

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Derek H. Chollet
Nominee for Appointment to be Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Duties, Qualifications, Challenges, Priorities

1. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P))?

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) serves as principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on all matters regarding the formulation of national security and defense strategy and policy and the integration and oversight of DoD policy, strategy, plans, execution, and capabilities to achieve national security objectives. Under the USD(P)'s Title 10 authority, he/she is the principal staff assistant to the Secretary of Defense responsible for development, implementation, and integration of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and strategic policy guidance for DoD activities across all geographic regions, military functions, and domains. The USD(P) is responsible for building, managing, and maintaining U.S. defense relationships with allies, partners, competitors, and international organizations. Among other duties, the USD(P) serves as a statutory member of the Nuclear Weapons Council.

2. If confirmed, what additional duties and responsibilities do you expect that the Secretary of Defense would prescribe for you?

If confirmed, I expect the Secretary of Defense would have me serve as principal advisor on all matters regarding the formulation of national security and defense strategy and policy. In addition, I would expect the Secretary would assign me other duties as appropriate, such as representing the Department of Defense at the National Security Council (NSC) Deputies Committee. If confirmed in this role, the Secretary would expect me to have good working relationships with the Combatant Commands, Military Services, and other DoD components, as well as other departments and agencies within the national security community.

3. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you for this position?

I currently serve as Counselor of the U.S. State Department, where at the rank of Under Secretary, I advise the Secretary of State on a wide range of issues and conduct special diplomatic assignments as directed by the Secretary. In prior government service, I have held senior positions in the State Department, White House, and Department of Defense.

From 2012-2015, I served at the Pentagon as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for International Security Affairs, where I managed U.S. defense policy toward Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Western Hemisphere and served as a close advisor to two Secretaries of Defense, Secretary Panetta and Secretary Hagel. Prior to serving as ASD, I was Senior Director for Strategic Planning on the NSC staff. From 2009 to 2011, I was the Principal Deputy Director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. During the

Clinton Administration, I served on the staff of Deputy Secretary of State Talbott and as chief speechwriter to U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke. Outside of government, I have held senior positions at several leading research institutions, including the German Marshall Fund, Center for a New American Security, Center for Strategic Studies, the Brookings Institution, and Kissinger Center for Global Affairs at Johns Hopkins/SAIS. I have written extensively on U.S. foreign and defense policy, specifically on Euro-Atlantic relations, Middle East policy, and the post-Cold War landscape.

4. If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy?

The Deputy Under Secretary for Policy is a key partner for the USD(P). If confirmed, I would ensure the Deputy Under Secretary and I maintain an open and collaborative working relationship on all national security and defense policy matters, in order to fulfill our roles as principal staff assistants and advisors to the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense. Regarding specifics, if I am confirmed, I will examine the roles and responsibilities in consultation with the Office of General Counsel, to ensure compliance with the law.

5. What are the major challenges you would expect to confront if confirmed as the USD(P)?

If confirmed, one of the greatest challenges I would confront is ensuring U.S. national security and defense policy is adequately postured to succeed in this era of great power competition. The U.S. faces not only the acute threat of Russia, but also the pacing threat posed by the People's Republic of China. In addition to these and other regional competitors, threats from cyber and new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are evolving every day. If confirmed, one of the biggest challenges would be to ensure the Department of Defense can compete and succeed in a multi-domain threat environment.

6. If confirmed, what would your policy priorities be, and what areas of policy do you think have not been adequately emphasized or addressed by the Department of Defense (DOD)?

If confirmed, one of my first priorities would be implementation of the NDS which, in my view, builds upon the strong foundation of the 2018 NDS. Another major priority, if confirmed, would be to continue this Administration's work to provide military assistance in support of Ukraine's self-defense, including working with our allies and partners to contribute to this effort. Similarly, it's essential the U.S. continue its support of Taiwan, in accordance with U.S. law. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress to ensure that the drawdown authority you authorized for Taiwan's self-defense is utilized to address its requirements. Finally, if confirmed, I would make sure the Department of Defense is meeting its obligations to modernize our nuclear triad in order to maintain a safe, secure, and credible deterrent.

7. How would you characterize your views regarding the appropriate posture of stationing of U.S. armed forces overseas and their use in overseas operations?

Our overseas military presence is a key component to our ability to protect and defend the homeland. The U.S. military presence abroad contributes to assuring allies and partners of our defense commitments and shared values, as well as ensures our operational responsiveness.

Civilian Control of the Military

8. What is your view of the role of DOD civilian leadership, as compared to the role of the military, in the formulation of strategy and contingency planning?

Civilian control of the military reflects the values of the American people and is central to our system. The Department is led by a civilian accountable to the President, an elected official, as commander-in-chief. The Department relies on the expertise and experience of our military leaders; but, ultimately, the decisions are made by civilians who have been confirmed by the Senate.

9. How would you define effective civilian control of the military? Aside from civilian control of the military via the Executive Branch, please describe the extent to which you believe Congress plays a role in furthering civilian control of our military?

Congress has a key role in the civilian control of the military, beginning with confirming leaders of the Department, appropriating funds, and conducting oversight. The annual National Defense Authorization Act, Appropriations Act, and other legislation fundamentally shape DoD's activities. Additionally, in Congress' oversight capacity, DoD is engaged daily with Congress and its staff.

10. If confirmed as the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, what specific actions would you take in preparing guidance for and reviewing contingency plans? If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that the Secretary of Defense and the are fully engaged in this process?

If confirmed, I would meet with other senior leaders in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Combatant Commands to hear their perspectives. I was fortunate to have served in a DoD Policy role previously – so, I am familiar with the building and general operations – but, my role would be broader and our national security concerns have changed. Contingency plans are elemental to DoD's readiness and as the Secretary's senior policy advisor, I would speak to him regularly about those plans, if confirmed.

Section 901 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 authorized an increase in the number of personnel in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and “sunsetting” the reduction of funding mandated in section 346 of the FY 2016 NDAA. It does not appear that the Department has used these additional flexibilities to increase the number of civilian billets in OSD, however.

11. In your view, would an increase in the number of personnel assigned to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P)) enhance civilian control of the military? Please explain your answer. (OPR: PMO)

I believe in the fundamental American principle of civilian control of the military. Any potential for future marks against OUSD(P) civilian pay would jeopardize the organization's ability to recruit and retain an experienced and capable workforce that can ensure meaningful oversight of the military. If confirmed, I intend to undertake a rigorous analysis of current staffing levels to determine whether the organization has a sufficiently sized civilian staff for the current—and increasing—number of national security mission sets OUSD(P) is responsible for. If necessary, I will seek additional permanent personnel for OUSD(P) to ensure the organization can successfully carry out civilian control of the military and conduct the national security missions it is responsible for.

2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS)

12. The 2022 National Defense Strategy identifies defending the homeland as the top defense priority.

In your view, is the Department making investments in homeland defense that are consistent with this being a top priority? What additional investments do you believe are necessary to protect the homeland? (OPR: HDHA, OCR: SPC)

In my view, the 2022 National Defense Strategy, along with the embedded Nuclear Posture and Missile Defense Reviews, establishes an effective strategic policy framework to guide investments that will enable successful execution of the first and most important mission of the Department, defending the U.S. homeland. If confirmed, I will continue to support investment in an integrated, layered defense of the homeland, and reducing strategic risk through strengthening deterrence and enhancing resilience, in collaboration with our Allies and Partners.

13. In your view, to what extent should the Department anticipate being called on to support civil authorities in the event of a war with a peer competitor? What investments and planning do you believe the Department should be undertaking to prepare for such a scenario? (OPR: HDHA)

DoD should plan for the possibility that it will be called on to support civil authorities because incidents may occur during or as a result of the conflict. For instance, DoD supported civil authorities in responses to many natural disasters while conducting operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere from 2001 to 2021.

Of course, it is important to recognize that the U.S. homeland is also not a sanctuary. In a conflict, we can expect our adversaries to seriously consider taking actions against the U.S. homeland to impede U.S. decisionmaking, interfere with the deployment of U.S. forces, and degrade our national will. DoD may be called upon to support civil authorities in these

scenarios. With regard to investments, it is my understanding that DoD plans, programs, and budgets for national defense missions. DoD leverages the substantial capabilities and capacity built for national defense missions to support civil authorities. If confirmed, I will review the DoD planning process and DoD plans to ensure that they account for such possibilities effectively.

14. In your view, does the 2022 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including prioritization among the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Please explain your answer. (Review: SPC)

I believe the 2022 NDS accurately lays out the four top priorities for the Department: defending the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by People's Republic of China (PRC); deterring strategic attacks against the United States, allies, and partners; deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary – prioritizing the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific region, then the Russia challenge in Europe; and building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.

For the first time, the Department of Defense (DoD) conducted its strategic reviews, including the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review and 2022 Missile Defense Review, in a fully integrated way. I understand the Department developed the NDS through a process that was iterative, inclusive, and implementable, including regular and wide-ranging touchpoints with senior leaders across the DoD, interagency, and allies and partners.

15. If confirmed, what changes or adjustments, if any, would you recommend in the NDS? What changes or adjustments, if any, would you recommend in the Department's implementation of the NDS? (OPR: SPC)

I believe the NDS accurately identifies the key defense challenges facing the United States and the appropriate ways to respond to these challenges. I know there is much work under way in line with the NDS to modernize our military, pursue advanced technologies, prioritize innovation, and invest in our defense workforce. If confirmed, I will work to ensure continued progress in all of these areas.

The Department of Defense is required to assess the NDS annually. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's commitment to thorough and ongoing assessments and make any adjustments necessary to ensure the NDS evolves in whatever ways necessary to provide for U.S. defense requirements.

16. Do you believe that 3-5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP is required to implement the 2022 NDS effectively? Please explain your answer. (OPR: SPC)

In general, I believe that a strong defense budget is essential to our ability to implement the 2022 NDS.

I understand that for FY 2024, the Department has requested a \$26.0 billion budget increase, representing a 3.2 percent increase over the FY 2023 enacted base level of \$816.0 billion and a 13.4 percent increase from the FY 2022 base level. I believe these increases address both the urgency of 2022 NDS implementation and recent inflationary impacts.

U.S. competitors – especially our pacing challenge, the PRC – continue to expand their capabilities to challenge the United States. Deterring aggression by these actors requires investments in U.S. innovation, acquisitions, and the DoD workforce. The budget request the Department has put forward makes these necessary investments. The FY 2024 budget request for procurement and research and development totaling \$315 billion, for example, is the largest in the history of the Department and ensures combat-credible forces across all domains.

While resourcing levels are critical, much depends on how the Department prioritizes investments. Under any resourcing level, the Department must continue to focus investments in line with the 2022 National Defense Strategy.

17. Looking forward, what types of resource shortfalls, if any, are likely to hamper the Department’s execution of the 2022 NDS and other national defense priorities, in your view? How would you address or mitigate these shortfalls, if confirmed? (Review: SPC)

In general, I believe that a strong defense budget is essential to our ability to implement the 2022 NDS. Although resourcing levels are critical, much also depends on how the Department prioritizes investments. Under any resourcing level, the Department must continue to focus investments in line with the 2022 National Defense Strategy.

Global Force Posture

18. What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current U.S. global defense posture, particularly as it relates to stationing U.S. military forces overseas, and where would you look to increase or decrease U.S. force posture overseas given current international security dynamics? (Review: SPC)

I believe DoD has a strong global posture. If confirmed, I am committed to continue the Department’s efforts to enhance U.S. force posture globally, in locations and with allies and partners that support our ability to project integrated deterrence, campaign day-to-day to gain and sustain military advantages, and prevail in conflict, if necessary.

Building the necessary force posture, including infrastructure, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, will require funding, manpower, and specialized requirements. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress, other Federal departments and agencies, and allies and partners, to ensure the Department has the critical resources we require to enhance and sustain posture, presence, and readiness around the world.

19. In your view, what role do forward-stationed forces play in implementing the NDS

and what is the proper balance between forward-stationed, rotationally-deployed, and surge forces in executing our defense strategy? (Review: SPC)

DoD relies on a balance of forward-stationed and rotationally deployed forces to meet our NDS objectives and mission requirements on a daily basis. In this changing global security environment, the proper balance among forward-stationed, rotationally-deployed, and surge forces will vary. I would want to work closely with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as he advances global force management recommendations to the Secretary.

20. Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition and conflict against a strategic power. If confirmed, what U.S. alliances and partnerships would you consider most critical and what new partnerships would you pursue in each Combatant Commander's area of responsibility?

U.S. alliances and partnerships are one of our unparalleled advantages over our competitors, and this Administration is doing more than ever to bolster them around the world. If confirmed, I would want to work with the Department on how to improve our already strong standing with allies and partners to reflect the priorities of the National Defense Strategy.

21. In your view, in the event of a major conflict with a strategic competitor such as China or Russia, what component of DOD would be responsible for real time management of the resulting impacts and necessary adjustments to global force posture? Is that DOD component adequately resourced and structured to react at the speed of relevance? (OPR: SPC)

In the event of a major conflict with a peer or near-peer competitor, the Department would use standing processes as well as emergent senior leader fora to manage the defense approach, resulting impacts, and necessary adjustments to global force posture at the speed of relevance. This includes utilization of long-standing global force management processes, that are well functioning and adequately resourced.

Nuclear Capabilities and Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)

United States nuclear forces have not been meaningfully updated since the Cold War. Currently, the U.S. is the only nuclear-armed country in the world without the ability to manufacture a fully new nuclear weapon. If these issues are not addressed, aging and attrition will cause the U.S. to lose the capabilities that have deterred nuclear attacks and major conflict for over 70 years – all while each of our major nuclear-armed adversaries are expanding and modernizing their own forces.

22. What is your understanding of the state of U.S. nuclear forces, its global nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) architecture, and the supporting weapons sustainment and production capabilities within the National Nuclear Security Administration? (Review: SPACE)

As Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks have testified, nuclear deterrence is a top priority for the Department. I am confident that our nuclear capabilities remain safe, secure, and effective today, but as stated in the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review, much of our nuclear weapons stockpile, delivery systems, and supporting capabilities have aged without comprehensive refurbishment and require continued investment to modernize. It is vital that we maintain a credible nuclear posture backed by a balanced and flexible nuclear stockpile.

23. Do you agree with Secretary Austin that nuclear deterrence is DOD's highest priority mission and that modernizing each leg of the nuclear triad and the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex is a critical national security priority? (Review: SPACE)

Yes, I agree with Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks that modernization of the nuclear triad, as well as our NC3 architecture and the National Nuclear Security Administration complex, is critical to U.S. national security and should remain a top priority for the Department.

24. What is your understanding of how Russia, China, and North Korea have expanded or modernized their nuclear force capabilities? (Review: SPACE)

I am concerned by the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification, as well as by Russia's continued emphasis on nuclear weapons in its strategy and North Korea's continued expansion and diversification of its nuclear forces. We face a significant challenge with two nuclear peers. The pace and scale of China's nuclear development is troubling. The intelligence community estimates that China's nuclear arsenal may exceed 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030 and 1,500 by 2035—rough parity with the United States. Russia's conventional force is suffering significant losses in Ukraine, potentially making Russia even more reliant on its nuclear arsenal.

I also understand that Russia has largely completed modernization of its strategic forces and is pursuing new strategic-range nuclear systems. I am also concerned by Russian assistance to the PRC's nuclear program, as well as Russia's non-compliance with the New START Treaty. If confirmed, I will continue to support the modernization of our nuclear triad and regularly reevaluate what is required to maintain a credible capability to deter strategic attacks.

25. The last two Commanders of U.S. Strategic Command have concluded that reports of China's nuclear force expansion should be considered a "strategic breakout," which represents an unprecedented threat to global stability. Do you agree with this assessment? (OPR: SPACE)

I agree that the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification, as well as the PRC's lack of transparency and its growing military assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region, present new challenges for strategic stability. If confirmed, I will support the modernization of our nuclear triad and regularly reevaluate what is required to maintain a credible capability to

deter strategic attacks, assure our allies and partners, and meet presidential objectives. I will also support efforts to engage the PRC on practical measures to reduce risks.

26. In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies? (Review: SPACE)

I am aware of reports regarding the PRC's nuclear expansion. Based on my understanding of U.S. nuclear force posture, I am confident that U.S. nuclear forces remain sufficient to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats the nation faces today and will likely face in the coming years. If confirmed, I look forward to increasing my understanding of developments regarding the PRC's nuclear expansion and potential options for the Department of the Defense to consider, consistent with existing policy and the capacity of the nuclear enterprise.

The PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification increase the PRC's capabilities to threaten the United States and our allies. A large and diverse nuclear arsenal could also provide the PRC with new options to leverage nuclear weapons for coercive purposes, including in the form of military provocations against our allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will continue to support the modernization of our nuclear triad and regularly reevaluate what is required to maintain a credible capability to deter strategic attacks, assure our allies and partners, and meet presidential objectives. Simultaneously I will support ongoing efforts to engage the PRC on the full range of strategic issues, including nuclear risk reduction and potential approaches to arms control.

27. Do you believe our current deterrence policy accounts for two near peer nuclear competitors like Russia and now China? (OPR: SPACE)

I am confident that our our existing deterrence strategy and nuclear force posture is sufficient to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats we face today and will likely face in the coming years. I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's finding that we must carefully assess the implications of China's ongoing nuclear expansion for U.S. nuclear strategy, forces, arms control approaches, and planning for regional conflict. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess the implications of the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification and will consider whether nuclear policy and other adjustments are necessary to achieve our deterrence objectives.

28. Do you support the U.S. nuclear force structure changes recommended by the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review? In light of recent actions by Russia, and China emerging as a second near peer nuclear competitor, do you believe there should be additional consideration to revisions in nuclear force structure?

Yes, I support the NPR recommended force structure changes. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess the implications of the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification and will consider whether nuclear force structure adjustments are necessary to achieve our

deterrence and other objectives for the PRC as well as Russia and other potential nuclear-armed challengers.

29. What is your assessment of our regional and extended deterrent capabilities in Europe and Asia and our allies views on them?

Although I cannot speak for our allies, I am confident that U.S. strategic nuclear forces, as well as capabilities tailored to extended deterrence, are sufficient to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats we face today and will likely face in the coming years. I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's findings that modern, flexible, and tailorable U.S. nuclear forces are key to assuring allies and partners that the United States is committed and capable of deterring the full range of threats they and we face.

The 2010 NPR called for retaining “sufficient force structure in each leg to allow the ability to hedge effectively by shifting weight from one Triad leg to another if necessary due to unexpected technological problems or operational vulnerabilities.”

30. Do you agree with that requirement for our nuclear force structure? Please explain your answer. (OPR: SPACE)

Yes, the 2022 NPR calls for modernization of all three legs of the triad, nuclear command and control, and recapitalization of our nuclear weapons production complex to ensure its resilience and responsiveness.

I agree that our nuclear forces and posture should be resilient to geopolitical, operational, programmatic, and operational risks. The three legs of the nuclear triad are complementary and offer unique attributes that are mutually supporting and contribute to risk mitigation. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we are identifying opportunities and taking steps to manage risks to our nuclear deterrent.

The 2010, 2018, and 2022 NPRs concluded that the United States would maintain a substantial portion of its nuclear forces on continuous alert, including keeping nearly all ICBMs on alert, and maintaining a significant number of SSBNs at sea at any given time.

31. Do you agree with that conclusion? Please explain your answer. (Review: SPACE)

I agree that maintaining a portion of U.S. nuclear forces on day-to-day alert maximizes decision time, preserves the range of U.S. response options, and contributes to strategic stability. It enhances deterrence by denying potential adversaries the capability to destroy our nuclear deterrent forces in a surprise first strike

In response to conditions set forth in the Senate Resolution of Ratification of the New START Treaty, President Obama certified on February 2, 2011, that he intended to “(a) modernize or replace the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems: a heavy bomber and air-launched cruise missile, an ICBM, and a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) and SLBM; and (b) maintain the United States rocket motor industrial base.”

32. Do you agree with and support these objectives for modernizing the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems? Please explain your answer. (OPR: SPACE)

I agree and support the findings of the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review calling for full modernization of all three legs of the nuclear triad and reinvigoration of our nuclear weapons production complex and supporting industrial base. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that modernization of the nuclear triad and our nuclear weapons complex remains a top Department priority.

33. In your view, is the current program of record sufficient to support full modernization of the nuclear triad, including delivery systems, warheads, while supporting National Nuclear Security Administration infrastructure? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe the forces in the Program of Record were designed with significant capacity to respond to a range of potential threats and challenges, ensuring the credibility of our deterrent into the future. I also agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's finding that we must continue to carefully assess the security environment. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts within the Department of Defense, in partnership with the Department of Energy, to review these programs to ensure we are modernizing our forces and supporting infrastructure in an effective, affordable, sustainable, and timely manner

34. Do you support the program of record for replacing the Minuteman III ICBM system with the Sentinel ICBM system? (OPR: SPACE)

I support the finding of the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review that we must replace the Minuteman III ICBM with Sentinel to ensure the continued credibility of the ground leg of our nuclear triad.

The Long Range Stand Off Weapon (LRSO) is intended to replace the AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM).

35. Do you support the Long Range Stand-Off weapon as a replacement for the aging ALCM? (OPR: SPACE)

I support the finding of the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review that we must replace the air-launched cruise missile with the Long Range Stand-off weapon to ensure the continued credibility of the air leg of our nuclear triad.

36. If confirmed as USD(P), would you take steps to advocate for, and ensure the continued development of, the Sentinel ICBM and Long Range Stand-Off weapons programs? If so, what are those steps? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes. I agree with Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks that modernization of our nuclear triad is a top DoD priority. If confirmed, I will advocate within the Department and with interagency partners, and engage with Congress for the effective and timely modernization of all three legs of the nuclear triad, including development of the Sentinel ICBM and the Long Range Stand-Off weapon, as well as nuclear command and control.

37. The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review concluded that current security conditions did not warrant adoption of a nuclear “No First Use” (NFU) policy by the United States. Do you believe a NFU policy would be appropriate for the United States? Please explain your answer, including the implications of such a policy for the U.S. extended deterrence commitments to our allies. (OPR: SPACE)

I support the findings of the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review that adoption of a No First Use declaratory policy would result in an unacceptable level of risk given the range of non-nuclear capabilities being developed and fielded by competitors that could inflict strategic-level damage to the United States and its allies and partners. Some allies and partners are particularly vulnerable to attacks with non-nuclear means that could produce devastating effects. I also support the NPR position that the United States retains the goal of moving toward a sole purpose declaration and we will work with our allies and partners to identify concrete steps that would allow us to do so.

38. By statute, the USD(P) is a member of the Nuclear Weapons Council. In your view, what are the most significant issues the Council should take up in the coming years? (OPR: SPACE)

As one of six principal members of the Nuclear Weapons Council, if confirmed I will work to ensure that the Department of Defense, in partnership with the Department of Energy, is working to realize the planned modernization of the nuclear triad and the National Nuclear Security Administration production complex while identifying opportunities to mitigate geopolitical, operational, programmatic, and technological risks.

39. If confirmed, will you commit to fully participating in Nuclear Weapons Council matters and personally attending meetings? (OPR: SPACE)

If confirmed, I commit to fully supporting active and constructive Policy leadership as one of the six principal members of the Nuclear Weapons Council, including personally attending meetings as appropriate and as my other responsibilities permit.

40. Do you support the continuation of the W93 program and parallel efforts to collaborate with the United Kingdom in the maintenance of its independent nuclear deterrent? (OPR: SPACE)

I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's decision to continue the W93 warhead program and continue parallel efforts to collaborate with the United Kingdom on its Replacement Warhead program, the Common Missile Compartment, and the Mark 7 aeroshell.

41. Based on your understanding of the condition of the nation's nuclear command, control and communications system, do you believe the modernization of the system should be a high priority, and, if so, what actions would you take to advocate such steps, if confirmed? (OPR: SPACE)

An effective Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) system that can provide command and control of U.S. nuclear forces at all times, and under all circumstances, is an essential element of deterrence and crisis stability. If confirmed, I would use the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's chair in DoD governing and budget processes to advocate for prioritizing the modernization of the NC3 system, which underpins our nuclear deterrence capabilities.

During his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin stated that any future reductions in U.S. nuclear forces should be taken only within the context of a formal, verifiable arms control agreements with adversaries, rather than by unilateral actions.

42. Do you agree with Secretary Austin's views? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes, I believe that reciprocal, verifiable nuclear arms control offers the most effective and responsible way to enable future reductions in nuclear forces. Unilateral steps are not an effective approach.

43. In your assessment, how would delaying or cancelling current nuclear modernization plans and programs affect our arms control negotiation leverage with near-peer and peer competitors? (OPR: SPACE)

I support the NPR-recommended modernization of U.S. nuclear forces and look forward to supporting this effort, if confirmed. Doing anything less would reduce U.S. leverage with our competitors.

44. What is your current assessment of the New START Treaty and the likelihood of any follow-on nuclear arms control treaties with either Russia or China? (OPR: SPACE)

When fully implemented by both parties, the New START Treaty can contribute to U.S. security. However, Russia's invalid suspension of the Treaty has eroded the effectiveness of the New START Treaty. Russian and Chinese actions to expand their respective nuclear arsenals make negotiating any future nuclear arms control treaties challenging.

45. In your view, at what threshold condition should future nuclear arms control regimes be expanded to include China's arsenal, as well as those of the United States and Russia? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe China's nuclear buildup has already proceeded to a point where any future arms control regime that includes the United States must take into account both Russian and Chinese arsenals.

46. Do you believe that the United States should consider accepting limitations on its missile defense, cyber, or conventional power projection capabilities as part of an agreement with Russia or China on nuclear weapons' reductions? (OPR: SPACE)

No, I would not recommend accepting such asymmetrical limitations. On nuclear weapons reductions, I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) observation that Russian and Chinese actions to expand their nuclear arsenals make mutual and verifiable arms control challenging. The United States will need willing partners operating in good faith to make any meaningful progress. On missile defense, I agree with the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR), which states that the Department supports strengthening mutual transparency and predictability with Russia and the China as appropriate. However, my understanding is that no missile defense limitations are currently under discussion. Compliance with negotiated cyber capability limitations would be unverifiable. The United States has instead sought to promote cyberspace stability through the recognition that existing international law applies to cyberspace, the promotion of cyberspace norms of responsible state behavior during peacetime, and confidence-building measures.

Missile Defense

Our current missile defense policy is focused on deterring North Korea and Iran while reserving our nuclear deterrent against missile threats from Russia and China.

47. What are your views on this policy, especially in light of Russia's recent statements and actions in Ukraine, as well as China's and North Korea's ongoing expansion of their respective nuclear and missile forces? (OPR: SPACE)

I support the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR), which continues longstanding policy stating that the United States will continue to rely on strategic deterrence – not missile defense – to address and deter large, intercontinental-range, nuclear-capable missile threats to the homeland by near-peers. Against the DPRK and Iran, the MDR states that the United States will continue to stay ahead of threats to the homeland through a comprehensive missile defeat approach, complemented by the credible threat of direct cost imposition through nuclear and non-nuclear means.

48. What role do you believe integrated air and missile defenses should play in defending limited areas and defeating smaller scale cruise or hypersonic glide missile attacks by larger threats, such as Russia and China? (OPR: SPACE)

I agree with the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR), which recognizes that adversaries are pursuing and demonstrating advanced, long-range space and missile systems capable of traversing entire Combatant Command Areas of Responsibility, and that attacks from these systems could increasingly blur the line between regional and homeland defense and challenge existing integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) architectures. In this respect, I support examining all options to enhance our IAMD posture against conventional missile threats to the U.S. homeland, including limited area defense against smaller scale missile threats. Regionally, I support the language of the MDR, which states that the United States will continue to pursue missile defenses in support of U.S. forces, our allies, and partners against all threats – including hypersonic missile threats – emanating from any source. Another key tenet of the MDR that I support is its emphasis on promoting international cooperation with allies and partners to enhance collective IAMD efforts.

The global U.S. architecture for detecting and tracking threat missiles is a highly complex maritime, terrestrial, airborne, and space-based system of systems, with the constituent pieces managed and sustained by a number of different DOD components.

49. Do you believe these various systems are appropriately integrated and provide operational commanders with a holistic threat picture capable of supporting real-time operational decisions? If so, please explain your answer. If not, please explain what steps you would take, if confirmed, to improve global sensor integration. (OPR: SPACE)

I understand that U.S. missile warning and tracking systems are highly effective and that greater integration can make them even more effective. However, offensive missile

threats are growing rapidly and our ability to keep pace is a perpetual challenge which will always have room for improvement. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments and Services, Defense Agencies, and operational commanders throughout the Department to ensure that U.S. systems can deliver critical, integrated and real-time information and data from ground and space-based sensors in support of U.S. missile defense systems around the world.

50. If confirmed as USD(P), what would be your priorities for U.S. missile defense capabilities for the homeland? (OPR: SPACE)

If confirmed, my priorities for U.S. homeland defense would include many of the areas of focus outlined in the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR). If confirmed my top priorities would include: improving ballistic missile defense of the homeland, which covers all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories; examining active and passive defense options for cruise missile defense of the homeland; fielding active and passive defenses for the defense of Guam; and pursuing ground and space-based sensor integration of existing and future capabilities.

51. What are your views about protection of the homeland from cruise missile threats? (OCR: HDHA, OPR: SPACE)

In my view, we are seeing the emergence of a greater, more diverse, and more sophisticated missile threat to North America, including advanced, long range cruise and hypersonic missiles able to target critical infrastructure. The Department must be prepared to respond to this threat, both to defend the Homeland and to assure our ability to project military power globally. If confirmed, I will continue to examine both active and passive measures to decrease the risk from any cruise missile strike against critical assets, and work alongside our Canadian allies to improve NORAD's ability to detect potential threats in the approaches to North America.

52. Do you support the current plan for modernizing the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GBMD) system, which anticipates the deployment of a Next Generation Interceptor in about a decade? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes. As the backbone of the U.S. homeland ballistic missile defense architecture, the Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system offers a visible measure of protection for the U.S. population and ensures that we will not be coerced by growing DPRK intercontinental ballistic missile threats. If confirmed, I will commit to improving the capability and reliability of the GMD system, including deployment of the Next Generation Interceptor to complement and potentially replace our current Ground-Based Interceptors, as part of our comprehensive missile defeat strategy to stay ahead of DPRK and potentially Iranian missile threats.

53. What is your assessment of the importance of a space-based sensor capability to support both regional and homeland missile defense scenarios? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand that space systems represent a critical layer of our integrated sensor network, providing global warning and communications for our homeland and regional missile defense systems positioned around the world. Proliferated space-based sensor capabilities are resilient and enable persistent attribution, identification, tracking, and if needed, fire control-quality data against ballistic and hypersonic missile threats. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department has adequate spaced-based capabilities to support its regional and homeland missile defense networks.

54. The most recent Unified Command Plan transferred the Joint Staff role of missile defense responsibility from Strategic Command to Space Command. Please explain your views on this change of oversight. (OPR: SPACE)

I support the 2022 Unified Command Plan (UCP) decision to transfer missile defense responsibilities from U.S. Strategic Command to the U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM). Bringing different mission areas of missile warning, missile defense and space domain awareness under one command will enable USSPACECOM to integrate and fuse all the sensor data required – detection, characterization, tracking and dissemination – for effective missile defense.

55. What component of the OUSD(P) is responsible for Theater Integrated Air and Missile Defense in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, and in your view, what should be done to improve the protection of deployed U.S. and allied forces from growing missile threats in operational theaters, particularly from advanced cruise and hypersonic missiles? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand that within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy there is a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Space and Missile Defense that works closely with the respective regional DASD responsible for Europe and the Indo-Pacific on Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD). I also understand that U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) are responsible for coordinating IAMD in the European and the Indo-Pacific theaters, respectively. In Europe, given the unprovoked and illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine, IAMD plays an especially critical role. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to work closely with our NATO and our European allies to ensure we have the right capacity and capabilities needed to address all types of missile threats and ensure our freedom of movement in theater. In the Indo-Pacific region, missile threats posed by China and others are growing and becoming more dangerous. If confirmed, I will actively work

within the Department, as well as with allies and partners to enhance our regional IAMD efforts against any types of offensive missiles.

56. What is your assessment of the recent activities associated with the missile defense of Guam? (OPR: SPACE)

The defense of Guam is critical to U.S. presence in the Indo-Pacific region. I fully concur with the language from the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR), which acknowledges that the missile defense architecture on Guam must be commensurate with its unique status as both part of the homeland as well as a critical, regionally-based operational hub. If confirmed, I will support efforts to ensure that our missile defenses on Guam strengthen deterrence while visibly demonstrating to our allies and partners that the United States stands ready to fulfill its global security commitments.

Space

China and Russia are training and equipping their military space forces and fielding new anti-satellite weapons to hold U.S. and allied space operations and activities at risk, even as they push for international agreements on the non-weaponization of space.

57. In your view, does the 2022 NDS accurately assess the strategic environment as it pertains to the domain of space? (OPR: SPACE)

Absolutely. The 2022 NDS captures how China and Russia are integrating space into their military strategies and doctrine as a way of gaining information advantage. China in particular is integrating space and counterspace capabilities to enhance its ability to fight and win a modern military conflict. Specifically, China is leveraging increasingly sophisticated and proliferated space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and command and control to improve the precision and accuracy of long-range missile systems, to seek to limit the Joint Forces' ability to operate in the Western Pacific.

58. How would you assess current DOD readiness to implement the 2022 NDS as it relates to the domain of space and the 2022 Defense Space Strategy? (OPR: SPACE)

In my understanding, the Department is fielding resilient systems in an assured space posture to preserve Joint Force access to the space-based services that underwrite combat credibility. I also understand that the Department is posturing across all domains to protect and defend the Joint Force from potential adversary threats emanating from hostile uses of space, including potential adversaries' ability to integrate space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems with command and control of means to track and strike our forces.

59. What do you perceive as the most significant threats to U.S. national security space

satellites? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe that the accelerating scope and scale of counterspace capabilities, particularly from China and Russia, is the most significant threat to U.S. national security space satellites, as well as to allied and partner space systems. China and Russia see counterspace capabilities as a way to gain the information advantage that is critical in modern warfare and to undercut the advantages that the U.S. Joint Force derives from space. Iran and North Korea have similarly pursued and demonstrated some counterspace capabilities.

The DOD is increasingly reliant on commercial space systems which can become enemy combatants in a time of conflict.

60. What do you perceive as the most significant threats to commercial space systems owned by U.S. companies? (OPR: SPACE)

Our adversaries have indicated that they do not discriminate between U.S. government satellites and commercially owned satellites that support us. That means Chinese and Russian counterspace capabilities pose significant risk to these systems.

61. What are the Department's responsibilities in defense of U.S commercial assets in space, especially those the DOD is employing in a time of conflict? (OPR: SPACE)

DoD's responsibilities to protect and defend commercial capabilities would be a function of the particular circumstances. My understanding is that the Department can utilize a range of solutions across all domains and during all phases of the spectrum of conflict to deter attacks against U.S. national security and space interests and, when necessary, defeat threats to those systems, including commercial space capabilities as directed.

62. Do you believe the Department should offer indemnity to commercial companies supporting DOD operations? (OPR: SPACE)

The Department relies on commercial services in sectors across the economy. I believe the Department must understand the risks it assumes under varying circumstances, just as commercial firms must understand the risks that they assume under varying circumstances across sectors. If confirmed, I will work with the Space Force and other stakeholders to identify the appropriate risk management options regarding commercial space companies supporting DoD space operations.

63. Do you have concerns about over-reliance on commercial systems supporting DOD operations, especially in a time of conflict who may find it in the companies best commercial interest to cease support to the Department? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe that reliance on a mix of government and commercial solutions can diversify

risk. The correct balance and the degree of appropriate diversification would correspond to the criticality of the mission and other factors.

64. If confirmed, would you support the development of offensive and defensive space control capabilities to counter threats against such assets? (OPR: SPACE)

If confirmed, I would support the development of offensive and defensive space control capabilities to counter threats to U.S. national security interests in space and to counter adversaries that may pose a threat to the men and women of the Joint Force in the case of a conflict. I would support the development of options across all domains, including space, to defend our critical space systems and challenge an adversary's ability to track and strike our forces.

65. What are your views on the U.S. Space Force? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe the creation of the U.S. Space Force was an overdue step to strengthen U.S. national security. Space is essential to the modern way of life and the modern way of war. Space also connects the Joint Force, and is a central component of integrated deterrence. It is critical that we have a cadre of Guardians focused on the unique challenges of the space domain to assure our space-based missions, attribute hostile acts, and protect the Joint Force from space-enabled attacks.

66. What are your views on U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM)? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe the creation of the U.S. Space Command was an important step to strengthen U.S. national security. Space is a vital interest to the United States. From commerce to warfighting, our nation depends on space. It is widely recognized as an operational domain, and there are risks of conflict just as there are in any other domain. It is important that we have a joint commander with operational authorities, focused on delivering effects from space, and protecting and defending our interests in space.

67. In your view, how could the U.S. Space Force and SPACECOM exploit commercial and small launch options to allow for more rapid replenishment and on-orbit employment of vital warfighting systems, while minimizing risk of mission failure? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand the U.S. Space Force and U.S. Space Command are prioritizing initiatives that harness the innovative capacity of the U.S. commercial space industry. Today, one hundred percent of our payloads rely on commercial launch service providers. I understand that the Department continues to leverage its large demand for launch services to incentivize even more responsive options. If confirmed, I would support such efforts.

68. Do you believe other services should maintain organic space capability? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand that with the establishment of the U.S. Space Force as a separate and distinct Service, many of the DoD space capabilities were transferred to the Space Force. That does not mean the other military departments don't have a need for their own organic space capabilities outside of what the U.S. Space Force can provide. If confirmed, I would monitor the space enterprise portfolio across the DoD and determine if additional realignments are necessary.

69. Do you believe the Department of the Air Force is adequately funded to handle both the Space Force and the Air Force or should there be a TOA increase? If so, where should the increase come from and how should “pass through” be handled? (OPR: SPACE)

As part of strengthening U.S. military advantages, it is critical to fund key space capabilities so that we address growing threats, especially those that have the ability to deny hostile uses of space by competitors and potential adversaries whose forces are increasingly enabled from space. Though I am not currently privy to budget details, if confirmed, I would ensure OSD Policy exercises its role in support of overseeing the budget process and the development of Secretary-level guidance that helps ensure the Military Departments' appropriate resourcing levels for capability development in space and other domains.

70. Space systems, like other military systems, rely on the availability of sufficient frequency spectrum that is becoming scarce. If confirmed, how would you work with the Military Departments and Services, the Joint Staff, and other components of DOD to ensure that the Department's frequency spectrum requirements are accounted for and protected in interagency discussions about potential spectrum auctions? (OPR: SPACE)

The modern electromagnetic environment is increasingly congested, contested, and constrained. I am aware that the Joint Force has critical reliance on the key portions of the spectrum that have been allocated for military use. If confirmed, I would work alongside DoD's Chief Information Officer to ensure DoD's access to critical spectrum, including by strengthening our commercial, interagency, and international partnerships to promote interoperability and spectrum access policies that support the U.S. military in conducting its full range of global operations.

The FY 2020 NDAA created a new Military Service dedicated to the space domain, as well as an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy to serve as the senior civilian official in the Office of the Secretary of Defense charged with oversight of military and interagency space policy and operations.

71. Do you support this current arrangement? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes. Across the U.S. government, we now have broad recognition that space is at the heart of integrating our strategic as well as our conventional capabilities. I believe the creation of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, U.S. Space Force, and U.S. Space Command were important steps to strengthen U.S. national security.

Electronic Warfare

Recent attention has been given Department-wide to the importance of electronic warfare, given its use in Ukraine and the importance which China and Russia has placed on it as a tactical warfighting element.

72. What are your views on this matter? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand that the Department relies on electronic warfare and the spectrum to conduct joint all domain operations. Our adversaries know this and are actively seeking to deny our ability to maintain freedom of access and maneuver in the electromagnetic spectrum. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's efforts to ensure the Joint Force is prepared to fight through a contested and congested electromagnetic spectrum environment, preserving our use of the spectrum while denying its use to our adversaries.

Cyber Policy and Authorities

73. What do you see as the primary cyber policy challenges for the Department currently, and what suggestion do you have for addressing them? (OPR: SPACE)

If confirmed, what would your relationship be with:

- **The Commander of U.S. Cyber Command**

The Commander of USCYBERCOM is responsible for the planning of cyberspace missions; serving as the cyberspace operations joint force provider; and joint force trainer. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command on all policy issues affecting USCYBERCOM's ability to achieve national security objectives.

- **The DOD Chief Information Officer**

The DoD CIO is the principal staff assistant and senior advisor to the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense for information technology (IT). If confirmed, I intend to foster a close relationship with the DoD CIO to strengthen governance of cybersecurity, communications, and information systems.

- **The Military Service Principal Cyber Advisors**

The role of the Military Service Principal Cyber Advisors (PCA) is important as they work to address cyber matters to include readiness, capabilities, budget, and strategy for their respective Services. If confirmed, I will work closely to engage with the Service PCAs on developing and implementing policies and strategies to synchronize these efforts across the Department.

- **The Director of Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at DHS**

The Department's relationship with the Department of Homeland Security is imperative to ensuring the cybersecurity of U.S. critical infrastructure systems. If confirmed, I will prioritize having a positive relationship with the director of CISA that encourages expanded coordination and communication between our two Departments. I will also ensure DoD is postured to support requests for assistance from the Department of Homeland Security and other Federal civilian agencies.

- **The Director for the Defense Cyber Crime Center (DC3)**

The Defense Cyber Crime Center (DC3) is a Federal Cyber Center and the USDP serves as the lead official for Sector Risk Management Agency of the Defense Industrial Base. In these roles, both share responsibility for protecting critical infrastructure. If confirmed, I will ensure that we are fully aligned and doing everything that we can to protect the Defense Industrial Base from malicious cyber activity.

Given the difficulty in anticipating and defending against cyber attacks, many suggest that the Department of Defense can only rely on a policy of cyber deterrence to protect its and the Nation's critical systems.

74. Do you believe that deterrence is possible in cyberspace? In your view, is the current level and tempo of cyber attacks on the Department and on the Nation tolerable? (OPR: SPACE)

There is no pure cyber deterrence, but it is a key aspect of integrated deterrence which involves DoD integrating across domains, theaters of operation, and the spectrum of conflict. Cyber is most effective when used in concert with other instruments of national power. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the Department's current cyber posture and our assessment of cyber threats to the U.S.

75. Do you believe that the Department's current capabilities and policies allow for the maintenance of robust cyber deterrence? (OPR: SPACE)

Strong cyber capabilities make integrated deterrence more potent. It is imperative that all

the foundational requirements from actionable intelligence to expeditious acquisition are in place to deliver the cyber effects with the best mission impact. The 2023 DoD Cyber Strategy lays out the Department's approach achieving national objectives in this domain, if confirmed. I look forward to guiding the implementation of this strategy.

76. How can the Department improve its cyber deterrence posture? (OPR: SPACE)

The 2023 DoD Cyber Strategy highlights the key pillars needed to ensure the Department can achieve the nation's objectives in cyberspace, defending the homeland being one of those pillars. It is imperative to work with the interagency, industry, and allies and partners to share threat information to improve the collective posture in defense of our critical infrastructure and networks.

77. Do you believe that the Department possesses the necessary authorities to stand up an effective cyber deterrence posture? (OPR: SPACE)

I understand the Department campaigns in and through cyberspace in support of the objectives established in the National Defense Strategy and as part of integrated deterrence. I believe that the Department possesses the necessary authorities to develop offensive and defensive cyber options to support the Joint Force and defend the Nation.

The FY23 NDAA required the establishment of an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy. The committee understands that the position is being studied by an FFRDC to make recommendations as to the structure and functions of that office, and presumably it will subsume the functions of the DOD Principal Cyber Advisor.

78. What are your views on the establishment of this position? (Review: SPACE)

I am aware of this statutory requirement and if confirmed, will work with this Committee to ensure I am implementing this provision in a manner consistent with our understanding of congressional intent. I believe civilian oversight of DoD's cyber authorities are critical. Additionally, I am committed to working with the selected individual to ensure that the Department has the policies, capabilities, and forces it needs to protect our Nation's interests and deter conflict.

79. If confirmed, what how do you plan to work with the DOD Principal Cyber Advisor and the Military Service Principal Cyber Advisors in the coordination of cyber policy and the many cyber initiatives across the DOD? (OPR: SPACE)

The Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) plays an important role in providing independent advice to the Secretary of Defense on cyber policy, programs, plans, and budgeting as well as in managing the implementation of the DoD Cyber Strategy. If confirmed, I intend to work closely to engage with the PCAs on developing and implementing policies and strategies to synchronize these efforts across the Department.

The NDAA for FY 2021 established the position of National Cyber Director (NCD)

to improve coordination and integration across the government in developing cyberspace strategy, policy, plans, and resource allocation.

80. What is your understanding of how DOD has been supporting the National Cyber Director? (OPR: SPACE)

The NCD serves as a principal advisor to the President on cybersecurity policy and strategy, and cybersecurity engagement with industry and international stakeholders. DoD has a role in that process, as it oversees the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) Cybersecurity information sharing and Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification programs and also partners with DHS/CISA on the new Joint Cyber Defense Collaborative which partners directly with private sector. I also understand that DoD supported NCD on the development and implementation of the National Cybersecurity Strategy (NCS) ensured the DoD Cyber Strategy was complementary to the NCS.

81. Do you have suggestions for how you might improve the relationship with the NCD if confirmed? (OPR: SPACE)

If confirmed, I would ensure that the close partnership between DoD and NCD continues, especially on matters of mutual interest in cybersecurity and in our relationships with the private sector. I look forward to learning more about the ongoing collaboration between the organizations.

Cyber notifications from the Department for sensitive cyber military operations, as required by law, have become increasingly vague and do not provide enough information for the committee to perform adequate oversight of these operations.

82. If confirmed, what would you do to improve these cyber operations notifications? (Review: SPACE)

Transparency with Congress will be one of my top priorities, and, if confirmed, I will commit to looking into this concern and ensuring the Department provides adequate levels of information in support of Congressional oversight.

83. Are there steps other than improving the written notifications that you would take, if confirmed, to help Congress perform oversight of these critical operations? (OPR: SPACE)

In addition to the written notifications, I understand the Department has a requirement to update Congressional defense committees on military activities and operations in cyberspace. If confirmed, I will continue to support regular engagement with Congress.

84. What is your understanding of the process for how the Department might respond to a request for Defense Support to Civilian Authorities (DSCA) when it comes to cyber incident? (OPR: HDHA, OCR: SPACE)

It is my understanding that the Department has a standard process for responding to any request for DSCA, whether the request is based on a natural disaster, a cyber incident, or a national security special event. Consistent with the law and DoD's policies, a Federal department or agency would request DoD assistance and DoD would review the request to consider legal, risk, cost, impacts on readiness, and other factors. If DoD approves the request, DoD would then source the appropriate forces or resources to provide the DSCA.

Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program

The CTR Program is widening its aperture to include biological weapons and capabilities as well as biological surveillance and early warning, and encouraging the development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

85. Do you support these DOD activities under the CTR program generally? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes, I strongly support the DoD CTR program conducting these activities. The Biodefense Posture Review states that biological threats, whether from natural, accidental, or deliberate sources, present significant challenges for U.S. national security, while advancements in biotechnology and delivery system technologies have decreased barriers for WMD development. The CTR program is uniquely positioned to work with partner countries to eliminate biological weapons and weapons-related materials, secure dual-use biological materials, and build biosurveillance capacity.

86. Do you believe the shift in focus to biological programs is an effective use of CTR resources? Why or why not? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes, my understanding is that the CTR program has worked to reduce biological threats for several years, including by making contributions to managing the 2014 West Africa Ebola crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Many partner countries relied on capacities built by the CTR program for their domestic response to COVID-19, highlighting the effectiveness of biodefense investments. If confirmed, I will work to prioritize the CTR program's activities according to the evolving security environment to make effective use of resources.

Pandemic Response

87. Drawing on DOD efforts during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014-2015 and the recent COVID-19 outbreak around the world, what attributes do you believe the Department of Defense can bring to bear to fight a global pandemic here and abroad? Please be specific. (OPR: SPACE)

DoD is ready to support the whole-of-government response to a global pandemic. Per the Biodefense Posture Review, DoD is developing pathogen-agnostic capabilities to support

the response to regional or international bioincidents. In addition, DoD is working with allies and partners to help them develop similar capabilities, aiding in their direct ability to prevent pandemics or mitigate the effects of bioincidents. For instance, the Cooperative Threat Reduction program works with partners to build capacity to safely and securely detect and diagnose diseases caused by high-threat pathogens and to improve accurate and timely reporting of such diseases. DoD also plays an important role in supporting other U.S. departments and agencies in their primary responsibilities for responding to pandemics, for example the Department of Health and Human Services. Those other departments must be adequately resourced so that DoD can prioritize biodefense efforts that advance 2022 National Defense Strategy objectives.

In May 2020, DOD partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on Operation Warp Speed, which developed and delivered two safe and effective COVID vaccines by December 2020.

88. How would you assess the effectiveness of Operation Warp Speed as a pandemic response model? (OPR: HDHA)

“Operation Warp Speed,” I understand, was established in May 2020. The Food and Drug Administration approved the first COVID-19 vaccines in August 2021 and not long thereafter made them readily available in the United States and to other nations. Given that a typical vaccine can take 5-10 years to develop and approve, my impression is that “Warp Speed” was effective.

89. Do you believe that this DOD-HHS partnership should be restored to expedite the development of pancoronavirus vaccines, as well as countermeasures for other pandemic-potential pathogens? (OPR: HDHA)

In general, DoD supporting other Federal departments and agencies in such partnerships, when necessary and appropriate, can be very effective. However, if confirmed, I would want to examine any existing mechanisms to determine if there are any opportunities to improve on them or if there are any mitigating considerations before launching any new partnerships.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM)

China

The 2022 NDS describes the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as “the most comprehensive and serious challenge to U.S. national security” and states “The PRC seeks to undermine U.S. alliances and security partnership in the Indo-Pacific region, and leverage its growing capabilities, including its economic influence and the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) growing strength and military footprint, to coerce its neighbors and threaten their interest.”

90. Is the current posture of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific region sufficient to support the NDS? Please explain your answer. (Review: SPC)

DoD clearly has made strides in modernizing its Indo-Pacific posture in support of the NDS. This includes expanding the scale and scope of U.S. military operations, exercises, and activities – many with our Allies and partners – to reinforce security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and strengthen deterrence. Through expanded Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement sites in the Philippines, a new Marine Littoral Regiment in Japan, and a range of force posture enhancements with Australia, among other initiatives throughout Southeast Asia and the broader region, the Department is reinforcing a resilient security architecture in the Indo-Pacific region to maintain regional stability and deter conflict. These capabilities will help us to strengthen integrated deterrence today and build the force we need for the future.

91. In your assessment, what are the priority investments DOD could make that would implement the NDS and improve the military balance in the Indo-Pacific? (OPR: SPC, OCR: IPSA)

If confirmed, I would value consultations across Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and USINDOPACOM to assess priority initiatives for resourcing and advancement in the region. As Policy plays a critical role in the Department's PPBE process, I will work with my counterparts to ensure that the Department's budget submissions are aligned to strategy and make investments that advance our priorities in the Indo-Pacific. This should include capabilities, concept development, exercising, force rotations, infrastructure, and other key areas for investment that strengthen integrated deterrence.

92. In your view, what are the key areas in which each Military Service must improve in order to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with China? (OPR: SPC, OCR: IPSA)

As the PRC races to modernize its military, I believe the Department will continue to require the resources to implement the 2022 National Defense Strategy and keep our nation safe while delivering a combat credible Joint Force that is the most lethal, resilient, agile, and responsive in the world.

If confirmed, I will work with Military Departments to ensure that the Department's budget submissions links strategy to resources and continue to execute the National Defense Strategy. As Policy plays a critical role in the Department's PPBE process, I will work with my counterparts to ensure that the Department's budget submissions make investments that advance our priorities in the Indo-Pacific region.

In my view, to sustain our military advantage over China, the Department will need to continue making investments in integrated air and missile defense, air and maritime dominance, and in munitions, including hypersonics. The Department will also need to invest in advanced capabilities, new operational concepts, and more resilient force posture in the

Indo-Pacific region. Finally, investments in resiliency are needed to ensure stability in the industrial base's ability to produce what the Joint Force needs.

**93. Should the United States revisit or change its “one China” policy, in your view?
(Review: IPSA)**

Our One China policy has preserved peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait for more than four decades. The U.S. defense relationship with Taiwan is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the Three Communiques, and the Six Assurances – and backed by strong, bipartisan support that has formed the bedrock of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. As the TRA makes clear: it is our longstanding policy to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security or the social and economic system of the people of Taiwan. If confirmed, I will seek to fulfill our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

94. In your view, how should U.S. joint concepts of operations, force posture, and investments adapt to address China's military modernization? (Review: SPC with IPSA)

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the Department is developing the right concepts, capabilities and investments to address the PRC as DoD's pacing challenge. Over the past year, the Department has delivered major achievements with Allies and partners to make U.S. force posture across the Indo-Pacific region more mobile, distributed, resilient, and lethal.

In Japan, Australia, Guam, and the Compact States, it is essential that the United States maintains its approach of forward-stationing and deploying modernized and more capable forces, alongside major infrastructure investments in airfields, logistics, domain awareness, and resilience.

Across Southeast Asia, I understand that DoD is engaged in rotational deployments, exercises, logistics cooperation, and targeted security assistance to strengthen our partnerships, deepen interoperability, and enhance collective readiness. I would seek to continue this progress if confirmed.

Through campaigning, DoD demonstrates new capabilities with allies and partners, while developing the concepts and experimentation required to be successful in a high-intensity warfighting scenarios.

95. What should the United States do, both unilaterally, and in coordination with allies and partners, to counter the increasing challenge posed by China in the South China and East China Seas? (Review: IPSA)

The United States seeks a free and open Indo-Pacific region in which all nations are secure in their sovereignty and free from coercion. It is the PRC that has conducted increasingly

provocative actions and dangerous operational behaviors across the Indo-Pacific region, including in the South China Sea. DoD will continue to expand the scale and scope of activities to reinforce security and stability with our regional allies and partners in support of our common vision.

96. What is your current assessment of the risk of a critical logistics failure in any conflict with China? (OPR: IPSA)

If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further in a classified setting. Conflict in the Indo-Pacific region is neither imminent nor inevitable, because deterrence today remains real and strong. My view is that the Department of Defense is doing more than ever to maintain and strengthen deterrence across the region, and the significant investments proposed in President Biden's FY 2024 budget underscore that commitment – particularly the budget's proposed 40% increase in funding for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI).

97. What is your assessment of China's increasing military presence overseas, including its base in Djibouti and other infrastructure projects across the Indian Ocean? (OPR: IPSA, OCR: SPC)

I remain particularly concerned with the PRC's attempts to gain permanent military access in Africa, as well as the Indian Ocean region. A global PLA military logistic network has implications for our U.S. allies and partners. All governments should closely examine any agreements or arrangements with China to ensure the PRC will not be allowed to undermine sovereignty and regional stability. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's efforts to strengthen alliances and partnerships rooted in a shared respect for transparency, accountability, sovereignty, and the rule of law.

98. What non-military activities and resources do you believe are necessary to effectively address the challenge posed by China? Do you believe these current activities are sufficient? (OPR: IPSA)

I support the Biden-Harris Administration's approach, which draws upon a whole-of-government strategy to bring together diplomatic, military, and economic tools to maintain stability, strengthen deterrence, and protect the national security interests of the American people. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's active role as part of this approach, because, as Secretary Austin said in May, "[t]o compete and succeed, we must use all the tools of American power."

The ability of U.S. ground forces to hold at risk adversary ships and aircraft; intercept missiles aimed at our ships, airfields, ports and other fixed facilities; and provide electronic warfare and communications support for our air and naval forces could enable the United States to present adversaries with our own "anti-access/area denial" (A2/AD)

challenge.

99. What should be the role of ground forces in creating an A2/AD challenge for adversaries within the First Island Chain in the Indo-Pacific? What specifically should be the role of the Army? (OPR: SPC, OCR: IPSA)

Rotational and forward-stationed ground forces are a key aspect of integrated deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region. Land-based long and medium range precision fires enhance the joint force's combat credibility because the PLA can preclude some of our more traditional platforms from operating inside the first island chain. We thus need additional options to present our own A2/AD challenge, and dispersed and resilient land-based fires are a key part of this. U.S. Army and Marine ground forces also play an essential role in training, assisting, and reassuring allies and partners across the conflict continuum. Lastly, the U.S. Army supports the joint force through theater logistics and command and control, both of which the PLA will persistently contest in a conflict.

100. Do you believe the current ground force posture in INDOPACOM is adequate? If not, what would you recommend to bolster it? (OPR: SPC, OCR: IPSA)

I commend the Department for its progress in enhancing our ground force posture in the Indo-Pacific region. Our ground force posture in the Indo-Pacific region is key to providing long range fires capability and logistics support to the Joint Force. On a day-to-day basis, ground forces play an important role in campaigning to preserve regional stability by strengthening deterrence and enhancing partnerships, including by conducting comprehensive exercises with allies and partners. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to refine exercises in the region to ensure operational relevance for the United States and our allies and partners and assess resourcing requirements as the Department enhances its Indo-Pacific posture.

101. Do you support the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative (DPRI), including the realignment of some U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and the build-up of facilities at other locations? (OPR: SPC, OCR: IPSA)

I support the continued implementation of the realignment plan known as the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI), which is the bilaterally determined way forward. The realignment of Marine Corps forces on Okinawa and the main islands of Japan, including the establishment of a strong presence on the U.S. territory of Guam, is fundamental to the Department's effort to achieve an improved Indo-Pacific defense posture, contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will remain regularly engaged with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the Military Departments and Services, and the Department of State to proactively adapt U.S. access and joint presence to the realities of strategic competition, and to ensure our posture is optimized for deterrence of adversary aggression, ally and partner assurance, and warfighting, if necessary.

The number of nuclear weapons currently possessed by China relative to the United States and Russia is often cited as an impediment to comprehensive nuclear arms control

talks.

- 102. What are the strategic implications of the rapid modernization of Chinese nuclear weapons that are set to at least double by 2030, and what approach should the United States take to address those implications, in your view? (OPR: SPACE, OCR: IPSA)**

The PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification increases the PRC's capabilities to threaten the United States and our allies and partners. A large and diverse nuclear arsenal could also provide the PRC with new options to leverage nuclear weapons for coercive purposes, including in the form of military provocations against our allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. For the first time, the United States will face two major nuclear powers as strategic competitors and potential adversaries, which will create new challenges for strategic stability, deterrence, assurance, arms control, and risk reduction. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess the implications of the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification and will consider whether nuclear force and other adjustments are necessary.

- 103. What do you think could motivate China to participate in nuclear arms control negotiations in a genuine and meaningful way? (OPR: SPACE, OCR: IPSA)**

I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's (NPR) observation that the scope and pace of the PRC's nuclear expansion, as well as its lack of transparency and growing military assertiveness, raise questions regarding its intentions, nuclear strategy and doctrine, and perceptions of strategic stability. I believe we must continue to convey a consistent message to the PRC that it will be more secure in a world where it engages in and complies with meaningful efforts to reduce strategic risks.

- 104. In your view, with the rapid development in both quantity and quality of Chinese nuclear capabilities, does U.S. nuclear posture and nuclear doctrine need to change from its current construct based on a single near-peer nuclear strategic competitor to a new framework based on two near-peer nuclear strategic competitors? (OPR: SPACE)**

I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review's finding that we must carefully assess the implications of China's ongoing nuclear expansion for U.S. nuclear strategy, forces, arms control approaches, and planning for regional conflict. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess the implications of the PRC's nuclear force expansion and diversification and will consider whether nuclear posture and other adjustments are necessary.

105. As Chinese aggression and nuclear capabilities both increase, do you assess that the U.S. has adequate military and national security crisis communication channels with senior Chinese leadership to avoid or at least mitigate the threat of rapid strategic escalation? (OPR: IPSA, OCR: SPACE)

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's emphasis on the importance of open lines of military-to-military communication between the United States and the PRC to ensure that competition does not inadvertently veer into conflict. While the PLA has remained largely unwilling to engage in substantive dialogue with the Department recently, my commitment to maintaining open lines of communication would continue if I am confirmed.

Taiwan

106. How do you assess the current cross-strait relationship between China and Taiwan, and how can the U.S. help prevent miscalculation on either side? (Review: IPSA)

We have seen the PRC increasingly turn to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as an instrument for coercion in support of its global ambitions, including, but not limited to, conducting more dangerous actions in and around the Taiwan Strait.

Consistent with longstanding policy, the Administration is focused on preventing military conflict against Taiwan using a whole of government approach and does not support unilateral changes to the status quo across the Strait. If confirmed, I will support the Department's continued efforts to ensure that cross-Strait deterrence remains real and strong.

107. How do you assess the current military balance across the Taiwan Strait? What do you believe should be the priorities for U.S. military assistance to Taiwan? Do you think Taiwan is making appropriate investments in its defensive capabilities and if not, what changes would you recommend? (Review: IPSA)

We have seen a growing number of states in the region and throughout the international community reiterate the importance of peace and stability in and around the Taiwan Strait.

Multiple Administrations and Congresses with leaders from both parties have sustained the Taiwan Relations Act with strong bipartisan support for providing Taiwan with self-defense capabilities and maintaining our own capacity to resist any use of force that jeopardizes the security of the people of Taiwan.

I know that the Administration is encouraged by Taiwan's commitment and welcomes Taiwan's continued investment in defense and resilience. If confirmed, I will support the Department's role in ensuring that the U.S. government continues to fulfill its longstanding obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

108. Some have argued that the United States should explicitly state that we would respond militarily to any Chinese use of force against Taiwan as a means to deter such actions. In your view, what would be the benefits and risks of such a policy change? (Review: IPSA)

Our longstanding policy has preserved peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait for more than four decades. Furthermore, the U.S. defense relationship with Taiwan is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the Three Communiques, and the Six Assurances – and backed by strong, bipartisan support that has formed the bedrock of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. As the TRA makes clear: it is our longstanding policy to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security or the social and economic system of the people of Taiwan. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department’s role in ensuring that the U.S. government continues to fulfill its longstanding obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

Japan

109. What is your assessment of our military-to-military relationship with Japan? (Review: IPSA)

The U.S.- Japan relationship is stronger than ever. In addition to Japan’s historic participation in the Camp David Summit earlier this year, the United States and Japan made historic announcements over the past year to optimize Alliance posture; modernize our roles, missions, and capabilities; and expand multilateral partnerships.

Prime Minister Kishida’s visit to Washington, D.C. in January followed the release of consequential strategic documents which announced Japan’s intention to increase defense spending to 2 percent of Japan’s Gross Domestic Product over the next five years. If confirmed, I will seek to build on this Alliance and enhance our shared security interests.

In late 2022, Japan signaled a significant change in its defense posture with the release of a new National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, and the Defense Buildup Program.

110. In your view, how can the United States best support Japan’s defense transformation in line with its strategic documents? (Review: IPSA)

I understand that Japan is seeking to substantially increase its defense budget and acquire new capabilities, like counterstrike, that will strengthen regional deterrence and bolster Japan’s self defense missions. Bilateral exercises, strengthening our coordination mechanisms as an Alliance, and working collaboratively with Japan to address future challenges are key to our security relationship.

111. Do you believe we should consider modifications to U.S. military organizational and command and control relationships to better align with the Permanent Joint Headquarters of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces? (OPR: IPSA)

The Department supports Japan's decision to establish a permanent Japan Self-Defense Forces joint headquarters. We do not have plans to change our combatant command structure or authorities at this time, but we will explore more effective command and control relationships to enhance interoperability and responsiveness.

Republic of Korea

112. How would you describe the value to U.S. national security interests of the U.S. Republic of Korea alliance? (Review: IPSA)

The United States and the ROK are making historic progress in expanding multilateral defense cooperation with partners in the Indo-Pacific region. The partnership is essential to not just deterring and responding to the DPRK, but also furthering U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. I know that the Department has worked to integrate U.S. and ROK maritime security cooperation programs with allies and partners in the region, expand participation in multilateral exercises, assist allies and partners with equipment diversification, and encourage defense industrial cooperation.

113. Do you believe the transfer of wartime operational control from the U.S. to the Republic of Korea should be conditions-based? If so, and if confirmed, what conditions would you recommend that the Secretary of Defense delineate as the threshold for transfer of control? (OPR: IPSA)

The United States, and just as importantly, the ROK continue to believe that the transfer of wartime operational control should be conditions-based. We are making steady progress towards this goal, which will strengthen our combined defensive posture on the Korean Peninsula. That said, we cannot rush our efforts. As we continue to acquire the bilaterally approved levels of capabilities to achieve our stated goals and conditions, I would, if confirmed, recommend to the Secretary that a stable security environment remains the threshold for transfer of control.

114. In your view, are there additional steps that DOD could take to improve U.S. and allied defenses against North Korea's missile capabilities, including through trilateral cooperation between the United States, the Republic of Korea, and Japan? (Review: IPSA)

The Administration made historic progress during the most recent Camp David Summit. The United States and the ROK are enhancing trilateral cooperation with Japan to more effectively deter the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear and missile threats and to strengthen peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the Indo-Pacific

region. DoD held trilateral meetings at various levels, most recently at the Shangri-La Dialogue with Secretary Austin and his counterparts and at the Defense Trilateral Talks at the Assistant Secretary-level last April to advance core trilateral security cooperation objectives.

Australia

115. What is your assessment of our military-to-military relationship with Australia? (Review: IPSA)

I believe the U.S.-Australia relationship is stronger than it has ever been. I know that the Department is broadening Force Posture Initiatives to new domains, locations, deepening cooperation to secure our technological edge, and expanding opportunities to enable trilateral defense ties with other regional partners, including with Japan.

At the AUSMIN 2023 meeting this past summer, the United States and Australia announced key advances related to force posture including new operating locations, designating space cooperation as a Force Posture Initiative; pre-positioning of U.S. Army stores and materiel in Bandiana through the Combined Logistics, Sustainment and Maintenance Enterprise; and enhanced regional maritime domain awareness through rotations of U.S. Navy maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft in Australia. They also agreed to deepen cooperation on Australia's guided weapons and explosive ordnance enterprise by collaborating on a production capability in Australia with an initial focus on co-production of guided multiple launch rocket systems by 2025. Additionally, the trilateral AUKUS partnership is a generational opportunity to strengthen regional deterrence by strengthening our capabilities, as well as those of two of our closest Allies, Australia and the UK.

In 2021, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States announced the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) partnership with the objective of helping Australia to acquire a fleet of nuclear-propelled submarines and increasing collaboration on a range of advanced technology initiatives.

116. What are your views of the AUKUS partnership? (Review: SPC)

AUKUS is a generational opportunity to strengthen regional deterrence while increasing our combined advanced capabilities and strengthening our partnerships. Congress is also a critical partner in implementing this effort. AUKUS will support Australia's acquisition of a conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarine, expand trilateral cooperation on advanced technologies, enhance global posture, and help ensure our defense industrial bases have closer integration.

117. In your view, are there improvements, clarifications, or enhancements that need to be made to effectively implement the AUKUS partnership as intended? (Review: SPC)

AUKUS is a historic opportunity for our national security, and we know that making AUKUS work will require the Department and Congress to continue to work together

closely. Part of this work involves reexamining our approach to information and technology sharing. We have reached a point in the global security environment and technology landscape where there is not only a benefit, but an imperative, to expand our defense technology-sharing practices. In pursuit of this objective, the Administration has requested Congress' oral support in enabling export licensing exemptions for AUKUS, streamlining defense trade with two of our most trusted allies, and raising our collective standards to protect the critical technologies that provide U.S. forces with warfighting advantages. We appreciate the efforts of Congress to advance these efforts and to realize the full potential of the AUKUS partnership.

The Philippines

118. What is your assessment of our military-to-military relationship with the Philippines? (Review: IPSA)

The U.S.-Philippine military-to-military relationship, underpinned by the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, is stronger than ever. Our two countries announced in February that we would designate four new Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites, and President Marcos formally announced the locations in April ahead of his meeting with President Biden. In May, we also released our new Bilateral Defense Guidelines. The United States and the Philippines have committed to move quickly in advancing necessary plans and investments for the new EDCA sites, as well as U.S. support for the Philippines' military modernization.

119. In your view, are there opportunities to improve our military-to-military cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, particularly as it relates to issues in the South China Sea? (OPR: IPSA)

The Philippines is a treaty Ally and we have a long history of mutual defense cooperation. If confirmed, I would continue to prioritize military-to-military cooperation with the Philippines on issues including maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, defense institution building, and increasing the size and complexity of bilateral and multilateral exercises to advance our shared goal of upholding a free and open Indo-Pacific region, including in response to destabilizing PRC actions in the South China Sea.

India

120. What is your assessment of our military-to-military relationship with India? (OPR: IPSA)

As President Biden has said, the U.S.-India relationship is the "defining relationship" of the 21st century, and our defense cooperation with India has emerged as a critical pillar for both countries. We are at a transformative moment in our defense cooperation with India, in part because of the great strides both countries have taken to enable our militaries to operate and coordinate more closely across the military services and in multiple warfighting domains. If

confirmed, I would continue to bolster the Major Defense Partnership with India by expanding our technology cooperation to support India's military modernization and the areas of operational collaboration between our militaries.

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or “Quad” between the United States, Japan, India, and Australia is designed to uphold the international rules-based order, ensure freedom of navigation, promote democratic values, improve information sharing, and enhance technological collaboration.

121. What are your views on the Quad and, in your view, how can it be more effectively utilized as a multilateral platform for addressing challenges in the Indo-Pacific region? (OPR: IPSA)

The Quad plays an increasingly central role in promoting peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific among like-minded partners. The Quad has been most effective when it has worked closely with its Indo-Pacific partners and guided by regional countries' priorities and by responding to regional countries' needs. Over the past several years, the Quad has emerged as an important forum for mobilizing a collective commitment by its members to address shared challenges, including those in the maritime domain.

U.S. European Command (EUCOM)

Russia

122. What do you believe are the greatest challenges for U.S.-Russia security relations? How would you describe the central objectives of U.S. security strategy regarding Russia? (OPR: ISA)

The greatest challenge for U.S.-Russia security relations is Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine. Until Russia ceases its brutal invasion, no meaningful progress on U.S.-Russia bilateral relations is possible.

If confirmed, I would work to ensure a sovereign, democratic Ukraine and to prevent the widening of the conflict outside of Ukraine, while also maintaining Allied unity in response to Russian aggression.

123. How do EUCOM and NATO activities fit into a “whole of government” approach to deterring Russian aggression? (OPR: ISA)

As part of a whole-of-government approach, DoD's actions contribute to a range of interagency initiatives to compete with Russia, deter and, if necessary, defend against Russian aggression towards NATO. Through bilateral security assistance to Ukraine, military exercises, and deployments in theater, the United States and its NATO Allies are

able to collectively push back against Russia's war in Ukraine and deter further Russian aggression.

124. What do you see as the role of forward-deployed U.S. forces in Europe in deterring Russian aggression against our NATO allies and partners? (Review: ISA)

The United States, along with our NATO allies, have an important role to play to deter further Russian aggression. The forward-deployed forces the United States has in Europe show our resolve to defend our Allies, and have allowed us to swiftly reinforce NATO's flanks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. U.S. military exercises in theater also demonstrate the United States' combat credibility, which further enhances U.S. deterrence messaging.

125. What is your view of Russia-China relations? (Review: ISA)

Russia-China cooperation is concerning on many levels. They collaborate in the economic, diplomatic, and military/security arenas in a so-called "no limits" partnership. Although they have differing national interests in the region and different motivations for their actions, they share an authoritarian view that undermines global security and the rules-based system from which we've all benefited. Though Russia and China are not truly "allied" through security guarantees, they are aligned in wanting to share a world consistent with their authoritarian model- gaining leverage over other nations' economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.

126. In your assessment, does DOD currently have a mature joint concept of operations and the necessary capabilities in sufficient capacity to mitigate the challenge of Russian A2/AD capabilities? If not, what changes should be implemented? (OPR: SPC, OCR: ISA)

In my assessment, DoD has the necessary concepts, capabilities, and capacity to mitigate the challenge of Russian A2/AD capabilities. If confirmed, I would work across DoD and in close cooperation with the Intelligence Community to continue to assess changes in the Russian threat resulting from the war in Ukraine, and ensure DoD makes adjustments as necessary to maintain its warfighting advantage and achieve the nation's strategic objectives.

127. In your view, what are the key elements of an effective strategy to counter Russian hybrid warfare? (OPR: SPC, OCR: ISA)

Russian authorities have demonstrated a capacity and willingness to use irregular means of disinformation, deception, and covert operations to accomplish its foreign policy goals as part of Russia's broader competition. In accordance with the National Defense Strategy, I know that DoD is working alongside allies and partners to deter, defend, and build resilience against acute forms of "gray zone" coercion.

Traditional military tools may not always be the best options to counter competitors'

coercive measures in the “gray zone.” In some cases, intelligence sharing, economic measures, diplomatic initiatives, partner-enabled national resilience operations, and activities in the information domain may prove more effective or may be required alongside the more traditional military activities. I believe the Department should work with its partners in other U.S. departments and agencies to provide an integrated response to the challenges posed by Russia’s irregular warfare.

Arms Control Agreements with Russia

128. In your view, what is the appropriate role of arms control in the U.S. security strategy regarding Russia? (Review: ISA)

The appropriate role of arms control in the United States’ security strategy regarding Russia is to prevent the escalation of military conflicts, reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, and maintain strategic stability between the two nations. Arms control agreements can foster transparency and predictability in the bilateral relationship, helping to avoid misperceptions and miscalculations.

The Department of Defense and the Department of State must work collaboratively with our NATO Allies to develop approaches for arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. We must be cautious not to impose any constraints that would hinder NATO’s ability to strengthen its deterrence and defense capabilities. It is imperative that we maintain a balance in our objectives.

129. What are your views on the military significance of Russian tactical nuclear forces not covered by the New START Treaty and whether arms control measures can adequately address them? (OPR: SPACE)

I support effective efforts to address the disparity between the non-strategic nuclear weapons stockpiles of the United States and Russia. Formal, verifiable arms control could provide an effective means of addressing this disparity but we need a willing negotiating partner to make meaningful progress.

130. Do you support mutually-agreed reductions in tactical nuclear weapons? Do you believe such reductions can be equitably achieved given the significant quantitative disparity in the number of Russian and U.S. weapons? (OPR: SPACE)

Yes, provided any such agreement addresses the current disparity, is verifiable, and makes the United States and its allies more secure.

131. Do you believe bilateral reductions serve U.S. security interests considering the trajectory of China’s nuclear force expansion? (OPR: SPACE)

I believe any future U.S. reductions to its nuclear forces, bilateral or otherwise, must account for the PRC’s nuclear expansion as well as Russia’s entire nuclear arsenal.

132. Do you believe that the United States should consider accepting limitations on its missile defense, cyber, or conventional power projection capabilities as part of an agreement with Russia or China on nuclear weapons reductions? (OPR: SPACE)

No, I would not recommend accepting such limitations. On nuclear weapons reductions, I agree with the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) observation that Russian and PRC actions to expand their nuclear arsenals make mutual and verifiable arms control challenging. The United States will need willing partners operating in good faith to make any meaningful progress. On missile defense, I agree with the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR), which states that the Department supports strengthening mutual transparency and predictability with Russia and the PRC as appropriate. However, my understanding is that no missile defense limitations are currently under discussion. Compliance with negotiated cyber capability limitations would be unverifiable. The United States has instead sought to promote cyberspace stability through the recognition that existing international law applies to cyberspace, the promotion of cyberspace norms of responsible state behavior during peacetime, and confidence-building measures.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

133. In your assessment, does the NATO Alliance continue to benefit the national security interests of the United States? (Review: ISA)

Yes. NATO reflects our shared values with our transatlantic partners and is instrumental to the safety of our nation.

134. How important to U.S. strategic interests is the U.S. commitment to its obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty? (OPR: ISA)

The U.S. commitment to mutual defense under Article 5 of NATO's founding treaty is essential to our strategic interests. The commitment of all Allies to collective self-defense is the core of NATO's strength, which has ensured Euro-Atlantic security for almost 75 years.

135. What do you view as the essential strategic objectives of the NATO Alliance in the coming years and what do you perceive are the greatest challenges? (Review: ISA)

I believe the most essential strategic objective of NATO is maintaining allied unity and ensuring collective self-defense. The greatest challenge the Alliance will continue to face is maintaining both Alliance unity and a ready force in light of the acute threat posed by Russia and their continued aggression.

136. What is your assessment of the current levels of Allied contributions to burden sharing and should our Allies do more to meet their commitments on defense spending and procurement? (Review: ISA)

NATO Allies have increased defense spending for nine consecutive years. After this year,

European Allies and Canada will have invested more than \$450 billion above previous levels in their defense since 2014. In addition, many allies and partners are providing an extraordinary amount of capability to Ukraine. Some Allies – such as Latvia and Estonia – have committed assistance equating to more than one percent of their GDP as compared to .18 percent for the United States--which ranks us 14th globally using this metric. Allies and partners can also provide unique capabilities that the United States might not have in inventory, including Leopard tanks, various infantry fighting vehicles, 152mm and 122mm ammunition, and certain types of multiple launch rocket systems. And factoring in humanitarian support, including taking in more than 8 million refugees, it is clear our European and Canadian allies and partners have indeed stepped up to support Ukraine. If confirmed, I look forward to leveraging Secretary Austin's Ukraine Defense Contact Group to drive support from around the world.

137. If confirmed how will you encourage NATO Allies to maintain a positive trajectory on defense spending? (Review: ISA)

NATO Allies have increased defense spending for nine consecutive years. NATO's most recent defense spending estimates show a real increase of 8.3% in 2023, the largest yearly increase in decades. After 2023, European Allies and Canada will have invested more than \$450 billion above previous levels in their defense since the 2014 defense investment pledge. If confirmed, I will continue to press our allies to build on this momentum.

138. NATO has taken a number of steps to adapt to the current security environment in Europe and globally, including issuing a new strategic concept, developing regional defense plans for the Atlantic and European Arctic; the Baltic region and central Europe; and the Mediterranean and Black Sea, and building a force with higher readiness to support these regional plans. (OPR: ISA)

I am encouraged by the steps we have taken in NATO to respond to the changed security environment and fully support the Supreme Allied Commander Europe in his work to enable the regional plans.

139. If confirmed, what criteria would you use for defining and measuring the success of these NATO efforts in enhancing credible deterrence? (OPR: ISA)

NATO's new Strategic Concept is an important document that prepares the Alliance to act in a new security environment. The recently approved Family of Defense Plans and the NATO Force Model enhance NATO readiness and provide for a more credible Allied deterrence. If confirmed, I will work closely with our NATO Allies to ensure these efforts are robust and effective.

140. What is your assessment of the role that the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) has played in increasing combat capability in Europe and enhancing deterrence of Russian aggression? What role would you foresee for EDI going forward? Please explain your answer. (OPR: ISA)

The foresight of the Congressionally-supported EDI-associated investments in Europe since 2015 along the five lines of effort of : 1) Increased Presence; 2) Exercises and Training; 3) Enhanced Prepositioning; 4) Improved Infrastructure; and 5) Building Partnership Capacity was borne out in the robust U.S. response to Russia's further invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. These investments enabled DoD to reinforce NATO members' security more quickly and with more combat power than any other Ally, deterring Russian aggression against NATO.

I understand that since EDI transitioned from the former Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) budget to the base budget in FY 2022, it no longer provides funding from a separate account. However, DoD has given guidance to the Military Departments on how to identify EDI-associated investments along the original five lines of effort in their base budgets going forward. This assists the Department in articulating tangible commitments of funding to the Russia deterrence mission.

NATO's nuclear policy states, "The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. NATO's goal is a safer world for all; the Alliance seeks to create the security environment for a world without nuclear weapons." This point was most recently reaffirmed within the alliance's 2022 Strategic Concept, adopted at the Madrid Summit."

141. In your view, should NATO remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist? (OPR: ISA)

Yes. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO should remain a nuclear alliance. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capabilities is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression.

142. In your view, is there a continuing requirement for deploying U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO countries? (OPR: ISA, OCR: Space)

Yes. NATO's nuclear deterrence posture relies on U.S. nuclear weapons forward deployed in Europe, as well as U.S. strategic forces. The presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO countries for the last 60 years has successfully deterred aggression against the Alliance, and this cooperation continues to provide an essential political and military link between Europe and North America. In my view, U.S. nuclear weapons should remain in NATO countries for as long as nuclear weapons remain a threat.

143. Do you believe the existing U.S. nuclear force posture should be reexamined given Russia's ongoing efforts to redeploy tactical nuclear weapons into Belarus? (OPR: ISA, OCR: Space)

I am not aware of any reason to raise our alert levels or adjust the U.S. nuclear posture, and, based on what I know, I am comfortable with the United States' strategic defensive posture at the moment.

Ukraine

144. What is your assessment of the current U.S.-Ukraine security relationship? (OPR: ISA)

I believe the U.S.-Ukraine security relationship has never been stronger. The United States has clearly demonstrated we stand with Ukraine, as the Ukrainian people fight for freedom, democracy, and independence. Throughout the war, the United States has worked closely with the Ukrainian government to ensure Ukraine's most urgent needs are met, including on the battlefield. In addition to enabling Ukraine to defend itself from Russia's brutal invasion, U.S. security assistance has shown Ukraine, Allies, partners, and adversaries that the United States is a reliable partner and force for political and economic stability globally.

145. Do you support continued U.S. security assistance to Ukraine? Are there specific capabilities that in your view should be prioritized through the provision of U.S. security assistance? (Review: ISA)

I am strongly supportive of continued U.S. security assistance to Ukraine. The capabilities the United States is providing have enabled Ukraine to push back on Russia's brutal war. U.S. assistance is critical to enable Ukraine's continued fight for freedom, to sustain Ally and partner support, and to send a clear message to Russia and China that using force to seize territory is a losing strategy.

I expect long-range fires to continue being a high-priority requirement in the future, particularly as Ukraine's counteroffensive continues. This includes critical capabilities, such as GMLRS and 155mm artillery ammunition. As winter approaches, I also see air defense systems as particularly important to defend Ukrainian citizens and critical infrastructure from Russia's barbaric air campaigns. If confirmed, I will work closely with Ukrainian counterparts at multiple levels to understand their ongoing capability requirements.

146. In your view, how does the provision of assistance to Ukraine contribute to a broader U.S. security strategy in Europe? (OPR: ISA)

U.S. security assistance to Ukraine directly supports U.S. strategic aims in Europe and across the globe. The United States is committed to, and benefits from, a peaceful, stable Europe. Russia's brutal war in Ukraine threatens this stability and undermines core U.S. values, including freedom, democracy, and independence. Supporting the Ukrainian people as they defend themselves and their country is not only morally right but it also highlights to Allies and partners the United States is a reliable partner. This support further demonstrates to adversaries around the globe that using force to seize territory will not lead to success.

147. Senior Ukrainian leaders have requested assistance to enhance their deep-strike capabilities. What is your view on the provision of deeper strike capabilities like the U.S. Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) or the British Storm Shadow? (OPR: ISA)

There is no doubt that deep strike, or the capability to strike military targets beyond the forward line of troops, within territorial Ukraine, is an important capability for the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

However, it is important to remain realistic about the ability of any one capability to change the outcome of the war. Deep strike capabilities should be considered as part of the whole effort to modernize and equip Ukraine's air and ground forces.

148. If confirmed, what steps would you recommend DOD take in the near term to help Ukraine to ensure the counteroffensive is successful? (OPR: ISA)

First, it's my understanding that the Department is already using its existing channels with Ukraine to help aid their operations on the ground well. We are in constant and close communication with Ukrainian military and civilian leaders to understand their battlefield requirements. The Ukrainians know how to fight, but the Russians are learning as well, and going forward, it will be an iterative process to help ensure the Ukrainian military has all the faculties and capabilities it needs to defeat Russian aggression in their country. Concretely, I know we are working on solutions to bolster Ukraine's air defense and ensure a steady ammunition supply, which will undoubtedly improve their progress on the ground.

U.S. and NATO Force Posture in Southeastern Europe and the Black Sea

149. In your view, is the security and stability of the Southeastern European region and the Black Sea in the U.S. national security interest? (Review: ISA)

Absolutely. This region is home to some of our closest Allies, and the more we improve the security situation in the Black Sea region, the more we can increase stability and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I'll ensure that the Department emphasizes security for the Black Sea region - in full support of the interagency strategy submitted in June - and strengthen security to help our Allies and partners counter aggression from Russia and malign influence from the PRC. Furthermore, we also recognize that we can't do this alone and that we must approach security in the region in tandem with our partners. Since the region lies at the crossroads of competing challenges and threats, improving security in the Black Sea region is an important investment in long term global stability.

150. NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) includes approximately 650 U.S. service members. Do you believe the United States should maintain its commitment to KFOR?

Yes. The U.S. commitment to KFOR demonstrates our resolve to ensuring safety and stability in the Southeast Europe. Our deployment facilitates the mission's success. KFOR's

presence also serves to deter malicious actors who would attempt to undermine sovereignty and stability in the Western Balkans. The United States relies in large part on Allied and partner contributions to KFOR, which total more than 3,700 military personnel – up to 86 percent of the total force.

NATO has maintained an “enhanced” forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, while deploying a more limited “tailored” forward presence in the southeastern region and the Black Sea.

151. Do you support efforts to boost NATO’s forward presence in the southeast and Black Sea region? (OPR: ISA)

Yes, I support NATO’s efforts to boost presence in southeast Europe and the Black Sea region, including the four battlegroups in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia that Allies approved after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. These efforts are welcome and consistent with U.S. strategic priorities for the region.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)

152. To what extent does achieving U.S. national security interests in the Middle East require a continuous U.S. military presence there, in your view? In your opinion, is the current U.S. force presence in the Middle East appropriately sized? Please explain your answer. (OPR: ISA, OCR: SPC)

In accordance with the National Defense Strategy, the Department continues to right-size its forward military presence in the Middle East to address major security challenges in effective and sustainable ways. At present, over 30,000 personnel are deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, along with critical capabilities. The Department stands ready to flow additional forces to the region, if necessary. The Department also integrates with allies and partners to enhance interoperability on a daily basis, sustaining cooperative relationships that have developed over decades.

153. What opportunities exist for increasing burden-sharing with U.S. regional and European partners to counter threats emanating from and affecting the CENTCOM AOR? (OPR: ISA)

The United States relies on its capable and resilient partners to maintain regional stability and provide a secure environment. Our decades-long relationships in the region focus on advancing interoperability with partner militaries and expanding coalitions to address shared concerns. For example, the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) counters repeated Iranian attacks on commercial shipping in the region. Jordan’s recent decision to join the IMSC demonstrates the important role our partners play in contributing to regional security. We will continue to encourage additional participation in security initiatives and opportunities to improve interoperability and cooperation.

154. To what extent is the Middle East relevant to great power competition? How should DOD consider countering Russia and China in the Middle East, in your view? Do you believe there are other elements of national power and policy tools might be useful? (OPR: ISA)

The Middle East is a key theater for strategic competition. China has demonstrated its intent to bolster its standing in the Middle East and Russia continues to destabilize the region through its military activities in Syria and its cooperation with Iran.

China has no intention of improving regional security. Its renewed engagement with Iran, its use of commercial exploitation for financial gain, and its efforts to build up its military infrastructure in the region are concerning. In Syria, Russia prevents the United Nations and aid organizations from delivering critical humanitarian aid to those in need and interferes with the efforts of the United States and coalition partners to defeat ISIS. Russia's continued purchase of Iranian military equipment for use in Ukraine presents a threat to security in Europe and challenges the rules-based international order.

The United States retains many advantages, including our economic power, democratic values, military might, and global alliances. By supporting regional partners and affirming shared interests in common threats, the United States can maintain its position as the partner of choice in the Middle East. The United States can approach both competition and cooperation from a position of strength by capitalizing on these advantages. The United States also must pursue sustained diplomacy to advance our interests and de-escalate regional tensions.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

155. In your view, what are the current U.S. strategic interests in Afghanistan? (OPR: OSCA)

The United States' vital national security interest in Afghanistan is to ensure it cannot be used as a safe haven from which terrorist groups can launch attacks against the United States or our interests and allies abroad. Working with allies and partners to avoid humanitarian crisis and/or economic collapse in Afghanistan is also strategically important for broader regional stability. The United States has further enduring interests in continuing our ongoing work to resettle our Afghan partners and in advocating for the rights of Afghan women and girls, in line with U.S. values.

156. Is the United States adequately postured to conduct effective over the horizon counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan? Please explain your answer. (OPR: SOLIC, OCR: OSCA)

A primary responsibility of the Department of Defense (DoD) is defending our citizens from terrorist threats that could emanate from around the globe, including Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will review the DoD posture and ensure we maintain an operational architecture

with the capability to detect threats in Afghanistan and conduct counterterrorism operations to disrupt potential threats.

I will also work with our COCOMs to advise the Secretary in innovating and modernizing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities to address any identified gaps.

157. How would you assess the strategic relationship between the United States and Pakistan? Do you view that relationship as having changed as a result of the transition of forces from Afghanistan in August 2021? If so, how? (OPR: IPSA)

Pakistan is an important, yet challenging partner. If confirmed, I will work with Pakistan defense leaders to build a constructive defense relationship based on shared security objectives, such as countering the threats from groups such as the Islamic State – Khorasan (ISIS-K) and promoting regional stability. These objectives are enduring and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan did not change the strategic rationale for our relationship with Pakistan.

158. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to U.S. relations with Pakistan, particularly in terms of the bilateral defense relationship? (OPR: IPSA)

The United States has enduring security objectives in Pakistan, and if confirmed, my objective would be to preserve the defense relationship based on cooperation in areas of mutual interest. These areas could include working with Pakistan to defeat terrorist threats posed by al-Qai'da and the Islamic State – Khorasan, promote peace and security along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, enhance Pakistan's capacity to respond to disasters and provide humanitarian relief, and develop the next generation of Pakistan's military leaders.

Syria and Iraq

159. What is your understanding of current U.S. strategy and objectives in Syria? (OPR: ISA)

The U.S. military mission in Syria is to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS. The broader objectives of U.S. Government policy are to expand humanitarian access, maintain existing ceasefires, pursue accountability measures, and ensure that ISIS cannot resurge. The Administration continues to support a political process led by the Syrian people, as laid out in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254.

160. From a DOD standpoint, what must be done to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, in your view? What non-military efforts are necessary to sustain the enduring defeat of ISIS? (OPR: SOLIC, OCR: ISA)

To ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, the United States must maintain pressure on the remaining ISIS elements in Iraq and Syria by advising, assisting, and enabling local vetted partner forces. The United States, in conjunction with international and local partners, must also seek secure and humane methods of detaining former ISIS fighters in northeast Syria and displaced persons living in camps, while encouraging the international community to repatriate these individuals to their communities of origin. Stabilization and rebuilding communities – particularly in Syria – will also require significant non-military investment and intervention.

Partnerships are also foundationally important for the enduring defeat of ISIS. Our leadership of the 86-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS is a core component of ensuring that lasting defeat. Collectively, we and our partners have proven successful at generating the will and capabilities—ranging from military to a broad array of non-military capabilities—required for the defeat of ISIS. Maintaining the Coalition’s cohesion in our efforts against the ISIS global network is essential for our success.

161. If Assad’s forces focus their attacks on U.S. forces in the region, how would you recommend that the U.S. respond? (OPR: ISA)

The Department of Defense’s mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. U.S. forces always maintain the right to self-defense.

162. In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Syria be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? If so, and if confirmed, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on future troop levels in Syria? (OPR: ISA, OCR: SOLIC)

The Department of Defense’s mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. If confirmed, I will evaluate our strategy and conditions for progress in Syria.

163. In your view, do U.S. troops in Syria help counter Russian influence in the Middle East? (OPR: ISA)-

The Department of Defense’s mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. With the confluence of numerous actors in the region, it is important that all militaries conduct themselves in a professional manner and that we de-conflict our movements to ensure our forces are protected.

164. In your view, do U.S. troops in Syria help counter Iranian influence in the Middle East? (OPR: ISA)-

The Department of Defense’s mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. We encourage all actors to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and the United States will not hesitate to respond in self-defense to any threat.

165. What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Iraq? (OPR: ISA)-

The Department of Defense's mission in Syria is to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. We encourage all actors to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and the United States will not hesitate to respond in self-defense to any threat.

166. What steps would you recommend for continuing to normalize security assistance to the Iraqi Security Forces in the coming years? (OPR: ISA)-

Normalizing our support to the Iraqi security forces requires close partnership between DoD and the State Department. An important factor will be Iraq's continued commitment to building on the progress made on the operational and institutional capabilities of the Iraqi security forces. Although the Iraqi security forces have demonstrated tremendous progress, there is still more work to be done together.

167. What steps do you recommend to counter Iranian-backed attacks on U.S. forces in Syria and Iraq? (OPR: ISA)-

Normalizing our support to the Iraqi security forces requires close partnership between DoD and the State Department. An important factor will be Iraq's continued commitment to building on the progress made on the operational and institutional capabilities of the Iraqi security forces. Although the Iraqi security forces have demonstrated tremendous progress, there is still more work to be done together.

Iran

168. What is your assessment of the current military threat posed by Iran? (Review: ISA)-

Iran continues to pose a serious conventional and unconventional threat to U.S. personnel and regional partners. Iran's continued support for violent, non-state actors, threats to the free flow of commerce, and nuclear advances destabilize the region and threaten U.S. and partner interests. The advances in Iran's nuclear program shorten the timeline for Iran to develop a nuclear weapon, should Iranian leadership decide to pursue one. Meanwhile, Tehran continues to make progress developing its missile and UAV programs, increasing the threat to U.S. personnel and facilities in the region and partners and allies in the Middle East. The Administration is also concerned about Iran's growing support for Russia's war in Ukraine.

169. Are U.S. military forces and capabilities currently deployed to the CENTCOM AOR adequate to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats posed by Iran? (OPR: ISA)

The Department of Defense continually assesses the security environment and reviews its military posture based on the threat and global demand for forces. The United States has demonstrated that it will not hesitate to respond in self-defense and that it can surge forces to the Middle East in response to an increased Iranian threat, as we are currently doing in the maritime domain.

170. What is your understanding of the objectives of the U.S. security strategy with respect to Iran? What is the role of the U.S. military in this strategy? (OPR: ISA)

The United States seeks to deny Iran a nuclear weapon and to deter aggressive Iranian behavior throughout the region. The Department of Defense seeks to achieve these goals and address Iranian malign activity through posture, planning, and partnerships. The Department regularly updates plans to address Iranian provocations and is integrating the capabilities of partners to more effectively counter Iran's destabilizing activities.

171. How do you view military cooperation between Iran and Russia? In your opinion, has this partnership affected Middle Eastern regional security? Please explain your answer. (OPR: ISA)

Deepening Iranian-Russian defense cooperation is harmful to Ukraine, Iran's neighbors, and the international community. Iran is gaining important insights from the performance of its UAVs on the Ukrainian battlefield, which will drive improvements in their development and manufacturing of these systems. This will result in the proliferation of better, more capable UAVs throughout the Middle East. As Russia's top military backer, Iran is fueling Russia's war and enabling Russia to strike Kyiv and terrorize the Ukrainian population with Iranian UAVs. In return, Russia has been offering Iran unprecedented defense cooperation, including on missiles, electronics, and air defense.

172. Are there any circumstances under which you would recommend taking military action against Iran in response to its support for attacks on U.S. personnel in the region, or in response to its threats against former U.S. officials and American citizens based in the United States? Please explain. (OPR: ISA)

A role of the Department of Defense is to provide options for the President. The Department regularly updates plans to address a wide variety of contingencies. If confirmed, I will seek to provide principled and direct advice to the Secretary of Defense should the President require military options.

Yemen

173. What are the U.S. national security interests in Yemen? (OPR: ISA)

The primary U.S. national security interest in Yemen remains ensuring that groups such as al-Qai'da in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Yemen can no longer maintain a safe haven from which to conduct attacks against the U.S. homeland. Additionally, Iran's malign

activities in Yemen continue to contribute to instability in the region by threatening the territory of our Gulf partners (including Saudi Arabia) and freedom of navigation. It is in the U.S. interest to increase pressure on all parties in Yemen to reach a permanent cessation of hostilities. A political solution is the only long-term solution to the crisis.

174. What are the implications of the Biden Administration’s decision to cease offensive support operations to the Saudi-led coalition? (OPR: ISA)

The Administration’s decision to end offensive support to the war in Yemen helped bring about conditions for the best opportunity for peace since the conflict began. At the same time, the Department has maintained its commitment to Saudi Arabia by providing air defense support, intelligence-sharing, and other support to the Kingdom to defend its territory, people, and the 70,000 U.S. citizens who reside there. Since the policy decision on the conflict, our Saudi partners have constructively supported the U.S. and UN-led efforts with offers for comprehensive ceasefires and proposals to negotiate an end to the war. The environment created by the April 2022 UN-mediated truce presents the best opportunity Yemen has had for peace in several years. Since the formal truce expired in October 2022, all sides continue to refrain from cross-border strikes, and the Republic of Yemen Government and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continue uphold their commitments to the truce to despite its expiration.

Egypt

175. What is your assessment of the security situation in Egypt and the U.S.-Egypt security relationship? (OPR: ISA)

Egypt faces a number of security challenges, including ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP), the ongoing conflict in Libya, regional tensions over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), and border security threats. Despite the challenges, the United States considers Egypt an essential partner for maintaining regional security and stability. U.S.-Egypt security cooperation focuses on counterterrorism and border security. Egypt also provides crucial assistance in anti-trafficking and regional security operations, which advance both U.S. and Egyptian security.

176. What role does the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) play in the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty? Should the U.S. maintain its military deployment to the MFO? What would be the risks of reducing this commitment? (OPR: ISA)

The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) has served to provide reassurance to both Israel and Egypt by ensuring both parties adhere to the security provisions of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace. For over 40 years, the MFO’s presence and organization have provided Egypt and Israel a trusted mechanism to resolve disputes, avoid conflict, and foster dialogue on shared security concerns in the Sinai Peninsula.

U.S. contributions to this mission encourage other countries’ participation and bolster U.S.

credibility as a leader in diplomatic and security initiatives globally. Any changes to the level of U.S. support to the MFO would need to take into consideration potential impacts on the MFO's mission, the Egypt-Israel peace treaty, U.S. obligations under applicable international agreements, regional stability, and would include extensive interagency and partner consultation.

Reducing U.S. commitment to this vital peacekeeping mission would risk destabilizing Israel-Egypt relations at a time in which the Abraham Accords and Negev Forum have improved prospects for Arab-Israeli ties.

177. In your view, should the United States continue to provide defense articles and services purchased by the Egyptian military using U.S. Foreign Military Financing funds? (OPR: ISA)

U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) plays an important role in strengthening the strategic partnership with Egypt and supporting Egypt's legitimate defense needs. Any changes to the U.S. FMF program with Egypt would require a coordinated interagency review to ensure that U.S. national security interests are protected. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing all of our bilateral defense relationships.

178. What is your assessment of the Muslim Brotherhood? In your view, to what extent has the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology influenced other Islamist groups across the region, including U.S.-designated terrorist organizations? Please be specific. (OPR: ISA)

At this time, I understand that the Administration has not determined that Muslim Brotherhood meets the criteria for a foreign terrorist organization (FTO). In January 2021, the State Department designated Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM) as an FTO. HASM is a violent group that has carried out assassinations and other attacks that have killed dozens of Egyptian civilians, and its leaders were previously associated with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. If confirmed, I would remain committed to working with the State Department to take appropriate action against foreign groups engaged in terrorist activity.

179. What is your assessment of Egypt's deepening ties with Russia? Where do U.S. and Russian interests converge in Egypt? Where do they diverge? (OPR: ISA)

Egypt is actively diversifying and deepening its military cooperation with other foreign partners, including Russia. Egypt's influence in the region and strategic location, including its control of the Suez Canal, make Egypt a key leader in maintaining regional stability.

Egypt's deepening ties with Russia have been demonstrated in recent years through key leader engagements, military drills, joint infrastructure projects, and Egypt's pursuit of Russian military equipment, such as Su-35 fighter aircraft. The United States has an interest in an Egypt that is politically inclusive and economically secure with a professional military force that can protect its land and maritime borders and counter terrorism in the Sinai, and that respects civilian control of the military and human rights. Russia does not share those

interests.

U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)

**180. In your view, what should be the role of AFRICOM in NDS implementation?
(OPR: SPC, OCR: ISA)**

The NDS indicates that the Department will prioritize VEO threats against the U.S. homeland and vital U.S. national security interests, working by, with, and through our African partners. It also states that the Department will support interagency efforts to disrupt malign PRC and Russian activities on the continent. USAFRICOM plays a critical role implementing the NDS— including through executing Department of Defense operations, exercises, and security cooperation on the African continent, island nations, and surrounding waters.

**181. What is your assessment of the availability and predictability of forces and capabilities to support the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan and crisis response?
(OPR: SPC, OCR: ISA)**

The Department of Defense's priority is aligning mission requirements with the President's strategic priorities, and evaluating the military posture and other tools required to meet those requirements. This is the approach taken in the U.S. Africa Command area of responsibility (AOR), and every AOR. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Joint Staff and USAFRICOM to assess the adequacy of DoD's Joint Force approach to meet day-to-day and crisis response requirements in theater.

182. What is your assessment of current U.S. counterterrorism strategies in AFRICOM? (OPR: SOLIC, OCR: ISA)

The National Defense Strategy underscored that DoD seeks a counterterrorism approach in Africa that is sustainable, in light of many competing interests, and calls on us to prioritize disrupting violent extremist organization (VEO) threats against the U.S. homeland and vital national security interests by working "by, with, and through" our African partners. I believe this is the right approach – given the current strategic environment – to apply pressure on Africa-based VEOs, supported by good governance and economic activities to address the root causes of instability. This will create the most sustainable, enduring framework for managing the terrorist threat moving forward. However, the President does and should retain the ability to take unilateral action to swiftly disrupt any imminent threats that may arise against the U.S. homeland or vital U.S. interests.

183. What do you assess to be the strategic objectives of Russia and China in Africa? (Review: ISA)

I believe Russia and the PRC are offering African nations short-term economic investment, destabilizing private military companies, and security agreements to present themselves as alternatives to western partners, without regard for long-term security of African nations.

- 184. What is your assessment of the efficacy of the current U.S. strategy to compete against Russia and China to be the security partner of choice in Africa? What metrics do you believe should be used to assess progress in this regard? (Review: ISA, IPSA)**

Russia and the PRC are offering African nations economic investment, diplomatic engagement, and security alternatives to western providers. If confirmed, I would seek to position the United States to be a superior and responsible alternative. To do this, the United States needs to develop cost competitive alternatives, demonstrate our commitment to the continent, and communicate an affirmative message about U.S-African partnership. U.S. diplomacy is based on partnership and respect for each other's interests.

Somalia

- 185. What is your assessment of the current security situation in Somalia? (OPR: ISA)**

As I understand it, we are seeing the largest offensive in five years of Somali security forces partnering with local communities to combat violence and extortion by al-Shabaab. This is a pivotal moment in Somalia, and we want to ensure that our partners can capitalize on this momentum. We have, however, also seen an uptick in al-Shabaab activity recently. I believe this is a part of a larger effort to stoke fear in the Somali people as the Somali National Army reestablishes control of key Somali towns. It is ultimately for Somalia's leaders to determine the structure of their federal governing system, to secure their own country, and to meet the needs of Somalia's people.

- 186. What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Somalia? (OPR: ISA, OCR: SOLIC)**

The reestablished U.S. presence and support from our partners and allies and multilateral efforts have signaled a continued commitment to our Somali partners and provides them with the tools they need to degrade al-Shabaab in support of President Hassan Sheikh's larger campaign to bring stability to Somalia. I believe that the United States has a vested interest in ensuring that the partners we have spent years training and advising to go after al-Shabaab can seamlessly integrate into the broader Somali force structure. I understand that we are actively working with other international partners across many sectors of the Somali Government to ensure we are working collectively and transparently to advance shared goals.

Libya

- 187. What is your assessment of current U.S. national security interests in Libya? (OPR: ISA)**

I believe the United States seeks a unified, democratically elected government in Libya and the removal of all foreign fighters that prohibit Libya from moving forward to a path of democratic order as elected by the citizens.

188. What is your assessment of external actors operating in Libya and where their objectives align and conflict with those of the United States? (OPR: ISA)

Some external actors appear to be working toward a unified military and democratically elected and unified government. In this respect their activities align with U.S. objectives. Other actors, notably the Wagner Group, are in Libya for their own advancement and profit, which does not align with U.S. objectives.

West Africa and the Sahel

189. What is your assessment of current security situation in West Africa and the Sahel and its impact on U.S. security interests? (OPR: ISA)

Although USAFRICOM's first CT priority is to counter Al Shabaab in the Horn of Africa, obtaining indicators and warnings of Violent Extremist Organization activity in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, and disrupting the efforts of these VEOs to further expand their activities is a significant priority. Countries where U.S. efforts had been successful have been compromised by the trend in democratic backsliding in the region, as illustrated most recently in Niger and Gabon. This situation has been exacerbated by malign Russian influence and has impacted DoD's cooperation with some African partners, creating opportunities for our global competitors to exploit. As we move forward, it will be critical to balance our imperative to bolster our allies and partners by maintaining pressure on VEO networks and countering Russian and PRC influence with the sometimes conflicting requirement to bolster our allies and partners' democratic values.

190. What is your assessment of the role and objectives of external actors in the region, particularly Russia, or Russian back proxies like the Wagner Group and China? (Review: ISA)

I believe Russia, the PRC, and groups like Wagner are offering African nations economic investment, diplomatic acknowledgment, and security agreements to present themselves as alternatives to Western providers. In some instances, I believe the goal of groups like Wagner is to displace U.S. and Western influence and undermine democracy. For this reason, we must be able to present an affirmative vision for the region and provide African countries with options.

191. What is your assessment of the utility of support provided by the United States to regional and external partners operating in the region in supporting U.S. security objectives, particularly support provided pursuant to section 331 of title 10, United States Code? (Review: ISA, SPC)

If confirmed, I look forward to assessing the support the United States provides to all partners, including those in Africa and their utility to U.S. security objectives.

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

Western Hemisphere

192. In your view, what should be the Department's strategic priorities in the Western Hemisphere? (OPR: HDHA)

Both the U.S. National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy underscore the importance of a stable, peaceful, and democratic Western Hemisphere to the security of the U.S. homeland. If confirmed, I would continue the Department's work to deepen partnerships with Western Hemisphere nations based on a commitment to democratic governance, civilian control of the military, the rule of law, and human rights. That should be DoD's number one priority in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I would also advance the Department's priorities to counter external state actor influence in the region, and to build the capacity of hemisphere partners to address transboundary threats, including those posed by transnational threat networks, malign actors in cyberspace, and natural disasters.

193. Is the Department appropriately resourced to support these priorities? If not, where do you assess the Department is accepting the greatest risk? (OPR: HDHA)

If confirmed, I will evaluate the Department's allocation of resources for defense efforts in the Western Hemisphere to determine whether adjustments are appropriate. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary in clearly communicating the Department's resourcing priorities to Congress to ensure that our resources are aligned with our strategic priorities in the region.

194. If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to the President and Secretary of Defense to deter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in the SOUTHCOM AOR and do you think these influences threaten hemispheric security and prosperity? (OPR: HDHA)

I believe that malign influence from these actors in the region is concerning and presents challenges to the security of the United States. If confirmed, I would recommend that the Department advance its defense partnerships with countries in the region to promote our shared values of democracy and respect for human rights, rule of law, and a rules-based international order, which have been the foundation of hemispheric security for decades.

The Department should continue to demonstrate why it remains the trusted partner of our hemisphere neighbors.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Many of the internal security challenges in Latin America are associated with transnational criminal networks.

195. What types of U.S. assistance are appropriate for Latin American countries given that these challenges emanate from non-state actors? (OPR: HDHA)

If confirmed, I would continue the Department of Defense's commitment to maintain strong defense ties with our key partners in the Western Hemisphere. As the United States engages with its partners, we recognize that many countries in the region face real and persistent threats from non-state actors, including the transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) that derive their influence from trafficking in narcotics and other illicit activity. TCOs pose a serious law enforcement challenge to the United States and other countries in the region. The response will require a whole of government approach – including working with diplomats, law enforcement, and intelligence agencies – and with partner nations, to combat the influence of TCOs and uphold the rule of law.

Venezuela

196. What is your assessment of the current situation in Venezuela? (OPR: HDHA)

The situation in Venezuela today and into the near future requires a whole-of-government, multinational effort to pave the way towards free and fair elections. If confirmed, I will work with our interagency and international partners to work towards this end.

197. What is your assessment of the role and objectives of external actors in Venezuela, particularly Russia, Cuba, Iran, and China? (OPR: HDHA)

I believe that external actors in Venezuela pose a continued risk to the restoration of democracy in that country. If confirmed, the Department of Defense will continue to monitor their activity in Venezuela.

198. If confirmed, what would be your policy recommendations on how the Department should address Venezuela? (OPR: HDHA)

If confirmed, I would recommend that any Department of Defense actions be in support of a broader U.S. Government strategy to enable Venezuela to move toward free and fair elections and a peaceful transition of power.

Colombia

***Plan Colombia* has enabled the Colombian government to make significant gains against the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and other paramilitary forces in Colombia. Additionally, Colombia has become a security exporter in the region due to its advances in capabilities and professionalism.**

199. What are your views regarding: (1) the current military and political situation in Colombia; and (2) the effectiveness and sustainability of ongoing DOD programs in Colombia? (OPR: HDHA)

The U.S and Colombia share a strong military-to-military relationship, as demonstrated by Colombia's recent designation as a Major Non-NATO ally. The United States has a history of strong collaboration with the Colombian military.

Colombia is a core strategic partner in the region, and if confirmed, I would continue to work with Colombia on defense sector institution building, international security cooperation, strengthening strategic intelligence capacity – including counternarcotics, territorial stabilization, and peace agreement implementation – and emergent transboundary challenges. These efforts promote regional stability and advance U.S. interests in the region.

200. Does the Department require any additional capabilities or legal authorities in Colombia, given developments in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration? (OPR: HDHA)

If confirmed, I will work across the Policy organization and the broader Department of Defense to determine whether additional capabilities or legal authorities are needed as the Department continues its work to employ counterterrorism and counternarcotics capabilities and authorities to the greatest extent possible in Colombia.

Over the last two decades, U.S. support was central to building up Colombia's defense and security capabilities, enabling Colombia to become a core regional security partner. The United States can leverage Colombia's defense and security capabilities and expertise to train other partner governments in the region. By replicating this model elsewhere, DoD can build up its partners' defense capabilities and then rely on them to train neighboring partner militaries. It could allow for enhanced regionalization – bolstering regional security.

201. Are there lessons to be learned from *Plan Colombia* that may be useful in addressing security and governance challenges elsewhere in the region and beyond? (OPR: HDHA)

I believe that DoD has focused on building up Colombia's defense and security capabilities, which has enabled Colombia to become a core regional security partner. The United States can leverage Colombia's defense and security capabilities and expertise to

train other partner governments in the region, which will help build up partners' defense capabilities to further bolster regional security.

Cuba

202. What is your assessment of Cuba's activities and objectives in the Western Hemisphere? (OPR: HDHA)

Cuba is clearly an undemocratic regime that does not respect human rights. If confirmed, I would support the Administration's direction to support a stable, prosperous, and free country for the Cuban people.

203. Under what circumstances, if any, would you recommend modifications to the security relationship between the United States and Cuba? (OPR: HDHA)

I understand that DoD maintains only limited contacts with Cuba through longstanding, practical meetings regarding routine issues at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners to ensure that U.S. interests are protected.

U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM)

Homeland Defense

204. How do you believe the Department should best prepare for and, if necessary, respond to airborne surveillance threats like the Chinese surveillance balloon that passed through United States airspace in early 2023? (Review HDHA)

The Department of Defense must be able to identify and defend against threats to the homeland. The 2022 National Defense Strategy, commits the Department to enhancing domain awareness. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to enhance the integration of ground and space-based sensors and work bilaterally with Canada to strengthen NORAD's capabilities.

Arctic

205. What changes, if any, are necessary for the Department of Defense to carry out their lines of effort in support of the 2022 National Strategy for the Arctic Region? (OPR: HDHA)

The Department of Defense has not issued an Arctic Strategy since 2019. Updating the Department's strategic approach to the Arctic will be helpful in aligning DoD resourcing to strategy and serve as a strong strategic messaging tool to Allies, partners, and

competitors.

206. What threat, if any, do Russian and Chinese activities in the Arctic pose to U.S. security interests? (OPR: HDHA)

Given its location, the Arctic is a potential forum for expanded strategic competition. Both competitors' activities in the Arctic could pose threats to freedom of navigation, as well as U.S. sovereignty and economic interests. The United States cannot afford to concede primacy in the region to either nation. Russia considers itself the preeminent Arctic power and views the Arctic region as critical to national security and a source of energy and resources. Consequently, the Russian military has invested heavily in its Arctic military presence in the years prior to Russia's reinvasion of Ukraine, creating new units, refurbishing infrastructure, and establishing new bases. Russia also asserts excessive and illegal maritime claims in the region, including the right to regulate Arctic waters and restrict navigational rights and freedoms guaranteed under international law. Russia's military investments reinforce its ability to enforce those claims and potentially seek to control what it calls "the Northern Sea Route."

The People's Republic of China (PRC) increasingly seeks access and influence in the Arctic region, and its claim to be a "near-Arctic state" reflects its intention to play a larger role in the region. The PRC does not yet possess the ability to project significant military power into the Arctic, but it is pursuing an increasing role in shaping governance and security affairs in the region. China's activities in the Arctic are largely civilian in nature to date, but they likely include dual-purpose activities that could enable a future PRC Arctic military presence.

207. To what extent should our partners in the Arctic share the burden of countering Russia and China where those two competitors threaten shared security interests? (OPR: HDHA)

The U.S. approach to the Arctic must be conducted in close cooperation with our key Allies and Sweden. Our Arctic Allies and partners have significant experience in and focus on operating in extreme Arctic conditions. These nations bring additional capabilities and geographic reach to the table, and there is great potential benefit in increased cooperation, data sharing, joint exercises, and combined operations if and when necessary. Our Allies are our greatest strength in the Arctic region, and the more interoperable our militaries become, the better prepared the United States is, alone and as part of an alliance.

208. What, in your view, are U.S. defense interests in the Arctic region? (OPR: HDHA)

As an Arctic nation, the United States's primary defense interest in the Arctic is to secure the homeland. The best way to achieve this goal is to strive for an Arctic region that is stable and characterized by high levels of cooperation among our Arctic Allies and partners. New sea lanes that will be opening in the coming years pose a number of challenges and opportunities. While new sea lanes mean new opportunities for transit and commerce, the resulting competition for resources and ocean access could bring about new flash points. Preserving navigational rights and freedoms in Arctic waterways will be key to maintaining a stable and secure Arctic region. Developments in the Arctic must not be allowed to harm the ability of the United States, its Allies, and partners, to prevail in conflict in case deterrence fails vis-à-vis our competitors.

209. Does the Department of Defense have the appropriate capabilities and assets to meet its goals in the Arctic? (OPR: HDHA)

The Arctic is a strategically important region for the United States, and DoD is closely monitoring the capabilities of competitors in the region. The National Defense Strategy makes clear that the People's Republic of China challenge is the Department's pacing challenge and that USINDOPACOM is the priority theater for resourcing. By contrast, the NDS articulates a calibrated approach to the Arctic region, with emphasis on increasing domain awareness, early warning, and ISR capabilities and ensuring the Joint Force is prepared for that region to become a venue for increased strategic competition. Our Allies and partners are our greatest strength in the Arctic region, and leading and supporting coordination and interoperability among our Arctic Allies and partners is a capability multiplier for the U.S. in the Arctic region. If confirmed, I will work within the Department's strategy, force planning, and force employment processes to ensure the Joint Force can effectively implement the National Defense Strategy and other strategic guidance, including with respect to the Arctic region.

210. U.S. forces in Alaska are assigned to INDOPACOM, but also have homeland defense responsibilities. Are there any changes to the force posture in Alaska, or the assignment of those forces, that you would recommend to ensure that the INDOPACOM and homeland defense missions are adequately staffed in the event of a contingency? (OPR: SPC)

Alaska's location within the Indo-Pacific region makes the State a strategically important region for our country. Alaska-based forces provide strategic advantages across the whole national defense spectrum, providing a deterrence to potential aggressors and security to our allies, all while supporting critical homeland defense requirements. If confirmed, I would seek close engagement with the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands, and Military

Departments to ensure no seams in DoD's approach to achieving the range of our defense objectives supported through U.S. forces in Alaska.

Defense Support to Civilian Authorities

211. What is the role of the Lead Federal Agency when DOD provides support to civilian authorities? (OPR: HDHA)

Consistent with their authorities and responsibilities in law and national policy, Lead Federal Agencies coordinate the Federal response to incidents. As such, they would normally request specific support from DoD, for instance under the Stafford Act or the Economy Act. When DoD support is authorized and involves the use of military forces, DoD retains command and control of its military forces.

212. In your view, are the procedures by which other Federal, State, and Local agencies request DOD support efficient and effective? (OPR: HDHA)

To the best of my knowledge, yes; however, I defer to Federal, State, and local agencies to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of their procedures. If confirmed, I will have the opportunity to review the efficiency and effectiveness of DoD's assessments of and responses to Federal, State, and local agency requests for DoD support.

213. In your view, are DOD procedures for evaluating and approving the provision of support requested by a civil authority efficient, effective, and timely? (OPR: HDHA)

It is my understanding that DoD's procedures are efficient, effective, timely, and field-tested. DoD works with its Federal, State, and local partners to plan, prepare, and exercise for responses to major disasters and emergencies and the safety and security of national special security events. If confirmed, I will have the opportunity to review these plans and procedures and evaluate how well they have worked in real-world situations.

214. What is your understanding of the factors that are considered in determining whether DOD will provide support to a civil authority? (OPR: HDHA)

Consistent with the law and DoD policy, DoD considers six factors: (1) legality (would providing the requested support be in compliance with law?); (2) lethality (would the requested support involve the potential use of lethal force by or against DoD personnel?); (3) risk (would providing the requested support pose an unacceptable risk to the safety of DoD personnel?); (4) cost (will DoD be reimbursed for the support and what effect will providing the support have on the DoD budget?); (5) appropriateness (would providing

the requested support be appropriate and in DoD's interest?); and (6) readiness (how will providing the requested support impact DoD's ability to perform its other primary missions?).

215. Are the procedures DOD employs to secure appropriate reimbursement for any support it provides to a civil authority efficient and effective, in your view? (OPR: HDHA)

It is my understanding that DoD's procedures regarding reimbursement for support of civil authorities are efficient and effective. If confirmed, I will review how efficient and effective these procedures have been and, if necessary, recommend improvements.

216. Under what conditions should DOD assist civil authorities in securing the southwest border, particularly by providing active-duty forces? (Review: HDHA).

Consistent with the law and DoD policy, DoD support of civil authorities in securing the southern border should be limited to circumstances in which providing support does not adversely affect the military preparedness of the United States or negatively affect military training, operations, readiness, or other military requirements.

If confirmed, I will also seek to work with DHS to help it develop the capabilities and capacity to carry out its statutory mission, and to ensure that DoD support does not pose an unacceptable risk to military preparedness, training, operations, readiness, or other military requirements.

217. What types of assistance in this context are inappropriate, in your view? (Review: HDHA)

DoD is prepared to support civilian law enforcement agencies consistent with the needs of U.S. military preparedness and while recognizing and conforming to the legal limitations on direct DoD involvement in civilian law enforcement activities. Examples of assistance that would be inconsistent with the law and DoD policy includes direct participation in law enforcement activities or assistance that would negatively affect military preparedness, training, operations, readiness, or other military requirements.

COVID-19

218. What is your view of DOD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? What aspects of it could be improved? What role do you envision for DOD in pandemic response moving forward? (OPR: HDHA, OCR: SPACE)

It is my understanding that DoD took great care to protect the health of its military and civilian personnel, sustain worldwide defense missions, and, at the same time, play an

incredible supporting role in our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. In future pandemics, I expect that DoD will continue to play a very important role. If confirmed, I will review DoD's response and plans to identify opportunities to preserve or improve DoD's preparedness.

219. Are there any types of support that the Department of Defense should not provide, in your view? (OPR: HDHA)

In my view, yes. For example, DoD should not provide support that is inconsistent with the law, such as support involving direct participation in a search, seizure, arrest, or other similar law enforcement activities by military personnel that is not otherwise specifically authorized by law.

220. To what extent does providing defense support to civil authorities during the coronavirus crisis impact readiness? How should DOD think about these tradeoffs? (OPR: HDHA)

When military personnel provide Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) on a large scale, there can be negative effects on readiness. These readiness impacts should be balanced with supporting the safety and security of the American people in times of crisis.

Southwest Border

Fentanyl, most of which enters this country from Mexico, is responsible for the deaths of approximately 70,000 Americans per year. Insecurity across our southwest border also contributes to human trafficking and illegal migration, which Mexico's criminal cartels are exploiting for financial gain.

221. Is the fentanyl crisis a national security crisis in your view? Why or why not? (OPR: HDHA)

Fentanyl is a national security crisis. Drug overdose deaths of Americans have increased 781% since 1999, with fentanyl responsible for approximately 68% of current overdoses. The ease of production and potency of fentanyl pose a unique danger that challenges our ability to defend our homeland, while financing criminal and violent extremist organizations.

222. What role do you believe that DOD should play in addressing the crisis at the southwest border? What aspects of the current DOD role at the southwest border could be improved? (OPR: HDHA)

DoD's long-standing role has been one of support to DHS, which is, by law, responsible for securing our nation's borders. However, in my view, if DHS is unable to secure our

nation's borders without DoD support, our nation could face serious risks were DoD's capabilities and forces required elsewhere, such as to respond to an overseas military contingency. DoD support should be reserved for circumstances when military-unique capabilities are critical, and even then should only be provided temporarily.

- 223. To what extent do you view the Mexican armed forces as partners in countering fentanyl, human trafficking, illegal migration, and the criminal cartels other illicit activities? Are there ways that you would recommend expanding cooperation with the Mexican armed forces? Do you see any risks in doing so? (Review: HDHA)**

If confirmed, I would continue the Department of Defense's commitment to maintain strong defense ties with Mexico, a partner nation that DoD works with on many important issues including trade, immigration, climate change, and North American defense. I recognize that Mexico, like many countries in the region, face real and persistent threats from non-state actors, including the transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) that derive their influence from trafficking in narcotics, illegal migration and other illicit products. The response will require a whole of government approach - including working with diplomats, law enforcement, and intelligence agencies - and with partner nations in the region, in order to combat the influence of these cartels and uphold the rule of law. I believe DoD should continue to support law enforcement efforts to disrupt these organizations, in partnership with the Mexican government, as part of a whole-of-government approach.

- 224. The Department purchased \$260 million of border wall construction materials, which were intended to be used for extending the southwest border wall. Rather than using those materials for that purpose, however, the Department paid to store those materials until approximately May 2023, and then transferred them to other government agencies or auctioned off those materials for other purposes.**

The Department of Homeland Security is the lead federal agency for border security and, depending on the situation, DoD plays a supporting role. I understand that there are provisions included in the House and Senate-passed versions of the NDAA that, if enacted into law, would direct the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a plan to utilize, transfer, or donate any remaining excess border wall construction materials to States on the southern border of the United States. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the Department acts in accordance with the law.

- 225. Do you believe that the incomplete barrier along the southwest border should be completed as part of a broader border security policy? Why or why not? (Review: HDHA)**

The Department of Homeland Security is the lead federal agency for border security and DoD plays a supporting role. I understand that there are provisions included in the House and Senate-passed versions of the NDAA that, if enacted into law, would direct the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a plan to utilize, transfer, or donate any remaining excess border wall construction materials. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the Department acts in accordance with the law.

Special Operations Forces

The NDAA for FY 2017 included provisions designed to enhance the oversight and advocacy of special operations forces. Among other things, these reforms established an administrative chain of command from the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command through the ASD(SOLIC) to the Secretary of Defense, mirroring the relationship between the Secretaries of the Military Departments and their Service Chiefs.

226. What is your understanding of the “service secretary-like” responsibilities of the ASD(SOLIC) for special operations forces?

ASD (SOLIC) is the principal civilian advisor to SecDef on special operations and low intensity conflict matters and exercises authority, direction, and control of Commander, USSOCOM for all special operations-peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces through the administrative chain of command specified in 10 USC 167(f).

227. If confirmed, what actions would you take to affirm the independent role of the ASD(SOLIC) as the “service secretary-like” civilian for special operations forces?

Civilian oversight is essential for our special operations enterprise just as it is for the services and ASD(SO/LIC) exercises authority, direction, and control of all specialoperations-peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces. If confirmed, I will continue to support for all elements of SO/LIC, including ASD(SO/LIC)’s role reporting to the Secretary of Defense in conducting Service Secretary-like responsibilities.

228. How do you differentiate the ASD(SOLIC)’s policy responsibilities from their “service secretary-like” responsibilities for “special-operations peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces”?

I understand the ASD(SO/LIC) has a unique dual reporting chain; maintaining a direct reporting line to the Secretary for its Service Secretary-like role in the administrative chain of command over USSOCOM, with full access to the same fora as the Service Secretaries for special operations-peculiar matters; and supporting OUSD(P) in their policy role with policy

advice on counternarcotics, stability operations, personnel recovery, crisis response, irregular warfare, and counterterrorism, among other things.

Section 127e and Section 1202 Activities

Section 127e of title 10, U.S. Code, authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to regular forces, irregular forces, and individuals supporting or facilitating military operations for the purpose of combatting terrorism. Section 1202 of the NDAA for FY 2018 authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide similar support to forces or individuals supporting or facilitating irregular warfare operations.

229. What is your assessment of the national security utility of each of these authorities in the current strategic environment? (Review: SOLIC)

I see the 127e authority as providing a relatively low-cost, low-risk, high payoff, sustainable option to maintain pressure on terrorist groups. I believe DoD's 127e programs are fully in line with the intent of the Administration's CT policy to shift the burden of countering terrorist groups to our foreign partners/local authorities. Our 127e partners reduce the threat of terrorist attacks against the U.S. Homeland and U.S. persons by maintaining pressure on these elements, often preventing or disrupting terrorist attack planning and operations.

"Section 1202" programs facilitate a broad range of special operations irregular warfare activities in direct support of authorized irregular warfare missions, including competing with peer adversaries and preparing for the implementation of operational plans. USSOF does this by, e.g., leveraging 1202-resourced foreign forces, irregular forces, groups or individuals to gain access and placement and to establish critical infrastructure. This program also enables USSOF to develop, enhance, and employ allied and partner access and placement and irregular warfare skills, and to operate in the information environment.

230. If confirmed, what criteria would you apply to the evaluation of proposals for the use of each of these authorities, with a view to mitigating the risks associated with the conduct of counterterrorism and irregular warfare activities below the level of traditional armed conflict? (Review: SOLIC)

Implementation of the 127e and Section 1202 authorities inherently rely on non-U.S. partners for success. As with any organization, those that succeed have high standards for professional conduct. If confirmed, I will ensure we select participants in these programs based on competencies in trustworthiness and willingness to adhere to U.S. standards, and I would also seek to provide them with appropriate training on laws of armed conflict and human rights.

I am aware of the Feb 2023 GAO report and recommendations for DoD to review and where necessary update guidance for 127e programs, in particular. If confirmed, I will review the progress on implementing these recommendations and apply any lessons learned to DoD

instructions on managing these programs.

231. If confirmed, how would you seek to ensure that recipients of support under these authorities are appropriately vetted to protect against potential human rights and counterintelligence concerns? (Review: SOLIC)

I understand DoD's Section 127e and 1202 procedures require that candidates be screened during selection and on an annual basis.

If confirmed, I would ensure DoD continually conducts this screening using all available intelligence across multiple databases. However, the most important aspect of upholding human rights is to continually monitor the actions and behavior of our partners once they have been accepted into DoD programs.

Our Service members live and work in close contact with our partners. If confirmed, I would ensure we are clear and open with our expectations for ethical conduct and we remain vigilant for any behavior that does not conform with our ethical standards and immediately remove those people from our programs.

Peacekeeping Operations

232. What should be the Department's role and objectives in supporting global peacekeeping operations? (OPR: SOLIC)

The United States is the largest overall financial contributor to the United Nations' peacekeeping budget in support of global peacekeeping operations. DoD supports the Department of State as the U.S. Government's policy lead for UN Peacekeeping by providing U.S. military officers for assignments in peacekeeping mission headquarters and capacity building support for troop-contributing countries. I understand peacekeeping operations are an effective type of stabilization activity. If confirmed, I would support DoD's continued efforts to enhance global peacekeeping operations mission performance.

Violent Extremist Organizations

Despite considerable global investment in the counterterrorism fight, jihadists in dozens of groups and countries continue to pose credible threats to local and regional U.S. interests.

233. What is your assessment of the threat to U.S. interests posed by Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates and adherents? Which group(s), in your view, present the greatest threat to the United States? (Review: SOLIC)

Terrorism and violent extremism remain a persistent threat to U.S. interests and our Homeland. Although our pacing challenge is the People's Republic of China (PRC), we must protect the U.S. Homeland and our citizens and facilities abroad from violent actors who have the capability and intent to attack us.

Since September 11, 2001, al-Qa`ida has been degraded to the point where it does not currently pose an acute threat to the United States Homeland. Some of their affiliates, like al-Shabaab, may pose a threat to U.S. persons in the region, which is why I believe it is important to continue support to our partners in Somalia and the surrounding region as they seek to break al-Shabaab's hold on parts of their country.

I believe ISIS continues to pose the greatest terrorist threat to the United States and our people globally. Although it may have lost its hold on territory in Iraq and Syria, it has gone back underground and remains committed to their goal of creating a Caliphate, governed by its interpretation of Sharia law. ISIS still produces media that can influence people around the world who share its ideology to conduct attacks and it still recruits dozens of people around the world to join its ranks.

Protecting U.S. citizens, personnel, and interests across the globe remains DoD's most important task. If confirmed, I will ensure counterterrorism remains a focus of effort at DoD as the department prioritizes integrated deterrence against Russia and the PRC.

234. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the U.S. counterterrorism strategy and DOD's role in supporting it? What metrics would you apply to measure the effectiveness of the strategy? (Review: SOLIC)

The Biden-Harris Administration's approach to counterterrorism is focused on disrupting threats to the U.S. Homeland and U.S. persons abroad while shifting the bulk of operations countering regional terrorist groups to the authorities of countries where they are located to prevent those groups from becoming global threats.

I believe these are appropriate goals for a sustainable counterterrorism posture abroad and help ensure we are continuing to protect Americans from terrorism while we focus on our pacing challenge: the People's Republic of China.

If confirmed, I will ensure DoD continues to work with partners and allies and leverage technology to build an enduring, sustainable counterterrorism posture to monitor and disrupt terrorist threats to the Homeland. These actions will degrade the capability of terrorist organizations to function trans-regionally, isolating branches from outside support, and allow foreign partner security forces to address terrorist threats before they reach the U.S. Homeland.

235. Do you believe there needs to be a "more resource sustainable" approach to counterterrorism, as directed by the 2018 and 2022 NDS? If so, and if confirmed, what specific actions would you take to promote a "more resource sustainable" approach and how would you assess any risks associated with such an approach? (OPR: SOLIC)

I believe that a resource sustainable strategy must focus on working by, with, and through foreign partners to address the terrorist threats that persist across the globe. This must

include degrading the capability of terrorist organizations to function trans-regionally by targeting those elements – such as senior terrorist group leaders – that can recruit, fund-raise, and traffic arms and people across borders. Taking this approach serves to isolate various regional branches from their outside support, weakens them, and allows local security forces to handle the threat before it reaches the U.S. homeland.

The publicly stated desire of ISIS and like-minded groups to develop global presence reflects a well-understood strategy of extremist groups: overextend an adversary into resource-intensive commitments that eventually deplete national resolve and popular will.

Against individual countries, this global strategy can be effective. Against well-coordinated multilateral partnerships, such as the 86-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, this strategy fails. Collectively, the Coalition has the global presence and resources to confront ISIS in and across any region in which it operates—in a manner that is resource sustainable for individual partners.

If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD works with our partners and allies – including the D-ISIS coalition – and leverage technology to monitor these terrorist threats and share information to disrupt their operations.

236. Should the Department focus principally on terrorist organizations that pose a direct threat to the U.S. homeland? If so, how would you mitigate risk posed by other terrorist groups that have such intent but currently lack the capability to do so? (OPR: SOLIC)

If confirmed, I will ensure DoD continues to work with its partners and allies, particularly through multinational forums like the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, to monitor the threat from terrorist groups that do not pose a direct threat to the U.S. Homeland and ensure we both share information and work with our interagency partners, including the Department of State, to build the capacity of foreign partners to disrupt these other Violent Extremist Organizations through law enforcement operations in the countries they reside in.

Counternarcotics and Counter-Transnational Organized Crime Activities

237. In your view, what should be the role of the Department in combating narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime? (Review: SOLIC)

DoD is the lead Federal agency for detecting and monitoring aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States in support of the counter-drug activities of Federal, State, local, and foreign law enforcement agencies. Aside from this detection and monitoring mission, DoD's role in combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime consists of support to interagency partners through enabling capabilities .

238. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the Department's allocation of resources to combat narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime?

(Review: SOLIC)

If confirmed, I will review the scope of DoD's activities to combat narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime to ensure we are aligned with our interagency law enforcement partners and our international partners. I will ensure that these threats are appropriately prioritized within the DoD Counterdrug Program.

Counter Threat Finance

**239. What should be the Department's role in counter-threat finance activities?
(Review: SOLIC)**

Understanding how our adversaries generate, store, move, and use resources, and working with other U.S. Government (USG) departments and agencies, as well as with partner nations, to deny, disrupt, or defeat and degrade adversaries' illicit financial networks is an important Irregular Warfare capability. I understand that most of DoD's counter-threat finance activity is currently funded by the DoD Counterdrug program and operates within the bounds of DoD's Counterdrug authorities.

240. In your view, should the Department expand its support to other U.S. Government departments and agencies conducting counter threat finance activities? If so, how? (Review: SOLIC)

DoD is not often the lead agency in countering threat finance and works extensively with other departments and agencies. That said, I understand that the DoD Counterdrug program currently provides counter-threat finance analytic support to several other Departments and Agencies, including the Departments of State, Justice, Treasury, and Homeland Security. If confirmed, I will review the scope of DoD's counter-threat finance activities and assess whether the Department should expand DoD support to other U.S. Government departments and agencies

Irregular Warfare

Nation states are becoming more aggressive in challenging U.S. interests through the use of asymmetric means that often fall below the threshold of traditional armed conflict, commonly referred to as irregular warfare or "gray zone operations."

241. What is your understanding of the threat to U.S. interests posed by adversaries in the domain of irregular warfare? (Review: SOLIC)

The People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russian Federation are both major nuclear powers that are also adept at irregular warfare below the threshold of armed conflict. They have both escalated their coercive and malign activities in the "gray zone." The PRC employs state-controlled forces, cyber and space operations, and economic coercion against the United States, its allies, and partners. Russia employs disinformation, cyber, and space

operations against the United States and our allies and partners, and irregular proxy forces in multiple countries. North Korea and Iran use similar means at more limited levels. These activities, if left unaddressed, could endanger U.S. military effectiveness now and in the future.

242. What should be the guiding principles of any DOD strategy to counter threats in the “gray zone,” in your view? (Review: SOLIC)

The United States must be judicious in our use of defense resources and efforts to counter competitors’ coercive behaviors in the gray zone, as traditional military tools may not always be the most appropriate response. That said, campaigning serves a critical role in disrupting competitors’ attempts to advance their objectives through gray zone tactics, especially when integrated for maximum impact with the actions of allies, partners, and other U.S. departments and agencies. This requires discipline, as successful campaigning begins with focused planning that specifies how an initiative supports our defense priorities, establishes clear connections with the Department’s strategies, and incorporates feedback loops.

Information Operations

243. What is your assessment of DOD’s ability to conduct effective military operations in the information environment to defend U.S. interests against malign influence activities carried out by state and non-state actors? (Review: SOLIC)

I understand the Department has processes and capabilities in place, or in development, to counter and defend against foreign malign influence operations targeting its forces and missions, such as Military Information Support Operations (MISO), Defense Deception Activities (DDA), cyber effects operations, electromagnetic spectrum operations, and public affairs. The Department’s effectiveness to defend U.S. interests against malign influences activities is best when focused on defined defense and military objectives, synchronized across all information capabilities, and when integrated into campaigning with interagency capabilities and partners/allies. If confirmed, I would work to strengthen these processes and capabilities.

244. In your view, is responsibility for Information Operations clearly delineated and properly situated within the military services and the Department? (OPR: SOLIC)

Yes, in my view the responsibilities for I.O. are properly situated. If confirmed, I will work with those in the Department to consider ways to improve our effectiveness in this area.

245. Do you believe the Department has a mature strategic concept for such efforts? (OPR: SOLIC)

Yes, I understand that the Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment (SOIE) was signed by Secretary Austin in July 2023. This strategy provides the framework for future efforts to enhance; people & organizations; programs; policies & governance; and partnerships. I understand the Department is developing an in-depth and agile SOIE

implementation plan to actualize the strategy and further the Department's efforts to implement the National Defense Strategy.

246. Are DOD's efforts in this regard appropriately integrated with other U.S. Government organizations and activities? (OPR: SOLIC)

The Department's efforts in the information environment work best when synchronized across other US agencies and their activities. If confirmed, I would make it a priority for DoD to ensure operations are integrated and deconflicted.

247. What is your assessment of the metrics used to assess effectiveness of DOD information operations? (OPR: SOLIC)

I understand that DoD continues to improve oversight and evaluation of our operations in the information environment. The Department is working to better understand the effects of Information Operations and the metrics used to evaluate their performance. Some operations provide immediate results while others require a sustained effort over time to reach military objectives in line with national security goals. DoD employs tools such as surveys, focus groups, and face to face interactions to gather quantitative and qualitative metrics required to assess operational effectiveness.

248. Does DOD have sufficient authorities and resources to conduct these operations effectively? If not, what additional authorities and resources would you request, if confirmed? (OPR: SOLIC)

I understand DoD currently has sufficient authorities to conduct Information Operations but that there may be some limitations. If confirmed, I will work to understand the nuances of those authorities and identify any limitations.

Department of Defense Role in Election Security

In September 2019, at the annual National Cybersecurity Summit, then Secretary of Defense Esper noted that "our adversaries will continue to target our democratic processes", the Pentagon had "developed our capabilities and increased our capacity to allow us to detect, locate, and exploit threats in the cyber domain", and that "influence operations are at a scope and scale never before imagined." In that same speech, Secretary Esper declared election security "an enduring mission for the Department of Defense."

249. What do you see as the Department's continued role in election security? (OPR: Space)

I understand the Department supports the whole-of-government effort to secure and defend US. Elections. This is a no fail mission and I will continue to support the Department's critical role in protecting and defending the Nation.

250. Do you agree that there is a continuing threat to our democratic processes from foreign malign influence operations? (OPR: Space, OCR: SOLIC)

Yes. I believe our adversaries have the intent and, in some instances, the capability to

conduct malign influence efforts against the United States that aim to manipulate and undermine confidence in U.S. elections. There is a low barrier for entry for adversaries to conduct Information Operations. The United States will likely see continued and increasingly sophisticated adversarial threats to our democratic processes as technology matures.

251. Do you envision election security as an enduring mission for the Department? If so, how would OUSD(P) best support the mission of defending our democratic processes from interference by Russia and other foreign adversaries? (OPR: Space)

I understand election security is an enduring mission for DoD. If confirmed, I will work with internal and interagency stakeholders to ensure our elections are free from foreign interference or influence.

252. Do you assess that DOD actions to date are supporting a whole of government approach to foreign adversaries that seek to interfere in our elections? If not, are there additional policy steps that you believe the Department of Defense should take to enhance deterrence of foreign election interference? How would the actions you list, if any, support whole of government efforts? (OPR: Space)

I understand DoD supports whole-of-government efforts to secure and defend US. Elections. If confirmed, I will work to ensure DoD's support enhances these whole-of-government efforts and deters foreign election interference.

Defense Security Cooperation

253. In your view, what should be the role of the Department's security cooperation activities in the implementation of U.S. security strategy? (Review: SPC)

The role of the Department's security cooperation activities is to deliver effective, timely, and sustainable solutions to improve the military effectiveness of our allies and partners in support of strategic interests. DoD security cooperation prioritizes developing ally and partner capabilities to create warfighting advantages, enhance integrated deterrence, and enable partners to act alongside or in lieu of U.S. forces.

For example, I understand the Department is implementing organizational improvements, coordinating with allies and partners and industry, and using lessons learned from the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Tiger Team, and its permanent body, the FMS Continuous Process Improvement Board, to ensure that the United States can rapidly support our Allies and Partners with the capabilities they need to buy down risk through the FMS process.

If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress and ensuring the Department's security cooperation capabilities are delivered rapidly to our allies and partners and achieve our own strategic objectives.

254. If confirmed, how would you define the fundamental objectives of the Department's programs and activities for building the capabilities of foreign security forces? What changes, if any, would you recommend to the Department's approach? (Review: SPC)

Delivering state-of-the-art capabilities at speed and scale is critical to secure our enduring military advantage. We must provide capabilities to our allies and partners as quickly as possible in support of their requirements, as well as our own National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I am committed to working with DoD components, the State Department, and Congress to continue to address delays and improve the FMS process.

255. Is the OUSD(P) appropriately organized and empowered to fulfill its responsibilities for the oversight of strategic policy and guidance and the overall allocation of resources for security cooperation programs and activities of the Department of Defense pursuant to section 382 of title 10, United States Code? What changes, if any, to OUSD(P) structure, authorities, and resourcing for these purposes, would you recommend, if confirmed? (OPR: SPC)

I understand that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy exercises responsibility for oversight of strategic policy and guidance and is responsible for overall resource prioritization and allocation for security cooperation programs and activities of the Department of Defense.

If confirmed, I will review and evaluate the organization, authorities, and overall resourcing for the Department's security cooperation programs and activities in alignment with the National Defense Strategy, and will provide my recommendations to Congress.

256. In your view, what should be the role of the Department of Defense, vis-à-vis the Department of State and other civilian departments and agencies, in efforts to build the capabilities of foreign security forces? What is your assessment of the current level of coordination between the Department of Defense and Department of State on security cooperation? (OPR: SPC)

I view the Department of Defense and the Department of State as partners in strengthening our ability to work with allies and partners to meet shared security objectives, as articulated in the National Security and National Defense Strategies. DoD security cooperation prioritizes developing ally and partner capabilities to create warfighting advantages, enhance integrated deterrence, and enable partners to act alongside or in lieu of U.S. forces.

Institutional capacity building efforts are integral to successful security cooperation. I view

the Department of Defense and State's efforts to build transparent, effective, and accountable security institutions and forces as both complementary and necessary for enhancing military effectiveness and building sustainable partnerships.

There is a strong, collaborative relationship between DoD and State on issues such as building the capabilities of foreign security forces. If confirmed, I will further assess the level of coordination between the Department of Defense and the Department of State and provide my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense

257. If confirmed, what would be your relationship with the Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA)? On what issues would you expect to consult with the Director? (OPR: SPC)

I understand that the Director of DSCA reports to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities. If confirmed, I expect to consult with the Director of DSCA on the execution of DoD and State-led security cooperation and security assistance programs.

Civilian Casualties

In August 2022 the Secretary of Defense issued the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP), which included a detailed set of objectives and initiatives to “improve its approach to mitigating and responding to civilian harm, protecting U.S. national security, and confronting the complex challenges of the modern security environment.”

258. What is your assessment of the progress made to implement the CHMR-AP to date? What areas do you believe require greater attention or resources to achieve the desired outcomes? (Review: SOLIC)

The CHMR-AP is a priority of Secretary Austin, and it will improve DoD's approach to mitigating and responding to civilian harm. The CHMR-AP creates a range of new processes and institutions dedicated to cultivating best practices on civilian protection and learning from previous instances of civilian harm. I understand DoD is in the process of implementing the range of actions directed in the CHMR-AP, including the hiring key personnel, although full implementation will take time. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to implement fully this important action plan.

259. What role do you believe public transparency plays with respect to accounting for and responding to allegations of civilian casualties resulting from U.S. military operations? (OPR: SOLIC)

Transparency is important for multiple reasons, and it is critical to both public accountability and responding appropriately to civilian harm when it occurs. My understanding is that the CHMR-AP will facilitate both transparency and accountability

through a range of actions, including the enhancement of assessments and investigations of civilian harm.

260. Do you believe the Department of Defense has achieved a sufficient level of transparency on such matters? If not, what additional steps do you believe are necessary? (OPR: SOLIC)

The extensive efforts undertaken by DoD over the past year to implement the CHMR-AP demonstrate a strong commitment to improve the processes in this area. Strengthening transparency requires systemic improvements. For instance, in addition to the enhancement of assessments and investigations of civilian harm directed by the CHMR-AP, the action plan also directs the creation of standardized civilian harm operational reporting and data management processes to improve how DoD collects, shares, and learns from data related to civilian harm. It is vital that these implementation efforts continue. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress and DoD components across the force to ensure these aspects of the CHMR-AP are implemented so that our military operations are both more effective and transparent.

Use of Military Force

261. Are you satisfied that current legal authorities, including the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF), enable the Department to carry out counterterrorism operations and activities at a necessary and appropriate level? (Review: SOLIC)

I believe the current authorities are sufficient for DoD's counterterrorism operations. I know that the President has said he is open to working with Congress on a narrow and specific framework to repeal and replace the current AUMF, if that is Congress' priority.

If confirmed, I would ensure Policy would work with Congress on any legislative proposals regarding this topic toward a mutually acceptable change in the law.

262. The Senate voted to repeal the 2002 AUMF in March of this year. Do you support the repeal of the 2002 AUMF? Please explain your answer. (OPR: SOLIC)

If confirmed, I would review any ongoing operations to determine if they rely on the 2002 AUMF. However, if none rely on the 2002 AUMF, I am not opposed to repealing it.

263. In your view, is a "new" authorization for the use of military force needed at this time? If so, what should be the scope and terms of this "new" AUMF? Please explain your answer. (Review: SOLIC)

I support the Executive Branch and Congress working together to develop a new AUMF that better reflects the reality of the ever-evolving threat that terrorists pose.

If confirmed, I will work with Congress to develop a narrow and specific framework that ensures the continuity of current operations and allows the flexibility to identify new terrorist groups or account for name changes or splits of previously identified terrorist groups.

264. What groups are currently assessed to be associated forces of al Qaeda for purposes of the 2001 AUMF, and in what countries are U.S. military direct action operations against such groups authorized? (OPR: SOLIC)

As cited in previous reports to Congress, including with the so-called “Section 1264” reports, the current covered groups are al-Qa`ida, the Taliban, certain other terrorist or insurgent groups affiliated with al-Qa`ida and the Taliban in Afghanistan, al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Shabaab, al-Qa`ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Qa`ida in Syria, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). There are also some groups that remain classified due to the sensitivity of the collection sources that provided us this information.

The United States used force in 2022 in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Somalia, according to this report.

265. What factors would you consider, if confirmed, in recommending to the Secretary of Defense which forces of other nations should be eligible for collective self-defense by U.S. military forces, and under what conditions? (Review: SOLIC)

It is important to note that defending allies and partners when they participate in combat operations alongside U.S. forces is a foundational element that trust is built upon. Collective self-defense is mutual in these partnerships, and our allies and partners have historically come to the aid of U.S. forces whose lives are in danger. We would not want to jeopardize this inherent trust when lives are at stake.

I understand that DoD has an obligation to report to Congress when it designates a force as eligible for collective self-defense.

If confirmed, I will advise the Secretary on the planning and development of rules of engagement and guidance for commanders to request and approve allied and partner forces that participate in combat operations alongside our forces.

Detainee Issues

266. Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, *The Department of Defense Detainee Program*, dated March 15, 2022? (Review: SOLIC)

Yes, I support the standards for detainee treatment in the Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DoD Directive 2310.01E, DoD Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014.

267. What are your views on the long-term use of the detention facility at Guantanamo? Should use of the facility be terminated, as President Biden has indicated? (Review: SOLIC)

I support the Administration's stated view that the detention facility at Guantanamo should be closed. Until that time, however, the Department must ensure the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of the 30 remaining detainees through Joint Task Force - Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO).

268. If the use of the facility should be terminated, what are the available options for disposition of the detainees held at Guantanamo and where should the remaining detainees in law of war detention at GTMO be detained? (OPR: SOLIC)

It would be premature for me to speculate. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of the 30 remaining detainees through Joint Task Force - Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO).

269. If the use of the facility should be terminated, what process would you expect to follow to bring detainee operations at GTMO to a close? (OPR: SOLIC)

It would be premature for me to speculate. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the Administration and Congress to ensure the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of the 30 remaining detainees through Joint Task Force - Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO).

270. If confirmed, would you ever advise the President to transfer new detainees to Guantanamo, and if so, under what criteria? (OPR: SOLIC)

It is my understanding that the Biden-Harris Administration does not intend to bring new detainees to Guantanamo.

271. What are your views on the objectives and outcomes of the Department's Military Commission process? (Review: SOLIC)

In my view, the Military Commissions process provides appropriate standards and processes for these trials.

If confirmed, to the extent possible, I will work with the Office of Military Commissions to ensure that Policy is not an impediment to the thorough and speedy adjudication deserved by the families of the victims of the 9/11 attacks and other terrorist attacks.

For as long as detainees are held at Guantanamo, the Department of Defense will have an ongoing obligation to meet the detainees' healthcare needs. Some of the detainees are approaching advanced age, and others have serious health conditions.

272. In your view, is the Department adequately addressing the healthcare needs of GTMO detainees? (OPR: SOLIC)

The health and well-being of the detainees at Guantanamo are an important part of the mission of JTF-GTMO. Accordingly, U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), through JTF-GTMO, provides adequate and humane care for the detainees at Guantanamo that complies with U.S. law and policy.

273. What recommendations would you make to ensure the Department can continue to meet its healthcare obligations for as long as detainees are held at GTMO? (OPR: SOLIC)

As the detainee population ages and detainees experience chronic medical conditions, it will remain Department policy to protect the life and health of detainees by humane and appropriate clinical means, and in accordance with all applicable law and DoD policy.

Sexual Harassment

In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, approximately 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.

274. If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or otherwise become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the OUSD(P)?

Sexual harassment has no place in the work place. Employees deserve a safe and respectful work environment. If confirmed, I would work with subject matter experts and/or Anti-Harassment Program Managers to appropriately address the complaint in a manner that respects the privacy and well-being of the complainant and ensures appropriate accountability.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

280. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters

to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Yes.

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

Yes.