

**OPENING STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR JACK REED
CHAIRMAN, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**ROOM SD-G50
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
Tuesday, March 1, 2022**

To receive testimony on Global Security Challenges and Strategy
(As prepared for delivery)

REED: Good morning. The committee meets today to receive testimony on the global security challenges for the United States. This hearing comes at a critical moment as Russia continues its unprovoked and illegal attack on Ukraine.

I would like to welcome and thank the expert witnesses before us today.

Ms. Heather Conley is President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States. She brings decades of experience working at the intersection of European and Russian geopolitics and U.S. policy, including senior roles at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Department of State.

Mr. Roger Zakheim is Director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute. He is an expert on U.S. defense strategy, having served as a professional staff member on the House Armed Services Committee. He also served on the 2018 National Defense Strategy Commission, as well as in various other national security leadership roles.

I would also like to thank Ms. Michèle Flournoy, who was originally scheduled to testify but a conflict prevented her from appearing. She has, however, graciously submitted written testimony for the record. I encourage all of my colleagues to review her insightful remarks.

Our objective today is to discuss the national security challenges that this committee should consider as we prepare the Fiscal Year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act. I will turn to these wide-ranging challenges in a moment, but we must start by addressing the criminal war Vladimir Putin is waging in Ukraine.

Let there be no doubt: this committee unequivocally condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Putin's unprovoked aggression is inflicting untold suffering upon innocent civilians in Ukraine, threatening European security, and causing serious

consequences for the global economy. Putin alone is responsible for the bloodshed he has caused, and we urge him to cease hostilities and pull back his troops.

However, if Putin thought his war would weaken NATO and the international community, he is badly mistaken. The United States and our allies around the globe have rallied together in a way not seen in generations. We are in lockstep with our partners, and the economic actions we have levied against Russia are already having significant impact. The world is witnessing a momentous shift in the international order, with a formidable array of global partners joining in solidarity to impose severe sanctions on Russia and provide support to Ukraine. We cannot overstate the scale and importance of this unity.

As we speak, China is watching how the democratic nations of the world respond to Russia. In considering a potential invasion of Taiwan, President Xi is scrutinizing Putin's playbook and the international response. I suspect he may not like what he sees. The international community has shown unprecedented resolve and, as the German Marshall Fund's Bonnie Glaser recently said, "We could make China feel very, very uncomfortable and perhaps rethink the advantages of being close to Moscow."

With that in mind, I would ask our witnesses to help place the current Ukraine crisis in the larger context of the evolving international order and long-term strategic competition, as well as the implications for the U.S. approach to security in the European theater going forward.

As we consider these broad questions, I would highlight the importance of the coming months for the Department of Defense. The Biden Administration will soon release a number of key planning documents, including the 2022 National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy, the Nuclear Posture Review, and the FY23 President's budget request. The policies outlined in these papers will shape how the Defense Department prioritizes its efforts for years to come.

Above all else, we have an opportunity to focus on the critical technologies needed to modernize our forces and maintain our competitive advantage – like artificial intelligence, 5G, quantum computing, biotechnology, robotics, and hypersonics. As Ms. Flourney wrote in her prepared testimony, "we are in a military-technological race with China, and what we do in the next five years will do much to determine whether we can successfully deter and defeat their aggression over the next 50."

This urgent reality should push us into finding ways to achieve maximum efficiency in our budgeting and acquisition decisions. To effectively modernize and maintain its technological edge, the Defense Department must be able to rapidly adopt new operational concepts, operate jointly, streamline research and development of new technologies, and improve management. All too often, these efforts are stymied by the so-called “valley of death” in the acquisition process. Congress must demonstrate leadership in transforming how the Department achieves agility, speed, and scale.

Simultaneously, we have to stay focused on the big picture. The Defense Department has appropriately identified the Indo-Pacific as its “priority theater” and China as the “pacing threat” for the United States military. In addition to its economic and socio-political growth, China has studied the United States’ way of war and focused on offsetting our advantages by investing in disruptive technologies. Beijing has made concerning progress in this regard.

There is broad consensus, however, that our comparative advantage over China is our network of partners and allies in the region and globally. Strengthening that network should be at the center of any strategy for the Indo-Pacific region, and the maturation of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or “Quad,” involving the United States, Japan, India, and Australia, presents a strategic opportunity to establish a durable framework.

Finally, to prepare for the security challenges going forward we must also examine and learn from the lessons of the last twenty years. In the post-Afghanistan period, our security strategy must also address the counterterrorism threat in a balanced and efficient manner so that we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past.

We live in a complex and dangerous global security environment. From Russia’s aggression in Europe to China’s influence in the Indo-Pacific to countless other malign actors around the world, prevailing in this environment will require resolute, thoughtful strategies.

I look forward to our witnesses’ insights into these issues, and I thank them again for their participation.

Ranking Member Inhofe is not able to be with us today, so I ask that his statement be submitted into the record.