

Advance Questions for General Martin E. Dempsey, USA
Nominee for the Position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Defense Reforms

You previously have answered the Committee's policy questions on the reforms brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in connection with your nomination to be the Chief of Staff, Army.

Has your view of the importance, implementation, and practice of these reforms changed from the perspective of your nomination to become the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or since you testified before the Committee at your most recent confirmation hearing for the Chief of Staff, Army?

Generally, no. Goldwater-Nichols made us the joint force we are today. However, if confirmed, I would examine the lessons of the past ten years of war to determine if there are opportunities to make us an even more effective force.

Duties

Section 151 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff performs duties as prescribed in law and as assigned by the Secretary of Defense. These duties include being the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman also heads and regularly convenes the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and regularly consults with combatant commanders. Where the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff differs, the Chairman conveys dissenting opinions in rendering his advice.

Assuming you are confirmed, what duties do you expect that Secretary Panetta would prescribe for you?

I anticipate the Secretary will assign duties consistent with the law and designed to support the requirements of the Secretary and the President.

If confirmed, what changes to section 151, if any, would you recommend?

If confirmed, I do not anticipate recommending any changes to the law. I will, however, be attuned to issues and opportunities that might suggest consideration of potential changes to the law in the future.

Sections 152 through 155 of title 10, United States Code, relate to the duties, organization, and functions of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the organization and operation of the Joint Staff.

If confirmed, what changes to sections 152 through 155, if any, would you recommend?

If confirmed, I do not anticipate recommending any changes to the law. I will, however, be attuned to potential issues and opportunities for improvement that might suggest consideration for eventual changes in the law.

What duties, responsibilities, and priorities would you plan to assign to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

The Vice Chairman performs the duties assigned to him as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and such other duties as assigned by the Chairman, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. I have not yet determined any additional duty assignments beyond those prescribed in law. If confirmed, I intend to discuss potential duties with the Vice Chairman as part of our close working relationship.

What is your understanding and assessment of the most critical functions and performance of the Joint Staff? If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to enhance the performance of the Joint Staff?

The Joint Staff is independently organized and operated to support the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in discharging their duties as assigned by law. Among these duties, serving as the principal military adviser to the Secretary of Defense and President of the United States is paramount. This requires close collaboration and coordination with the staffs of the Secretary of Defense, Service Chiefs, and Combatant Commanders as well as other Inter-Agency offices and foreign military staffs. One ongoing change to the Joint Staff is the integration of certain functions and responsibilities that currently reside in Joint Forces Command. In addition to managing this transition, I will be alert to other opportunities to improve Joint Staff performance.

Qualifications

What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?

I've been the beneficiary of assignments both with the Joint Force and within the Institutional Army that provide an important perspective on national security issues. Specifically, I've served as GEN Hugh Shelton's special assistant when he was CJCS, as a Division Commander in combat, in a security assistance/building partner capacity role in both Saudi Arabia and Iraq, as Deputy and then acting commander of US Central Command, as Commander of US Army Training and Doctrine Command, and as Chief of Staff of the Army.

Do you believe there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Yes. It seems clear we are entering a future environment that is more complex, less predictable, and faster paced. It is also clear we are entering a new fiscal environment. To be effective in that environment, I will need to establish strong relationships with the Joint Chiefs, the Secretary of Defense, the President, and the Congress. I will also have to ensure that as a Military we learn faster and adapt more quickly than our potential adversaries. Finally, if confirmed, I will be the senior military officer in the nation. With that comes responsibility as the steward of our profession. Therefore, I will take personal interest in the development of our force as professionals in the service of our nation.

Relationships

Other sections of law and traditional practice establish important relationships between the Chairman and other officials. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the following officials:

The Secretary of Defense

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff must have a close working relationship with the Secretary of Defense. Under Title 10, the Chairman is assigned several duties that guide the relationship to include serving as the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman also performs other duties assigned by the Secretary of Defense.

The National Security Advisor

The National Security Advisor is a Special Assistant and direct advisor to the President. As the role of the Chairman is to serve as the principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council, Homeland Security Council, and Secretary of Defense, if confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the National Security Advisor to ensure our efforts are synchronized across the inter-agency and for the purpose of implementing Presidential decisions.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

Under existing directives, the Deputy Secretary of Defense has been delegated full power and authority to act for the Secretary of Defense on any matters upon which the Secretary is authorized to act. As such, the relationship of the Chairman with the Deputy Secretary is similar to that with the Secretary.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

Title 10, United States Code, and current DoD directives establish the Under Secretaries of Defense as the principal staff assistants and advisers to the Secretary regarding matters related to their functional areas. Within their areas, Under Secretaries exercise policy and oversight functions. They may issue instructions and directive type memoranda that implement policy approved by the Secretary. These instructions and directives are applicable to all DoD components. In carrying out their responsibilities, and when directed by the President and Secretary of Defense, communications from the Under Secretaries to commanders of the unified and specified commands are transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The General Counsel of the Department of Defense

Under Title 10, United States Code, Section 140, the DoD General Counsel serves as the chief legal officer of the Department of Defense. In general, the DoD General Counsel is responsible for overseeing legal services, establishing policy, and overseeing the DoD Standards of Conduct Program, establishing policy and positions on specific legal issues and advising on significant international law issues raised in major military operations, the DoD Law of War Program, and legality of weapons reviews. The office of the DoD General Counsel works closely with the Office of Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and communications with the combatant commanders by the DoD General Counsel are normally transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Department of Defense Inspector General

The Department of Defense Inspector General performs the duties, has the responsibilities, and exercises the powers specified in the Inspector General Act of 1978. If confirmed, I will cooperate with and provide support to the Department of Defense Inspector General as required.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff performs the duties prescribed for him as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Chairman, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. When there is a vacancy in the Office of the Chairman or in the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman acts as Chairman and performs the duties of the Chairman until a successor is appointed or the absence or disability ceases.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments

Title 10, United States Code, Section 165 provides that, subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, and subject to the authority of the Combatant Commanders, the Secretaries of Military Departments are responsible for administration and support of forces that are assigned to unified and specified commands. The Chairman advises the Secretary of Defense on the extent to which program recommendations and budget proposals of the Military Departments conform to priorities in strategic plans and with the priorities established for requirements of the Combatant Commands.

The Chiefs of Staff of the Services

Because of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the Service Chiefs are no longer involved in the operational chain of command. However, this does not diminish their importance with respect to Title 10 responsibilities. Among other things, they serve two significant roles. First, they are responsible for the organization, training, and equipping of their respective Services. Without the full support and cooperation of the Service Chiefs, no Combatant Commander can assure the preparedness of his assigned forces for missions directed by the Secretary of Defense and the President. Second, as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chiefs are advisers to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense as the senior uniformed leaders of their respective Services. In this function, they play a critically important role in shaping military advice and transforming our joint capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the Service Chiefs to fulfill warfighting and operational requirements.

The Combatant Commanders

The Combatant Commanders fight our wars and conduct military operations around the world. By law, and to the extent directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman serves as spokesman for the Combatant Commanders and is charged with overseeing their activities. He provides a vital link between the Combatant Commanders and other elements of the Department of Defense, and as directed by the President, may serve as the means of communication between the Combatant Commanders and the President or Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Combatant Commanders to enable their warfighting capability and to provide support.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau

The Chief of the National Guard heads a joint activity of the Department of Defense and is the senior uniformed National Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel. Appointed by the President, he serves as principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on National Guard matters. He is also the principal adviser to the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army and the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force on all National Guard issues. As National Guard Bureau Chief, he serves as the department's official channel of communication with the Governors and Adjutants General. If confirmed, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau will continue to have full access to the upper echelons of the Joint Staff and me.

The Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan

There is no command relationship between the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan and the U.S. military. However, because of the critical importance of coordinating State Department and Department of Defense activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan to advance U.S. policy objectives in the region, if confirmed, I will work closely with him to ensure our efforts are synchronized.

The Commander, U.S. Forces – Afghanistan

Although the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council, he is not in the chain of command of the Commander, U.S. Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A). The Commander, USFOR-A reports to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. This reporting relationship is prescribed in 10 USC Section 164(d)(1). The Commander, USFOR-A does not have a formal command relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but he coordinates with him through the Commander, USCENTCOM on a regular basis. The Commander, USFOR-A sends his advice and opinions on military operations to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, presents them to the Chairman.

The Commander, U.S. Forces – Iraq

Although the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council, he is not in the chain of command of the Commander, U.S. Forces – Iraq (USF-I). The Commander, USF-I reports to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. This reporting relationship is prescribed in 10 USC Section 164(d)(1). The Commander, USF-I does not have a formal command relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but he coordinates with him through the Commander, USCENTCOM on a regular basis. The Commander, USF-I sends his advice and opinions on military operations to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, presents them to the Chairman.

Major Challenges and Priorities

What is your vision for the Armed Forces of today and the future?

We have the finest military in the world today, and we must maintain it as the finest military in the future. We must provide the nation with the military it needs, and that means we must provide our leaders with options. The force must be responsive, decisive, versatile, interdependent, and affordable.

We are likely to be somewhat smaller, but in doing so we must remain capable of providing what the nation needs. Delivering a force such as I've described will require us to reform many of our current processes including but not limited to the acquisition and procurement processes as well as our training and leader development strategies. It will likely be necessary to establish a different relationship among the active and reserve components of our armed forces, and it is likely that we will have to establish a different relationship among our closest allies and partners.

In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

The next Chairman must achieve the nation's objectives in the current conflicts, shape the international security environment, prepare the force for an uncertain future, respond to a changing fiscal reality, and do all of that while preserving the all volunteer force.

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

Addressing these challenges starts with a clear-eyed look at the mid-future and the determination of what the nation needs in its military. Stated another way, we must decide what military capabilities we need in 2020 and determine how we will deliver them.

If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish?

We've got to provide whatever it takes to achieve our national objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan. We've got to maintain pressure on those state and non-state actors who threaten us. We've got to maintain and build alliances and partnerships. We've got to stay connected to the American people, and we've got to keep faith with soldiers, families, and veterans. As I said earlier, the Joint Force for 2020 must be responsive, decisive, versatile, interdependent, and affordable.

Chain of Command

Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Section 163(a) of title 10 further provides that the President may direct communications to combatant commanders be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and may assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function.

Do you believe that these provisions facilitate a clear and effective chain of command?

The current chain of command provides a clear and effective means for employing our nation's military. The Combatant Commanders, under the orders of the Secretary of Defense, fight our wars and conduct military operations around the world. As the principal military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman provides a vital link between the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Combatant Commander, and the Service Chiefs. If confirmed, I may inform decisions and transmit directions, but there will be no question that the Combatant Commanders receive their orders from the Secretary of Defense.

The recent successful mission against Osama bin Laden was executed using military forces of the Department of Defense, under the control of the Central Intelligence Agency, and

presumably under the authorities in title 10, United States Code.

Are there circumstances in which you believe it is appropriate for U.S. military forces to be under the operational command or control of an authority outside the chain of command established under title 10, United States Code?

I believe the chain of command established by Title 10 is the appropriate mechanism for the command and control of military operations. Without commenting on the bin Laden operation in particular, it is my understanding that in general there are circumstances in which military capabilities should be made available temporarily to support an activity of a non-DoD U.S. Government department or agency. In these instances, it is appropriate for the head of such department or agency to direct the operations of the element providing that military support. The President remains at the top of the chain of command and at all times has overall command and responsibility for the operation. The military units supporting such an operation are still governed by the laws of armed conflict and, as an administrative matter, the military personnel remain accountable to the military chain of command, including for matters of discipline under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

In your view, what are the advantages, disadvantages, and risks, if any, in utilizing U.S. military personnel for missions under the authorities contained in title 50, United States Code.

Non-DoD federal departments and agencies may, in carrying out their duties, occasionally require support that resides in the U.S. Armed Forces and does not exist in the department or agency conducting the operation. It sometimes is therefore preferable to make an appropriate military capability temporarily available to support the operations of other departments and agencies. The advantage of this authority is that it allows for specialization and division of labor across departments and agencies and can prevent the development of under-utilized, military-like capabilities in other agencies. A potential disadvantage or risk is of sharing capabilities is that the department or agency receiving the support may not be sufficiently organized, trained, or equipped to most effectively direct the employment of the military capability. In all cases, however, we work to minimize any disadvantages and risk.

What is your understanding and assessment of the authorities and agreements which are in place to allow U.S. military personnel to carry out missions under the authorities contained in title 50, United States Code? Do you believe any modifications to these authorities are necessary?

As noted above, consistent with title 50 of the United States Code, the President may authorize departments, agencies, or entities of the U.S. government to participate in or support intelligence activities. As stated above, military personnel in support of any such activities remain subject to the laws of armed conflict and the Uniform Code of Military Justice while operating under the direction of the head of a non-DoD federal department or agency. I believe that existing authorities are sufficient to facilitate DoD's providing appropriate support under title 50 while ensuring necessary oversight.

Please explain your views on the preferred chain of command structure for counter terrorism operations conducted outside of Iraq and Afghanistan.

I believe the chain of command established under title 10 is appropriate for command of U.S. military operations regardless of the location. The determination of whether chain of command structure for a specific counterterrorism operation is appropriate will depend on the nature of the contemplated operation and the circumstances specific to the time and place of that operation.

Advice of the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders

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.

What changes to section 151 or 163, if any, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the views of the individual Service Chiefs and of the combatant commanders are presented and considered?

I believe the legislation is well-crafted and is sufficient to ensure that differing viewpoints are offered to our national leadership, while preserving the Chairman's role as the principal military advisor. It has been my experience that this relationship works well, and I see no need to change the law. If confirmed, I will maintain the very effective and collaborative environment that currently exists.

Do you believe the Chief of the National Guard Bureau should be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? Please explain your position.

While I am open-minded to the possibility, I have significant concerns about this proposal. The Services have never been closer to their reserve components, and separating them by title risks creating unnecessary friction in the ranks. Furthermore, the authority of the Service Chiefs is built on the foundation of their budget responsibility. Stated another way, they are accountable for the military advice they provide by virtue of their control of their Service budgets. The Chief of National Guard, if appointed as a member of the JCS, will have authority without accountability. This would concern me.

Security Strategies and Guidance

In your view, is the Nation's defense strategy appropriate for the threats we face today and could face in the coming decades?

I believe the strategy is appropriate for the threats we face today, although I am alert to concerns that it might be under-resourced over the mid- to long-term. It is my understanding that the ongoing comprehensive review is being careful to ensure it is strategy-based and risk-informed. If confirmed, I will ensure that we clearly identify the specific risks commensurate with revised resource levels.

What changes, if any, should be considered?

In my judgment, a good strategy is dynamic and adaptive to changes in the strategic environment the threat, and the needs of our nation. I believe the existing strategy addresses known threats while posturing for less well-defined or understood threats and contingencies that might arise.

In your view, is our broad defense strategy and current establishment optimally structured, with the roles and missions of the military departments appropriately distributed, and U.S. forces properly armed, trained, and equipped to meet security challenges the Nation faces today and into the next decade?

Overall, I would say yes, but I would also be careful about the word “optimal,” because it implies some static ideal. I would say that as our strategy evolves, so too must our organizations, approaches, and forces. I think we do that well. We continually examine whether our forces are appropriate to the missions at hand. A recent example is the stand up of US CYBER COMMAND in response to challenges in cyberspace.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to the structure, roles, and missions of the defense establishment?

The Defense Department conducts continuous security analysis that results in the periodic publication of strategic evaluations and plans intended to guide all elements of the defense establishment in its strategic and operational planning, programming and budgeting, and for the development and employment of military forces. These evaluations and plans include: the National Security Strategy, the National Strategy for Counterterrorism, the National Military Strategy, the Unified Command Plan, the Quadrennial Defense Review, the Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review, the Nuclear Posture Review, the Ballistic Missile Defense Review, and the Global Defense Posture Review.

If confirmed, I will examine our current status and provide my best military judgment on what needs to be adapted. Title 10 requires the Secretary to conduct a Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review and submit it to the Congress prior to the budget submission in 2013. One of my statutory responsibilities will be to provide an assessment of roles, missions, and functions to inform that review. I would do so in collaboration with the Joint Chiefs and Combatant Commanders.

What is your assessment of the most current versions of these strategic evaluation, guidance, and report documents?

My assessment is that these documents derive from a common understanding of a complex strategic environment, and that their strategy objectives and tasks are integrated, consistent, and appropriate to advancing US national security. The simultaneity of the multiple reviews enhanced the ability for these reviews to complement each other. For example, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was informed by early Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) findings.

What, in your view, is or should be the relationship, if any, of each document to the Department’s annual and long range budget request and plans?

Budget plans and requests must be informed by national strategies as strategies must be resource informed. The security strategies and guidance inform the Program, Planning, Budget, and Execution (PPBE) process and allow the Department to align resources with the execution of strategy, guidance, and policies. The PPBE process allows us to revisit decisions that need review due to changing world situations, and it enables the department to adjust resources as needed.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to the strategic analysis and approval processes or to the reports and guidance contained in each?

If confirmed, I do not anticipate recommending any immediate changes, but I retain the right to change my mind. The Department conducts rigorous strategic analysis, which informs strategic discussions and provides options. The approval processes ensures that multiple perspectives are captured prior to final

direction being provided.

Strategic Risk

Do you believe that the extended pace and scope of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan create increased levels of strategic risk for the United States based on the lack of available trained and ready forces for other contingencies?

No. Our servicemen and women have gained enormous combat experience in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. I think our military and civilian leaders have managed the risks associated with our extended campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan well. That said, there are skills that have atrophied, and we must address them as time to train permits.

If so, how would you characterize the increase in strategic risk in terms of the military's ability to mobilize, deploy, and employ a force for a new contingency? In your view, is this level of risk acceptable?

I believe the Services have done a tremendous job maintaining the readiness of our military to respond to contingencies—evidenced, in part, by our rapid ability to plan and execute military operations in Libya, respond to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and maintain a credible deterrence against potential aggressors across the globe. The temporary increases in end strength authorized by Congress played an important role in this, and recently, the drawdown in Iraq has made more forces available. I believe any risk we have assumed to be acceptable, because while training in some areas has suffered, our forces are actually the most experienced they have ever been. The focus now needs to be on resetting and reconstituting degraded capabilities.

What is the impact of the decision to decrease U.S. forces committed to Afghanistan on our ability to meet our security obligations in other parts of the world?

We are meeting our current global security obligations. Given the size of the drawdown scheduled for this year and next year, there will be little initial impact on our ability to meet these obligations. As we reset and reconstitute our military, we will be better able to meet any additional and emergent security obligations.

How and over what periods of time, if at all, will reductions to Army and Marine Corps end strength increase or aggravate this risk?

An unpredictable and/or hasty timeline to reduce ground forces would damage both the institution and increase military and strategic risks to the nation. The current planned reductions and timelines, coupled with efficiency efforts are executable with what I consider acceptable risk.

If confirmed, what additional actions would you take, if any, to reduce or mitigate this strategic risk?

If confirmed, I will address risks by advising on the employment of the Joint Force to maximum effect, working closely with Allies and partners, and integrating coordinating to integrate military actions with other elements of national power. Furthermore, I would use my first annual risk assessment to clearly identify the risks that require mitigation.

Transformation

Military “transformation” has been a broad objective of the Armed Forces since the end of the Cold War.

What is your understanding and assessment of the progress made by the Department, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, toward transforming the Armed Forces?

Transformation can have many different meanings, but in general it implies fundamental organizational change. Such change has certainly occurred over the last decade even as we have preserved our core values and retained the trust of the American people. The Joint Force is more battle-tested and integrated across Services and Components than at any time in our history. It has changed its structure, doctrine, education, exercises, training, material, leader focus, and posture to account for changing threats in diverse theaters. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we continue to change in way that strengthens joint warfighting capabilities over time.

If confirmed, what goals, if any, would you establish regarding military transformation in the future?

As we adjust our posture and missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, I would like to see a balanced force that is capable across the full spectrum of missions vice optimized for any particular mission set. If confirmed, I would also work to further advance affordable and versatile joint capabilities.

Do you believe the Joint Staff should play a larger role in transformation? If so, in what ways?

The Joint Staff has contributed significantly to transformation over the years, especially in the areas of concept development and experimentation, strategy development, requirements development, and the doctrine development processes. The assumption of many Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) responsibilities will ensure that Joint Staff plays an even larger role in the future.

Economic Security

Current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Michael Mullen, asserted in January that the Pentagon’s “budget has basically doubled in the last decade. And my own experience here is in that doubling, we’ve lost our ability to prioritize, to make hard decisions, to do tough analysis, to make trades.” Most recently on July 10th, Admiral Mullen stated that “the single-biggest threat to our national security is our debt.”

Do you agree with Admiral Mullen’s assessments regarding the relationship between U.S. security and debt?

I wouldn’t describe our economic condition as the single biggest threat to national security. There are a lot of clear and present threats to our security in the current operational environment. That said, there is unquestionably a relationship between US security and the debt. However, national security didn’t cause the debt crisis nor will it solve it. I agree that the national debt is a grave concern. Our national power is the aggregate of our diplomatic, military, and economic influence. We have to address our economic stature, but that doesn’t mean we can neglect the other instruments of national power.

If so, in your view, how does this relationship impact the Defense Department and, if confirmed,

what changes, if any, would you propose to ensure that, in building a military capable of meeting our strategic objectives, the defense budget does not at the same time undermine our national security?

The Department of Defense is currently conducting a comprehensive review directed by the President to determine the strategic implications of a \$400 billion reduction in spending. If confirmed, I will focus on delivering the military force the nation needs while endeavoring to be a good steward of our national resources.

Do you agree with Admiral Mullen that the Defense Department has lost the ability to prioritize and make the tradeoffs that come with tough decisions?

Over the last decade in an era of relatively unconstrained resources, the Department of Defense has not had to make difficult decisions about budgetary tradeoffs. While we may have lost some of the “muscle memory” for such decision-making, I am confident we can adapt to a changing security and fiscal environment. If confirmed, I will build on current efforts to strengthen the analytical processes needed for making hard choices. More importantly, I will reinforce a culture of cost discipline that will ensure we remain good stewards of our national resources.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to regain the Department’s ability to objectively analyze its requirements, prioritize to meet national security needs, and make the tough choices in allocating resources to meet those needs?

The next Chairman—whoever he or she is—will clearly have to balance ends, ways, and means more proactively than his immediate predecessors to deliver a military that will meet the needs of the nation. This is not about changing process; it’s about managing change.

National Security Budget Reductions

The President has called for \$400 billion in reductions to security spending over a 10-year period starting in 2013, and has asked the Secretary of Defense to lead a review to provide recommendations on where to make those cuts.

What is your understanding of the current status of that review?

The review is ongoing. I participate in the review now as a Service Chief, and if confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to continue to collaborate with the Secretary of Defense, Service Chiefs, and Combatant Commanders to achieve a more affordable Joint Force.

What is your view as to how such cuts should be distributed among the various components of security spending?

While some distribution of cuts among various components of security spending is both inevitable and appropriate, we should avoid simply making formulaic, across-the-board cuts. Reductions in one area have implications in others. Therefore, we must carefully calibrate cuts to ensure the result is a strengthened Joint Force. The precise distribution of cuts across components of security spending is still being determined, but I understand it to be a fundamental consideration for the ongoing review.

What role do you expect to play, if confirmed, in guiding the review and in determining what cuts,

if any, should be made to the defense budget?

If confirmed, I expect to play a prominent role in this review, and I will work closely with both the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to do provide my best judgments on how what cuts should be made.

Do you believe that a national security spending reduction of this magnitude can be accomplished without significant adverse impact on our national security?

The review is ongoing, and it will help inform the risks associated with prospective cuts to our defense budget. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff to ensure an affordable Joint Force that meets our national security needs.

If confirmed, how will you prioritize the objectives of: making needed investments in the future force, addressing pressing requirements for completing the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, meeting ongoing operational commitments across the globe, re-setting of the force, and achieving the level of savings proposed by the President?

If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize funding to support our troops fighting in our conflicts abroad while helping to assure we are conducting operations in fiscally responsible manner. Given that the review is ongoing, I do not want to prejudge how to prioritize among the other categories listed; however, it is my judgment that we can achieve the level of proposed savings in way that strengthens the Joint Force over time.

Use of Military Force

The question as to whether and when U.S. forces should participate in the use of force is one of the most important and difficult decisions that the national command authorities have to make. Prior Secretaries of Defense and Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have proposed criteria to guide decision-making for such situations.

What factors would you consider in making recommendations to the President on the use of force?

If confirmed, in making recommendations to the President on the use of force, I would consider the threat to our national interests, the role of non-military means to achieve our objectives, the ability of military means to contribute to our political objectives, and the likely outcome from the use of military force. If it is determined that the use of military force is appropriate, I would propose its use in a precise and principled manner. I would pursue the cooperation and assistance of our allies and partners and adhere to international standards and treaty agreements while still reserving the right to act alone if necessary.

What circumstances should pertain for you to recommend that the President employ preemptive force?

If adversaries challenge our vital interests with the threat of force, and both deterrence and diplomacy fail, the United States must be prepared to consider preemptive force. If confirmed, some of the key factors I would consider in recommending the employment of preemptive force include the vital national interests at stake, the degree to which other options have been exhausted, the probability of an attack by our adversary, the potential results of the enemy attack, and the consequences of our preemptive action.

What degree of certainty do you believe is necessary before the United States would use preemptive force?

While I believe the degree of certainty necessary before the United States should employ preemptive force should be high, it is not reasonable to articulate a pre-existing standard. Rather, it should take into account the imminence and severity of the threat and the likely outcomes of the use of preemptive force.

Dwell Time

While dwell time is improving as our forces draw down in Iraq, many active duty military members are still not experiencing the dwell time goal of 2 years at home for every year deployed.

In your view, under what conditions and when will dwell time objectives be met for the active and reserve components?

All Services are making progress toward achieving objective dwell rates based on guidance issued in the Global Employment of Forces document. While the Army is now averaging about a 1:1 dwell time, we expect to reach 1:2 by the end of this year. I understand the other Services are at about 1:2 already and that dwell times will continue to improve for both the active and reserve components through FY12-14. Our goal remains to optimize the quality of life for every Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine while still meeting mission requirements. If confirmed, I will closely monitor this important issue.

Active-Duty End Strength

Under current planning, the Army will reduce its end strength by 22,000 through FY 2013, including 7,400 in FY 2012. This end strength was part of the temporary increase authorized in 2009 and was intended to enable the Army to cease relying on the so-called "stop-loss" authority and to make up for a growing population of non-deployable soldiers. Beginning in FY 2015, depending on conditions on the ground, the Army and Marine Corps plan to reduce their permanent end strength and force structure by 27,000 soldiers and at least 15,000 marines, respectively.

Do you agree with this active-duty end strength reduction plan?

Yes. End strength reductions are conditions based and require periodic reevaluation. If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Panetta and support the Army Leadership's plan to accomplish current and projected missions, balance the well-being of Soldiers and Families, and keep the Army prepared to meet unforeseen operational demands.

What is your view of how these planned end-strength reductions will affect dwell time ratios?

The planned end strength reductions are intended to take advantage of reduced demand to support ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is my understanding that if the draw-downs continue as planned, the end-strength reductions should allow our forces to achieve and sustain acceptable dwell ratios.

What effect would inability to meet dwell time objectives have on your decision to implement the planned end-strength reductions?

Should an unforeseen event change our assumptions about end-strength assumptions, I would review all options and provide my best military advice in adapting existing plans.

In your view, can the Army accelerate to 2012 more of its planned reduction in its temporary over-strength without an adverse impact on national security?

Army force structure is directly linked to the pace of on-going operations. We will manage end-strength reductions to ensure that we do not incur excessive risk. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Army and the Marine Corps to determine our appropriate end strength and the associated timing.

What would be the effect on dwell time of accelerating the Army's force reduction plan?

Currently, our plans for end-strength reductions are well integrated with our dwell time projections. Any changes to current timelines for end-strength reductions would need to be assessed against our current and projected operational requirements and our dwell time goals.

What are the assumptions regarding "conditions on the ground" that will allow for the planned reductions beginning in 2015 to occur on time?

We're tracking the: (1) transition of tasks to our Afghan counterparts in the security forces and various government institutions and (2) the responsible drawdown of our surge forces within the parameters set by the President. The planned reductions in end strength are based on achieving these drawdown objectives in Afghanistan. As 2014 approaches, we will have to assess our enduring strategic interests in the region to determine the appropriate size and nature of force presence in Afghanistan after 2014.

The Navy and Air Force appear to be on pace to exceed authorized strengths for fiscal year 2011, and to address this overstrength, the Department has requested congressional authorization of force management tools to avoid exceeding end strength limits and save money.

In your view, what tools do the Department and Services need to get down to authorized strengths in the future, and which of these require Congressional authorization?

I am not yet familiar with the full extent to which the authorities used during previous force reductions have expired or will soon expire. If confirmed, I will work closely with the senior military and civilian leadership of the Department to identify any additional tools and associated legislation that may be needed to help us meet our authorized end strengths.

Institutionalization of Counterinsurgency Capabilities

The 2010 report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) provided that military forces shall be sized to prevail in ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the war against Al Qaeda as well as for conducting foundational activities that prevent and deter attacks or the emergence of other threats. The QDR report particularly emphasizes the requirement for improved capabilities in key mission areas such as counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations, as well as building the security capacity of partner states.

What is your understanding and assessment of the current ability of each Service to provide capabilities to support these mission requirements and, if confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue to improve these capabilities?

My belief is that we have adapted extraordinarily well. Over the past decade, our forces have made tremendous advances in developing their counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism capabilities. Leaders have put a tremendous amount of effort into actually learning and applying the lessons learned from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Just as I did during my tenure with Training and Doctrine Command, it is my understanding that all the Services are continuously incorporating those lessons into doctrine and training regimes. In turn, these lessons are being adapted by our forces in combat, as I witnessed on more than one occasion in Iraq. If confirmed, I will continue to support those recurring and continuous improvement efforts that bring the right mix of capabilities and force structure to address future requirements. I will also continue to assess and balance risk across the spectrum of operations.

A major objective of the Department over recent years, as well as guidance in the QDR report, has been toward increasing emphasis on and institutionalization of lower-end, irregular, counterinsurgency, and stability type operations.

What is your understanding and assessment of the Department's efforts to date to institutionalize and support these capabilities?

During over ten years of continuous operations in these areas, DoD has made remarkable progress toward developing and institutionalizing joint capabilities for irregular warfare, counterinsurgency, and stability operations. We have further supported these capabilities by adopting lessons learned and resetting and maintaining the equipment that facilitates those operations. The United States will continue to face challenges from non-state adversaries and regions threatened by terrorist or insurgent violence. If confirmed, I will closely examine our efforts to develop the right capabilities at the right price effectively counter these threats.

If confirmed, how would you propose to redistribute the Department's efforts and resources, if at all, to ensure that the force is prepared for force-on-force combat at the same time it increases and institutionalizes capabilities and support for irregular, counterinsurgency, and stability operations?

The 2010 QDR recognized the need to balance future military capabilities to meet a broad range of threats across a wide spectrum of adversary capabilities and operating environments. In a period of potentially significant budget constraints, it will be imperative to appropriately balance risk across the spectrum of potential operations. If confirmed, I will support existing and ongoing efforts and processes to assess the impact of these constraints and ensure our forces retain the appropriate size and mix of capabilities. I am committed to preserving the appropriate mix of hard-won, joint capabilities and experiences for our decade-plus of war.

Defense Acquisition Reform

Two years ago, Congress enacted the, without a dissenting vote in either House. WSARA is designed to ensure that new defense acquisition programs start on a sound footing, to avoid the high cost of fixing problems late in the acquisition process.

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

I welcome WSARA. The Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009 (WSARA) mandated much

needed reforms to the defense acquisition process. I support its requirements for DoD to examine cost, schedule and performance trade-offs to reduce cost-growth. I am also aware that DoD has pursued significant additional improvements to the acquisition process to include examining the requirements process. If confirmed, I will not only work to implement the changes required by law, but I will continue to pursue improvements to defense acquisitions processes.

If confirmed, how would you improve all three aspects of the acquisition process B requirements, acquisition, and budgeting?

The 2009 Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act was an important step forward in improving defense acquisition. It is my understanding, that DoD has made significant progress toward implementing its requirements and achieving our shared interest in deriving better value for every dollar spent. I fully support the DoD "Better Buying Power" initiative to coordinate the requirements, acquisition, and budget processes in a way that mandates affordable requirements to ensure programs start from a solid foundation. If confirmed, I would work to enhance the quality of interaction among these processes and promote greater participation by the warfighter throughout the acquisition lifecycle.

Do you believe that the current investment budget for major systems is affordable given increasing historic cost growth in major systems, costs of current operations, and asset recapitalization?

While I am not yet familiar with the entirety of the defense budget, my sense is that the current investment budget for major systems is not affordable in this fiscal and operational environment. Certain progress was made on this front under the leadership of Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen leading to a leaner major weapons system portfolio. But, we are not finished pursuing cost control and affordability. Given historic cost growth and current budget pressures, we must closely manage existing programs, and start new programs smartly, so that cost growth does not make them unaffordable. If confirmed, I will continue to examine the investment budget closely for opportunities to achieve greater cost savings and improve overall weapon systems affordability.

If confirmed, how do you plan to address this issue and guard against the potential impact of weapon systems cost growth?

If confirmed, I will address weapons system cost growth in several mutually supportive ways. I will directly leverage the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) "trip-wire" process to monitor for cost growth and schedule delays in Major Defense Acquisition Programs. This process also helps ensure I am prepared to properly advise the Secretary of Defense with regard to the Nunn-McCurdy certification process and participate in the still maturing Configuration Steering Boards. Additionally, balancing system performance and cost will continue to be a central goal of the on-going Joint Capabilities Integration and Development process review. Program and portfolio affordability will be important factors in performance trade-off decisions.

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

The FY 2011 Defense Authorization Act implemented requirements process changes that I would allow to mature if confirmed. For example, the addition of Combatant Commanders as voting members of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) is proving its value to ensure that Service and Joint priorities are properly aligned. A further improvement is the requirement that JROC validations specify cost, schedule, performance, and quantity to ensure we get the capabilities we need in a responsive and

reasonable timeframe. As the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development Systems (JCIDS) review goes forward, I anticipate several reform recommendations that will improve our ability to establish increasingly realistic and properly prioritized requirements.

Contractors on the Battlefield

U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have relied on contractor support to a greater degree than previous U.S. military operations. According to widely published reports, the number of U.S. contractor employees in Iraq and Afghanistan has often exceeded the number of U.S. military deployed in those countries.

Do you believe that the Department of Defense has become too dependent on contractor support for military operations?

While I am not yet in a position to render a judgment about whether we have become too dependent on contractors, my instincts suggest that this is the case. Recently as a result of a study by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum to DoD directing a wide range of changes to improve operational contracting support along with guidance for the assessment high-risk contracted capabilities. If confirmed, I will review this study and the military departments' assessments.

What risks do you see in the Department's reliance on such contractor support? What steps do you believe the Department should take to mitigate such risk?

The most significant risk is in contract oversight. DoD's recent experience supporting contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has shown that poor contractor management can increase the potential for fraud, waste, and abuse. Additionally, interaction of contractors with local communities, along with their potential use of force, has a direct impact on the operational mission. Therefore, it is imperative for DoD to properly plan for, use, and manage contractors in the operational environment. As with any situation, understanding the current problems and their risks are the first step in mitigation. It is my judgment that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense have set the department on the right path and if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing ongoing assessments and continuing efforts to improve the use and oversight of contractors.

Do you believe the Department is appropriately organized and staffed to effectively manage contractors on the battlefield?

I'm not sure. I recognize that initially DoD was not properly organized and staffed to effectively manage contractors in the ongoing contingency operations, but corrective actions have been implemented over the last several years. Operational contracting support efforts will enhance our ability to modify the way we source and oversee contracting. If confirmed, I will review ongoing efforts to ensure that DoD institutionalizes its contingency contracting capabilities and that the lessons learned from our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are applied to future operations.

What steps if any do you believe the Department should take to improve its management of contractors on the battlefield?

DoD has made significant progress in institutionalizing effective management of contractors during contingency operations through several ongoing efforts. DoD's management of contractors on the battlefield has evolved from a more reactionary approach toward pro-active theater-wide management.

As an example, DoD stood up Task Force 2010 and Task Force Spotlight to improve contractor management and oversight in Afghanistan. Furthermore, we are using the task force efforts to shape how the department will continue the institutionalization of contractor management in future operations. If confirmed, I will review these efforts and ensure they are adequate and effective, and I will continue to champion effective management processes.

Do you believe the Department of Defense and other federal agencies should rely upon contractors to perform security functions that may reasonably be expected to require the use of deadly force in highly hazardous public areas in an area of combat operations?

Based on current force structure and the level of operations tempo, the use of contractors for some security functions is necessary. We can mitigate the risk that this accrues if we properly plan for contractor use and have a clear designation of their mission and assigned tasks. Furthermore, we must ensure they have the necessary skills and training to perform these tasks. Finally, we must have the proper oversight in place. Contractor use of force should remain limited to self-defense and the defense of others against criminal violence and the protection of critical property. With proper planning, contractor capability, and government oversight, I think that the limited use of security contractors by DoD in contingency operations is acceptable. It would be inappropriate for me to comment on their use by other departments. If confirmed, I will ensure that proper limitations on DoD private security contractors are in place and enforced.

In your view, has the U.S. reliance upon private security contractors to perform such functions risked undermining our defense and foreign policy objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan?

No. The use of contractors to perform security functions remains a viable DoD option and has been necessary in Iraq and Afghanistan. As with all security forces, the inappropriate use of force remains the greatest risk to our policy objectives. Contracted private security, used correctly with proper management and oversight, preserves DoD's ability to achieve defense and foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to continue to examine and improve DoD's procedures to manage and provide oversight of these contractors.

What steps, if any, would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that any private security contractors who may continue to operate in an area of combat operations act in a responsible manner, consistent with U.S. defense and foreign policy objectives?

If confirmed, I would work to further institutionalize two primary initiatives already underway. First, the use of private security contractors in any area of combat operations must be fully planned, coordinated, and synchronized with the Joint Force Commander of the designated area of responsibility. Furthermore, commanders on the ground must have the authority and flexibility to restrict security contractors' as the operations dictate. Second, we must continue to hold private security contractors accountable and work with our host nation partners to ensure rigorous licensing procedures and enforcement of their laws.

Do you support the extension of the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act to private security contractors of all federal agencies?

Individuals who provide support to US agencies in our vital missions overseas should not be allowed to operate with legal protection. They should be held accountable for any criminal activity. This is especially true as we work to support the Rule of Law in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. If confirmed, I would support further study in order to investigate the most effective legal method to ensure

private security contractor accountability.

What is your view of the appropriate application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice to employees of private security contractors operating in an area of combat operations?

Individuals who provide support to the US military operations as private security contractors should not be allowed to operate with impunity. They should be held accountable for any criminal activity. This is especially true as we work to support the Rule of Law in Iraq and Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will remain open to all recommendations for ensuring accountability of private contractors.

Future Army

In a speech at West Point last February, former Secretary Gates argued that it is unlikely that the Nation will commit large land forces to future conflicts, and that the Army must "confront the reality that the most plausible, high-end scenarios for the U.S. military [will be] primarily naval and air engagements." The Army's first major challenge, he stated, is "how will it structure itself – how will it train and equip – for the extraordinarily diverse range of missions it will face in the future?" Former Chief of Staff of the Army, General George Casey Jr., said he expected that over the next 10 years we will still have 50,000 to 100,000 soldiers deployed in combat. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Michael Mullen said that for planning purposes the Department assumes 6 to 10 combat brigades will likely be deployed.

Do you agree that high-end military operations will primarily be naval and air engagements such that the Army will have difficulty justifying the size, structure, and cost of its heavy formations?

I believe that the strength of our military is in the synergy and interdependence of the joint force. My experience of 37 years suggests that single-component solutions to security challenges is at best risky and at worst foolhardy.

In your view, what are the most important considerations or criteria for aligning the Army's size, structure, and cost with strategy and resources?

Our nation needs a versatile Army that can conduct operations across the spectrum of conflict. We need an Army that can win conventional fights, remains adept at conducting counterinsurgency and stability operations, and that can work shoulder to shoulder with the ground forces of our partner states to impart the necessary skills that can help them bring security and stability to their own countries and regions. I understand that some tradeoffs across the force may be required to meet cost-savings goal. If confirmed, I will work closely with military and civilian leaders to balance these risks and help develop a versatile Army for a versatile Joint Force.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you propose to properly align the Army's size and structure with the requirements of security strategies and the likely availability of resources?

Our Army, like our other services, must provide options to the national command authority. It must be responsive, decisive, versatile, interdependent, and affordable. In sizing it, we must address three fundamental questions: what do you want it to do, how often, and for how long. This requires a comprehensive analysis of the security environment and a detailed assessment of the relationship of the active, guard, and reserve components.

Tactical Fighter Programs

Perhaps the largest modernization effort that we will face over the next several years is the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program to modernize our tactical aviation forces with fifth generation tactical aircraft equipped with stealth technology.

Based on current and projected threats, what are your views on the requirements for and timing of these programs?

The Department has the necessary fighter aircraft capacity in the near-term to support our Nation's security needs. Based on the current and projected threats, I am convinced that we must transition to a fifth generation tactical aviation capability across the U.S military services.

What is your assessment of whether the restructuring of the JSF program that we have seen over the past two years will be sufficient to avoid having to make major adjustments in either cost or schedule in the future?

It is my understanding that the issues with the JSF program have been addressed through a deliberate requirements and acquisition review process. A high level plan was approved in January of 2011, and the program expects to deliver a fully compliant weapon system. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the progress of the program to ensure affordability.

Information Assurance

Protection of military networks, information, and communications is critical to Department of Defense operations.

What is your understanding and assessment of the cyber security posture of the Department's critical information systems?

The DoD Strategy for Operating in Cyberspace (DSOC) lays out a roadmap for DoD to effectively conduct the defense of critical information systems and strengthen overall cyber security. The Department is working aggressively with national agencies to assess current and future threats while ensuring the availability, integrity, and confidentiality of critical information systems.

What Department-wide policies, guidance, or changes in legislation do you believe are necessary to address information and cyber security challenges for current and future systems?

DoD recently released the first DoD Strategy for Operating in Cyberspace which addresses information and cyber security challenges along with the ways and means for employing defense capabilities to meet these challenges. Furthermore, I understand that DoD supports the Administration's recommendations for cyber legislation recently provided to Congress. If confirmed, I will work with the Administration to provide recommendations to Congress on any additional legislation that may be required to address information and cyber security challenges.

Ballistic Missile Defense

In September 2009, President Obama announced that he had accepted the unanimous

recommendation of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to pursue a Phased Adaptive Approach (PAA) to missile defense in Europe. This approach is intended to defend all of Europe against existing and emerging threats from Iranian missiles, starting this year and increasing in capability with each of its four phases. Phase 4 of the European PAA is intended to provide a capability to defend against future long-range missiles from Iran, including those that could reach the United States, thus augmenting the existing homeland missile defense capability.

Do you support the Phased Adaptive Approach to Missile Defense in Europe?

I support the President's policy on European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA).

In February 2010, the Defense Department issued its report on the first-ever comprehensive review of U.S. ballistic missile defense policy and strategy, the Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR), as required by Congress. The BMDR established a number of policy priorities, including establishing defense against near-term regional missile threats as a top priority of missile defense plans, programs and capabilities. It also stated the policy of sustaining and enhancing the ability of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system to defend the homeland against attack by a small number of long-range missiles by countries such as North Korea and Iran, and of hedging against future uncertainties.

Do you support the policies, strategies, and priorities set forth in the Ballistic Missile Defense Review and, if confirmed, will you implement them?

I support the Administration's policies, strategies, and priorities in concert with this review. If confirmed, I will implement the policies set forth including those that sustain and enhance our nation's defense while increasing our capability against the growing regional threats.

The two most recent flight tests of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system failed to intercept their targets. The Director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) has formed a Failure Review Board to determine the root cause of the most recent failure and will devise a plan to correct it, including two flight tests to confirm the correction. Until the second flight test confirms the correction, the Director of MDA has suspended production of the Exo-atmospheric Kill Vehicles (EKVs) of the type that failed last year's flight tests, in order to ensure that those EKV's do not contain a flaw that would need to be corrected later.

Do you agree that it is essential to correct the problem that caused the December 2010 flight test failure, and to verify the success of that correction through extensive testing, including flight testing, before continuing production and delivery of additional EKV's for the GMD system?

I agree that it is essential to have confidence and reliability in the Exo-atmospheric Kinetic Vehicles (EKVs) prior to continuing production in order to control costs and ensure the U.S. has an effective missile defense system.

Do you support the continued modernization and sustainment of the GMD system?

Yes. The Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system currently protects the U.S. from the threat of a limited ICBM attack. It is important to maintain this advantage by continuing to improve the GMD system.

The United States and NATO are seeking options to cooperate with Russia on missile defense. President Obama has announced that such cooperation would not limit U.S. or NATO missile defense capabilities.

Do you agree that such cooperation could enhance the security of the United States, NATO, and Russia against common missile threats from nations such as Iran?

Yes. Russia's cooperation could improve the effectiveness of U.S. and NATO missile defenses as well as those of the Russian Federation. An effective multi-partner ballistic missile defense system has the potential to deter aggression and strengthen regional security.

What do you believe would be the security benefits, if any, of such missile defense cooperation, and what types of cooperation do you believe would be beneficial?

Cooperation could result in tangible benefits to the U.S., Europe, and Russia in the form of a more robust common defense against missile threats, which could strengthen strategic stability and transparency. U.S. cooperation with Russia along the lines of shared early warning of missile launches, technical exchanges, operational cooperation and planning, and joint exercises would be mutually beneficial.

Do you agree that irrespective of Russian objections, the United States is committed to the continued development and deployment of United States missile defense systems, including qualitative and quantitative improvements to such systems?

Yes, the U.S. is committed to continued development, improvement, and deployment of U.S. missile defense systems in order to enhance our defense capabilities. Cooperation with Russia on missile defense has the potential to enhance U.S. and NATO security.

Space

China's test of an anti-satellite weapon in 2007 was a turning point for the United States in its policies and procedure to ensure access to space. As a nation heavily dependent on space assets for both military and economic advantage, protection of space assets became a national priority.

Do you agree that space situational awareness and protection of space assets should be a national security priority?

Yes. Space situational awareness underpins our ability to operate safely in an increasingly congested space environment. It is vital that the U.S. protect national space assets to maintain the benefits and advantages dependent on our access to space.

In your view should China's continued development of space systems inform U.S. space policy and programs?

Yes. The U.S. should ensure its space policy and programs address China's continued development of space systems as well as systems of other space-faring nations. Our National Security Space Strategy acknowledges space is vital to U.S. national security and our ability to understand emerging threats, project power globally, conduct operations, support diplomatic efforts, and enable the global economy. We are and should seek opportunities to co-operate in space and lead in the formation of rules and behaviors for benefit all nations. I support development of U.S. space capabilities which preserve the use

of space for the U.S. and our allies, while promoting the principles of the 2010 National Space Policy.

If confirmed would you propose any changes to National Security space policy and programs?

I am not in a position to recommend any proposed changes at this time. If confirmed, I would continue implementation of the President's 2010 National Space Policy and the supporting National Security Space Strategy.

The Federal Communications Commission is currently considering licensing a telecommunications provider who plans on using a signal that has the potential to interfere with GPS signals and GPS receivers.

If confirmed, would you look into this matter to understand the impact of the proposal to national security GPS signals receivers and commercial receivers used by the national security community?

It is my understanding that the Joint Staff is currently reviewing this issue, and if confirmed, I will ensure continued emphasis. We are committed to working within the DoD and with various government agencies and the FCC to ensure that GPS remains a secure and reliable national asset.

What is your view on weapons in space and the merits of establishing an international agreement establishing rules of the road for space operations?

I support the principles outlined in the 2010 National Space Policy, which states that the U.S. will pursue bilateral and multilateral transparency and confidence-building measures to encourage responsible actions in, and the peaceful use of, space. I understand the Department is currently evaluating the European Union's proposed international Code of Conduct for Outer Space as a pragmatic first set of guidelines for safe activities in space. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing this evaluation for space operations.

Strategic Systems

Over the next 5 years DOD will begin to replace or begin studies to replace all of the strategic delivery systems. For the next 15 plus years, DOD will also have to sustain the current strategic nuclear enterprise. This will be a very expensive undertaking.

Do you have any concerns about the ability of the Department to afford the costs of nuclear systems modernization while meeting the rest of the DOD commitments?

I share the President's and the Secretary's commitment to maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. Sustainment of our nuclear deterrent requires modernization of delivery systems and life extension programs for warheads. Successfully accomplishing this will require balancing our current commitments with our national interests and strategic priorities.

If confirmed will you review the modernization and replacement programs to ensure that they are cost effective?

If confirmed, I will continue to support our commitment to sustaining and modernizing a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent that supports strategic stability in an efficient and cost effective manner while strengthening regional deterrence and reassuring Allies and partners.

Readiness Funding

What is your understanding and assessment of the methods currently used for estimating the funding needed for the maintenance of military equipment?

Each of the Military Services uses costing models to estimate funding for maintenance of equipment at various levels of readiness, including support of overseas contingency operations. Their estimates are based on readiness metrics such as system miles, steaming hours, or flying hours. It is also my understanding that the Joint Staff evaluates readiness across the Joint Force.

Do you believe that we need an increased investment to reduce the backlog in equipment maintenance and improve readiness?

My primary concern is with reset funding for equipment readiness that currently comes out of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding. If confirmed, I will examine this issue further. At this juncture, however, it is my understanding that we will need OCO funding two years after the end of the conflict in order to ensure all equipment is reset. Without OCO funding, there will be significant pressure on the base budget maintenance accounts to cover those costs, which could impact long-term readiness.

Operational Energy Budgeting

The committee recently received the fiscal year 2012 budget certification report from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy Plans and Programs. The certification report highlighted several failures by the Services to fund significant energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, such as: smart and green energy (SAGE), tactical fuel managers defense (TFMD), near-term and mid-term modifications to legacy systems to increase efficiency and reduce operational energy demand, and tent foaming efforts at forward operating bases.

Do you believe the Department should increase funding for operational energy requirements, renewable energy opportunities, and energy efficiency demands?

My understanding is that DoD certified the 2012 budget submission as adequate to implement operational energy strategic goals. As identified by DoD's Operational Energy Strategy, many operational energy improvements do not necessarily require increased funding and could ultimately save DoD money. If confirmed, I plan to closely monitor the implementation of the Operational Energy Strategy. Overall, I think DoD needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations into our strategic planning and force development processes. In doing so, the Department will inherently make investments in energy efficiency, alternative energy, and reliability to increase operational effectiveness.

Iraq

What do you believe are the major lessons learned from the Iraq invasion and the ongoing effort to stabilize the country?

Perhaps the most important lesson is that our country must remain prepared for the difficult work that occurs in the wake of major combat. Future strategic and force sizing constructs must account for all phases of conflict. We must plan and train with our civilian counterparts and be prepared to operate

effectively both at peace and during post combat. Furthermore, our political objectives are best achieved when all the instruments of national power are coordinated toward a common purpose. Finally, I am reminded of the importance of working with allies and partners, none more important than the host nation populace, in order to attain our objectives.

What is your understanding and assessment, if any, of the Department's adaptations or changes in policy, programs, force structure, or operational concepts based upon these lessons learned?

The Iraq War has led to deep and wide-ranging changes in all of the areas listed above. For example, the Department better understands and is better at Irregular Warfare and Stability Operations. Our shared goal across the department is to learn and apply these important lessons and experiences to strengthen the Joint Force. The military has demonstrated the ability to learn and adapt across many areas, and if confirmed, I will continue to integrate that valuable knowledge into future doctrine, training, and readiness.

If confirmed, what additional changes, if any, would you propose making to policy, programs, force structure, or operating concepts based on the lessons of combat and stability operations in Iraq?

Simply stated, we must learn faster and understand more deeply than our adversaries. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the process by which lessons translate into the development of the Joint Force.

What is your assessment of the current security situation in Iraq?

The overall security situation is relatively stable. I am concerned about increased violence in southern Iraq, about the inability of the Iraqi Government to appoint security ministers, and about the enduring potential for Arab-Kurd violence in Kirkuk and Mosul.

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al-Qaeda in Iraq?

Al-Qaida in Iraq still poses a significant threat within Iraq. Al-Qaida in Iraq continues to pursue an attack strategy focused on Iraqi government officials and security forces personnel, Shia civilians, and Sunnis who oppose the terrorist group's agenda. However, the ISF demonstrates improving counter-terrorism capability and the capacity for maintaining internal security despite occasional high-profile attacks.

What are the main challenges to stability and security in Iraq over the coming months?

In the coming months, the main threats to Iraqi stability and security are attacks by Sadrist and Iran-sponsored forces against departing U.S. forces and the unresolved status of territories claimed by the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Do you support the current plan for the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq consistent with the U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement of 2008 signed by President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki?

I support the current plan for the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq in accordance with the 2008 U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement. It is important that we fulfill our obligations under this bilateral agreement, and we are on track to complete the drawdown by December 31, 2011.

Responsibility and authority for lead U.S. agency in Iraq is scheduled this year to transition from Department of Defense (DOD) to Department of State (DOS). By October 2011, the

Department of State is supposed to achieve an initial operating capability as lead agency and achieve full operating capability by December.

What is your understanding and assessment, if any, of the planning and progress on executing this transition from DOD to DOS? In your view, what are the sources of greatest risk, if any, to the current plan and successful implementation of this transition?

My understanding is that the transition from the DoD and DoS is on schedule. The DoD, DoS, and other agencies have undertaken unprecedented levels of coordination and planning for the transition in Iraq. As one would expect with a transition of this scope and complexity, challenges exist, but it is my understanding that we are collaborating well to overcome them in order to meet our objectives. Of concern, failure to support FY12 State Department budget requirements for Iraq increases the risk for a successful transition of responsibilities.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to the current plan or actions for implementation of the transition?

I wouldn't anticipate any changes at present but will remain vigilant.

In your view, what will be the nature of the U.S.-Iraq strategic relationship after December 31st, 2011?

In my judgment, a long-term strategic partnership with Iraq is in our national interest. As stated by the President, we support an Iraq that is sovereign and self-reliant; that has a just, representative and accountable government; that denies support and safe haven to terrorists; that is integrated into the global economy; and that contributes to regional peace and security. All these elements of our desired strategic relationship with Iraq were codified in the 2008 Strategic Framework Agreement. If confirmed, it is my intention to closely monitor the status and help to advance our relationship.

If the Government of Iraq were to ask for the continued presence in Iraq of U.S. forces beyond the end of 2011, would you support the deployment or retention of additional troops in Iraq beyond the current deadline for U.S. troop withdrawal?

I am not in a position to recommend such a proposal at this time. If confirmed, I would provide my best military advice to the Secretary of Defense and President after considering all relevant factors.

What do you see as the greatest challenges for that relationship over the coming years?

The greatest challenges will be maintaining U.S. engagement and support for Iraq during a time of change. Recent turmoil in the broader Middle East highlights the importance of active U.S. engagement and maintaining strategic partnerships with regional partners based on mutual interests and mutual respect. We must maintain focus on Iraq in order to advance broader U.S. objectives of peace and security in the region.

Stability and Support Operations

The U.S. experience in Iraq and Afghanistan has underscored the importance of planning and training to prepare for the conduct and support of stability and support operations in post-conflict situations.

In your view, what are the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the Department of Defense and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government in the planning and conduct of stability operations?

In my judgment, stability operations are a core U.S. military mission which we should be prepared to conduct with a proficiency equivalent to combat operations. Stability operations cut across all phases of conflict. The military often operates in a supporting role to other federal government agencies. However, when directed, we have taken a lead role in stability operations activities to establish civil security and control, restore essential services, repair and protect critical infrastructure, and deliver humanitarian assistance. In these cases, our objective is to transition the lead responsibility to other U.S. Government agencies, the host nation or international organizations as the situation dictates. As seen in recent operations, experts from the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Justice Department and other agencies are needed to build host nation capacity to improve economic development, establish effective governance, and institute the “rule of law” which are essential for stability.

Do you believe that the U.S. government needs to establish new procedures to manage stability operations? If so, why?

We should certainly capture the lessons of ten years of conflict. DoD policy regarding stability operations adequately clarifies roles and responsibilities. We now treat stability operations as a core U.S. military mission and are prepared to conduct those operations on par with major combat operations in support of other U.S. Government departments and agencies. If confirmed, I will continue to assess our ability to conduct stability operations, and I will remain open to ideas and issues that might suggest needed change.

In Afghanistan, the Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 works in partnership with the Government of Afghanistan, the U.S. interagency, and international partners to conduct detention and corrections operations and promote the rule of law and judicial sector reform.

What role do you believe the Department of Defense should play in providing training and advocacy for “rule of law” development in Iraq and Afghanistan?

With respect to Iraq and Afghanistan, the “rule of law” is essential for the creation of stable and enduring democratic governments that can prevent the return of terrorists. I strongly support the State Department’s lead in building rule of law capacity in both of these countries. The Department of Defense has the capability and capacity to provide “rule of law” related training in a supporting role for civilian and military leaders.

Afghanistan Counterinsurgency Strategy

Do you support the counterinsurgency strategy for Afghanistan? In your view, is that the right strategy?

Yes. Over the past 18 months we have made significant gains in halting Taliban momentum and reversing it in many places. The surge has allowed us to establish security in previously held Taliban areas such as Central Helmand and Kandahar, areas of historic importance to the insurgency, and to expand Afghan National Security Force capacity and capability. As we drawdown our surge force in

Afghanistan and partner with Afghan forces, this will serve to expand the Afghan National Security Forces' responsibilities and their control of Afghanistan.

If confirmed, are there changes you would recommend to the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan? For example, would you support an increase in counter-terrorism action in Afghanistan?

In my judgment, the current U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is on track. Counter-terrorism forces support the ISAF campaign plan and are certain to remain an integral part of this effort. If confirmed, and if conditions on the ground warranted a re-evaluation of an aspect of the current strategy, I would unhesitatingly provide my recommendations to the Secretary of Defense and President.

What is your assessment of the progress of the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan?

We have made important gains over the past eighteen months, and we have reached a point in the campaign where a responsible drawdown in U.S. surge forces is possible. An increasing number of Afghan forces will join the fight in protecting Afghanistan over the next fifteen months, and the international community has demonstrated its intention to support Afghanistan until at least 2014.

In your view, how significant an impact does the death of Osama Bin Laden have on the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan?

The death of Osama Bin Laden is important as it demonstrated our ability to deny safe haven to al-Qaeda (AQ) members and our commitment to disrupt, dismantle and defeat AQ. While it is too early to fully understand the long term impact of his death, I believe, the mutual relationship between AQ and the Taliban has been dealt a severe blow and that we have an opportunity to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven and staging area for AQ.

Transition of Security Responsibility in Afghanistan and U.S. Troop Reductions

On June 22nd, President Obama announced his decision to draw down 10,000 U.S. troops from Afghanistan by the end of this year and to withdraw the remaining 23,000 "surge" force by September 2012, for a total drawdown of 33,000.

Do you support the President's decision to begin reducing U.S. forces in July 2011? Why or why not?

Yes, I agree with the President's decision. If confirmed, I will constantly monitor and assess the situation in consultation with the theater commanders and should it be determined that the situation has changed, I will advise Secretary of Defense and President.

Do you support the President's decision regarding the size and pace of reductions in U.S. forces? Why or why not?

Yes. I support the President's announced drawdown goals for a condition-based withdrawal of surge forces. As these surge forces are withdrawn, the ANSF will continue to grow in capacity and capability while assuming more responsibility. This component of the strategy is designed to safeguard the significant gains made possible by the surge. I believe the strategy is working at this time. If confirmed, and if conditions on the ground warranted a re-evaluation of both the pace and scope of the draw down, I would unhesitatingly provide my recommendations.

At the NATO Summit in Lisbon last November, the participants in the International Security Assistance Force endorsed President Karzai's goal of the Afghanistan National Security Forces having the primary responsibility for providing security throughout Afghanistan by 2014. In March of this year, President Karzai announced the first tranche of provinces and municipal districts designated for the transition of security responsibility to an Afghan lead.

Do you support the goal of transitioning responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan to the Afghan security forces by 2014?

Yes. There is still a significant amount of work to be done but, I believe, the transition of security can be accomplished to meet this objective.

Do you support the decision to begin this month the transition of lead security responsibility to the Afghan security forces in the areas announced by President Karzai, with that initial transition of security lead to be completed by the end of the year?

Yes. The first round of transition includes areas such as Lash Kar Gah in Helmand Province, an area where we significantly invested the surge force and has since seen a remarkable change in the security environment. ANSF is providing the bulk of security responsibility in Lash Kar Gah today. This is also true in places such as Kabul, Bamyan, Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif, which are also part of the first tranche of the transition process. I would highlight that transition is conditional on the following: transitioned areas have sustainable ANSF who are responsible for population security and accountable to and serve the people; that ISAF is postured to provide over watch; that provincial governance is inclusive, accountable and acceptable to the Afghan people; and that the population has access to basic social services and adequate rule of law.

In your view, how important is it to the counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan that the transition of primary responsibility to the Afghan security forces for providing security throughout Afghanistan be completed by 2014?

I think that momentum in Afghanistan has broadly shifted. The ANSF are on track to begin the transition process by assuming lead security responsibilities in several areas of the country. In my judgment, the transition of security will also aid in the legitimization of the Afghan government, removing some of the impetus behind insurgents who claim to only seek the departure of foreigners.

In your view, how important is it to the counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan that the initial round of transitioning security responsibility to the Afghan security forces begins in July and be completed by the end of the year?

Transitioning to Afghan lead for security responsibility in the Tranche 1 areas is a critical part of our comprehensive civil-military campaign in Afghanistan. As we seek to eliminate safe havens from which al-Qaeda (AQ) or its affiliates can launch attacks against our homeland or our allies, the Afghan Government must step up its ability to protect its people and move forward with actions to build a more stable, economically viable country. If confirmed, I will remain committed to supporting transfer of lead security responsibility to the Afghan Government by the end of 2014.

Afghanistan National Security Forces

Approximately 100,000 more personnel have been added to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) since November 2009 and by September 2012 another 70,000 Afghan Army and police personnel will be added. The NATO training mission is ahead of schedule for meeting its target end strength of 305,000 ANSF by October of this year. A new ANSF target end strength of 352,000 by 2012 is awaiting final approval by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board.

What is your assessment of the progress in developing a professional and effective Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF)?

The ANSF continues to improve and is developing into a more professional and capable force with each passing day. In May 2011, the Afghan National Army (ANA) completed the fielding of all of their required infantry kandaks—the ANA equivalent of a US battalion. With the fielding of the last infantry kandak, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) shifted its focus from force generation to force professionalization. The additional support from NTM-A will enable the ANSF to assume security lead of Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

If approved, will an ANSF end strength of 352,000 be sufficient in your view to enable the ANSF to assume lead responsibility for security in Afghanistan?

Based on the current security environment, I believe so. Once all of the 352,000 personnel are fielded, the ANSF should be capable of assuming lead responsibility for security in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. If confirmed, however, I will closely monitor progress to assess whether the ANSF and Afghanistan government are taking ownership of their responsibilities.

What do you see as the main challenges to building the capacity of the ANSF and, if confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you make for addressing those challenges?

The three primary challenges for the ANSF are literacy, the lack of enablers, and force attrition. We are assisting the ANSF by providing literacy training, supporting the development of branch schools, and helping with leader development programs. If confirmed, I will explore all options to increase ANSF capacity by working closely with Afghan, US military and civilian leaders and our international partners.

There remains a shortfall in the number of training personnel required for the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A) and in the number of embedded training teams, the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) embedding with Afghan Army units and the Police OMLTs (POMLTs) embedding with Afghan Police units. This shortfall may become more acute if the new end strength target of 352,000 for the ANSF by 2012 is approved.

What more should be done to get NATO members and other coalition partners to meet the ISAF requirements for additional NTM-A trainers and OMLTs and POMLTs?

Our NATO allies and other coalition partners have demonstrated a strong commitment to the mission in Afghanistan over the years. As we move forward, we must continue to engage our partners on the importance and need for NATO/SHAPE HQ, HQ ISAF, and representatives of the NATO training mission. They share our view that a strong and capable ANSF is the key to achieve our objectives. Personnel with specialized skills such as police, logisticians, medical personnel, and maintenance specialists are essential. We must also engage coalition members to get their assistance in filling requirements for troops to partner with the ANSF.

If the 352,000 ANSF end strength target is approved, what challenges would this present in generating the necessary training personnel to build these Afghan security forces?

There are obvious challenges associated with training a larger force. Although there is work being done to fill all vacant trainer requirements, a shortfall of trainers remains. While this shortage may delay the development of ANSF, it is my understanding that NTM-A is exploring all options to compensate for the shortfall.

If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you have for meeting these challenges?

The ANSF have made significant gains in creating Afghan trainers. The ANA and ANP are participating in Teach the Instructor (T2I) programs in order to build their own internal training capacity. The ANP have trained 474 instructors and are on track to have 900 instructors trained by December 2011. Between the U.S., Coalition, and Afghan trainers, my understanding is that we will have sufficient capacity to meet most training requirements

A key component of efforts to build the capacity of Afghan security forces is partnering ANSF units together with ISAF units in the field. An April DOD report states that field reports suggest that a partnership ratio of greater than 3 ISAF personnel to one ANSF personnel “reduces the effectiveness of the ANSF’s participation” and that “ANSF are more motivated and, hence, more effective when the partnership ratio [between ISAF and ANSF personnel] is closer to even.”

In your view, how effective has partnering been in building the capacity of the Afghan Army and Afghan police?

We are committed to partnering. Partnering builds the capacity of Afghan security forces in terms of capability, confidence, and professionalism in the field. The last 18 months have seen significant strides in our baseline training, but our partnership efforts have proven to be the most effective training mechanism. The benefits of partnering work both ways. Our Afghan counterparts have made the most rapid improvements where we have higher partnering ratios and where our troops live and fight alongside their Afghan partners. In addition, our effectiveness increases since Afghan forces understand the human and cultural terrain in ways that we do not.

Would you anticipate ISAF-ANSF partnering moving to a partnership ratio below 1:1 (fewer than 1 ISAF soldier for every ANSF soldier) as the capability of Afghan security forces improves?

Yes. Over time, we will move from partnered operations, to providing support with Afghans in the lead, and finally to coalition forces in strategic over-watch. There are units already below a 1:1 partner ratio, and there are increasingly more areas where Afghans are in the lead or operating independently. For example, in Kabul Province, Afghans lead almost all operations.

Reconciliation and Reintegration

Under what conditions, if any, should reconciliation talks with the Taliban leadership be pursued?

Ending the insurgency in Afghanistan will require some sort of political settlement between the Afghan Government and the Taliban. This settlement must be brokered among the Afghans themselves. To this end, I support an Afghan-led reconciliation effort consistent with US policy for reconciliation as laid out

by the Secretary of State. In particular, those who are willing to renounce violence, cut ties with al-Qaeda, and respect the Afghan Constitution – to include the rights of women and ethnic minorities – should be welcomed as part of this process.

What is your understanding and assessment of the current program for reintegrating insurgent fighters willing to lay down their arms? What additional steps, if any, should be taken to improve the reintegration program?

It is my understanding that the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) is an essential component of our comprehensive civil-military campaign. The goal of this Afghan program is to convince insurgents to join the peace process, accept the Afghan constitution, renounce violence, and rejoin Afghan society. Regarding additional steps to improve the program, it's important to note that this program is still relatively new in many provinces. One challenge among many is the capacity to channel funds from the Afghan national level down to the provincial level. Funding at the local level enables many of the reintegration opportunities as they emerge. If confirmed, I will more closely assess the status of this program.

U.S. Strategic Relationship with Pakistan

What in your view are the key U.S. strategic interests with regard to Pakistan?

Our strategic interests and national security goals remain to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and its militant allies, and eliminate their capacity to threaten the U.S. and its allies in the future. Tactically, Pakistan secures our southern lines of communication into Afghanistan. We also have an interest in stable Pakistan and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology. U.S. strategic interests in Pakistan encompass both our relationship with Pakistan itself and Pakistan's role in the campaign against violent extremists. Our partnership with Pakistan in the context of the greater South Asia region holds great potential for security, economic advancement, and stability.

What in your view are the key lessons from the operation to kill Osama Bin Laden for the U.S.-Pakistan relationship?

Our relationship must be pragmatic. Pakistan supports us in several key areas. We should leverage those areas and “meter” our support for them against their support of us. That said, I strongly believe we must maintain a relationship with Pakistan.

How significant do you believe military-to-military relations have been for the development of a strategic relationship between the United States and Pakistan?

Our senior military engagements, and especially our security assistance and cooperation programs, have been essential to laying the foundations for effective military cooperation between our two countries. But these are only foundations. A true strategic relationship is only possible when our countries come to appreciate more closely the compatibility of our vital interests in the region. And this can only come through a whole-of-government approach that strengthens civilian institutions, promotes the rule of law, and supports economic development.

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

If confirmed, I would sustain the general approach to security cooperation endorsed by the Secretary of Defense and President. From my perspective, the guiding tenet of security cooperation is to assist in areas the host nation considers important, but that also respects the shared interests of the host nation and the U.S. We should not push programs the Pakistanis do not want because doing so dilutes the value of U.S cooperation. Nor should we feel compelled to provide equipment or training just because we are asked. A frank and respectful dialogue is intrinsic to successful security cooperation.

Since 2001, the United States has provided significant military assistance to Pakistan, including foreign military financing and training and equipment through the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund to build the capacity of the Pakistan Army and Frontier Scouts to conduct counterinsurgency operations. In addition, the United States has provided significant funds to reimburse Pakistan for the costs associated with military operations conducted by Pakistan along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and other support provided in connection with Operation Enduring Freedom.

How effective, in your view, has this assistance been in improving Pakistan's efforts and commitment to counter terrorists in Pakistan?

The Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund (PCF) has produced some important initial results for Pakistan's Frontier Scouts, the Special Services Group, and other organizations. The quality of tactical maneuver, communications, marksmanship, and intelligence fusion have improved survivability and performance in combat against extremist groups which threaten Pakistan and the U.S. efforts in Afghanistan. US programs offer the potential of exceptional value for both our countries, but cannot succeed without the buy-in and invitation of Pakistan's sovereign leadership and continued support of the U.S. Congress.

Iran

Iran continues to expand its nuclear program and has failed to provide full and open access to all aspects of its current and historic nuclear program to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

What more do you believe the United States and the international community should be doing, if anything, to dissuade Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapons program?

If confirmed, I will support the policy objectives for Iran established by the President. It is my understanding that we continue to apply pressure on Iran to make it clear that Iran's failure to meet its international obligations will make it less secure and prosperous. Concurrently, we should continue to encourage Iran to become a responsible member of the international community.

What is your understanding and assessment of the military threat posed by Iran from its nuclear program and its ballistic missile program?

Iran is a destabilizing influence in the region. It is my understanding that the government of Iran continues to enrich uranium, pursue nuclear capabilities, enhance its ballistic missile program, and has failed to provide full and open access to all aspects of its current and historic nuclear program to the International Atomic Energy Agency. With its nuclear activities and its surrogate activities in southern Iraq, there is a high potential that Iran will make a serious miscalculation of US resolve.

In your view, have the various sanctions that have been imposed by the international community reduced the military abilities of Iran?

International sanctions have hindered Iran's weapons procurement efforts and driven up the costs associated with obtaining necessary components for its military. Sanctions also appear to have slowed Iran's progress on its nuclear program. It has also become increasingly difficult for Iran to import needed materials or skills for its military programs.

Osama Bin Laden and al Qaeda

If your view, will the death of Osama Bin Laden have a significant impact on the conflict against Al Qaeda and if so, how?

The death of Osama bin Laden is a significant milestone in our campaign to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda. The successful operation does not mean we can rest, but rather we have a window of opportunity to make new gains toward the strategic defeat of al-Qaeda. It is too early to assess the long term impact of his death, but it clearly conveys our persistence, determination, and capability to achieve our goals.

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al Qaeda affiliates to the U.S. homeland, U.S. interests overseas, and Western interests more broadly? Which affiliates are of most concern?

The killing of al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden may increase the threat from al-Qaeda's regional nodes to the U.S. Homeland and U.S. interests overseas. Each of the regional nodes— al -Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Qaeda in Iraq, Somalia-based al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula — eulogized Bin Laden and vowed attacks against the U.S. in retaliation. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula has demonstrated its intent and capability to carry out an attack targeting the U.S. Homeland, as evidenced by the group's 25 December 2009 attempted bombing of a U.S. airliner on approach to Detroit. Each of the other three nodes remain largely focused on attacks within their respective regions, though each is likely capable of supporting operatives engaged in transnational attack planning against U.S. or Western interests in Europe and possibly the U.S.

Arab Spring

The Arab Spring has changed – and will likely continue to change – the political dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa for many years to come. These changes will require the United States to adjust our military-to-military and defense civilian relations in this region. Some observers argue that the U.S. should reduce significantly our military-to-military contact in countries as a result of the ongoing changes and others advocate more robust and stepped-up contact with our partners in this region.

In your view, what should be the posture of the U.S. Government on military-to-military and defense civilian relations in the region?

In my judgment, we have a unique opportunity to support some of the Arab Spring reform movements through our military relationships. It is my understanding that the Department and our Combatant Commands are reviewing our policies and posture in the region to enhance our ability to promote responsible change. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our programs and policies further our national

interests while strengthening our relations in the region.

Libya

Do you support the limited U.S. military mission in Libya?

Yes. We are operating in Libya as part of an international coalition enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973. Our role is to support and assist our partners in protecting innocent civilians in Libya. The U.S. military provides unique capabilities to this effort such as electronic warfare, aerial refueling, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and unmanned aerial systems.

Do you support broadening the military mission to include regime change?

The purpose of our military mission, consistent the UN Security Resolution 1973, is to protect innocent civilians. As directed by the President, we are using all non-military instruments of power to apply further pressure on the Qadhafi regime to end the conflict. If confirmed, I would consider a wide array of factors before providing my advice on whether the military mission should be changed for any reason.

Should the United States provide arms and training to the Libyan rebels?

It is my understanding the Administration has chosen not to provide arms or training to the rebels at this time. The purpose of our military action is grounded in UNSCR 1973, to protect the Libyan people in population centers like Benghazi from a massacre at the hands of Qadhafi's forces. If confirmed, I would assess the full range of implications for providing arms and training before making any recommendation.

East Africa – al Qaeda and al Shabaab

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al Qaeda and al Shabaab to the U.S. and Western interests in East Africa and to the U.S. homeland?

The al-Shabaab threat to U.S. and Western interests in East Africa is significant. While al-Shabaab remains focused on resisting the current Transitional Federal Government and African Union Mission in Somalia, the group has the capability to plan attacks against U.S. and Western interests in East Africa. The April 2009 attacks in Kampala proved their capability to stage simultaneous suicide attacks, and senior al Qaeda in East Africa operative Harun Fazul had evidence of advanced plans to attack European allies with him at the time of his death. Finally, Al-Shabaab's effort to recruit U.S. persons increases the threat to the U.S. Homeland.

What is your understanding of DOD's role in countering the threat posed by al Qaeda in East Africa and al Shabaab? What is your understanding of DOD's supporting role to other departments and agencies of the U.S. Government in this region?

It is my understanding that DoD in concert with interagency partners has provided security assistance to regional partner nations to counter threats from violent extremists. Some of that support is also aimed directly at improving counter-terrorism capabilities. I cannot provide detail about the operations we are supporting, but I can say the work remains critical to our goal of strategically defeating al Qaeda and its affiliates.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to DOD's current role in East Africa?

If confirmed, I do not anticipate making any immediate changes to DoD's role in East Africa. It is my understanding that U.S. Africa Command is looking at how best to direct our military efforts in the region to work in concert with our interagency partners. In my judgment, our goal is a strategy through which security assistance, capacity building, cooperation with regional partners, and counter-terrorism actions are fully integrated to provide security and stability in East Africa.

Yemen and al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

What is your assessment of the current U.S. strategy in Yemen and what is your understanding of the role of DOD within that strategy?

The current strategy in Yemen remains our best option. The near term goal of containing and degrading al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) while pursuing long term initiatives to create a stable Yemen that can provide internal security remain valid even amidst domestic turmoil. A stable, unified, and economically viable Yemen, free of violent extremist, remains in our best interest. My understanding of DoD's role is that Central Command works with inter-agency partners to build Yemen's counter-terrorism capacity and enhance our partnerships. Separately, select elements within DoD work with the Yemeni government to disrupt near-term threats to the U.S. Homeland. This effort is intended to provide time and space for the Yemeni security forces to increase their effectiveness and eventually eliminate Yemen as an al-Qaeda safe haven.

Given the ongoing political upheaval and splintering of the military in Yemen, what are your views on the U.S. continuing to provide security assistance – most significantly DOD section 1206 funding – to Yemeni counterterrorism forces?

The ongoing unrest has already weakened the Yemeni government and economy and has allowed al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to expand its influence. We will continue to closely evaluate our security assistance programs in Yemen, particularly those provided under Section 1206. It is my understanding that we expect to continue counterterrorism cooperation with the Yemeni government during and after any future political transitions, but that we are prepared to reevaluate our partnership as necessary to address the changing military situation. If confirmed, I will be attentive to the potential need to reconsider our approach.

NATO

In a speech to allies in Brussels in June, then-Secretary of Defense Gates delivered a blunt warning about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) becoming “a two-tiered alliance.” Secretary Gates described a division between “members who specialize in ‘soft’ humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and talking tasks, and those conducting the ‘hard’ combat missions,” and between “those willing and able to pay the price and bear the burdens of alliance commitments, and those who enjoy the benefits of NATO membership...but don't want to share the risks and the costs.” He added, “This is no longer a hypothetical worry. We are there today. And it is unacceptable.”

In your view, how important is the NATO alliance to U.S. national security interests?

The NATO Alliance is vital to the United States. It is a collective defense alliance and forum for security

dialogue that has maintained the trans-Atlantic link and kept Europe peaceful for the past 60 years. NATO remains equally important today providing the foundation for European and supporting global security. NATO is the critical enabler for coalition operations in Afghanistan, and it is leading operations in Libya.

Do you agree with former Secretary Gates that NATO is today a two-tiered alliance?

I have not been in a position to evaluate it in that way. What I do know is that some Allies have made the political decision to limit the resources dedicated to defense. This has forced critical choices between spending money on transforming their militaries and contributing to Alliance operations. It has also resulted in an overall loss of effectiveness, which, while initially minor, has compounded over time. Some Allies remain capable partners, while others' past decisions now limit their ability to contribute to collective security.

Given the significant budgetary constraints facing many NATO allies, what in your view needs to be done to enhance the capabilities of the NATO alliance to undertake combat operations?

Several NATO Allies are planning further cuts to defense investment in order to sustain their operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere while coping with financial constraints. To enhance capabilities, Allies must prioritize, seek efficiencies and cost savings, and invest those savings into maintaining credible military power. Additionally, those countries that can afford to should expand their investment in defense. Investments should be coordinated among Allies, and we all must be mindful of threats and risks to collective security.

What are the greatest opportunities and challenges that you foresee for NATO in meeting its strategic objectives over the next five years?

NATO's new Strategic Concept is an important step in ensuring that NATO will continue to play its unique and essential role in ensuring the common security of its members as well as guide the next phase in NATO's evolution. Over the next five years, the top NATO challenges include: achieving durable progress on a successful transition in Afghanistan; implementing missile defense in Europe; and stemming the deterioration in European military capability. However, this is also an opportunity for Allies to develop innovative multi-national solutions to deliver capabilities in a more cost-effective manner such as the C-17 Strategic Airlift Consortium.

In your view, is there a continuing requirement for U.S. nuclear weapons to be deployed in NATO countries?

NATO's New Strategic Concept states NATO's commitment to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. However, it also made clear that as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO has initiated a review of its overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance. NATO's new Strategic Concept reflects Allies' commitment to a nuclear alliance and to nuclear burden sharing as fundamental to deterrence and assurance in Europe.

U.S. Force Posture in Europe

In April it was announced that following an extensive review of its force posture in Europe, the Department will revise its plans to withdraw 2 of 4 brigade combat teams (BCTs) from Europe,

and instead retain 3 BCTs in Europe. The drawdown of one BCT from Europe will not be implemented until 2015, when a reduced demand on U.S. ground forces is projected.

Do you support the decision to reduce the U.S. force posture in Europe by one BCT?

I support the decision to retain 3 BCTs in Europe. It strikes the best balance between responding to a more constrained fiscal environment and the need to maintain a flexible and easily deployable ground force to meet Article 5 and other NATO commitments. This size force will also allow the U.S. to engage effectively with Allies and partners and to satisfy other security objectives.

What do you see as the U.S. security priorities in Europe and would retaining 3 BCTs in Europe beyond 2015 serve those security priorities? Why or why not?

U.S. security priorities in Europe are focused on meeting our Article 5 NATO security commitments, building partnership capacity, and engaging with allies and partners. Additionally, the U.S. and NATO allies are preparing to meet a broad range of 21st century threats, including new challenges such as missile defense, cyber security, countering weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism at home and abroad. In my judgment, retaining three distinct types of BCTs in Europe (Heavy, Stryker, and Airborne) enables EUCOM to meet a wide array of engagement, building partner capacity, and interoperability objectives while being prepared to support a full range of military operations needed for plausible European and global contingencies.

U.S. Force Posture in the Asia Pacific Region

The Defense Department's 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, DOD "will augment and adapt our forward presence" in the Asia-Pacific region.

Do you agree that the U.S. needs to augment and adapt our presence in the Asia-Pacific?

Yes. The Nation's strategic priorities and interests will increasingly emanate from the Asia-Pacific region. The rise of new powers with their growing share of global wealth, the expanding influence of non-state actors, and the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will create a security environment that poses profound challenges to international security. The U.S. military should maintain an enduring military presence in the Asia-Pacific region that provides tangible reassurance that we are committed to Asia's security and the prosperity essential to the region's success.

If so, what specific capabilities or enhancements are needed in your view?

If confirmed, I will review our military's force posture in Asia and make appropriate recommendations on any enhancements. In general, U.S. presence must remain capable of reassuring our Allies and partners in the region while positioning us to deter against—and if necessary, defeat—the full range of potential threats. Our actions in the Asia-Pacific region should encourage greater regional security cooperation by strengthening and expanding our bilateral and multilateral relationships so that we preserve stability in Northeast Asia while investing new attention and resources in Southeast and South Asia.

What do you see as the U.S. security priorities in the Asia-Pacific region?

Our alliances in Asia have provided the bedrock for security and economic prosperity in the region. We must continue to deepen these alliances while evolving them to face current and emerging threats. Our security priorities in this region should promote regional peace and stability while combating such threats as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy, and cyber security threats. Additionally, we must work to maintain free and open access to the maritime, air, and space domains.

North Korea

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

North Korea remains the primary threat to security in Northeast Asia. The security situation on the peninsula has reached high levels of tension over the past year with the attack on the Cheonan and the artillery shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. North Korea continues to improve its asymmetric capabilities including weapons of mass destruction (WMD), ballistic missiles, special operations forces, and cyber capabilities. Absent evidence of fundamental change, North Korea will remain a serious security threat in the region and a significant concern for the U.S. and the international community.

In your opinion, what should be the U.S. role in the South Korean response to any future North Korean attacks or provocations?

The U.S. role as part of a combined force with the Republic of Korea (ROK) is to deter North Korean aggression and if deterrence fails, fight and win. This mission is accomplished through the employment of agile and well-trained forces within the ROK–U.S Alliance.

In your view does the lack of progress in diplomatic efforts to persuade North Korea to verifiably dismantle its nuclear weapons program inform or guide U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy in the region?

In my judgment, the U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy has helped prevent the resumption of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula for more than half a century. Successful deterrence creates the space within which diplomacy can operate. The success of diplomatic efforts, however, will ultimately hinge on the willingness of North Korea to comply with the agreements it makes.

What is your assessment of the threat posed to the United States and its allies by North Korea's ballistic missile and WMD capabilities and the export of those capabilities?

North Korea's missile and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs are increasingly a direct threat to the U.S. These programs already pose a serious and real threat to U.S. regional allies and partners. The U.S. must continue to monitor North Korea's capabilities and related proliferation, while collaborating with our partners and allies, to ensure contingency planning remains adaptive and responsive.

In your view are there additional steps that DOD could take to ensure that North Korea does not proliferate missile and weapons technology to Syria, Iran and others?

Proliferation of missile and weapon technology by North Korea is a regional and global threat. In my judgment, there may be additional steps that can be taken consistent with the President's policy. If confirmed, I will work to ensure continued coordination and cooperation between DoD, other U.S. agencies, and our international partners to strengthen international consensus against proliferation, invest in capacity building programs with partner nations, and find ways to increase WMD-related information sharing with international partners.

Republic of Korea

What is your understanding of the current U. S. security relationship with the Republic of Korea (ROK)?

The ROK-U.S. alliance is one of the most successful alliances in the world and serves the interests of both of our nations. The U.S. is committed to the security of the peninsula and ensuring the alliance remains a comprehensive, strategic partnership with bilateral, regional, and global scope. The alliance's resolve has never been stronger, and we should continue to advance the alliance in terms of both capability and commitment.

If confirmed, what measures, if any, would you take to improve the U.S.-ROK security relationship?

If confirmed, I will continue to maintain close contact with my South Korean counterpart to promote the continuation of a strong U.S.-ROK security relationship. The DoD and the ROK should continue to work closely to realign U.S. forces on the Peninsula and prepare for the transition of wartime operational control to the ROK by December 2015. U.S. forces should continue the plan to reposition south of Seoul, making the U.S. presence less intrusive to the Korean People and improving force readiness and quality of life.

What is your view regarding the timing of turning over wartime operational command to the ROK?

The South Korean military is a highly capable and professional force and is increasing its ability to lead the defense of its country. I appreciate that the U.S. and the ROK have a shared understanding on a comprehensive way forward for the transfer of wartime operational control by December 2015. If confirmed, I will continue to work with my ROK counterpart to advance this process.

Do you believe that current planning regarding tour normalization in the ROK should be reconsidered in view of the high cost of the plan and the risks associated with significantly higher numbers of dependents on the Korean peninsula?

If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate the associated costs and benefits of implementation and make recommendations based upon proposed force posture and best way forward. I understand the goal of tour normalization is to enhance the quality of life for our forward-stationed forces and their families. A stable family improves operational readiness. DOD's long-term goal remains full tour normalization with the timeline to be determined based upon affordability.

China

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

In my judgment, we should welcome a strong, prosperous, and successful China that plays a responsible role in world affairs. China's economic growth has been a key factor for the Asia-Pacific regions' economic growth and development. Its economic growth has also allowed China to embark upon a comprehensive transformation of its military forces. However, a lack of transparency into the pace and

scale of China's military modernization raises concerns within the region. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor China's military development and engage China to promote stability.

What do you believe are the objectives of China's military modernization program?

If confirmed, my new responsibilities will allow me to more closely examine this issue. From my current perspective, China appears to be building the capability to fight and win short duration, high-intensity conflicts along its periphery, with a near-term focus on preparing for potential contingencies involving Taiwan. This appears to include an emphasis anti-access and area denial capabilities. China is also devoting increasing attention and resources to conducting operations beyond Taiwan and China's immediate periphery as evidenced by public revelations about their aircraft carrier program. China is modernizing its nuclear forces and strengthening its nuclear deterrence capability, while enhancing its strategic strike capabilities, such as space and counter-space operations and computer network operations. Additional military missions include humanitarian assistance, non-combat evacuation operations, and counter-piracy support.

How do you believe the United States should respond to China's military modernization program?

If confirmed, I would continue to use our interactions with China's military to encourage a constructive role in addressing common security challenges. Force posture, presence, capability developments, and actions that strengthen our alliances and partnerships will demonstrate our ability and commitment to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific.

Do you support the sale of F-16 C/D aircraft to Taiwan?

I have not yet had the opportunity to study in detail Taiwan's defense needs; however, in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act, we have a responsibility to make available to Taiwan defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. Our China policy has been consistent for the past eight U.S. administrations, and supports the Three Joint U.S.-PRC Communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act.

In the past six months, the U.S. and China have had a series of high level military-to-military engagements beginning with Secretary Gates' visit to China in January which was followed by Chinese General Chen Bingde's visit to the United States in May. Most recently, Admiral Mullen traveled to China to meet with General Chen and to visit Chinese military sites. Nonetheless, the U.S-China military-to-military dialogue has been strained over the past several years and efforts to establish and maintain mutually beneficial military relations has been hampered by China's propensity for postponing or canceling military engagements in an apparent effort to influence U.S. actions.

What is your general experience with U.S.-China military-to-military relations?

My experience so far has been fairly limited during my short tenure as Chief of Staff of the Army. My interactions with my PLA counterpart and other senior leaders have focused on the positive aspects of a military-to-military relationship to increase cooperation between our nations.

What is your view of the relative importance of sustained military-to-military relations with China?

I firmly believe that healthy, stable, reliable, and continuous military-to-military relations between the U.S. and China are very important.

Do you believe we should make any changes in the quality or quantity of our military relations with China? If so, what changes and why?

I understand General Chen's recent visit to the United States and Admiral Mullen's trip to China to signify progress in the relationship. If confirmed, I will certainly strive to further improve the U.S.-China military-to-military relationship, both in terms of quantity of exchanges and, more importantly, the *quality* of the events.

What is your understanding of U.S. military operations in the proximity of the South China Sea and do you think the U.S. should make any changes in those operations?

The U.S. military is committed to maintaining peace and stability, freedom of navigation, open access, and respect for law in international waters, including the South China Sea.

Department of Defense Counternarcotics Activities

On an annual basis, DOD's counternarcotics (CN) program expends approximately \$1.5 billion to support the Department's CN operations, building the capacity of certain foreign governments around the globe, and analyzing intelligence on CN-related matters. In a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, GAO found that DOD "does not have an effective performance measurement system to track the progress of its counternarcotics activities." This is the second such finding by GAO related to DOD CN in the last decade.

What is your understanding and assessment of the DOD CN program?

Drug trafficking and transnational organized crime continues to be a complex threat to the U.S. and its interests abroad. I have not had an opportunity to assess the DoD's counternarcotics program fully. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring the DoD's program supports our nation's interests and our foreign partners, aligns with the National Drug Control Strategy, and strives to achieve measureable results.

In your personal view, should DOD continue to play a role in attempting to stem the flow of illegal narcotics?

Based on my experience, confronting this issue requires a whole-of-government approach to confront the flow of illicit narcotics, associated transnational organized criminal activity, and potential terrorist connections. Interagency collaboration has been critically important to the progress made since the 1980s and should continue. Additionally, DoD's existing partnerships with countries throughout the world contribute considerably to U.S. government efforts to confront this global problem.

Counter-Piracy Operations

Since January 2009, the U.S. Navy has been patrolling the waters of the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia as part of the international coalition engaged in counter-piracy operations. While there have been some high profile interdictions and arrests, data suggests that the number of pirate attacks has not been diminished in any meaningful way. To the contrary, piracy in that

region remains a significant problem.

What is your assessment of the counter-piracy mission to date?

The presence of the coalition navies continues to deter and prevent individual pirate attacks, reducing the success rates of pirate attacks by 15% in the Horn of Africa region.

What changes, if any, do you believe are necessary in terms of the level of effort by the U.S. and coalition countries and also in terms of strategy and tactics?

It is my understanding that current DoD and coalition tactics and procedures are proving effective, especially when executed in conjunction with commercial vessels adhering to industry Best Management Practices (BMPs). Due to the size of the affected region, additional naval vessels would not necessarily provide significant increase in return on the investment. However, using other instruments of government power, such as disrupting pirates' financial networks or increasing the judicial capacity and capability throughout East Africa, would likely have a greater return on USG investment.

Do you think the DOD should continue the counter-piracy mission, as it has been conducted over the past few years, and, if so, how long do you think the Navy can continue the mission without experiencing any adverse effect on other missions?

Yes. As articulated in the President's Maritime Security Policy and the NSS Counter Piracy Action Plan, the U.S. has a unique leadership role in protecting high seas freedom and global sea lines of communication, noting that piracy threatens U.S. security and economic interests and contributes to regional instability. of pirated vessels.

International Peacekeeping Contributions

In testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (July 29, 2009), Ambassador Susan Rice, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, stated that the United States "is willing to consider directly contributing more military observers, military staff officers, civilian police, and other civilian personnel—including more women I should note—to UN peacekeeping operations."

What is your view on whether the U.S. should contribute more military personnel to both staff positions and military observers in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations?

Our troop commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan remain substantial and take first priority in my judgment. As these commitments change, however, I believe that we should consider opportunities for U.S. personnel to contribute to U.N. peacekeeping missions. Experience shows that even a small number of trained and experienced American service members can have a significant, positive effect on U.N. operations.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of contributing additional military personnel to U.N. operations?

I regard U.N. peacekeeping operations as a cost-effective alternative to unilateral U.S. military action. These missions save civilian lives, promote stability, and support American interests around the world. U.S. service members can have a very positive impact on U.N. operations, especially in areas where our troops can deliver hard-to-find expertise, like logistics and intelligence. If confirmed, I would carefully

weigh the advantages of additional participation in U.N. peacekeeping against potential costs including an increase in the operational tempo of our force. I would also acknowledge the reality that in some cases, U.S. boots on the ground may not be supportive of the mission's desired end state. In these cases, we may be able to achieve our objectives in other ways.

If confirmed, would you support identifying methods through which the DOD personnel system could be more responsive to requests for personnel support from multilateral institutions like the United Nations?

I'm not aware that we have been unresponsive. If confirmed, I will seek to learn more about this issue.

Counter Threat Finance

A number of officials in DOD and the intelligence community (IC) have called for investing significantly more resources in identifying and tracking the flow of money associated with terrorist networks and illicit trafficking.

What are your views on the role of DOD in counter threat finance activities?

To defeat a network it must be attacked in each of its components including leadership, operations, supply, and financing. DoD has an important role in counter threat finance activities. Terrorist activities and illicit networks that traffic narcotics, weapons of mass destruction, or improvised explosive devices can and will leverage funding to further resource and expand their operations. DoD policy is to effectively deny, disrupt, degrade, and defeat our adversaries' ability to attain and utilize financial resources. To penetrate the financial networks of our adversaries, we must leverage the full capabilities of our nation while simultaneously attaining vital assistance from our allies. If confirmed, I will further this effort by working with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, as well as with our partner nations, in order to effectively counter threat finance activities.

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

In my judgment, DoD should continue to work with and support other U.S. Government departments and agencies to conduct counter threat finance activities. If confirmed, I do not anticipate an immediate need to expand the support that DoD is providing, but we certainly must ensure that we are fully engaged in the interagency process to counter threat finance activities.

Transnational criminal organizations in Central America and Mexico are having a debilitating impact on the ability of our foreign partners to govern their nations and provide opportunities for their people.

Do you think expanded Counter Threat Finance activities in this region would be beneficial? If so, what role – if any – should DOD play in those activities?

USNORTHCOM and USSOUTHCOM are helping to shape and leverage unique capabilities in support of our foreign and domestic mission partners. If confirmed, I will examine this issue carefully.

Central America and Mexico

During a recent Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, the Commanders of U.S. Northern Command and Southern Command discussed the increasingly dangerous region along the northern and southern borders of Mexico and the devastating impact transnational criminal organizations are having on the people and security of southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador. The United States has increased its assistance in this region, but – to date – the Department of Defense has had only a small role.

What are your views on the threats posed by transnational criminal organizations in this region?

Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) operating throughout Mexico and Central America are better-armed than many police forces and demonstrate increasing adaptability and sophistication in their methods. Their criminality extends far beyond drugs to extortion, robbery, kidnapping, trafficking in firearms and persons, and many other illegal activities. All of these activities, coupled with the fear, corruption and violence they engender, are having a considerably negative impact on the prosperity and security of our partners in the region.

What is your assessment of DOD's current activities in Mexico and Central America?

U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) have been assisting our regional partners through increased senior level interactions, subject matter expert exchanges, human rights training, mobile training teams, intelligence support, and exercises. Our overall military-to-military relations with Mexico have expanded considerably as have our relationships with Central American nations.

What changes, if any, would you propose to the DOD's current activities in this region?

If confirmed, I would closely examine all aspects of our activities in the region.

Anti-Access and Area Denial

Over the past few years, much has been made of the emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities of certain countries and the prospect that these capabilities may in the future limit the U.S. military's freedom of movement and action in certain regions.

Do you believe emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities are a concern and, if so, what should the U.S. military be doing now and in the next few years to ensure continued access to all strategically important areas?

The proliferation of anti-access and area denial capabilities are of growing concern to the U.S, threatening assured access and our freedom of maneuver on land, sea, air, and space. They also potentially inhibit global commerce by controlling passage through regional chokepoints. If confirmed, I will focus on developing joint capabilities to counter these threats while working with our allies and partners to deter those who would attempt to deny access to the global commons.

Interagency Collaboration

What do you believe are the most important lessons learned from the collaborative interagency efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere?

Among other lessons, it seems clear to me that we have learned that countering insurgent and terrorist threats demands the integration of all instruments of national power toward a common purpose.

How do you believe these efforts can be improved?

If confirmed, I will pursue opportunities for early and regular interagency engagement to foster enduring partnerships and to develop the planning, training, and education necessary for complex operations. We should seek new opportunities to collaborate and identify common mission tasks and related core training objectives. We should seek opportunities to leverage DoD joint training venues and resources to build capacities that improve our ability to work together.

How can the lessons learned in recent years be captured in military doctrine and adopted as “best practices” for future counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations?

As part of the recurring revision of joint doctrine, there is a direct link to joint lessons learned and best practices. If confirmed, I will continue to invest in the ability of our joint force to learn and adapt.

Section 944 of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (P.L. 111-383) required the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to submit a report on the organizational structures of the headquarters of the geographic combatant commands (GCCs). DoD’s report, dated June 2011, highlights the role of “interagency” (i.e., non-DoD, non-intelligence community) representatives at each of the GCCs. Stronger and more effective interagency integration was a central theme in the establishment of U.S. Africa Command and has apparently also informed re-organizations at U.S. Southern Command and other GCCs. Yet a number of observers have suggested that there is still room for improvement in both the nature and extent of interagency integration at the regional level.

In your view, what is the importance, if any, of interagency integration to the ability of DOD’s Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) to execute their missions?

Interagency integration is critical to the ability of the COCOMs to execute their missions. It enables the U.S. Government to build international support, conserve resources, and conduct coherent operations that efficiently achieve shared national and international goals.

If confirmed, how would you envision the appropriate roles of “interagency” representatives at GCCs?

It is my understanding that the Executive Branch’s Interagency Process of national security policy development and implementation integrates all aspects of U.S. national security in a whole-of-government approach to advance our national security interests. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate the roles of interagency representatives at the COCOMs in a similar fashion.

Responsibility to Protect

The U.S. Government has recognized the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) – that is, the responsibility of the international community to use appropriate means to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, by encouraging states to protect their own populations, by helping states build the capacity to do so, and by acting directly should national authorities fail to provide such protection. In its 2010 Quadrennial Defense

Review, the Department of Defense names “preventing human suffering due to mass atrocities” as one of a long list of potential contingencies that DOD might be called on to address. DOD has begun to explore some of the implications of R2P, by considering “mass atrocity prevention and response operations” (MAPRO).

In your view, how high a priority should the “responsibility to protect” be for the U.S. Government as a whole?

Maintaining the will and the ability of the U.S. to prevent human suffering is not only a moral imperative but also an important means to promote our values and increase our influence around the globe. This doesn't seem to me to be an issue of prioritization. A well trained and well led Joint Force can accomplish this mission if called upon to do so.

In your view, what should be the role of DOD, if any, in fulfilling the responsibility to protect?

Given our global reach and organizational capabilities, DoD can play a role in responding to humanitarian disasters including mass atrocities. DoD has played an effective role in support of the efforts of the State Department, USAID, and other agencies to prevent mass atrocities from occurring.

Special Operations Forces

The previous two Quadrennial Defense Reviews have mandated significant growth in our special operations forces and enablers that directly support their operations.

Do you believe that we should further increase the number of special operations personnel? If so, why, and by how much?

The current growth of 3-5% in special operations personnel is appropriate. If confirmed, I will examine if additional growth of Special Forces is needed.

In your view, how can the DOD increase the size of special operations forces while also maintaining the rigorous recruiting, selection, and training standards for special operators?

Although SOF has nearly doubled since 9/11, recruitment, assessment, selection, and training standards have not been altered or lowered.

Do you believe any modifications to USSOCOM's title 10, U.S. Code, missions are appropriate? If so, what modifications would you suggest?

In my judgment, no modifications are required at this time. If confirmed, I remain open to issues and ideas that might suggest modifications should be considered.

What can be done to ensure that indirect special operations missions with medium-and long-term impact, such as unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense, receive as much emphasis as direct action, and that they receive appropriate funding?

The Commander USSOCOM continues to emphasize the importance of the indirect SOF mission profiles and insures that SOF trains to these mission profiles. It is my understanding that we have grown our SOF Civil Affairs and Military Information Support forces to insure we have extra capacity to conduct indirect

operations. If confirmed, I will work with our SOF commanders to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained.

Special Operations Forces

The previous two Quadrennial Defense Reviews have mandated significant growth in our special operations forces and enablers that directly support their operations.

The Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has described the “non-availability” of enabling capabilities as USSOCOM’s “most vexing issue in the operational environment.” The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) sought to balance previously mandated growth in special operations forces with additional enabling capabilities.

What do you believe are the greatest shortages in enabling capabilities facing special operations forces?

Rotary wing aircraft is the single most significant shortage, and we are taking steps to address it. If confirmed, I will work with our SOF commanders to identify and resolve other critical shortfalls.

Do you believe additional enabling capabilities, beyond those mandated by the QDR, are required to support special operations forces?

It is my understanding that the Services and USSOCOM are increasing enabling capabilities as mandated by the QDR. The Force Sufficiency Assessment should inform our senior leaders in deciding whether more enabling capabilities are needed.

Do you believe the process for special operations forces to request enabling capabilities from the services, when required, should be formalized? If so, how?

This process is formalized in the Global Force Management Board (GFMB) Force Allocation process. The SOCOM Commander and I are in discussion about adapting the process for the Army based on the lessons of the past 10 years. If confirmed, I will closely monitor these processes to ensure SOF requirements for critical enabling capabilities are being addressed.

Some have argued that the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) should have greater influence on special operations personnel management issues including assignment, promotion, compensation, and retention of special operations forces. One proposal would modify section 167 of title 10, United States Code, to change the role of the USSOCOM Commander from “monitoring” the readiness of special operations personnel to “coordinating” with the services on personnel and manpower management policies that directly affect special operations forces.

What is your view of this proposal?

If confirmed, I will closely examine this proposal; however, it is my judgment that the law does not need to change at this time. The recently implemented DoD Instruction 5100.01 requires the Services to coordinate their personnel policies and plans with USSOCOM. The "coordination" policy will provide USSOCOM more visibility into personnel policy changes and initiatives.

Combating Terrorism

The Administration recently released its National Strategy for Counterterrorism. This strategy highlights the need to maintain pressure on al Qaeda's core while building the capacity of partners to confront mutual threats. The strategy also underscores the need to augment efforts to counter threats from al Qaeda-linked threats "that continue to emerge from beyond its core safe haven in South Asia."

How do you view the Department's role under the new National Strategy for Counterterrorism?

It is my understanding that the DoD strategy for combating terrorism is comprised of three elements: antiterrorism, or defensive measures; counterterrorism, or offensive actions; and consequence management, or measures to recover from terrorist attacks. Each of these components of combating terrorism has its own policies and strategies, developed in close coordination with interagency partners. DoD plays a significant role within the government-wide global fight against al-Qaeda and its affiliates primarily through partner nation capacity-building and enabling efforts, targeted counterterrorism operations, and countering violent extremist messaging.

What do you believe is the appropriate role for the Department in countering threats from al Qaeda and affiliated groups outside of South Asia?

In my judgment, DoD's primary role is to pursue the ultimate defeat of al Qaeda (AQ) and its affiliates as part of a whole-of-government counterterrorism approach. We accomplish this through security force assistance, building strong and enduring partnerships, and when directed, conducting targeted counterterrorism operations in order to eliminate imminent threats to the U.S. and U.S. interests. We also support other efforts led by interagency partners who focus on the development of better governance and supplying basic needs thereby reducing the underlying causes that enable AQ to recruit from vulnerable populations.

Are there steps the Department should take to better coordinate its efforts to combat terrorism with those of other federal departments and agencies?

It's my personal experience that the level of interagency coordination that occurs in the global counterterrorism (CT) fight is greater than it has ever been. But that does not mean we can rest in continually improving our coordinated efforts to bring the full weight of our national power to bear in the defense of our interests. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we collectively put forth the most effective approach to combat terrorism.

What do you view as the role of the Department in countering al Qaeda and affiliated groups in cyberspace?

The Department acts in support of the Nation's strategic objective to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda (AQ) and its affiliates. In cyberspace, this includes directing DoD information networks operations, planning against designated cyberspace threats, and executing cyberspace operations as directed. DoD also employs cyber defense measures to prevent intrusions and defeat adversary (including AQ) activities on DoD networks and systems.

Section 1208 Operations

Section 1208 of the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 108-375), as amended by subsequent bills, authorizes the provision of support

(including training, funding, and equipment) to regular forces, irregular forces, and individuals supporting or facilitating military operations by U.S. Special Operations Forces to combat terrorism.

What is your assessment of this authority?

Combatant Commanders have repeatedly confirmed Section 1208 as a key tool in this ongoing fight. The ability for Special Operations Forces to leverage willing partners who possess access to areas, people, and information that are denied to our forces is critical to tactical and strategic success. We have been able to respond quickly to global challenges due to this authority while maintain the appropriate civilian oversight, including Secretary of Defense approval and Congressional notification. The Department is appreciative of Congress's continued support for this authority and if confirmed, I will continue to keep you informed through our annual report and briefings.

Capabilities of Special Operations Forces and General Purpose Forces

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) called for increased counter insurgency, counterterrorism, and security force assistance capabilities within the general purpose forces.

What is your understanding and assessment of the QDR's guidance with regard to the mix of responsibilities assigned to general purpose and special operations forces, particularly with respect to security force assistance and building partner military capabilities?

The 2010 QDR emphasized expanding general purpose forces' capabilities and capacity for these missions. Our general purpose forces have always performed some security force assistance and built partner capacity; however, this strategy increases that emphasis and expands the range of missions. This approach is also consistent with the 2010 QDR emphasis on Allies and partners.

Do you believe that our general purpose forces need to become more like special operations forces in mission areas that are critical to countering violent extremists?

Our conventional forces should continue to become more versatile, adopting some special capabilities, particularly in areas such as cultural awareness, linguistic capabilities, information operations, and in the ability to operate in a decentralized, widely dispersed environment. Doing so will improve general purpose force capabilities across mission areas including counterinsurgency and stability operations.

In your view, what mission areas, if any, should be reserved for special operations forces only?

In my judgment, Special Operations Forces provide unique abilities and are an essential component of our U.S. Armed Forces. In a very unpredictable security environment, they must remain versatile as well. Unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, and counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are some of the unique mission areas in which they excel and provide an essential capability.

DOD's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

The CTR program, which is focused historically on accounting for, securing or eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and materials in the states of the former Soviet Union, has started to expand its focus to other countries. With this expansion the CTR program is widening its focus to biological weapons and capabilities including biological surveillance and early warning; and encouraging development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

Do you think the CTR program is well coordinated among the U.S. government agencies that engage in threat reduction efforts, e.g., the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the State Department?

My understanding is that effective interagency coordination has been a defining characteristic of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program since its inception, which has directly contributed to the program's success. We should continue to evaluate the program's objectives in alignment with our national security interests. If confirmed, I will evaluate whether interagency coordination can be improved.

If confirmed, would you make any changes in the current programs or goals of the CTR program?

The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program has contributed significantly to reducing residual Cold War stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and associated materials within the states of the former Soviet Union. However, such threats continue to exist, both within the Eurasia region and throughout the world. I support the continued expansion of this program to other regions of the world in order to build global partnerships. Where governments are unable to mitigate this threat on their own, we should consider working with them to secure all WMD and related materials.

Prompt Global Strike

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review concluded that the United States will continue to experiment with prompt global strike prototypes. There has been no decision to field a prompt global strike capability as the effort is early in the technology and testing phase.

In your view, what is the role for a conventional prompt global strike capability in addressing the key threats to U.S. national security in the near future?

There has been no decision to field a Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS) capability; however, the concept has merit in a variety of scenarios. If confirmed, I will closely examine CPGS in order to provide recommendations on its future development.

What approach to implementation of this capability would you expect to pursue if confirmed?

If confirmed, I will support continued Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) of critical technologies. I will also assess the formal establishment of follow-on Service acquisition programs and a concurrent effort to improve the nation's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities necessary to support a future Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS) capability.

In your view what, if any, improvements in intelligence capabilities would be needed to support a prompt global strike capability?

As with other weapons systems, effective employment of Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS) weapons depends on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of timely and accurate intelligence information. Currently, the DoD is conducting assessments of the adequacy of present and future Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) to support strikes using a CPGS weapon system. If confirmed, I will use these assessments to inform the performance requirements for CPGS, just as assessed CPGS performance will shape future ISR requirements.

Nuclear Weapons and Stockpile Stewardship

Congress established the Stockpile Stewardship Program with the aim of creating the computational capabilities and experimental tools needed to allow for the continued certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable without the need for nuclear weapons testing. The Secretaries of Defense and Energy are statutorily required to certify annually to the Congress the continued safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

As the stockpile continues to age, what do you view as the greatest challenges, if any, with respect to assuring the safety, security, and reliability of the stockpile?

To sustain a safe, secure, and effective stockpile today, we must prudently manage our nuclear stockpile and related Life Extension Programs (LEPs), while cultivating the nuclear infrastructure, expert workforce, and leadership required to sustain it in the future. If confirmed, I will consider the full range of LEP approaches to include refurbishment of existing warheads, reuse of nuclear components from different warheads, and replacement of nuclear components.

If the technical conclusions and data from the Stockpile Stewardship Program could no longer confidently support the annual certification of the stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable, would you recommend the resumption of underground nuclear testing? What considerations would guide your recommendation in this regard?

Our current stockpile stewardship is assessed as effective. Today's stockpile has been certified and does not require further nuclear testing. However, the stockpile is aging. I understand that there are challenges in identifying and remedying the effects of aging on the stockpile. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Department of Energy to maintain the critical skills, capabilities, and infrastructure needed to ensure the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile within a constrained budget environment.

Do you agree that the full funding of the President's plan for modernizing the nuclear weapons complex, commonly referred to as the 1251 report, is a critical national security priority?

Yes. The Administration's 1251 report details the roadmap for ensuring the future safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear stockpile and associated delivery platforms as well as for modernizing the nuclear weapons complex. It demonstrates a strong commitment to the nuclear mission and is an important signal that the U.S. deterrent remains strong.

Prior to completing this modernization effort, do you believe it would be prudent to consider reductions below New START Treaty limits in the deployed stockpile of nuclear weapons?

The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) Report stated that the U.S. would pursue additional reductions in strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons with Russia, and a key aspect of implementing the 2010 NPR is conducting follow-on analysis. The Senate also noted in its resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the New START Treaty (NST) that we must seek to initiate negotiations with Russia on a new arms control agreement by February 2012. The analysis of further reductions would inform my judgment, if confirmed, on whether it is prudent to reduce nuclear weapons below NST limits.

If confirmed, would you recommend any changes to the non-deployed hedge stockpile of nuclear weapons?

As detailed in the Administration's Section 1251 Report, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is pursuing a multi-year program to build critical plutonium and uranium facilities that will give

the Nuclear Weapons Enterprise the ability to correct identified stockpile deficiencies. Without these infrastructure improvements and the ability to correct stockpile deficiencies and failures, careful analysis would be required to enable or accept reductions in the strategic hedge. If confirmed, I would assess this analysis before recommending any changes to the non-deployed hedge stockpile.

Law of the Sea Convention

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is pending consideration in the United States Senate.

What is your view on whether or not the United States should join the Law of the Sea convention?

I support the U.S. becoming party to the Law of the Sea Convention. This Convention provides U.S. armed forces the best possible means to maximize its rights to move freely on, through, and over the world's oceans. I also think that joining the Convention will allow the U.S. to strengthen our military's ability to conduct operations.

How would being a party to the Law of the Sea convention help or hinder the United States' security posture?

In my judgment, accession to the Convention would more permanently secure our Nation's global mobility rights, which are critical to America's ongoing and future national security operations and humanitarian assistance missions.

Mobilization and Demobilization of National Guard and Reserves

In support of the current ongoing conflicts, the National Guard and Reserves have experienced their largest and most sustained employment since World War II. Numerous problems have arisen over time in the planning and procedures for mobilization and demobilization, e.g., inadequate health screening and medical response to service-connected injuries or illnesses, antiquated pay systems, limited transition assistance programs upon demobilization, and inefficient policies regarding members of the Individual Ready Reserve. Reserve force management policies and systems have been characterized in the past as "inefficient and rigid" and readiness levels have been adversely affected by equipment shortages, cross-leveling, and reset policies.

What is your assessment of advances made in improving reserve component mobilization and demobilization procedures, and in what areas do problems still exist?

At this point, I can speak only for the Army Reserve Component, but we have made significant progress in this area and eliminated or improved many "inefficient and rigid" procedures. In doing so, we have been able to better sustain the vital employment of the National Guard and Reserves. Some of the direct results of these improvements are: increased deployment predictability, earlier mobilization notifications, stabilized dwell times, and reintegration and transition services throughout the deployment cycle. Deliberate investments and policy commitments to this Operational Reserve have resulted in the best trained, best equipped, and best led Reserve Component in our history. There remains room for improvement, such as achieving a single, standardized pay system and providing first-rate medical care before and after deployment. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on the shared goal of providing our Total Force the most capable and best cared for military force in the world.

What do you consider to be the most significant enduring changes to the enabling of an operational reserve aimed at ensuring reserve component readiness for future mobilization requirements?

The future fiscal environment will present significant challenges as we seek to program sufficient resources to preserve the readiness gains of the Reserve Component while continuing to use them on a predictable and periodic basis to satisfy our national security requirements. Meeting this challenge will require the commitment of both the Department and Congress.

Do you believe the reserve components should be operational or strategic reserves?

The reality is that the Reserve Components of our Armed Forces have transformed from an exclusively strategic Reserve to one that also provides operational, full-spectrum capabilities to the Nation. Repeated combat deployments, as well as peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and homeland defense missions, have produced a Reserve Component far more operationally capable and experienced than at any time in our Nation's history. Returning to a strictly strategic reserve role for the reserve component would not be in the nation's best interest.

Do you see a need to modify current statutory authorities for the mobilization of members of the National Guard and Reserves to further enhance their ability to perform various national security missions?

Over the past ten years, the Department has primarily relied on the provisions of the Presidential Declaration of National Emergency to gain involuntary access to the Reserve Components. If confirmed, I think it would be prudent to explore more effective and potentially more decentralized authorities to involuntarily access and mobilize Reserve and National Guard Forces. To that end, I understand the DoD is working with the Armed Service Committees to include new mobilization authorities in the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. These authorities would allow Service Secretaries limited mobilization authority, of up to 365 days, for non-named contingencies. Such a change would allow us to better support the requirements of the Joint Force Commanders. Additionally, the recent agreement between the Department of Defense and the Governors, which will allow Reserve and National Guard Forces to respond to a domestic emergency or disaster when requested by a Governor, is a positive step forward.

Medical and Dental Readiness of the Reserves

Medical and dental readiness of reserve component personnel has been an issue of significant concern to the Committee, and shortfalls that have been identified have indicated a need for improved policy oversight and accountability.

If confirmed, how would you seek to clarify and coordinate reporting on the medical and dental readiness of the reserves?

Medical and dental readiness of reserve component personnel remains an issue of significant concern. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP), which provides Periodic Health Assessment (PHA), Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA), and other Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) services—both medical and dental—to all Reserve Component (RC) forces. In addition to these programs, command emphasis on meeting standards and the integration of RHRP data with our existing readiness systems will improve both reporting accuracy and overall readiness. If confirmed, I will work to improve reserve readiness across the Department.

How would you improve upon the Department's ability to maintain a healthy and fit reserve component?

Improving the Department's ability to maintain a healthy and fit reserve component requires senior leadership involvement and individual accountability. Strong command emphasis must be in place to produce necessary improvements. If confirmed, I will work with the Defense Safety Oversight Council and the Medical and Personnel Executive Steering Committee to advance health and safety promotion and injury/illness prevention.

Recruiting Standards

Recruiting highly qualified individuals for military service during wartime in a cost-constrained environment presents unique challenges. The Army has been criticized in past years for relaxing enlistment standards in tough recruiting environments with respect to factors such as age, intelligence, weight and physical fitness standards, citizenship status, tattoos, and past criminal misconduct. On the other hand, as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, G-1, testified earlier this year that less than 25 percent of all 17-24 year olds are eligible to enlist, primarily due to physical and educational requirements.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of current standards regarding qualifications for enlistment in the Armed Forces?

From my perspective as CSA, the current enlistment qualification standards are well-defined and have stood the test of time. They are driven by the need to provide the Services with men and women who are prepared to adapt to the rigors of military life and meet performance requirements. To that end, the Services carefully screen applicants who come from all walks of life. The traditional high school diploma remains the best single predictor of attrition. That said, some standards may change over time. As an example, I personally believe that the enlistment process should include an open-source social media screening and have asked the Department of the Army to consider whether we have the necessary authorities and whether it is feasible to do so.

In your view, is there any way to increase the pool of eligible enlistees without sacrificing quality?

Again, speaking from the Army perspective, we are not currently challenged by recruiting and retention. There is an adequate pool of eligible enlistees. However, we are alert to challenges other than quality such as ensuring a reasonable geographic diversity of recruits so that we remain reflective of American society. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to continually find new ways improve recruitment.

Are there any enlistment requirements or standards that are overly restrictive or which do not directly correlate to successful military service?

My current assessment is that our military enlistment standards are not overly restrictive. The Services employ fitness, adaptability, and aptitude standards which correlate to the physical, disciplined, regulated lifestyle and cognitive demands needed to succeed in the Armed Forces. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate this issue closely.

Current recruiting policies define three tiers of high school diploma credentials, aimed at minimizing attrition during the initial enlistment term. At the height of OIF, the Army was particularly forward-leaning in advocating for more GED holders and non-traditional high school graduates to meet recruiting goals. Pending legislative proposals would treat all graduates of State-recognized programs equally for recruiting eligibility.

Do you believe the current "tier" system for evaluating potential enlistees has outlived its usefulness in today's all-volunteer force?

The Services track the attrition rates of military recruits by a variety of credential types. Traditional high school diploma graduates have lower rates of attrition than any other type of credential holder. I am aware of the proposals that would classify graduates of online public schools as “Tier I” candidates for military enrollment, and if confirmed, I will give it careful consideration.

What do you consider to be the most important indicators of future successful active-duty military service in a new recruit?

The fitness, adaptability, and aptitude standards which the Services employ have historically correlated to the physical, disciplined, regulated lifestyle and cognitive demands needed to succeed in the Armed Forces. Young men and women who are motivated to serve their country and desire to excel will have that opportunity through military service.

Homosexual Conduct Policy

The “Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010,” enacted on December 22, 2010, provides for the repeal of the current Department of Defense policy concerning homosexuality in the Armed Forces, to be effective 60 days after the Secretary of Defense has received the Department of Defense 's comprehensive review on the implementation of such repeal, and the President, Secretary, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff certify to the congressional defense committees that they have considered the report and proposed plan of action, that the Department of Defense has prepared the necessary policies and regulations to exercise the discretion provided by such repeal, and that implementation of such policies and regulations is consistent with the standards of military readiness and effectiveness, unit cohesion, and military recruiting and retention.

What effect do you anticipate the repeal will have on readiness and discipline in the Armed Forces?

We have the policies and regulations needed for implementation, and they are consistent with standards of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention. I have considered both objective and subjective measures, and it is my judgment that with our training and preparation nearly complete, we are now ready to affect repeal while sustaining military effectiveness.

Protection of U.S. Forces Against Internal Threats

On November 5, 2009, a gunman opened fire at the Soldier Readiness Center at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 13 people and wounding or injuring 43 others. A Department of Defense review of the attack released in January 2010 concluded that the Department was poorly prepared to defend against internal threats, including radicalization among military personnel.

What, in your view, are the lessons learned from the tragedy at Fort Hood?

Fort Hood revealed areas that require corrective action. Specific lessons include: (1) identifying and monitoring potential threats through gathering, analyzing, and acting on information and intelligence, (2) providing time-critical information to the right people through the sharing and merging of key indicators, (3) planning for and responding to incidents through immediate emergency response as well as the long-term care for victims of attacks and their families.

If confirmed, what strategies would you advocate to prevent and mitigate such threats in the future?

As a result of the tragedy at Fort Hood, the Department will strengthen its policies, programs, and procedures to mitigate internal threats, ensure force protection, enable emergency response, and provide care for victims and families. If confirmed, I will work to: (1) address workplace violence, (2) ensure commander and supervisor access to appropriate information in personnel records, (3) improve information sharing with partner agencies and among installations, (4) expand installations' emergency response capabilities, (5) integrate force protection policy, and clarifying force protection roles and responsibilities, and (6) ensure that we provide top quality health care to both our service members and our healthcare providers.

Religious Guidelines

The Independent Review Related to the Tragedy at Fort Hood observed that “DOD policy regarding religious accommodation lacks the clarity necessary to help commanders distinguish appropriate religious practices from those that might indicate a potential for violence or self-radicalization.” Recommendation 2.7 of the Final Recommendations urged the Department to update policy to clarify guidelines for religious accommodation and Recommendation 2.8 urged the Department to task the Defense Science Board to “undertake a multi-disciplinary study to identify behavioral indicators of violence and self-radicalization”

What is your view of these recommendations?

I understand the Independent Review Related to the Tragedy at Fort Hood issued recommendations based on their findings, and that the Fort Hood Follow-on Review prepared an implementation plan in response to these. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor implementation and track the progress being made to protect our service members from harm while ensuring DoD policies, programs, and procedures appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion.

What is your understanding and assessment of current policies and programs of the Department of Defense regarding religious practices in the military?

The right of service members to observe their respective religious faiths has always been highly valued by all of the Services. It is my current judgment that our policies and programs reflect this value and provide commanders with adequate flexibility to balance accommodation for religious beliefs and maintain good order and discipline. If confirmed, I will remain open to issues and ideas that might suggest any change in policy or programs.

In your view, do these policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

Yes, I believe our policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion.

In your view, do existing policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by military chaplains in a variety of formal and informal settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain's ability to pray in accordance with his or her religious beliefs and the rights of other service members with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs?

Yes, I think existing policies and practices strike the proper balance. I admire our military chaplains for their work ministering amidst the pluralistic environment of the military. Even as chaplains express their faith, they and their commanders also are asked to be as inclusive as possible when ministering to an

interfaith group. Our chaplains can voluntarily participate, or not participate, in settings which conflict with their faith traditions while remaining mindful of the requirement for inclusiveness. If confirmed, I will remain open to issues and ideas that might suggest improvement to policy and practices.

If confirmed, will you work to ensure that a scientific fact-based approach to understanding radicalization will drive the Department's relevant policies on this topic?

If confirmed, I will ensure that our force is protected by a reliance on scientific, fact-based approach to countering radicalization. I understand Defense Science Board study on violent radicalization has been commissioned by DOD and that there are plans to commission two additional clinical studies focused on identifying any potential indicators of violent behavior in military personnel. I believe the results of these studies can help inform future policies and programs on radicalization.

Current policy in the Department gives discretion to military leaders to decide whether requests to waive uniform and appearance standards should be granted based on religious beliefs. The Department has submitted a legislative proposal that would clearly exempt the armed services from the requirements of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

What is your view of the manner in which DOD policies accommodate religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith?

I understand the important and delicate balance that we must strike between accommodating religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith and maintaining the military's uniform grooming and appearance standards. My understanding is that wearing particular articles of faith are permissible so long as the articles are neat and conservative, do not negatively impact the readiness, and good order or discipline of the unit and the mission is not jeopardized. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring an appropriate balance between maintaining the military's uniform grooming and appearance standards and accommodating particular articles of faith.

Do you believe that the Armed Forces need to be exempted from the strictures of RFRA? If so, why?

Yes. It is my understanding that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act has the effect of ensuring that a "rational basis" standard in the specific area of military grooming and appearance is applied by the courts instead of by the Armed Forces. The DoD legislative proposal will restore a more appropriate balance between maintaining the military's uniform grooming and appearance standards and approving requested religious accommodations.

Muslims in the U. S. Military

Are you concerned that the attack at Fort Hood could lead to harassment or even violence against Muslims in the military?

First and foremost, the events related to the attack at Fort Hood are a tragedy for all involved. While it is possible that such a tragic act could spur harassment and violence as a means of retaliation, I have confidence in the professionalism of our men and women in the Armed Forces. Furthermore, our military leaders and supervisors at all levels take precautions to prevent such occurrences while maintaining good order and discipline.

If confirmed, what strategies would you advocate to address the potential for harassment or violence against Muslims in the U. S. military?

If confirmed, I would focus on sustaining the professionalism of our All Volunteer Force. I would also advocate open communications, decisive action on the part of military leaders and supervisors, and command emphasis on our standards for maintaining good order and discipline. It's worth noting that the vast majority of our force has lived and worked among Muslims for the past 10 years and is very culturally aware.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Department has in recent years developed comprehensive policies and procedures to improve the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assault, including providing appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault. However, numerous incidents of sexual misconduct involving military personnel in combat areas of operation and at home stations are still being reported. Victims and their advocates claim that they are victimized twice: first by attackers in their own ranks and then by unresponsive or inadequate treatment for the victim. They assert that their command fails to respond appropriately with basic medical services and with an adequate investigation of their allegations followed by a failure to hold assailants accountable.

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

I do, but am also acutely aware that we must continue to do more. Current policies and programs designed to address sexual assault have allowed the Department to both care for victims and hold offenders accountable. However, until we have zero sexual assaults within our forces, we should continue to look for ways to improve the system. If confirmed, I will continue to engage and emphasize the importance of addressing sexual assault, of caring for victims, and of holding offenders accountable.

What problems, if any, are you aware of in the manner in which the restricted reporting procedure has been implemented?

Getting victims to trust the system and come forward can be challenging. Confidential reporting, or restricted reporting, allows a victim to come forward and have their personal needs met without fear that may be associated with a criminal investigation. I will remain alert and receptive to any reported flaws in the program and take prompt action to improve the system.

What is your view of the steps the Services have taken to prevent and respond to sexual assaults in combat zones, including assaults by or against contractor personnel?

I am very concerned about reports of sexual assault against anyone in any location. We will not tolerate this behavior. The services have procedures in place to address the challenges of preventing and responding to sexual assaults in an operational environment to include working with host governments and our international partners. The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program requires larger units, such as Brigades, to appoint and train a deployable sexual assault response coordinator and every battalion or squadron to appoint and train unit victim advocates. Until no sexual assaults occur within our armed forces, we will continue to look for ways to improve 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?

DoD is committed to addressing sexual assault in a comprehensive, integrated and uniform manner. All the Services have been directed to establish guidelines for a 24-hour, 7 day a week sexual assault response capability for all locations, including deployed areas. Our investigators and first responders are well trained. All services recently enhanced their resources for investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases.

What is your view of the willingness and ability of the Services to hold assailants accountable for their acts?

The Services have the willingness and ability to hold assailants accountable. Moreover, senior leaders are very aware of the importance of establishing a positive organizational climate. Sexual assault is personally destructive for the victim while also undermining organizational climate, unit discipline and morale. When sexual assaults do occur, leaders must ensure victims feel free to report incidents without fear of reprisal, while appropriately applying available resources to investigate and punish assailants.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure senior level direction and oversight of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assaults?

DoD has a zero tolerance policy for sexual assault, and we have assigned a General/Flag Officer with operational experience to provide direct oversight of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program office. If confirmed, I will constantly evaluate policies to ensure the safety, dignity and well being of all members of the Armed Forces.

Women in the Military

In recent years, the Navy has opened service on submarines to women, the Marine Corps has expanded service opportunities for women in intelligence specialties, and the Army is currently reviewing its assignment policy for female soldiers. The issue of the appropriate role of women in the armed forces is a matter of continuing interest to Congress and the American public.

Do you believe additional specialties should be eligible for service by women?

DoD is currently conducting a comprehensive review of the role of women in combat. We are participating in this review, and if confirmed, I will continue to monitor combat needs as Services recommend expanding combat roles for women and notify Congress accordingly as required by statute (10 U.S.C., §652 and/or §6035). Any decision regarding opening additional specialties for service by women will be based on our obligation to maintain a high state of mission readiness of our All-Volunteer Force.

Do you believe any changes are needed or warranted in the current assignment policies regarding women?

I support the DoD review and welcome the opportunity to determine what we've learned in 10 years of combat.

Rising Costs of Medical Care

In testimony presented to Congress in February, 2009, the Assistant Director of the Congressional Budget Office asserted that “medical funding accounts for more than one-third of the growth projected for operations and support funding between 2009 and 2026.” In April, 2009, then Secretary of Defense Gates told an audience at Maxwell Air Force Base that “health care is eating the Department alive.” The Administration has proposed health care efficiencies to save nearly \$8.0 billion through 2016.

Do you agree with the proposed health care efficiencies?

As they have been described to me, I believe that the proposed health care efficiencies are sensible efforts to control DoD’s health care costs while maintaining the same level of care. I also believe the modest increases in beneficiaries’ cost shares are reasonable and still compare favorably to private sector healthcare plans.

What reforms in infrastructure, benefits, or benefit management, if any, do you think should be examined in order to control the costs of military health care?

Before reforms can be initiated, detailed analysis must be done. This must include a look at benefit payment structures, organizational structure, systems, and policies for the military health system. If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary of Defense, as he leads the Department’s ongoing effort to explore all possibilities to control the costs of military health care. I am also an advocate for the potential long term gains available through the promotion of healthy life styles and prevention among our beneficiaries to help reduce the demand for health services.

What is your assessment of the long-term impact of rising medical costs on future Department of Defense plans?

The medical cost growth trend will continue to add pressure to the Department’s budget the longer it remains unresolved. Our uniformed service-members make great sacrifices for their Nation and the quality of their health care is a critical component to having a fit and ready force to accomplish the National Security Strategy. Additionally, the generous health benefits we provide to their families and retirees are a significant part of the quality of life which allows the military to recruit and retain the highest caliber personnel the Nation has to offer. If confirmed, I will continue our efforts with Congress and the Department of Defense to find effective ways to improve the cost-effectiveness of the Military Health System.

If confirmed, what actions would you initiate or recommend to mitigate the effect of such costs on the DOD top-line?

I’m not in a position to make specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I will work closely with health care leadership in DoD to continue the Administration’s efforts to examine every opportunity to ensure military beneficiaries are provided the highest quality care possible while managing cost growth.

Personnel and Entitlement Costs

In addition to health care costs, personnel and related entitlement spending continues to grow and is becoming an ever increasing portion of the DOD budget.

What actions do you believe can and should be taken, if any, to control the rise in personnel costs and entitlement spending?

The cost related to personnel and entitlements is an increasing portion of DoD's available resources. Our current military compensation system is rooted in structures established a generation ago. In order to control the rise in costs related to personnel and entitlements, it is appropriate to conduct a comprehensive review of the military pay and benefits structure to determine where costs can be contained. If confirmed, I would coordinate with the Secretary of Defense on any review in a manner that supports and sustains the All-Volunteer Force.

In your view, can the Department and the Services efficiently manage the use of bonuses and special pays to place high quality recruits in the right jobs without paying more than the Department needs to pay, or can afford to pay, for other elements of the force?

In my judgment, recruiting and retention bonuses are cost-effective tools to achieve DoD's personnel strength and experience objectives, but we must continually monitor these tools to ensure they are being used efficiently as well as effectively. It has been my experience that the Services adjust enlisted bonus levels to ensure we get the right numbers of personnel in the corresponding specialties. If confirmed, I would be open to a review of the utilization and efficacy of bonuses as part of any comprehensive review of the military pay and benefits structure.

Military Retirement

The 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) proposed a new defined benefit retirement plan that more resembles the benefits available under the Federal Employee Retirement System than the current military retirement benefit; increasing TRICARE fees for retirees; and the adoption of dependent care and flexible spending accounts for service members. Secretary Panetta has called for a comprehensive review of the military retirement benefit.

While it is often said that the military retirement benefit helps retention after the 10-year point, do you believe it provides any significant boost to recruitment? Do 17-18 year olds care when deciding to enlist?

Surveys show that retirement benefits are often not a driving factor to enlist 17-18 year old men and women. I agree with Secretary Panetta that it is time to review the military retirement system for needed changes and efficiencies that will still encourage retention and recruitment.

How might it be modernized to reflect the needs of a new generation of recruits, while easing the long-term retirement cost of the government?

There are many proposed alternatives to the current military retirement system. I am unable to make recommendations at this time, but if confirmed, I will closely study proposals and their impact as part of a comprehensive review process.

Systems and Support for Wounded Warriors

Service members who are wounded or injured performing duties in Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and New Dawn deserve the highest priority from their Service for

support services, healing and recuperation, rehabilitation, evaluation for return to duty, successful transition from active duty if required, and continuing support beyond retirement or discharge. Yet, as the revelations at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) in 2007 illustrated, the Services were not prepared to meet the needs of significant numbers of returning wounded service members. Despite the enactment of legislation and renewed emphasis, many challenges remain, including a growing population of service members awaiting disability evaluation.

What is your assessment of the progress made to date by the Department of Defense and the Services to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured service members and their families?

The Wounded, Ill and Injured, Senior Oversight Council the DoD formed in 2007 has provided the necessary consistent focus on these issues, and has made excellent progress. The DoD, in collaboration with the Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs, has been working on multiple ways to improve the care, management, and transition of our wounded warriors and their families. The Services' Wounded Warrior Units and Program oversight offices have made dramatic improvements through which individual and family medical, mental, and social-economical needs are addressed.

What are the strengths upon which continued progress should be based?

If confirmed, I would continue to build upon the successes of the Services' Wounded Warrior Units. By continuing to appropriately resource and staff these organizations with high quality personnel we can further improve the transition processes and overall well being of our Wounded Warriors. Additionally, we should continue to expand upon the research and treatment by continued collaboration between the private medical research and healthcare sector and the Centers of Excellence which fall under the DCoE (Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury). These groups are making daily strides in providing the best level and quality of care to our Wounded Warriors and their families, and if confirmed, I will continue to place the highest priority on these efforts.

What are the weaknesses that need to be corrected?

The Services' have taken great strides to improve care to our wounded service members. However, continuous improvement is needed. One area to further improve is individual case management when a service member transitions from the active force to DoD retiree or eligible veteran status. The key components of this process are the implementation of a single electronic health record, which follows the Service Member through transition and a single tracking tool for case management. If confirmed, I will work to improve collaboration with our Department of Veterans Affairs partners to expedite fielding of this system. The transition process and tracking for wounded warriors with unseen psychological wounds is an area which requires continued development as well.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase support for wounded service members and their families, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

Yes. For example, if confirmed, I would continue to take advantage of generous support the Department has received from the many non-profit programs and private organizations who have reached out to support our returning veterans. There are hundreds of these organizations and programs that have come to the aide of wounded warriors and their families to provide for everything from assistive devices (wheel chairs, house ramps, etc), to conducting research on medical treatments, to providing direct economic aid.

I would also continue the Joint Staff's role in providing the Department with evaluation and analysis across the Services in order to share best-practices and lessons learned.

Studies conducted as a result of the revelations at WRAMC pointed to the need to reform the disability evaluation system (DES). A DES pilot program, and now an Integrated DES program, has been established to improve processing of service members.

What is your assessment of the need to further streamline and improve the integrated DES?

It is my belief that the current Integrated Disability Evaluation System has made significant progress but needs further reform. If confirmed, I would facilitate the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Veterans Administration's collaboration via the IDDES Tiger Team. In order for IDDES to reach its full potential, DoD may need to closely coordinate with Congress for legislative change. Ultimately, this will reduce the total number of warriors in the evaluation process, thus reducing the overall cost to the system and the burden on our wounded warriors.

If confirmed, how will you address any need for change, particularly the Army's growing population of service members awaiting disability evaluation?

If confirmed, I will support current IDDES reform initiatives and, if necessary, assist the Secretary of Defense with recommendations to Congress on legislative adjustments to the disability rating and compensation system. Additionally, I would continue support for the Services Wounded Warrior units, where significant improvements are being made to the quality of care for our Wounded Warriors.

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources

The numbers of suicides in each of the services has increased in recent years. The Army released a report entitled "Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention" in July 2010 that analyzed the causes of its growing suicide rate and examined disturbing trends in drug use, disciplinary offenses, and high risk behaviors. In addition, studies conducted by the Army of Soldiers and Marines in theater are showing declines in individual morale and increases in mental health strain, especially among those who have experienced multiple deployments.

In your view, what should the Department of Defense do to shape 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?

I am very concerned about the suicide rate. Suicide is a problem that cuts across the Army family, affecting our Service members, our Veterans, and their families. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with Congress, our military leaders, Veterans Affairs, and Federal and civilian organizations to see that our members' and families' psychological health is addressed. The DoD has developed an action plan to address the 13 foundational and 76 targeted recommendations outlined in the 2010 Department of Defense Task Force Report on Prevention of Suicide. Resourcing and implementing recommendations set forth by the Services will improve resilience in the Force in hopes of ultimately lowering suicide rates.

What is your understanding of the action that the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Army are taking in response to the July 2010 Army report, and the data in Chapter 3 in particular?

Early identification of "high risk" behavior and issues such as marital problems, substance abuse, and

behavior difficulties are at the forefront of the Services' proactive interventions. This has allowed leaders to intervene on the leading edge. We are seeing increased unit resilience in Soldiers and Marines, and though it is still a factor the stigma regarding mental health care is dissipating. The Army and the Marines continue to evaluate and modify services related to health promotion, risk reduction, and suicide prevention including increased behavioral health providers at the brigade level in active and reserve units, allowing engaged leaders to improve education and awareness of behavioral health issues. In addition, the Army has required increased behavioral health screening before and after deployments; improved training for chaplains and suicide prevention coordinators; and for primary care medical providers to identify and respond to behavioral health issues.

If confirmed, what 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 upon return to home station?

As an institution, the DoD must continue to directly address mental health issues because they directly affect the wellness of our force. There are three key areas that must be addressed to ensure sufficient resources are available to members and their families. First, we must continue to reduce stigma and ensure that members are comfortable seeking treatment and using the resources that are available. Second, we must continue to develop effective mental health therapies that are relevant and appropriate for the experiences of our Forces and their families. Third, the necessary resources must be available to include trained mental health professionals.

Military Quality of Life

In January 2009, the Department published its second Quadrennial Quality of Life Review, which focused on the importance of key quality of life factors for military families, such as family support, child care, education, health care and morale, welfare and recreation services.

If confirmed, what further enhancements to military quality of life would you consider a priority, and how do you envision working with the Services, combatant commanders, family advocacy groups, and Congress to achieve them?

Quality of life programs are important to the wellness of the total force. If confirmed, I will encourage continued improvements and effective management in key areas such as access to counseling, fitness opportunities, child care support, and spouse employment opportunities. I look forward to working with advocacy groups and Congress to efficiently close gaps and reduce overlaps in programs and to communicate effectively with families to ensure that they know how to access available support when they need it.

Family Support

Military members and their families in both the active and reserve components have made, and continue to make, tremendous sacrifices in support of operational deployments. Senior military leaders have warned of growing concerns among military families as a result of the stress of frequent deployments and the long separations that go with them.

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families?

I share the common judgment that family resilience is tied to family readiness. We must ensure military families are well prepared to meet the challenges that come with deployment and service. Through focusing on the psychological, social, financial, and educational well-being of military families, we can continue to build family resilience. Great strides have been made in improving access to resources for families through such programs as Strong Bonds, Military One Source and the Yellow Ribbon Program. If confirmed, I will continue to focus on these and other initiatives to promote family readiness.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced?

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Services, the Department, and other agencies on improving resources for benchmark Service programs as well as access to other programs such as Military One Source and the Yellow Ribbon Program. I believe it is DoD's responsibility to ensure that appropriate resources, including those in health care, education, and employment, are available to families at the level they need wherever they may be located.

How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, BRAC, deployments, and future reductions in end strength?

If confirmed, I will monitor the changing needs of our military families closely to ensure that all available resources are available to families at the required level and location. In order to accurately address the needs of these families in a changing environment, it is critical that we build community partnerships between all Federal Agencies and with local governments, businesses, and non-profit organizations that are stakeholders in addressing the stressful aspects of military life. I also believe we need to encourage continued progress among individual states' legislative initiatives to ease recognition of professional accreditation of family members and support for various school programs transferring children.

If confirmed, how would you ensure support to reserve component families related to mobilization, deployment and family readiness, as well as to active duty families who do not reside near a military installation?

We have a duty to ensure every family has access to quality resources, regardless of component or location. These resources should provide information, access, referrals, and outreach to all military members and their families. This needs to be underwritten by a coordinated, community-based network of care encompassing DOD, VA, State, local, non-profit and private providers. It is my understanding that DOD's Yellow Ribbon Program has been successful in addressing these needs. If confirmed, I will assess this program and others to ensure it is properly focused and funded to address the issues faced by active duty, Guard, and Reserve members and their families.

If confirmed, what additional steps will you take to enhance family support?

If confirmed, I would encourage the implementation of flexible family support programs that meet the needs of our members and their families whether they live on, near, or far from military installations. I understand there are many excellent state programs that support members and their families. If confirmed, I would like to explore these further and see if they can be expanded across all states.

If in your view, are the recent increases in military family support (which have risen to \$8.3 billion in the FY 2012 President's budget) sustainable in future years?

We will have to review family programs with respect to efficiencies just as every other program in DoD will be reviewed against the overall needs of the Department. In so doing, the focus should be on the efficiency and quality of Family Support programs along with the leveraging of community-level organizations and citizens who desire to help their military-connected neighbors. DoD efficiencies, along with community partnerships and cooperation, are key to meeting the long-term needs of our military families in a fiscally constrained environment.

Detainee Treatment Policy

Do you support the policy set forth in the July 7, 2006, memorandum issued by the Deputy Secretary of Defense stating that all relevant DOD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes. If confirmed, I would continue to support the Deputy Secretary of Defense's 7 July 2006 memorandum which states that all relevant DoD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions.

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?

Yes. If confirmed, I would continue to support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the Army Field Manual on Interrogations and DOD Directive 2310.01E.

If confirmed, will you ensure that all DOD policies promulgated and plans implemented related to intelligence interrogations, detainee debriefings, and tactical questioning comply with the Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the Army Field Manual on Interrogations?

Yes. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure all DoD policies and plans related to intelligence interrogations, detainee briefings, and tactical questioning comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the Army Field Manual on Interrogations.

Do you share the view that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?

Yes. I share the view that the way in which we treat detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. forces are treated should they be captured in future conflicts.

Congressional Oversight

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

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

Yes.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

Yes.

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

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

Yes.