

Advance Policy Questions for the Honorable Leon Panetta
Nominee to be Secretary of Defense

1. Defense Reforms

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and clearly delineated the operational chain of command and the responsibilities and authorities of the combatant commanders, and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have also clarified the responsibility of the Military Departments to recruit, organize, train, equip, and maintain forces for assignment to the combatant commanders.

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions? If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?

It has been twenty-five years since the passage of Goldwater- Nichols legislation which has prepared DoD to better meet today's challenges. At this time, I do not believe Goldwater-Nichols should be amended, but, if confirmed, I will continue to evaluate this issue and will work with the Committee on this very important topic.

2. Duties of the Secretary of Defense

Section 113 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Secretary of Defense is the principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department of Defense. Subject to the direction of the President, the Secretary of Defense, under section 113, has authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense (DOD).

Do you believe there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Secretary of Defense?

Current authorities for the Secretary of Defense appear to be clear and appropriate.

What changes to section 113, if any, would you recommend?

At this time, I have no recommendation for changes to section 113. My view may change based on the perspectives I may gain while serving in the position of Secretary of Defense, if confirmed.

3. Priorities

If confirmed, you will confront a range of critical issues relating to threats to national security and ensuring that the Armed Forces are prepared to deal with these threats.

What broad priorities would you establish, if confirmed, with respect to issues which must be addressed by DOD?

The top priority of the Secretary of Defense is to ensure the security of the American people.

We face a number of challenges: first, prevailing in the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and in the fight against al-Qa'ida; second, keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists and rogue nations; third, preparing to counter future military threats; fourth, preserving the finest fighting force in the world and taking care of service members and their families; and fifth, continuing the reforms DoD's leadership has initiated which will be crucial in this time of budget constraints.

4. National Security Budget Reductions

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

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

Secretary Gates has discussed with me his overall approach for the Comprehensive Review. It is my understanding that the process initiated focuses principally on driving program and budget decisions from choices about strategy and risks. Such a strategy-driven approach is essential to ensuring that we preserve a superb defense force to meet national security goals, even under fiscal pressure.

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 large role in the Comprehensive Review and to have it completed in the fall.

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

If confirmed, I will work to make disciplined decisions in ways that minimize impacts on our national security. But it must be understood that a smaller budget means difficult choices will have to be made.

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

From my years of service in the public sector, I recognize the importance of balancing immediate and future needs. And in national security matters, such a balance is essential to keeping America safe both today and tomorrow. Decisions on budget must be carefully made so that none of the listed objectives is compromised.

If confirmed, I will work with both DoD's civilian and military leaders to seek the right balance and I will

not hesitate to provide my views on the potential consequences of proposed future changes in the DoD's budget.

5. 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?

Based on my understanding of the existing authorities and the practice I have personally observed while Director of the CIA, I believe there is currently a clear and effective chain of command. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, I will work to ensure that the chain of command continues to be clear and effective.

In your view, do these provisions enhance or degrade civilian control of the military?

I believe these provisions enhance civilian control of the military.

In your capacity as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, you were reported to have been in charge of the recent operation against Osama bin Laden, an operation using military forces of the Department of Defense, presumably under the authorities in title 50, 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 command and control of military operations. Without commenting on the bin Laden operation in particular, I will state that in general there are instances in which military capabilities are temporarily made available to support an activity of a non-DoD U.S. Government department or agency. In those circumstances, it is appropriate for the head of such department or agency to direct the operations of the element providing that military support while working with the Secretary of Defense. In such situations, 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. Military personnel remain accountable to the military chain of command, including the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Can you explain the chain of command for U.S. military forces in the operation against bin Laden, and what role, if any, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Secretary of Defense each had in that chain of command?

I cannot comment publicly on the chain of command for the bin Laden operation, in particular. In general, see my answer above.

Please explain the pros and cons of 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 only the U.S. Armed Forces can provide. It is therefore sometimes preferable to make an appropriate military capability temporarily available to support the operations of other departments and agencies. A significant advantage of doing so is that it permits the robust operational capability of the U.S. Armed Forces to be applied when needed. A potential disadvantage is that the department or agency receiving the support may not be specifically organized or equipped to direct and control operations by military forces.

If the reports mentioned above are accurate, please describe 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. I cannot comment publicly on any specific arrangements in this regard. 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.

My view is that 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 a military 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.

6. Advice of the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders

Section 151 of title 10, United States Code, provides, in part, 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 and that if any member of the Joint Chiefs submits to the Chairman advice or an opinion, in disagreement with, or advice or an opinion in addition to, the advice presented by the Chairman, the Chairman shall present that advice or opinion at the same time he provides his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

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.

What changes in law, 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?

At this time, I do not recommend any changes to the law. If confirmed, and after I have been in office for a sufficient time to determine if changes are advisable, I will recommend changes as appropriate or necessary.

Do you believe the Chief of the National Guard Bureau should be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

No. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau is now a 4 star general and attends Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings and provides invaluable advice. Members of the Guard are members of the uniformed services and adding its Chief to the Joint Chiefs of Staff would introduce inconsistencies among its members and will create the impression that the National Guard is a separate military service.

7. Goldwater-Nichols for the Interagency (Policy)

Several groups and individuals have been calling for a Goldwater-Nichols Act for the entire federal government. They argue that the U.S. and allied militaries can prevail on the battlefield but that the global war on terror requires a concerted effort by a host of U.S. agencies.

What are your views on the merits of instituting a Goldwater-Nichols Act for the entire federal government?

In the twenty five years since Goldwater-Nichols much has changed. In the post-September 11th era, there have been significant benefits due to increased unity of effort and interagency cooperation. Civilian-military collaboration has improved, and our military commanders expect to operate in a coordinated and joint, multi-service environment. Diplomats, development experts, intelligence analysts, and law enforcement must work together in today's complex operations.

At this time, I do not know that instituting such a change across the entire federal government is needed. However, there may be additional ways to develop more effective and inclusive approaches to our national security challenges that do not require legislation.

If confirmed, I intend to reiterate to all civilian and military personnel in DoD the important role each interagency partner plays in supporting our nation's security.

8. Use of Military Force

The question as to whether and when U.S. forces should participate in potentially dangerous situations 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, I would consider many of the same factors that previous Secretaries of Defense have evaluated in their recommendations to the President on the use of force, including the threat to our vital interests, the ability to employ non-military methods to respond to the threat, our capability to defeat that threat and improve our strategic situation through the use of military force, and the prospects for sustained public support for military action.

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

As the 2010 National Security Strategy discusses, military force, at times, may be necessary to defend our country and allies or to preserve broader peace and security, including by protecting civilians facing a grave humanitarian crisis.

While the use of force is sometimes necessary, if confirmed, we will continue to exhaust other options before war whenever we can, and carefully weigh the costs and risks of action against the costs and risks of inaction. When force is necessary, if confirmed, we will continue to do so in a way that reflects our values and strengthens our legitimacy, and we will seek broad international support, working with such institutions as NATO and the U.N. Security Council.

The United States must reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests, yet we must also seek to adhere to standards that govern the use of force.

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

I believe the use of preemptive force should be based on the strongest evidence of the need. It is a decision that must not be taken lightly.

Two years as CIA Director has made me realize that intelligence is often ambiguous. I believe the men and women in the intelligence community do their best to get the most reliable intelligence possible. Still, we need to be aware of the caveats that come with intelligence products. And we need to continue to ask hard questions about the information presented to policymakers.

9. Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs Collaboration

Secretary of Defense Gates and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki have pledged to improve and increase collaboration between the respective departments to support military service members as they transition to veteran status, in areas of health and mental health care, disability evaluation, and compensation.

If confirmed, what role would you expect to play in ensuring that the Department of Defense and

the Department of Veterans Affairs achieve the Administration's objectives in DOD and VA collaboration?

I understand significant improvements have been made in DoD-VA collaboration in the last few years. If confirmed, I will continue the efforts made by Secretary Gates, and look forward to working with Secretary Shinseki to accelerate current timelines. If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD continues to work closely with VA to support service members and their families in all facets of making a seamless transition to veteran status will remain a top priority.

10. Disability Severance Pay

Section 1646 of the Wounded Warrior Act, included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, enhanced severance pay and removed a requirement that severance pay be deducted from VA disability compensation for service members discharged for disabilities rated less than 30% incurred in the line-of-duty in a combat zone or incurred during the performance of duty in a combat-related operation as designated by the Secretary of Defense. In adopting this provision, Congress relied on the existing definition of a combat-related disability contained in 10 U.S.C. 1413a(e)). Rather than using the definition intended by Congress, the Department of Defense adopted a more limited definition of combat-related operations, requiring that the disability be incurred during participation in armed conflict.

If confirmed, would you review the interpretation of this provision by the Department's subject matter experts and reconsider the Department's definition of combat-related operations for purposes of awarding enhanced severance pay and deduction of severance pay from VA disability compensation?

I understand this matter is currently being reviewed. If confirmed, I will continue that review and ensure that any policy change, if warranted, meets the intent of Congress.

11. 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 is your view on repealing the current Department of Defense policy?

I support the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010 and the certification process defined in the law.

If confirmed, and in the event Secretary Gates does not sign such a certification prior to his departure from office, I will work closely with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to assess whether the elements for certification in the law are met before signing it myself.

12. 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 is your assessment of the lessons learned from the tragedy at Fort Hood?

I understand that the Fort Hood review released by DoD in August 2010 included seventy-nine recommendations on how to improve personnel policies, force protection, emergency response and mass casualty preparedness, and support to DoD healthcare providers. I am told that DoD has completed implementation of half of these recommendations.

If confirmed, I intend to review all the lessons learned, recommendations for improvement, and progress made to date and work closely with members of Congress to ensure that DoD is prepared to defend against internal threats, including radicalization among DoD's military and civilian personnel.

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

I understand that the findings and recommendations of the Fort Hood Review are the foundation of DoD's current strategy and leadership and accountability are key. If confirmed, I will review this strategy and how it has been implemented, seek the advice of DoD's civilian and military leadership, and consult with Congress to ensure that DoD implements the most effective policies to prevent and mitigate such threats in the future.

13. 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?

It is my understanding that the Fort Hood Follow-on Review prepared an implementation plan in response to both of these recommendations. If confirmed, I will review that report and the progress that has been

made to ensure DoD policies, programs, and procedures appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion while effectively protecting our service members from harm.

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

It is my understanding that the Military places a high value on the rights of service members to observe their respective religious faiths and that policies and programs reflect this.

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?

I understand each Religious Ministry Professional has committed to functioning in a pluralistic environment and to supporting, both directly and indirectly, the free exercise of religion by all members of the Military Services, their family members, and other persons authorized to be served by the military chaplaincies. If confirmed, I will review the relevant policies, seek the advice of the military leadership, and consult with Congress to ensure that DoD appropriately accommodates 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?

I understand current policy appears to strike the proper balance by allowing chaplains to voluntarily participate, or not participate, in settings which conflict with their faith traditions, while also ensuring chaplains performing in an interfaith setting, such as an official dinner or interfaith memorial service, are mindful of the requirement for inclusiveness. If confirmed, I will monitor these policies 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?

I understand DoD has commissioned a Defense Science Board study on violent radicalization and plans to commission two additional clinical studies to identify any potential indicators of violent behavior in military personnel. The results of these studies will inform DoD's policies and programs on radicalization. If confirmed, I intend to ensure that DoD continues to rely on a scientific, fact-based approach to countering radicalization and protecting our force.

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.

In your view, do DOD policies appropriately accommodate religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith?

I understand the important and delicate balance that must be struck between accommodating religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith and maintaining the military's uniform grooming and appearance standards. If confirmed, I will work with the leaders of the military services to achieve an appropriate balance between maintaining the military's uniform grooming and appearance standards and approving requested religious accommodations.

14. 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?

I recognize the events related to the attack at Fort Hood are first and foremost 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 am informed that military leaders and supervisors at all levels take precautions to prevent such occurrences and maintain good order and discipline in the force. No form of harassment will be tolerated.

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 advocate open communications, decisive action on the part of military leaders and supervisors, and command emphasis on the military standard for maintaining good order and discipline. More specifically, this would include safeguarding the rights of service members by exercising the established procedures and processes for addressing all indications of harassment and complaints. If confirmed, I would review the effectiveness of these feedback systems, and take measures to improve them, as appropriate.

15. 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?

Sexual assault has no place in the Department of Defense – and it will not be tolerated. DoD's zero tolerance policy on sexual assault is the right policy. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Chiefs, and the Service Secretaries are continuously and directly engaged in emphasizing the importance of addressing sexual assault. DoD is deeply committed to broad and focused improvements in how it prevents and responds to sexual assault. Advancements in development of policies and programs, such

as hiring additional investigators, field instructors, prosecutors and lab examiners have been made. But there is still work to do to integrate and continue to improve our efforts across DoD and the Services. If confirmed, I would continue to ensure DoD is committed to addressing sexual assault in a comprehensive manner.

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

I have not been informed of any specific problems in the implementation of the restricted reporting option. It is my understanding that restricted reporting allows victims who wish to remain anonymous to come forward and obtain the support they need following an assault without being identified. I believe that the most important concern in reviewing the reporting procedure should be to ensure that victims are coming forward. If confirmed, I will review DoD's program to gain a clear picture of progress and areas for future improvement in sexual assault reporting procedures.

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

Sexual assault against anyone is unacceptable in any location. I do not have enough information to make a comprehensive assessment at this time, but it is my understanding that if any of our deployed Service members, civilians, or contractors is assaulted, he or she will receive appropriate and responsive support and care. It is also my understanding that individuals who commit sexual assault are appropriately punished. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure DoD is committed to addressing sexual assault in a comprehensive manner across the Services in all locations. There is no tolerance in DoD for sexual assault in any location or for any personnel who serve in DoD.

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. It is my understanding that all 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. I also understand that the Services recently enhanced their resources for investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases. While, I cannot make a specific assessment at this time, if confirmed, evaluating the adequacy and efficacy of training and resources allocated to the Services for sexual assault investigation will be a priority.

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

DoD's policies emphasize the command's role in effective response to sexual assault. DoD has taken action to provide training for commanders and to ensure adequate training and resources for prosecutors and investigators. I understand that DoD's policies seek to balance victim care and appropriate command action against offenders, with one of the aims being to build the victim's confidence to assist in an investigation. If confirmed, I will ensure accountability, appropriately balanced with victim care, remains an important focus of DoD's sexual assault prevention and response efforts.

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

I believe that sexual assault has no place in the Armed Forces, and that DoD currently has a zero tolerance policy. I understand DoD has assigned a General/Flag Officer with operational experience to provide direct oversight of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program office. This senior leader will facilitate and integrate a comprehensive and uniformed approach to sexual assault prevention and response policy across DoD. If confirmed, I will continue to make sexual assault prevention and response a priority for DoD and will work closely with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chiefs of the Military Services to ensure that DoD maintains senior leadership focus on this issue.

16. 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?

I understand there have been many changes made in policies governing the utilization of the Guard. There is now a 180-day notification prior to mobilization, dwell ratio standard of no more than one year mobilized for five years not mobilized, and Guard and Reservists can only be involuntary activated for one year.

These changes have improved morale by providing a predictable cycle of active duty.

A key problem that remains is there are over 30 different duty statuses for Guard and Reserve personnel. This diversity of duty status is cumbersome and results in mobilization and de-mobilization delays.

17. 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?

In order to fully assess the capability of the Reserve force, it is critical to measure and report medical and dental readiness in a standardized manner. It is my understanding that over the past several years, small, but steady improvements have been made across the Services, but there is more work to do in confirming the medical and dental readiness of the entire Reserve force.

Medical and dental readiness is tracked through standardized calculations each quarter. Currently, the medical readiness achievement goal is 75% and DoD is at 63%. The dental readiness achievement goal is 85%, and DoD has met that goal.

While progress can be seen, the medical and dental readiness of the reserve component remains a priority if I am confirmed.

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

It's my understanding that DoD continues to pursue new and improved opportunities to provide flexible options for the Guard and Reserve to improve their overall readiness.

Producing and maintaining a healthy and fit Reserve Component requires more than access to health care – it also requires command emphasis and individual accountability.

Recently, the Army Reserve approved and funded two medical/dental readiness days per soldier starting in FY 2010.

If confirmed, I will work with the Services to incorporate the findings and recommendations from the executive-level DoD Prevention, Safety and Health Promotion Council (PSHPC) recently created to advance health and safety promotion and injury/illness prevention policy initiatives to address readiness requirements developed from evidence-based research.

18. 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, when will the active component dwell time goal be met?

I understand that the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, on average, are meeting or exceeding DoD's dwell time goal of 1:2 for the Active Component. The Army is now averaging 1:1 but expects to be 1:2 by October 2011. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor this issue closely.

When will dwell time objectives be met for the reserve components?

I understand Reserve Component dwell time is improving, but has not reached DoD's dwell time goal of one year of active duty and 5 years at home, or 1:5. If confirmed, I will continue to work toward the goal

of a 1:5 dwell time ratio for the Reserve Component.

19. Active-Duty End Strength

Secretary Gates announced this year that the Army would reduce its end strength by 22,000 through FY 2013, including 7,000 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 “stoploss” 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?

If confirmed, I will review the plan, but it is my understanding, that based upon what we know today, and the well reasoned assumptions that have been made, that the current plan strikes a prudent balance between serving operational needs and ensuring the funds available for recapitalization which are critical to future readiness. However, I know that ensuring that commanders have the right numbers and right kinds of volunteers to perform their mission is of critical importance. As future national security circumstances could change, if confirmed, our plan will change accordingly.

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

The Army and Marine Corps end strength reductions, planned for FY 2015, are based on the assumption of a future draw-down in Afghanistan. If this assumption holds true, the dwell ratio of 1:2 should not be affected.

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

If confirmed, I will take into consideration dwell time objectives and our ability to meet competing strategic objectives before implementing the planned end-strength reductions.

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?

I am unable to express an opinion on this issue at this time. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Army on appropriate end strength.

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

That would depend on the Army’s deployment footprint and the period of acceleration. However, I would anticipate that the Army may not be able to achieve the dwell ratio goal of 1:2 on its current schedule. This is an issue that I will need to evaluate, if confirmed.

What are the assumptions regarding “conditions on the ground” that will allow for the planned

reductions beginning in 2015 to occur on time?

Generally speaking, I would consider our progress against the established security objectives at the time. I would solicit the advice of DoD's senior military and civilian leaders to inform my judgment on such decisions.

The Navy and Air Force have 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 understand that some of the authorities used during previous force reductions have expired or are expiring soon. DoD is seeking to renew these authorities and is requesting new legislation to size and shape the force. My view is that DoD should make maximum use of voluntary authorities; however, great care should be taken to ensure those who leave are not going to be needed in the near term. If confirmed, I will study this issue closely and rely on the advice of both civilian and military professionals at the Department.

20. 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, recently testified, 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 understanding, 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 is the best single predictor of attrition. Some standards may change over time. Medical standards have been revised, for example, as pre-enlistment treatments result in improved outcomes.

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

From my understanding, the Services are exploring ways to improve our ability to predict attrition. The Services may be able to augment their screening procedures by incorporating other measures, such as personality, to identify applicants who are likely to adapt well to the military. If confirmed, I will work with the Services to continually find new ways to recruit.

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

I am not aware that DoD assesses that military enlistment standards are 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.

Do you believe that current policies defining three tiers of high school diploma credentials, aimed at minimizing attrition during the initial enlistment term, should be retained?

My understanding is the Services track the attrition rates of military recruits, by a variety of credential types, and traditional high school diploma graduates have lower rates of attrition than any other type of credential holder.

21. Women in the Military

The Navy has opened service on submarines to women, the Marine Corps recently expanded service opportunities for women in intelligence specialties, and the Army is 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 opened up for service by women?

It is my understanding DoD believes it has sufficient flexibility under current law to make appropriate assignment policy for women. DoD 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 should be based on our obligation to maintain a high state of mission readiness of our All-Volunteer Force.

Do you believe any changes in the current policy or legislation regarding women in combat are needed or warranted?

I understand DoD policies and practices that restrict assigning female service members are currently under review per Section 535 of the FY 2011 National Defense Authorization Act. If confirmed, I will take my responsibility to thoroughly review any proposed policy change and ensure changes to existing policy move forward after appropriate notice to Congress.

22. 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, Secretary 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.

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?

While the proposals included in the FY 2012 President's Budget are a significant first step, I believe that we need to continue to explore all possibilities to control the costs of military health care. In the long term, the promotion of healthy life styles and prevention among our beneficiaries is one way 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?

I understand that even with the estimated savings from the health care efficiencies proposed in the FY 2012 budget, the cost of the Military Health System continues to increase as a percentage of the DoD budget and will exceed 10 percent of the budget in just a few years.

During a period when there is heavy downward pressure on all Federal spending, including defense spending, we must make smart choices that permit us to maintain a balance between personnel benefits and funding for equipment and readiness.

If confirmed, one of my highest priorities would be to ensure that DoD provides quality care, and it does so in a way that provides the best value for our service members and their families, as well as the American taxpayer.

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

I cannot make specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would work closely with the health care leadership in DoD to examine every opportunity to ensure military beneficiaries are provided the highest quality care possible while managing cost growth.

23. 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?

I am aware that an increasing portion of DoD's limited resources are devoted to personnel-related costs.

I understand there have been many incremental adjustments to military pay and benefits over the years; however, much of the military compensation system remains rooted in structures established generations ago. If we are going to manage costs, I believe everything must be on the table. It may be appropriate to conduct a comprehensive review of the military pay and benefits structure to determine where costs can be contained.

I believe that it may be possible to restructure our military benefits in a way that reduces costs, but any such effort must continue to attract and support our men and women in uniform and their families in a wide variety of situations.

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?

I understand recruiting and retention bonuses are cost-effective tools to achieve DoD's personnel strength and experience objectives. However, we must continually monitor these tools to ensure they are being used efficiently as well as effectively. A review of the utilization and efficacy of bonuses should certainly be part of any comprehensive review of the military pay and benefits structure.

24. 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. The head of a Defense Business Board Task Force has criticized military benefits as "GM-style benefits" describing the military retirement system as a "pre-volunteer force retirement system" and criticizing "taxpayer-subsidized grocery chains and low out-of-pocket healthcare costs".

What is your view of the adequacy of the current military retirement benefit?

I understand that the military retirement system was created in an earlier era and, in general, accomplishes the purpose for which it was designed; to provide a strong incentive to attain 20 years of service and then to leave shortly thereafter. To maintain the right military force structure, the comprehensive mix of pay and benefits, which includes military retirement, needs to be adequate. However, over time, the world has changed and private-sector compensation practices have changed, but the military retirement system has remained essentially the same. I believe it may be appropriate to also review the military retirement system for needed changes and efficiencies.

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?

I understand there are many proposed alternatives to the current military retirement system. I am unable to make recommendations at this time but will closely study proposals and their impact if confirmed.

Do you share the Defense Business Board Task Force view of military benefits?

I am aware that the Defense Business Board is reviewing military retirement, but I do not believe it has released their report. I look forward to reviewing it once it is made available. I agree that it may be possible to restructure our military benefits in a way that reduces costs, but any such effort must continue to attract and support our men and women in uniform and their families.

25. Dependent Care and Flexible Spending Accounts

The 10th QRMC recommended providing dependent care and flexible spending benefits to active-duty service members. Providing these benefits would seem consistent with the initiatives of First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden on behalf of military families. It would appear that no new legislative authority is needed for the Department to provide these benefits to service members and their families.

If confirmed, would you extend these benefits to the active duty service members and their families?

I understand that in response to the FY 2006 National Defense Authorization Act, DoD examined and provided a report on the advantages and disadvantages of providing flexible spending accounts to military members. If confirmed, I will review whether flexible spending accounts should be extended to active duty service members and their families.

26. 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 soldiers 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?

Although I do not have sufficient information to make a full assessment at this time, I am aware that significant improvements in these areas have been made in the last four years. However, it is my opinion that more must be done. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure DoD regularly evaluates and seeks to improve its wounded warrior programs to ensure that the needs of our wounded warriors and their families are met.

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

In my opinion, one of the most significant strengths is the high priority which DoD has placed on caring for our wounded warriors and their families. In my view, next to the wars themselves, there is no higher priority, and if confirmed, I will continue to place the highest priority on these efforts.

What are the weaknesses that need to be corrected?

A challenge facing DoD in this area, as in other areas, is to ensure that in delivering the highest standard of care for our wounded, ill and injured, we do so in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

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?

I do not have any specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I will closely monitor and evaluate this issue to ensure necessary resources are in place to take care of our recovering wounded, ill, and injured Service members and their families.

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, have been established to improve processing of service members.

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

I have been told that a revised and improved disability evaluation system developed by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, known as the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, today serves over half of those in the system, and that its wide adoption is a priority of the VA and DoD leadership. I do not currently have any specific recommendations regarding the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, but I support these ongoing efforts and, if confirmed, will look for opportunities to further improve on them.

If confirmed, how will you address any need for change, particularly the Army's growing problem?

I do not have specific recommendations at this time, but, if confirmed, I will work with DoD and VA to continually evaluate the system and identify opportunities for improvement.

27. 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 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 role should the Department of Defense play in shaping policies to help prevent suicides both in garrison and in theater and to increase the resiliency of all service members and their families, including members of the reserve components?

The rise in suicides in the military and by veterans is tragic and DoD has a responsibility to address the factors that contribute to suicidal behavior among our military men and women whether they are deployed, at a military installation or in their home communities. I understand all of the Services have implemented prevention and resilience building programs. The *Final Report of the Department of Defense Task Force on the Prevention of Suicide by Members of the Armed Forces* is being used as a vehicle to review all Departmental policies and procedures related to suicide prevention. If confirmed, I will ensure that DoD continues to improve suicide prevention policies and processes.

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?

While I have not had the opportunity to read *Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention Report 2010*, I know that sustaining a force steadily engaged in combat for over a decade has unexpected challenges. Some of those challenges include a rise in “high risk” behaviors and suicides. It is my understanding the Army’s report provided an introspective look at these issues and concluded that suicide and other high risk behaviors must be addressed with a more holistic and multidisciplinary approach. If confirmed, I will work to see the Services share lessons learned to jointly address these risk factors.

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?

Ensuring that our service members and their families have sufficient access to the mental health resources that they need is critical to the wellness of our total force. I am advised that DoD is working to determine workforce requirements for mental health professionals, and utilizing all the medical, educational, and counseling resources available, but there is further room for improvement. If confirmed, I will monitor how well we are meeting these goals by assessing current utilization rates and further determining ways in which we can leverage more resources for our Service members and their families.

28. 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.

How do you perceive the relationship between military recruitment and retention and quality of life improvements and your own top priorities for the armed forces?

While I have not had the opportunity to read the Quadrennial Quality of Life Review, I know that quality

of life factors, such as those highlighted in the report, contribute significantly to recruiting and retention are key to maintaining the All-Volunteer Force. It is well known that a Service member's satisfaction with various aspects of military life, as well as the Service member's family's experience, has a strong influence on a member's decision to reenlist. If confirmed, I will monitor how effectively DoD programs, in conjunction with community efforts, meet the needs of Service members and their families, and ensure that they are contributing positively to recruitment and retention.

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?

I understand the importance of quality of life programs on the wellness of the total force as well as on recruiting and retention. If confirmed, I will study the 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.

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

If confirmed, I will study this issue in great detail, but I believe that family readiness is tethered to family resilience. It is DoD's responsibility to ensure that 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, DoD can continue to build family resilience. I understand that great strides have been made in improving access to resources for families through such programs as Military One Source, the Yellow Ribbon Program, but DoD can always improve.

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

Given upcoming structural changes across the world, it is DoD's responsibility to ensure that all resources including those in health care, education and employment are available to families at the level they need wherever they may be located. In order to accurately address the needs of these families in a changing environment, it is also critical to DoD's success to 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. If confirmed, I will monitor the changing needs of our

military families closely.

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?

DoD has a duty to ensure that every family has access to quality resources, regardless of 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 to ensure that it is properly focused and funded to address the issues faced by active duty, Guard, and Reserve service members and their families.

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

During my pre-hearing office calls, I heard about many excellent state programs that support service members and their families. If confirmed, I would like to explore these further and see if they can be expanded across all states.

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?

I believe family programs are sustainable in future years. It will be necessary to review family programs with respect to efficiencies just as every other program in DoD will be reviewed against the overall needs of DoD. The focus should not merely be on more resources, but rather on the efficiency and quality of Family Support programs along with the leveraging community-level organizations and citizens who desire to help their military-connected neighbors. DoD efficiency, along with community partnerships and cooperation, are key to allowing DoD to meet the long-term needs of our Military families in an ever-increasing fiscally constrained environment.

30. 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.

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, 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.

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 believe that DoD's leadership should always be mindful of multiple considerations when developing standards for detainee treatment, including 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.

Do you consider waterboarding to be torture?

As I stated at my February 2009 confirmation hearing and prior to that hearing, I believe that water-boarding crosses the line and should not be employed. Having said that, I also believe, as the President has indicated, that those individuals who operated pursuant to a legal opinion indicating that the technique was proper and legal ought not to be prosecuted or investigated. They were acting pursuant to the law as it was presented to them by the Attorney General at that time.

Do you believe that waterboarding is consistent with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

As stated, I have expressed the view that I believe that water-boarding crosses the line and should not be employed. I therefore believe that water-boarding is inconsistent with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

Do you believe that we have obtained intelligence through waterboarding that we would not have been able to obtain through other means?

As I have stated previously, the intelligence community relies on many sources of information. Whether that technique is the only way to obtain certain information is an open question, as I have repeatedly said. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, I will ensure that all interrogations conducted by DoD personnel are conducted consistent with the Department of the Army Field Manual 2-22.3 and in accord with Geneva Conventions Common Article 3.

Do you believe that the intelligence we received through waterboarding was accurate, or did we receive false leads?

I cannot generalize about the quality of the intelligence that has been obtained through any particular technique. I am aware of instances in which useful information has been obtained from detainees and

other instances in which detainees sought to provide false information.

Are there any circumstances under which you believe the United States should resume waterboarding of detainees?

As I testified at my February 2009 confirmation hearing, I fully support the President's decision to establish the Army Field Manual, which does not permit waterboarding, as the single standard applying to all interrogations by U.S. government personnel and have upheld this standard while I was CIA Director. I will continue to do so if confirmed as Secretary of Defense. I believe we should do everything possible to collect intelligence while remaining in compliance with the law.

Are you familiar with the "enhanced interrogation techniques," other than waterboarding, that have been applied to so-called "high value detainees" at Guantanamo and elsewhere?

Yes.

Do you believe that these enhanced interrogation techniques are consistent with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

I would refrain to offer a legal opinion on this question as the answer also depends upon the nature and extent of the technique employed.

31. Coordination with the Department of Homeland Security

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Congress established the Department of Homeland Security, and DOD established the U. S. Northern Command and an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs.

What is your assessment of the current situation regarding cooperation and coordination between DOD and DHS on homeland security matters, and what will be your goals in this regard if you are confirmed?

I understand that DoD has established a strong relationship with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I believe DoD and DHS have a common goal: the protection of the United States.

Elements of DoD work very closely with a number of the operational components of DHS including the Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Secret Service, Customs and Boarder Protection, and others.

DoD and DHS work hand in hand with the Council of Governors to reach common goals. I understand DoD has a number of liaison and coordination officers throughout DHS and its components. I also understand that there are a number of cyber security related issues on which the Departments are also in collaboration.

If confirmed, my goal would be to continue this strong relationship and build upon a number of these important initiatives.

What do you believe is the appropriate mechanism for DOD to respond to the needs of domestic agencies for DOD support – whether through new or modified programs within DOD or otherwise?

I understand the mechanisms for DoD to respond to the needs of domestic agencies appear to be working effectively. During the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, DoD responded to 141 requests for assistance from DHS and the U.S. Coast Guard, by providing ships to skim surface oil, air traffic control capabilities, and other critical assets. DoD has responded to over 50 requests for assistance from FEMA in the past year for a variety of disasters. DoD also regularly assists other agencies in the homeland as well, including the Department of Agriculture for fighting wildfires, and the Secret Service for security during special events such as the Presidential Inaugural. If confirmed, I will work closely with domestic agencies to ensure DoD is prepared to continue to support civil authorities, when appropriate.

32. Iraq Lessons Learned

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

One of the most important lessons is the U.S. government must train and plan for post-combat operations. Conflict can occur along a spectrum. Our military must be prepared for combat, but also may have a role in shaping the political, cultural and economic factors that can fuel conflict. The U.S. military must plan and train with civilian counterparts, be prepared to operate effectively in all phases of conflict, and develop better awareness of political, cultural, and economic factors to ensure that our actions will meet 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?

I understand that lessons learned from Iraq and other recent engagements have led to deep and wide-ranging changes in doctrine, organization, training, and policy. For example, the counterinsurgency doctrine has been completely revised, culminating in the publication of Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24. The development of Advise and Assist Brigades and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance units are examples of force structure changes.

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?

I am not in a position to recommend specific measures at this time. I understand that many of the lessons from Iraq are in the process of being integrated into DoD policy and doctrine, and are contributing to the effort in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will monitor this ongoing process closely.

33. Lead Agency Transition in Iraq

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?

DoD, State Department, and other agencies and offices have undertaken unprecedented levels of coordination and planning for the transition in Iraq. I understand that DoD has an excellent working relationship with DoS and that the two departments are working together at all levels to achieve a successful transition. As one would expect with a transition of this scope and complexity, challenges exist and DoD is doing everything it can to help set up DoS for success.

The biggest concern I am aware of is that the State Department may not receive the resources it needs for the transition.

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

I believe the current plans are sufficient, based on what I have been briefed to date. If confirmed, I would review and assess the Iraq transition planning and make recommendations on any necessary changes.

34. 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, if any, between the Department of Defense and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government in the planning and conduct of stability operations?

As seen in recent operations, there is a great need for economic development, governance, and law enforcement experts who work for the State Department, USAID, and the Justice Department. As appropriate, I understand that DoD operates within U.S. Government and international structures for managing civil-military operations, and will seek to enable the deployment and use of the appropriate civilian capabilities and resources. Ideally, I understand that DoD usually will be in a supporting role. But when no other options are available, and when directed, DoD has led stability operations activities to establish civil security and control and to restore essential services, repair and protect critical infrastructure, deliver humanitarian assistance, and then transitioned lead responsibility to other U.S. Government agencies, foreign governments and security forces, and international governmental

organizations and non-governmental organizations.

In developing the capabilities necessary for stability operations, what adjustments, if any, should be made to prepare U.S. Armed Forces to conduct stability operations without detracting from its ability to perform combat missions?

I note DoD policy states that “stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that DoD shall be prepared to conduct with proficiency equivalent to combat operations.” This represents a significant cultural and programmatic shift in recent years. If confirmed, I intend to familiarize myself with the efforts of the Military Departments to enhance proficiency on these missions and will work with the Chairman, the Military Department Secretaries, and Service Chiefs to ensure appropriate adjustments are made.

Do you believe that the authorities provided under Section 1206 (Building the Capacity of Foreign Military Forces) and Section 1207 (Security and Stabilization Assistance) of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2006 contribute to a policy of military engagement?

I believe the authorities provided under Sections 1206 and 1207 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2006 have made the government more agile in its ability to respond to urgent and emergent counterterrorism and stabilization challenges. I am told that the “dual-key” processes established to manage these projects have fostered greater collaboration between the Departments of State and Defense. If confirmed, I intend to apply the lessons learned from our experience with these programs in future security and stabilization assistance efforts with Secretary Clinton and other interagency partners.

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

Although I have not studied this issue in detail, my understanding is that the U.S. Government does not need to establish new organizations or offices to manage stability operations. If confirmed, however, I will be open to the advice of others on this issue.

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

I think one area where we can improve is to strengthen our combined ability to conduct “whole-of-government” planning which will enhance the management and the effectiveness of the U.S. Government’s stabilization and reconstruction activities. If confirmed, I will review how to make such planning a priority.

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?

Without fair and effective rule of law, neither Iraq nor Afghanistan will be able to prevent the return of terrorists. Both countries require U.S. Government assistance in rule of law capacity building in such areas as civilian police forces, attorneys, and judges. I strongly support the State Department’s lead in

this critical endeavor. However, in fragile security environments, my sense is that DoD rule of law practitioners can also play a major and useful role in providing training and assistance.

35. Security Situation in Iraq

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

Iraq still faces dangerous and determined enemies, but these enemies do not have the support of the Iraqi people. Although occasional high-profile attacks still occur, the underlying security situation in Iraq remains stable and these attacks have not sparked a return to widespread insurgency or civil war.

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

The main challenges to internal stability and security in Iraq are al-Qa'ida in Iraq and Iranian-backed Shia extremist groups. Moreover, the unresolved status of territories claimed by the Kurdistan Regional Government has the potential to create fissures that can be exploited by extremist groups, and could even lead to an escalation of tension between Kurdish and central government forces. However, with sustained political engagement by Iraqi leaders and a strong U.S. support role, the ISF should be able to handle these challenges.

36. Drawdown in Iraq

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?

Yes.

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?

Iraqi leaders and U.S. officials have acknowledged that there will be gaps in Iraqi Security Forces' capabilities after 2011, especially in external defense. I believe the United States should consider a request from the Government of Iraq to remain in Iraq for a limited period of time to provide limited assistance to fill these gaps.

37. U.S.-Iraq Strategic Relationship

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

The nature of the U.S.-Iraq strategic relationship desired by both countries is articulated in the November 2008 Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA). The SFA establishes a structure for cooperation and collaboration across a variety of sectors, including commercial, education, cultural, political, energy, and defense.

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.

38. Afghanistan Counterinsurgency Strategy

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

Yes, I support the strategy that the President has set forth and I believe it is the right strategy. We have the necessary resources and strategy in place to succeed in our focused counterinsurgency campaign. This strategy has reversed the insurgency's momentum and is helping the Afghans increase their governance capacity and build security forces that are capable of providing the security and basic services necessary to achieve a peaceful, stable Afghanistan that does not again become a safe haven for terrorists. The gains made are fragile and reversible.

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?

I believe U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is sound. The Administration tracks metrics of progress throughout the year and conducts annual reviews to determine whether adjustments are necessary. Counter-terrorism is a significant part of the counter-insurgency strategy, and managing the balance of all aspects of the strategy is an ongoing process.

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

Important gains have been made over the past eighteen months, establishing security and Afghan government authority in former Taliban strongholds such as Helmand and Kandahar, as well as building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. Although the gains are fragile and reversible, momentum has shifted to the Afghan Government, and they are on track to begin the transition process by assuming lead security responsibilities in several areas of the country this summer.

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 a significant victory in our campaign to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa'ida, which is the core goal of our efforts in Afghanistan. The successful operation does not mean we can rest, but rather we have a unique opportunity to make new gains on al-Qa'ida while it is in disarray. 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.

39. Transition of Security Responsibility in Afghanistan and U.S. troop reductions

Do you support the July 2011 date announced by President Obama to begin transferring more and more responsibility for Afghanistan's security to the Afghan security forces and to begin the drawdown of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, with the pace of reductions to be based on conditions on the ground?

I support the July 2011 date to begin the process of transferring lead security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and to begin a responsible, conditions-based drawdown of U.S. forces. Over the preceding 18 months, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and its ANSF partners have made significant gains in the overall security environment. Their hard-earned gains have set the necessary conditions to begin the transition of responsibility.

Do you support a significant drawdown of U.S. troops starting in July of this year?

I support a responsible conditions-based drawdown as called for by the President. I believe we have made the progress necessary to give the President meaningful options for his decision. Decisions regarding the size and pace of the drawdown will be based on commanders' assessment of conditions and warfighting requirements.

In your view, what impact, if any, does the death of Osama Bin Laden have on the size or time table for the reduction of U.S. troops in Afghanistan?

It is too early to know the implications of Osama bin Laden's death on the region and how it will affect the campaign. While bin Laden's death sends a clear message to other al-Qa'ida and Taliban senior leaders about U.S. resolve, there are no indications at this stage of what impact, if any, it might have for decisions regarding the size or time table for reducing forces in Afghanistan.

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

Yes. At the NATO Summit in Lisbon, the participants in ISAF endorsed President Karzai's goal of ANSF assuming lead responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan by 2014. Although much work is still left, I am confident that this objective can be met.

40. Afghanistan National Security Forces

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

The ANSF have made enormous progress in size and quality over the past two years and remain ahead of schedule for their growth targets this year. In addition, both the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) have made significant gains in effectiveness and professionalism, although more remains to be achieved. The establishment of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program has also

fostered greater local capability to resist insurgents. U.S. and NATO efforts to recruit, train, equip, and deploy these forces, in conjunction with very capable Afghan Ministers of Defense and Interior, are paying real dividends on the ground in Afghanistan. These gains have set the ANSF on a path to be capable of assuming lead security responsibilities across Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

Do you support the increase in the size of the ANSF beyond the level of 305,000 by the fall of 2012?

Yes. Military commanders, who are closest to the problem and have expert knowledge, have conducted detailed studies on ANSF personnel and capabilities requirements. These requirements were developed by examining the terrain, the strength of the enemy, and the core goals in the DoD campaign plan. In order to ensure the Afghans have the capabilities they need to secure their country in the current threat environment, continued ANSF growth is needed. The President has endorsed growth to 352,000 and I support that decision.

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?

Some of the main challenges to building the capacity of the ANSF include poor literacy rates and low education levels in the Afghan population which constrain the development of more advanced capabilities such as logistics, aviation, medical and communications units. These are capabilities that will be necessary for the ANSF to ensure Afghanistan does not again become a safe haven for terrorists. NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan has put a lot of attention on, and resources toward, the literacy problem. Another key challenge is the development of strong and capable leadership, which takes time and experience. If confirmed, I will work with military and civilian leaders and international partners to explore ways to bolster ANSF capacity.

41. Afghan Governance and Development

While improving security for the Afghan people is a key component of our counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan, the success of that strategy also depends on improving the Government of Afghanistan's capacity to provide governance, better services and economic development. Significant concerns remain over the performance of the Government of Afghanistan in meeting the needs of the Afghan people and fighting corruption.

What do you see as the role for the Department of Defense in building the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan to deliver services, provide better governance, improve economic development and fight corruption in Afghanistan?

I strongly agree that improving governance and economic development is as crucial to our strategy in Afghanistan as is improving security. While the Department of State (DoS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are the lead agencies within the U.S. Government on governance and development initiatives in Afghanistan, the DoD contributes to this effort and must cooperate closely with State and USAID. Coordinating DoD stabilization projects with civilian reconstruction and development efforts ensures that the military and civilian activities work together to support longer-term development objectives, as well as near-term stabilization.

In areas where civilians cannot operate independently due to an insecure environment, they regularly collaborate with military counterparts. Recognizing that corruption erodes the legitimacy of the Afghan state and fuels the insurgency, the Commander, ISAF, created Task Force Shafafiyat (“Transparency”) to foster a common understanding of the corruption problem and coordinate anti-corruption efforts among ISAF, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, the Afghan Government, and the international community. The task force has enabled ISAF to begin helping the Afghans address corruption and has improved U.S. contracting practices to ensure our funds are not being used in ways that contribute to the corruption that enables the insurgency

42. Reconciliation

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

The President has clearly outlined our support for an Afghan-led process to achieve a political resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan. I support Afghan Government efforts to achieve the reconciliation of groups and individuals who agree to cut ties with al-Qa’ida, cease violence, and accept the Afghan Constitution.

What is your assessment of the likelihood that such conditions may be achieved in the near future?

The clear successes we have seen in the military campaign are helping to create the conditions for reconciliation. The insurgency does not represent a clear hierarchy, and includes a variety of competing and affiliated groups. Resolution of the conflict in Afghanistan will likely require a process that includes both national and local dispute resolution. I am optimistic that the sustained combination of our military, governance, and diplomatic efforts is helping to set the conditions for the Afghan Government to build the political consensus that will ultimately bring about a resolution to the conflict.

43. U.S. Strategic Relationship with Pakistan

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

Most importantly, the core national security goal remains, to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and its militant allies, and eliminate their capacity to threaten the United States and its allies in the future. U.S. strategic interests in Pakistan encompass both our relationship with Pakistan itself and Pakistan’s role in the campaign against al-Qa’ida. Al-Qa’ida and other extremists use safe-havens in Pakistan to plot and prepare attacks against the U.S. and our allies and partners, and it is essential to continue working with Pakistan to eliminate these safe havens.

In addition, Pakistan’s civilian-led government requires international support to maintain political stability and to work toward the ability to govern all of its territory effectively. The fact that Pakistan is a nuclear state that faces internal threats from extremist organizations adds to the urgency of these requirements. Furthermore, U.S. economic interests in South Asia require stability in the region. Preventing, if possible, a potential Pakistan-India conflict is another important and strategic interest. For these reasons, it is in the United States' interest for Pakistan to have a strong civilian-led government

and an open society, to live in peace and security with its neighbors, and to ensure its nuclear assets remain secure, in accordance with international standards. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress as we pursue these strategic interests with Pakistan.

U.S. and Pakistan officials have been working together for years to counter the threat of terrorism. However, the revelation that Osama Bin Laden has been hiding out apparently for years at a spacious, highly-secure compound in Pakistan, less than 35 miles from the capital, has raised disturbing questions about the nature of Pakistan's cooperation with the United States in the fight against terrorism.

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

The operation against Osama bin Laden was a vital element of the President's comprehensive strategy to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa'ida, but it is far from the only element in this strategy. One of the key lessons from this operation is that we have seen no clear evidence to indicate that senior Pakistani leaders were involved in harboring Osama bin Laden or knew of his whereabouts. Although the relationship with Pakistan is not always easy and we have our differences, continuing cooperation with Pakistan is critical to keep a tremendous amount of pressure on al-Qa'ida's leadership and the networks that provide it support and safe haven at a time when it is most vulnerable. The operation presents a historic opportunity not only for us, but also for Pakistan, to advance our shared interests and strengthen our cooperation in eradicating terrorist networks that threaten both nations. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners in both Afghanistan and Pakistan to achieve our goal of eliminating terrorist networks that threaten the United States and our allies and partners and continue to seek Pakistan's unambiguous support in the fight against al-Qa'ida and the regional syndicate of terrorist networks.

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

Our military-to-military relationship with Pakistan, like our overall relationship, has featured ups and downs and is challenged by a long-term lack of trust within Pakistan about our intentions. If confirmed I will continue to focus on building the trust that is necessary for the effective partnership we need with Pakistan.

44. U.S. Assistance to Pakistan

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?

Security assistance, Coalition Support Fund reimbursements, and cross-border coordination with ISAF and Afghan forces have helped enable Pakistan's counterinsurgency campaign. Since 2009, Pakistan has undertaken counterinsurgency operations against extremist organizations in the northwest, including in Swat, South Waziristan, Mohmand, and Bajaur, with varying levels of success. Pakistan's level of commitment is reflected in the enormous casualties it has suffered as a result of terrorism in the last few years, including more than 11,000 military personnel killed or wounded in action and more than 30,000 civilian casualties in recent years, most recently in significant attacks following the bin Laden operation. However, Pakistan continues to lack the necessary military and civilian capacities to "hold" and "build" in cleared areas. If confirmed, I will work the Congress to ensure that the support we provide is yielding the results we seek.

45. Osama Bin Laden and al-Qa'ida

What changes, if any, should the United States make to its security assistance policy regarding Pakistan in light of the revelation of Osama Bin Laden's hideout within Pakistan?

The current "train-advise-and-equip" programs with the Pakistan military and paramilitary forces have been an important component in pursuing the near-term objective of eliminating terrorist sanctuaries and disrupting the al-Qa'ida network. It is vital, however, that Pakistan live up to its end of the bargain, cooperating more fully in counterterrorism matters and ceasing to provide sanctuary to Afghan Taliban and other insurgent groups. Therefore, in the wake of the Osama bin Laden raid, we have asked Pakistan to take a number of concrete steps to demonstrate cooperation and counter-terrorism. Future requests for security assistance will be informed by Pakistan's response to the counter-terrorism steps we have proposed.

In your view, will the death of Osama Bin Laden have a significant impact on the conflict against Al-Qa'ida and if so, how?

The death of Osama bin Laden is a significant blow to al-Qa'ida and brings us closer to its strategic defeat. However, al-Qa'ida remains a potent, dangerous, and adaptable foe. Its close allies, such as Pakistan Taliban and the Haqqani Network, have increasingly adopted al-Qa'ida's jihadist vision and, as core al-Qa'ida is weakened, there is a risk that decentralized affiliates may pose an increased threat to the United States. To achieve the President's objective of defeating al-Qa'ida and preventing its return to either Pakistan or Afghanistan, it is vital that we continue to aggressively pursue our accelerated counterterrorism campaign in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region.

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al-Qa'ida affiliates to the U.S. homeland, U.S. interests overseas, and Western interests more broadly? And, which affiliates are of most concern?

Al-Qa'ida and its adherents are diverse, dispersed, and decentralized. They are present in the Arabian Peninsula, North and East Africa, South Asia, Iraq, and elsewhere around the globe, including within the

United States. Intent and ability to attack the United States varies by group, but such attacks are a common theme in their propaganda and planning. Bin Laden himself remained very focused on attacking the Homeland. Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula has already demonstrated both the intent and the capability to conduct attacks against the United States. Despite the death of Bin Laden, core Al-Qa'ida and its adherents in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region remain a very dangerous threat.

46. 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?

The DoD's military-to-military and defense civilian relations with our partners in the Middle East and North Africa have played a critical role in advancing U.S. strategic interests: defeating extremists, countering weapons of mass destruction, countering terrorist organizations, ensuring the free flow of commerce, preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, disrupting smuggling and piracy, supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and securing Israel. Engagement with our key Middle Eastern and North African partners' defense ministries and militaries, building partner capacity to meet common challenges, having a forward presence to enable operations and deter potential threats, and being able to access regions – if and when necessary for future contingencies – require considerable effort on the part of many organizations within DoD working in tandem with the Department of State. During this time of change and uncertainty in the region, I understand that DoD will continue to evaluate and re-calibrate the nature and substance of our relationships to ensure they are consistent with U.S. values and advance U.S. vital national interests.

47. Libya

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

Yes. DoD is supporting operations against Libya as a part of an international coalition that is enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973. The coalition's combined efforts have prevented the mass killing of civilians in Libya. The President was clear from the beginning that the United States would bring its unique set of capabilities to bear on the front end of this conflict to stop the advance of Qadhafi's forces, take out regime air defenses, and set the stage for the NATO mission. While our role is now to support and assist, the U.S. military can provide unique capabilities to this effort that our NATO Allies and other partners cannot provide either in kind or at the levels required, such as electronic warfare, aerial refueling, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support, and unmanned aerial vehicle strikes.

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

No. While I do believe that the Qadhafi regime has lost all legitimacy and must go, the goal of our military effort, and the mandate of the UN resolution, is very clear: protect the Libyan people. We must continue to use a range of diplomatic and economic tools to apply further pressure on the Qadhafi regime. Ultimately, however, it will be up to the Libyan people to decide their future.

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

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, and any assistance will be for that purpose. The Administration has chosen not to provide arms or training to the rebels at this time, but it is my understanding that DoD has authorized up to \$25 million of non-lethal support which includes medical equipment, protective vests, binoculars, and radios.

48. Strategic Communications and Information Operations

Over the past few years, the Department of Defense has funded an increasing number of psychological operations and influence programs. While the Department does not have any separate documentation outlining its strategic communication activities, GAO reports that DOD "spent hundreds of millions of dollars each year" to support its information operations outreach activities. Many of these programs are in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but Military Information Support Teams (MISTs) from United States Special Operations Command are also deploying to U.S. embassies in countries of particular interest around the globe to bolster the efforts of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Further, the geographic combatant commands are moving into this operational space.

What are your views on DOD's psychological operations and influence programs and its integration into overall U.S. foreign policy objectives?

I understand that DoD's capability to effectively operate in the information environment is essential to the U.S. Government's ability to engage foreign audiences and adversaries to service our strategic and operational interests and objectives. It is particularly important to counter the rise of violent extremism, reduce the influence of those who challenge our interests and military operations, and it is a critical element of Combatant Command strategies for security and stability in their respective geographic regions. To be effective, these activities must be nested in U.S. foreign policy objectives and integrated across government and with our allies. I have seen much improvement in the coordination and de-confliction of these activities across the interagency and, if confirmed, will seek to build on these relationships.

I am aware that there has been acute interest from Congress in this area as budget requirements have risen sharply in recent years based on the growing realization of our military leaders that we must effectively operate in the 21st Century information environment. Over the last year, DoD has taken significant steps to improve and ensure appropriate and focused management and oversight of all influence programs including psychological operations (now re-named Military Information Support Operations). If

confirmed, I will continue this effort fully cognizant of both its importance to our military strategy and the requirements to ensure that DoD operates as a mutually supporting partner in a cooperative effort to advance our nations objectives.

You were reportedly a strong supporter of the creation of the State Department's Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications. In your view, what - if any - support should DOD provide to this Center?

As the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, I supported the creation of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) and it will continue to have my support should I be confirmed as Secretary of Defense. Both DoD and CIA support the Center with personnel. DoD currently provides three military service members in support of the CSCC, and I understand that the Department of State has requested several additional personnel. This request is undergoing review and consideration within DoD.

In 2005, al-Qaeda's Ayman al-Zawahiri declared that "We are in a battle, and more than half of it is taking place in the battlefield of the media." Last year, a non-partisan study highlighted the lack of a U.S. strategy to counter radical ideologies that foment violence (e.g. Islamism or Salafist-Jihadism).

What is the role of DOD versus the intelligence community and the State Department?

I understand DoD participates in several interagency efforts to counter violent extremism and works closely with not only the Department of State, but also CIA, the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), and others to ensure DoD programs are synchronized and deconflicted with programs of the other departments and agencies. Due to DoD's global presence, DoD personnel often encounter the effects of radical ideologies and the violence propagated by Islamist extremists on a daily basis. DoD personnel are thus well situated to contribute to U.S. Government efforts to counter the messages of violent extremists. DoD seeks to reduce support for violent extremist organizations by engaging foreign local populations, countering adversary propaganda, and developing relationships with key leaders and credible local interlocutors across the globe.

In your view, how do we counter radical ideologies that foment violence?

The efforts of the U.S. Government to counter radical ideologies must be persistent and long-term, and should be developed in order to shape and support collaborative regional security initiatives. One critical area of focus is those populations that are most vulnerable to extremist messaging. The U.S. Government should work within the interagency framework to build and implement programs and activities that address these at-risk audiences, which are predominantly under 30 years of age and mostly, but not exclusively, male. We have learned from experience that one of the most effective ways of countering such messaging is by seeking to amplify the credible voices of our Muslim partners.

Defense Secretary Gates launched the Minerva Program in 2009 to develop deeper social, cultural and behavioral expertise for policy and strategy purposes.

Do you support this program and its goals?

I have not had an opportunity to be briefed on the program and its specifics. In general, I agree that understanding the dynamics of social, political, economic, and cultural systems is critical not only for national security policy makers and strategic planners, but also for commanders down to the lowest tactical level.

49. Somalia

Somalia is a collapsed state with a weak government unable to project either power or stability or to provide services to its people. Somalia is also a training and operations hub for: al Shabaab and other violent extremists; pirates operating in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Peninsula; illicit traffickers of weapons, humans, and drugs; and remnants of the al-Qa'ida East Africa cell that was responsible for the destruction of our embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in August of 1998.

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

The threat from al-Shabaab to the U.S. and Western interests in the Horn of Africa and to the U.S. homeland is significant and on the rise. Al-Shabaab leaders, who have claimed affiliation with al-Qa'ida since 2007, are developing ties with al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, and are showing an increasing desire to stage international terrorist attacks in addition to their acts of violence inside Somalia. Al-Shabaab employs several hundred foreign fighters and regularly tries to recruit fighters from Somali diaspora communities in the United States and Europe. The Kampala bombings last July, which killed 79 innocent civilians, were a wake-up call and a reminder that al-Shabaab is willing to operationalize its rhetoric. As al-Shabaab faces increasing international pressure, we may see the group increase its international attacks. Al-Shabaab continues to repress the Somali people and remains the main adversary to the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers in Mogadishu.

Further, Somalia's lack of governance and sparse population could make it appealing as a safe haven for al-Qa'ida. As al-Qa'ida undergoes leadership changes and regroups from counterterrorism operations in Pakistan, we need to ensure that it does not relocate its center of operations to Somalia.

Given your knowledge of the role of the various U.S. Government Departments and Agencies in the Horn of Africa, what changes, if any, would you make to DOD's current role in the Horn of Africa?

I understand the DoD mission in the Horn of Africa is to build partner-nation capacity in order to promote regional security and stability, prevent conflict, and protect U.S. interests. I believe this mission is appropriate. I am informed U.S. Africa Command is undertaking a review of East Africa to determine how our military efforts in the region work in concert with our interagency partners to achieve our collective regional goals and counter al-Qa'ida's linkages to elements of al-Shabaab. DoD's ultimate goal is a fully integrated strategy under which security assistance, capacity building, operational collaboration with regional partners, and counter-terrorism actions are synchronized to provide the regional security and stability that is in the interest of both the United States and our regional partners.

This review of DoD's East Africa strategy will also review the status of Joint Task Forces to determine if any should be considered for transition to a more permanent Joint Interagency Task Force - including recommendations on basing and funding for Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) based at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our strategy is developed as part of a coordinated U.S. national security policy towards the Horn of Africa, and to determine how the DoD can and should best support this policy.

50. Yemen and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula

A number of senior U.S. officials, including you, have indicated the most significant threat to the U.S. homeland currently emanates from Yemen.

What is your assessment of the current U.S. strategy in Yemen?

U.S. goals in Yemen are to ensure Yemen is stable, unified, and economically viable, and to help Yemen deny Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) a safe-haven and operational platform. We do not yet know how the current crisis will play out.

The ongoing unrest has weakened an already fragile economy and allowed AQAP to expand its influence and to make some tactical gains in the tribal areas – in several cases seizing and holding territory now outside of Republic of Yemen Government control. However, despite AQAP's limited gains, they remain distant from, and largely counter to, the current anti-government movement in Yemen.

AQAP is intensely focused on conducting a near-term attack against the United States, and poses an immediate terrorist threat to U.S. interests and the homeland. The Christmas Day attempted bombing of the Detroit-bound airliner in 2009 and the failed package bombing attempt in October 2010 were the more recent attempts by al-Qa'ida to attack the U.S. Homeland. Despite these setbacks, al-Qa'ida and its affiliate, AQAP, are still actively plotting attacks, with the principal goal of successfully striking the U.S. Homeland. If confirmed, I will continue to work to achieve U.S. objectives in Yemen.

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?

In consideration of the ongoing political environment in Yemen, I understand DoD is constantly evaluating our security assistance and capacity building programs – particularly those provided under Section 1206. The Republic of Yemen Government currently remains a critical partner in the war against al-Qa'ida, and DoD remains particularly mindful of the continued and growing threat to the Homeland from AQAP.

51. NATO

At the NATO Summit in Lisbon last November, NATO members adopted a new Strategic Concept setting out the Alliance's vision for the coming decade. In their communiqué from that Summit,

NATO countries envisioned a more agile, capable and cost-effective alliance, able to defend against a full range of threats and to operate effectively with other international organizations and non-NATO nations. At the same time, many NATO members have significantly reduced their national defense budgets in response to the global economic crisis.

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

The United States has enormous stakes in a strong, mutually supportive NATO alliance, and the President has stressed his strong desire to rebuild and adapt transatlantic security relationships to meet 21st century security challenges. 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 and it will guide the next phase in NATO's evolution. Over the next five years, top-tier NATO-related challenges include, first and foremost, achieving durable progress on a successful transition in Afghanistan, implementing missile defense in Europe, and stemming the deterioration in European military capability. It is my sense that a number of our NATO allies, while fulfilling their current commitments, have been underperforming in terms of their own investments in defense capabilities, especially when it comes to deployable expeditionary forces. Many are planning further cuts to defense investment in order to sustain their operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere while coping with the financial crisis. The challenge will be for Allies to work together to determine which capabilities must be sustained and how that can be done in a more cost-effective manner, while also identifying other capability or mission areas where a higher degree of risk is acceptable.

Do you envision further enlargement of NATO within the next five years?

The President has stated that NATO enlargement should continue so long as new candidates are democratic, peaceful, and willing to contribute to common security. Precisely which countries and within what timeframe NATO would undertake further enlargement are important questions which the Administration would need to address in close consultation with Congress and our allies. It is important that each NATO aspirant should be judged on its individual merits and progress in implementing political, economic and military reforms.

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

NATO's New Strategic Concept stated NATO's commitment to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, but made clear that as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance. At Lisbon, NATO also initiated a review of its overall posture in deterring and defending against the full range of threats to the Alliance. I am informed that this review will recommend an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defense capabilities for the Alliance. This provides an opportunity to adapt NATO's nuclear posture to the realities of the 21st century. NATO's new Strategic Concept reflects Allies' commitment to NATO as a nuclear alliance and to nuclear burden sharing as fundamental to deterrence and assurance in Europe. NATO has rightly made clear that it will not unilaterally eliminate its nuclear capabilities absent an agreement with Russia on non-strategic nuclear weapons. The Administration is exploring negotiations with Russia to address

the disparity in non-strategic weapons, and will consult with Allies on those negotiations.

52. 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?

I believe that the current growth in special operations personnel is appropriate. I understand that U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) is programmed to meet the growth mandated by the last two Quadrennial Defense Reviews. If confirmed, I will examine if additional growth of Special Forces is needed, but only after that programmed growth is complete.

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

Special operations forces cannot be mass produced. Special Operations Command leaders have stated that Special Operations growth should not exceed 3 to 5 percent per year in order to ensure quality of the manpower being produced. I have been informed that this is the pace USSOCOM has sustained to great effect over the past several years and is on track to sustain over the next several years.

In recent years, special operations forces have taken on an expanded role in a number of areas important to countering violent extremist organizations, including those related to information and military intelligence operations. Some have advocated significant changes to U.S. Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) Title 10 missions to make them better reflect the activities special operations forces are carrying out around the world.

What current missions, if any, do you believe can and should be divested by SOCOM, and why? Are there any additional missions that you believe SOCOM should assume, and, if so, what are they and why do you advocate adding them?

I understand that DoD uses a range of processes, such as the Unified Command Plan, to review the mission sets and responsibilities it assigns to USSOCOM on an on-going basis. Additionally, the law provides the President and the Secretary of Defense flexibility needed to meet changing circumstances. At this time I would not advocate significant changes to USSOCOM's title 10 missions. If confirmed, and after I have been in office for a sufficient time to determine if changes are advisable, I will consider any recommend changes as appropriate or necessary.

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 activities of special operations forces are quite varied, from high-risk strikes and counterterrorist raids

to working by, with, and through local partners, whether training and advising foreign counterparts or providing support to civilian authorities abroad. I believe that each of these missions is highly valued within the special operations community. However, as the security landscape has changed, the demands for these kinds of missions have begun to exceed the ability of the Special Operations community alone to meet them. As a remedy to this situation, Secretary Gates advocated that the conventional forces be prepared to take on more of the kinds of missions that used to fall exclusively to SOF, including, for example, Security Force Assistance. I agree that broadening the spectrum of irregular missions that our conventional forces are able to take on will alleviate some of the demands being placed on the SOF community and ensure that the Total Force is adequately prepared to undertake both direct and indirect missions.

53. Combating Terrorism

What is your understanding of the Department's strategy for combating terrorism?

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

It is my understanding that the DoD strategy for combating terrorism is comprised of three elements: antiterrorism – defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts; counterterrorism – offensive actions to disrupt, dismantle and defeat terrorists, and resolve terrorist incidents; and consequence management – 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.

While I served as Director of the CIA, I worked closely with my interagency counterparts on strategies to defeat terrorism around the globe and will bring that experience to bear if confirmed as Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will continue to work with my interagency partners and the National Security Council and Staff to ensure the best coordination possible.

54. Intelligence Support for Indirect Activities

Some observers contend that the national intelligence agencies focus their assistance to the Defense Department in Afghanistan and Iraq on special operators engaged in direct action operations. As a consequence, it is alleged, general purpose forces and special operations forces engaged in indirect activities, including foreign internal defense and population protection, receive less intelligence support.

Do you believe this is true?

If so and if confirmed, how would you ensure special operations forces engaged in indirect activities receive adequate intelligence support?

The Intelligence Community (IC) supports a range of DoD customers to include those involved in foreign internal defense and population protection. Especially in light of efforts over the last several years, the IC

and DoD are appropriately providing intelligence support to all warfighters across the board. For example, DoD created the Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Task Force to field ISR platforms rapidly and, with the Committee's support, has continued to work to expand airborne ISR capabilities. Over the past year, the IC has also provided significant support to the surge of forces to Afghanistan through Attack the Improvised Explosive Device Network capabilities that support both general purpose and special operations forces. DoD and the IC are also substantially increasing intelligence support to Village Stability Operations and to the Afghan local police. The IC has also put greater emphasis on developing a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural environments within which terrorist networks and insurgent forces operate, which has enabled all warfighters to effectively engage the local population during stability operations. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that such programs, which support all warfighters, remain robust.

55. 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?

I understand that section 1208 authority is a key tool that Combatant Commanders have repeatedly confirmed as essential to combating terrorism in their areas of responsibility. It enables the Special Operations Forces under their control to leverage willing partners that possess access to areas, people, and information that are denied to our forces, but critical to tactical and strategic success. The authority has allowed DoD to respond immediately to emergent global challenges. Section 1208 requires appropriate civilian oversight, including Secretary of Defense approval and congressional notification.

56. 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 assessment of the QDR 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? 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?

I concur with Secretary Gates that America's dominance in traditional war-fighting has created powerful incentives for adversaries to use alternative methods to counter U.S. influence and interests. I also agree that, for the foreseeable future, the most likely contingencies the United States will face will involve irregular threats. Therefore, I believe the 2010 QDR's strategic shift toward expanding general purpose forces' capabilities and capacity for these contingencies makes sense. The overall flexibility of our

Armed Forces can be greatly improved by investing in key enablers within our conventional force, such as strengthening and expanding capabilities for security force assistance; increasing the availability of rotary-wing assets; expanding manned and unmanned aircraft systems for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; improving counter-improvised explosive device capabilities; and enhancing linguistic, cultural, counterinsurgency, and stability operations competency and capacity.

Are there certain mission areas that should be reserved for special operations forces only?

Special Operations Forces are a unique component of our U.S. Armed Forces that are trained to conduct operations in areas under enemy control or in politically sensitive environments, including counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, direct action, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, and counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In such environments, Special Operations Forces provide a unique and essential capability.

57. 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. DoD must keep pace with changes in the Asia-Pacific security environment that pose profound challenges to international security, such as the rise of new powers, the growing influence of non-state actors, and the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

DoD should maintain an enduring military presence in the Asia-Pacific region that provides a tangible reassurance that the United States is committed to Asia’s security, economic development, 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 DoD’s posture in Asia and make appropriate recommendations on any enhancements. In general, our regional Allies and partners must remain confident in the continued strength of our deterrence against the full range of potential threats.

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

As outlined in the 2010 National Security Strategy, the United States must develop a positive security agenda for the region. DoD’s priorities include protecting U.S. territory, citizens, and allies; deterring aggression and maintaining regional stability; maintaining free and open access to the maritime, air, and space domains; deterring and defeating violent extremism; and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their associated materials.

58. North Korea

North Korea represents one of the greatest near term threats to regional security and stability. This seriousness of the threat is seen by North Korea's continued pursuit of a nuclear capability and ballistic missile program, and particularly, over the past year, by North Korea's unprovoked and deadly attacks against South Korea – specifically the attack on the Republic of Korea navy ship Cheonan in March 2010 and the artillery attack on South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010.

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

North Korea's large conventional military, pursuit of asymmetric advantages through its ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs, including the newly revealed uranium enrichment activities, and proliferation behavior, underscores that North Korea poses a growing and direct threat to the United States, our allies in the region, and to the international community. If confirmed, I intend to monitor the security situation on the Korean Peninsula closely, work for the continued transformation of our alliances and partnerships in the region, and maintain the military capabilities necessary to protect our interests, defend our allies, and deter North Korea from acts of aggression and intimidation.

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?

I understand that U.S. strategy toward the Korean Peninsula is centered on maintaining peace through deterrence and diplomacy. The U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy has helped to prevent renewed war on the Korean Peninsula for more than half a century through escalation dominance, secure second-strike capabilities, and robust extended deterrence commitments to regional allies. 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 WMD programs pose a serious threat to U.S. regional allies and partners, and increasingly, are becoming a direct threat to the United States itself. The United States must continue to monitor carefully North Korea's WMD and missile development programs and related proliferation activities. If confirmed, I would ensure that DoD continues to work closely with other parts of the U.S. Government to address these and other emerging threats, reduce our vulnerabilities and those of our allies and partners, and work cooperatively with our allies to ensure our 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?

I understand that DoD, with its interagency partners, has taken several measures to prevent North Korea's proliferation of weapons-related technology, to include working to advance international nonproliferation norms, and cooperating with partner nations to inspect and interdict vessels and aircraft suspected of carrying illicit cargo. If confirmed, I would continue to work 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.

59. Republic of Korea

Since the end of World War II, the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) has been a key pillar of security in the Asia Pacific region. This relationship has gone through periods of inevitable change.

What is your understanding of the current U. S. security relationship with the ROK?

In my view, the U.S.-ROK Alliance remains one of the cornerstones of U.S. strategy in the Asia Pacific and is as strong and viable today as it has ever been. A mutual commitment to common interests, shared values, continuous dialogue, combined planning, and a recognition of the need to transform the relationship in light of the changing regional and global circumstances provide a strong underpinning to the Alliance and can serve to inform U.S. and ROK efforts going forward as the Alliance becomes a more equal military partnership.

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

As I understand it, DoD and the ROK 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. As part of these efforts, for example, DoD is repositioning U.S. forces to bases south of Seoul. This will make the U.S. presence less intrusive to the Korean people, will remove U.S. forces from the center of Seoul, and result in a U.S. force posture that enhances U.S. forces' readiness and quality of life. If confirmed, I would maintain close contact with my ROK counterpart and build upon the solid foundation laid by Secretary Gates to continuously improve and transform this important security relationship.

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

I understand that the United States and ROK have an 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 complete 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?

I understand our normalization in Korea was designed to further our commitment to support our forward-stationed forces and family members. It was to be implemented on an “as affordable” basis and not according to any specific timeline. If confirmed, I will continue to assess the cost of implementation and our proposed force posture to determine the best way forward.

60. China

Much has been made about the economic and military growth in China and what that growth might mean in terms of regional and global security.

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?

China’s sustained economic growth is in the United States’ interest and has contributed to the Asia-Pacific’s economic growth and development in recent years. In terms of regional security, China’s economic growth has increased China’s international profile and influence, and has enabled China’s leaders to embark upon and sustain a comprehensive transformation of its military forces. The pace and scale of China’s military modernization, coupled with the lack of transparency, raises many questions, both within the United States and the region as a whole, about China’s future.

From my perspective, DoD has a special responsibility to monitor China’s military and to deter conflict. Through a robust forward presence, prudent capability developments, and, sustained action to strengthen alliances and partnerships, DoD can support our national interest in promoting a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.

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

China appears to be building the capability to fight and win short duration, high-intensity conflicts along its periphery. Its near-term focus appears to be on preparing for potential contingencies involving Taiwan, including possible U.S. military intervention. Its modernization efforts emphasize anti-access and area capabilities. China is also devoting increasing attention and resources to conducting operations beyond Taiwan and China’s immediate periphery. Beijing’s growing focus on military missions other than war includes humanitarian assistance, non-combat evacuation operations, and counter-piracy support. Lastly, China is strengthening its nuclear deterrence and enhancing its strategic strike capabilities through modernization of its nuclear forces and improving other strategic capabilities such as space and counter-space operations and computer network operations.

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

I believe that we should continue to monitor closely the growth of China’s military capabilities while continuing to encourage Beijing to be more transparent about its military and security affairs. Our strategy must be designed to preserve peace, enhance stability, and reduce risk in the region. Our response to China’s military modernization should be flexible and supported by the continued

transformation of our force posture in the Asia-Pacific, the maintenance of our global presence and access, the modernization of our own capabilities, and the strengthening of our Alliances and partnerships.

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

President Obama and President Hu Jintao have expressed that a healthy, stable, reliable, and continuous military-to-military relationship is an essential part of their shared vision for a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive U.S.-China relationship. I fully agree with that assertion. The complexity of the security environment, both in the Asia-Pacific region and globally, calls for a continuous dialogue between the armed forces of the United States and China to expand practical cooperation where we can and to discuss candidly those areas where we differ.

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

I understand that our two armed forces have made progress in recent months to build toward a more sustained – and sustainable – relationship. I was informed the recent visit of General Chen was a success. We can build on that progress to improve the U.S.-China military-to-military relationship, both in terms of the quantity of exchanges, but more importantly, the quality of the dialogue. I believe that military exchanges with China can be valuable, but can only truly work if China is willing to reciprocate with transparent and substantive discussions. If confirmed, I will look for ways to deepen and enhance our military-to-military relationship with China, and to encourage China to act responsibly both regionally and globally.

61. Department of Defense Counternarcotics

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 relating to DOD CN in the last decade.

What is your assessment of the DOD CN program?

Drug trafficking and associated organized crime are a multidimensional threat to the United States. In addition to the impact on our nation's public health and economy, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime provide a funding source for terrorists and insurgents, undermine legitimate government institutions, and contribute to international instability.

I have not had an opportunity to assess the DoD counternarcotics program. If confirmed, I look forward

to working with the Congress and the Office of National Drug Control Policy to ensure that these programs achieve measurable results and that those results are clearly aligned with the goals of the National Security Strategy and the National Drug Control Strategy.

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

Based on my experience with this issue from my time in Congress, in the Clinton Administration, and in my most recent assignment, all agencies must work to confront the flow of illicit narcotics. This whole-of-government approach has been critically important to the progress we have made since the 1980s and should continue.

62. 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 military observer and staff positions in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations?

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

The United States has a stake in the success of UN peacekeeping operations. I believe that, where practicable, the United States should continue to provide military personnel for UN peacekeeping operations, especially for key staff positions that can help shape the direction and success of the mission. However, as with any investment, there are associated costs. If confirmed, I will carefully evaluate any proposals to contribute military or civilian personnel to a UN peacekeeping operation, weighing the potential positive impact of U.S. participation in the mission against other military commitments we have around the globe and the proposed cost of U.S. involvement.

63. 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. The objective would be to identify key individuals, as well as individuals enabling the flow of money outside of certain countries of interest.

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

Terrorists, drug traffickers, and other adversaries rely heavily on legal and illegal funding sources to support their activities, which routinely work against U.S. interests. It is critical to engage all U. S. Government tools to track and halt the flow of money associated with these organizations. It is my understanding that DoD has capability to identify and disrupt our adversaries' finances while working

with its interagency counterparts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. DoD is not the U. S. Government lead agency in counter threat finance but, it plays a supportive role by working with other departments and agencies, and with partner nations, to fight our adversaries' ability to use global financial networks.

64. 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?

These threats are real and are felt throughout Mexico, Central America, and elsewhere in the region. Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) threaten the security and prosperity of the United States' neighbors and have the resources to impact the stability of some of the more vulnerable nations in the region. To confront these threats effectively, it is necessary to harness the talents and resources of DoD, in coordination with those of DoD's Federal partners and the governments of Mexico and Central American nations.

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

I have not yet had an opportunity to make a thorough assessment but generally speaking, Department of Defense activities such as training, equipping, information sharing, infrastructure support, operational support, and related cooperation with Mexican and Central American militaries and security forces complement other U.S. Government security efforts under the Mérida Initiative and the Central America Regional Security Initiative. I am mindful, however, that DoD plays a supporting role to its law enforcement partners in the fight against TCOs and that DOD-led efforts alone are not enough in the long term. I believe a long-term solution will require a whole-of-government effort.

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

As I noted above, I have not had an opportunity to make a thorough assessment of DoD's current activities in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with DoD's Federal partners and the U.S. Government's partners in the governments of Mexico and the Central American nations, in consultation with Congress, to shape the scope and scale of continued Department of Defense efforts in the region.

65. Interagency Collaboration

The collaboration between U.S. Special Operations Forces, general purpose forces, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies has played a significant role in the success of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in recent years. However, much of this collaboration has been ad hoc in nature.

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

Our nation has learned many hard lessons about the importance of whole-of-government approaches in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations over the past several years. One of the most important lessons of our experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq is that success in counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and post-conflict stability operations depends upon the integrated efforts of both civilian and military organizations in all phases of an operation, from planning through execution. Sustainable outcomes require civilian development and governance experts who can help build local civilian capacity. DoD supports civilian agency lead in areas such as fostering political reconciliation, building accountable institutions of government, restoring public infrastructure, and reviving economic activity, so that DoD can focus on providing a safe and secure environment and assisting in building accountable armed forces. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to ensure that interagency collaboration is as robust and effective as possible.

How do you believe these efforts can be improved? How can the lessons learned in recent years be captured in military doctrine and adopted as “best practices” for future contingency operations?

I believe interagency collaboration can be improved by continuing to ensure that the U.S. military plans and trains with our civilian counterparts and is prepared to operate effectively in all phases of conflict, including post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization. In addition, improving the interagency planning process would ensure that optimal use is made of all national instruments of statecraft, while also enhancing the ability to conduct comprehensive assessments, analysis, planning, and execution of whole-of-government operations. Robust civilian capabilities are critical to realizing any improvements in interagency efforts and best practices for future operations.

66. Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA), among other actions, realigned the responsibilities for budgeting for and management of intelligence organizations between the Secretary of Defense and the head of the Intelligence Community, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI).

What do you believe is the role of DoD in intelligence under IRTPA?

I believe the role of DoD, including its intelligence components, is spelled out clearly in law. Under Title 50 of the United States Code, the Secretary of Defense has responsibility for all intelligence and intelligence-related activities conducted by DoD components. DoD contains a number of elements of the Intelligence Community, including the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and the National Reconnaissance Office. Consistent with the statutory authorities of the DNI under the IRTPA, the Secretary of Defense is responsible for the continued operation of these elements as effective unified organizations within DoD for the conduct of their missions in order to satisfy the requirements of the Intelligence Community. The Secretary is also responsible for ensuring that the budgets of these elements are adequate to satisfy the overall intelligence

needs of the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, the geographic combatant commanders, and other departments and agencies, as well as ensuring that such elements are responsive and timely in satisfying the needs of operational military forces. In the period since IRTPA's signing, a tremendous amount of integration has occurred within the Community and I believe the elements of the Intelligence Community, including those within DoD, are working together more closely than ever.

Do you believe that the IRTPA strikes the correct balance between the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary and the DNI?

Yes. Based on my understanding of authorities granted under IRTPA, I believe the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary and the DNI are sufficiently balanced. The IRTPA gave the DNI strong authority over core intelligence functions for the National Intelligence Program, such as setting requirements and budgets, as well as determining priorities for and managing the analysis and dissemination of national intelligence, while leaving the responsibility for execution of DoD intelligence activities to the Secretary. The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence is dual-hatted as the Director of Defense Intelligence in the Office of the DNI which helps ensure the equities of both the DNI and Secretary of Defense are taken into account. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, I will maintain the current strong working relationship with the DNI to address any issues that might arise over the balance of responsibilities.

What changes in the IRTPA, if any, would you recommend that Congress consider?

At this point, I do not recommend any change to the current law. If confirmed, I will wait until I have sufficient time to weigh options, should I discover a reason to recommend a change.

67. Qualifications of Intelligence Community Officials and Secretaries of Defense

During the Bush and Obama administrations, there has been significant criticism about the appointment of active duty and retired military officers to senior positions in the Intelligence community, including as Director of National Intelligence and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Some have referred to this as the "militarization" of the CIA and the Intelligence Community. With your nomination to be Secretary of Defense, we now have the situation where the last two nominees to be Secretary of Defense have been CIA Directors.

Is there reason to be concerned about current or former military officers serving in senior positions in the Intelligence Community?

No. I have served alongside many current or former military officers and have been impressed with their knowledge, professionalism, and effectiveness. While it is important to maintain a military and civilian balance across the Intelligence Community, in my view, there is no reason to be concerned, as a general matter, about current or former military officers serving in senior positions in the Intelligence Community. The challenges facing the Intelligence Community are enormous and require the most capable leaders available. Our military possesses a considerable pool of talented leaders who have proven experience within, or related to, the Intelligence Community. The wealth of experience and leadership these military officers bring with them is invaluable in meeting the Community's challenges.

Is there reason to be concerned about civilian heads of Intelligence Community elements serving in senior positions in the Defense Department, including as Secretary of Defense?

No. I think it is fair to say that DoD and IC integration has never been better. This is a product, in part, of people like Secretary Gates, who brought his wealth of experience as a CIA officer and National Security Council official to DoD. Both the head of an Intelligence Community element and the Secretary of Defense strive to achieve the same central objective: keeping the American people safe. I believe that the knowledge and experience obtained as a senior leader in the Intelligence Community is extremely valuable and will improve my ability, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, to successfully prevail in this mission.

68. Quadrennial Defense Review

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-Qa'ida 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?

Our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan attests to the fact that U.S. forces have made tremendous strides over the past decade in developing capabilities and doctrine for effective counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, and stability operations. This is true across the board, but particularly in our Army and Marine Corps forces, which have borne the brunt of the burden of bringing stability to these two countries.

Further improvement is always possible and it will be important that we continue to gather and assess "lessons learned" from our forces in the field. If confirmed, I will continue to press for enhancements in our capabilities for all-source intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination; rapid, secure communications to units in remote areas; defeating improvised explosive devices; training, advising, and assisting host-country forces; and cultural understanding.

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.

In your view, what does it mean to "institutionalize" capabilities and support for irregular warfare capabilities in each of the Services? What is your understanding and assessment of Department's efforts to date to institutionalize and support these capabilities?

Institutionalizing these capabilities means working to ensure that our forces actively maintain and continue to improve effective capabilities for counter-insurgency and stability operations even after we have achieved our goals in the current conflicts. This will entail not only retaining much of the equipment that has been fielded over the past decade for ongoing operations but also sustaining the improvements in doctrine and training of experienced warfighters that has been central to the successes we have achieved.

I understand DoD has taken steps to accomplish this. For example, as units rotate back to home station from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, they have been resetting equipment for operations that include COIN and stability operations. Furthermore, military education and training programs have been revised to place much greater emphasis on counter-insurgency and stability operations.

The United States will continue to face challenges from non-state adversaries and regions threatened by terrorist and insurgent violence. Our armed forces must, therefore, retain the ability to counter these threats effectively.

Institutionalizing support for irregular, counterinsurgency, and stability capabilities in the force does not mean ignoring the requirement to be trained, equipped, and ready for major combat at the high-end of the full spectrum of operations.

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 major combat while at the same time it increases and institutionalizes capabilities and support for irregular, counterinsurgency, and stability operations?

The 2010 QDR recognized the imperative to improve capabilities for operations against both irregular adversaries and states equipped with advanced anti-access and area-denial weapons. Accordingly, DoD is allocating resources to both ends of the spectrum of operations. This is appropriate, given the array of threats and challenges facing our nation, but it is also difficult to accurately predict future threats and, accordingly, allocate sufficient resources, particularly in an era of fiscal austerity. Secretary Gates has pointed out that it may be necessary to shrink the force and accept that we will have less overall capacity in order to ensure that the forces we field are superbly trained and equipped for the most important missions. If confirmed, this is a set of issues to which I will devote priority attention.

69. 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?

I understand that the F-35 will replace a range of legacy tactical aircraft in the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps with a fifth generation fighter. Based on the current and projected threats, I believe it is important

that we transition to a fifth generation tactical aviation capability across the U.S military services as soon as practical. I understand that one F-35 variant, the Marine Corps' Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) F-35B is on "probation" while technical issues are addressed. Overall, I believe we should maintain sufficient legacy inventory to support the force structure needed to prevail in the wars we are currently engaged in, as well as in possible future conflicts, while we field the F-35.

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 F-35 program restructure was intended to put the program on solid ground, with realistic development and production goals and significant reduction in concurrency. I support DoD's current effort to focus on and reduce F-35 sustainment costs. If confirmed, I will review the overall F-35 program's status and health.

70. Navy Shipbuilding

Today's Navy is at its smallest size in decades and could decline further without additional shipbuilding efforts. The Chief of Naval Operations has concluded that the Navy requires a fleet of at least 313 ships to perform its mission.

What are your views regarding the CNO's conclusions about the appropriate size and composition of the fleet, and the adequacy of the Navy's current and projected plans to deliver that inventory of ships?

A strong naval force is essential to project U.S. military power and ensures a global presence. I am not familiar with all of the analysis performed in the Chief of Naval Operations' assessment to reach a minimum number of 313 ships. However, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations to ensure that the appropriate force structure requirements are fully identified and supported.

71. Information Assurance

Protection of military networks, information, and communications is critical to Department of Defense operations. The Department has not yet provided Congress with a comprehensive legislative proposal that would allow the Department to implement the President's guidance on dealing with current and future cyber threats.

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

From my understanding, DoD is developing a solid foundation for securing critical information systems. Given the lack of strong security features in today's commercial information technology, however, DoD's critical information systems, like other critical financial, energy, transportation information systems,

contain vulnerabilities that are at risk of being exploited by a sophisticated adversary. To mitigate these vulnerabilities I understand that DoD has implemented and continues to improve a capability for protecting and defending its networks. Among other actions, the recent stand-up of U.S. Cyber Command has brought increased operational focus to these tasks.

Going forward, an enormous amount of work is required to keep pace with technology and capabilities, and to stay ahead of system vulnerabilities that put our information and communications technology systems at risk. If confirmed, I will continue the efforts to secure DoD's information and communications technology, address cyber challenges, and ensure DoD can defend against network adversaries.

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?

I am not in a position to recommend specific policies, guidance, or changes to authorities at this time. The Administration is currently working with Congress to fashion new cyber legislation, and DoD is an active participant in these ongoing discussions. If confirmed, I will be studying this issue and if I determine any recommended changes in legislation to address information and cyber security challenges, I will work with the Administration to provide those recommendations to Congress.

72. Future Army

In a speech at West Point last February, 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." Accordingly, the Army will find it difficult to justify the number, size, and cost of its heavy forces. On the other hand, 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 with Secretary Gates assertion that the commitment of land forces, on the scale of Iraq or Afghanistan, is unlikely in the future? Why or why not?

I think our historical experience argues for humility in predicting the shape or direction of future conflicts. Dismissing the prospect of a particular type of warfare could lead to unpreparedness or strategic surprise. Therefore, we must be prepared to conduct operations across the spectrum of conflict, and our forces, including the Army, need the ability and flexibility to adapt to a changing security environment. However, I believe that we should employ the full range of diplomatic, economic, and informational tools to achieve national security objectives with reduced reliance on military force whenever possible.

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?

It is always difficult to predict the characteristics of future conflict, but I think DoD must be prepared to confront potential adversaries armed with advanced technologies, such as integrated air defense systems, long-range ballistic missiles, and anti-ship cruise missiles. Given the importance of power projection for U.S. operations, naval and air assets will undoubtedly play a key role in these future military engagements. However, robust Army capabilities, which provide an unquestioned and essential ability to find and defeat opposing ground forces and establish security over wide areas, also serve as a deterrent to potential aggressors. Our experience in Iraq and recent military operations by our Allies and partners has informed our thinking on the role of heavy forces across the spectrum of conflict, including in urban areas and the conduct of counterinsurgency operations. Of particular concern for ground forces are not only the modernization efforts of nation-states but also the proliferation of increasingly advanced weaponry, such as precision-guided anti-tank weapons, man-portable air defense systems, and precision-guided rockets, artillery, and mortars, to non-state actors. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Services to assess current and future challenges and adjust the size and focus of each Service accordingly.

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

I understand that our nation needs an Army that can win on conventional battlefields, that can conduct effective counterinsurgency and stability operations, and that can partner with the ground forces of partner states to impart skills that can help them bring security and stability to their own countries and regions. Maintaining skills across this broad mission set while ensuring excellence will be a challenge, particularly in a period of budget austerity, and may require some tradeoffs across the force. If confirmed, I will work closely with military and civilian leaders to balance these risks.

73. Army Modernization

In general, major Army modernization efforts have not been successful over the past decade. According to a recent study done for the Secretary of the Army by former Assistant Secretary of the Army Gilbert Decker and retired Army General Louis Wagner the Army has sunk \$3.3 billion to \$3.8 billion annually since 2004 into weapons programs that have been cancelled. The report states that, "The Army lacks a credible, quantitative model and process for determining realistic, achievable requirements for modernization and recapitalization given reduced budgets."

What is your assessment of the Army's modernization record?

I understand that many of the Army's development and procurement problems stemmed from pursuing programs that ultimately did not match the needs of DoD, were cost prohibitive or were technologically infeasible. I understand that the Army has been working to rapidly review and implement many of the innovative recommendations of the Decker-Wagner panel. If confirmed I will review current Army programs to ensure this history is not repeated.

What actions, if any, would you take to ensure that the Army achieves a genuinely stable

modernization strategy and program?

If confirmed, I will closely monitor and oversee the Army modernization efforts. This will include reviewing the steps that the Army is taking to improve the effectiveness of its requirements and acquisition systems. Moreover, as the Army implements changes to its acquisition system, I will encourage that the lessons learned from the Army's efforts are infused into other programs across the Services and DoD.

What is your understanding and assessment, if any, of the Army's capabilities portfolio review process and its current modernization priorities and investment strategy?

I understand that as part of his comprehensive efforts to reform Army acquisition, in February 2010, Secretary McHugh ordered an Army-wide "capability portfolio reviews" to scrutinize requirements, identify potential redundancies and if appropriate, recommend program changes, including terminations. These portfolio reviews appear to be sound steps toward improving the results of the Army's requirements and acquisition systems; however, I have not had the opportunity to review this initiative in detail.

What actions, if any, would you take to sustain the momentum of these reviews in stabilizing the Army's modernization strategy and priorities?

As noted above, if confirmed, I will closely monitor Army modernization efforts. In doing so, I will encourage the Army to continue its capability portfolio review process and share its lessons learned from this effort throughout DoD.

74. 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 long-range missiles 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 and, if confirmed, will you implement it?

I support the President's policy on European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) and, if confirmed, I will ensure DoD supports the program's full implementation.

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 will need to further study the Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR), if confirmed, but as I understand the issue currently, I support the Administration's policies, strategies, and priorities as set forth in this review. If confirmed, I will implement the policy priorities of the BMDR, including sustaining and enhancing defense of the homeland, 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, probably sometime in late 2012, 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 prudent to verify that the flight test failure problem has been corrected before continuing production of the EKV's, and before building more Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) or deciding how many additional GBIs may be needed in the future?

Verifying and correcting the problems with the EKV's prior to continuing production is prudent and supports the Administration's policy to "fly before you buy" in order to improve reliability, confidence, and cost control of U.S. missile defense systems.

Do you support the continued modernization and sustainment of the Ground-based midcourse defense system?

Yes. The United States is currently protected against the threat of limited ICBM attack from States like North Korea and Iran. It is important we maintain this advantage by continuing to improve the Ground-based Midcourse Defense 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?

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 worldwide,

including qualitative and quantitative improvements to such systems?

Yes, I believe that missile defense cooperation with Russia can enhance U.S., NATO, and also Russian security. The United States is committed to sustaining strategic stability with Russia, and it is my understanding that neither current nor planned U.S. missile defenses will impact this stability. The United States is committed to continuing to develop and deploy missile defenses, including qualitative and quantitative improvements.

75. 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 and enables the protection of space assets. Maintaining the benefits afforded to the United States by space is central to our national security.

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

Yes.

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 two offer pragmatic approaches to maintain the advantages derived from space while confronting the challenges of an evolving space strategic environment.

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

If confirmed, would you look into this matter to understand the impact on GPS signals?

Yes. I understand DoD is currently addressing this issue. If confirmed, I will work with the FCC to ensure GPS remains accessible to support national security, public safety, and the economy.

The management of national security space and space systems appears to be more fragmented than ever.

If confirmed, would you commit to reviewing the overall management and coordination of the

national security space enterprise?

It is my understanding that DoD recently took steps intended to clarify and streamline space management, by amending the Secretary of the Air Force's responsibilities as the Executive Agent for Space, and by establishing a Defense Space Council. If confirmed, I will assess what further steps may be required within DoD and in the interagency to ensure effective management of the national security space enterprise.

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, including that all nations have a right to explore and use space for peaceful purposes, and that all nations should act responsibly in space to help prevent mishaps, misperceptions, and mistrust. I understand that the Joint Staff is conducting an operational assessment of the European Union's proposed Code of Conduct for Outer Space; if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this assessment and considering appropriate steps to establish clear rules of the road for space operations.

76. 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 commitment to a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist. Sustaining our nuclear deterrent requires life extension programs for warheads and modernization of delivery systems. I believe that providing necessary resources for nuclear modernization should be a national priority.

77. 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. In addition the P-5 +1 talks have stalled, with Iran setting unreasonable preconditions to resume the talks.

Do you believe it would be in the United States' interest to engage Iran in a direct dialogue regarding stability and security in Iraq?

The United States continues to reject Iran's destabilizing behavior towards Iraq and calls on Iran to meet its international obligations. The Iran and Iraq relationship is an issue that should be negotiated by their respective governments, especially as the United States draws down. However, I also believe we

should continue the current strategy of engagement and pressure and remain open to additional talks with Iran through the P5+1.

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

I believe that we should explore ways to increase the pressure on Iran, including through additional sanctions, and make it as clear as possible that Iran's failure to meet its international obligations will make it less – not more – secure. At the same time, we should leave open the door for diplomacy, since it is not too late for Iran to provide commitments and take steps that ensure that its nuclear programs will remain peaceful.

What is your assessment of the threat posed by Iran?

Iran remains a significant threat to the United States, its allies, and its interests in the region. Iran continues to enrich uranium and pursue an illicit nuclear program, support terrorist groups that attack U.S. forces and interests, and aggressively exert its influence throughout the region. There is a real risk that its nuclear program will prompt other countries in the region to pursue nuclear options or threaten the broader global non-proliferation regime.

In your view, what has been the effect of sanctions against Iran – have they been effective and should additional unilateral or multilateral sanctions be levied against Iran?

The increasing economic pressure that the Obama Administration has brought to bear on Iran has caused surprise and anxiety in Tehran. I do not believe that Iran's leaders believed that we could generate the level of international support that we have for sanctions. Iranian behavior has not changed, as Iran's leadership continues to flout UN resolutions and has failed to meet its international obligations. I believe, however, that we must continue to increase the economic pressure on Iran in an attempt to change Iran's behavior.

78. DOD's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

The CTR program, which is focused primarily on eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the states of the former Soviet Union, has several key objectives that include: (1) eliminating strategic nuclear weapons; (2) improving the security and accounting of nuclear weapons and weapons-usable fissile material; (3) detecting, eliminating and preventing the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons and capabilities; and (4) encouraging development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

In your view, what needs to be done to reduce the proliferation threat from the residual Cold War stockpiles of WMD weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union?

I believe the countries of the former Soviet Union have made appreciable strides in the past two decades to reduce the threats associated with the extensive Soviet WMD programs, facilities and stockpiles in their territories – in many cases with the support and assistance of DoD's CTR program. While much has been

done, residual Cold War stockpiles of WMD and materials continue to pose a threat to U.S. national security, especially in light of the potential for WMD terrorism. Where and when host governments are unable to mitigate this threat on their own, CTR and other U.S. programs should work with these nations to reduce this threat.

Are Russia and the former Soviet Union countries making a significant contribution to efforts to reduce the proliferation threats they inherited?

It is my understanding that Russia and states of the Former Soviet Union are making important contributions to reduce proliferation threats they inherited and to address new ones. These contributions include direct national funding as well as collaboration with U.S. agencies and other international partners.

I understand that DoD's principal vehicle to support these efforts is the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which is executed in close coordination with related activities of the Departments of State and Energy. As examples, I understand that Kazakhstan is partnering with U.S. agencies to reduce a variety of nuclear and biological threats that were left by the Soviets on its soil. Similarly, Georgia is taking a leading role, with U.S. assistance, to eliminate Soviet-era biological threats and to turn itself into a regional bio-defense leader. I am also told that we have maintained a strong non-proliferation partnership with Russia in a number of areas.

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

I understand that DoD's CTR mission is executed with essential support from the Department of State, and in cooperation with the Department of Energy and other interagency partners. Robust collaboration across U.S. agencies and interagency coordination is a hallmark of the program and key to its effectiveness. If confirmed, I will evaluate whether interagency coordination can be improved.

As the CTR program expands to geographic regions beyond the states of the former Soviet Union, in your view what proliferation and threat reduction goals should the DOD establish?

Expanding the geographic reach of the CTR program beyond the former Soviet Union strikes me as an important step toward preventing and reducing WMD threats and building global partnerships. The President has highlighted the threats posed by nuclear and biological terrorism as key proliferation concerns requiring international attention. In line with these priorities, I am informed that DoD's goals for the program are: 1) reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons threats; (2) improving the security and accounting of nuclear weapons and weapons-usable fissile material; (3) detecting, eliminating and preventing the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons and capabilities; and (4) encouraging development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats among key partners and regions. I believe that these goals make sense.

79. 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?

Conventional prompt global strike (CPGS) weapons would provide the nation with a unique conventional capability to strike time-sensitive targets, so that distant, hard-to-reach places will no longer provide sanctuary to adversaries. It is my understanding that the only current prompt global strike capability in the U.S. inventory is a nuclear armed ballistic missile. CPGS would be a valuable option for the President to have at his disposal.

CPGS systems could be useful in scenarios involving regional adversaries considering an attack using weapons of mass destruction or against high-priority non-state adversaries. More broadly, CPGS may be the only systems available in situations where a fleeting, serious threat was located in a region not readily accessible by other means.

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

I understand that DoD is developing and testing technologies relevant to both land-based and sea-based CPGS. It would be premature to make any decisions regarding a future deployed system until the results of these tests are in-hand.

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

Like other weapon systems, effective employment of CPGS weapons would depend on the availability of timely and accurate intelligence on the nature, location, and disposition of a potential target. If confirmed, I will consider what specific improvements in intelligence capabilities may be needed to enable effective use of CPGS systems for various types of targets. I believe that it is important to pursue continued enhancements in our capabilities to collect, analyze, and distribute intelligence irrespective of the development of CPGS systems.

80. 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 with respect to assuring the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile?

It is my understanding that stockpile stewardship is effective; today's stockpile appears to be safe, secure, and reliable and not require further nuclear testing. But 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, all in a constrained budget environment.

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?

As stated in my answer above, my understanding is that today's nuclear stockpile appears to be safe, secure, and effective and does not require a return to nuclear testing. I understand that nuclear testing is not currently anticipated or planned. It is my understanding that the Stockpile Stewardship Program has demonstrated an ability to resolve problems that in the past would have been resolved with testing, and I believe that if the Stockpile Stewardship Program is adequately funded to maintain critical technical and manufacturing capabilities, it can continue to fulfill this role. My recommendation on a course of action in the event that I was unable to certify the stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable would depend critically on the root causes of problems in the stockpile.

What considerations would guide your recommendation in this regard?

The dominant considerations would be the safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear stockpile and our ability to sustain the U.S. nuclear deterrent. Technical and military considerations would guide my recommendation to the President. I would certainly take into account the expert technical judgment of the three nuclear weapons laboratory directors, coupled with the military judgment of the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, as well as the judgment of other experts. I would also ask for the best military judgment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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?

I have not had the opportunity to review this report. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to do so. I do believe that maintaining a safe, reliable, and secure nuclear stockpile is a critical national security priority. At the same time, I believe that nuclear modernization, as with all DoD's efforts, must be undertaken in a cost-effective manner. I am informed that Secretary Gates took steps to reduce the estimated costs of the OHIO-class replacement ballistic missile submarine and the new Long-Range Strike Family of Systems. If confirmed, I would continue to work to ensure affordability while sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.

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

I have not had an opportunity to review the timeframe of the modernization program or to assess its

relationship to reductions below the New START Treaty limits. I agree with the Senate's resolution of ratification for the New START Treaty in calling for negotiations with Russia to "secure and reduce tactical nuclear weapons in a verifiable manner." I understand that the Administration has suggested bilateral negotiations with Russia on this matter, after consultation with our Allies. I believe that any proposed further reductions should take into account the status of the stockpile of nuclear weapons, and that our investments and these negotiations should be pursued in parallel.

81. Medical Countermeasures Initiative (MCMI)

The Administration has produced an interagency strategy for the advanced development and manufacture of medical countermeasures (MCM) to defend against pandemic influenza and biological warfare threats. In this strategy, the Department of Defense will be responsible for the development and manufacture of medical countermeasures to protect U.S. Armed Forces and Defense Department personnel.

Do you support this interagency strategy and the MCM Initiative and, if confirmed, would you plan to implement them?

Yes. If confirmed, I will work to establish this important capability that is needed to support our forces and sustain our global operations.

82. Defense Acquisition Reform

Two years ago, Congress enacted the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009 (WSARA), 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 support the improvements in the areas of defense acquisition organization and policy that are addressed in the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009 (WSARA). WSARA mandated needed improvements in the defense acquisition process. I support the law's requirements that DoD examine trade-offs between cost, schedule, and performance to significantly reduce cost growth in major defense acquisition programs. I am aware that DoD has undertaken significant further acquisition reform. If confirmed, I will continue the effort to improve the acquisition system consistent with the direction provided in WSARA.

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

I believe that the acquisition process must be closely coordinated with the requirements and budget processes. Since enactment of WSARA, progress appears to have been made in coordinating these three processes, but I understand there remains room for improvement and that DoD can reduce costs to get

better value for its defense dollar. I understand DoD is currently engaged in a comprehensive initiative designed to reduce cost throughout the defense acquisition system. I understand that a major part of this “Better Buying Power” initiative is to coordinate the requirements, acquisition, and budget processes in a way that mandates affordable requirements and full funding into weapon systems up front. I support these efforts.

I also believe that it is necessary to create a “Fast Lane” for acquiring and fielding systems in response to urgent operational needs, as was done with the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, DoD has engaged in rapid acquisition through a variety of largely ad hoc processes. Section 804 of the FY 2011 National Defense Authorization Act requires DoD to consider a formal process for rapid acquisition. If confirmed, I will make creating a formal process for rapid acquisition a priority.

If confirmed, how would you improve acquisition accountability?

Goldwater Nichols established a chain of command for the acquisition process which provides for clear accountability. However, the acquisition process must be operated in close coordination with the requirements process and the budget process, and this requires active participation by DoD’s senior leadership to ensure all three processes are properly coordinated and held accountable. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring accountability in all aspects of acquisition during my tenure.

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?

I have not reviewed DoD’s investment budget in detail. However, it is clear to me that in this current fiscal environment, pursuing affordability and cost control are critical. In recent years, Secretary Gates has cancelled a number of programs that were unneeded, were not delivering affordably, or had been procured in adequate numbers already. These efforts have gone a long way towards paring down DoD’s portfolio of major weapons systems to those that are truly needed. Existing programs must be managed so that cost growth does not make them unaffordable. If confirmed, I will continue to examine the investment budget closely for affordability and for opportunities to achieve cost savings.

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

Clearly, continued implementation of WSARA is a critical element in controlling cost growth. If confirmed, I will support this and other ongoing efforts to control costs and reform the acquisition system. In particular I will review DoD’s major programs to determine if they are affordable and I will direct the Services to do the same for programs under their direction.

83. Services Contracting

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the volume of services purchased by the Department of Defense. According to a recent report by the Defense Science Board, the Department now spends substantially more for contract services than it does for all products,

including weapon systems. Yet, the Department is still struggling to establish a management structure for services contracts comparable to the structure in place for the acquisition of products.

What is your view of the Department's reliance on service contractors?

I recognize that the private sector is, and will continue to be, a vital source of expertise, innovation and support and that DoD, which relies on an All-Volunteer Force, simply cannot operate without the support of service contractors. These contractors do account for more of the defense budget than contractors who provide products to DoD. I believe that properly managing service contractors is just as important as managing DoD's contractors who provide weapon systems and other products.

If confirmed, how do you plan to address the issue of cost growth in services contracting and ensure that the Department gets the most for its money in this area?

If confirmed, I will review the processes DoD is using to manage service contractors to ensure that they are providing good value for the funds they receive.

Over the last decade, the Department has become progressively more reliant upon contractors to perform functions that were once performed exclusively by government employees. As a result, contractors now play an integral role in areas as diverse as the management and oversight of weapons programs, the development of personnel policies, and the collection and analysis of intelligence. In many cases, contractor employees work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces, and perform many of the same functions as DOD employees.

In your view, has DOD become too reliant on contractors to support the basic functions of the Department?

At this time I do not have enough information to make this assessment. However, I believe that reliance on contractors is something that must be assessed function by function. Many functions are appropriate for contractor support, however some, such as program management, are more appropriately performed by government personnel. Some functions are inherently governmental and should not be performed by contractors. If confirmed I will assess this issue to determine whether or not DoD's reliance on contractors has become excessive.

Do you believe that the current extensive use of personal services contracts is in the best interest of the Department of Defense?

Although I am not familiar with the various types of functions acquired through personal service contracts, or the extent to which DoD acquires these functions through personal services contracts, I understand there are statutory restrictions. In my view, the basis for those restrictions is as applicable to DoD as to that of other federal departments and agencies. If confirmed, I will ensure that personal services contracts are not used inappropriately.

What is your view of the appropriate applicability of personal conflict of interest standards and other ethics requirements to contractor employees who perform functions similar to those

performed by government employees?

When it is appropriate for contractors to perform work that is similar to work performed by government employees, my view is that those contractor employees should be subject to appropriate ethics and conflict of interest requirements. Contractor employees should be held to similar ethical standards as the Government employees they support, and in particular, should not be allowed to misuse the information which may be available to them as a result of their performance under a DOD contract.

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?

I am not in a position to offer such an assessment at this time. While DoD's use of contractors is high relative to previous conflicts, current levels may be warranted. DoD now has several years of experience with the widespread use of contractors to support the All-Volunteer Force engaged in counter-insurgency and stability operations. It is my understanding that the increased level of reliance on contracted support in contingency operations is highlighted in a recent study conducted by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Furthermore, it is my understanding that based on a recommendation by the Chairman, Secretary Gates recently issued a memorandum to DoD regarding a wide range of initiatives associated with contractor support in contingencies. This memorandum requires the military departments to assess opportunities for in-sourcing contracted capabilities that represent high risk to the warfighter. 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?

Reliance on contractor support can lead to operational problems if contractors fail to perform. Experience has shown that a number of other problems can arise including a potential for increased fraud, waste and abuse, problems that arise from contractor interaction with local communities, and issues with the use of force. It is also possible that skills needed in the military in the future will atrophy or disappear due to reliance on contractor support.

What steps do you believe the Department should take to mitigate such risk?

I believe the first step in mitigating such risk is to gain a thorough understanding of any risks we have with the current workforce mix of military, civilian and contractors. The aforementioned study led by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the assessments being conducted by the military services and agencies will provide me with a baseline level of understanding. If confirmed, I will review and continue on-going efforts to conduct effective oversight of service contracts in contingencies.

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

It is my understanding that originally DoD was not properly organized and staffed to effectively manage contractors in the ongoing contingency operations, but that corrective actions have been taken over the last several years. If confirmed, I will review ongoing efforts to ensure DoD institutionalizes its contingency contracting capabilities and the lessons learned from our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are applied to future conflicts.

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

It is my understanding that DoD has made significant progress in implementing effective management of contractors during contingency operations through several ongoing efforts. If confirmed, I will review and ensure these efforts are adequate and effective and I will work to institutionalize the effective management processes that have been developed over the last several years as appropriate.

84. Private Security Contractors

Federal agencies including the Department of Defense have spent more than \$5 billion for private security contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last decade. Over this period, there have been numerous reports of abuses by private security contractors, including allegations of contractors shooting recklessly at civilians as they have driven down the streets of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. In September 2007, employees of Blackwater allegedly opened fire on Iraqis at Nisour Square in downtown Baghdad, killing more than a dozen Iraqis and wounding many more. More recently, the Senate Armed Services Committee reported on questionable activities by private security contractors in Afghanistan.

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?

Without a substantial increase in the force structure committed to contingency operations, the use of contractors for some security functions in contingencies is a necessity. However, these contractors must be properly regulated and supervised and their mission must be carefully limited. Contractors cannot engage in combat operations. Their use of force is limited to self-defense and the defense of others against criminal violence and the protection of critical property. Under these circumstances, I believe that the limited use of security contractors 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 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?

The use of force by contractors or military personnel can, if misapplied, undermine our policy objectives.

Contractors for physical security missions have been a necessity in Iraq and Afghanistan and will continue to be so. My understanding is that, over time, DoD has established procedures to manage these contractors effectively to prevent unnecessary violence that would be detrimental to our policy objectives. This is an area that requires constant attention and continued supervision and policy refinement is required. If confirmed, I will focus on providing that supervision.

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 ensure that two actions are taken. First, the use of private security contractors in any area of combat operations must be fully coordinated. There must be unified and consistent procedures for all such contractors, regardless of which U.S. agency hires them. Our commanders on the ground must have authority to restrict security contractors' operations as the situation requires.

Second, there must be assured legal accountability for the actions of private security contractors. In a given circumstance, the host nation will have responsibilities in this regard as well, such as rigorous licensing procedures and enforcement of its own laws.

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

I support steps to ensure that there is legal accountability for the actions of all contractors performing work for the U.S. Government in an area of combat operations. If confirmed, I will consult with my interagency partners concerning appropriate mechanisms to ensure such 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?

There must be assured legal accountability for the actions of all contractors deployed to an area of combat operations. The application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice is one tool to do this.

OMB Circular A-76 defines "inherently governmental functions" to include "discretionary functions" that could "significantly affect the life, liberty, or property of private persons"

In your view, is the performance of 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 an inherently governmental function? In your view, is the interrogation of enemy prisoners of war and other detainees during and in the aftermath of hostilities an inherently governmental function?

I am not familiar with DoD policies governing the use of contractors in detention operations, but if confirmed, I will review them to ensure they properly separate inherently governmental functions from work performed by contractors. I am aware that Congress spoke to the issue of interrogation by contractors in section 1038 of the FY 2010 National Defense Authorization Act which prohibits the

interrogation by contractor personnel of detainees or others in the custody or under the effective control of DoD in connection with hostilities. If confirmed, I will ensure this provision is enforced.

Do you see a need for a comprehensive reevaluation of these issues now?

If confirmed, I will review these issues to determine whether there is a need to reevaluate these policies.

85. Acquisition Workforce

Over the last 15 years, DOD has reduced the size of its acquisition workforce by almost half, without undertaking any systematic planning or analysis to ensure that it would have the specific skills and competencies needed to meet DOD's current and future needs. Since September 11, 2001, moreover, the demands placed on that workforce have substantially increased. Section 852 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 established an Acquisition Workforce Development Fund to help the Department of Defense address shortcomings in its acquisition workforce. Over the last year, Secretary Gates has stated that the Department must continue to rebuild its acquisition workforce, even as it seeks efficiencies in other areas.

Do you agree that the Department would be “penny-wise and pound foolish” to try to save money by cutting corners on its acquisition workforce at the risk of losing control over the hundreds of billions of dollars that it spends every year on the acquisition of products and services?

Yes. I am aware that DoD is expending far more today on goods and services with an acquisition workforce substantially reduced in size from the 1990s. If confirmed, I will support a properly sized and highly capable acquisition workforce.

Do you believe that the Acquisition Workforce Development Fund is needed to ensure that DOD has the right number of employees with the right skills to run its acquisition programs in the most cost effective manner for the taxpayers?

Yes. It is my understanding that DoD has used the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund, which originated in this Committee, to resource a number of initiatives to attract, develop, and retain individuals with critical acquisition skills. DoD must continue to fund these initiatives which are critical to achieving a properly sized and highly capable acquisition workforce.

If confirmed, what steps if any will you ensure that the money made available through the Acquisition Workforce Fund is spent in a manner that best meets the needs of the Department of Defense and its acquisition workforce?

If confirmed, I will direct that the Under Secretary for Acquisition Technology and Logistics monitor the implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund to ensure that it focuses on rebuilding critical skills in the workforce, without which our goals for affordability, cost control, and reform of the acquisition system cannot be met.

86. Management Issues

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) is intended to provide managers with a disciplined approach by developing a strategic plan, establishing annual goals, measuring performance, and reporting on the results by for improving the performance and internal management of an organization.

What do you consider to be the most important priorities and challenges facing DOD as it strives to achieve these management goals?

I share Secretary Gates' concern, as noted in his recent speech to the American Enterprise Institute, that the current systems for managing people and money across the DoD enterprise are inadequate. It is my understanding that the defense agencies, field activities, joint headquarters, and support staff functions of DoD operate without centralized mechanisms to allocate resources, track expenditures, and measure results relative to DoD's overall priorities. If confirmed, I look forward to addressing this issue.

What are your views on the importance and role of financial information in managing operations and holding managers accountable?

I believe that having access to the appropriate financial information, as well as other key performance indicators, is critical towards managing operations and holding leaders accountable for results.

87. Financial Management

The Department of Defense spends billions of dollars every year to acquire, operate and upgrade business systems needed to support the warfighter, including systems related to the management of contracts, finances, the supply chain, and support infrastructure. Despite these expenditures, the Department's business systems are stovepiped, duplicative and non-integrated. As a result, the Department remains unable to produce timely, accurate and complete information to support management decisions.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the financial management problems of the Department of Defense receive priority attention at the senior management level?

Yes.

What priority do you believe the Department should place on achieving a clean financial statement, as required by section 1003 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010?

Achieving clean audit opinions is one of my top management improvement priorities. A clean financial audit opinion is important to demonstrate that DoD is a responsible steward of public funds and to ensure management has accurate and timely information for decision making. I understand DoD has a plan for achieving auditable statements that includes goals, a governance process, and resources; and that this plan depends in part on modernizing its business systems.

I expect senior leaders across DoD to work together to continue progress towards meeting the legal

requirement to be ready for audits by the end of 2017, and will ensure that the Comptroller, in partnership with the Chief Management Officers, devotes time and resources to leading this effort.

88. Human Capital Planning

The Department of Defense faces a critical shortfall in key areas of its civilian workforce, including the management of acquisition programs, information technology systems and financial management, and senior DOD officials have expressed alarm at the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in these areas. Section 115b of title 10, U.S. Code, requires the Department to develop a strategic workforce plan to shape and improve its civilian employee workforce.

Would you agree that the Department's human capital, including its civilian workforce, is critical to the accomplishment of its national security mission?

Yes. DoD's human capital, including its civilian workforce, is not only critical, but an essential element to the successful accomplishment of its national security mission. It is my understanding that the civilian workforce is viewed as one entity throughout DoD. Given the intent to have civilians be capable and ready to move to where an emerging requirement exists within DoD, collaboration is an ongoing process amongst the Services, Defense Agencies, Joint Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense. This process ensures that DoD is speaking in one voice for its civilian workforce to ensure transparency, develop and recommend enterprise policy, and support the overall lifecycle. DoD employs a robust system of talent management to ensure it possesses and plans for future workforce needs. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that this ready and capable civilian force has the support it needs through programs that foster ideas, methods and procedures for lifecycle management.

Do you share the concern expressed by others about the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in critical areas such as the management of acquisition programs, information technology and financial management?

If confirmed, I will monitor whether or not DoD is too reliant on contractors. The private sector will continue to provide vital support to DoD. There are areas in acquisition, IT and financial management where support from contractors is an appropriate and cost effective solution to perform work that does not require government personnel discretion. If confirmed, I will be committed to proactively managing the Total Force of military and civilian personnel, and support provided by contractors.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the Department undertakes necessary human capital planning to ensure that its civilian workforce is prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades?

Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that a comprehensive workforce plan provides strategies for recruitment, development, and retention of a mission-ready civilian workforce is in place. Planning is critical as fiscal constraints impact workforce capabilities and sustainment.

89. Test and Evaluation (T&E)

A natural tension exists between major program objectives to reduce cost and schedule and the

T&E objective to ensure performance meets specifications and requirements.

What is your assessment of the appropriate balance between the desire to reduce acquisition cycle times and the need to perform adequate testing?

I support rigorous independent testing and evaluation to provide accurate and objective information on the capabilities and limitations of defense systems to both acquisition executives and Warfighters and to ensure contractors deliver products that meet their requirements. When systems are urgently needed in the field, the imperative for accurate and objective testing is still just as important but should be addressed through efforts to expedite the test and evaluation process. I understand this has been accomplished successfully for such urgent efforts as the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle program. In those urgent cases I believe that some risk can be taken, but safety and basic performance must be verified prior to fielding. Testing is needed to validate system performance and I believe it is a necessary part of the acquisition process. That said, there may be opportunities to achieve this goal through more efficient processes than those currently in practice.

Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe we should procure weapon systems and equipment that has not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, suitable, and survivable?

In a limited number of urgent circumstances it might be necessary to field a system prior to operational testing in order to address an urgent gap in a critical capability. But even in such cases, operational evaluation should still be conducted at the earliest opportunity to assess the system's capabilities and limitations and identify any deficiencies that might need to be corrected.

Congress established the position of Director of Operational Test and Evaluation to serve as an independent voice on matters relating to operational testing of weapons systems. As established, the Director has a unique and direct relationship with Congress, consistent with the statutory independence of the office.

Do you support the continued ability of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation's to speak freely and independently with the Congress?

Yes.

90. Funding for Science and Technology (S&T) Investments and Workforce

In his State of the Union speech earlier this year, the President said that "maintaining our leadership in science and technology is crucial to America's success." In the FY12 budget submission, despite the significant efforts to find efficiencies, the DOD's basic research investments grow by 2 percent per year and other S&T activities remain constant taking into account inflation.

Do you support maintaining growth in the DOD's S&T investments?

I understand and appreciate the valuable role government investment in science and technology has had for the nation and DoD. As Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, I noted that many of that agency's key capabilities emerged from long-term S&T funding. I have seen the results and I support long term S&T investments. I am also aware that the President has challenged S&T funding levels for all government components. While S&T investment will be a high priority if I am confirmed, all defense appropriations must be considered during this time of budget constraints.

How will you assess whether the science and technology investment portfolio is adequate to meet the current and future needs of the Department?

If confirmed, I anticipate conducting an early review of DoD's capabilities to support the Administration's goals, including S&T investment. DoD's budget must balance a number of competing needs and, if confirmed, I will have to assess all those needs, and the risks associated with various levels of funding.

Well over half of all graduates of U.S. universities with advanced degrees in science and technology are non-U.S. citizens. Due to a variety of reasons, many return to their home countries where they contribute to competing against the U.S. in technology advancement.

What is your view on steps that the Department should take, if any, to ensure that DOD and the defense industrial base are able to recruit and retain scientists and engineers from this talent pool?

The issue of enabling and encouraging foreign students to remain in the US to pursue careers in science and engineering is one that affects the nation as a whole. If confirmed, I would work within the Administration and with the Congress to find ways to retain this talent pool.

91. Defense Industrial Base

The latest Quadrennial Defense Review addressed the need for strengthening the defense industrial base. Specifically, it said: "America's security and prosperity are increasingly linked with the health of our technology and industrial bases. In order to maintain our strategic advantage well into the future, the Department requires a consistent, realistic, and long-term strategy for shaping the structure and capabilities of the defense technology and industrial bases—a strategy that better accounts for the rapid evolution of commercial technology, as well as the unique requirements of ongoing conflicts."

What is your view on steps that the Department should take, if any, to strengthen the defense industrial base?

I believe a strong, technologically vibrant, and financially successful defense industrial base is in the national interest. I understand that national policy for many years has been to let market forces adjust the defense industrial base to our evolving threats and requirements, and to changing technology. The government specifically supports defense science and technology, and small businesses entering the defense market. Occasionally, specific industrial policies are used to assure the long-term health of particular sectors of the defense industry. If confirmed, I will ensure DoD uses a sector-by-sector approach to the defense industrial base, with productivity growth and long-term health as its goals.

92. Encroachment

Some of the most significant issues that impact the readiness of the Armed Forces are categorized as outside encroachment upon military reservations and resources. This encroachment has included, but is not limited to environmental constraints on military training ranges, local community efforts to obtain military property, housing construction, and other land use changes near military installations, airspace restrictions to accommodate civilian airlines, and transfer of radio frequency spectrum from DOD to the wireless communications industry. Unless these issues are effectively addressed, military forces will find it increasingly difficult to train and operate at home and abroad.

In your opinion, how serious are encroachment problems for the U.S. military? If confirmed, what efforts would you take to ensure that military access to the resources listed above, and other required resources, will be preserved?

I believe that encroachment is a serious issue for the U.S. military. I am aware that DoD has a number of key programs to influence activities outside our installations so that they do not conflict with our training and operations. I strongly support such efforts and, if confirmed, will work closely with Congress to ensure that these efforts are effective.

93. 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 U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention.

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

Being a party to the Law of the Sea Convention would not hinder the U.S. security posture, nor would it have any adverse impact on our sovereignty. In fact, becoming a party would enhance our security posture by enabling the United States to reinforce the Convention's freedom of navigation and overflight rights, including transit passage in strategic straits, and preserve our rights and duties in the Arctic. In addition, becoming a Party to the Convention would support combined operations with coalition partners and support the Proliferation Security Initiative; establish undisputed title to our extended continental shelf areas; and bolster our leadership in future developments in the law of the sea. Accession would also add to DoD's credibility in a large number of Asia-focused multilateral venues where Law of the Sea matters are discussed.

94. 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, 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 Secretary of Defense?

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.