

**Written Testimony for the Honorable John C. Rood
to the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC)**

December 5, 2019

Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to discussing the Department of Defense's (DoD) effort to implement the National Defense Strategy or NDS in an era of great power competition and addressing your questions.

My objectives today are two-fold: first, to address how we frame the challenge of great power competition with China and Russia; and second, to illuminate the hard work the Defense Department has been undertaking over the last two years in order to implement the NDS and assess our progress.

GROWTH OF THE THREAT

The NDS was clear in setting out that great power competition is now the pre-eminent challenge facing the Department, stating:

“The central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition by...revisionist powers. It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model – gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.”

As the complex security environment has evolved, the Department has sought to keep Congress and the public apprised of the threats posed by great power competitors such as China and Russia as well as rogue regimes through regular reporting. For example, the Defense Intelligence Agency's annual reports to Congress, *China Military Power* and *Iran Military Power* both released this year, and *Russia Military Power*, released in 2017, highlight the following:

- CHINA: The Peoples Republic of China (PRC) remains focused on realizing a “world-class” military.

- China possesses one of the largest militaries in the world; it continues to add to its capabilities and is increasingly provocative, such as its activities in the South China Sea and in Africa, where China established its first overseas base ever in Djibouti in 2017. Of note, China's official defense budget has grown 850% over the past 20 years from \$20B to \$170B in 2018, and I would note the real figures are significantly higher than China's official budget.
- China has also sought to spend funding in ways that are specifically targeted at key U.S. military advantages with new capabilities in such areas as space, cyber, electronic warfare, undersea warfare, fighter aircraft, bombers equipped with long-range cruise missiles, and other anti-access, area denial (A2AD) capabilities. For example, China is using cyber capabilities to advance its military and strategic ends.
- China's ground forces alone exceed 1 million personnel. A large maritime militia supplements its 300-ship navy and 250-ship coast guard. Its air forces operate over 2,600 aircraft. It maintains a ballistic missile arsenal consisting of 750-1500 short range, 150-450 medium range, and 80-160 inter-mediate range variants.¹
- Chinese development of nuclear capabilities is extensive. The People's Liberation Army Navy intends to increase the number of operational SSBN class submarines from four to six. The Rocket Forces maintain approximately 90 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, including road mobile delivery systems. Rounding out their nuclear triad is the People's Liberation Army Air Force's operational H-6K, and the prospect of a future nuclear capable stealth strategic bomber, estimated to debut in 2025. These delivery systems equipped with nuclear weapons give China several ways of reaching the United States, and exemplify the PRC's large-scale effort to build larger and more capable forces armed with nuclear weapons.²

¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense "Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China" – May 2019.

² Office of the Secretary of Defense "Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China" – May 2019.

- Developments in this year's report illustrate that China's activities, such as militarization of the South China Sea, development of offensive cyber and space capabilities, and legal and illicit efforts to acquire sensitive or advanced dual-use technologies to support its military objectives, are inconsistent with the rules-based international order, which has benefited all nations, including China.
- **RUSSIA:** Over the last decade, we have seen this threat grow considerably.
 - Russia continues to emphasize nuclear weapons in its doctrine and conduct large-scale exercises. Russia is forecast to spend approximately \$28B by 2020³ to upgrade the capacity of its strategic nuclear weapons and delivery systems, including intercontinental ballistic missiles, ballistic missile submarines, and strategic bombers. Russia maintains approximately 2,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons, including air-to-surface missiles, short-range ballistic missiles, gravity bombs, and other delivery systems.
 - Russia has invested heavily in A2AD capabilities intended to prevent an adversary from operating in a particular region, including capabilities such as strategic air operations, integrated air defense systems, surface to-air-missiles, and coastal defense cruise missiles. Russia has also undertaken considerable upgrades of its conventional forces while investing heavily in cyber, space, electronic warfare, and hybrid warfare capabilities.
 - Russia has coupled its investment in new capabilities with a litany of destabilizing activities across the world, which in many cases result in a loss of innocent lives. For example, Russia invaded Georgia in 2008, invaded Crimea in 2014, and continues to perpetuate an active conflict in eastern Ukraine. Russia continues to intervene in the Syrian civil war, propping up the brutal Assad regime, and Russian agents used chemical weapons in the attempted assassination of Sergey Skripal on the soil of a

³ Office of the Director of National Intelligence “Russia Military Power: Building a Military to Support Great Power Aspirations” – June 2017.

- NATO Ally, the United Kingdom. Russia is also using cyber capabilities to advance its military and strategic ends.
- Since 2016, Russia has attempted to shape democratic elections and referendums in multiple countries.
 - IRAN⁴: While Iran is not a great power like China or Russia, it continues to improve its military capabilities and work through proxy forces with the objective of spreading its influence across the Middle East.
 - Over the past six months, Iran has taken aggressive steps to seek to disrupt freedom of navigation and the global economy with attacks on oil tankers, and sought to destabilize its neighbors through both direct attacks and attacks via proxy forces in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. Iran continues to use violence and seek to spread its malign influence – all while continuing to develop, test, and field advanced weapon systems.
 - The capabilities of the Iranian military have progressed although Iran continues to rely on its unconventional warfare elements and asymmetric capabilities. Iran has developed and fielded a substantial arsenal of ballistic missiles, as well as cruise missiles and UAVs designed to target U.S. forces and our partners in the region. Iran is also using cyber capabilities to advance its military and strategic ends.

The fundamental problem we continue to face, as identified by the NDS, is the “erosion of U.S. competitive military advantage vis-à-vis China and Russia,” while continuing to address threats from rogue regimes like Iran and North Korea, and violent extremist organizations like ISIS and Al Qaeda.

It is critical that we continue our work to arrest and reverse this trend to regain our competitive military advantage, especially in high-end warfare. It is also critical that DoD efforts

⁴ DIA Iran Military Power Report – Unclassified – August 2019

and capabilities support USG efforts to counter-Chinese influence activities. We must win the competition, as well as the high-end warfare fight. Doing so will ensure the United States can continue to deter aggression and coercion from those that would seek to supplant the United States and challenge the free and open international order that forms the foundation of our continued freedom and prosperity.

NDS VALIDITY & IMPLEMENTATION

We are pleased the NDS remains a solid strategy as examined by independent reviews. For example, the independent, Congressionally-established National Defense Strategy Commission's evaluation of NDS in 2018 determined that it was the right approach for the Department to pursue, stating:

“[the Commission] supports its [NDS's] candid assessment of the strategic environment, the priority it places on preparing for major power competition and conflict, its emphasis on the enduring value of U.S. alliances and partnerships, and its attention to issues of readiness and lethality.”

In addition, and in accordance with Congressional mandate, DoD conducts a thorough annual review of the NDS and the Department's progress in implementing it. In former Acting Secretary Shanahan's statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee in March of this year, he stated:

“I say with conviction: the NDS remains the most effective aligning mechanism for the Department. Its implementation is our most critical mission...Our three primary lines of effort - increasing our military's lethality, strengthening our network of alliances and partnerships, and reforming DoD's business practices - remain the most effective avenues for addressing this challenge [of great power competition].”

That position has not changed, and the NDS remains the guidepost for our Department. Secretary Esper is taking action to reinforce the strategy and build upon his predecessors' efforts by rigorously structuring and overseeing NDS implementation within the Department to focus on great power competition and “warfighting, today and tomorrow.” Through his guidance, we are actively adjusting to the threat environment and reassessing our progress toward NDS priorities. This work has resulted in refinements to our approach and changes in resourcing.

The Department's primary job is to provide combat-credible military forces to deter war, or to win should deterrence fail. Bolstering our military's deterrent capability is therefore job number one. Since the NDS's launch, the Department has made significant progress investing to modernize and restore high-end readiness in the Joint Force toward this purpose, as evidenced in the FY 2020 President's Budget request. We must continue to balance this prioritization of the military competition with ongoing operations and activities globally that affect military resourcing and readiness – including the security challenges posed by Iran, North Korea, terrorism, and other contingencies.

Despite an increase in the scope and scale of the military challenges confronting the United States, our military has been steadily shrinking over time. At the end of the Korean War in the mid-1950s, the U.S. military consisted of approximately 2.9 million active-duty forces. Following the conclusion of the Vietnam War, the United States had about 2.1 million forces. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States divested additional forces until it reached a 1.4 million-person force. Today, our force is composed of approximately 1.3 million active-duty service personnel.

The FY2020 budget was the first budget developed since the NDS's release and it made significant progress on a range of fronts to compete with China and Russia by prioritizing modernization, innovation, and high-end readiness. For example:

- **SPACE:** The FY2020 budget requested \$14.1B to maintain our competitive edge in this new warfighting domain. The Administration also submitted a proposal to Congress to establish the Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces in order to unify, focus and accelerate the establishment of space doctrine, capabilities, and expertise to outpace future threats. The Department has also created an operational command: U.S Space Command focused on the daily operations of our space assets and warfighters, and stood up the Space Development Agency to speed development and fielding of critical space capabilities;
- **CYBER:** The President's FY20 budget requested \$9.6B, which equates to a 10% increase over the FY19 budget if approved. We are investing \$3.7B in capabilities for our cyber forces, including our teams focused on stopping cyber threats outside U.S. networks.

Within the past year DoD has published a new classified cyber strategy, completed a review of our gaps and shortcomings called the Cyber Posture Review, revamped authorities, and continued to build out the cyber mission force. Additionally, in 2018, alongside DHS we initiated the Pathfinder Programs in two critical infrastructure sectors—finance and energy—to experiment with innovative ways to improve public-private information sharing and collaboration. Most critical infrastructure in the United States is owned and operated by the private sector; we are figuring out how best to work with them to improve overall national resilience.

READINESS INITIATIVES:

- Improving the ability of the Joint Force to be ready to fight and win against much larger and more capable force is vitally important. Here too the Department has made significant progress although more work remains to be done. Some highlights follow.

- Air Force: Of units expected to fight in the first weeks of any major combat operation, over 90% are ready to "fight tonight." Since 2017 and as of September 2019, overall Air Force readiness increased 17% and pacing unit readiness increased by 35% since April 2018.

- Army: As of March 2019, the Army increased the number of brigade combat teams and combat aviation brigades at their highest state of readiness by 36% and 100%, respectively, since 2017.

- Marine Corps: The Marine Corps increased aviation readiness - for example, the F/A-18 A-D aircraft mission capable rates increased by 12% and the number of available mission capable aircraft for the CH-53E platform increased by 52%. The F-35B Joint Strike Fighter completed its first extended 7-month shipboard Marine Expeditionary Unit deployment, sustaining a 74% mission capable rate, and executing its first combat operations.

- Navy: The Navy instituted Performance to Plan (P2P) to improved aviation mission capable rates. For example, by the end of FY19, the Navy achieved its mission capable aircraft target goals for F/A-18 E/F Strike Fighter aircraft and EA-18G Electronic Attack aircraft to 349 and 96 aircraft, respectively. This was a 19.5% and 14.5% increase to mission capable rates for the F/A-18 E/F and EA-18G, respectively from October 2018.

- **RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**: Prioritizing the research and development of new capabilities. The Department's FY2020 budget request for R&D was the largest percentage of the defense budget devoted to R&D in 70 years. This includes \$7.5B in funding to develop and field technologies that will create key military advantages such as unmanned/autonomous vehicles, hypersonics, Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, and directed energy.

- **POST-INF TREATY**: New conventional strike options offering significant operational utility are now available to be pursued, following the August 2019 U.S. withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty due to Russia's material breach. The President's FY20 budget submission reflects the Department's initial efforts to leverage the military advantages of conventional ground-launched cruise and ballistic missiles. In August, the Department successfully tested a conventional ground-launched cruise missile and will soon test a conventional ground-launched ballistic missile. These are initial capability demonstrations. The Department is concurrently examining options for both the near-term adaptations of existing systems, as well as longer-term developmental efforts. PB20 includes \$76M in FY20 for further work on adapting and testing ground-launched cruise missiles.

- **NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE**: The U.S. nuclear deterrent is dependent on aging nuclear delivery systems, weapons, and Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications built during the Cold War. Repeated decisions to defer recapitalization have led to a deterrent force in which most systems were extended for decades beyond their initial design lives. The portfolio of nuclear modernization and sustainment programs is extraordinarily

complex and interconnected, and entails high risk as we transition from legacy to modern systems. In recent years, both the Obama and Trump Administrations have funded the nuclear program of record and, for FY2020, the President's Budget Request funds DoD Nuclear Enterprise Program of Record at about \$24.9B, which includes \$8.4B for modernization/recapitalization and \$16.5B for sustainment and operations.

Competitive investments alone will not deter China and Russia. Great power competition also means that the Department must develop new concepts and organizational approaches for force employment and design, posture, and warfighting. DoD is building increased flexibility and responsiveness into our global force posture, allowing us the ability to dynamically flow capabilities to global hotspots on short notice. Our aim is to be strategically predictable, yet operationally unpredictable.

WORKING WITH WIDER USG

The Department recognizes it is one piece of the federal government. DoD supports its interagency partners to ensure that we challenge and mitigate China's and Russia's malign diplomatic, informational, economic, and military efforts to undermine global security and reshape the rules-based international order in their favor. This endeavor is highly dependent not only on collaborating across our government, but also on our close cooperation with allies and partners, to ensure regional balances of power remain favorable to our mutual interests. The measure of success in competition will lie in the United States' ability to compete with these two powers from a sustained position of strategic military and economic advantage

ALLIES & PARTNERS

The Department is also strengthening and leveraging America's network of allies and partners to compete with China and Russia. The NDS highlighted:

“Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to our strategy, providing a durable asymmetric strategic advantage that no competitor can rival or match...By working together with allies and partners we amass the greatest possible strength for the long-term advancement of our interests, maintaining favorable balances of power that deter aggression and support that stability that generates economic growth.”

Building a constellation of strong allies and partners is therefore a foundational pillar of the Strategy, one of our greatest strategic advantages over our competitors, and it requires care and attention. As our competitors seek to advance their own revisionist view of the world, consistent with their authoritarian models, we understand that their strategies involve isolating and trying to gain leverage over countries through predatory approaches and intimidation.

To remain competitive in this environment, the Department is pursuing several measures to bolster our defense relationships. In some cases, this necessitates hard conversations to ensure appropriate burden-sharing and targeted capability development, as we take steps together to address shared challenges.

Our Allies and Partners are stepping up their efforts. Just this week, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) announced that 2019 defense spending across European Allies and Canada increased in real terms by 4.6%, the fifth consecutive year of growth. By the end of 2020, these Allies will have added an additional \$130B since 2016, and this accumulated increase in defense spending is projected by the NATO Secretary General to rise to \$400B by 2024. As Secretary General Soltenberg has said, this is “...unprecedented progress and it is making NATO stronger.” We continue to encourage our Allies to direct defense spending increases to enhancing capabilities and readiness.

At the December Leaders Meeting, NATO recognized the Alliance needs to address the opportunities and challenges presented by China’s growing influence and international policies. NATO is also devoting attention and resources to face 21st century challenges such as hybrid threats. In 2018, NATO agreed to establish Counter Hybrid Support Teams (CHST), which provide tailored, targeted assistance to Allies, upon their request, in preparing for and responding to hybrid activities. The first CHST deployed to Montenegro in November 2019.

In the Indo-Pacific, DoD is strengthening and evolving U.S. partnerships into a security architecture that helps uphold a “free and open” order characterized by 1) respect for sovereignty and independence of every nation, no matter its size; 2) peaceful dispute resolution without coercion; 3) free, fair, and reciprocal trade and investment; and 4) adherence to international rules and norms. For example:

- JAPAN: In Japan, we are integrating NDS implementation with Japan’s National Defense Program Guidelines and participating in ongoing defense dialogues to re-evaluate roles,

missions and capabilities while increasing operational readiness and training. DoD is also increasing cooperation in space, cyberspace, the electromagnetic spectrum, and artificial intelligence as well as cross-domain operations.

- **INDIA:** With India, we are committed to a common vision for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership, which we will advance at a “2+2” Ministerial on December 18 in Washington, DC. We have agreed to expand military-to-military cooperation and improve interoperability, including by establishing a new tri-service amphibious exercise, TIGER TRIUMPH.
- **SINGAPORE:** No country in Southeast Asia does more than Singapore to enable a U.S. forward presence in the Indo-Pacific. More than 100 U.S. ships and 800-1,000 U.S. aircraft transit through Singapore each year. Singapore supports our rotational deployment of our littoral combat ships and P-8 aircraft. Singapore forces have four active training units stationed in the United States. We expect to agree soon on a permanent Singapore fighter training presence in Guam. Singapore also is a top purchaser of advanced U.S. weapons systems.
- **TAIWAN:** Consistent with the policy articulated in the Taiwan Relations Act, the United States continues to make available to Taiwan defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain sufficient self-defense capability. This year DoD has approved over \$10B in defense sales such as M1A2 Abrams tanks and F-16s fighters to recapitalize its force. We are supporting their development of more mobile, survivable, and asymmetric capabilities. The ultimate goal is to develop a more combat credible force.
- **VIETNAM:** In Vietnam, we are building a productive defense relationship and overcoming the legacy of the Vietnam War. For example, last year the U.S. Navy conducted the first aircraft carrier visit to that nation since the end of the War. The United States has also transferred a high-endurance Coast Guard cutter to Vietnam and Secretary

Esper announced during his visit to Hanoi two weeks ago that the United States will provide a second such cutter to Vietnam.

- PACIFIC ISLANDS: In the Pacific Islands, DoD is enhancing our engagement to promote our status as a security partner of choice.

DoD is also planning to invest \$521M over the next five years in programs like the Maritime Security Initiative to build the capacity of our allies and partners in the region, including developing partners' ability to conduct maritime security and maritime domain awareness operations, and advancing interoperability with U.S. forces.

CONCLUSION

The NDS represents a major shift, unachievable in just one year. We still have important work ahead of us to design a more lethal, resilient and ready force; solve tough operational problems; build a combat-credible forward presence, and work with allies and partners. Innovative concepts, analysis, and additional investments will be critical. The NDS remains our guidepost and we are determined to deliver on its priorities.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here and Lt Gen Allvin and I look forward to your questions.