

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Dr. Colin Kahl
Nominee for Appointment to be Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Duties, Qualifications, Challenges, Priorities

Q1. 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 the Secretary of Defense's principal staff assistant responsible for policy development and planning; leads the formulation and coordination of national security and defense policy within the Department of Defense; and integrates policies and plans to achieve desired objectives. The USD(P) also is responsible for efforts to build and maintain defense relationships with U.S. allies, partners, competitors, and international organizations. As provided by 10 U.S.C. 134, the USD(P) assists the Secretary of Defense in the development of written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans, and for the review of such plans. Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, the USD(P) has responsibility for supervising and directing activities of the Department of Defense relating to export controls, as well as for policy oversight, guidance, allocation, and use of resources for Department of Defense security cooperation and combating terrorism activities.

Q2. 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 the principal staff assistant and advisor to the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense for all matters on the formulation of national security and defense policy. In addition, I would establish good relationships with other DoD Components, Defense Agencies and DoD Field Activities, the Joint Staff, Military Services, and Combatant Commands. I would expect that the Secretary will assign me any other duties that he deemed appropriate for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, including, but not limited to, representing the Department of Defense, as directed, in matters involving the National Security Council (NSC), Department of State, and other Federal departments, agencies, and interagency groups with responsibility for national security policy.

Q3. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you for this position?

I was trained as an international security and conflict specialist, with a PhD from Columbia University in political science. Over the past two decades, I have held professorships at the University of Minnesota, Georgetown University, and now Stanford University, where I am a tenured Senior Fellow and Co-Director of the Center for International Security and Cooperation. I have conducted research and published on a wide array of foreign policy and defense policy topics, including environmental security, the evolution of counterinsurgency, post-9/11 Middle East policy, nuclear nonproliferation, the impact of emerging technologies on strategic stability, the geopolitical implications of COVID-19, and American grand strategy. I also have extensive experience as a policy practitioner, working at multiple levels of government. From 2005 to 2006, I worked as an action officer at the Pentagon in OSD Policy via a fellowship from the Council on Foreign Relations, focusing on stability and counterinsurgency operations. I returned to OSD Policy from 2009 to 2011 as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, serving as the senior policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense for Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel

and the Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, and six other countries in the Levant and Gulf region. For my work on these issues, I was awarded the Outstanding Public Service Medal by Secretary Gates in 2011. From October 2014 to January 2017, I served as Deputy Assistant to President Obama and National Security Advisor to Vice President Biden. As a senior aide to the President and Vice President, and a standing member of the National Security Council Deputies Committee, I worked extensively on China, Central America, Iran, the counter-ISIS campaign, North Korea, Russia, Ukraine, cyber, climate policy, and other national security matters.

Q4. If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy?

If confirmed, I expect that whomever is confirmed as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy would be my partner and right hand on all national security and defense policy matters, as we 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, and with the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to ensure a full, successful partnership.

Q5. What are the major challenges you would expect to confront if confirmed as the USD(P)?

The most urgent challenge we face is the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. If confirmed, my first priority will be to support Secretary Austin's direction to the Department to support Federal COVID-19 response efforts. We also must root out extremism in the Department, which is contrary to the oath we take to support and defend the Constitution. Another major challenge is balancing efforts to prepare and strengthen the U.S. military for a dynamic future security landscape and ensuring deterrence against threats from China and other strategic competitors, rogue states and terrorist organizations; preparing for the effects of climate change that drive nation-state fragility and conflict; working to address transnational criminal organizations and irregular migration; and accounting for budgetary limitations. I would ensure, through the formulation of the next National Defense Strategy, that the Department properly outlines the strategic and policy objectives that we expect the Joint Force to achieve.

Q6. 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, my first priority will be to support Secretary Austin's efforts to combat COVID-19. We need to take care of our national security workforce to ensure they have the protections necessary to conduct their essential national security missions. I will take immediate steps to understand the organizational health and structure of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and take action to ensure the career civilian workforce is appropriately sized and resourced. I understand resource-driven civilian staff reductions have resulted in a significant decrease in staffing as well as marks against budget levels in Policy that threaten to undermine the ability of the workforce to meet mission requirements as they exercise statutory responsibilities to provide civilian guidance and oversight of the military. Policy has to be organized effectively to meet our statutory requirements, as well as to meet emerging mission requirements in areas such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and other disruptive

technologies, climate change, and energy policy. Simultaneously, I will focus on our work to shape the next National Defense Strategy to ensure it accounts for changes in the strategic environment and reflects the Secretary's and the President's priorities. If confirmed, I will work closely with other DoD Components and with the Congress to address these challenges and support Secretary Austin's priorities for the Department.

Q7. How would you characterize your views regarding the appropriate posture of stationing of U.S. armed forces overseas and their use in overseas operations?

I have great respect for all of our forces, regardless of where they serve. Overseas military presence contributes to assuring allies and partners of U.S. defense commitments and shared values, and to ensuring our operational responsiveness. I believe having our forces serve in overseas locations is essential to our national security interests and to our ability to protect and defend the homeland and interests around the world.

Civilian Control of the Military

The National Defense Strategy Commission report notes, “allocating priority—and allocating forces—across theaters of warfare is not solely a military matter. It is an inherently political-military task, decision authority for which is the proper competency and responsibility of America’s civilian leaders.”

Q8. 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 is a vital cornerstone of our democracy. DoD civilian leadership provides necessary direction and oversight of the formulation of military strategy and plans through the provision of timely policy guidance, clearly defined objectives and end-states, and requirements and guidelines for contingency planning. Additionally, the Department's military leadership exercises essential roles across the range of DoD's strategic and planning functions, providing deep operational expertise and sound military advice; working closely with military leaders, therefore, is essential to success in these areas. Collectively, these roles ensure a balanced civil-military relationship and national defense activities that are in concert with American values.

Q9. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to implement the Commission's recommendation that “the Secretary of Defense and USD(P) . . . fully exercise their responsibilities for preparing guidance for and reviewing contingency plans?”

If confirmed, I will fully carry out the responsibilities of the USD(P) to prepare guidance for and review contingency plans. Specifically, I will deepen and expand the interactions between civilian and military leadership through an extensive contingency plans review process to invigorate the civilian oversight role, integrate new capabilities more effectively, and ensure robust civil-military dialogue.

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.

Q10. 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.

I understand Policy's civilian workforce has shrunk by 25 percent as a result of mandatory headquarters cuts taken over the past decade; and the FY 2021 DoD Appropriations Act explanatory statement's \$3.5 million reduction in operation and maintenance funds for Policy for "excess personnel increase" will affect the civilian workforce further. I am concerned about these cuts, and if confirmed will review Policy's missions and current staffing levels to determine whether the professional civilian staff is sized appropriately and whether it is able to recruit and retain an experienced, talented, diverse workforce that can effectively carry out the Secretary's vision for meaningful oversight of the military. If necessary, I will seek additional personnel to be assigned permanently to Policy so that we can effectively pursue these national security missions and improve civilian control of the military.

National Defense Strategy (NDS)

Q11. Does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Q12. If confirmed, what changes or adjustments would you recommend in the NDS? Q13. What changes or adjustments would you recommend in the Department's implementation of the NDS?

A11. I believe the 2018 NDS accurately identifies strategic competition with China and Russia as the primary challenge animating the global security environment. The continued erosion of U.S. military advantage vis-à-vis China and Russia, in key strategic areas, remains the most significant risk the Department must address. I assess China is the top priority and pacing threat for the Department, given its increasing scope and scale of military modernization, its aggressive behavior, and its potential as a systemic competitor across multiple domains.

A12. The Department should consider geo-political shifts, intensifying competition with China, transnational threats (including climate change and COVID-19 and other biological threats), and the evolving technology landscape in its review and development of the next NDS. Further, the 2018 NDS assumed sustained defense budget growth and anticipated a rebalancing of U.S. commitments from the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific region, though neither has fully materialized. A new strategy should consider and highlight the difficult choices DoD faces, where fiscal, doctrinal, temporal, or other limitations pose trade-offs to addressing strategic priorities.

A13. I understand DoD's annual NDS assessment identified the need for strategy implementation to involve more deliberate planning, organization, and prioritization. If confirmed, I will review and consider applying forward the insights from NDS implementation, while also helping to ensure that future strategy implementation is addressed more organically as part of the NDS development process.

DoD should consider how a number of factors affect NDS implementation, including the security and fiscal environments, demands on defense-wide and military roles and missions, global force

management and force planning issues, and the state of our network of allies and partners. If confirmed, I would ensure future strategy implementation focuses on how DoD efforts can be better integrated with other elements of national power, and with key roles exercised by our allies and partners.

The National Defense Strategy Commission recommended an average of 3-5% real growth annually in the size of the defense budget in future years or “DOD should alter the expectations of the strategy and America’s global strategic objectives.”

Q14. Do you believe that DOD requires 3-5% real budgetary growth through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) to implement the NDS effectively? Q15. If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of DOD funding?

A14. The Department must align new operating concepts, focused capability investments, and internal reforms with its strategic approach to future warfighting, to be able to deter our competitors most effectively. The overall level of DoD resourcing is a critical factor that must be reconciled with national priorities for our military. Appropriate use of available DoD resources will be necessary to maximize the strategy’s effectiveness and minimize risks to U.S. forces, while at the same time DoD seeks efficiencies through innovation.

A15. If confirmed, I would first ensure, through oversight of and participation in the formulation of the next National Defense Strategy, that the Department properly outlines the strategic and policy objectives that we expect the Joint Force to achieve. Secondly, by leveraging and supporting the Department’s analytic enterprise, I would ensure the Secretary and other senior leaders have a clear understanding of the warfighting effectiveness needed for our forces to be able to achieve those ends, with acceptable levels of risk. Based on this information, I would support the Secretary in clearly communicating risks and resourcing priorities to Congress.

Global Force Posture

Q16. 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?

DoD’s current global posture provides the United States a good baseline for executing operations today. However, there are opportunities to improve DoD’s global posture so that we are better positioned to execute operations tomorrow. With this in mind, DoD will be executing a global posture review directed by President Biden to assess alignment of DoD’s posture with national security priorities. Most importantly, DoD will review how to take additional steps toward a more resilient and distributed posture in the Indo-Pacific region that leverages new capabilities and operational concepts. Elsewhere in the world, we need to ensure DoD forces and footprint are scoped appropriately for the threat scenarios they face and balanced against any tradeoffs with the strategic priority of improving our warfighting advantages over near-peer competitors.

Q17. 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?

Forward-stationed forces play a critical role in enabling DoD to deter potential adversaries because they decrease crisis response times while also reassuring, supporting, and developing

stronger relationships with allies and partners. The balance between forward-stationed, rotationally deployed, and surge forces varies from region to region based upon several factors, including the capabilities required to deter particular threats and the availability of access and basing in allied and partner countries. However, each of the three components is vital to our overall global defense posture.

Q18. 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?

Our alliances and partnerships are an asymmetric strategic advantage over our competitors. The strength of this network of defense relations cannot be taken for granted. We must reinvigorate and modernize these relationships, where appropriate. If confirmed, I would strive to align the Department's priorities and synchronize our tools and resources, to help allies and partners develop their defense establishments and military forces. I would confer within the Department to inform how best to enhance and strengthen defense relationships that advance shared objectives. I expect to focus on engaging with key allies and partners on priority bilateral and multilateral issues, strengthening collaborative planning, and increasing interoperability.

Q19. 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? Q20. Is that DOD component adequately resourced and structured to react at the speed of relevance?

A19. The Secretary of Defense is responsible for activating a plan for a major conflict with a strategic competitor and subsequent global force posture adjustments and associated risk. To facilitate these decisions, the Joint Staff provides military options and the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy provides its recommendations to the Secretary regarding the associated risk to strategy and policy.

A20. All DoD components, but particularly Policy – which directly supports and enables the Secretary's civilian control of the military – should be properly resourced to provide timely and informed advice. If confirmed, I will review whether OSD Policy is adequately resourced and structured to react swiftly and appropriately to a major conflict.

Nuclear Capabilities and Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)

Q21. 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?

As both Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks testified, I agree that nuclear deterrence is DoD's highest priority mission, and I agree that nuclear modernization of the triad is critical to U.S. national security.

Q22. What is your understanding of how Russia and China have expanded and/or modernized their nuclear force capabilities?

I understand that Russia has largely completed modernization of its strategic forces and is pursuing new strategic-range nuclear systems. I am aware of reporting that Russia is poised to increase the size of its theater and tactical nuclear weapons arsenal in response to perceived threats; and of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA), public statement that China will roughly double the size of its nuclear forces. If confirmed, I will request briefings on these developments to understand the details of both countries' modernization program, why they are modernizing, and the implications for U.S. national and international security.

Q23. In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies?

Improvements to nuclear forces by our two most important strategic competitors of course pose a threat to the United States and its allies and partners. Maintaining effective nuclear deterrence is critical.

Q24. Do you support the U.S. nuclear force structure changes recommended by the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review?

I expect the Administration will review the nuclear force changes recommended by the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review to determine if they are appropriate given the current and projected security and fiscal environment.

Q25. 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.” Do you agree with that requirement for our nuclear force structure? Please explain your answer.

I agree -the three legs of the U.S. nuclear deterrent are complementary and mutually supporting capabilities. The Triad allows for flexibility in our nuclear deterrence and provides a built-in hedge to increase resiliency against unknown technological surprise or unpredicted advancements in threat capabilities. .

Q26. The 2010 and 2018 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. Do you agree with that conclusion? Please explain your answer.

Maintaining a portion of U.S. nuclear forces on day-to-day alert maximizes decision time and preserves the range of U.S. response options. It enhances deterrence by denying potential adversaries the capability to destroy our nuclear deterrent forces in a surprise first strike. I would expect the appropriate alert levels would be reviewed in the course of any posture review.

Q27. 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.” Do you agree with and support these objectives for modernizing the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems? Please explain your answer.

The nuclear Triad has provided a strong deterrence posture for decades. The U.S. nuclear deterrent plays a significant role in global strategic stability and we must maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear force to maintain that stability. If confirmed, I will conduct a review to determine the appropriate pace and scale of modernization to support future stability requirements.

Q28. 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?

I believe it is intended to be. I anticipate the Department of Defense, in partnership with the Department of Energy, will review these programs to ensure we are modernizing our forces and supporting infrastructure in an effective, affordable, and sustainable manner that provides us the necessary capabilities when they are needed.

Q29. Admiral Richard, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, recently reaffirmed the longstanding assessment of the Department of Defense that extending the service life of the Minuteman III (MM III) system is no longer a cost-effective option for preserving the nation's intercontinental ballistic missile force, and given MM III's age, is all but technologically infeasible. Do you agree with the Commander's assessment?

I agree we cannot life-extend Cold War legacy forces indefinitely, and I look forward, if confirmed, to working with the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, as the Administration conducts a review of our nuclear modernization efforts in support of the nuclear posture review. If confirmed, I will work within the Administration to begin reviewing our nuclear policy and programs to ensure we are modernizing our forces in an effective and affordable manner.

Q30. The Long Range Stand Off Weapon (LRSO) is intended to replace the AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM)— Do you support the Long Range Stand-Off weapon as a replacement for the aging ALCM?

I support modernizing our aging nuclear forces and maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. I understand the need to modernize and replace the ALCM. If confirmed, I plan to prioritize getting briefed on all our nuclear modernization plans.

Q31. If confirmed as USD(P), would you take steps to advocate for, and ensure the continued development of, the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and Long Range Stand-Off programs? Q32. If so, what are those steps?

A31. I support modernizing our aging nuclear forces and believe we must maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. If confirmed, I plan to prioritize getting briefed on all of our nuclear modernization plans, which will include a careful review of the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and Long Range Stand-Off Programs.

A32. If confirmed, I will request briefings on all our nuclear modernization plans to ensure we prioritize and maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal.

Q33. Do you believe a nuclear "No First Use" 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.

I believe the United States should periodically examine its nuclear declaratory policy to ensure it is suitable for the current and foreseeable security environment and supports U.S. strategic objectives. Our declaratory policy should support our strategic deterrence and be credible in the eyes of both adversaries and allies. As such, I would expect to consult closely with allies in the course of reexamining our nuclear policy.

Q34. 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?

The most significant issues facing the Nuclear Weapons Council are maintaining our commitment to nuclear modernization to ensure that the United States has a credible, flexible, and responsive nuclear deterrent and to recapitalize our aging infrastructure to be able to respond quickly to an emerging threat environment.

Q35. If confirmed, how would you participate in Nuclear Weapons Council matters?

If confirmed, as one of six principal members of the Nuclear Weapons Council, I will work to ensure that the nation's nuclear policies are integral to decisions concerning the current and future nuclear stockpile and the recapitalization of the supporting infrastructure.

Q36. 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?

If confirmed, I anticipate an early review of our nuclear weapons programs. Any impacts on the United Kingdom would be a consideration in that review. The United Kingdom's independent strategic nuclear forces contribute significantly to the overall security of the NATO Alliance, and our close partnership with the UK remains a critical facet of U.S. national security.

Q37. 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?

Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) system effectiveness is an essential element of deterrence and crisis stability. If confirmed, I would use 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.

Q38. During his confirmation hearing, Secretary Austin voiced his agreement 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. Do you agree with Secretary Austin's views?

Yes, I agree with Secretary Austin.

Q39. 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?

With the New START Treaty extension secured, if confirmed, I anticipate a review of our arms control objectives and approach. The pace and scale of our modernization plans would be an important consideration in such a review. Maintaining credible and effective nuclear forces and pursuing verifiable reductions both contribute to strategic stability.

Q40. 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?

Although China is actively modernizing and appears to be significantly increasing the size of its nuclear forces, their inventory remains much smaller than those of the United States and Russia. That said, the reasons China is expanding its nuclear forces, and the implications for strategic and regional stability should be addressed. For that reason, as we focus on engaging Russia on further arms control negotiations, it is important to bring China into either U.S.-Russian structures or into parallel arms control and security discussions.

Q41. 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?

If confirmed, I would support a review of missile defense policy and capabilities to ensure the Department’s policy and strategy are fully aligned with the priorities of the Administration. I agree we should be careful not to impede our ability to defend ourselves against missile threats or attacks originating from rogue states. In coordination with the Department of State, I would ensure DoD views inform any future nuclear arms control negotiations with either Russia or China.

Missile Defense

Q42. 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?

From a broad policy perspective, Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) plays an important role in deterring and mitigating adversary anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. I understand that multiple offices within OUSD(P) address different aspects of regional IAMD. These include defense relationships with allies and partners, agreements, future capability development, and contingency planning, among others. The relevant offices within OUSD(P) work closely with many stakeholders, including the Joint Staff as well as Geographic Combatant Commands – especially U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. European Command – on policy aspects related to theater-specific operational plans designed to contend against advanced threats such as cruise and hypersonic missiles.

The Air Force announced in December 2020 a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking potential contractors to operate, maintain and integrate sensors, kinetic weapons, directed energy systems, and emerging technologies for the Air Base Air Defense program. The program would protect multiple air bases in the European and Africa Command areas of responsibility through a potential \$953 Million contract.

Q43. Do you agree that this effort is necessary to protect key bases required to deter, and if necessary, defeat Russia in Europe?

Although I am not aware of the details of that program, my understanding is that air base defense and resiliency are critical areas in need of capability investment and modernization, both for the Air Force and the Army, given the Army's designated role in integrated air and missile defense. Protecting air bases is key to ensuring the Air Force can generate and sustain combat power in support of broader joint force operations in the air, on the ground, and at sea.

Q44. Should there be a parallel effort in the Indo-Pacific?

My understanding is that air base defense and resiliency are critical priorities in the Indo-Pacific region as well. I cannot speak to the specific merits of the Air Base Air Defense program. However, the Department must properly address air and missile threats to U.S. forces and bases in the Indo-Pacific theater in order to deter aggression credibly and reassure allies and partners.

Q45. If confirmed as USD(P), what would be your priorities for U.S. missile defense capabilities for the homeland?

The United States is currently defended from existing intercontinental missile threats posed by rogue States by the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system, which includes 44 ground-based interceptors and a global network of sensors and command and control elements. If confirmed, I would support continuing improvements to these components of our homeland missile defense architecture to address evolving rogue State missile threats. We must have an effective missile defense that defends the United States and its allies and partners.

Q46. 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?

Defense of the United States against rogue state threats is a DoD priority, and missile defense is a central component of this mission. If confirmed, I would support continuing improvements to our missile defense architecture. I would review missile defense concepts, programs, and capabilities in light of the Administration's broader defense strategy. I agree that we should prioritize an effective system to improve our limited missile defense capability against rogue States, and we should minimize the risks of delay or cost growth.

Q47. In your view, what should we be doing to improve protection of the homeland from North Korean ballistic missiles in the interim?

If confirmed, I will work to develop effective and affordable solutions responsive to evolving missile threats to the U.S. homeland, including our ongoing modernization efforts to improve the current deployed Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system. I will need to review particular concepts, programs, and capabilities to be able to advise the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on specific courses of action to improve the protection of the homeland.

Q48. What is your assessment of the importance of a space-based sensor capability to support both regional and homeland missile defense scenarios?

Space-based sensors are a vital component of missile defense, enabling a variety of capabilities such as detection, tracking, and targeting through all phases of flight for an incoming missile. In addition, space-based sensors provide hit and kill assessments of engagements. Space-based

sensors are key for maintaining persistent coverage against a range of threats, including advanced threats such as hypersonic missiles.

Q49. Do you support the policy—reiterated by the 2019 Missile Defense Review—that the United States should continue to rely on nuclear deterrence to defend against large-scale missile attack from Russia and China?

I support longstanding U.S. policy to rely on nuclear deterrence to safeguard the United States against large-scale strategic missile threats from Russia and China.

Q50. In your view, what is the relationship between missile defense and nuclear deterrence?

The relationship between U.S. missile defense and the U.S. nuclear arsenal is complementary – both capabilities are essential to deterring an attack against the United States. U.S. nuclear weapons present a credible threat of response to a nuclear attack or threat of attack, while U.S. missile defenses provide deterrence and, if necessary, damage limitation against a limited nuclear attack by a rogue state such as North Korea. Extended deterrence provides assurance to our allies and partners who are also critical to contributing to nonproliferation goals, and strengthening regional and global security.

Space

The 2020 Defense Space Strategy highlighted that 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.

Q51. In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the strategic environment as it pertains to the domain of space?

The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) accurately provides a broad overview of the strategic environment as it pertains to the space domain. The NDS highlights the growing threats to our national security interests arising from strategic competition with China and Russia, as well as the importance of working with our allies and partners. The 2020 Defense Space Strategy provides additional detail on the growing space and counterspace threats posed by China and Russia, as well as the growth of allied, partner, and commercial space capabilities.

Q52. How would you assess current DOD readiness to implement the 2018 NDS as it relates to the domain of space and the 2020 Defense Space Strategy?

If confirmed, I would seek to assess current DoD readiness to implement the 2018 National Defense Strategy as it relates to space and the 2020 Defense Space Strategy. I would first determine the state of readiness of our personnel and the resilience of our space-based systems to address current and anticipated challenges. I would work across the Department, including with the U.S. Space Command and the U.S. Space Force, to ensure the readiness and resilience of our forces across all domains in order to protect and secure our homeland and U.S. interests.

Q53. What do you perceive as the most significant threats to U.S. national security space satellites?

Growing Chinese and Russian counterspace activities present the most significant threats to U.S.

national security space satellites, as well as to allied and partner space activities. Both China and Russia view space as critical to modern warfare and see U.S. reliance on space as a vulnerability to target. They view the use of counterspace capabilities as a means to reduce U.S. military effectiveness and to win future wars. Iran and North Korea also have demonstrated some counterspace capabilities that threaten, to a lesser extent than those of China and Russia, U.S., allied, and partner space satellites.

Q54. What do you perceive as the most significant threats to commercial space systems owned by U.S. companies? Q55. What are the Department's responsibilities in defense of U.S. commercial assets in space? Q56. If confirmed, would you support the development of offensive and defensive space control capabilities to counter threats against such assets?

A54. I do not expect adversaries to discriminate in peacetime or in the event of conflict between military and commercial satellites that support the military. Chinese and Russian counterspace capabilities are the most significant threats to both national security and U.S. commercial space systems.

A55. DoD responsibilities to defend commercial capabilities would be a function of the particular circumstances and the law. If confirmed, I would seek to understand the extent to which DoD has the capacity and the authority to defend U.S. commercial assets in space, and the situations in which DoD might be called upon to defend commercial capabilities.

A56. Yes. Other nations are developing space and counterspace capabilities that are contesting the ability of the United States and our allies and partners to operate freely in the domain. The development of both offensive and defensive space capabilities is needed for an effective U.S. strategy to deter and counter hostile use of space, and to provide freedom of operation in, from, and to the space domain.

The United States is increasingly dependent on space, both economically and militarily—from the Global Positioning System on which many industrial and military capabilities rely, to the missile warning systems that underpin U.S. nuclear deterrence. Our great power competitors are making concerted efforts to leap ahead of U.S. technology and impact U.S. freedom of action in the space warfighting domain.

Q57. Do you believe that the creation of the Space Force and SPACECOM was warranted? Q58. If so, do you recommend changes in the structure, authorities, and missions of these organizations?

A57. Yes. The creation of the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command was supported by recommendations from numerous independent commissions and studies over a number of years and across multiple Congresses and Administrations. These commissions and studies examined the expanding challenges in the space domain, how to address them, and how to adapt our defense space enterprise and grow our capacity to secure the Nation's vital interests in space. I understand this work led to the bipartisan support for creating the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command.

A58. If confirmed, I would assess whether changes to the structure, authorities, and missions of the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command are necessary to advance national security. I

would work to enhance the integration of the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command with other Military Services and Combatant Commands, and with other stakeholders within the Department. The integration of space within the national security enterprise would be an important focus area.

Q59. Do you believe other services should maintain organic space capability or should those capabilities transfer to Space Force?

I understand that with the establishment of the U.S. Space Force, the majority of DoD space capabilities were transferred to the new Military Service. However, I also understand that some organic space capabilities remained with the other Military Services to support their designated functions and forces. If confirmed, I would review the current state of the defense space enterprise and assess if there is a need to move any additional capabilities to advance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Joint Force in addressing growing security challenges in space.

Q60. Do you believe the Dept of the Air Force is adequately funded to handle both Space Force and Air Force or should there be a TOA increase – if so, where should that come from and how should “pass through” be handled?

As part of strengthening U.S. military advantages, it is critical to resource key space capabilities in the face of growing threats, particularly to ensure U.S. use of space and to 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 the budget details, if confirmed, I would ensure Policy exercises its important role in support of overseeing the budget process and the development of Secretary-level guidance that helps ensure the Military Services’ appropriate resourcing levels for capability development in space and other domains.

Q61. 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?

The Department of Defense utilizes commercial space launch systems in situations where there is a match to mission requirements. Responsive launch, which is a small subset of the entire responsive space architecture, can enhance threat deterrence against potential adversaries and promote space mission assurance. I understand that the Department is in the process of developing tactically responsive launch requirements that could further capitalize on commercial innovation. If confirmed, I would work with the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command to identify how to utilize commercial technology in launch and other space applications most effectively to meet warfighting and mission assurance requirements.

Space systems, like other military systems, rely on the availability of sufficient frequency spectrum that is becoming scarce.

Q62. 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?

The modern electromagnetic environment is increasingly congested, contested, and constrained. Adversary actions, commercial development, and regulatory constraints impede U.S. forces' freedom of action in the electromagnetic spectrum. Ensuring that freedom of action will require policies that balance important U.S. economic development objectives, while preserving military capabilities and limiting constraints on the use of those capabilities. 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 NDAA for FY 2020 not only created a new Military Service dedicated to the space domain, but also created 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.

Q63. Do you believe such a position is needed? Q64. If so, and if confirmed, what steps would you take to fill this position immediately and what qualifications would you require of a nominee?

A63. Yes. I understand the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy is responsible for providing expertise and capacity to support the Secretary of Defense in setting defense strategy and policy for the space domain and in carrying out other civilian oversight functions with respect to both the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Space Command. Additionally, as a direct report to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, this official has important responsibilities in leading the Department's international space cooperation activities with allies and partners and in supporting the Department of State's diplomatic efforts regarding space security.

A64. If confirmed, I would advise the Secretary of Defense that he work with the President to select a nominee the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, who has leadership experience in developing and executing national defense policy and strategy, who understands space systems and the inter-relationships between space operations and total force operations, and who has demonstrated success in developing international partnerships with our allies and partners. I would ask the acting leadership for a briefing on what actions have been taken to establish and organize the ASD for Space Policy office and ask for their assessment regarding the appropriate resourcing and scope of responsibilities for that office regarding space, space-related, and other advanced technology missions, taking into account the overall structure of the Policy organization.

Cyber Policy and Authorities

The September 2018 DOD Cyber Strategy charges DOD to “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” to compete, deter, and win in the cyber domain. The NDAA for FY explicitly provided that military operations in cyberspace may be conducted as traditional military activities as defined in the covert action statute. In addition, NSPM-13 streamlined the interagency process for reviewing and approving military cyber effects operations. These changes have led to increased operations by U.S. Cyber Command, including operations to defend the United States from interference in the 2018 and 2020 elections.

Q65. Do you believe that the DOD Cyber Strategy, congressional affirmation of traditional military operations in cyberspace, and current approval and oversight processes for cyber effects operations are appropriate and should be sustained, or if confirmed, would you recommend they be altered? Please explain your answer.

It is my understanding that these policy measures have resulted in well-coordinated, risk-managed, and timely DoD cyber operations. If I am confirmed, I intend to review these measures, and I will confirm that oversight is adequate and that the Department remains fully transparent with Congress as we ensure that DoD is able to perform its mission effectively in cyberspace.

The NDAA for FY 2021 established the position of National Cyber Director to improve coordination and integration across the government in developing cyberspace strategy, policy, plans, and resource allocation.

Q66. How do you envision DOD supporting the National Cyber Director?

Cyber is inherently a team sport, and I welcome all efforts to ensure that our Nation's networks and infrastructure are resilient and secure. I look forward to working within the Administration in implementing this initiative.

Q67. 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?

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of DoD's strategy and policy. The Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) plays an important role in providing independent advice to the SecDef on cyber policy, programs, plans, and budgeting as well as in managing the implementation of the DoD Cyber Strategy, thus executing a largely internally facing function in assessing and coordinating DoD plans, programs, and functions.

I understand the important role that the PCA plays across the Department and in overseeing the implementation of the DoD Cyber Strategy. That the PCA is dual-hatted as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security is important, because it ensures close collaboration between those in Policy responsible for drafting the DoD Cyber Strategy and those responsible for overseeing its implementation. If confirmed as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, I would work closely with him or her to develop and implement a practicable cyber strategy, provide effective oversight of U.S. Cyber Command, and ensure that the Department's externally facing functions and policy are compatible with its internal plans and programs.

Recent 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.

Q68. If confirmed, what would you do to improve these cyber operations notifications?

I understand that the Department, in accordance with Section 395 of Title 10, U.S. Code, notifies the congressional defense committees within 48 hours of completing sensitive military

cyber operations. If confirmed, I will work with DoD components to improve these notifications by providing as much additional information as possible when appropriate.

Q69. Are there steps other than improving the written notifications that you would take, if confirmed, to help Congress perform oversight of these critical operations?

I am committed to the principle of congressional oversight and, if confirmed, I would work with the Department to deliver informative and timely quarterly cyber operations briefings (as required by Section 484 of Title 10, U.S. Code) and the annual military cyberspace operations reports (as required by Section 1644 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020) so that Congress has the information needed to oversee military cyber operations effectively.

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.

Q70. Do you support these DOD activities under the CTR program generally?

I am supportive of the Department of Defense's activities under the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program. I understand that the program has delivered significant benefits for U.S. security since the early 1990s. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the program's efficacy and clear prioritization to address threat reduction objectives, consistent with national and Departmental strategy.

Q71. Do you believe the shift in focus to biological programs is an effective use of CTR resources? Q72. Why or why not?

A71/72. I understand DoD has a process to assess WMD threats worldwide and prioritize CTR investments accordingly. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this process and ensuring CTR resources are aligned with DoD and interagency priorities and coordinated with our allies and partners.

Pandemic Response

Q73. Based on the Ebola outbreak in Liberia and the current 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.

A73. It is my understanding that DoD capabilities to support the response to public health crises include providing transportation and logistics; bio-surveillance with associated training; medical countermeasures, such as personnel protective equipment (PPE), therapeutics, and vaccines; laboratory support, such as diagnostics and genetic sequencing; sample-collection training; virtual training of healthcare workers to identify symptoms; and training of healthcare workers in the proper use of PPE. In the United States, the Department is responding to requests from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by providing support to FEMA- and State-run vaccination centers and by providing medical expertise to areas in need, and DoD is participating fully in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)-DoD Task Force. If confirmed, I commit to supporting Secretary Austin in his efforts to fight COVID-19 here and abroad.

China

Q74. Is the current posture of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific region sufficient to support the NDS? Please explain your answer.

A more resilient and distributed force posture in the Indo-Pacific region is essential to the U.S. military's ability to deter and, if necessary, deny adversary aggression against ourselves, allies, and partners. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the Military Departments and Services, and other U.S. departments and agencies to ensure that our Indo-Pacific region posture is optimized to deter aggression, reassure allies and partners, and prevail in conflict.

Q75. In your view, is the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI), established and authorized at \$2.2 billion in the FY 2021 NDAA, a useful tool to improve U.S. posture in the Indo-Pacific?

The Pacific Deterrence Initiative can be a powerful tool to highlight and track the substantial investments that the Department of Defense is making to maintain a credible conventional deterrent in the Indo-Pacific region. These investments include more lethal and survivable capabilities; a more resilient and distributed force posture; improved capabilities for allies and partners; and enhanced innovation, experimentation, and training for the joint force.

Q76. In your assessment, what are the priority investments DOD could make that would implement the NDS and enable a more favorable balance of military power in the Indo-Pacific?

The development of Joint and Service operational concepts help identify needed capability and capacity investments. If confirmed, I pledge to examine the Department's work in this area, including the development of capabilities such as long range fires, integrated fires networks, more robust space and cyber capabilities, and power projection in highly contested environments.

Q77. What are your views on potentially increasing the number of forces west of the International Date Line and the balance of increased risk to the force against the need for more forward stationed troops?

A combat-credible forward posture is essential to the U.S. military's ability to deter and, if necessary, deny adversary aggression. However, distributed and resilient forward posture must be combined with new warfighting concepts; modernized, highly capable, and ready forces; and capable allied and partner forces in order to fulfill their strategic role.

Q78. In your view, how should U.S. operational concepts, force posture, and investments adapt to counter the shifting maritime balance in the Indo-Pacific?

The development of joint operational concepts should help identify gaps or shortfalls in force design and posture, which then drive investment recommendations to counter the operational challenges posed by our most capable adversaries. If confirmed, I will review the Department's concept development work to ensure it fully considers where changes in force posture and investments may be necessary.

Q79. Do you think the Department needs a Joint Operational Concept, that is—a

theory of victory for a specific threat in a specific geographic region in a specific timeframe—for the Indo-Pacific, and if so, what should the Department be doing to develop that Operational Concept?

Yes, a joint operational concept, and likely supporting concepts, are important to describe how the future force may be employed during a conflict, and to inform future force development priorities. Given strategic competitors' increased military capability and stated military objectives, joint concept development should initially focus on defeating aggression in the Indo-Pacific region, and should be underpinned by analysis of specific operational problems. If confirmed, working closely with other Departmental components, I will ensure that joint operational concepts align with a theory of victory for achieving strategic and political objectives in a potential war in the Indo-Pacific theater, to ensure that the Department can more effectively link strategic ends, ways, and means for priority, future armed conflicts.

Q80. What is your assessment of China's increasing military presence overseas, including its base in Djibouti and other infrastructure projects across the Indian Ocean?

China seeks a more robust overseas logistics and basing infrastructure to allow the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to project and sustain military power at greater distances. Beyond its current base in Djibouti, China is likely considering additional overseas military logistics facilities to support naval, air, and ground forces. Locations likely considered for PLA military logistics facilities include Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the UAE, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, and Tajikistan. PLA personnel at the facility in Djibouti have interfered with U.S. flights by lasing pilots and flying drones, and the PRC has sought to restrict Djiboutian sovereign airspace over the base. These actions highlight that a global PLA military logistics network could interfere with U.S. and ally and partner military operations and eventually support offensive operations by China.

Q81. What non-military activities and resources do you believe are necessary to effectively address the challenge posed by China? Q82. Do you believe these current activities are sufficient?

A81. Secretary Austin has identified challenges posed by China as the Department's pacing challenge in most areas. The Department of Defense has an important role in meeting these challenges, but it cannot do so alone. I believe that the United States must use all elements of its national power, including the full range of diplomatic, economic, and intelligence efforts, as well as activities conducted by other departments and agencies, to address the complex challenges posed by China. Non-military activities and resources are vital to maintaining peace and deterring aggression, strengthening our alliances and partnerships, promoting prosperity for the American people, and advancing U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere. If confirmed, I will work in close coordination with other departments and agencies to help ensure DoD's efforts to address the challenges posed by China are conducted within a whole-of-government approach.

A82. I do not believe that the United States is sufficiently leveraging all of the non-military instruments of national power within a unified and integrated approach to address the challenges posed by China. It is vital that non-DoD departments and agencies have robust capabilities and sufficient resources to address the complex, and growing, non-military challenges posed by China and other actors. Additionally, closer alignment of DoD activities with interagency efforts

can enhance our engagements with allies and partners and improve outcomes for the United States. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that DoD conducts its activities in close coordination with other departments and agencies, and will advocate for other departments and agencies to receive the resources necessary while improving return on investment for DoD initiatives to address the challenges our nation faces.

Q83. 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, such as Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan?

I support the continued implementation of the realignment plan known as the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI), as it 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 ensure the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy remains regularly engaged with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the Military Departments and Services, and the Department of State to adapt proactively and adjust U.S. access and joint presence to the realities of great power competition, and to ensure our posture is optimized for deterrence of adversaries, ally and partner assurance, and warfighting, if necessary.

The United States has sought to clarify and strengthen its policy with respect to China's maritime claims in the South China Sea. Q84. What new steps would you recommend the United States put in place, both unilaterally and in coordination with allies and partners, to counter the increasing challenge posed by China in the South China Sea and Southeast Asia more broadly?

If confirmed, I would work with my interagency colleagues, and with U.S. allies and partners, to respond to China's coercive and destabilizing behavior in the South China Sea and to uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Our approach should be based on maintaining a strong and stabilizing military presence in the region, to deter aggression and coercion and to reassure our allies and partners. In addition, I would look at ways to use security cooperation more effectively to build partner capacity and reduce vulnerability and coercion. Lastly, I would support a whole-of-government effort that includes renewed focus on cooperation with our Indo-Pacific region allies and partners, including combined military exercises and operations, expanded economic engagement, and reinvigorated diplomacy.

Q85. What are the United States' responsibilities under the Taiwan Relations Act?

Q86. What policy recommendations do you have regarding U.S. support to Taiwan?

A85. The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) sets forth U.S. policy on Taiwan and establishes our unofficial relationship. The TRA also makes clear that the peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait is a U.S. interest and a matter of international concern. In order to ensure the peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, it is our responsibility to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability. We do so through the regular provision of defense articles and services to Taiwan. The Department is also responsible for maintaining the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force, or other forms of coercion, that would jeopardize Taiwan. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Department in its implementation of U.S. policy, in accordance with the TRA.

A86. For more than 40 years, our policy has been premised on China's continued commitment to

the peaceful resolution of differences. China's military modernization, alongside the coercive and aggressive military actions in the vicinity of Taiwan, presents an increasingly urgent challenge to our interest in peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. Therefore, our support for Taiwan must be strong, principled, and bipartisan—in line with longstanding U.S. commitments to the the Taiwan Relations Act, Three Communiques, and the Six Assurances.

Q87. What kinds of capabilities do you think should be priorities for Taiwan to acquire to best deter and, if necessary, defend against Chinese aggression?

Taiwan should prioritize asymmetric capabilities that are mobile, stealthy, survivable, and leverage Taiwan's geography to deter and defend against aggression from the People's Republic of China. This includes coastal defense cruise missiles, short- and medium-range air defense, sea mines, Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) platforms, and other asymmetric systems that build Taiwan's resilience and enable Taiwan to pose a credible deterrent to invading People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces. Taiwan must also prioritize the development and implementation of joint doctrine, service interoperability, and realistic training for the Taiwan Armed Forces. This includes developing a professional non-commissioned officer corps and increasing Taiwan's overall readiness. DoD should prioritize and be prepared to support these efforts.

Q88. Considering the NDS and China's crackdown on Hong Kong, how do you view the U.S. relationship with Taiwan in the context of broader U.S. objectives in the Indo-Pacific?

Taiwan is an important partner to the United States and a contributor to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Taiwan is now the United States' 9th largest trading partner. With a population of 23 million, Taiwan is a shining example of a robust, prosperous, free, and orderly democratic society based on principles of the rule of law and respect for human rights. The common bonds and shared values of the U.S.-Taiwan relationship are real, and the benefit to the region is clear. The United States has played a role in Taiwan's success, and the "unofficial relationship" continues to advance regional peace and prosperity. A secure and confident Taiwan is better able to engage the People's Republic of China constructively, which supports everyone's interest in cross-Strait peace and stability.

In cyberspace, China has far greater capabilities than its regional neighbors, who may seek to work with the United States to improve their security.

Q89. What are your views on the potential benefits of the United States offering cyberspace security assistance in the region?

Our community of allies and partners is one of the United States' greatest comparative advantages and a crucial component of our security. The security and resilience of their networks – especially those upon which U.S. forces rely, both in peacetime and in crisis – should be a key objective for U.S. strategy in cyberspace. If confirmed, I look forward to working to ensure that cyberspace security assistance has the focus and resources to be successful.

Q90. In your view, should the United States respond in kind in the event that China executes destructive cyber attacks on U.S. critical infrastructure, and should the United States make that clear as a component of a declaratory deterrence policy?

Consistent with President Biden's statements on the topic, there must be consequences when norms of responsible state behavior are violated—and destructive attacks on critical infrastructure would be a particularly grave example of such violations. Determining how to respond to any given cyber attack, particularly ones considered destructive, would require case-by-case, fact-specific deliberation. I understand that to include a consideration of an incident's effects in their totality—and those effects could include injury, death, or significant property destruction. Any potential response to such a destructive incident would not be limited to the cyberspace domain. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department is postured to support whole-of-government responses to any such incidents, particularly if they are destructive or target our critical infrastructure. Effective deterrence requires this credible commitment, in coordination with our allies and partners, to respond effectively to perpetrators of such irresponsible activity.

Q91. What is your view of China's pursuit of anti-satellite capabilities and what do you see as the long-term implications of such developments for the U.S. military, for U.S. national security, and for U.S. interests in space?

China's pursuit of anti-satellite capabilities is a central element in China's strategy of achieving information dominance in the electromagnetic spectrum and denying the spectrum's use to China's adversaries; this would enable China to seize and maintain strategic initiative in a military conflict. China's strategy underscores the importance of a U.S. space posture that achieves mission assurance commensurate with our reliance on capabilities delivered from space. Given the enduring importance of space for the United States – not just in the military and national security realms, but in all aspects of modern life -- we must continue to transition to space architectures that have resilience against emerging and future threats, and we must also be prepared to protect, defend, and reconstitute our critical space capabilities.

Q92. To what extent do you believe multilateral engagement is important for addressing the challenges posed by China? Q93. In your view, what are the most important multilateral relationships in the region and where are the opportunities to improve multilateral coordination?

A92. Multilateral engagements are a critical part of our strategy to address the diverse and increasing set of challenges posed by China. These engagements, especially among likeminded partners, amplifies our voices, helps to pool resources, and establishes and enforces rules, norms, and standards. We have long recognized that our allies and partners are a key advantage against China's coercion and subversion of the international rules-based order. Only by continuing to strengthen our global relationships and work through multilateral formats will we ensure our collective ability to deter aggression and meet shared challenges.

A93. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defense Minister's Meeting Plus (ADMM+) is the primary forum through which the Department coordinates multilaterally and fosters cooperation. Beyond our efforts with ASEAN we also work multilaterally with many of our allies and partners to enhance coordination, interoperability, and responsiveness. Quadrilateral dialogue with Australia, India, and Japan is emerging as another important mechanism to advance shared interests, including in support of ASEAN centrality. We will also continue to work trilaterally with Australia and Japan and bilaterally with the Republic of Korea and Japan. If confirmed, I would continue the Department's work to improve coordination with allies and partners multilaterally by broadening the scope of issues we discuss, as well as by considering new and expanded multilateral groupings.

North Korea

Q94. What is your assessment of the current security situation on the Korean peninsula?

The security and stability of the Korean Peninsula is inextricably tied to regional security and stability. The United States remains well-postured to deal with the security threat posed by North Korea's continuing development of nuclear and conventional weapons. Our web of allies and partners in the region gives us a significant advantage as compared to our adversaries. In particular, our relationships with the Republic of Korea and Japan provide a powerful deterrent to North Korean threats. If confirmed, I will look to ensure that U.S. forces have what they need to maintain our robust deterrent and readiness posture in Northeast Asia, in close collaboration with our regional allies.

Q95. In your view, what should be the U.S. overall strategy to mitigate the threat posed by North Korea to our allies in the region and to the United States?

As I understand it, the administration is currently in the midst of a whole-of-government strategy review to determine its way ahead on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Although I do not want to presuppose the outcome of the review, I believe that it is the role of the Department of Defense to maintain a robust defense and deterrence posture, and to ensure that the United States is well-positioned with forces and assets throughout the region to detect and respond to DPRK threats. This strong defense posture must underpin our efforts, irrespective of the outcome of the strategy review, to ensure that the United States engages the DPRK from a position of strength. We must also continue to pursue robust sanctions enforcement to mitigate the nuclear proliferation threat posed by North Korea. If confirmed, I will work with stakeholders across the government, as well as our regional partners and allies to strengthen our defense posture, reassure our allies, and protect the U.S. homeland.

Q96. What policy recommendations would you make to ensure U.S. and allied forces can secure weapons of mass destruction sites in North Korea in the event of a contingency?

U.S. and ROK forces must maintain a "fight-tonight" readiness on the Korean peninsula to deter North Korean aggression and to be able to respond quickly and effectively should deterrence fail. As you noted, one critical component is securing nuclear and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) sites in order to prevent the further proliferation of these capabilities in a contingency. In order to do this effectively, the United States and allies must be able to characterize WMD sites accurately and be able to secure them safely. I understand the Department of Defense (DoD) is improving capabilities that will reduce the threat posed by WMD and missile sites in North Korea in the event of a contingency, and is working closely with the Republic of Korea to execute this mission. If confirmed, I will work closely with our operational commanders, intelligence specialists, and resource providers in this effort. I will also work closely with my counterparts from across the Department to provide the Secretary with integrated recommendations to maintain our forces' readiness to deter aggression and address contingencies.

Q97. In your view, should the U.S. force posture on the Korean peninsula be adjusted, and if so, how?

President Biden recently announced a global posture review to ensure that U.S. forces deployed globally are matched with the global threat environment. I do not want to presuppose its outcome. What I will say is that our security commitment to the Republic of Korea is unshakable and consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty. This commitment is not tied to a “magic number” of forces, or to a specific capability, but rather to a 70-year alliance relationship based on common values and people-to-people ties. As President Biden said, “Alliances are our greatest asset.” Our force posture in South Korea ensures our ability to “fight tonight” alongside our ROK allies, and it is critical to regional stability. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the objectives of the National Defense Strategy and the necessary requirements of our major operational plans across the region to ensure that our global force is optimally deployed to meet emerging challenges, including those on the Korean Peninsula.

Republic of Korea

Q98. What is your assessment of the current U. S.-South Korean security relationship?

The U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) alliance is a linchpin of peace and security in the region. The resilience of our partnership is founded on shared interests and values, which have endured for more than 70 years. Our alliance is among the most combined, interoperable, capable, and dynamic bilateral alliances in the world, and it is a robust deterrent to aggression on the Korean Peninsula. It also has evolved beyond a purely military alliance to one that reflects mutual respect and encompasses support for free markets, civic engagement, people-to-people exchanges, and education. Over a few decades, South Korea has gone from being a net security recipient to a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will prioritize working with our ROK allies on identifying and addressing future security challenges beyond the Korean Peninsula, including robust cooperation in response to Chinese malign activities in the region, maintaining the rules-based international order, and capacity building for other regional partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

Q99. What is the value to U.S. national security of the U.S.-South Korea alliance?

The U.S.- Republic of Korea (ROK) alliance is critical not only to the security of the ROK, but also to the stability of the Indo-Pacific region—the Department’s priority theater. Given the unprecedented challenges posed by both the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and China, the U.S.-ROK alliance has never been more important. On North Korea, U.S. and ROK forces have been critical to deterring North Korean aggression for more than 70 years, and these forces have been postured to respond should deterrence fail. This posture provides a credible military force to underpin any prospective political or diplomatic efforts to achieve final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. However, the ROK is also a critical partner for our broader priorities in the region, and principal among these priorities is upholding the rules-based international order that has underpinned unprecedented global prosperity since World War II, including that of the ROK.

Q100. What is your understanding of the U.S. obligations in the event of an attack on South Korea by North Korea, and when U.S. armed forces should be committed to engage North Korean forces in response to an attack on South Korea?

The U.S. obligation to the Republic of Korea in the event of an attack, consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty, is to consult on the best appropriate response and act together in the defense of

the Republic of Korea. If confirmed, I will remain committed to building a posture that is robustly capable of deterring, defending, and, if necessary, defeating any adversary that threatens our treaty ally.

Q101. Under what conditions should wartime operational control be transferred from the U.S. to the Republic of Korea?

Operational Control (OPCON) transition remains conditions-based, consistent with the bilaterally determined conditions articulated in the OPCON Transition Plan (COT-P). Any transfer of wartime operational control must fundamentally strengthen our combined defense posture. The conditions set forth in the COT-P were designed to do just that—strengthen our combined posture. We cannot take shortcuts. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Republic of Korea (ROK) to ensure all conditions for OPCON transition are met, and that our alliance remains the most interoperable, capable, and dynamic bilateral alliance in the world.

Q102. In your view, should U.S. forces on the Korean Peninsula remain focused on defense of South Korea or should U.S. forces in Korea also be available for regional or global operations?

The United States must maintain operational flexibility to ensure that our forces are optimized and ready to meet emerging threats to U.S. forces and allies and partners in the region and around the world. In order to meet the objectives of the National Defense Strategy, the Defense Department will continually consider adjustments to every command in every theater to ensure the optimization of our global force. If confirmed, I will prioritize a continued evolution of our strategic alliance with the ROK to ensure that we are well-postured to address new and evolving threats, consistent with our respective national-level strategies.

Japan

Q103. How would you characterize the U.S.-Japan security relationship?

The United States – Japan security relationship is strong, resolute, and resilient. We have placed emphasis on broadening the scope of the alliance, increasing Japan’s role in securing a free and open Indo-Pacific region, through bilateral and multilateral efforts.

Q104. How does Japan’s relationship with its regional neighbors, predominantly China, North Korea and South Korea, influence the U.S.-Japan relationship?

Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are two of our most important allies in the Indo-Pacific region. In the face of shared challenges posed by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and China, it is critical that there are strong and close relationships between and among our three countries. Although we recognize the role that history plays in the Japan-ROK relationship, we encourage the Republic of Korea and Japan to seek ways to cooperate further through bilateral and multilateral activities in security matters, such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution enforcement operations against North Korean ship-to-ship transfers. We support those efforts.

Q105. What steps should Japan take to become a more active partner in security activities with the United States and in the international security arena?

We are engaged in continuous discussion with our Japanese allies on ways in which they can increase their support for regional and global security efforts, while acknowledging the legacy

regional and domestic constraints Japan must consider. We are encouraged that the Japan Self Defense Forces are a capable and well-equipped component of Japan's steadily growing international presence.

Q106. The current plan is to close the Marine Corps Air Station on Okinawa after the construction of a Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) at Camp Schwab. In your view, what are the prospects for the successful construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Camp Schwab on Okinawa?

The Government of Japan has given us its assurance of the commitment to complete the construction of the FRF at Camp Schwab, and progress continues. Although delays in the construction are disappointing, they are neither unexpected nor particularly unusual. Both sides have committed to maintaining the capability of MCAS Okinawa until such time that the FRF is operational.

Q107. What areas of security cooperation, such as missile defense and space, would you recommend the United States and Japan prioritize to improve U.S.-Japanese interoperability and capability?

We are very encouraged that Japan has placed special emphasis on what it calls the "new domains" of cyber, space, and electromagnetic operations. Additionally, we consider Japan to be a premier partner in missile defense cooperation. At the same time, we are encouraging Japan to focus on the readiness and sustainability and modernization of its regular ground, maritime, and air forces. In short, we are cooperating in improving the capabilities of the alliance across the entire spectrum of operations.

India

Q108. What would be your strategy, if confirmed, for bolstering the overall defense relationship between the United States and India? Q109. What specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

A108. If confirmed, I would continue to operationalize India's status as a "Major Defense Partner" by positioning the U.S. and Indian militaries to cooperate more closely to advance shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region. To this end, I would support efforts to strengthen interoperability; expand bilateral and multilateral security cooperation across the region; and deepen defense trade and technology sharing. I also would leverage regular senior-level bilateral and multilateral engagements with likeminded partners to bolster the relationship.

A109. To continue elevating the U.S.-India partnership, I would prioritize a few promising areas of cooperation. These include deepening information-sharing and mutual logistics operations; growing our defense trade and technology relationship; and expanding high-end cooperation in the maritime domain, including in the Indian Ocean region and in Southeast Asia. Importantly, I also would seek to expand multilateral cooperation with like-minded partners in the region, including through the Quad, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) mechanisms, and other regional engagements.

Q110. In your view, what is the significance of the recent China-India border clashes?

The India-China border tensions reflect a concerning trend of growing aggressiveness and

assertiveness by China in the region, including toward allies and partners of the United States. We will continue to stand by our allies and partners and support their ongoing efforts to de-escalate the situation. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor the situation closely as both parties work toward peaceful resolution.

Q111. What would be your priorities for U.S. foreign military sales to India?

The past decade has seen promising trends in the U.S.-India defense trade and technology relationship, and, if confirmed, I will work to sustain these trends, including through a focus on major procurements and high-end technology.

Republic of the Philippines

Q112. What is your view of U. S.-Philippine military-to-military relations?

The Philippines is a treaty ally, and we have a long history of mutual defense cooperation dating back to World War II. The Mutual Defense Treaty and other bilateral defense agreements provide the foundation for the defense relationship and enable critical U.S. military support, presence, and interoperability. I also understand the United States provides important support to combat terrorism in the southern Philippines.

Q113. What should be the U. S. security goals in the Republic of the Philippines?

The United States and the Philippines share the goal of upholding a free and open Indo-Pacific region that supports peace, stability, and economic opportunity. If confirmed, I would continue to prioritize partnering with the Philippines on maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, and defense institution building. Expanding defense cooperation in these areas would build our respective capabilities and increase interoperability between our forces.

Q114. Would you recommend steps to promote defense cooperation and preserve future geostrategic options despite short-term authoritarian government trends in the Philippines? If so, please explain.

If confirmed, I would support continued defense cooperation with the Philippines as critical to our shared goals of advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific region. In its alliances, the United States seeks ways to encourage the Philippines' respect the rule of law and human rights.

Thailand

Q115. What is your view on the importance of the U.S.-Thai alliance?

The U.S.-Thai alliance is critical to supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Our longstanding defense cooperation and Thailand's role as a regional transit point facilitate U.S. presence in the region.

Q116. What recommendations would you have for strengthening the Thai alliance?

If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen interoperability, professional military education and training, and regional cooperation, including in the maritime domain, with Thailand.

Vietnam

Q117. What, in your view, are the best opportunities for increased defense cooperation with Vietnam?

The United States and Vietnam share a common interest in upholding a rules-based, free and open order in the Indo-Pacific region, including Southeast Asia. If confirmed, I would continue efforts to strengthen defense cooperation with Vietnam, particularly in the areas of maritime security, cyber security, defense trade, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations.

Q118. Do you agree that addressing war legacy issues, including through new cooperative arrangements, is essential for U.S.-Vietnam defense relations?

The United States' decades-long cooperation with Vietnam on legacy-of-war issues and Missing in Action (MIA) accounting is a foundation of our defense relationship. If confirmed, I would be open to considering ways to expand this engagement so that we can reconcile the past and continue building a cooperative future.

Indonesia

Q119. What is your view of the current state of military-to-military relations with Indonesia and, specifically, Kopassus?

Defense relations between the United States and Indonesia are strong. Where possible, I understand that we plan to increase the scale and complexity of our engagements to bolster our bilateral relationship and strengthen the Indonesian military's ability to defend its territory. I understand that, in consultation with Congress, the Department of Defense is planning for a limited resumption of training with KOPASSUS Unit 81, which will include a focus on human rights, in an effort to help cultivate the next generation of Indonesian leaders.

Q120. Do you favor more U.S.-Indonesian military-to-military contacts and under what conditions?

Yes, I do favor more interactions between the U.S and Indonesian militaries, particularly those interactions that contribute to a free and open Indo-Pacific region, help Indonesia protect its sovereignty, and promote the Indonesian military's respect for human rights and its role in Indonesia's democracy.

Q121. If confirmed, what would you do to encourage respect for human rights and accountability in the Indonesian military?

If confirmed, I would continue the focus on human rights and accountability in interactions with senior Indonesian leaders, and would urge the same emphasis in all military engagements.

Russia

Q122. What do you believe are the greatest challenges for U.S.-Russia security relations?

Relations between the United States and Russia may have reached an all-time low since the end of the Cold War. If we are unable to re-establish Russia's understanding of and compliance with international norms and acceptable behavior in the international arena, the relationship will continue to decline. Reconstructing this baseline of norms will be challenging, but it is a prerequisite to any sustainable normalization of relations between our countries.

Q123. How would you describe the central objectives of U.S. security strategy regarding Russia?

I understand that President Biden and the national security team are developing an approach to Russia that includes holding them accountable for their pattern of malign behavior and actions, including the recent SolarWinds intrusion, NotPetya, and other malicious cyber activity around the world. I personally think that the Department would want to ensure that any approach to Russia should maintain its military edge, including investing in the force posture and capabilities necessary to continue to deter Russia from attacking our homeland or our allies through military means. In addition to the paramount concerns of conventional and nuclear defense, Russia has shown that it has the ability and intent to target the sources of American strength. We must do more to defend the American way of life, our economy, our people, and our democratic institutions from all states that would seek to undermine them, including Russia.

Q124. Where do U.S. and Russian security interests align and where do they diverge?

Russia behavior indicates it seeks to undermine and overturn the rules-based international order established during the post-World War II period. From its blatant disregard for the sovereignty of its neighbors, to using chemical weapons to murder dissidents around the world, persistent cyber attacks against its neighbors and Russia's contempt for the international rules of the road makes Americans less safe. Over the past four years, it has expanded its military footprint abroad, largely by taking advantage of crises. This strategic orientation is largely incompatible with the principles of democratic societies governed by the rule of law.

Still, there are a few basic areas where our interests may overlap. Russia's foremost security interest is the survival of the Putin regime, and so ensuring strategic stability and minimizing the risk of unintended escalation across all domains that could lead to conventional or nuclear warfare remains a common imperative.

Q125. How do EUCOM and NATO activities fit into a "whole of government" approach to deterring Russian aggression?

My understanding is that U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and NATO continue to provide a powerful deterrent to Russian aggression with forward-postured, combat-credible forces, demonstrating both capability and capacity to respond decisively to any threat. These forces also complement broader whole-of-government initiatives to build partner capacity to resist and respond to Russian malign actions. If confirmed, I will review Department of Defense authorities, resources, and policies to ensure that DoD is optimally positioned to support U.S. whole-of-government efforts.

Q126. 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?

U.S. forces in Europe are a tangible signal of the U.S. commitment to the collective security of the NATO Alliance. Although the United States demonstrates combat-credibility of our forces with our force presence and unilateral exercises in the region; our support and integration with NATO activities, exercises, and security cooperation programs provide the greatest deterrent to Russian adventurism and aggression. U.S. presence and training provide lethal, resilient, and

agile formations and demonstrate the alliance's combat-credible capability and capacity to operate throughout Europe.

Q127. What is your view of Russia-China relations?

Russia and China collaborate in the economic, diplomatic, and military/security arenas. Although they do not agree on everything, Russia and China align when it suits them. Each poses different challenges to the United States and has different motivations for its actions. But both countries seek to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model, gaining leverage over other nations' economic, diplomatic, and security decisions. Both nations undermine global security and the rules-based order by undercutting such basic values as liberty, human rights, and the rule of law. They share a preference for a world in which the United States and its allies and partners are weaker, less unified, and less influential. Together with allies and partners, we must be vigilant and united in opposing their malign action and influence.

Q128. In your assessment, does the 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? Q129. If not, what changes should be implemented?

A128. My understanding is the Department is developing a Joint Warfighting Concept, which aims to address this issue. If confirmed, I will review this effort, and provide my assessment and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

A129. If confirmed and if required, I will work within the Department to assess the need for and then identify how to implement updates to our concept of operations and related capabilities.

Q130. In your view, what are the key elements of an effective strategy to counter Russian hybrid warfare?

Russia has responded to U.S. and NATO conventional capability overmatch by tailoring an asymmetric approach at every point across the spectrum from competition to conflict. Russian hybrid warfare injects uncertainty and risk into the modern competitive landscape. An effective strategy to counter Russian hybrid warfare requires that DoD innovate and operationalize our irregular warfare toolkit, as part of a broader interagency strategy that integrates all elements of U.S. Government power and authorities, at both the strategic and operational levels, to compete with Russia across the spectrum.

Arms Control Agreements with Russia

Q131. In your view, what is the appropriate role of arms control in the U.S. security strategy regarding Russia?

If negotiated effectively, arms control agreements can enhance U.S. national security. Any future arms control agreement with Russia must strengthen deterrence and provide assurance to our allies and partners. It should also be verifiable and increase transparency and predictability with regard to Russian nuclear forces that are currently not subject to any arms control agreement.

Q132. How can DOD mitigate any negative consequences associated with U.S. withdrawal from the INF and Open Skies treaties, and reassure NATO allies?

After consultations with allies, the United States withdrew from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in 2019 and the Open Skies Treaty (OST) in 2020 following years of Russian violations. The United States should continue to coordinate closely with allies and key partners on the intermediate-range systems Russia produced and deployed in violation of the INF Treaty, and on increasing military transparency in Europe and Eurasia through other important confidence- and security-building mechanisms.

Q133. Do you support mutually-agreed reductions in tactical nuclear weapons?

Addressing the increasing disparity between the U.S. and Russian stockpiles of non-strategic nuclear weapons is a national security imperative. One way to do this is through concluding an effective and verifiable arms control agreement. The U.S. Senate recognized this imperative in a condition to its resolution of ratification for the New START Treaty. If confirmed, I commit to working to fulfill that condition in a way that enhances the national security of the United States and its allies and partners.

Q134. Do you believe that U.S. missile defenses should be considered in any future arms control negotiations?

This Administration has made clear that it remains committed to effective arms control. The extension of the New START Treaty increases the national security of the United States and its allies and partners. The extension is just the beginning, not the end, of President Biden's efforts to engage Russia and other countries to reduce threats from Russia and other countries. If confirmed, I will work to ensure DoD has a role in any forthcoming reviews of missile defense and nuclear arms control.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Q135. In your assessment, does the NATO Alliance continue to benefit the national security interests of the United States?

Yes. NATO is the bedrock of enduring transatlantic security and serves as the bulwark of our shared values of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law.

Q136. How important to U.S. strategic interests is the U.S. commitment to its obligations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty?

U.S. commitment to NATO Allies under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is vital to U.S. strategic interests. This shared commitment among NATO Allies is the cornerstone of the NATO's strength and has helped safeguard our way of life for decades.

Q137. 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?

NATO's essential strategic objectives remain its ability to deter aggression, defend Allied populations and territory if deterrence fails, and project stability beyond NATO's borders. NATO's greatest challenges include maintaining unity and ensuring ready forces and capabilities.

Q138. 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?

I am encouraged that the Alliance is entering its seventh consecutive year of growth in defense

spending. We must continue to build on this progress to fulfill the 2014 Wales Summit Defense Investment Pledge. Defense spending is essential to ensuring we have the ready forces and capabilities to address the challenges facing NATO.

Q139. If confirmed how will you encourage NATO Allies to maintain a positive trajectory on defense spending even as COVID-19 continues to strain their economies?

If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of fulfilling the 2014 Wales Summit Defense Investment Pledge. We all must do our part to procure, prepare, and provide the ready forces and capabilities. Although COVID-19 poses a challenge, we want to see every member of the Alliance contribute its fair share.

The NATO Readiness Initiative commits Allies to the “Four Thirties” plan—30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 naval combat vessels—ready to use within 30 days.

Q140. If confirmed, what steps would you recommend to ensure the readiness and interoperability of these “Four Thirties” units?

If confirmed, I will review the plan approved by Allies to train, certify, and maintain the units associated with the “Four Thirties.” Maintaining ready and interoperable forces and capabilities will be one of my highest priorities as we rebuild a culture of readiness at NATO.

NATO has taken a number of steps to adapt its Command Structure, including the decision to stand up the NATO Joint Force Command for the Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia, and the NATO Joint Support and Enabling Command in Ulm, Germany.

Q141. If confirmed, what criteria would you use for defining and measuring the success of these NATO commands in enhancing credible deterrence?

An adaptive NATO Command Structure greatly improves how the Alliance addresses a range of threats. I expect the newly established U.S. Second Fleet and Joint Force Command (JFC) Norfolk increases Allied maritime domain awareness and capability; and also that they would lead in exercises and operations in the Atlantic to secure our sea lines of communication.

Q142. In your view, is there a continuing requirement for deploying U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO countries?

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

Q143. 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? Q144. What role would you foresee for EDI going forward? Please explain your answer.

A143. EDI funding has enabled DoD to increase its force presence in Europe, improve critical capabilities, establish pre-positioned equipment sets, and execute readiness-building exercises, all of which have contributed greatly to increasing U.S. European Command's combat capability and enhancing deterrence of Russian aggression.

A144. If confirmed, I look forward to examining how the EDI can be used going forward.

Q145. In your view, should EDI include funding for military construction in Europe, and if so, under what circumstances or criteria?

I understand that military construction has been one of the five lines of effort within the EDI since 2017. If confirmed, I will examine under what circumstances military construction should continue to be a part of the EDI.

Last year, the U.S. Army was prepared to execute DEFENDER 2020, which would have been one of the largest exercises since the Cold War, with support of many Allies and partners, but it was largely truncated due to COVID-19.

Q146. If confirmed, how will you work with the U.S. Army, EUCOM, and NATO to glean lessons learned from this episode and execute large future exercises?

It is my understanding that because all of the planning and much of the personnel movement for DEFENDER 2020 began prior to the exercise curtailment due to COVID-19, U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and NATO were able to identify and catalogue many of the strategic, operational, and logistics lessons a full-scale exercise would have illuminated. If confirmed, I plan to review the DEFENDER 2020 after-action report and work with the Joint Staff, USEUCOM, and USNATO to ensure those lessons are reflected in future largescale U.S., multilateral, and NATO exercises.

Q147. In what other ways can the Department support efforts to deter Russia while strengthening our alliances and partnerships in Europe?

As Russia increasingly utilizes a whole-of-government approach to achieving its geopolitical objectives, the Department of Defense continues to organize its resources to compete with Russia below the level of armed conflict. Engaging our allies and partners in these endeavors is critical to countering Russian influence by deterring and defending against all forms of coercion and aggressive actions and building partner capacity to resist hybrid threats. Additionally, I believe the Department could also support State Department and national security council colleagues as they work with Allies and partners to collectively denounce Russia's unacceptable behavior and develop international consensus to take action in response to that behavior.

Ukraine

Q148. What is your assessment of the current U.S.-Ukraine security relationship?

The United States maintains a robust strategic defense partnership with Ukraine. Ukraine continues to contribute to U.S. and transatlantic security by providing forces to NATO operations.

Q149. Do you support continued U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal defensive assistance? Q150. Are there specific capabilities that in your view

should be prioritized to be enhanced through the provision of U.S. security assistance?

A149. Yes. Since 2014, the United States has committed more than \$2 billion in security assistance to help Ukraine's forces preserve the country's territorial integrity and progress toward NATO interoperability. The Department's security assistance programs, including lethal assistance for defensive purposes, are essential components of efforts to build the capacity of Ukraine's forces.

A150. If confirmed, I'll examine the Department's current efforts and Ukraine's requirements closely, but continued support to enhance Ukraine's defensive lethal capabilities in the maritime domain will likely remain a top near-term priority.

Q151. How does the provision of assistance to Ukraine contribute to a broader U.S. security strategy in Europe?

U.S. security is enhanced by supporting a strategic partner that shares our values and the universal principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. DoD security assistance programs, combined with efforts to improve the readiness of U.S. forces in Europe through programs like the European Deterrence Initiative, help to deter further aggressive Russian actions in the region.

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

Q152. In your view, is the security and stability of the Southeastern European region and the Black Sea in the U.S. national security interest?

The security and stability of Southeastern Europe and the Black Sea region are in the U.S. national interest and are critical to the security of NATO's eastern flank. This region is vulnerable to Russian aggression, evidenced by ongoing actions in eastern Ukraine, occupation of parts of Georgia, militarization of the Black Sea, and provocative actions in the air and at sea. Russia's destabilizing activities in and around the Black Sea reflect its ambitions to maintain a dominant position in its so-called near-abroad and prevent the realization of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. Furthermore, Russia is using its purported annexation of Crimea as a force projection platform to extend its forces further to the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.

Q153. NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) includes approximately 650 U.S. service members. Do you believe the United States should maintain its commitment to KFOR?

U.S. deployment to NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR), which helps ensure security and stability both in Kosovo and across the Western Balkans, contributes directly to the success of KFOR's mission set. The U.S. and NATO presence also provides a vital deterrent to malign actors who seek to undermine sovereignty and peace in the region. We continue to rely heavily on the efforts of our Allies and partners in KFOR, who contribute more than 2,800 military personnel – up to 80 percent of the total force. If confirmed, I will ensure consultation with NATO Allies and partners is the highest priority when discussing the distribution of U.S. forces and capabilities in KFOR.

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.

Q154. Do you support efforts to boost NATO’s forward presence in the southeast and Black Sea region?

Yes. If confirmed, I will review our force posture in this region and ensure the strength of our deterrence along NATO’s Eastern and Southern flanks.

Former Secretary Esper issued a plan, the European Strategic Posture Realignment, in 2020. This committee was concerned about some elements of that plan, such as the reduction of forces in Germany. However, other aspects of it may be worth continued consideration.

Q155. What are your views on former Secretary Esper’s realignment plan?

With the President’s lifting of the 25,000 U.S. personnel cap for Germany, DoD will re-examine the realignment plan through the Global Posture Review process to determine what elements of it are in line with this Administration’s national security priorities and should be pursued.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)

Q156. 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? Q157. In your opinion, is the current U.S. force presence in the Middle East appropriately sized? Please explain your answer.

A156. It is important for DoD to review its military posture in the Middle East continually to ensure it is sustainable to defend against threats to the homeland and respond to contingencies, while maintaining focus on our global strategy. Our presence provides opportunities for security cooperation with our partners in the region as we seek to cultivate their military capabilities and build interoperability to pursue shared objectives. If confirmed, I will evaluate the U.S. force presence in the Middle East, including the opportunities and challenges presented, and provide my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

A157. I believe that we must right-size our military posture to the level required to assist our partners with their security, disrupt international terrorist networks, deter Iranian aggression, and protect other U.S. interests. I believe that Secretary Austin’s Global Force Posture Review will help to shape these choices to ensure they are aligned with our strategic objectives, values, and resources. If confirmed, I will assess our force presence in the Middle East in the broader context of our global posture, and provide my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

Q158. What opportunities exist for increasing burden-sharing with U.S. regional and European partners to counter threats emanating from and affecting the CENTCOM AOR?

I think an important element to DoD’s approach in the Middle East is burden-sharing with allies and partners. The Department has included regional partner participation in the International Maritime Security Construct and in an expanded NATO mission to advise Iraqi security institutions and forces, for example. Our partners are increasing investments in their defense capabilities, and if confirmed, I will support the exploration of additional opportunities to enhance security cooperation.

Q159. To what extent is the Middle East relevant to great power competition?

Q160. How should DOD consider countering Russia and China in the Middle East, in your view? Q161. What other elements of national power and policy tools might be useful?

A159. The Middle East is increasingly a key theater for great power competition. I expect it will remain so, and Russian and Chinese attempts to build inroads there suggest our rivals believe the same.

A160. I believe that military force is not the answer to the region's challenges. In the face of strategic challenges from China and Russia, we will assess the appropriate structure and sizing of the force and will develop capabilities to compete with them and deter their gray zone actions more effectively. In my view, DoD should continue investing in regional partnerships. By supporting regional partners and affirming common interests to counter common threats, we can ensure that the United States will remain the partner of choice in the Middle East.

A161. The United States retains many advantages, including our formidable combination of economic power, innovative dynamism, democratic values, military might, and global alliances. If we capitalize on these advantages, we can approach both competition and cooperation from a position of relative strength. We also must pursue sustained diplomacy to advance our interests, de-escalate regional tensions, and create space for people throughout the Middle East to realize their aspirations.

Afghanistan

Q162. In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? Q163. If so, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on troop levels in Afghanistan, if confirmed?

A162/A163. U.S. force levels in Afghanistan should be tied to conditions on the ground, but also need to be set in the context of U.S. and partner interests in the region. Any change in force levels should support diplomatic efforts and should be executed in close consultation with our NATO Resolute Support partners. If confirmed, I will assess our strategic posture with Office of the Secretary of Defense experts, U.S. military leadership, and our allies and partners to develop recommendations for potential changes in our approach.

Q164. Is it your understanding that the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan is currently "conditions-based"?

U.S. forces are in Afghanistan in support of U.S. national security interests. My understanding is that the current U.S. military presence of 2,500 forces was reached on January 15, 2021, pursuant to then-President Trump's direction as announced by then-Acting Secretary of Defense Miller on November 17, 2020. The administration is currently reviewing policy options for Afghanistan, which could impact the number of U.S. forces in the country.

Q165. If so, what is your understanding of the conditions prerequisite to drawing down the U.S. military presence there?

My understanding is that under the U.S.-Taliban Agreement, the Taliban's continued participation in intra-Afghan negotiations fulfills a key element of the U.S.-Taliban Agreement. I also understand that the Taliban have made specific commitments regarding counterterrorism

and reducing violence, although press reports indicate that violence in Afghanistan has been above seasonal norms throughout the peace process that began in September 2020.

Q166. If the U.S. does not fully withdraw its troops by May 2021 because the Taliban has not met the conditions under the February 2020 U.S.-Taliban Agreement, how do you expect the Taliban to respond?

The United States is committed to peace in Afghanistan and is actively encouraging all sides to meet their commitments in furtherance of a political settlement to the conflict. It is possible that the Taliban will resume attacks on U.S. and Resolute Support Coalition forces. My understanding is that the Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan is confident that U.S. and partner forces can defend themselves while continuing their mission, although they would be at higher risk if the Taliban resumed attacks.

Q167. What type of adjustments to U.S. force posture, if any, would you recommend to prepare for the Taliban's possible response?

Force protection is a top priority for any commander, and any adjustments to prepare for a resumption in Taliban attacks should be left to the commander on the ground. If confirmed, I would work with the Joint Staff and U.S. Central Command to ensure that the Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan has whatever authorities and resources he needs to be postured appropriately.

Q168. In your view, will the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) continue to require financial support to maintain effective operational capacity and capability?

Yes. I understand DoD funding provides three-fourths of the cost of sustaining Afghan combat operations and developing capabilities such as aviation and special forces. Even if a peace agreement is achieved, I would anticipate that the ANDSF would still require international funding to maintain viability as a stabilizing force.

Q169. Do you support continuing efforts to train and equip the ANDSF?

My understanding is that DoD's efforts to train and equip the ANDSF have mostly been completed and that DoD now focuses primarily on sustaining ANDSF combat operations. I understand that the two exceptions to this are the Afghan Special Forces and the Afghan Air Force, which continue to receive train-and-equip support. The Afghan Special Forces and the Afghan Air Force are effective fighting forces. If confirmed, I would support continuing to train and equip these forces in a manner consistent with the overall strategic approach the President chooses.

Q170. Is a capable, well-trained and managed ANDSF critical to achieving a successful political settlement and preventing further conflict in Afghanistan?

The Afghan Army is the most respected institution in the country and is an important source of national cohesion. As such, it is essential for future stability under any type of political settlement.

Q171. Would it be counterproductive to cut programs designed to mature the leadership and management of the Afghan forces?

My understanding is that Resolute Support has focused on identifying Afghan security leaders with good potential, and then investing in them through training and advising. In any military organization, leadership is the key to success.

Pakistan

Q172. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to U.S. relations with Pakistan, particularly in terms of military-to-military relations?

Pakistan is an important partner. If confirmed, I will focus on taking advantage of shared interests such as counter-terrorism, peace in Afghanistan, and regional stability. We should seek means to develop relationships with Pakistan's military leaders, including through continued use of the International Military Education and Training program.

Q173. What additional steps can the United States take with Pakistan to ensure that its territory does not continue to be used as a sanctuary for militants and violent extremist organizations (VEOs)?

Pakistan needs to redouble its efforts to ensure its territory is not being used as a sanctuary for militants and violent extremist organizations. Pakistan is entitled to security within its borders, and the United States can play an important role to help promote stability and security across the region.

Syria and Iraq

Q174. What is your understanding of current U.S. strategy and objectives in Syria?

U.S. national security objectives in Syria include preventing the resurgence of ISIS so that it cannot directly threaten the United States and its interests; maintaining pressure on al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups; preventing a renewal of fighting that produces large-scale refugee flows that further destabilize U.S. allies and partners; promoting the provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Syrian civilians in need; securing reforms in Syria that improve the welfare of Syrian civilians; and preventing the outbreak of broader regional conflict.

Q175. From a DOD standpoint, what must be done to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, in your view? Q176. What non-military efforts are necessary to sustain the enduring defeat of ISIS?

A175. The enduring defeat of ISIS will require a whole-of-government approach and working together with our partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The objective should be to address the underlying political, economic, and social grievances that ISIS exploits. To this end, it is critical that U.S. and Coalition forces continue to improve the capacity of our local partner forces to enable them to conduct counter-ISIS operations independently.

A176. The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) play a critical role in countering ISIS. However, as long as underlying grievances that facilitated ISIS' rapid expansion remain unaddressed, ISIS' ability to reconstitute remains a threat. Our partners face the dual challenge of continued counter-ISIS military operations while enabling stabilization and recovery efforts in communities liberated from ISIS. DoD should support our civilian agencies in providing stabilization assistance and non-military support to communities recovering from ISIS. Additionally, our local partners and the communities seeking to rebuild require the

assurance of sustained U.S. and Coalition commitment to their recovery. We should ensure the commitment of our allies and partners to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, both the military and non-military efforts to defeat ISIS. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the other departments and agencies on this effort.

Q177. In your personal view, are there any conditions under which Bashar al-Assad should be permitted to remain President of Syria?

I support a nationwide ceasefire and efforts to resolve the Syrian conflict in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254, which states “that the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in Syria is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people.”

Q178. What do you perceive to be the role of the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraq Security Forces in countering ISIS, now that its caliphate has been eliminated?

I understand that the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS has made progress in the fight against ISIS, but recent attacks demonstrate that ISIS remains a threat. The United States works by, with, and through the Iraqi Security Forces and vetted Syrian partner forces, such as the Syrian Democratic Forces, to achieve the enduring defeat of ISIS. U.S. and Coalition forces should continue to develop the capacity of these groups to counter ISIS and al-Qa’ida.

Q179. In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Syria be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? Q180. If so, and if confirmed, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on future troop levels in Syria?

A179. U.S. force levels in any theater should be based on the capabilities necessary to perform the directed mission, in line with overall U.S. objectives.

A180. If confirmed, I will review the status of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE in Iraq and Syria. I will base my recommendation on future force levels in both countries on my assessment of the progress of the campaign, the development of our local partners, and the capabilities necessary to perform the mission.

Q181. In your view, do U.S. troops in Syria help counter Russian influence in the Middle East?

U.S. forces are in Syria to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. U.S. forces operate in a complex operating environment and, thus, as I understand it, they deconflict movements with Russian counterparts to prevent interactions from escalating.

Q182. In your view, do U.S. troops in Syria help counter Iranian influence in the Middle East?

U.S. forces are in Syria to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS.

Q183. What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Iraq?

The Iraqi people desire a secure, stable, and prosperous Iraq, able to defend itself against those who would undermine Iraq’s security. The U.S. objective is to support Iraq in achieving these goals.

Q184. In your view, should the U.S. train and equip Sunni Islamist groups in Syria?

The United States works by, with, and through vetted Syrian partner forces to enable the enduring defeat of ISIS. If confirmed, I will ensure that our Syrian partner forces continue to be appropriately vetted.

Q185. With the dissolution of the Defeat-ISIS Task Force in December that integrated counterterrorism, multilateral, and regional efforts for the Department, how will you ensure continued focus on the defeat of ISIS and integration across multiple disciplines in DOD, and in collaboration with other federal departments and agencies?

If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD teams, whether organized across traditional bureaucratic functions or through integrated task forces, will continue to collaborate and maintain focus on the Defeat-ISIS mission.

Iran

Q186. What is your assessment of the current military threat posed by Iran?

Iran continues to pose a significant conventional and unconventional threat to U.S. personnel and regional partners. Iran's current conventional threats include ballistic missiles in the region, capable of striking regional U.S. military bases, to naval forces that threaten freedom of navigation near the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's unconventional threats have evolved to include attacks on commercial shipping and oil facilities, global cyber attacks, and the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons. Iran also leverages regional militia groups to threaten U.S. forces and partners and undermine regional sovereignty.

Q187. 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?

If confirmed, I will assess our Middle East posture in the context of our global posture, and provide my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. In all geographic Combatant Commands, we need to review carefully the size, shape, and readiness of the force in dynamic security environments, striving for a flexible global posture that leverages our unmatched ability to deploy significant forces quickly anywhere in the world to deter and respond to threats.

Q188. What is your understanding of the objectives of the U.S. security strategy with respect to Iran? Q189. What is the role of the U.S. military in this strategy?

A188/189. I understand the U.S. strategy aims to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, protect our personnel and interests from Iranian threats, and counter Iran's destabilizing activities. Diplomacy is the primary tool for achieving these objectives. The Department of Defense supports the diplomatic effort by deterring and, if necessary, defending against Iranian aggression. More broadly, the Department of Defense supports regional stability through security cooperation and maintaining freedom of navigation.

Q190. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action entailed significant sanctions relief for Iran. Some of that sanctions relief was used to fund terrorist groups. In your view, should Iran be afforded sanctions relief without any specific carve outs or limitations?

It is my view that we should continue actively to enforce sanctions against Iran's support for terrorism, human rights abuses, missile program, and destabilizing activities.

Q191. What danger would increased Iranian funds through sanctions relief pose to U.S. forces, as well as to partners in the region?

It is my belief that Iran's attack calculus toward U.S. forces and our partners hinges primarily on its views of the broader strategic environment. For instance, the threat posed by the Iranian military and its proxies increased in the past few years despite the worsening Iranian economy and corresponding budgetary woes.

Q192. According to the *New York Times*, Iran recently plotted to attack UAE embassies in Ethiopia and Sudan. What do you believe are Iran's objectives in Africa? Q193. What can be done to counter Iran's support for terrorism in Africa?

A192. Iran has sought to increase its influence in Africa in recent years and likely views Africa as a permissive environment to plot attacks against its adversaries.

A193. It is my view that robust cooperation with our partners in Africa, especially on shared interests such as intelligence sharing, can be effective in constraining Iran's support for terrorism and disrupting attack plots.

Q194. If an Iranian-funded group attacks and kills an American citizen, should the United States maintain a "red line" and respond proportionately?

The protection of U.S. forces remains the highest priority for the Administration. Iran should know that the United States will hold it responsible for such an attack, and we will respond decisively at a time and place of our choosing.

Yemen

Q195. What are the U.S. national security interests in Yemen?

The primary national security interest in Yemen remains ensuring that groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Yemen cannot maintain a safe haven from which to conduct attacks against the U.S. homeland. Additionally, the aggressive actions taken by the Houthis (further empowered by Iran) against our partners contribute to instability in the Middle East and threaten Saudi Arabia's territorial defense. It is in the United States' best interest for the parties in Yemen to reach a cessation of hostilities.

Q196. In your view, has Saudi Arabia responded appropriately and proportionately to the threat they face from the Houthis?

Saudi Arabia's conduct of its military campaign in Yemen continues to raise concerns about the incidence of civilian casualties.

Q197. What are the implications of the Biden Administration's decision to cease offensive support operations to the Saudi-led coalition?

There is no military solution to the war in Yemen. As the President stated, the U.S. is ending all U.S. support to Saudi-led offensive operations against the Houthis in Yemen. This includes both materiel and restricting U.S. information sharing with Saudi Arabia and the Saudi-led

Coalition. It is in the United States' best interest for the parties in Yemen to reach a cessation of hostilities.

Q198. To what extent are the Houthis, supported by Iran, a threat to freedom of navigation in the Red Sea? Q199. What policy positions would you recommend for the United States to address this threat?

A198. The Houthis represent a threat to freedom of navigation in the Red Sea due to their offensive actions in the maritime domain. Further, the materiel and training support they receive from Iran have enhanced their lethal capabilities over time.

A199. I support the renewed emphasis that the Biden Administration has placed on a two-track approach: diplomacy to end the war through a political solution, and enhanced relief efforts to address the worsening humanitarian situation.

Q200. What do you assess to be the impact of the recent pause in weapons sales to Saudi Arabia, including precision-guided munitions?

My understanding is that the pause was to ensure that what is being considered advances our strategic and foreign policy objectives. As I understand it, the interagency process for working through the details of individual arms cases has been re-established, with relevant departments and agencies bringing expertise and discipline back to our policymaking.

Q201. To what extent do you believe Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners have made progress in avoiding civilian casualties and ensuring appropriate accountability when allegations of civilian casualties arise?

A201. My understanding is that the United States lacks sufficient insight into civilian casualty rates in Yemen. If confirmed, I will review how our partners are making progress in this critical area.

Egypt

Q202. What is your assessment of the security situation in Egypt and the U.S.-Egypt security relationship?

Egypt faces a number of security challenges, such as ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP), the ongoing conflict in Libya, and border security threats. U.S.-Egypt security cooperation is increasingly focused on counterterrorism and border security. At the strategic level, both countries share an interest in improving regional security and stability.

Q203. What role does the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) play in the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty? Q204. Should the U.S. maintain its military deployment to the MFO? Q205. What would be the risks of reducing this commitment?

A203. The MFO has served to provide reassurance to both Israel and Egypt for almost 40 years by ensuring both parties adhere to the security provisions of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace.

A204. The MFO relies on U.S. contributions, including personnel, equipment, explosive ordnance disposal, aviation, and logistics, to support observation and monitoring in the Sinai. U.S. contributions to this mission anchor other countries' contributions and bolster U.S.

credibility as a leader in diplomatic and security initiatives globally. The MFO presence and organization provide Egypt and Israel a trusted mechanism to resolve disputes, avoid conflict, and foster dialogue on shared security concerns in the Sinai Peninsula.

A205. Any changes to U.S. support would necessitate interagency and partner consultation regarding the potential impacts on the MFO, the Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace, U.S. obligations under applicable international agreements, and regional stability. Risks could include potential reduction in support from other international MFO contributors and risk to the viability of this security construct.

Q206. 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?

Any changes to the U.S. FMF program with Egypt will 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.

Q207. What is your assessment of Egypt's deepening ties with Russia? Q208. Where do U.S. and Russian interests converge in Egypt? Q209. Where do they diverge?

A207/208/209. Egypt is actively diversifying its military cooperation with other foreign partners, including Russia. These deepening ties 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 a politically inclusive, economically vibrant, and secure Egypt 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)

Q210. The 2018 NDS makes little reference to Africa and its myriad security challenges. In your view, what should be the role of AFRICOM in NDS implementation?

Africa is a continent with great opportunities to advance common values and security interests. A key challenge, however, is the threat posed by violent extremist organizations (VEOs) to U.S. interests in both East and West Africa; another involves Chinese and Russian strategic competition for access, influence, and values. AFRICOM plays a supporting role in advancing U.S. national security interests through a whole-of-government effort and simultaneously preserves U.S. access and influence to protect our people, partners, resources, and interests. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of Defense works seamlessly with other U.S. departments and agencies, such as the U.S. Department of State, to align priorities and limited resources accordingly, advancing lasting peace and security on the continent. I will also, where appropriate, work closely with our allies and partners to achieve our national security objectives.

Q211. What is your assessment of the availability and predictability of forces and capabilities to support the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan and crisis response?

Our by, with, and through approach to achieving security and stability in Africa largely proven

effective with a limited forward presence. Often our security cooperation also enhances larger partner force operations, which achieve shared strategic objectives and build enduring relationships. Key to this approach is the limited forward presence on the continent and a focus on building African partner nation capabilities while supporting efforts of other international partners. If confirmed, I will assess all AFRICOM's requests and consider Commander, USAFICOM's requirements and requests for forces, and advise the Secretary with a view consistent with changes in the strategic environment and the direction provided in our national and defense strategies.

Q212. What is your assessment of current U.S. counterterrorism strategies in AFRICOM?

We cannot ignore that persistent conflict in Africa will continue to generate threats to U.S. personnel, partners, and interests from violent extremist organizations (VEOs). I understand the Department's current strategy is to work by, with, and through allies and partners across Africa to disrupt and degrade threats from VEOs, transnational criminal organizations, human trafficking, and other malign influence. Two key elements of the Department's strategies are a whole-of-government approach to address the drivers of insecurity and instability, and close coordination with allies and partners. If confirmed, I will review the counterterrorism strategies to ensure our resources are being employed appropriately and effectively toward mission success.

Q213. What do you assess to be the strategic objectives of Russia and China in Africa?

Both Russia and China have expanded their strategic focus on Africa and use engagement in Africa to bolster their international standing, obtain access to raw materials, undermine Western influence, and pursue access agreements to support force projection in the region. However, the scale and methods vary widely between the two.

China has a multidimensional strategy to engage diplomatically, economically, culturally, as well as militarily across the Continent. China continues improvements to its first overseas military base in Djibouti and has expressed interest in opening more bases in Africa to expand China's geopolitical influence throughout the continent.

Russia markets its security services and experience to African countries as a means to expand its influence and challenge U.S. interests. While comparatively speaking, Russia's outreach is not as wide reaching as China's, Russia remains a key arms supplier for many African militaries. Russia's efforts and influence are further expanded through the presence of Russian professional military companies (PMCs) in several African countries, including supporting combat operations in Libya and the Central African Republic.

Q214. 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?

I understand the U.S. strategy takes a practical approach to tailoring our outreach in Africa to ensure we are aligned not just in countering competitors, but also in meeting broader U.S. goals across the region. Key to our success is focusing on our by, with, and through approach and working with partners to meet the security challenges they face. The Department's efforts should be aligned with our interagency partners to help our African partners build capacity,

improve transparency, and develop institutions that support sustainable security solutions. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to refine and improve these efforts.

Q215. What metrics do you believe should be used to assess progress in this regard?

I recommend that the Department work closely in consultation with other U.S. departments and agencies to develop global metrics rather than regarding this issue as one unique to Africa. If confirmed, I look forward to helping shape that effort moving forward.

Somalia

Q216. What is your assessment of the current security situation in Somalia?

Though al-Shabaab has been degraded significantly, we recognize that violent extremist organizations (VEOs) remain a threat to Somalia and the region. It is important that VEO influence is reduced and their operations disrupted so they can no longer threaten innocent Somalis, their neighbors, or U.S. and international allies' and partners' interests in the region and at home. Recently, Somalia has also faced growing insecurity due to the conflict in neighboring Ethiopia and delays in Somalia's domestic electoral processes.

Q217. What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Somalia?

It is my understanding that the key to our approach in Somalia is to work by, with, and through our partners to achieve stability and security. Our support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army (SNA) focuses on building partner nation institutions and capabilities that can provide for long-term security. We assist our partners to counter direct terrorist threats to the U.S. homeland and U.S. personnel.

Q218. Do you believe the defense lines of effort in the current strategy can be successfully achieved with the vast majority of U.S. forces deployed external to Somalia?

I know the Department of Defense routinely reviews its military presence globally to ensure alignment with stated priorities. If confirmed, I would review U.S. objectives in Somalia and engage in discussions with Departmental leadership regarding whether the repositioning of U.S. personnel and assets in neighboring countries is the most appropriate location to meet our objectives. Overall, our partner-centric, by, with, and through, strategy has always been at the core of the mission, and by helping our partners strengthen defensive capabilities to counter shared threats to stabilize the region, there may be an opportunity to help create political and economic development.

Libya

Q219. What is your assessment of current U.S. national security interests in Libya?

I understand that U.S. national security interests in Libya include support to the continued political reconciliation in Libya for a unified, democratic, and sovereign government; encouraging the removal of destabilizing foreign actors from Libya who undermine peace and threaten U.S. and NATO security in the Mediterranean and North Africa; and retaining our ability to monitor and disrupt violent extremist groups in Libya.

Q220. What is your assessment of external actors operating in Libya and where their objectives align and conflict with those of the United States?

I think the Department has seen how the operations of malign external actors, particularly private military companies (PMCs) and imported foreign fighters, in Libya threaten peace in the country and the region. The use of foreign proxy forces in Libya comes at great expense to the Libyan people and regional stability.

West Africa and the Sahel

Q221. What is your assessment of the current security situation in West Africa and the Sahel and its impact on U.S. security interests?

Security continues to deteriorate in the Sahel as instability spreads and threatens coastal West Africa. Porous borders and lack of state legitimacy and presence across large swaths of territory provide an enabling environment for violent extremist organizations, particularly the Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) groups, and transitional criminal networks. The security situation in the Sahel also poses a vital national security risk for our European allies and partners. If confirmed, I will review the Department's current strategy in the Sahel and work closely with other U.S. departments and agencies to nest our counterterrorism efforts within broader governance, diplomatic, and development priorities.

Q222. 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 in the region, particularly support provided pursuant to section 331 of title 10, United States Code?

One of the significant contributions to external partners in the region is logistical and intelligence support to enable French counterterrorism operations in the Sahel. I understand that our support in the region is effective and directly enables French operations against JNIM and ISIS-GS. This support provides vital capabilities for our partners to achieve shared counterterrorism objectives. This support complements the Department's bilateral support to African partners to train, equip, and professionalize their security forces. If confirmed, I will assess support and resourcing to ensure it aligns with our national security objectives for the region.

Western Hemisphere

Q223. What should be the Department's strategic priorities in the Western Hemisphere?

A peaceful and prosperous Western Hemisphere is essential to the security of the United States. The Department's priorities will be informed by the President's national security strategy. I believe these priorities should address the malign influence of China and Russia and support cooperative efforts with our partners to mitigate insecurity in the region.

Q224. Is the Department appropriately resourced to support these priorities?

A224. If confirmed, I will assess and advise the Secretary on the resources required to support the Department's priorities in the region. If confirmed, I also will seek to ensure these efforts are prioritized effectively and reflect the Secretary's broader objectives.

Q225. If not, where do you assess the Department is accepting the greatest risk?

A225. I expect that limitations on resources available to the Department will necessarily require tradeoffs and result in some level of risk. In the Western Hemisphere, I would be concerned about accepting risks that could result in region-wide instability or accepting risks that enable China or Russia to increase their ability to threaten the United States or constrain our actions.

Q226. If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to the President and Secretary of Defense to deter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) AOR and do you think these influences threaten hemispheric security and prosperity?

Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influences do threaten hemispheric security and prosperity. If confirmed, I would recommend to the President and Secretary that we counter these influences through a whole-of-government approach and robust engagements with our partners in the region, promoting the values of democracy, respect for human rights, and cooperation in a rules-based international order.

Latin America and the Caribbean

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

Q227. What types of U.S. assistance are appropriate for Latin American countries given that these challenges emanate from non-state actors?

Transnational criminal networks are a cause of insecurity in Latin America and contribute to challenges in the United States. The Department of Defense can support a whole-of-government effort to disrupt these networks' activities and help our partners advance defense institution building, military professionalization, respect for human rights, and regional cooperation.

Venezuela

Q228. What is your assessment of the current situation in Venezuela?

The greatest threat to Venezuela's peace and prosperity is the Maduro dictatorship. He and his inner circle have dismantled Venezuelan democracy, as they plunder the country's natural resources to enrich themselves, and caused the grave humanitarian crisis facing the country, which also has destabilized the region.

Q229. What is your assessment of the role and objectives of external actors in Venezuela, particularly Russia, Cuba, Iran, and China?

I believe that external actors in Venezuela have enabled the Maduro dictatorship to remain in power by providing diplomatic, intelligence, financial, and military support.

Q230. If confirmed, what would be your policy recommendations on how the Department should address Venezuela?

If confirmed, I will advocate for a whole-of-government (that includes DoD) and multilateral approach to address the problems in Venezuela and encourage a peaceful, democratic transition. I would expect any DoD actions will be in support of a broader U.S. Government strategy to encourage the Maduro regime to hold free and fair elections and transition power peacefully.

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.**

Q231. 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?

The Colombian military is one of the most willing and capable strategic partners in Latin America, and the only country in the region that is a NATO Global Partner. Colombia is often held up as a model of how DoD's security cooperation programs can most effectively help build capacity and professionalize militaries. I believe that DoD programs support Colombia's significant investments in its defense establishment.

Q232. Does the Department require any additional capabilities or legal authorities in Colombia, given developments in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration?

If confirmed, I would look into how the Department is supporting Department of State-led efforts regarding disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and make recommendations for any required additional capabilities or authorities to the Secretary.

Q233. 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?

I believe that the success of *Plan Colombia* can be attributed to four main factors: (1) It had overwhelming bipartisan support; (2) it was a whole-of-government effort, and interagency partners collaborated effectively to deliver results; (3) it was sustained year-over-year with predictable funding; and (4) most importantly, the Government of Colombia played a strong leadership role, was committed to the plan, and provided the majority of the funding.

Cuba

Q234. What is your assessment of Cuba's activities and objectives in the Western Hemisphere?

Cuba continues to seek ways to extend its political, economic, and security influence in Latin America and the Caribbean in ways that counter the values we share with partners in the region.

Q235. Under what circumstances, if any, would you recommend modifications to the security relationship between the United States and Cuba?

I believe the Cuban regime's continued suppression of the rights of the Cuban people and its continued support of the Maduro regime in Venezuela are factors that must be carefully considered prior to modifying this security relationship. It is important that the U.S. military maintain the longstanding limited contact on practical and routine issues at the Guantanamo Naval Station and between the U.S. Coast Guard and its counterparts.

Arctic

Q236. What changes, if any, are necessary for the United States to implement the June 2019 Arctic Strategy and does the United States have the appropriate capabilities and assets to meet its goals in the Arctic?

I understand that the Department has identified capability needs associated with implementing the Arctic Strategy, such as improved domain awareness and communications capabilities. If confirmed, I am committed to helping ensure that DoD has the appropriate concepts, capabilities, and relationships to advance defense objectives in the Arctic. DoD will continue to balance consideration of investments for the Arctic region with broader requirements placed upon the Joint Force, as detailed in the National Defense Strategy and other strategic guidance documents.

Q237. What threat, if any, do Russian and Chinese activities in the Arctic pose to U.S. interests?

The Arctic is a region of increasing competition with China and Russia spurred in part by climate change. These competitors pose different challenges in the Arctic. Russia approaches the Arctic largely from a territorial defense perspective, including by restricting freedom of navigation along its coast, recapitalizing its Arctic military bases, and establishing a new Northern Fleet Joint Strategic Command. It is advancing its interests through an increase in Arctic-based forces, which are intended to improve its operational capability in northern latitudes and to exert greater control of the Northern Sea Route. China is focused on increasing its influence in the region, primarily through predatory economic behavior and non-transparent research efforts.

Q238. 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?

The United States' allies and partners are key to maintaining the international rules-based order and competing with Russia and China. This remains true in the Arctic, where one of the pillars of the DoD Arctic Strategy is strengthening the rules-based order through cooperation with allies and partners. DoD maintains strong cooperation with allies and partners in the Arctic in areas such as maritime surveillance, rotational deployments to Arctic locations, and U.S.-Canada binational defense efforts through the North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD). This defense cooperation complements broader U.S. Government efforts to enhance Arctic cooperation on shared issues, such as fisheries management, search and rescue, and scientific research.

Q239. What, in your view, are U.S. defense interests in the Arctic region?

In my view, U.S. defense interests in the Arctic region include: defense of the homeland; deterring strategic competitors from undertaking malign or coercive activities in the region; and ensuring that common domains remain free and open in accord with international law. If confirmed, I will help ensure DoD supports broader U.S. Government efforts and works by, with, and through our allies, partners, indigenous communities, and other key stakeholders as appropriate.

Q240. Do you believe that U.S. naval access in partner nations' Arctic ports are sufficient to achieve U.S. defense interests in the Arctic region?

I understand that DoD is concluding an examination of whether there is a need for a strategic port or ports in the Arctic, pursuant to Section 1752 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2020, "Department of Defense Designation of Strategic Arctic Ports." If

confirmed, I will help ensure that Secretary Austin's decision on Arctic ports is informed by a range of strategic, political-military, operational, and fiscal considerations, including U.S. naval access to ally and partner nations' Arctic ports.

Defense Support to Civilian Authorities

Q241. What is the role of the Lead Federal Agency when DOD provides support to civilian authorities?

My understanding is that, consistent with the law and the National Response Framework, lead Federal agencies may request DoD support in their areas of responsibility, coordinate the execution of DoD support, and reimburse DoD for such support. At all times, however, DoD personnel operate under DoD command and control.

Q242. In your view, are the procedures by which other Federal, State, and Local agencies request DOD support efficient and effective?

To the best of my knowledge, these procedures are well-documented and time-tested. Federal, State, and local agencies cooperate in developing plans and procedures to respond to incidents and protect special events, and they exercise together to test and refine these plans and procedures. If confirmed, I will have the opportunity to review these plans and procedures, evaluate whether they are efficient and effective, and determine how well DoD has incorporated lessons learned.

Q243. In your view, are DOD procedures for evaluating and approving the provision of support requested by a civil authority efficient, effective, and timely?

If confirmed, I will review DoD's procedures for evaluating and approving support requested by a civil authority to ensure these contribute to the timeliness and effectiveness of DoD's support.

Q244. What is your understanding of the factors that are considered in determining whether DOD will provide support to a civil authority?

I understand that, consistent with the law and DoD policy, DoD considers six factors: 1) does providing the requested support comply with law; 2) does the requested support involve the potential use of lethal force by or against DoD forces; 3) will providing the requested support pose an unacceptable risk to the safety of DoD forces; 4) will DoD be reimbursed for the support and what effect will providing the support have on the DoD budget; 5) will providing the requested support be appropriate and in DoD's interest; and 6) how will providing the requested support affect DoD's ability to perform its other primary missions.

Q245. Are the procedures DOD employs to secure appropriate reimbursement for any support it provides to a civil authority efficient and effective, in your view?

It is my understanding that DoD Components providing DoD support are responsible for securing appropriate reimbursement for DoD support. If confirmed, I will work closely with the relevant DoD Components to ensure that the DoD's procedures are efficient, effective, and transparent.

Q246. Under what conditions should DOD assist civil authorities in securing the southwest border, particularly by providing active duty forces?

Most importantly, DoD assistance must be consistent with the law. For instance, Congress has authorized DoD to provide certain types of support, such as the provision, maintenance, and operation of equipment, including by active-duty military personnel, for aerial reconnaissance and for the detection, monitoring, and communication of the movement of surface traffic outside of the geographic boundary of the United States and within the United States not to exceed 25 miles of the boundary if the initial detection occurred outside of the boundary. However, Congress also has prohibited DoD from providing certain types of support, such as support provided under Chapter 15 of Title 10, U.S. Code, that would require the direct participation by a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps in a search, seizure, arrest, or other similar activity unless participation in such activity by such member is otherwise authorized by law. Also critically important is the imperative that providing DoD assistance should not expose the readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces and the defense of our nation to unacceptable risks.

Q247. What types of assistance in this context are inappropriate, in your view?

In my view, assistance that would be inconsistent with the law would be inappropriate. For example, for support provided under Chapter 15 of Title 10, U.S. Code, Congress has prohibited the direct participation by a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps in a search, seizure, arrest, or other similar activity unless participation in such activity by such member is otherwise authorized by law. Assistance that would expose the readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces and the defense of our nation to unacceptable risks would also be inappropriate. Finally, assistance that would be inconsistent with DoD policies would be inappropriate.

COVID-19

Q248. What is your view of DOD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? Q249. What aspects of it could be improved? Q250. What role do you envision for DOD in pandemic response moving forward?

A248. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to our nation. In the face of this tremendous challenge, Secretary Austin tasked DoD to work to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic and defend the force against COVID-19, while protecting our nation. DoD has an important but supporting role in our nation's fight against the pandemic. I understand DoD has been effective in this role, while also executing national defense missions around the world. DoD has provided unprecedented support – thousands of military and civilian personnel contributing expertise, equipment, and supplies to our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, DoD is providing thousands of members of the Armed Forces to support Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and State-run vaccination centers. If confirmed, I will support DoD's continuing efforts to rise to this challenge.

A249. From what I understand, DoD has been very effective at providing essential support in our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. As Secretary Austin made clear in his Day One message to the force, DoD must move further and faster to contribute to the Federal Government's efforts to counter the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to help DoD provide the most effective support.

A250. In my view, DoD should remain an important but supporting partner in a whole-of-government response to future pandemics. We have vast capabilities and resources that can be marshaled to help our nation detect, prevent if possible, and, if necessary, fight against the next

pandemic. In parallel, those same contributions have the corresponding benefit of strengthening the health of the Joint Force, which is paramount in meeting mission requirements.

Q251. Are there any types of support that the Department of Defense should not provide, in your view?

I believe DoD should not serve as the lead Federal agency or the lead Federal coordinating agency for pandemic response. These roles are best carried out by the Department of Health and Human Services and FEMA. DoD continues to harness its capabilities, resources, and personnel to provide support. Further, DoD should not provide support that supplants, rather than supplements, the fulfillment of responsibilities that by law belong to the States and other Federal departments and agencies.

Q252. Is it advisable, in your view, for DOD to play a significant role in the production and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines? Q253. What, if anything, can be done to enhance DOD's role and expedite the distribution and administration of vaccines?

A252. I assess that DoD's partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services has been effective in accelerating the development, production, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for our nation. DoD's support to this effort was critical.

A253. From what I understand, DoD continues to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to accelerate the manufacture of vaccines; is working with FEMA regarding the use of National Guard personnel to help States and territories distribute and administer vaccines; and is working closely with FEMA and the States to provide direct support to existing State-run vaccination centers and new FEMA Federally supported, State-run vaccination centers. That collaboration should continue as long as DoD is able to execute this and all of its missions, and until this pandemic is under control.

Q254. To what extent does providing defense support to civil authorities during the coronavirus crisis impact readiness? Q255. How should DOD think about these tradeoffs?

A254. As far as I can tell, DoD has met the demands of contingencies abroad and supported civil authorities responding to catastrophes at home simultaneously and successfully. I am not in a position to assess any impact on readiness, but, if confirmed, I will examine this issue to ensure that DoD is managing risks and balancing mission commitments effectively.

A255. First and foremost, DoD's highest priority is, and should remain, the protection of our nation and its people. DoD cannot execute its mission risk-free, but DoD can mitigate and manage risks to ensure that DoD does not compromise the safety and security of our nation.

China, Russia and other nations are disseminating disinformation and false narratives relating to COVID-19, to advance their strategic interests.

Q256. What role, if any, should the Department play in countering disinformation and false narratives relating to COVID-19?

In support of national efforts, DoD can work with partners and allies to counter efforts by foreign adversaries to spread disinformation and false narratives. DoD has a responsibility to personnel

within the Department to communicate effectively to ensure its personnel have accurate information about COVID-19, force health protection measures, and facility protection measures.

Q257. How has the COVID-19 crisis impacted U.S. plans and abilities to conduct joint training exercises with allies and what policy steps would you recommend, if confirmed, for mitigating these impacts?

It is my understanding that the COVID-19 crisis has had an impact on U.S. plans and the ability to conduct joint training exercises with allies and partners. If confirmed, I will work with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to understand the force health protection requirements associated with an exercise environment (and mitigation measures) and the impacts of training delays, and to identify an appropriate way forward that addresses force health protection and mission readiness.

Civilian Oversight of 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.

Q258. What is your understanding of the “service secretary-like” responsibilities of the ASD(SOLIC) for special operations forces?

I understand that the ASD(SO/LIC) reports directly to the Secretary of Defense on these “service secretary-like” matters, consistent with Section 167(f) of Title 10. The ASD(SO/LIC) exercises authority, direction, and control regarding special operations-peculiar administration and support of USSOCOM, including, but not limited to, the readiness and organization of special operations forces and civilian personnel.

Q259. 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?

I understand that the ASD(SO/LIC) is immediately subordinate to the Secretary of Defense for the oversight of special operations-peculiar administrative matters. Title 10 is clear that the administrative chain of command runs from the Secretary of Defense to the ASD(SO/LIC) to the Commander, USSOCOM. Also, Section 902 of the NDAA for FY 2021 states that “no officer below the Secretary may intervene to exercise authority, direction, or control over the Assistant Secretary in the discharge of such responsibilities.” If confirmed, I will comply with the law and support the Secretary of Defense’s organizational decisions.

Q260. In your view, how should these responsibilities be balanced with other ASD(SOLIC) responsibilities related to policy and operational issues?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the ASD(SO/LIC) to ensure that the office of the ASD(SO/LIC) is appropriately supported and empowered to fulfill the ASD(SO/LIC)’s principal responsibilities, including the overall supervision of special operations activities, administering and leading the special operations administrative chain of command, and assisting the

USD(Policy) in developing overall policy pertaining to special operations, counterterrorism, and irregular warfare.

In a November 18, 2020, memorandum, then-Acting Secretary of Defense Miller established the ASD(SOLIC) as a direct report to the Secretary for policy responsibilities, as well as for their “service secretary-like” responsibilities for “special-operations peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces.”

Q261. If confirmed, how would you ensure that policy advice and recommendations relating to the employment of special operations forces is fully integrated with that provided by the Office of the USD(P)?

Title 10 is clear that the ASD(SO/LIC) is a direct report to the Secretary of Defense in its “service secretary-like” role; it is also clear that the ASD(SO/LIC) assists the USD(Policy) in developing and supervising overall DoD policy, program planning, execution, and allocation and use of resources pertaining to special operations activities identified in 10 USC 167(k), combating terrorism, and irregular warfare. If confirmed, I will work closely with Secretary Austin and Deputy Secretary Hicks to ensure the integration of policy advice and recommendations relating to employment of special operations forces, and ensure the optimal organizational structure to accomplish those goals.

Q262. 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”?

Title 10, Section 138, prescribes distinct roles for ASD(SO/LIC), including the overall supervision (including oversight of policy and resources) of special operations activities, acting as the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on special operations matters, and assisting the USD(P) in developing and supervising overall DoD policy, program planning, execution, and allocation and use of resources pertaining to irregular warfare, combating terrorism, and special operations activities identified in 10 USC 167(k). Under 10 USC 167(f), the ASD(SO/LIC) exercises authority, direction, and control with respect to special operations-peculiar administrative matters and support of USSOCOM, including, but not limited to, the readiness and organization of special operations forces, resources and equipment, and civilian personnel. The latter is akin to the responsibilities of a Military Department Secretary in providing civilian oversight of, and civilian leadership and management for, the Military Department under the Military Department Secretary’s cognizance.

Peacekeeping Operations (SHA)

Q263. What should be the Department’s role and objectives in supporting global peacekeeping operations?

I understand the United States is the largest overall financial contributor to the United Nations’ peacekeeping budget in support of global peacekeeping operations. DoD provides support to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) mission in the Sinai for the continued implementation of the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel and assists the Department of State in execution of its Global Peace Operations Initiative. If confirmed, I will review this DoD support

to global peacekeeping operations to see if any changes should be made.

Q264. Should the U.S. contribute military personnel to both staff positions and military observers in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations?

I understand the United States provides military personnel in support of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations as military observers. If confirmed, I will work to understand more about this issue and assess whether DoD should consider supporting UN requests for U.S. military personnel to serve in peacekeeping operations.

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.

Q265. What is your assessment of the threat to U.S. interests posed by Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates and adherents?

Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates continue to pose a threat to U.S. interests around the globe, even as persistent pressure from the United States and our allies and partners has helped prevent these groups from attacking the U.S. homeland. These groups continue to present localized and regional insurgent threats to our partners; seek to destabilize societies through violence; and will continue to threaten U.S. citizens and U.S. interests. As these groups and their networks have become more decentralized, they increasingly have turned to a strategy of proliferating their radical ideologies online, seeking to motivate their adherents to violence from within the borders of our allies and partners.

Q266. Which group, in your view, presents the greatest threat to the United States?

Although al-Qaeda and its affiliates continue to harbor designs to strike the United States, ISIS has shown itself particularly adaptive despite massive international pressure; I would be most concerned that a reduction of that pressure would allow ISIS to reconstitute its capabilities to strike Americans relatively quickly. Should I be confirmed, I will aim to continue to empower our global coalition of partners and the whole-of-government approach within the U.S. Government and the governments of our partners. These efforts collectively have decimated both groups and their associated networks and are critical to preventing their resurgence.

Q267. If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the U.S. counterterrorism strategy and DOD's role in supporting it? Q268. What condition-based metrics would you apply to measure the effectiveness of the strategy?

A267. For years, the U.S. counterterrorism strategy has been an effective, whole-of-government approach to integrating military and non-military efforts, calibrated to varied threats and the regional context in which they exist. DoD has long been a cornerstone of that strategy, drawing on kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities, and often enabling the capabilities of other departments and agencies and foreign partners. I am particularly focused on determining how we can continue to disrupt threats to the United States and our partners from groups like ISIS and al-

Qaeda while working to position the United States to be successful against other global threats we face. If confirmed, I look forward to working across the Department, with my counterparts in other departments and agencies, and with our international partners to ensure we remain successful in executing our counterterrorism strategy, even as we take on additional strategic goals.

A268. The most important metric identifies whether the security of the United States—our people, our homeland, and our interests—is improved by the implementation of our strategy. A key criterion for making such an assessment is whether our partners, who increasingly are in the lead with our support, are becoming more capable of degrading these threats in a sustainable manner.

Q269. Do you believe there needs to be a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism, as directed by the 2018 NDS? Q270. 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?

A269. I believe that a “resource-sustainable” approach is necessary in addressing all our global challenges, including counterterrorism, as we confront an increasingly complicated global environment requiring the United States to calibrate our resources, expenditures, and investments to make progress in addressing the range of threats we face.

A270. If confirmed, I would look to align the Department’s efforts with broader U.S. policy objectives and desired end-states. To be successful in achieving our strategic goals, I intend, if confirmed, to work with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to prioritize how the Department applies its resources, expenditures, and investments in an optimal combination. To ensure we are striking that right balance, we will need to exercise regularly and evaluate the approach to ensure we are managing risk in the best possible manner.

Q271. Should the Department focus principally on terrorist organizations that pose a direct threat to the U.S. homeland? Q272. If so, how would you mitigate risk posed by other terrorist groups that have such intent but currently lack the capability to do so?

A271. In my opinion, the Department should prioritize our efforts and resources in such a way that terrorist organizations, especially those that possess the intent and capability to attack the U.S. homeland and our interests, are unable to do so.

A272. We can mitigate risk through collaboration with partners and allies in addressing a wide range of challenges. Intelligence and information sharing mechanisms provide an important means to identify issues and threats, to share awareness rapidly, and to respond to threats as they develop. To that end, the Department should continue to work with international and interagency partners to maintain awareness of emerging threats from terrorist groups that have the intent, but not yet the capability, to attack the U.S. homeland.

In May 2013, President Obama gave a speech at the National Defense University

regarding counterterrorism operations and related legal and policy frameworks for the use of force. According to a White House fact sheet, the President indicated a “preference” that the use of force in “active warzones, and beyond” should be carried out by the U.S. military. Furthermore, in a background briefing with reporters, a senior administration official stated “the United States military is the appropriate agency to use force outside of active warzones, given their traditional role and given the transparency [that] can be associated with actions by the United States military.”

Q273. Do you believe that, absent extraordinary circumstances, the military is the appropriate organization to carry out counterterrorism operations involving the use of force?

I agree that, absent extraordinary circumstances, the U.S. military is the appropriate organization to carry out counterterrorism operations involving the use of force. The Department of Defense should not, however, address terrorist threats unilaterally, and all DoD activities must be correlated with and complementary to a U.S. Government-wide response. The Department must also work with our allies and partners -- another key pillar of the current National Defense Strategy -- to leverage their regional expertise and unique capabilities.

Q274. In your view, how important is public transparency regarding counterterrorism operations and issues related to the use of force?

In my view, public transparency regarding U.S. military counterterrorism operations, including those related to the use of force, is vitally important. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for transparency in our operations. I am confident we can strike the right balance between transparency regarding counterterrorism operations and our duty to protect our forces and our partners who conduct these operations.

The Obama Administration publicly released a redacted version of its Presidential Policy Guidance (PPG) outlining procedures for approving direct action against terrorist targets located outside the United States and areas of active hostilities.

Q275. Do you believe an appropriately redacted version of successor guidance to the PPG should be publicly released?

The PPG and any successor guidance are Presidential guidance. As such, I would defer such decisions to the National Security Advisor and staff. If confirmed, I would advocate for transparency in the principles and standards that undergird our operations to ensure the American people understand what guides us in safeguarding them from terrorist threats outside of the United States.

Q276. Will you commit to releasing this successor guidance within 90 days of your confirmation?

Because it is Presidential guidance, I would defer such decisions on successor guidance to the National Security Advisor and staff.

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 forces and individuals

supporting or facilitating military operations for the purpose of combating terrorism. Section 1202 of the NDAA for FY 2018 authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to forces and individuals supporting or facilitating irregular warfare operations.

Q277. What is your assessment of the national security utility of each of these authorities in the current strategic environment?

In my past experience, authorities such as these are cost-effective ways for the United States to advance our security interests by supporting and enabling partners and allies in pursuing shared objectives. If confirmed, I will evaluate these authorities, including how they are supporting U.S. strategic goals, and ensure the activities conducted under these authorities are in alignment with NDS priorities.

Q278. If confirmed, what criteria would you use to evaluate proposals for the use of each of these authorities, particularly with respect to mitigating the risks associated with conducting irregular warfare activities below the level of traditional armed conflict?

If confirmed, I will review the authorities and all operations currently ongoing to ensure they meet U.S. national security objectives, are aligned with NDS priorities, support Combatant Commander needs, are appropriately scoped, and remain good returns on investment. I will ensure that all stakeholders are consulted, and I look forward to working with Congress, including Congress's oversight of these unique authorities and missions.

Counternarcotics and Counter-Transnational Organized Crime Activities (CNGT)

Q279. What should be the role of the Department in combating narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime?

I understand that DoD, in support of interagency and international law enforcement partners, executes its statutory mission to detect and monitor the aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs bound for the United States. DoD provides expertise and capabilities that help law enforcement partners reduce the flow of illicit drugs, degrade the ability of drug trafficking organizations, and disrupt transnational criminal organizations that threaten U.S. national security. If confirmed, I will evaluate whether DoD's resources are used appropriately in this area.

Q280. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the Department's allocation of resources to combat narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime?

If confirmed, I will review DoD's counterdrug activities, resources, and approach to prioritization to determine whether adjustments are appropriate.

Counter Threat Finance (CNGT)

Q281. What should be the Department's role in counter-threat finance activities?

I understand that DoD provides expertise and analytical capabilities that help enable other U.S. Government departments and agencies disrupt terrorist and transnational criminal finance activities that threaten U.S. national security. I believe counter-threat finance is an important capability that helps the U.S. Government degrade the capabilities of its adversaries by denying and disrupting their revenues. If confirmed, I will review these activities to ensure that DoD is

fulfilling its statutory responsibilities and employing its counter-threat finance resources against priority threats.

Q282. In your view, should the Department expand its support to other U.S. Government departments and agencies conducting counter threat finance activities?

Q283. If so, how?

A282/A283. I do not know the extent of DoD's support to other U.S. Government departments and agencies conducting counter-threat finance activities. If confirmed, I will review the support DoD provides and make adjustments as necessary to execute the USD(P) responsibility to develop and oversee DoD counter-threat finance activities and capabilities. If confirmed, I will review the support that DoD provides and make adjustments as necessary.

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."

Q284. What is your understanding of the threat to U.S. interests posed by adversaries in the domain of irregular warfare?

I see adversaries increasingly turning to irregular warfare tactics to advance their objectives because the United States maintains significant conventional military advantages, but has not always been as militarily successful in the "gray zone" or in applying statecraft against adversaries operating in the gray zone. Although the Department acts largely in a supporting role to other U.S. Government partners in addressing challenges that fall beneath the threshold of traditional armed conflict, I assess that DoD cannot depend only on its conventional military advantages and deterrent capability as its contribution to combating adversaries in the gray zone. If confirmed, I would look to ensure the Department is supporting all U.S. Government efforts to defeat threats posed by adversaries and to maintain military and political advantages.

Q285. What should be the guiding principles of any DOD strategy to counter threats in the "gray zone," in your view?

I understand the Department has developed an Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy that guides the Department in countering "gray zone" or irregular threats. I also understand that this guidance places particular emphasis on the multi-domain environment and on the importance of a unified effort within the U.S. Government and with U.S. allies and partners. Gray zone competition is complex and multi-faceted, and it requires a proactive and creative application of Department capabilities coordinated with complementary toolsets of other U.S. departments and agencies.

Information Operations

Q286. 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?

I understand the Department has a variety of capabilities to conduct military operations in the information environment, including public affairs (PA), Military Information Support Operations (MISO), Electro-Magnetic Spectrum Operations (EMSO), and cyberspace operations. When

these activities are executed effectively and in combination with each other and other tools, DoD can achieve its mission more affordably, with reduced risk to our operating forces. If confirmed, I will strive to integrate these capabilities further into Department activities and into our support to our interagency and foreign partners.

Q287. Are DOD's efforts in this regard appropriately integrated with other U.S. Government organizations and activities?

Department efforts throughout the information environment should cross traditional department and agency lines. If confirmed, I will evaluate the integration of the Department's organization and activities in the information environment to ensure we are bolstering collective U.S. Government efforts toward meeting our strategic national goals.

Q288. Does DOD have sufficient authorities and resources to conduct these operations effectively? Q289. If not, what additional authorities and resources would you request, if confirmed?

A288. I am not aware of a need for new authorities or resources, but will need to evaluate this question with the benefit of experts in the Department, if confirmed. I am aware of a requirement for a posture review in conjunction with the statutory direction to establish a Principal Information Operations Advisor; I expect that review would inform my evaluation of authorities, resource availability and allocation, and strategic alignment.

A289. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding our current authorities and resources more fully before making an assessment of what additional resources and authorities, if any, need to be requested.

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."

Q290. Do you agree with Secretary Esper's assessment regarding the continuing threat to our democratic processes from foreign malign influence operations?

Our adversaries rightly view our democratic system as a source of strength and resilience, and that makes it an attractive target for efforts to divide and destabilize us. The FBI leads the U.S. Government's efforts to counter malign influence operations, but if confirmed, I intend to continue the Department's supporting role as a part of a whole-of-government effort to defend our democratic processes from those operations.

Q291. Do you envision election security as an enduring mission for the Department?

Civilian leadership of the electoral process is paramount, and within a whole-of-government effort, the Department of Defense has a role to play defending those elections from foreign interference. It is my understanding that, operating outside the United States, DoD generates insights that enable the defense of our elections and, when appropriate, conducts cyber operations to that same end. DoD also can provide Defense Support of Civil Authorities upon request and in accordance with applicable law. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department is postured to continue playing this important role in defense of our elections.

Q292. If so, how would OUSD(P) best support the mission of defending our democratic processes from interference by Russia and other foreign adversaries?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to generate insights that enable defense against foreign interference and, when necessary, prepares to act against the malign actors conducting such interference.

Q293. Do you assess that our actions to date are deterring Russian President Putin or other foreign adversaries that seek to interfere in our elections? Q294. If not, are there additional policy steps that you believe the Department of Defense should take to enhance deterrence of foreign election interference?

A293/A294. It is impossible to say for certain whether certain actions have been successful at changing the decision-making processes of President Putin or other malign actors. My understanding is that whole-of-government efforts to impose costs on President Putin's government for its attempted interference in the 2016 election, and subsequent efforts by U.S. Cyber Command and others to disrupt and degrade malicious cyber infrastructure, have been significant. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency asserted in November that the 2020 elections were the most secure in history, and I have no reason to believe otherwise. If confirmed, I intend to continue the Department's proactive efforts – as a part of a whole-of-government approach – to defend our elections.

Defense Security Cooperation (DSCA)

Q295. In your view, what should be the role of the Department's security cooperation activities in the implementation of U.S. security strategy?

The Defense Department's role fits into the whole-of-government approach to bolstering our allies and partners. DoD security cooperation activities should enhance the capabilities and capacity of our partners to provide for their own defense, address regional security challenges to advance shared security interests, and strengthen relationships that promote U.S. security interests. In coordination with the Department of State, the Department of Defense's security cooperation tools are critical to strengthening and leveraging the United States' robust network of alliances and partnerships, which is foundational to U.S. defense strategic objectives.

Q296. If confirmed, how would you define the fundamental objectives of the Department's programs and activities for building the capabilities of foreign security forces? Q297. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the Department's approach?

A296. The fundamental objective of DoD security cooperation activities is to advance our ally and partner defense postures to address shared security threats. Through building partner

capacity, our partners can operate effectively alongside and in lieu of U.S. forces to address shared security challenges in support of U.S. interests.

A297. It is my understanding that the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy has made significant progress in recent years to align security cooperation activities more closely with National Defense Strategy (NDS) objectives. If confirmed, I plan to review the strategic prioritization of DoD security cooperation resources and existing planning processes to ensure these activities advance defense strategic objectives and earn the United States a return on its investments.

Q298. 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?

Q299. What changes, if any, to OUSD(P) structure, authorities, and resourcing for these purposes, would you recommend, if confirmed?

A298. I understand that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, as delegated by the Secretary of Defense, has the responsibility for oversight of strategic policy and guidance and responsibility for overall resource allocation for security cooperation programs and activities of the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will review the Department's current approach to the strategic oversight and resource allocation of security cooperation activities and assess whether the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is appropriately organized and empowered to perform its strategic oversight role of the security cooperation enterprise.

A299. If confirmed, I will communicate to the Committee any additional organizational, legislative, or resource adjustments that I assess are necessary to exercise the responsibility for strategic oversight, guidance, and allocation of Department of Defense security cooperation resources.

Q300. 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? Q301. What is your assessment of the current level of coordination between the Department of Defense and Department of State on security cooperation?

The Department of Defense advises the Department of State regarding desired partner and ally military requirements, consistent with U.S. national security policy. The Department of Defense implements the Foreign Military Sales program and certain Department of State security assistance programs, consistent with State Department guidance; and coordinates with the Department of State regarding Department of Defense security sector assistance programs. I understand—and if confirmed, would affirm—the importance of ensuring DoD activities align with broader U.S. foreign policy, thorough coordination, collaboration, and consistent engagement with the State Department and other interagency partners.

A301. I understand that the Department of Defense and the Department of State coordinate well on security sector assistance activities through formal coordination forums and regular, informal engagements.

Q302. If confirmed, what would be your relationship with the Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA)? Q303. On what issues would you expect to consult with the Director?

A302/A303. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is responsible for exercising authority, direction, and control over the Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). If confirmed, I expect to consult with the Director, DSCA, to provide the Secretary with advice and recommendations on security cooperation issues facing the Department, including partner and ally capability development strategies; Foreign Military Sales; DSCA-managed security sector assistance programs; and Security Cooperation Workforce development.

Civilian Casualties

Section 936 of the NDAA for FY 2019 required the Secretary of Defense to develop a comprehensive policy for accounting for and responding to allegations of civilian casualties resulting from U.S. military operations.

Q304. 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?

Making public information about U.S. military operations, including the results of DoD's assessments of civilian casualty incidents, helps improve the public's understanding of U.S. military operations. Although operational and security necessities constrain what can be publicly released, transparency efforts can help the public better understand the suffering that results from war as well as the U.S. military's efforts to reduce that suffering to the greatest extent possible. I understand that the Department currently makes public information about its efforts to reduce the risk of civilian casualties. I also know that the Combatant Commands that are engaged in operations periodically release information about civilian casualty incidents and their assessments of reports of civilian casualties, and that the Department prepares an annual report on civilian casualties that have resulted from U.S. military operations, pursuant to statutory requirements. I strongly support such transparency efforts.

Q305. Do you believe the Department of Defense has achieved a sufficient level of transparency on such matters? Q306. If not, what additional steps do you believe are necessary?

A305/A306. I understand the Department is continuing to consider ways to improve its communications with the public on these issues, even as it is developing a new DoD-level policy document on civilian casualty mitigation and response. For example, last October, the Department established a webpage highlighting how members of the public can communicate information about civilian casualties that may have resulted from U.S. military operations to relevant Geographic Combatant Commands. If confirmed, I will consider ways that the Department can improve its communication with the public on these issues, including by considering how this instruction can support these transparency efforts.

Use of Military Force

Q307. 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?

The Department has operated under the current legal authorities for nearly 20 years, but the threats we face continue to evolve. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Department of Defense General Counsel to evaluate current legal authorities to determine whether they are sufficient to enable the Department's counterterrorism and related missions.

Q308. Is the 2002 AUMF still necessary and useful, in your view?

Should I be confirmed, I would recommend this authority be reassessed in the light of current circumstances, and I would advocate for changes or updates if they are deemed necessary.

Q309. In your view, is a "new" authorization for the use of military force needed at this time? Q310. If so, what should be the scope and terms of this "new" AUMF? Please explain your answer.

A309. The Department has operated under the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs for nearly 20 years, even as new threat actors have emerged, and others have evolved. If confirmed, I believe it would be prudent to review these existing authorities and assess whether updated or further authorizations are required.

A310. The scope or terms of any "new" authorization should be informed by an in-depth review of the current authorities, and by the facts and circumstances to which the authorities apply. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department's General Counsel to conduct that evaluation.

Q311. 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?

The 2001 AUMF is the legal basis for currently authorized operations against the following groups or individuals: 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; 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). I do not have updated information on the countries in which U.S. military direct action is currently authorized.

Q312. 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?

If confirmed, I would consider the degree to which collective self-defense would help achieve U.S. national security and specific mission objectives; bolster the protection of U.S. forces and facilities operating abroad; and help maintain the resolve of partners that U.S. forces work by, with, and through to address mutual threats, including commitments in mutual defense agreements. Also, rules of engagement authorizing U.S. forces to defend foreign partner forces should clearly identify the particular partners eligible for such collective self-defense. Any use of force in defense of foreign partner forces must be conducted in accordance with the law of armed conflict.

Detainee Issues (ODP)

Q313. 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 August 19, 2014?

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. Individuals in the custody and control of the U.S. Government may not be subjected to any interrogation technique that is not authorized by and listed in the Army Field Manual.

Q314. 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?

I believe that it is time to close the DoD detention facility at Guantanamo Bay responsibly. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Administration to develop a plan for the 40 detainees remaining at the facility. Until such time, the Department will continue to ensure safe and humane treatment of the detainee population.

Q316. 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 40 detainees in law of war detention at GTMO be detained?

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 and humane treatment of the law of war detainees in the care of U.S. forces at Guantanamo Bay.

Q317. 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?

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 and humane treatment of the law of war detainees in the care of U.S. forces at Guantanamo Bay.

Q318. If confirmed, would you ever advise the President to transfer new detainees to Guantanamo, and if so, under what criteria?

I would not advise the Secretary of Defense to transfer new detainees to Guantanamo.

Q319. The Periodic Review Board (PRB) process enacted by section 1023 of the FY 2012 NDAA “to determine whether certain individuals detained at [Guantanamo] represent a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States such that their continued detention is warranted” appears to be stalled. In your view, should the PRB process be continued or terminated? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I would support continuing the Periodic Review Board (PRB) process. I understand that the PRB process continues to conduct hearings on a regular basis.

Q320. What are your views on the objectives and outcomes of the Department’s Military Commission process?

I support the use of military commissions for the narrow purpose of prosecuting those accused of violations of the law of war.

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.

Q321. 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)?

The safety and security of our workforce are of utmost importance. If confirmed, and if I were to receive a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination, I would first ensure that the complainant was in a safe place. I would work with the legal office, the human resources office, and the employee’s supervisory chain to support the employees concerned and appropriately resolve the complaint. Each member of the Policy workforce deserves a safe, healthy, and respectful place to work. If confirmed, I will communicate my expectation that this standard of respect be upheld, and that any allegations be addressed swiftly.

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.

Q322. 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.

Q323. 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.

Q324. 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.

Q325. 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.

Q326. 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.

Q327. 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.

Q328. 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.