintain the positive momentum and trajectory of our burgeoning strategic partnership by continuing to build on past efforts to establish relationships and a strong foundation for a long-term partnership. I will seek to prioritize increasing maritime security cooperation, expanding the military-to-military relationship across all Services, concluding key foundational agreements, facilitating greater Indian contributions to Afghanistan, and deepening defense cooperation. Moreover, I see strong potential for greater cooperation on counter-proliferation, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, counterpiracy, counter-terrorism, and greater intelligence sharing on common threats.

What is your assessment of the relationship between India and China and how does that relationship impact the security and stability of the region?

A trust deficit stemming from China’s longstanding relationship with Pakistan, India’s defeat in the 1962 Sino-Indian war, long-standing border disputes, increasing competition for resources, and the Belt and Road Initiative complicate the relationship between the region’s two fastest growing powers. The ongoing border dispute, trade imbalances, and competition for influence across South and Southeast Asia also confound efforts to reduce the pervasive mistrust. Ultimately, this mistrust challenges the security and stability of the region. New Delhi and Beijing do find common ground and cooperate in international forums such as BRICS, the G20, and in Climate Change Conferences where both countries leverage their convergent interests to shape international trade rules to ensure their continued domestic development and economic growth.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to ensure the close coordination of U.S. security policy with respect to South Asia—much of which is in the CENTCOM AOR?

If confirmed, I will coordinate across the combatant command boundary, as is being done today through a 2017 Memorandum of Understanding between both combatant commands, to minimize opportunities to exploit the seam by malign actors. The PACOM and CENTCOM staffs regularly hold cross-boundary coordination meetings to discuss issues that not only exist on the physical boundary between India and Pakistan, but also conceptual seams such as proliferation both to and from each other's AORs. PACOM and CENTCOM have significant collaboration between their Intelligence sections and have worked to institutionalize cross-geographic combatant command senior leader participation in bilateral engagements. The South Asia security policy of the U.S. is not a military-only effort; it is an interagency policy with the State Department's South and Central Asia Affairs Bureau, which crosses both PACOM and CENTCOM areas of responsibility, and a number of other departments and agencies playing significant or leading roles.

Philippines**What is your current assessment of the U.S.-Philippines alliance and the state of our defense cooperation?**

The Philippines is one of America's five treaty allies in the Pacific. PACOM's security cooperation activities are always planned and conducted through mutual agreement and focused on shared priorities. I expect that PACOM engagements with the Philippines will continue to demonstrate the value of the alliance and the U.S. commitment to the Filipino people.

What do you believe the U.S. goals should be in the Philippines and how best can we achieve those goals?

I believe the primary goals of the United States should be to strengthen the alliance with the Philippines and assist in building and maintaining the capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Our network of alliances in the Indo-Pacific is the bedrock of U.S. security strategy in the region. Going forward, I look to increase the scope and depth of bilateral exercises to address training and readiness requirements with a renewed focus on territorial defense, counter-terrorism, and maritime domain awareness. It is in the United States' direct interests to encourage the Philippines to develop its counter-terrorism capabilities, improve its maritime domain awareness, and lead multilateral approaches toward greater peace and stability across the region.

Do you see a permanent shift in the Philippines' approach to China beyond the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte?

The United States and the Philippines have been allies for nearly seven decades and our defense cooperation has always been provided at the request of various Philippine administrations. Ours is one of the most enduring relationships in the Indo-Pacific region. PACOM engagements with the Philippines will continue to demonstrate the value of the alliance and the U.S. commitment to the Filipino people. In short, the relationship is strong enough to stand on its own merits beyond any one individual.

Do recent tensions between the United States and the Philippines threaten the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement?

No, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) approved by the Supreme Court of the Philippines continues to make steady progress. The EDCA enabled PACOM and the Philippines to pursue FY18 and FY19 construction projects at Fort Magsaysay, Basa Air Base, and Lumbia Air Base. The first EDCA projects to begin construction include a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief warehouse and a Command and Control Fusion Center at Basa Air Base. Both projects are on track to break ground in April 2018. Looking forward, PACOM and the Philippines plan to pursue additional project approvals via the Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board process for all five approved EDCA locations, including the Philippines' proposed renovation projects at Antonio Bautista Air Base (Palawan) and Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base (Cebu).

What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the U.S. military assistance being provided to the Philippines' military in its fight against insurgent groups?

PACOM provided effective assistance to the Philippines in its fight against ISIS. In accordance with the Mutual Defense Treaty, U.S. military assistance to the Philippines focused primarily on externally driven security threats from groups such as Al Qaida and ISIS that have leveraged the continued southern Philippines insurgency to advance their global agenda. Ultimately, U.S. support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) proved critical in the AFP's six month battle to recapture Marawi City.

Thailand

What is your assessment of U.S.-Thailand relations?

U.S. Thai relations are on an upward trajectory. We have continued to slowly normalize our mil-mil relationship with increased key leader engagements, including visits by SECDEF, CJCS and PACOM Commander over the past six months. Additionally, PACOM is increasing participation in COBRA GOLD – an integral part of the U.S. commitment to strengthen engagement in the region – which supports prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

If national elections are successfully held in November 2018, what recommendations do you have for reinvigorating the U.S.-Thai alliance?

Despite recent challenges, we have remained close allies and important security partners. During key leader engagements, Prime Minister Prayut explained that elections will not be held in November but delayed 90 days to February 2019. If national elections are successful in February 2019, I would encourage rapid trips by senior leaders to demonstrate our commitment. In addition, I would recommend reinstating funding for International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) both of which have been suspended since the 2014 coup. IMET enables mid-grade and senior Thai officers to benefit from U.S. Civilian and Military education and serves an important role in promoting U.S.-Thai forces interoperability.

What is your assessment of Thailand-China relations?

Sino-Thai relations continue on a trajectory that is enabling China to gain influence through military cooperation and economic investment in Thailand. In terms of military cooperation, China has actively lobbied Thailand's Defense Ministry to procure a variety of military equipment including main battle tanks, armored personnel carriers, and submarines, in excess of \$1 billion (USD) in 2017. Additionally, China and Thailand have broadened bilateral training and exercises, participating in maritime and air exercises, which appear to replicate exercises led by the United States, albeit much smaller in size and scope. In terms of economic ties, China will play a major role in Thailand's \$45 billion (USD) flagship Eastern Economic Corridor project, which will align with China's Belt and Road Initiative and bring much needed investment to Thailand over the next five years. Despite strengthening Sino-Thai relations, Thailand is maintaining its traditional balanced foreign policy approach with allied and partner nations which recognizes China's expanding regional influence, while also appreciating the scope of its 200-year relationship with the U.S.

Vietnam

Recently, the USS *Carl Vinson* made a historic port visit to Da Nang, Vietnam, an indication of the significant progress in the U.S.-Vietnam bilateral security relationship.

What is your current assessment of the U.S.-Vietnam security relationship?

The successful visit of the USS Carl Vinson in March 2018 affirmed our commitment to a growing relationship with Vietnam. Vietnam has been vocal in its support for freedom of navigation and overflight, as well as the development of a legally binding Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. Vietnam's demonstrated commitment to stand up for the international order, especially in the face of coercive behavior by China, deserves our support. Further indicators of the developing relationship include the 2017 transfer of a High Endurance Cutter to the Vietnam Coast Guard and the USNS Mercy's Pacific Partnership exercise with Vietnam planned for May. A robust U.S.-Vietnam defense partnership will promote regional and global security.

If confirmed, what specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

If confirmed, I would prioritize areas where U.S. and Vietnam interests align such as maritime security, maritime domain awareness, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and UN peacekeeping operations. I would also support efforts under the Three Year Defense Cooperation Plan of Action that the United States and Vietnam affirmed last year, focusing initially on the agreement to discuss foundational agreements for increased information sharing and logistics.

What do you see as the next steps for improving U.S.-Vietnam security cooperation?

The next steps in our security cooperation with Vietnam should focus on demonstrating the value of our relationship to Vietnam. Vietnam is looking for U.S. assistance for defense modernization, especially the development of a comprehensive and credible maritime capability. Vietnam's Minister of Defense recently asked SecDef for assistance in procuring undergraduate pilot training aircraft, medium range maritime UAVs, missile components, help in developing the Vietnam Naval Infantry (VNI), and for a second excess defense article U.S. Coast Guard High Endurance Cutter. If confirmed, I will support these requests.

Indonesia

What is your view of the current state of military-to-military relations with Indonesia and, specifically, Indonesian special forces known as Kopassus?

U.S.-Indonesia mil-to-mil relations continue to progress and mature. In 2017, the United States and Indonesia agreed to execute over 200 bilateral activities focused on five areas of cooperation: maritime defense, institution building, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and counter-transnational threats, making the United States Indonesia's largest bilateral defense partner. Changes in Indonesian armed forces leadership have created new opportunities to expand mil-to-mil cooperation.

That said, U.S. forces are currently restricted from training with Indonesia's Special Forces known as Kopassus. DoD has requested Kopassus begin a remediation process. Until completion of the remediation process, PACOM forces will not conduct engagement with Kopassus. Post-rehabilitation engagement will proceed incrementally based on the Kopassus' continued compliance with international human rights standards.

If confirmed, what specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

Indonesia's geographic location, demographics, and regional prominence make it a critical defense partner supporting U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I would continue to focus efforts on the five areas of cooperation: maritime defense, institution building, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and counter-transnational threats. In addition, I would continue engagement through International Military and Education Training to help Indonesia achieve its goal of military modernization and increase interoperability between U.S. and Indonesian forces.

Do you favor increased U.S.-Indonesian military-to-military contacts? If so, under what conditions and why?

If confirmed, I will support increased military-to-military contact within the context of the Strategic Partnership, guided by close consultation with the Departments of State and Defense, and within the existing legal boundaries. I believe close military-to-military relations with Indonesia are integral to achieving U.S. national interests in the region. I also believe that one of the most effective methods for encouraging reform is through interaction between Indonesian and U.S. service members. Regardless of their mission, any interactions with U.S. service members reinforce professional military practices, to include respect for human rights and the rule of law. Increased interactions facilitate greater understanding and reinforce professional values.

What is your view of the commitment of the Indonesian military leadership to professionalizing its armed forces, adhering to human rights standards, improving military justice, and cooperating with law enforcement efforts to investigate and prosecute those military personnel accused of human rights abuses?

Reform efforts continue slowly and challenges clearly remain. However, Indonesia is increasingly committed to professionalization of its armed forces, and new leadership in command of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) opens the possibility of improving this trend within the TNI. In advance of regional and presidential elections scheduled in the coming months, the new commander of the TNI has been mandated to strictly control regional officers, remain neutral, and impose strict punishment for abuses of power.

If confirmed, what would you do to encourage respect for human rights and accountability in the Indonesian military?

If confirmed, I will support TNI's continued progress by encouraging senior Indonesian leaders to fulfill their stated commitments with particular emphasis on accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights. We can accomplish this through bilateral security discussions, joint training, and military assistance. Our engagements with the TNI frequently involve human rights and rule of law training. We have seen significant improvement in these areas from the senior leadership. As I wrote in an earlier response, I view U.S. interaction with TNI counterparts as an effective method to encourage professionalism and continued reform within the Indonesian military.

Burma

The scale of human rights abuses against the Rohingya people and other minority communities in Burma has been staggering. Burma's military bears a significant portion of the responsibility for these atrocities.

If confirmed, what would be your approach to U.S.-Burma military relations?

Although the peaceful process of the 2015 elections in Burma was a cause for happiness, many challenges lie ahead for the government. The U.S. eased sanctions against Burma in October 2016, allowing for greater economic engagement. However, U.S. legislation and policy restricts U.S. military engagement in Burma to workshops, consultation on English-language training, and legal institution reform. Existing engagement largely focuses on professionalization and human rights training through the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies and Defense International Institute of Legal Studies. Burma does not receive International Military Education and Training (IMET) or Foreign Military Financing (FMF). If confirmed, I will continue to follow U.S. engagement policy and continue limited military-military engagement as a means to shape positive behavior and promote reform in the Burmese military.

Diego Garcia

Are you concerned about the sovereignty dispute between the United Kingdom and Mauritius over the Chagos Islands, home to the Diego Garcia military base?

I am confident the sovereignty dispute will end peacefully, but I would have serious concerns if the dispute or its resolution impacted our access to Diego Garcia.

In your assessment, what would be the strategic and operational impact for the United States if we were to lose access to Diego Garcia?

Diego Garcia houses the critically important U.S. Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia. Strategically located in the middle of the Indian Ocean, this facility serves surface and submarine units, supplies regional operations in conjunction with Military Sealift Command, and facilitates global U.S. Navy and Air Force operations. Historically, it has also generated aircraft sorties in support of Operations DESERT STORM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Loss of access to Diego Garcia would have significant strategic and operational impacts – particularly with China's efforts to expand its military presence in the Indian Ocean.

Combating Terrorism

The National Defense Strategy calls for making U.S. counterterrorism operations more efficient and sustainable for the long term. In your view, are there any lessons to be drawn from U.S. counterterrorism operations in the Philippines?

I view the primary lesson to draw from U.S. counterterrorism operations in the Philippines is the importance of maintaining strong alliances and partnerships, as a mechanism to improve counterterrorism capability and capacity before a crisis develops. This allows the United States to provide the necessary support to the Philippines to fight our common enemy, Al Qaida and ISIS, yet maintain a small U.S. footprint in the Philippines. Persistent engagement through AOR-oriented Special Operations Forces has enabled PACOM to rapidly and dynamically respond to the needs of this and other partners.

What is your current assessment of ISIS's presence and capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region?

ISIS currently has limited operational capacity in the Indo-Pacific and the strength of its brand is weakening. ISIS-Philippines fragmented after its losses in Marawi and ISIS-Core losses in Iraq and Syria. Without a recognized leader and the resources of the Maute clan, ISIS Philippines is struggling to recover. In the rest of the Indo-Pacific region, ISIS-associated groups and cells remain committed to jihad, but effective counter-terrorism pressure has kept these groups from building capacity.

What is your current assessment of the military, intelligence, and law enforcement capacities of our regional allies and partners to track and combat terrorist organizations?

Indo-Pacific countries have varying levels of capability and capacity to track and combat terrorist organizations. All of PACOM's partner nations have some organic ability to provide a limited response; however, few countries have the intelligence infrastructure to identify in advance, or successfully execute a governmental response to a "Marawi-like" event. PACOM has developed programs to build partner capacity for counterterrorism operations tailored to each country's internal organization. Additionally, PACOM has begun assisting with a multilateral effort to develop a framework, processes, and infrastructure to encourage information sharing across borders to disrupt transnational threats from a regional perspective.

Is there a nexus between terrorist groups and criminal networks in the Asia-Pacific region?

Yes. In the Indo-Pacific, terrorist groups and criminal networks often draw on the same manpower and resources for activities, including kidnapping for ransom, extortion, and small-scale attacks. Two specific examples come from the Philippines – the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and the Maute Group. Some elements of the ASG use piracy and kidnapping as their primary means of income, while other elements of the ASG conduct acts of terrorism. The Maute Group's criminal empire in Marawi facilitated ISIS-P operations in that city.

Department of Defense Counternarcotic Activities

On an annual basis, the Department of Defense's counternarcotic (CN) program expends approximately \$1 billion to support CN operations, build the capacity of certain foreign governments in Asia and around the globe, and analyze intelligence on CN-related matters.

What is your understanding of the illegal narcotics industry in the PACOM AOR?

The drug trade in the Indo-Pacific threatens regional stability as drug trafficking organizations continue to expand markets and develop criminal partnerships across the globe. Asia-sourced precursor chemicals continue to fuel worldwide cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl production. China is the primary source of illicit fentanyl – a drug responsible for the death of approximately 125 Americans daily. Burma and China produce large amounts of methamphetamine for consumption within the region. Consistently high prices for cocaine in Australia and New Zealand support a small but extremely lucrative trade for Western Hemisphere drug traffickers and feeds enormous amounts of cash back into the Mexican and South American drug cartels.

What role, if any, should DOD play in countering—either directly or with allies and partners—the illegal narcotics industry in the PACOM AOR?

In order to counter the destabilizing effect the illegal narcotics threat has on the region, DOD should continue to work in concert with foreign law enforcement and the U.S. interagency to identify and disrupt drug threats. For the Indo-Pacific, Joint Interagency Task Force West (JIATF West) – PACOM’s executive agent for the counter-narcotics mission – performs this role by building partner capacity programs with foreign law enforcement, sharing intelligence with both domestic and partner nation law enforcement, and assisting in the coordination of foreign partner interdiction efforts across the PACOM AOR.

Transnational Organized Crime

What, if any, threat does transnational organized crime pose to U.S. national security interests in the PACOM AOR?

Transnational organized crime poses a threat to a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific because it weakens our allies and partners by subverting laws and establishing systems to facilitate illicit trafficking. The subversion of national and international laws can lead to increased corruption, money laundering, a loss of faith in the government, and a weakening political resistance to outside influence. Transnational organized crime also provides means to transport narcotics, weapons of mass destruction, terrorists, and other materials for violent extremist groups. Together these effects weaken U.S. ability to influence conditions in the Indo-Pacific, allows competitor nations to extend influence, and allows VEOs to operate with impunity.

What role, if any, should PACOM play in countering the threats posed by transnational organized crime?

PACOM should continue its role in countering the threats posed by transnational organized crime by identifying where transnational organized crime poses a risk to U.S. national security interests. PACOM can also help by coordinating DOD activities in support of U.S. government and partner nation response efforts in the Indo-Pacific. PACOM intelligence capabilities can contribute significantly to the identification of threat networks and provide the necessary analysis to support law enforcement and other activities required to disrupt

transnational organized crime. Further, PACOM leads capacity building efforts and the development of regional cooperative networks to provide critical reinforcement to partner nation governments. By improving the regional environment, we shrink the operational space within which both extremists and criminals can grow and prosper.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

What should be the role for the U.S. military in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) in the Asia-Pacific region?

A key element of PACOM's Theater Campaign Plan (TCP) is building capacity with allies and partners to improve their resiliency and capability to conduct humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). When requested, U.S. military capabilities support the U.S. Government's response to HADR events in the Indo-Pacific region. PACOM's ability to organize and move large amounts of resources by air, land, and sea is an integral part of U.S. HADR missions, which helps mitigate damage and alleviate human suffering in the early stage of a crisis.

HADR cooperation is also an effective means to deepen and strengthen relationships. PACOM's Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) serves as a regional authority on best practices for HADR and helps prepare regional governments for HADR events.

An opportunity for engaging in HADR also comes in the use of Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) and mil-to-mil programs to build disaster resilience in strategically important nations. These programs enhance HADR preparedness with the tangential benefit of maintaining solid relationships and interoperable forces. Improving resiliency with foreign countries will eventually reduce the requests for U.S. Government assistance for minor disasters, allowing us to focus on disasters that are more severe in nature.

PACOM continues to be ready to respond to any request for assistance by the lead federal agency, USAID/OFDA, as part of a whole of government response to a major disaster in the Pacific Area of Responsibility. Some examples where PACOM forces were a major factor in HADR operations include the 2015 Nepal Earthquake, 2013 typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the East Japan earthquake/tsunami of 2011 that also damaged the Fukushima nuclear power plant, and the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004 where over 280,000 people lost their lives in 14 countries.

Are the resources necessary to fulfill this role currently available to the PACOM Commander? If not, what additional resources are necessary?

The resources typically needed to respond are readily available as part of the U.S. military's portfolio of capabilities. However, the time distance factor in the Indo-Pacific is always a concern. PACOM has specific capabilities that are often requested by the Lead Federal

Agency for coordinating international disaster relief. These capabilities include strategic and tactical airlift, mobile airspace control, field engineering and emergency construction, communications, consequence management, information sharing, logistics and supply, medical treatment, and airborne and maritime search and rescue.

There are also niche capabilities such as Humanitarian Assistance Survey Teams (HAST) maintained by the Army and Marines, and PACOM has pre-designated the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade as its forward-deployed HA/DR response force. Finally, the Army and USAID are repositioning HADR assets in several locations within the region.

When it is determined that it is in the U.S. interest for the military to respond DSCA can provide up to \$30 million annually for Foreign Disaster Response. If operations exceed that limited amount, then additional funds need to be made available to reimburse the military for any costs it incurs as a result of supporting disaster relief operations.

How should the PACOM Commander incorporate “lessons learned” from prior HADR operations in the PACOM AOR?

Unfortunately, due to the large number of natural disasters that have occurred in the Indo-Pacific in recent years, PACOM has been involved in numerous disaster relief efforts in the region. The CFE-DM – a PACOM Direct Reporting Unit – was designated to conduct the After Action Report (AAR) for PACOM following the 2015 Nepal earthquake. CFE-DM conducted dozens of interviews with key leaders from supporting PACOM forces, the affected state military, and U.S. interagency to provide a holistic view of all aspects of the disaster relief. Documents like the Nepal AAR are loaded into the Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS), thus all the information is retrievable by organizations at PACOM and by any organization that wants to ensure their training programs incorporate such lessons learned. CFE-DM also pulled lessons learned from our counterparts at SOUTHCOM and CENTCOM which are then incorporated into major exercises such as BALIKATAN and RIMPAC.

All PACOM staff directorates and its service components and sub-unified commands are required to enter data about their engagements in the Global Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System (GTSCMIS). This information is collated for the command to provide a matrix to inform decision making regarding priorities for future HADR capacity building engagements within the Theater Security Cooperation Plan.

Law of the Sea

Do you support U.S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea? If so, why?

I support U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention. Accession would “lock in” the customary rights and freedoms reflected in the Convention, and support the free and open international order. Accession would not impose any additional constraints on the U.S.

military's ability to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, but would give the United States greater credibility when calling on other states to adhere to the same rules.

I agree with Secretary Mattis that protecting freedom of navigation and overflight worldwide is vital to the defense of our national security interests, and is necessary to maintain the mobility of U.S. forces in all areas of the globe and accession to the Convention puts us in the best position to do so.

Would U.S. accession to the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention benefit the U.S. military's mission in the Asia-Pacific region? If so, how?

Yes, accession to UNCLOS would benefit the U.S. military's mission in the Indo-Pacific region. Relying solely on customary international law does not guarantee that the benefits we currently enjoy will be secure over the long term.

With respect to the Indo-Pacific region, specifically, I am concerned that some nations, including China, assert their interests in ways that threaten the foundational standards for the world's oceans as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. This trend is most evident off the coast of China and in the South China Sea where China's policies and activities are challenging the free and open international order in the air and maritime domains. China's attempts to restrict the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea available to naval and air forces is inconsistent with customary international law and as President Reagan said in the 1983 Statement on United States Oceans Policy, "the United States will not, however, acquiesce in unilateral acts of other states designed to restrict the rights and freedoms of the international community in navigation and overflight." As I noted above, the Law of the Sea Convention largely reflects customary international law with respect to navigational rights and freedoms and accession would put the military in a better position to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, including throughout the Indo-Pacific and in the South China Sea.

Quality of Life

Combatant commanders have an interest in the quality of life of military personnel and their families assigned within their AOR.

In your view, what are the role and responsibility of combatant commanders for the quality of life of personnel assigned to their AOR?

The Combatant Commander must continue to be a strong advocate for quality of life (QoL) programs that sustain and support the needs of our Service members and their families, even during an era of fiscal constraint, and champion needed improvement initiatives. The Commander ensures that QoL issues are articulated to community leaders, military installation commanders, DoD policy makers, and members of Congress. If confirmed, I will

continue strong advocacy of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coastguardsmen assigned to PACOM and their families.

If confirmed, what would you do to enhance quality of life programs for military members and their families within the PACOM AOR?

Although QoL programs fall under the purview of the individual Services, if confirmed, I will continue to make QoL for service members and families assigned within the PACOM AOR a top priority. I will work with my Service Component Commanders to ensure our service members' and their families' needs are met.

What is your view of the challenges associated with global rebasing on the quality of life of members and their families in the PACOM AOR (including adequate health care services and Defense Department schools)?

With global rebasing, we must continually review and assess the impact on QoL programs during all phases of rebasing – from planning to final execution. When issues arise that are beyond our control (e.g., host nation funding, construction delays), we must evaluate the impact on our service members and their families – especially with regard to quality housing, adequate health care services and DoD schools – and make adjustments as needed. I regard access and availability to these QoL programs as much a mission readiness issue as the timely movement of service members and weapon systems.

Deployment-to-Dwell

This Committee continues to receive information from the Services saying current deployment-to-dwell ratios are unsustainable in the long term. For example, the Marine Corps states it is operating at a 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio, which negatively affects training and readiness. The only way to mitigate these concerns is either an increase in end strength, which takes years to accomplish responsibly, or a decrease in operational requirements, which carries strategic risks.

Do you believe current deployment-to-dwell ratios are unsustainable?

I believe in general that the majority of unit types within each service have sustainable deployment-to-dwell ratios, with some exceptions. If confirmed, I intend to work with the service headquarters and the PACOM component commands to utilize assigned forces at a tempo that each can manage to meet operational requirements and maintain the health of the force.

If confirmed, how would you evaluate, with a goal of reducing, operational requirements to ensure the long-term viability and readiness of the force?

If confirmed, I will work with the services and PACOM Component Commanders to better understand the balance achieved between operational requirements and the readiness and

long term health of the assigned forces. Commensurate with the NDS' focus on China and great power competition, I expect to see some challenges to PACOM's operational requirements. However, I will work with the Congress, industry, and DoD to develop, position, and employ a more lethal Joint Force that will enable PACOM to meet the increased requirements without sacrificing the readiness and health of the force.

Is there another alternative besides increasing end strength or decreasing operational requirements to improve deployment-to-dwell ratios?

Yes, and I believe the Secretary has articulated that alternative within the NDS by emphasizing preserving peace through strength. This will require us to find the sustainable balance between operational requirements forward and the ability to demonstrate globally the lethality that can deter, fight and win.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Department of Defense 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 PACOM, including assaults by and against U.S. civilian and contractor personnel?

Sexual assault is a crime. I have seen great focus by commanders and subordinates to address the issue of sexual assault and a deep commitment towards the prevention of incidents and the immediate response to reported incidents. Commanders monitor their command climate as it relates to sexual assault and are proactive in taking steps towards ensuring a climate free from sexual assault and reprisals against victims.

PACOM's components have implemented a number of reforms and policy changes designed to improve victim confidence, enhance access to victim advocacy and legal support.

Zero is the only acceptable level for sexual assault in our military.

What is your view of the adequacy of PACOM policies and procedures to protect victims of sexual assault from retaliation for reporting the assault?

I believe that PACOM has strong policies and procedures in place to protect victims of sexual assault from retaliation and I intend to reinforce them. Almost three years ago, PACOM created its own Sexual Assault and Prevention Response (SAPR) Coordinator position to ensure a strong SAPR Program and a proactive approach to prevent sexual assaults and to protect the victims. PACOM is fully committed to this high-priority, mission-readiness program.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the current efforts by the PACOM Service Components to comply with the Department's 2017 strategy to prevent retaliation associated with reporting sexual assault or harassment. This strategy requires PACOM SAPR personnel to track all retaliation allegations and their outcomes. I would also strongly reemphasize the FY14 laws on retaliation, specifically the prohibition on retaliation against service members for reporting sexual assault and retaliatory personnel actions.

I expect commanders to create a culture intolerant of retaliation. Setting the right unit climate encourages the reporting of any crime or misconduct, and ending retaliation is crucial to effectively addressing sexual assault in the military.

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

PACOM Components have adequate training in place to investigate and respond to allegations. All services have established guidelines for a 24/7 sexual assault response capability for victims in all locations. Additionally, PACOM provides oversight for ensuring that adequate resources are present at deployed locations, to maintain the appropriate level of resources to respond to incidents.

PACOM's Sexual Assault Program Manager established a network of Service personnel committed to provide immediate victim support throughout our AOR. PACOM Component Commands augment annual training with events centered on SAPR prevention strategies. This is accomplished through interactive discussion among unit personnel, additional leadership training, and quality assurance site visits.

What is your view of the willingness and ability of military leaders to hold service members accountable for sexual misconduct?

I believe military leaders take this seriously and hold perpetrators accountable. It is absolutely clear to everyone that sexual assault has no place in DoD. Through my actions and words, I will reinforce this on a continuing basis at PACOM, if confirmed. We have the responsibility to enforce Public Laws and regulations and hold our personnel accountable to the high standards that our core values demand. When our people fail to live up to our high professional and ethical standards, they must be held accountable through a fair and impartial process.

For those sexual assault allegations occurring in foreign nations, we will cooperate fully with local authorities in their investigation into alleged assaults in accordance with the Status of Forces Agreement. We will continue to ensure the due process of the law is followed.

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

Service components within PACOM have appropriate resources and programs in place to offer victims of sexual assault medical, psychological, investigative, and legal support. Service components have enhanced victim support services through certified SAPR personnel and healthcare providers. Judge Advocates protect a victim's rights through the investigative and adjudicative stages of the military justice process. Component Commanders work with Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs), legal offices, and investigate organizations to establish Case Management Groups to track unrestricted sexual assaults and the care of victims.

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

It is our obligation to victims of sexual assault to build confidence in the program to allow for reporting the crime without fear of blame or retaliation from peers or anyone else. DoD survey data shows that 1 out of 3 military victims report the crime to military authority, which is a significant increase from 1 out of 10 reporting in 2012. We are getting better, but we still have work to do.

I believe proactive and positively engaged commanders are vital when providing a professional response and comprehensive services necessary to support the victims. I will hold leaders and commanders accountable to set the tone for their organization. They must provide a climate that treats victims with dignity and respect and where any form of retaliation or reprisal is unacceptable. We need to get this right.

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

Change starts and momentum continues from the top of organizations. If confirmed, I will set PACOM-wide expectations for conduct through guidance on core values and will demand that subordinate leaders set the example in their organizations. Commands shall monitor their climates as well as the climates of their subordinate units. Chains of command shall be proactively engaged in resolving issues pertaining to command climate, and commanders will be accountable for their units' actions.

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?

The commander's role in military justice is long-standing and essential to the effectiveness of command in our forces. Removing commanders from the military justice system would signal a lack of confidence in our commanders that would undermine good order and discipline. It would foster doubt in our service members in the competency and abilities of their commanders that are entrusted with their lives. The maintenance of good order and discipline is the responsibility of the commander. Removing this responsibility would certainly erode the ability of a commander to effectively command his or her unit. That said, I believe in and support the assignment of Judge Advocates as formal Victim Advocates and Victim's Legal Counsel.

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

Yes. Restricted reporting allows victim care to be a top priority. Victims of this crime can come forward and receive needed medical and support services while maintaining confidentiality.

Survey data shows that confidentiality is a key driver to accurately assessing the extent of sexual assault. Without restricted reporting, many of these victims would not have an avenue to access needed services. They would simply forgo reporting.

I look forward to the implementation of “Catch a Serial Offender” (CATCH) Program, that allows a victim to provide perpetrator information confidentially. I understand that this was funded and the technology is in development. CATCH will provide adult sexual assault victims who elect to file a Restricted Report with a mechanism to identify individuals who are suspected of perpetrating multiple sexual assaults.

The program will provide victims an avenue to discover if the suspect in their Restricted Report also assaulted another person and then to weigh the option of converting his/her Restricted Report to an Unrestricted Report. This program is voluntary for victims and they may decline to participate in the process at any stage, without any adverse consequences. This program is ideal for those victims who find “strength in numbers” before participating in an investigation.

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 PACOM?

If confirmed, I will establish clear policies and procedures for my leaders, at all levels, to take action to prevent sexual assault, protect and support victims and to ensure a safe and healthy environment for those in their charge.

I will establish a command climate in which a victim can report a sexual assault without fear of retaliation, including ostracism and group pressure from other members of the command. The failure of commanding officers to maintain such a command climate is an appropriate basis for relief from the command positions. Senior officers will evaluate subordinate commanding officers on their performance in establishing a command climate during the performance appraisal process prescribed by the Armed Force of concern for inclusion in the systems of records maintained and used for assignment and promotion selection.

I will ensure all personnel are fully aware, trained, and committed to eradicating sexual assault. My subject matter expert will conduct on-site visits with component services to observe and validate current practices are effective and follow public laws.

What methods for monitoring overall trends and gauging the sufficiency of component commanders' efforts in preventing and responding to incidents of sexual assault do you consider appropriate and intend to implement as PACOM Commander?

If confirmed, I will ensure Commanders comply with all requirements in accordance with DoD Directive 6495.02 and other established Department policies.

Additionally, I will require commanders provide me assessments of their prevention efforts as well as their responsiveness to incidents. From these assessments, I will monitor trends and provide further guidance and direction as necessary. I will emphasize the importance of commanders monitoring their command climate with respect to sexual assault and ensuring sexual assault response capabilities continue to be available at all locations in my AOR. PACOM joins forces with the Component Services to provide an operational perspective to support of SAPR initiatives. This provides oversight and accountability. My full-time sexual assault subject matter expert will work with DoD SAPR Headquarters and Component Services to enhance operational support and strengthen the theater's SAPR network.

Lastly, I will demand victims be treated with fairness and respect and that sexual assault incidents be given the highest priority. I will not allow sexual assault to injure our personnel, our friends, our families, destroy our professional values, or compromise readiness.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress?

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 PACOM Commander?

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 to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate committees in a timely manner?

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 this Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Yes.

Do you agree to answer letters and requests for information from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?

Yes.

If confirmed again, do you agree to provide to this Committee relevant information within the jurisdictional oversight of the Committee when requested by the Committee, even in the absence of the formality of a letter from the Chairman?

Yes.