

**Advance Policy Questions for General Paul Selva, USAF,
Nominee for Reconfirmation as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

Department of Defense Reforms

On previous occasions you have answered this Committee's policy questions on the reforms brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the last time being in connection with your prior nomination to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. You indicated that you did not see a need for modifications to Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions.

Has your view of the importance, implementation, and practice of these reforms changed since you testified before the Committee at your last confirmation hearing?

I have not changed my views on the importance, implementation, and practice of reforms since I last appeared before this committee.

In light of your experience as Vice Chairman, do you see any need for modifications to Goldwater-Nichols? If so, what modifications do you believe would be appropriate?

The most recent modifications to Goldwater-Nichols have helped the Joint Force by increasing flexibility in force development and acquisition. I look forward to working with the department and this committee on policy reforms that continue to improve our Joint Force's warfighting ability.

Duties

Based on your experience during your tenure as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, what recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions set forth in sections 152 through 155 of title 10, United States Code, and in regulations of the Department of Defense, that pertain to the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the organization and operation of the Joint Staff in general?

Implementation is ongoing for the foundational reforms you directed in Fiscal Year 2017. It is too early to assess whether future reforms are warranted. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary, Joint Chiefs, and Combatant Commanders to identify additional reforms as part of a continuing dialogue with the committee.

Major Challenges and Priorities

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you expect to face if you are confirmed again?

The current security environment is extraordinarily dynamic and complex. We face simultaneous challenges from Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremist organizations. We are directly confronting ISIS in Iraq and Syria and are in the midst of a critical transition in Afghanistan. While dealing with these pressing challenges, we must also modernize the military. Over the last decade, sustained operational commitments, budgetary instability, and advances by our adversaries have threatened our ability to project power and eroded our competitive advantage in key warfighting areas.

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

If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for a framework for deterrence that addresses the threats we face today. I will work closely with the Services and combatant commanders to ensure we meet operational requirements, retain strategic flexibility, and ensure our competitive advantage now and in the future. Given the challenges we confront, it remains critical that we enhance our integration with other elements of the Interagency in partnership with Congress.

Recognizing that challenges, anticipated and unforeseen, will drive your priorities to a substantial degree, if confirmed again, what other priorities, beyond those associated with the major challenges you identified above, would you set for your second term as Vice Chairman?

If confirmed, my priorities will remain focused on developing and advancing the capabilities, posture, operating concepts, and human capital necessary to assure our allies and partners, deter adversaries, compete on a day-to-day basis, and respond across the spectrum of conflict. This includes continuing efforts to modernize our aging nuclear enterprise, advancing innovation across the Department, developing the right mix of capabilities with sufficient capacity, rebuilding readiness, balancing risk, and optimizing our ability to respond to crises.

Advice of the Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders, and Chief of the National Guard Bureau

Section 163 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff serves as the spokesman for the Combatant Commanders, especially on the operational requirements of their commands. Section 151 of title 10 provides for the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to submit their advice or opinion, in disagreement with or in addition to the advice or opinion of the Chairman, and requires the Chairman to provide that advice at the same time that he presents his own advice to the President, National Security Council, or Secretary of Defense.

Based upon your experience and observations in your first term as Vice Chairman, what changes to section 151 or 163, if any, do you believe may be necessary to ensure that the views of the individual Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders, and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau are presented and considered?

Reflecting on my recent experience, I do not believe changes to Sections 151 or 163 of Title 10 (as they relate to the provision of military advice) are necessary at this time. If confirmed, I will remain alert to opportunities or shortcomings that might indicate changes to the legislation are warranted.

U.S. Military Force Sufficiency

America will likely never have the resources to assign all the forces each Combatant Commander believes they need, which leads the Department of Defense to apportion forces in operations planning. As U.S. military forces are already severely challenged in terms of capacity, there are consequences when it comes time to allocate them for a given contingency.

If we remain a global power, does our niche remain our global power projection capabilities?

Promptly and decisively projecting military power to meet multiple challenges is the sine qua non of a 21st century global power.

Do you believe the United States must retain the capability to strike any global target (hold any target at risk), both in the nuclear and conventional sense, and use it if our strategic vital interests are threatened?

Yes, I believe the United States must maintain a set of capabilities to hold any target at risk.

In your opinion, does power projection include our ability to deploy and sustain forces anywhere on the planet, across the full range of military operations? Do you believe this is a unique characteristic of the American way of war?

Yes. Our military strategy is unique in the world and is predicated on our unparalleled ability to project power and act decisively across the full range of military operations.

Do you believe we must also have a sufficient strategic and operational reserve, national mobilization capability, and robust defense industrial base to provide a second echelon of follow-on forces if a contingency arises in a particular region, especially against a near peer, great power state?

Yes. Faced with multiple simultaneous global contingencies, the Joint Force will deploy and sustain trained and ready active and reserve component forces. The industrial base must be capable of surging spare parts, end items, and critical munitions to support wartime demands. Innovation during conflict is equally important; the industrial base must be capable of developing and deploying new systems in the midst of a fight.

In light of current and future threats to the United States' strategic vital interests, what do you believe should be the U.S. military's posture and capacity to address these threats?

America today faces strategic challenges broadly in scope, threat, and geography. As such, our posture must provide flexible response options while also allowing us to quickly mass at the right time and place. Power projection is critical because it allows us to avoid excessively deployed combat power while maintaining enough forward-deployed forces to assure our allies while deterring our enemies.

Our ability to deter and assure depends on our production and maintenance of a Joint Force right-sized for defense strategy across capacity, capability and readiness. The Joint Force must continue investing in capacity to ensure that the right forces with the right capabilities are available when required.

U.S. Military Capability Dominance

The Committee has received sobering briefings on the status of the United States' military technological lead over potential adversaries that have "gone to school" on the way our military has conducted warfare over the past quarter century, and are rapidly closing the gap in various capability areas where we previously enjoyed a large overmatch.

In your view, what are the top operational challenges our warfighting commanders are facing currently, and will face in the future?

Our adversaries have studied the American way of war and pursued capabilities to specifically counter our historic advantages, straining Joint Force capabilities at both the high and low technology ends of the warfighting spectrum, as well as challenging our warfighting commanders to operate below the threshold of traditional armed conflict. Specific operational challenges arise from our decreasing technological overmatch and playing an away game against potential adversaries. This frequently gives potential adversaries advantages in decision speed and capacities that they can bring to bear. The Joint Force's ability to fight into these environments and sustain efforts in them is threatened due in part to massed salvos of ballistic/cruise missiles coupled with non-kinetic attacks against our integrated air and missile defense networks. Subsequently, commanders are forced into early repositioning of theater war reserves and moving logistic operations further from desired operational locations exacerbating potential vulnerabilities to our fighting force.

What is your assessment of the capability and capacity of our current and planned military forces to achieve success with respect to these operational challenges?

Today's Joint Force is the most capable, professional military force in the world, and can successfully defend the homeland, prosecute the fight against violent extremist organizations, and defeat any adversary in the world. However, we assess the trend of the Joint Force's ability to fulfill our requirements is increasingly challenging, particularly in our ability to compete below the level of armed conflict and respond to multiple, overlapping contingencies. In specific areas we have limited capacity to compete against adversaries. However, increasing capacity alone will not regain ground lost due to our decreasing technological overmatch.

Do you believe our military is shaped properly to achieve success with respect to these challenges with respect to the optimal size and mix of long-range versus short-range, stand-off versus stand-in, and manned versus unmanned capabilities?

While our military is shaped properly to achieve success with respect to these challenges, our adversaries Anti-Access and Area-Denial investments have eroded U.S. overmatch in global power projection and long-range, stand-off, manned capabilities, while aging infrastructure limits our ability to sustain a protracted conflict.

Budget Control Act

How would our Armed Forces be affected if Congress fails to repeal the budget caps in the 2011 Budget Control Act?

BCA funding levels are insufficient to meet our worldwide commitments. The tradeoffs required to balance capability, capacity, and readiness are no longer sustainable. Without relief, our competitive advantage will continue to erode.

How would our Armed Forces be affected if Congress does not conform to the budget caps of the 2011 Budget Control Act and sequestration is triggered?

BCA funding levels are insufficient to meet our worldwide commitments. Sequestration further

damages the Armed Forces due to the arbitrary nature of implementation. Across the board cuts remove the Department's ability to balance capability, capacity, and readiness.

How would our Armed Forces be affected if Congress passes a continuing resolution, instead of a Fiscal Year 2018 appropriation bill?

A year-long continuing resolution would pose a greater risk to the Armed Forces than the BCA spending cap in 2018, significantly challenging our ability to maintain our competitive advantage and accomplish our national military strategy in acceptable timelines at acceptable cost. Fiscal year 17 base funding, which we would receive under a continuing resolution, effectively matches BCA levels (\$522B in FY18). Unlike the BCA, a CR would misallocate resources and prohibit new starts, damaging both the immediate and long term readiness of the Joint Force. Repeated continuing resolutions have hampered long-term investment and often resulted in increased costs. Nine of the last ten fiscal years began under a continuing resolution, forcing the Department to delay critical new starts for acquisition programs, installation and infrastructure modernization, and to cancel major training events. Continuing resolutions also come with significant opportunity costs generated by their inherent lack of flexibility and predictability. Finally, a continuing resolution will challenge our ability to resource Congress' intended force structure growth.

Middle East / Strategy to Defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

President Trump ordered a 30-day review of the strategy to combat ISIS at the end of January. He signed a formal executive memorandum declaring, "It is the policy of the United States that ISIS be defeated," to "convey to the world and to our allies the strength of our resolve," according to a senior administration official. The battlefield in Syria, however, has become increasingly complicated as U.S.-backed forces liberate ISIS-held territory and come into contact with pro-regime forces.

How do you define the "defeat" of ISIS?

The "defeat" of ISIS has three primary components: the threat posed is localized and not exportable; it is degraded into smaller disaggregated organizations that can be addressed by law enforcement and partner nation security forces; and the group can no longer hold territory or achieve safe haven.

In what ways does the U.S. strategy to defeat ISIS take into account the Syrian regime, Iranian-backed forces, and Russia?

Our focus in Syria is to defeat ISIS. As ISIS loses territory, the shrinking battlespace means our operations to defeat ISIS occur in close proximity to pro-regime forces. To ensure the safety of U.S. and coalition personnel, we are making efforts to de-conflict with Russian military forces, who can influence Regime-aligned forces. We are also working to prevent Iranian-backed forces from gaining a permanent foothold and achieving their strategic goals.

Apart from the counter-ISIS campaign, what are U.S. objectives in Syria with respect to the civil war and regional security?

U.S. objectives in Syria beyond the defeat of ISIS include de-escalation of the ongoing civil war, addressing the humanitarian crisis created by the conflict, helping our partners in the region strengthen

their borders, and supporting a political process that allows the Syrian people to select new leadership.

Do you believe the military should have a role in increasing pressure on the Assad regime with the goal of bringing about a political solution in Syria? If so, what are the benefits and risks of such an approach?

The focus of our military campaign in Syria is the defeat of ISIS, working with and in support of our local partner forces. We support the current de-escalation agreement in southwest Syria and ongoing U.S. diplomatic efforts to further U.S. interests.

How does the military contribute to a strategy in Syria?

The military component of the current strategy in Syria is focused on defeating ISIS and ending the humanitarian crisis. Currently, the military is destroying ISIS physical presence and developing partner forces.

Iraq

The Iraqi Security Forces, with significant enabling support by U.S. and coalition forces, have made great progress over the past year in liberating territory controlled by ISIS. However, significant questions about the presence and role of U.S. troops remain.

What do you envision the roles and missions of U.S. forces in Iraq will need to be in the short, medium, and long term in order to prevent the resurgence of ISIS and emergence of other destabilizing groups?

I believe the roles and missions of U.S. forces in the short- and medium -term will remain the same: training, advising, and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to defeat ISIS forces, regain territory, secure and hold territory, and develop as a legitimate security provider to the Iraqi people. Over the long-term, we will continue to train, advise, and assist the Government of Iraq to ensure its sovereignty.

What is the appropriate size and composition of an enduring U.S. presence in Iraq given these roles and missions?

We will continue our by, with, and through strategy by working with Iraqi political leaders to develop a force level that will be sufficient to accomplish the necessary missions while respecting Iraqi sovereignty and the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq.

How does U.S. strategy seek to mitigate Iranian malign influence in Iraq?

The best counterbalance to Iranian malign influence in Iraq is a strong United States – Government of Iraq relationship and an Iraqi government that is stable and functioning. Our strategy in Iraq cultivates this security partnership while developing Iraqi Security Force capabilities and empowering the Government of Iraq. The United States is encouraging neighboring countries like Jordan and those of the Gulf Cooperation Council, who have shared interests with the United States, to reduce Iran's ability to negatively affect outcomes in Iraq.

Afghanistan

At a February 2017 Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Afghanistan, General Nicholson stated, “we’re in a stalemate.” He also said that what will break the stalemate in Afghanistan are the further development of key offensive Afghan capabilities such as special forces and the Afghan Air Force to allow them to overmatch the Taliban or any other group on the battlefield. He also said, “...I have adequate resourcing in my counter-terrorism mission. In my Train, Advise, and Assist mission, however, we have a shortfall of a few thousand [troops].” Although none of the district centers are held by the enemy, it is reported that at the end of 2016, the Taliban held about 15% more territory than it did in 2015.

Do you agree with General Nicholson that the security situation is in a stalemate in Afghanistan after more than 15 years of fighting?

Yes.

When do you expect we will have a strategy that supports the Afghan efforts to break the stalemate?

We are developing a strategy and are in discussions within the interagency in order to provide recommendations to the President.

What are the key elements of this strategy?

The strategy is conditions based. We will remain partnered with the Afghans to ensure terrorists in that region that wish to attack the United States do not have the capability to do so. The strategy will also feature close coordination of military, diplomatic, economic, and informational actions.

Will you commit to briefing the strategy to the Committee?

Yes.

Do you agree with General Nicholson’s assessment that there is a need for more troops?

Along with interagency partners, we are working on a strategy for Afghanistan and the South Asia region, which will be presented to the President and will include recommendations on force levels.

Much has been made of the potential increase in U.S. troops. At the same time, however, numerous diplomatic positions, to include the Ambassadorships in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, remain unfilled.

In your view, what are the ramifications to our mission in Afghanistan of allowing State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development efforts to be under-manned and under-resourced?

Under-resourcing the State Department and USAID in Afghanistan undermines our strategy as they will drive long term success.

Is this a conflict that can be resolved militarily?

There must ultimately be a political solution; the best means to bring a resolution of the conflict is an Afghan-led peace process.

Do high profile terrorist attacks in Kabul by the Taliban and similar attacks by ISIS elsewhere in the country, represent a terrorist organization losing and trying to present a picture of relevance, or does it signal an organization increasing in strength?

While the threat persists, the total number of high-profile attacks in Kabul decreased by 20% compared to the same time period last year, and by 11% in the rest of the country. The Taliban and ISIS-Khorasan continue to perpetrate high-profile attacks to generate media attention, create the perception of insecurity, and undercut the legitimacy of the Afghan government.

In your view, what should be the role of the United States in any reconciliation negotiations with the Afghan Taliban and other insurgent groups?

The United States' role is to help facilitate the peace process, but in the end, it must be an Afghan-led process.

What additional steps, if any, should the United States take to advance the reconciliation process?

The United States continues to support an Afghan-led political process to determine the future of their country, and continues to support the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) through train, advise, and assist missions in order to enable stability and set conditions for a political solution to end the conflict.

In your view, what should be the role of Afghanistan's neighbors, in particular Pakistan, in facilitating stability in Afghanistan and throughout the region?

It is critical that Pakistan and other neighboring countries support the legitimate Afghan government, the United States and NATO missions, and take positive steps to fight terrorism and achieve stability in the region.

Iran

In your view, what is the nature of the threat posed by Iran?

Iran seeks to achieve regional power and influence in the Middle East through a variety of means. To advance its strategic interests, it is pursuing more advanced missile systems and a more capable naval presence that could be used to threaten the Arabian Gulf region and Strait of Hormuz in the event of conflict. It is also developing proxy forces, supporting Shi'a movements, and promoting other pro-regime elements throughout the region.

What is the role of our Armed Forces in countering Iran's proxy networks specifically, and Iran's malign influence more broadly, throughout the Middle East?

The armed forces' primary role is to support U.S. diplomatic efforts to apply pressure against Iran and its proxy networks' destabilizing activities, and, through security assistance, help build our partners' resiliency against Iran's malign influence. Throughout the Middle East, the U.S. armed forces continue to maintain the plans, posture, and preparations to assure our partners and respond to Iran and its proxies' activities that directly threaten U.S. interests.

In your view, is Iran complying with its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)?

I do not have any indications that Iran is currently failing to meet its commitments under the JCPOA. The IC is well-positioned to detect malign activity related to Iran's nuclear program that may violate this nuclear agreement.

Since the signing of the JCPOA, do you believe there has been any change in Iran's malign activities?

No, Iran continues its malign activities regionally.

Yemen

The war in Yemen is a complex conflict involving different Yemeni factions backed by the Gulf States and Iran, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and other actors.

What are U.S. interests in Yemen and what role do U.S. forces play in safeguarding those interests?

The U.S. national interests in Yemen are to protect the U.S. homeland, U.S. persons, and our allies from terrorist attacks, to ensure freedom of navigation, and to disrupt Iranian malign activity. Our military forces complement broader U.S. government efforts to support our Gulf partners and the international community in their drive to deny safe havens for terrorists and restore security in Yemen.

Do you believe a political resolution to the situation in Yemen is necessary and, if so, what needs to occur for such a resolution to be achieved?

Yes, a political solution in Yemen is required and we are working with our regional partners to reduce ungoverned spaces and deny safe haven to terrorists. For example, we continue to work with our partners in the region to maintain pressure on Al-Aq'eda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State in Yemen, to contain threats to freedom of navigation in the Bab Al-Mandab, and to help partners pursue long-term political resolution in the region.

What is the nature of U.S. support to the Saudi-led coalition and what is being done to help the coalition minimize civilian casualties and suffering as a result of the conflict?

The United States provides support to the Saudi-led coalition through sales of military hardware and institutional advice and assistance, as well as limited direct support to operations through aerial refueling, intelligence sharing, and operational advising to promote compliance with the law of armed conflict. These actions enable more effective Saudi operations with an aim to minimize civilian casualties and suffering.

Russia and Europe

At his nomination hearing, General Dunford was asked what he considered the greatest threat to our national security. General Dunford said, “My assessment today, Senator, is that Russia presents the greatest threat to our national security.”

Do you still agree with General Dunford’s assessment that Russia is the “greatest threat to our national security”?

Yes, I agree that today Russia poses the greatest threat to our national security.

If so, why in your view is Russia the greatest threat compared to China, North Korea, Iran, and ISIS?

While North Korea, Iran, and ISIS clearly have malign intentions and pose regional as well as global threats, none of these pose an existential threat to the Nation. Russia and China are in a different category; they are capable of engaging the United States across the full spectrum of nuclear and conventional conflict. They continue to relentlessly invest in a full-range of modern capabilities. What makes Russia a more immediate threat at this time is its nuclear capability, demonstrated aggressive behavior, and willingness to employ its military forces.

How do we deter Russian aggression and defend NATO?

The United States is committed to Article 5, which is the bedrock principle of NATO. That U.S. commitment is backed by the readiness of the U.S. Joint Force. U.S. forces are postured forward to provide an immediate response, either separately or collectively with the other NATO Allies, to any acts of aggression against any NATO member. The United States maintains a safe, reliable, and effective nuclear capability to deter Russian nuclear attack.

Russia Deterrence Concept

During General Dunford’s nomination hearing, he said, “we need an effective deterrent model for the 21st century to deal with the kind of threats that we are now seeing in Russia because, quite frankly, I think that kind of asymmetric threat is one we will continue to see in the future and certainly we are going to continue to see that in the European context.”

Do you agree with General Dunford’s assessment on the need to “update our deterrence and response model to deal with the kind of threat that we have today, which has been described as a hybrid threat from Russia”?

Yes.

What has been done to update our deterrence and response model to deal with the Russian hybrid warfare threat?

We are enhancing our capacity to compete below the level of armed conflict, to include in the diplomatic, information, and economic realms, in order to impose costs for disruptive Russian behavior

while denying them the benefits of malign activities. We are continuing to enhance our military capabilities for protecting U.S. interests, are encouraging our Allies to do the same, and are strengthening our capacity to reinforce those Allies in the event of conflict.

What more in your view needs to be done in this regard?

We continue to refine our strategy to countering Russian malign influence operations and we resource these efforts appropriately. Responding to hybrid warfare is an inherently whole-of-government proposition. In conjunction with the interagency, we are continuing to build partner capacity while ensuring our allies are resourced and focused on the Russian hybrid threat.

Russia's Violation of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty

Russia's deployment of a nuclear ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) in violation of the 1987 INF Treaty: 1) poses a risk to our NATO allies and U.S. forces in Europe; and 2) is part of a wider deployment by Russia of sea, air, and ground-launched nuclear capable missiles. You told the House Armed Services Committee on March 8, 2017, that "we believe that the Russians have deployed a land-based cruise missile that violates the spirit and intent of the [INF] Treaty...the system itself presents a risk to most of our facilities in Europe...I don't have enough information on their intent to conclude other than that they do not intend to return to compliance...."

How should the United States address the military implications of this new nuclear ground-launched cruise missile?

The Intermediate Range Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty is only in our national security interest if all parties comply with their Treaty obligations. We must continue to engage Russia, both directly and together with our allies, to pressure Russia to return to full and verifiable compliance. However, we must be prepared if Russia fails to return to compliance.

Should we initiate a program to determine the need for strike systems comparable to the GLCM?

The Administration is in the final stages of reviewing the U.S. response to Russia's INF violation, including potential military measures to increase pressure on Russia to return to full and verifiable compliance with its Treaty obligations. At this point, it is premature to identify any particular systems we may develop.

Should we increase NATO's defenses against these new ground-based cruise missiles, as well as Russia's air and sea-launched cruise missiles? If so, please specifically describe systems being considered.

Russian investments and demonstrated cruise missile capability in the Syrian conflict highlight the need for the United States and NATO to increase defenses against the cruise missile threat. The Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR) will examine all threats -- North Korea, Iran, China, and Russia. The policy statements in the BMDR will recommend the proper balance between homeland and regional missile defense, and specifically speak to our policy regarding Russia's threat systems in Europe.

U.S. Force Posture in Europe

General Breedlove told the Committee in 2015 that, “our current force posture in Europe has been based on Russia as a strategic partner....” In 2016, General Scaparrotti’s written testimony stated, “the ground force permanently assigned to EUCOM is inadequate to meet the combatant command’s directed mission to deter Russia from further aggression.”

What changes have we made and should we make to our current military posture in Europe to adjust to the current threat reality?

The United States leads an enhanced forward presence mission in Poland, which is one of four NATO multinational Battle Groups in the Baltic States and Poland. In addition, outside the NATO framework, the U.S. Army provides a rotational presence of an Armored Brigade Combat Team in Eastern Europe. We’re also placing additional Army Prepositioned Stock (APS) in Europe. The United States will maintain its commitment to a persistent rotational presence of air, land, and sea forces in Europe.

Will you revisit the European Infrastructure Consolidation (EIC) initiative that was developed prior to the resurgence of Russian adventurism to determine whether its implementation remains consistent with our efforts with the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) to bolster military capabilities and reassure our allies?

We continue to evaluate the strategic situation and, in close coordination with our allies and partners, adapt our posture and capabilities to secure U.S. interests.

Russian Activities Outside Europe

What is your assessment of Putin's objectives and operations in Libya? How do Putin's actions in Libya compare to Russia's intervention in Syria?

Russia’s activities in Libya are generally aimed at gaining influence, and it is pursuing various strategies to bolster its regional influence in the Middle East. In direct contrast to Russia's actions in Syria, it is using regional engagement rather than direct military intervention to strengthen its position.

From your interactions with Russian General Gerasimov, how sincere do you believe the Russians are about cooperating against ISIS in Syria and how does that square with their actions to date?

I would caution against us trying to determine Russian sincerity or motives in Syria. We operate consistent with our national security objectives, and Russia has its own calculus. Our experience has been that we have mutual objectives in ensuring the safety of our respective forces operating in close proximity. These operational deconfliction requirements remain a critical interest that we will continue to pursue through established channels.

Ukraine Lethal Assistance

Do you believe we should provide lethal assistance to Ukraine?

I support the provision of lethal defensive security assistance to Ukraine, and the Department of

Defense is actively engaged with the interagency on this issue. Despite readiness improvements enabled through U.S. training, Ukraine still has significant capability shortfalls as it faces a technologically superior adversary.

NATO

Ahead of the NATO Defense Ministers meeting in February, NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg said, “After many years with steep cuts in defense spending, we have turned a corner,” announcing that defense spending in real terms increased by 3.8% or about \$10 billion in 2016 among our NATO Allies, but qualifying it with, “This makes a difference but it is absolutely vital that we keep up the momentum.”

From your perspective, what are the other dimensions of burden sharing, besides the 2% of GDP defense spending, that are important to keep in mind when discussing defense contributions of our allies and partners?

NATO Allies and partners have served shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States, and over the past 20 years they have contributed significantly to both NATO and non-NATO operations in and outside of Europe. These include combat operations where partners fought alongside U.S. forces in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and other locations. Their contributions across the spectrum – military, economic, and humanitarian – have been essential to our successes. Further, our allies and partners are a critical component of our ability to project power globally.

If Turkey purchases a Russian or Chinese air and missile defense system, how would that affect its ability to be integrated into NATO’s air and missile defense architecture?

If Turkey purchased a Russian or Chinese air and missile defense system, there would be significant integration issues because the systems likely are built on different infrastructure platforms. This would also place significant restraints on interoperability and system integration due to the counter-intelligence risk.

Asia and the Pacific

The Defense Department’s January 2012 strategic guidance, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century,” states “while the U.S. military will continue to contribute to security globally, we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.” Likewise, the 2010 report of the Quadrennial Defense Review states that the United States needs to “sustain and strengthen our Asia-Pacific alliances and partnerships to advance mutual security interests and ensure sustainable peace and security in the region,” and that, to accomplish this, the Department “will augment and adapt our forward presence” in the Asia-Pacific region.

Would you recommend the current administration continue the rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region? If so, what does the term “rebalance” mean to you in terms of force structure, posture, basing, capabilities, and funding?

The Joint Force will continue to sustain and strengthen our approach toward Asia-Pacific in a way that complements all other aspects of U.S. engagement (including diplomatic, information, and economic)

and supports key multilateral institutions in the region. The Department has made and will continue to make adjustments to the regional posture of the military component including the locations and type of forces in regions as the operational needs pertain to the five key challenges. The Department must continue to enhance U.S. force posture and capabilities in the Pacific while preserving the ability to protect U.S. National interest globally.

How do you assess the strength and health of our military alliances in the region? Are they on solid footing or do we have reason to be concerned?

The five formal treaty alliances in Asia (Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand) are all on solid footing. Short-term stressors develop, but are managed within the alliance constructs.

There are increasing calls from members of Congress for an Asia-Pacific Stability Initiative, similar to the European Deterrence Initiative. Would you recommend such an Asia-Pacific Stability Initiative?

The Joint Staff supports efforts to improve and reinforce U.S. military capabilities across the region and strengthen our alliances.

If so, what would be the objectives and priorities and how would you recommend the Department use the funding, if appropriated?

If appropriated, the Joint Force will use funding in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act to invest in operationally relevant infrastructure, increase air and sea assets available in theater, improve resiliency, expand and diversify munitions, and enhance capabilities to improve and reinforce U.S. military capabilities across the region.

North Korea

The deployment of the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile system to South Korea is a highly visible and concrete action to counter the North Korean missile threat.

If deterrence fails with North Korea, can we respond decisively and win?

Yes, in partnership with our South Korean ally, we can respond decisively to defeat North Korea. We continually re-evaluate required follow-on force flow, risk to operations in other theaters, and the significant loss of life, both military and civilian, that will likely result in the event of a military campaign on the Korean Peninsula.

What other steps would you recommend we prepare to take to deter Kim Jong-Un and ensure the safety and security of South Korea and U.S. forces stationed in the region?

We continue to support our Japanese and South Korean counterparts in strengthening their respective defense capabilities against the North Korean nuclear and missile threat. We have also made significant progress in promoting trilateral cooperation with Japan and South Korea.

China

What military actions do you recommend to deter war with China, maintain free passage through the global commons, and assure our Pacific allies and friends?

Deterring war is an exercise in influencing China's decision calculus, making diplomacy preferable to conflict and managing crises in such a manner that they do not unintentionally escalate. To do this, the Joint Force will engage with the Chinese military within congressionally mandated limits, build alliance capacity through close cooperation, and uphold international law through appropriate operations.

From your perspective, what effect is China's expanding economy and growing military having on the region at-large and how does that growth influence the U.S. security posture in the Asia-Pacific region?

The Chinese have shown their willingness to exploit their economic leverage as a way to advance their regional political objectives. As China's military modernization continues, the United States and its allies and partners will continue to be challenged to balance China's influence.

What can the United States do, both unilaterally and in coordination with allies and partners, to militarily counter the increasing challenge posed by China in the East and South China Seas?

Long-term, sustained presence is critical to demonstrating that the United States is committed to the region. The United States will continue to develop a security network through multilateral partnerships. Unilaterally, we will continue to develop capabilities to counter China's improving military capabilities.

China's defense budget seems to be increasing at an alarming rate year after year. However, China's plans and strategies do not seem aimed at military domination outside of its immediate neighborhood.

How do you explain this discrepancy and why China is engaged in such a massive military build-up?

China's leaders remain focused on developing the capabilities to increase its regional influence and to counter any third-party intervention – including by the United States – during a crisis or conflict. China is also seeking resources and economic opportunities outside of the region to support continued domestic economic growth and prosperity. China's growing military is being designed and postured to be able to protect its interests both in the Asia-Pacific region and abroad. China's military modernization emphasizes development of capabilities with the potential to degrade core U.S. military-technological advantages.

Freedom of Navigation Operations

While we have continued conducting freedom of navigation operations, the Committee has heard from several high-ranking officials from within the Pentagon and combatant commands that they are constrained from carrying out critical tier three freedom of navigation

operations because of the lack of a timely decision-making and approval process in Washington. While the Committee understands the need to have broad interagency agreement on such operations to ensure they are effective and not counterproductive, extended delays for approval of these requests seems excessive.

Can increased authority be delegated to Combatant Commanders to carry out freedom of navigation operations? If not, what can be done to streamline the process to prevent unnecessary delay in considering such requests?

The existing authorities for freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) are sufficient to enable the Joint Force to effectively achieve its objectives globally and regionally.

India

Congress and this Committee strongly support an enhanced defense relationship between the United States and India. Over the coming years, India could be one of our strongest and most dependable military partners in the region. Bolstering and strengthening the relationship, and encouraging enhanced engagement by India in the Asia-Pacific region should be a top priority of the Defense Department.

What is your view of the current state of the U.S.-India military cooperation relationship?

The U.S.-India military relationship is strong and getting stronger. Our two countries cooperate through complex exercises as well as robust engagement through defense trade and technology cooperation.

What are your recommendations for bolstering the overall defense relationship between our two countries?

The United States and India should continue to expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest like maritime security in the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Region that increase our ability to work together to maintain stability. We should also continue to strengthen our defense relationship with India by pursuing opportunities to co-develop and co-produce defense technology that is in the interests of both countries under the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative.

Pakistan

What changes, if any, would you recommend for our military-to-military relations with Pakistan?

We need to continue mil-to-mil cooperation with Pakistan in order to improve Pakistan's capacity to combat terrorist organizations, while working with Pakistan on ways to enhance security along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and help bring stability in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Increased Role of Ground Forces in the Pacific

Admiral Harris, the Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, and Deputy Secretary Work, have repeatedly articulated a need for the Army to develop myriad capabilities to “project

power” beyond the ground domain into the air and maritime domains to anchor defenses in the Pacific, and provide mutually supporting relationships among ground, naval, and air forces in the theater. The ability of ground forces to hold at risk adversary ships and aircraft; intercept missiles aimed at our ships, and at airfields, ports and other fixed facilities; and to provide electronic warfare and communications support for our air and naval forces could enable the United States to present adversaries with our own “anti-access/area denial” challenge.

Do you believe U.S. defense policy would be better served if the Army were to develop the capabilities and operational concepts for such a role, both for the European and the Pacific theaters?

Yes. We are exploring operational concepts for ground forces outside of traditional roles to expand our anti-access/area denial globally. More broadly, we are examining the role of every Service in addressing multi-domain threats.

Do you believe our current ground forces posture in the Asia-Pacific region is adequate? If not, what actions would you recommend to improve it?

Our ground forces in the Asia-Pacific are postured appropriately to meet today’s challenges, yet we continuously assess the evolving threat environment and our respective force posture.

Western Hemisphere

What roles do U.S. forces play in addressing transregional threats in the Western Hemisphere, including the threats posed by transnational criminal networks and terrorist groups?

The Joint Force protects the United States from any nation state attack against our homeland. DoD provides aerial, maritime, and cyber detection and monitoring of illicit trafficking into the United States, which facilitates interdiction by law enforcement entities. Upon request, the Joint Force is poised and ready to support U.S law enforcement and federal agencies responsible for addressing threats to our homeland by criminal networks and terrorist groups.

Working with our allies and partners, the United States disrupts external attack operations and denies terrorist groups from exploiting criminal and other threat networks. U.S forces provide equipment, training, infrastructure and intelligence to build the capacity, capability, and professionalism of partner nation security forces to assist in countering shared transnational threats.

Readiness of the Armed Forces

How would you assess the current state of readiness?

Today, each service faces significant readiness challenges from manpower shortfalls to delays in infrastructure investment and ground systems required to build, train, and launch combat ready forces. While we maintain a competitive advantage over any potential adversary in the world, that advantage is eroding and the Joint Force is challenged to meet operational requirements while sustaining investment in capabilities.

How would you plan to restore full spectrum readiness and under what timeline? Additionally, how would you enforce those timelines to ensure that goals are met?

Predictable and sufficient funding is key to restore full spectrum readiness. The FY17 appropriation addresses the Department's most pressing near-term readiness requirements and places us in a better position to begin restoring readiness to the joint force in FY18. The FY18 budget supports ongoing operations and continues the rebuilding of warfighting readiness by increasing funding for critical training, depot maintenance, and munitions with the purpose of restoring capacity and lethality. In FY19, we will begin to realize full spectrum readiness recovery in capability, capacity, and infrastructure.

Countering Cyber-Enabled Information Operations

Russia has conducted ambitious and aggressive cyber-enabled information operations against the United States and our European allies aimed at influencing election outcomes, and undermining democracy and collective security. Since the attack on America's 2016 election, the U.S. election systems and networks have been designated as critical infrastructure. General Rogers, Commander of U.S. Cyber Command, has testified to this Committee that he has not been tasked to counter such operations.

Do you believe that U.S. Cyber Command should be prepared to take action against foreign actors attempting to influence the 2018 U.S. election cycle through cyberspace?

DoD must be prepared to defend the U.S. homeland and its interests against cyberattacks of significant consequence as outlined in the 2015 Cyber Strategy. Any U.S. response should involve a whole of government approach employing all the tools at our disposal.

The Defense Science Board Task Force on Cyber Deterrence testified to the Committee that the best way to deter cyber-attacks and foreign information warfare operations is to demonstrably "hold at risk" those things that the elites in adversary nations value most highly. The Task Force specifically recommends that each Combatant Commander be tasked with developing a strategy for accomplishing this that is tailored to specific potential adversaries.

Do you agree with these conclusions and recommendations?

Yes.

Do you think that the Department of Defense needs to better integrate its capabilities and planning for cyber operations and information warfare?

Yes. The Department must continue to improve its ability to exploit cyberspace as a pathway for Information Operations to affect adversary perceptions, decisions, and actions in support of strategic ends. We must also enhance our ability to support allies and partner efforts to defend against and defeat adversary propaganda, misinformation, and disinformation delivered in cyberspace.

If so, how would you recommend that this goal be achieved?

Effective information and cyber operations require integration across all warfighting domains to ensure

efforts are working collectively to achieve effects. As our fluency continues to mature, we are refining new operational and organizational constructs and advanced tools to outpace competitors. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to continue to advance our capability.

Officer Management Issues

As the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, you wield significant influence over joint officer management policies. Despite numerous changes in the law, the requirements and the process for attaining joint officer qualifications are still beset by systemic challenges. Some of these challenges require the Services to make officer assignments to “check the box” for joint qualifications at the cost of assignments to other career enhancing and professional development opportunities. Also, officers assigned to a designated joint billet on an operational staff receive joint credit while other officers performing substantially the same duties supporting the same joint commander do not receive joint credit unless they submit a package to have their assignments qualify for joint service.

If confirmed again, what steps will you take to review the joint qualification requirements to ensure that the qualification process is matched to the increasingly joint service environment in which many officers serve throughout their careers?

I appreciate the committee’s recent work in improving the joint qualification process. As we implement the recent statutory changes, I firmly believe that the joint officer qualification process provides a tested and flexible means to ensure officers develop the skills necessary for successful service at the operational and strategic levels. If reconfirmed, I will work with the relevant Joint and Service components and the Congress to ensure that the joint qualification process continues to hone joint officer qualification requirements through programs like Joint Force Development.

How would you assess the Department of Defense’s progress in providing the military services the force management tools necessary to meet the needs of the 21st century joint, all-volunteer force?

The Department, the Joint Staff, and the Services have positively worked together over the past 10 years to develop a set of flexible force management tools needed to shape the joint force to meet the challenges of the 21st century. If reconfirmed, I will continue to examine the strategic environment to ensure that the tools remain relevant.

Do you believe the current Department and service procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending nomination by the President are sufficient to ensure the Secretaries of the military departments, the Secretary of Defense, and the President can make informed decisions?

Yes, it is my understanding that the Services evaluate officer qualifications, past performance, future potential, and any available adverse or reportable information, and have a rigorous process in place to ensure all decisions are fully informed.

In your view, are these procedures and practices fair and reasonable for the officers involved?

Yes.

What modifications, if any, to the requirements for joint officer qualifications are necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain meaningful joint and service-specific leadership experience and professional development?

I believe that the current combination of Joint Professional Military Education and requisite experience gained through joint assignments, training, and exercises prepares officers to operate effectively at both the strategic and operational levels. I do not currently recommend any modifications to the requirements for joint officer qualification.

In your view, what is the impact of joint qualification requirements on the ability of the Services to select the best qualified officers for promotion and to enable officer assignments that will satisfy service-specific officer professional development requirements?

In the conflicts of both today and tomorrow, it is critical that officers are prepared to operate effectively as senior leaders in both Service and joint environments. Although satisfying joint qualification requirements may affect the time available for officers to develop Service-specific skill sets, doing so produces a cadre of well-rounded and competitive leaders who are capable of integrating Service functions with other Services in support of national directives in both strategic and operational environments. In my opinion, officers with these capabilities possess the greatest potential for success in positions of senior leadership across the force and therefore are the most qualified for promotion.

Headquarters Streamlining

Congress has previously directed reforms to consolidate the headquarters functions of the Department of Defense and the military departments.

How would you describe your progress in identifying and implementing streamlining and reductions in the Joint Staff?

The Joint Staff took the lead for both the Joint Staff and the Combatant Commander in applying Major DoD Headquarters Activities (MHA) reductions. Our re-baselining actions were conducted in accordance with the OSD MHA framework and will achieve compliance by FY20.

What Joint Staff areas, specifically and if any, do you consider to be the priorities for further consolidation or reductions?

The Joint Staff is currently reorganizing, with the intent of meeting current legislative guidance on MHA reductions and authorized personnel, while simultaneously supporting the Chairman's responsibility for global integration. While I do not believe there are any additional areas for further consolidation or reduction within the Joint Staff at this time, we are constantly reviewing our structure and process to find efficiencies and improve integration.

What are the negative impacts, if any, of headquarters streamlining on Department missions and capabilities?

We are still assessing what negative impacts headquarters reduction may have created. DCMO is leading a DoD-wide reform initiative review which should conclude later this year.

Defense Acquisition Reform

Over the past two years, Congress has implemented a number of acquisition reform measures designed to reduce the costs and development timelines of major systems to improve the process of moving programs from Department research efforts into operational capabilities, and to streamline access to innovative commercial technologies and systems. The Department has been slow to implement most of these reforms.

What are your views regarding acquisition reform and the need for improvements in the Defense acquisition process?

I am fully supportive of the reforms put in place by Congress in the 2016 & 2017 NDAA's, and would only caution that further reform should be considered only after we successfully implement and then benchmark these most recent changes, to ensure DoD acquisition outcomes are actually improving in response to these reforms.

If confirmed again, what actions would you take from your position to accelerate the implementation of these reforms?

Once the Department completes the assessment of the impact of the 2016 and 2017 reforms, whatever actions are taken to accelerate reform should be based upon the following key principals: 1) The responsibility and authority for acquisition system outcomes should be clearly identified within the DoD; 2) The requirements' sponsor should be an integral part of delivering needed capability and remains accountable throughout the acquisition process, and; 3) There is a continued effort to reduce overhead and increase efficiencies across defense acquisition.

If confirmed again, what actions would you propose, if any, to ensure that requirements are realistic, technically achievable, and prioritized?

I believe that recent legislation better aligns responsibility for performance requirements with Service and Joint priorities. If reconfirmed, I will work to ensure the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System achieves the goals of the legislation and remains a solid foundation for validating realistic, technically achievable, and prioritized requirements.

What should be the role of the Combatant Commanders, Service Chiefs, and Joint Staff in the acquisition process?

Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders and the Joint Staff play a vital role in achieving success throughout the acquisition process by proactively engaging with Service and Defense Acquisition Executives during the acquisition life-cycle.

Are there specific new roles or responsibilities that should be assigned to the Service Chiefs or Combatant Commanders in the acquisition process?

While I do not believe there are new roles or responsibilities that should be assigned to the Service Chiefs or Combatant Commands, I am supportive of changes that promote Service accountability in acquisitions and further streamline the bureaucratic processes.

In what ways do you believe the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System needs to be reformed in order to better respond to rapid changes by our competitors and the pace of technological change more generally?

I agree with the changes addressed in the 2017 NDAA. We are currently in the process of drafting a new requirements policy and associated Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System Instruction and Manual to reflect Congressional reforms and improve the process. These will ensure the system is more responsive to the speed of technology in order to keep pace with our competitors. The JCIDS process is also being adapted to accommodate rapidly changing threat environments, allowing for more robust intelligence and requirements integration and to introduce Joint Performance Requirements. These enhancements will allow the Services the authority and autonomy to quickly develop capabilities and deliver those to the warfighter.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 made a number of changes in the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and the role of the Vice Chairman, including elevating the role of the Vice Chairman to be the principal adviser to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on joint military capabilities and joint performance requirements.

To what extent have these changes been implemented?

The Joint Staff is updating the JROC and JCIDS guidance documents to implement the congressionally-directed modifications to the requirements process. The Services are currently implementing their requirements pilot programs which accommodate all aspects of the Acquisition Agility Act - promoting interoperability of technology with emphasis on Modular Open Systems Architecture.

What is your assessment of the positive and negative impact of these changes?

As implementation is in its early stages, it is too early to assess the impact. If re-confirmed, I look forward to sharing my assessment of future impacts with the committee.

Do you recommend making additional changes to the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and Defense Acquisition Board in terms of composition and staffing, authority, scope of responsibility, and associated processes?

I do not recommend making any additional changes to the requirements or acquisition processes until already mandated changes are further implemented and the Department has time to evaluate the results of those changes.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 made a number of changes in acquisition policy, allowing the Department to take greater advantage of rapid prototyping opportunities.

To what extent have these changes been implemented?

The Services and the Department have moved deliberately in both practice and policy to take advantage of greater rapid prototyping authorities granted in the 2017 NDAA. Current initiatives along with future opportunities are being considered for rapid prototyping applicability and I expect the number of rapid prototyping actions to increase over time.

What is the appropriate role that prototyping should play in helping to establish better requirements, more rapidly, for the acquisition process? Are there additional reforms you believe are required to capitalize on the opportunities associated with prototyping for improved requirements definition?

Prototyping is a key part of the requirements/acquisition process and should continue to be leveraged to ensure that requirements are realistic and technically achievable. This is especially important early in the lifecycle of capability development. There were significant legislative changes made to the acquisitions process in FY17, including prototyping. If reconfirmed, I look forward to assessing the impact of those changes and providing feedback to the committee on opportunities.

What steps will you take to ensure that systems are not prematurely deployed before they have had their technical risk removed and before they have been tested and found to be operationally effective and suitable for operational use?

Capabilities, whether or not developed as a result of rapid prototyping, will continue to meet the practices and standards in existence today that assure they are suitable, effective, and reliable.

Research, Technology, Innovation, and Testing Capabilities

The Department of Defense has a number of organizations and thousands of technical personnel working on internal and contracted research programs to develop next generation warfighting capabilities. These include the \$13 billion science and technology programs, the \$1 billion Small Business Innovation Research program, and the network of over 50 Department labs and test ranges that develop and test all systems before they are deployed. It also includes newer efforts at prototyping in the Strategic Capabilities Office and outreach to commercial companies through DARPA and the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental (DIUx).

Are you satisfied with the quality of the facilities and workforce at the Department's labs and test ranges?

Yes, but new, emerging capabilities will require adaptation and expansion of facility capabilities.

What steps will you take to improve the effectiveness of the Department's technology development and testing community to support near term and future operational needs?

I will continue to work with our Combatant Commanders to ensure that Department level S&T is

prioritized to meet both near- and far-term operational needs. I am also highly supportive of efforts within the operational test community to streamline and leverage development testing in order to expedite system fielding.

Space

The House Armed Services Committee-version of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 contains a provision directing the establishment of a separate Space Corps within the Department of the Air Force.

What are your views on the establishment of such a corps?

Establishing a space corps at this time will not effectively address concerns with the management and organization of the national security space enterprise. This proposal currently is without adequate study of the root causes of the identified problems, and assumes that a space corps will resolve space challenges without acknowledging the ongoing effort between the Air Force and USSTRATCOM to optimize management and integration to compete more effectively in a contested space environment. Establishing a space corps at this time could disrupt these current lines of effort and exacerbate existing issues rather than improving our effectiveness in space operations.

Do you support making the Air Force Space Command a subordinate Unified Command of the U.S. Strategic Command with joint staffing?

I support USSTRATCOM's recent decision to elevate his component commander for space operations from a three-star to a four-star general officer who will be dual-hatted as the commander of Air Force Space Command. It will require time to evaluate the impact of this increased level of oversight, affecting both the provision of joint space forces and the conduct of joint space operations. Further, DoD is currently conducting an NDAA-directed review more broadly of the overall space enterprise, which will provide greater insights on this particular matter. I support allowing time to implement this reorganization and to evaluate its efficacy.

If you oppose such a move, what actions would you recommend to improve perceived issues with the management and operations of the national security space enterprise from a military perspective?

I am awaiting the results of the review of the DoD space enterprise, which is examining the root causes of the shrinking of our operational advantage in space, and I will be glad to provide my views to the committee once we finish evaluating those results.

Commercial Space Capabilities

In support of the Department's technology innovation agenda, and to address reconnaissance needs in Northeast Asia, the Middle East, and elsewhere, you and the Deputy Secretary of Defense have sponsored through DIUx a two-part effort with small, innovative commercial space companies to try to (1) build very inexpensive radar imaging satellites that could be deployed in large numbers to provide nearly constant coverage of specific areas of interest, and (2) make effective use of such collection capabilities, and exploit advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning software to determine "patterns of life" and

automated detection and identification of mobile targets.

What do you intend to accomplish with this initiative and when do you expect to have results?

This initiative will allow the Department to leverage less expensive radar imaging satellites to fill gaps in space-based reconnaissance by encouraging commercial development in space-based radar imaging. This will allow the Joint Force to deploy the right capability for a given situation, allow us to flex and adapt to the threat, respond to the situation, and be unpredictable across an increasingly contested space environment. However, commercial radar imaging by no means replaces the need for exquisite government satellites capable of focusing on specific targets of interest; rather, it provides capacity and broader focus for countrywide patterns of life that in turn can provide indications and warning to tip exquisite assets or posture forces.

Against certain targets, radar also lends itself well to machine processing, which accelerates our ability to close the kill chain from detection to engagement. The first of three pathfinder satellites is scheduled to launch in late 2017, with immediate access to a portion of its data. As constellations quickly build out over the next few years, much more imagery will be available for government purchase similar to how we purchase electro-optical imagery today. Artificial intelligence and machine learning increases the amount of imagery that can be distilled into patterns of life at machine speed and does not require more imagery analysts to exploit the data. The first of the machine vision algorithms will be demonstrated in early 2018, and algorithms that can be run on multiple radar imagery sources for a host of government organizations will be available by the end of 2018.

Nuclear Deterrence

The Vice Chairman has traditionally served as the Joint Staff's senior subject matter expert on nuclear deterrence.

Do you support the current triad of delivery systems?

Yes.

Do you support the timely replacement for the AGM-86 cruise missile? If so, why?

Yes. A nuclear air-launched cruise missile contributes significantly to every element of U.S. nuclear strategy and is therefore an essential component of our future nuclear capability. The AGM-86 Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM), initially fielded in 1982, is well beyond its intended service life. The Department has undertaken several Service Life Extension Programs to sustain ALCM, but they are not sufficient to meet long term operational requirements.

Do you support the timely replacement of the LGM-30 Minuteman III system? If so, why?

Yes. The current Minuteman III weapon system was initially fielded in 1970. Some of the supporting command and control system and infrastructure date back to the 1960s. Our intercontinental ballistic missile force requires recapitalization and modernization as a result of critical sub-systems age-out and booster asset depletion from surveillance and flight testing. The Ground Based Strategic Deterrent will

replace the Minuteman III and provide a fully integrated weapon system to include new flight systems, command and control sub-systems, and launch systems.

Do you support the timely replacement of the E-4B National Airborne Operations Center? If so, why?

Yes. The National Airborne Operations Center, the NAOC, is the most survivable command center within the National Military Command System supporting command and control for the Secretary of Defense and the President. The E-4B fleet, which supports the NAOC missions, will continue to face availability issues due to aircraft age and resulting maintenance and modification requirements. Efforts are underway to replace the aging fleet.

Do you support the Council on Oversight of the National Leadership Command, Control, and Communications System? If so, why?

Yes. I support the Council's responsibilities to provide the highest level of oversight, integration, and advocacy across the DoD and with other agencies.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

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

The Services continue to take steps to provide increased training and resources to respond to and investigate allegations of sexual assault, such as a newly established 24/7 response capability available everywhere the military operates.

What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove the disposition authority from military commanders over violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?

I firmly believe that the commander's role is indispensable in the military justice process. We trust commanders with the lives of their subordinates, and we must trust them to address misconduct in the ranks. The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) establishes a criminal justice system that is a critical part of commanders' authority and responsibility to maintain good order and discipline in each unit. Misconduct in the military, including sexual assault, is best addressed when commanders are accountable for addressing it, not when their responsibility and authority are diminished. The FY17 NDAA's revision of the UCMJ preserved the critical role of military commanders in the military justice process. The military services and DoD are now focused on implementing the many UCMJ changes and properly training convening authorities, judge advocates, and other servicemembers on the new law and associated rules and policies.

What is your assessment of the military's protections against retaliation for reporting sexual assault?

DoD and the military services are committed to ensuring that servicemembers who report sexual assault have appropriate protection from retaliation. The Department has enhanced its sexual assault prevention and response training to emphasize the prohibitions against retaliation and the protections

available to those who experience retaliation. DoD released a Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy in 2016 to further define policies and procedures to protect from retaliation those who report, witnesses, or respond to sexual assault. Additionally, the military Services are implementing the additional notification, training, and reporting requirements relating to retaliation that were established in recent NDAAAs.

In response to advance policy questions regarding the Department of Defense’s sexual assault prevention and response program when you were first nominated to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, you responded that, “We have taken strong action to address the climate within the military and to bring perpetrators to justice. We hold commanders accountable for both.”

What is your view of the role of the chain of command in maintaining a command climate where sexual harassment and sexual assaults are not tolerated?

The chain of command is fundamental to maintaining a command climate where sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated. Commanders are accountable for what happens in their units and must foster a climate of dignity, respect, and trust for all service members, where sexual harassment and sexual assault are never condoned or ignored.

How are commanders held accountable for failing to adequately address the command climate with respect to sexual harassment and sexual assault?

Commanders are responsible for promoting equal opportunity and the elimination of unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault within their commands. DoD and the services focus on supporting all commanders’ efforts to establish positive command climates, and DoD policy requires the military departments to hold commanders accountable when they fall short. Commanders who fail to adequately address their command climate could face a range of consequences, to include complaints from members of their commands and follow-up inquiries under Article 138 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and subsequent investigations, Inspector General complaints and subsequent investigations, administrative counseling and corrective measures, adverse performance evaluations, and punitive action.

Can commanders be held accountable for failing to bring perpetrators to justice without exercising unlawful command influence?

Yes, commanders are held accountable in that they are responsible for implementing and fully supporting sexual assault prevention and response efforts in their commands, for ensuring each report of sexual assault is investigated, for making an appropriate disposition decision on each unrestricted report of sexual assault, and for taking any necessary disposition actions. They are also required to report the disposition of each unrestricted report of sexual assault to Congress. A commander’s disposition decision is a discretionary judgement that must be free of any unlawful command influence from superior authorities. Senior officers in the chain of command who have concerns about the handling of sexual assault cases by their subordinates may lawfully withhold disposition authority at their level for certain types of cases.

In your view, do military and civilian leaders in the Department of Defense have the tools and resources needed to hold commanders accountable for these issues? If not, what additional

authority do they need?

Yes. Our leaders have the tools and resources needed to hold commanders accountable for sustaining positive command climates and maintaining good order and discipline in their commands.

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources

The numbers of suicides in each of the Services continue to concern the Committee.

In your view, what role should the Joint Chiefs of Staff play in shaping policies to help prevent suicides both in garrison and in theater and to increase the resiliency of all service members and their families, including members of the reserve components?

Preventing suicide among members of the Armed Services and their families is one of the most important challenges within the Joint Force. We are working with OSD, Defense Agencies, the private sector, and civil society to better understand the factors leading to suicidal thoughts and the most effective prevention techniques. We are shaping policy to foster a culture of Total Force Fitness that enhances wellness, promotes resilience, and sustains a military force fit in mind, body, and spirit. In addition to educating the force on suicide prevention, we are providing additional training and support to our first responders (chaplains, senior enlisted leaders, legal counsel, and mental health providers) to ensure they are as equipped as possible to prevent suicides. Working together with the Services, we will continue to improve effectiveness and enhance the accessibility of support.

What actions have been taken since your last confirmation to reduce the stigma associated with service members seeking mental health care? In your view, are these actions sufficient, or must more be done to encourage service members to seek mental health care when needed?

If reconfirmed, I will do everything in my power to continue the Department's progress in encouraging service members to seek mental health care when they are in crisis. The Department has taken a number of actions to reduce the stigma associated with mental health care. The Services have been most successful by embedding behavioral health specialists within operational units. These embedded specialists become trusted agents that are both readily visible and accessible to service members well before they reach the point of despair. We have seen increased provider-patient contacts since embedding these specialists, as well as decreased behavioral health hospitalizations.

If confirmed again, what additional actions will you take to ensure that sufficient mental health resources are available to service members in theater, and to the service members and their families, including Guard and Reserve members, upon return to their home stations?

We will continue to address areas that build resilience among our service members and their families, improve early identification of unduly stressed individuals, and enhance ready access to embedded licensed professional behavioral health specialists.

Military Quality of Life

The Committee is always concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family support, child care, education, employment support, health

care, and morale, welfare and recreation services.

After the experience of your first tour as Vice Chairman, what further enhancements, if any, to military quality of life programs would you consider a priority in an era of intense downward pressure on budgets?

We recognize quality-of-life programs that support child care, spousal employment, and special-needs families are often top concerns for our military families and enable our service members to continue and succeed in their missions. It is important that we continue to focus on program evaluation and outcomes to ensure we prioritize core programs that address the greatest needs and produce the greatest impact on joint force readiness.

In a constrained budget environment, should the Services downsize or eliminate certain legacy quality of life programs that are less important to service members and their families in the 21st century?

Quality of life programs are important to the service member and their family and directly contribute to readiness and retention. I will continue to review existing programs and, with proper analysis, seek efficiencies in existing legacy programs where possible, to include examining our current service delivery models.

Audit, Financial Management, and Oversight

The Department of Defense has been incapable of obtaining a clean audit opinion for over 25 years, despite billions of dollars being spent on the effort. The Department is also on a number of GAO High Risk lists for management failures, including in financial management, weapons systems acquisition, and supply chain management. The Department is also in the midst of a number of investigations regarding waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as continuing to be unable to assert control over millions of dollars in improper and unauthorized payments.

Should it be a priority for the Department to address these management issues, especially in times of perceived budget constraints?

Yes, auditability is a DoD priority and in 2018, all major elements of the Department will be under audit. This will include standalone audits for many organizations and an overarching audit of the entire Department. Clearly understanding where and how money is spent will help address our fiscal management challenges and allow us to implement a process of remediation and accountability.

How should Congress view these financial management weaknesses when contemplating increased budgets for the Department?

The Department has made – and will continue to prioritize – financial management and business transformation improvements. These improvements increase the Department’s ability to make sound decisions through improved data accuracy and accountability. Despite improvements, financial management challenges will continue. If confirmed, I will remain focused on addressing these challenges.

What steps will you take to improve financial management within the Department?

I will continue to support financial management improvements and the transformation of business processes through my role as the Chair of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), Co-Chair of the Deputy's Management Action Group (DMAG), and other management and oversight bodies. Specifically, I will continue to address a DoD-wide audit, human capital issues related to financial management certification, and implementation of initiatives that ensure effective use of resources.

Operational Energy

In his responses to the advance policy questions from this Committee, Secretary Mattis talked about his time in Iraq, and how he called upon the Department of Defense to “unleash us from the tether of fuel.” He stated that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that were exploited by the enemy.”

Do you believe this issue remains a challenge for the Department?

Yes.

If confirmed again, what specific steps will you take to unleash the Department from the tether of fuel?

If confirmed, as Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) I will ensure that new capabilities are assessed for energy supportability and will review energy key performance parameters as needed, before approving programs for production. In the annual Chairman's Risk Assessment, I will assess and manage energy-related risks to operations, training, and testing as they relate to supporting infrastructure, equipment, platforms, and personnel. I will also ensure that joint exercises and wargames incorporate and assess the Joint Force's energy demand and logistics supportability, as well as continue to use the acquisition process to explore not only ways to reduce energy consumption for our weapons systems, but to find alternate and renewable energy sources as well.

If confirmed again, what priorities would you establish for defense investments in and deployment of operational energy technologies to increase the combat capabilities of warfighters, reduce logistical burdens, and enhance mission assurance on our installations?

We have a comprehensive operational energy program and I fully support its goals and objectives. We will continue to use the same standards for ranking energy technologies as for any other Departmental decision for basic research funding. We continue to assess alternative energy sources and evaluate improvements in the use of petroleum-based fuels, which ultimately will improve operational reach and lower vulnerabilities to the warfighter.

If confirmed again, how will you consider operational forces' energy needs and vulnerabilities during training exercises, operational plans, and war games?

I share the concerns expressed by Secretary Mattis about this operational vulnerability. Through our global integration exercises, war gaming, and training programs we are taking opportunities to test mitigation solutions. This includes involvement with our multinational partners and allies around the

globe and builds on Service and our combatant commanders insights on operational impacts. As they occur, we leverage public and private industry innovations into our future joint force planning. We are examining access, capacity, and risks across all horizons to address this challenge.

Energy and Acquisition

How can our acquisition systems better incorporate the use of energy in military platforms, and how, if at all, are assessments of future requirements taking into account energy needs as a key performance parameter?

The acquisition system considers the use of energy in military platforms as an important consideration in design, development, production and sustainment. In the requirements process, energy will remain a key performance parameter that must be considered in the review and validation of future capability requirements.

Energy Resiliency in the Fight Against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

Back in July 2016 after a coup attempt, the Turkish government cut off power to Incirlik Air Base, which is the primary platform for launching coalition airstrikes in the fight against ISIS. For roughly a week, deployed units had to operate relying on backup generators, which is expensive and is certainly not the preferred method of operation given the demanding tempo of sorties against ISIS. Recently, the Air Force described an incident in the past (via open source) in which a remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) mission based in the United States was flying a targeting mission overseas. Because of a power outage stateside, the RPA feed temporarily lost visual and the target was able to get “away and is able to continue plotting against the United States and our allies.”

If confirmed again, how will you specifically address and make energy resiliency and mission assurance a priority for the Department of Defense, to include acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to improve combat capability for deployed units on our military installations and forward operating bases?

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department's efforts to increase the combat capability of deployed forces through improved energy resilience and mission assurance, in particular by emphasizing these attributes through the joint requirements process and encouraging innovation in both areas. We will continue to participate in DOD initiatives to improve energy resiliency and mission assurance on critical installations, and advocate for development and fielding of alternative energy sources.

Do you support the J-4's enforcement of the energy supportability key performance parameter in the requirements process?

Yes.

Congressional Oversight

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

briefings, and other communications of information.

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

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed again, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.