

Posture Statement of  
Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Before the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

Chairman Inouye, Senator Cochran, and distinguished members of the Committee, it is my privilege to report on the posture of the United States Armed Forces.

We remain a Nation at war on multiple fronts. In the face of daunting challenges, our Armed Forces have successfully carried out their far-ranging missions over the past year. They have improved security in Afghanistan, continued on a path to soon end the war in Iraq, promoted stability in the Pacific Rim, and provided humanitarian assistance when disasters struck. They have supported NATO in its UN mission to protect civilians in Libya. And they displayed their characteristic bravery and precision in the May 2<sup>nd</sup> operation targeted against al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda. You can be very proud of your military. However, the cumulative stress of nine years of war is substantial and growing. We will need your sustained support, even in the midst of fiscal difficulties, to reset the Joint Force so it can continue to protect the American people.

Our country is fortunate to be served by the best Armed Forces I have seen in over forty-three years of wearing the uniform. Despite continuous deployments and combat operations, our men and women in uniform and their families have been resilient beyond all expectations. They are patriots who care deeply for this country and serve under very trying conditions. They are the most combat experienced and capable force we have ever had, and they continue to learn and adapt in ways that are truly remarkable. I am continuously humbled as I visit them around the country and the world. Time and again, these men and women and their families have proven that our All Volunteer Force is the Nation's greatest strategic asset.

This Force cannot thrive without the support of the American people. Everything we are and everything we do comes from them. I am grateful for the Congress' and the American people's constant reminders that the service, heroism, and sacrifices of our service members and their families are valued. However, I am concerned that because our military hails from a shrinking percentage of the population, some day the American people may no longer know us. We cannot allow this to happen. With your help, we will endeavor to stay connected and to maintain a strong and open relationship.

As we look to our military's posture and budget, we recognize that our country is still reeling from a grave and global economic downturn and is maintaining nearly historic fiscal deficits and national debt. Indeed, I believe that our debt is the greatest threat to our national security. If we as a country do not address our fiscal imbalances in the near-term, our national power will erode. Our ability to respond to crises and to maintain and sustain influence will diminish.

Our national economic health is creating real budgetary pressures. For too much of the past decade we have not been forced to be fully disciplined with our choices. But for the foreseeable future, cost will be a critical element of nearly every decision we face. We must now carefully and deliberately balance the imperatives of a constrained budget environment with the requirements we place on our military in sustaining and enhancing our security. We must identify areas where we can reduce spending while minimizing risk. This will affect our posture, force structure, modernization efforts, and compensation and benefits. The Defense Department must and will become more efficient and disciplined, while simultaneously improving our effectiveness.

In April, the President announced his framework for addressing our nation's long-term fiscal challenges, setting a goal of reducing national security spending by \$400 billion over the next twelve years. This will require choices

that will be painful, even unnatural to many. But this is necessary, hard work. The President also directed that before making specific budget decisions, the Department of Defense assess their impact by conducting a fundamental review of America's military missions, capabilities, and role in a changing world. Secretary Gates and I have launched this review and will work with Service Chiefs to ensure our ability to meet our crucial national security priorities even in the face of fiscal pressures. Our review will be based on strategy and risks, not simply budgetary math, and our goal will be to ensure that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past nor at the end of this endeavor find ourselves with a hollow force—a force that retains an organizational structure but lacks the people, training, and equipment necessary to perform the tasks we expect from it.

In the near-term, the President's Fiscal Year 2012 Department of Defense budget of \$553 billion represents a balance of military risks and fiscal realities we face today. The return on U.S. defense spending over the past two decades has been immense and historic: preventing world war between great powers, securing the global commons and the free flow of international trade and natural resources, combating terrorism across the globe, and protecting the American people and our allies. But our operations have come with stresses and strains as well as costs to our readiness. If we are to continue to execute the missions set out by our strategy, we must recognize that recovering from war and resetting the force is costly and will require several years of continued investment. Congressional support is required for our forces, their families, their equipment and training, and our military infrastructure to ensure the success of our ongoing efforts and for us to be ready to respond to new and emerging security challenges.

The President's National Security Strategy, the National Military Strategy, and the President's Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan describe our military approaches and ongoing operations in great detail. This posture statement will

focus on the strategic priorities for the military and the Congressional support we need. My priorities remain defending our vital interests in the broader Middle East and South Central Asia, improving the Health-of-the-Force, and balancing global strategic risk.

### **Defending our Vital National Interests in the Broader Middle East and South Central Asia**

Over the past year, our Armed Forces have continued to shoulder a heavy burden, particularly in the Middle East and South Central Asia. The balance of this burden and our wartime focus has shifted, however, from Iraq to Afghanistan. This was made possible by drawing down military forces in Iraq and transitioning security responsibilities to the Iraqis. Meanwhile, we committed additional forces and resources to Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as participated in NATO operations in Libya.

Removing Osama Bin Laden from al-Qaeda's leadership is a signature achievement, and it came only after years and years of painstaking and difficult work by intelligence and military professionals. Although the full import will not be known for some time, his death contributes to the larger struggle and steady progress we must make toward disrupting, dismantling, and ultimately defeating al-Qaeda in the region. As a result of our operations with our Coalition, Afghan, and Pakistani partners, and extensive cooperation with other partners, al-Qaeda's senior leadership in Pakistan is weaker and under greater pressure than at any other time since being forced out of Afghanistan in late 2001. They have suffered the losses of numerous senior leaders and face significant challenges to coordinating operations, maintaining safe havens, and acquiring funding. Despite this operational progress, al-Qaeda retains the intent and capability to attack the United States and other Western countries. The movement's leaders continue to operate in the Afghanistan-Pakistan

border region, planning operations and guiding the efforts of al-Qaeda networks operating out of the Arabian Peninsula, Africa, and even Europe. We, in turn, remain committed to our deepening and broadening partnerships in the region and to our goal of ultimately defeating al-Qaeda and creating the conditions to prevent their return to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

We continue to implement our national strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan with great urgency. This past November, we completed the deployment of the 30,000 additional U.S. forces, and we are seeing signs of improving security on the ground. These forces have allowed us to go on the offensive with our Afghan partners, force the Taliban out of safe havens in its heartland of Kandahar and Helmand, protect the Afghan population, and reduce civilian casualties. Our counterinsurgency operations, conducted in close partnership with Afghan forces, have reduced the Taliban's influence, reversed the insurgency's momentum in key areas of the country, and forced many Taliban leaders to flee across the border. Our forces will consolidate recent gains in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces and further expand security in other critical parts of the country.

This success against the Taliban and other insurgent groups is essential to prevent the return of al-Qaeda, gain time to build the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and force insurgents to reconcile with the Afghan government on acceptable terms. We expect the violence in 2011 to be greater than last year. The fighting this summer will be tough and often costly, but it is necessary to sustain and even increase the pressure we have been placing on the insurgent groups. We cannot allow the Taliban to reorganize and reconstitute as they did in 2004 and 2005, regain their oppressive influence over the Afghan people, and once again provide safe haven to al-Qaeda.

For the success of our military operations to be enduring, it is critical that the ANSF be able to provide security for the Afghan people. Our greatest success story this past year has been the growth and development of the ANSF.

With the help of additional NATO trainers, the ANSF added 49,000 soldiers and 21,000 policemen to their ranks—an astonishing growth of 36 percent. The ANSF also continue to improve on the battlefield and increasingly contribute to the war effort. They are fighting beside us and have grown in their ability to plan and conduct complex operations. In fact, their expanding capabilities and presence have already allowed International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) units to “thin out” in some parts of central Helmand and Kabul Province. We are on track to begin the transition of security responsibilities and drawdown of our forces in July 2011. In the coming year, while continuing to grow the ANSF in size, we will place greater emphasis on improving its quality, professionalism, and self-sufficiency, to ensure that they remain on track to assume the overall lead for security in 2014. To this end, the Afghan Security Forces Fund remains critical to the building of the ANSF’s capabilities and to the ANSF’s eventual assumption of security responsibilities.

Despite our successes, numerous other challenges remain. Achieving sustainable security requires developing Afghan governing capacity, countering corruption, cultivating the conditions needed for conflict resolution, and neutralizing insurgent sanctuaries in Pakistan. Absent these conditions, we will not succeed. Despite a dramatic increase in our civilian presence in Afghanistan this past year, improvements in sub-national governance and reconstruction have not kept pace with progress in improving security. This has impeded our ability to “hold,” “build,” and “transfer.” For this reason, the Commander’s Emergency Response Program remains the most responsive means for addressing a local community’s needs and is often the only tool our commanders have to address pressing requirements in areas where security is challenged. Along with development projects, we believe that new transparency and anti-corruption efforts may counter the deleterious effects of Afghanistan’s criminal patronage networks, mitigate the distortive effects of international aid and development programs, and ultimately improve the confidence the Afghan people have in their government and their governing officials.

To complement this “bottom-up” development, we will support the Afghan government’s reconciliation and reintegration efforts in order to achieve the political solution that is an imperative to sustainable peace. This will only happen if the Taliban and other insurgents believe they have more to gain by negotiating an end to the conflict than by continuing to fight. Getting there will take time, skillful diplomacy, and sustained military pressure, but we will not achieve a favorable and durable outcome unless we meet this challenge.

Though our operational efforts are focused on Afghanistan, our diplomatic efforts have increasingly focused on Pakistan, a country critical to our strategy in the region. We must continue to pursue a partnership with Pakistan even as we are realistic about the difficulty in overcoming years of mistrust. The alternative—drifting towards a more contentious or fractured relationship—is far more detrimental to U.S. interests in strategically defeating al-Qaeda and ensuring nuclear weapons do not fall into terrorists’ possession. We therefore should remain committed to close coordination, cooperation, and friendship with Pakistan.

It is manifestly in our interest to enable the Pakistani Military’s counter-terror and counter-insurgency operations. The series of offensive operations undertaken by the Pakistani Military in the tribal areas expanded dramatically in 2009. There, the Pakistanis have fought bravely and sacrificed much—losing thousands of soldiers in the process. We have steadfastly supported them in a variety of ways, primarily in the development of the counter-insurgency capabilities of Pakistan’s security forces. This development and the military’s operations have kept pressure on al-Qaeda’s senior leadership and the militant groups threatening Pakistan and Afghanistan.

However, insurgent groups such as the Quetta Shura and the Haqqani network continue to operate unhindered from sanctuaries in Pakistan, posing a significant threat to NATO and Afghan forces. Our efforts to enable the Pakistani Military depend on several critical programs, such as the Pakistan

Counterinsurgency Fund and Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund and the Multi-Year Security Assistance Commitment announced by Secretary Clinton last fall. It is also important that through exchange programs, such as the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, we establish relationships with the generation of Pakistani officers with whom we had cut ties. In addition, because we so heavily depend on Pakistan as a supply route supporting our efforts in Afghanistan, Coalition Support Funds remain critical to reimbursing the Pakistanis for their assistance to U.S. counterinsurgency efforts.

In terms of our broader engagement with Pakistan and the region, reducing some of the long-standing enmity and mistrust between India and Pakistan would greatly contribute to our efforts. As neighbors, it is in both India and Pakistan's interests to reduce the tension between them and strengthen their political, security, and economic ties. While we acknowledge the sovereign right of India and Pakistan to pursue their own foreign policies, we must demonstrate our desire for continued and long-term partnership with each, and offer our help to improve confidence and understanding between them in a manner that builds long-term stability across the wider region of South Asia.

Another increasingly important aspect of our engagement in South Central Asia is the development of the Northern Distribution Network. This line of communication has proven critical to maintaining flexibility in our logistical support to our efforts in Afghanistan. We will continue to work with our partners to ensure access, expand throughput, and sustain the viability of redundant supply routes for our forces.

We have ended our combat mission in Iraq, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and started a new chapter in our partnership, Operation New Dawn. We successfully transferred lead for security responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces on August 31, 2010. Iraq's military and political leaders are responding

to the residual, but still lethal, threat from al-Qaeda. As a result, and despite a drawn-out government formation process, the security situation there remains stable, and the Iraqi people are increasingly able to focus on jobs and development. Beyond this security transition, the State Department has taken the lead for U.S. efforts in Iraq, and our diplomats and other civilians are increasingly the face of our partnership with the Iraqi people and their government. Sustained funding for our civilian efforts, commensurate with the State Department's growing responsibilities—particularly our development assistance and police training programs—is needed to ensure we are able to successfully turn our military accomplishments into lasting political ones.

However, the end of the war in Iraq will not mean the end of our commitment to the Iraqi people or to our strategic partnership. We must focus on the future to help Iraq defend itself against external threats and consolidate a successful, inclusive democracy in the heart of the Middle East. As we continue to draw down forces through December 31, 2011, in accordance with the U.S.-Iraqi Security Agreement, we will transition to a more typical military-to-military relationship. We will shift the focus of our assistance from Iraq's internal domestic security to its external national defense, keeping in consideration the interests and sensitivities of all Iraqis as well as Iraq's neighbors. While Iraqi security forces have made great improvements, they will require external assistance for years to come. The cornerstone of our future security partnership with the Iraqis will be a robust Office of Security Cooperation as part of the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. Key to our assistance and not squandering our hard won gains will be continued support to the Iraqi Security Forces fund through fiscal year 2011, equipment transfer provisions, IMET and other traditional security assistance programs, as well as an extension of Section 1234 authority to transfer equipment from Department of Defense stocks.

Despite the energy we commit to defeating al-Qaeda and to stabilizing the situations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, we remain vigilant against other security challenges and sources of aggression and proliferation throughout this critical region. The Iranian regime continues to threaten regional stability. Despite growing isolation from the international community and a fourth round of increasingly costly UN sanctions, the regime has neither ceased providing arms and other support to Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist groups nor accepted a verifiable end to its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Many of the potential flashpoints in the Levant and the Gulf region bear Iran's signature, commanding the region's and the world's attention.

That said, strong social, economic, and political tensions pull on the region and its people—as evidenced by the turmoil we have recently witnessed in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain. Volatility in regional affairs can often follow volatility in domestic affairs. Strong military-to-military relationships can help reduce and mitigate the risks of instability, but sometimes use of force is necessary. The most recent example of this is our rapid response to the crisis in Libya. Since mid-March, after Muammar Gaddafi turned his armed forces against his own population and the world recoiled in horror, U.S. forces have participated in the NATO-led effort to implement and enforce UN Security Council Resolution 1973. We provided rapid planning, command, and control for the coalition force that has halted the regime's assault on the city and people of Benghazi, and subsequently transitioned the leadership responsibility of the effort over to NATO.

We will continue to help counter terrorist threats, deter Iranian aggression, and protect our partners from coercive influence. To do this we will continue to build the capabilities of our partners. More important, we will nurture the development of a regional security architecture based on multi-lateral partnerships that address a wide range of security issues including counter-proliferation, maritime security, counter-terrorism, air and missile

defense, and emergency response. As with our other partnerships across the globe, our security assistance programs are the cornerstone of our relationships. In particular, our Section 1206 and 1208 programs provide a unique and necessary flexibility and responsiveness to Combatant Commander requirements that we cannot currently get with our Foreign Military Funding (FMF) programs.

### **Improving the Health-of-the-Force**

The “back end” of war—the continued care of our veterans and their families and the resetting of our force—cannot be an afterthought, and getting it right will be expensive. Moreover, because of the duration of these conflicts, we have begun to reset our units even in the midst of conflict. The stress of over nine years of constant warfare has come at a great cost to the Force and its ability to continue to conduct operations and respond to other emergent crises. We must care for our people and their families and reset and reconstitute our weapon systems to restore our readiness, capabilities, and wartime effectiveness. This will require a sustained commitment of at least three to five years, and could continue well beyond the end of our involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

#### *Care for our People*

Our foremost focus is on our servicemen and women, their families, and their supporting communities—the bedrock of our Armed Forces. They each play unique and growing roles in our national security fabric, but they have been under great, often unrecognized, stress for the past nine years. Over two million of our service members have deployed to fight overseas. Some have served multiple grueling tours, a great number have suffered significant injuries, and thousands have sacrificed their lives. Even those serving

stateside enjoy only short respites between deployments. We have asked a great deal from our people, and we must invest in them and their families—through appropriate pay, health care, family care, education, and employment opportunities—as they are the single greatest guarantee of a strong military. And they become our best recruiters.

The many accomplishments of our All Volunteer Force over the past nine years of continuous combat operations have been unprecedented. That we remain competitive in attracting the country's best talent during this period is simply extraordinary. All of our Services in the Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard components continue to have exceptional recruiting and retention rates. Ninety-six percent of our accessions have earned at least a high school diploma, which helps explain why this is one of the finest forces we have ever fielded. Competitive compensation and selective bonuses are critical to our ability to recruit and retain talent, as are other “people programs,” such as the new GI Bill, improvements in housing, access to quality schooling for military children, mental health counseling, adequate child care, and attractive family support centers. All of these programs make the harsh burdens of military life easier to bear. I ask for Congress' continued support for them in order to sustain the Force while our overseas operations continue.

I also urge Congress to continue funding the programs that will create a continuum of health care for our veterans and their families that seamlessly spans active duty and veteran status. With a focus on our enduring commitment, we must continue to improve our active and veteran care services, with special emphasis on Wounded Warrior Support. We will expand our public and private partnerships and tap into the “sea of goodwill” towards our veterans found in our Nation's communities and civic organizations. That will be important, but it is not sufficient. Long-term fiscal support for the Department of Veterans Affairs will serve the growing number of veterans requiring care.

One issue that demands acute national attention is the challenge of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The Improvised Explosive Device (IED) is the signature weapon of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and is directly responsible for many of these injuries. Many of our heroes suffer from severe TBI and have had their lives dramatically changed in ways we do not yet fully understand, and over 150,000 others have been exposed to events that may have caused moderate TBI. As such, we need to aggressively identify the victims of TBI, both within the serving force and among our veterans, and the treatment and rehabilitation they need and deserve. The effects of these efforts will pay dividends for some time, because we can expect to face IEDs in future conflicts as well.

In addition, suicides and the many other stresses and social health costs that lag behind war—divorce, domestic violence, post-traumatic stress, depression, and even homelessness—are becoming alarmingly evident. Suicide rates remain unacceptably high, although programs such as the Department's Suicide Prevention Task Force and our improved leadership efforts have helped to lower the rates in 2010 in three of our four Services. Leaders must remain focused on this issue, as we work to improve our systematic understanding of the problem's scope, warning signs, and at-risk populations. As a society we must work to end the stigma that prevents our service members, veterans, and families from seeking early help.

By more effectively leveraging public-private partnerships, we can pursue solutions and treatment for all of these health issues afflicting the Force with great urgency and compassion and honor the sacred trust our Nation has with all of our combat veterans.

### *Reset and Reconstitute*

The grueling pace of deployments has not allowed for the training needed to keep our forces ready along the entire spectrum of military operations and,

as a result, our readiness in some mission areas has atrophied over the past decade. There are some modest reasons for hope, though. The Army now has fewer soldiers deployed than it has had at any time since the invasion of Iraq. In addition, this past year we completed the increases in the Army and Marine Corps end strengths authorized in 2007. As a result, we are beginning to see some stabilizing deployment rates and modestly improving dwell times. We appreciate the Congressional support to our wartime manning needs that has enabled this. However, our overseas contingency operations do continue to demand significant numbers of ground and special operations forces and low-density, high-demand specialties. For our Army combat units, we do not expect to begin to reach our interim goal of 1:2 deploy-to-dwell ratios until the end of 2012. After reset and reconstitution activities and as demand decreases, we expect to begin off-ramping some of our recent temporary force level increases.

However, my concerns about the health of our force go beyond our people and training—we must also restore the readiness of our combat systems and capabilities, which have similarly been under extraordinary stress. In the “back end” of previous conflicts, we were able to contract our equipment inventory by shedding our oldest capital assets, thereby reducing the average age of our systems. We cannot do this today, because the high pace and durations of combat operations have consumed the equipment of all our Services much faster than our peacetime programs can recapitalize them. We must actually recapitalize our systems to restore our readiness and avoid becoming a hollow force. All of this will force us to be more efficient and disciplined in our choices.

We must focus resources where they matter most, and we will reset and reconstitute by prioritizing people, readiness, capabilities, and essential modernization to maintain a technological edge. In the short-term, we will continue previous efforts to reconstitute and expand our rotary wing and tilt-

rotor capacity in our Combat Aviation units and to convert one heavy Brigade Combat Team to a Stryker Brigade. However, over a period of years, we will modernize our battle fleet of ground combat vehicles, including replacing the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. We require enhancements to our manned and unmanned Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets, a new bomber program, extending the service life of a portion of our F-16 fleet, and continuing improvements in our missile defense and electronic warfare systems. We hope to modernize and extend the service life of our F/A-18 fleet and invest in additional P-8A aircraft and tankers. Lastly, we ask for full resourcing of the Air and Missile Defense Radar, the Next-Generation Jammer, and communications and integrated fire control systems designed for operating in contested environments. These investments are, without question, costly, but they are critically demanded by our current and likely future challenges.

Just as important as the reconstitution of these combat systems are the acquisition processes and production capacities underlying them. Our procurement systems remain complex and in need of streamlining to help us acquire needed capabilities faster and more affordably. Last year we committed to adding 20,000 experts to our acquisition corps by 2015. In doing so we seek to improve stability in our programs, conduct more comprehensive design reviews, improve cost estimates, utilize more mature technology, and increase competition in order to make the entire process more responsive and effective.

In addition, as I stated last year, I am concerned about the capabilities of our defense industrial base, particularly in ship building and space. Our ability to produce and support advanced technology systems for future weapon systems may be degraded by decreasing modernization budgets as well as mergers and acquisitions. Left unchecked, this trend will impact our future war-fighting readiness. Although we are properly focusing on near-term reset requirements, the Department, our industry leaders, and the Congress need to

begin considering how to equip and sustain the military we require after our contemporary wars come to an end.

### **Balancing Global Strategic Risk**

Balancing global risk requires maintaining a ready, forward presence with available forces that, overall, can meet the full scope of our security commitments. To meet these requirements, we must reset, sustain, and properly posture a force that includes both our active force and our National Guard and Reserve Components. But we must also make prudent investments and continuously evolve the force so as a whole it can meet the challenges of an increasingly complex global security environment.

For many decades, our overmatch in our general purpose forces has underwritten our national security and our prosperity, as well as that of our many allies and partners. This credible strength has deterred aggression and reduced the likelihood of inter-state conflict like those of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. With these capabilities, we have stood side by side with our allies in the face of belligerent aggression, helped secure access and responsible use of increasingly contested domains, and provided timely humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters across the globe. However, our recent experience reminds us that we must continue to adapt some of our systems and tactics to counter anti-access and area-denial strategies, which may involve both the most advanced and simplest technologies.

We already know some of the contours of what our future force will need to do. We know that, in addition to the current array of aggressive states and transnational terrorists we face, we must adjust to a changing global environment impacted by the rise of China and other emerging powers as well as the growing worldwide use and capabilities of cyber space. Such a world requires an agile, adaptive, and expeditionary force. It must ensure access, protect freedom of maneuver, and project power globally. It should retain

decisive overmatch with air, land, sea, and special operations forces and be able to operate in degraded space and cyber environments. As such, transitioning to this future force will likely involve a greater emphasis on ISR, command and control, long range strike, area denial, undersea warfare, missile defense, and cyber capabilities. This transition will also involve further developing flexible leaders, operators, and technicians who are highly proficient and able to fully integrate our efforts with our partners from other agencies and other countries.

In addition to maintaining our regular and irregular warfare capabilities, we will also continue to rely on secure and stable nuclear deterrence. It is also important that we maintain the safety and surety of our nuclear forces, even as we seek to reduce them in accordance with the Nuclear Posture Review and implement the recently ratified New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. We need to modernize our nuclear force and its supporting infrastructure to ensure that a smaller force is nonetheless safe, secure, and effective. Lastly, our missile defense systems should support the stability of our deterrence architectures.

And while we work to reduce, safeguard, and provide confidence in our nuclear force and those of treaty signatories, we acknowledge that the proliferation of nuclear technology and other weapons of mass destruction by state and non-state actors remains one of the most significant and urgent worldwide threats. Effectively countering proliferation requires strong international partnerships, new surveillance technologies, and layered defenses. These are supported by ongoing expansion of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, establishment of a standing joint headquarters for weapons of mass destruction elimination, and investments in nuclear forensics technology and programs. These relatively small programs can have a disproportionately large positive impact on our security.

Balancing global strategic risk also requires improving our capabilities in cyberspace. Today we face a range of threats to our computer systems from

other states, mercenaries, and even civilian hackers, and their ability to wreak havoc cannot be overstated. Lower grade cyber threats conducted by organized criminals and talented individuals do not necessarily put the nation at serious risk. But the effects of a well coordinated, state-sponsored cyber attack against our financial, transportation, communications, and energy systems would be catastrophic. Though we have made headway by recently releasing the *International Strategy for Cyberspace*, by standing up U.S. Cyber Command, and by developing constructs for cyberspace operations and our national response to cyberspace attacks, more work is needed. Critical to Cyber Command's future success will be our ability to recruit, train, and most importantly, retain the right people. We must devote the same time and attention to cultivating this nation's cadre of future cyber warriors as we do to our combat specialists. We must also empower Cyber Command and the combatant commands by working with the Executive Office of the President and other agencies to develop appropriate cyber authorities and by refining our cyber doctrine, tactics, and procedures. Lastly, we need to actively foster public discussion about international observance of cyber space norms.

Balancing global strategic risk requires strong military-to-military engagement programs. These collaborative efforts engender mutual responsibility and include ongoing combined operations, multi-lateral training exercises, individual exchanges, and security assistance. They help demonstrate the United States' responsible military leadership in critical regions, reassure our allies, and strengthen the international norms that serve the interests of all nations. They also foster connections with other governments that reinforce our diplomatic channels and have proven critical during times of crisis.

We currently benefit from numerous strong and well appreciated military partnerships. For example, at the November NATO Summit in Lisbon, we and our allies recommitted to our alliance, ongoing operations, and a new Strategic

Concept for the next decade. This spring, NATO released its Alliance Maritime Strategy and work continues on its improved command structure—energized by ongoing operations related to Libya. In Asia, though still underpinned by U.S. bilateral alliances, the region’s security architecture is becoming a more complex mixture of multi-level multilateralism and expanded bilateral security ties among states. As the region’s military capability and capacity increases, we seek new ways to catalyze greater regional security cooperation.

Unfortunately, the global economic downturn is placing pressure on the resources of partner nations’ security forces. We foresee no decrease in the commitment of our partners to us or to any of our mutual security efforts, but we must face the reality of less spending by our partners on our combined security and stability efforts. Any measures we take to strengthen our partnerships, such as the Administration’s Export Control Reform effort, can only improve our collective security.

We should not engage only with like-minded allies. Military-to-military engagement, in coordination with other diplomatic efforts, can help foster cooperation in areas of mutual interest between nations with varying levels of amity. We have seen the fruits of our engagement programs in strengthening cooperation in the Middle East, countering piracy in the Red Sea and the Straits of Malacca, and countering proliferation across the globe. We will seek out military-to-military relations even where they have not existed before because sound relations can prevent miscommunication and miscalculation that could lead to crisis or conflict. In particular, we are nurturing increased engagement with China—recently hosting the Chief of the Chinese General Staff for the first U.S. visit in seven years. I intend to reciprocate and will visit China in July. China’s peaceful, constructive rise would have a positive economic and security impact on the world, and we encourage continued improvements in transparency to ensure that this rise is properly understood. In addition, by increasing our military-to-military engagement with China we

hope to increase understanding and cooperation on a multitude of issues, including encouraging North Korea to refrain from further provocation and ensuring access to and equitable use of the global commons.

A significant component of our engagement program is the security sector assistance we provide to build the capabilities of our partner nations' security forces. These cost-effective programs properly place security responsibilities in the hands of other sovereign governments and reduce the tactical strain on our own forces by helping to prevent conflicts and instability. In many places, across the range of U.S. interests, investments in capacity building result in strong foundations for the future. These investments are often small but, if persistent, can yield a high return. I urge your continued support for Theater Security Cooperation programs, Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements to lend military equipment for personnel protection and survivability (under 1202 authorities), Global Train and Equip initiatives (under 1206 authorities), funding for special operations to combat terrorism (under 1208 authorities), as well as the many security assistance programs managed by the Department of State, including FMF and IMET programs.

However, just as these programs require full funding, they also need wholesale reform. Our security assistance structures are designed for another era—our authorities are inflexible, and our processes are too cumbersome to effectively address today's security challenges in a timely manner. I urge your assistance in modifying the laws and regulations surrounding security cooperation and assistance to create a better coordinated, pooled-resource approach—the Global Security Contingency Fund—that make resources more fungible across departments and programs and better integrates our defense, diplomacy, development, and intelligence efforts. We should not allow bureaucratic resistance to trump operational effectiveness when security sector assistance is essential to our national strategy of helping others secure and defend themselves.

On this last point of interagency cooperation, I want to reiterate our commitment to comprehensive approaches to our security challenges that employ all elements of national and international power in coordination. Our future security concerns require a whole of government effort, not just a military one, and we serve best when we serve hand-in-hand with all of our partners and support, rather than lead, foreign policy. As such, we will work closely with the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support their implementation of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, particularly in the areas of conflict prevention and response. The capabilities and success of our interagency partners are inextricably linked to our own. As such, I reiterate my unequivocal support to Secretary Clinton and her efforts to fully resource the State Department's and USAID's activities and an expansion of its diplomacy and development capabilities, particularly in Iraq to support the transition from a military to a civilian-led mission. In addition, I support interagency cooperation programs and work to expand the number of exchanges between the Department of Defense and other Executive Agencies to institutionalize an enduring capacity to solve global problems using a whole-of-government approach.

## **Conclusion**

In the upcoming year, our Armed Forces will build on the past year's achievements and continue to provide the common defense our Constitution directs with distinct honor and effectiveness. We will advance our ongoing efforts and maintain the credibility of our forces while learning, adapting, and preparing for new security challenges. We know that the military's role in national security will remain substantial, and the demands on our servicemen and women will be high. However, we also know that we can never let our actions move us away from the American people, and that the quality of our

work and our personal conduct will say far more about who we are and what we stand for than anything else we do. In all of our efforts, we will maintain a strength of character and professionalism, at the individual and institutional levels, that is beyond reproach and continues to be a source of pride for our Nation.

Again, on behalf of all our men and women under arms, I thank this Committee, and the entire Congress, for your unwavering support for our troops in the field and their families at home during this time of war and for our efforts to maintain a strong, agile, well-trained, and well-equipped military that can prevail in our current conflicts and remain poised to deter or respond to new challenges.