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THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENT OF

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This testimony reflects the personal views of the author and does not represent the official views of the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

I would like to begin by thanking the Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of this committee for inviting me to testify this morning. I would also like to stress that I am appearing here in a personal capacity, and that what I have to say thus represents my own views rather than those of any organization with which I am associated.

As someone who has spent a career studying, teaching, and practicing strategy in government and academia, I am sympathetic to those who face the challenging task of trying to ensure that the U.S. armed forces are prepared to defend American interests against the full spectrum of threats. I applaud Secretary of Defense Gates' call to achieve a balanced defense capability. I also acknowledge that achieving balance is extremely challenging. Planners must, for example, weigh the certainty that American soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are today engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan against the possibility of a great-power conflict – a contingency of low probability but extremely high consequence. Moreover, readiness involves not only preparing for war, but also reassuring allies and deterring aggressors in order to prevent war.

The strategic environment further complicates this task. The United States today faces the most complex and challenging spectrum of threats in recent memory. First, and most obviously, we are engaged in a war against violent extremist organizations such as Al Qaeda and its affiliates: a protracted irregular conflict that spans the globe. Quite apart from Iraq and Afghanistan, this conflict will generate significant demands for forces over the long term.

Second, for the foreseeable future we will face the need to deal with hostile regional powers, such as Iran and North Korea. These states, which possess (in the case of North Korea) or seek (in the case of Iran) nuclear weapons, have used terrorism as an instrument of their foreign policy. They threaten U.S. friends and allies as well as the stability of key regions.

Third, and potentially most consequential over the long term, is the rise of China. Chinese military modernization threatens to reshape the balance of power in Asia in ways that challenge U.S. interests and allies in Asia and beyond.

Dealing with these challenges will require a versatile military force. Military power plays, and will continue to play, an important role in the struggle to defeat Al Qaeda and its affiliates. Military power is needed to blunt the global reach of terrorist groups, and military power is needed to train and advise local security forces, bolstering their capacity to deal with insurgents locally. To achieve success, the U.S. military will need to develop and sustain a proficiency in irregular operations equal to that it possesses in high-end conventional warfare.

Military power will also play a crucial role in dealing with regional rogues with nuclear weapons. The threat of military force plays a central role in deterring these states and their surrogates from aggression.

Finally, military power has a role to play in dealing with the rise of China. Specifically, the United States must, through its words and actions, maintain a

preponderance of power in the Pacific in order to ensure access to the global commons, reassure our allies and friends in the region, and deter aggression.

Beyond these challenges, the United States must be prepared to confront any number of disruptive events that could destabilize the international system. Military power serves as an insurance policy against the unknown and the unexpected.

Last year, the Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel, which I supported, examined U.S. interests and threats to them. I was particularly involved in the Panel's Force Structure and Personnel Sub-Panel, which operated under the capable leadership of Rudy deLeon. Although the panel identified a number of shortfalls in U.S. force structure, I would like to focus on the need to respond to anti-access capabilities, and particularly those of China.

This is a matter of some urgency, since China is, for the first time, close to achieving a military capability to deny U.S. and allied forces access to much of the Western Pacific rim. The growth of China's anti-access capability, in turn, calls into question many of the fundamental assumptions upon which the United States has based its defense planning since World War II. Specifically:

1. The assumption that the United States will enjoy an operational sanctuary in space is in doubt. The Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) is actively engaged in programs to degrade or destroy the U.S. command, control and communications (C3), the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and the navigational systems that are critical for U.S. military operations.

2. The assumption that U.S. bases in Guam, Japan and elsewhere will be secure from attack is in question. The PLA is fielding ballistic and cruise missile systems and a number of other capabilities designed to destroy most key facilities.
3. The assumption that U.S. naval surface vessels can operate with impunity in all parts of the Western Pacific is questionable. A combination of PLA long-range surveillance assets and land, air and submarine launched weaponry mean that U.S. aircraft carrier strike groups and other surface vessels are now vulnerable up to approximately 1,200 nautical miles from the Chinese coast. This is further than carrier-based aircraft can fly unrefueled, so that were carrier strike groups tasked to strike targets on the Chinese coast or further inland, they would need to operate from very vulnerable locations. Moreover a new generation of Chinese submarines now poses a serious challenge to surface vessels much further out into the Pacific.
4. The assumption that in a crisis U.S. information networks will remain secure is questionable. China is working hard to develop capabilities to challenge, penetrate or degrade a wide range of defense, national security and logistics networks that would play key roles in any future crisis in the Western Pacific.

These developments have profound implications for U.S. national security. The United States has, since the end of World War II, based its defense strategy on a combination of forward-based forces to deter adversaries and reassure allies and friends and the projection of power from those bases and the continental United States to defeat foes in wartime. The spread of anti-access capabilities calls that formula into question.

In response to these developments, the QDR Independent Panel argued that U.S. "force structure needs to be increased in a number of areas to counter anti-access challenges."[1] Specifically, it called for an expansion of the U.S. surface fleet, the acquisition of additional attack submarines, a replacement for the *Ohio*-class SSGNs, an increase in the bomber force, and an expansion of long-range precision strike capabilities.[2]

In addition to these recommendations, I believe that the United States has opportunities to work with its allies and friends to ensure security in the Asia-Pacific region.

First, the United States should consider developing a coalition intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance network in the Western Pacific to reassure our allies and friends and generate collective responses to crisis and aggression. By networking together U.S. and allied airborne sensors, participants would build a common picture of activity in the region. Such an approach could also represent a significant deterrent to hostile action. It would be harder for an aggressor to act without being caught, and an attack on the network would amount to an attack on all its members.

Second, the United States should harden and diversify its network of bases in the Pacific. The United States should protect and defend its bases to deter an attack upon them. Moreover, the Defense Department should examine a much broader and diverse set of bases in the region.

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[1] *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America's National Security Needs in the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2010), 67.
[2] Ibid., 58.

Third, and finally, the United States should help bolster the submarine forces of our allies and work to link them. Undersea warfare is a comparative advantage of the United States and many of its allies, and one that is likely to be increasingly relevant in the future. Recently, for example, Australia's Kokoda Foundation has called upon the Royal Australian Navy to lease or buy *Virginia*-class nuclear-powered attack submarines from the United States.[3] In my view, it would make sense for the United States to offer to do just that. Nuclear-powered submarines have the speed and endurance that Australia needs to protect its maritime interests. Moreover, such a move would offer a way to broaden and deepen the U.S.-Australia alliance. It's a bold, even radical, idea, and there are plenty of barriers to it, but it is one that is well worth pursuing.

None of the moves that I have outlined would be free, although some of them could be undertaken with modest investment. In closing, however, I would like to quote once again from the report of the QDR Independent Panel. It notes that "Although there is a cost to recapitalizing the military, there is also a potential price associated with not recapitalizing, and in the long run, that cost is much greater."[4]

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

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[3] Kokoda Foundation, Australia's Strategic Edge in 2030 (Canberra: Kokoda Foundation, 2011).

[4] Ibid., 61.