

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for Mr. Victor G. Mercado**  
**Nominee for Appointment to be Assistant Secretary of Defense**  
**for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities**

**Duties and Qualifications**

- 1. What do you believe would be your most critical duties and responsibilities if confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities (ASD(SPC))?**
  - If confirmed, the ASD(SPC)'s most critical responsibilities include advising and supporting the USD(P), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Defense on formulation of the national defense strategy and on the capabilities, forces, campaign, and contingency plans necessary to implement the strategy.
  
- 2. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform the duties and functions of the ASD(SPC)? In particular, what background and experience do you possess in the domains of:**

**Defense Strategy, Force Planning, Force Development**

- My career in the military includes senior positions where I oversaw Strategy, Force Planning, and Force Development efforts in Combatant Commands, Service Component Commands and for the Navy. Specifically:
  
- As Vice Director, Strategic Plans and Policy for Commander, US Central Command, I oversaw planning for the entire Middle East region, including Iran and Syria at the outset of the crisis and civil war.
  
- As Director, Maritime Operations for Commander, US Pacific Fleet, I directed all strategy and planning efforts for the Indo-Pacific Region including North Korea and China.
  
- As Director, Assessment Division for the Chief of Naval Operations, I oversaw the development of Navy's most recent Force Structure Assessment that determined the Navy's requirement for a 355 ship Navy.

**Development and/or review of campaign and contingency plans, major force deployments, and military operational plans.**

- As Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans and Posture, I have worked to re-new the operational plans review process. As a former senior military planner, I recognize the fact that no plan developed strictly by the military is viable. Civilian oversight and input is critical to a plan that can be successfully implemented by the DoD and the interagency. This is also the approach that I applied when developing plans for the Middle East for Commander, U.S. Central Command.
  
- As Director, Maritime Operations for Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, I was intimately involved in generating and deploying forces to support U.S. Central Command as well as to address the challenges in Northeast Asia and the South

China Sea.

**Joint capabilities requirements and Joint Warfighting Concept Development**

- As Director, Assessments Division for the Chief of Naval Operations, I was involved with Navy capabilities assessments, as applied to future defense planning scenarios, to inform budget decisions for the future force.
- As Deputy Secretary of Defense for Plans and Posture, I have a broader defense-wide view of joint capability requirements and have oversight responsibilities of Joint Staff development of a future Joint Warfighting Concept.

**3. What leadership and management experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as ASD(SPC), if confirmed?**

- During 35 years as a military officer, I have led and managed several large and complex organizations, including commanding an Aegis Destroyer, a Destroyer Squadron, and an Aircraft Carrier Strike Group. Ashore, I led mixed teams of military and civilian staff at U.S. Central Command and on the Navy Staff. My last tour on active duty was as the Director, Maritime Operations, where I managed the daily operations of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet involving 200 ships and submarines; 1,500 aircraft; and 144,000 Sailors and civilians from the west coast of the United States to the Indian Ocean. This job required integrating the disparate staffs of the Intelligence, Operations, Strategic Plans and Policy, Communications, Information & Cyber, and Training Directorates into one coherent and effective organization.

**4. Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to serve as the ASD(SPC)? Please explain your answer.**

- I continue to seek counsel from former senior DoD officials who have either performed in, worked with, or supervised the position for which I have been nominated. My experience is rich in the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East and relatively limited, but improving, in NATO/Europe as I continue to travel to Europe and engage with foreign civilian and military leaders across Europe, including the Baltic States. If confirmed, I would continue this approach to enhance my effectiveness in this critical position.

**5. If confirmed, what additional duties and functions might you expect the Secretary of the Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, or the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) to prescribe for you, particularly in light of the lines of effort set forth in the National Defense Strategy (NDS)?**

- If confirmed, based on my experience, I am prepared to support the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and USD(P) across all of the NDS Lines of Effort. My previous experience serving in OSD, the Joint Staff, a Combatant Command, a Navy Component HQs, the Navy Staff, in the acquisition community, and a legislative fellowship allows me to analyze issues from various points of view to inform how I can support the leadership.

**6. If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing the USD(P) regarding the organization and operations of the Office of the ASD(SPC)?**

- I believe the ASD(SPC) has an important role to help integrate the myriad, disparate

activities and initiatives across the Office of USD(P) with a global strategic perspective based on the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, my goal would be to work together with the other ASDs within the Office of USD(P) to enhance teamwork across the seams within the organization to advance the National Defense Strategy objectives.

**7. If confirmed, what actions would you take to develop and sustain an open, transparent, and productive relationship between your office and Congress, and the Senate Armed Services Committee, in particular?**

- If confirmed, it would be a top priority to establish and develop a positive and transparent relationship with the Congress. The first order of business would be to pay calls on the professional staff and, as available, any members to hear their concerns.

**8. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as ASD(SPC) epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?**

- Civilian control of the military is a critical statutory responsibility and the foundation for an effective Department of Defense. I am fortunate to have served previously in DoD as the Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense as well as the Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; therefore, I understand the important roles and missions of both senior civilian and military leaders in executing DoD's mission. I have completed my transition from military service, and civilian control of the military underpins my approach to my current and, if confirmed, future responsibilities within the DoD.

## **Relationships**

**9. If confirmed, what would be your relationship with:**

**The Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense**

- At the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities (ASD(SPC)) advises the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense on development of national security and defense policy, the integration and oversight of DoD policy and plans to achieve national security objectives, and strategy and policy on matters relating to nuclear weapons, missile defense, and security cooperation. The ASD(SPC) also provides policy support to the USD(P) and the Secretary in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) processes inside the Department, including National Defense Strategy implementation, the Nuclear Posture and Missile Defense reviews, and annual program and budget reviews.

**The Under Secretaries of Defense**

- At the direction of the USD(P), the ASD(SPC) works with the Under Secretaries of Defense in support of the Secretary's objectives. Specifically, the ASD(SPC) provides the Under Secretaries of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and Research and Engineering with policy input regarding acquisition and programmatic activities, most notably relating to nuclear weapons and missile defense.

### **The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

- At the direction of the USD(P), the ASD(SPC) works with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to provide support on matters that affect strategy, force planning and employment, nuclear weapons, and missile defense.

### **The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Service Chiefs**

- At the direction of the USD(P), the ASD(SPC) works with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and Service Chiefs on a broad range of strategy, policy, and force planning issues and other areas in which the Military Departments and Services are critical stakeholders.

### **The Commander of U.S. Strategic Command**

- At the direction of the USD(P) and in coordination with the CJCS, the ASD(SPC) works with the Commander of U.S. Strategic Command on a broad range of issues that affect strategy and policy for nuclear weapons and missile defense.

### **The Commander of U.S. Cyber Command**

- At the direction of the USD(P) and in coordination with the CJCS, the ASD(SPC) works with the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command in support of strategy development and execution, and contingency planning.

### **The other Combatant Commanders**

- At the direction of the USD(P), the ASD(SPC) works closely with the Regional and Functional Combatant Commanders, particularly in support of strategy development and execution, and steady-state and contingency planning.

### **The Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency**

- The ASD(SPC) works collaboratively with the Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) to provide the USD(P) with advice and recommendations on security cooperation issues to ensure alignment with defense strategy.

### **The Director, Missile Defense Agency**

- SPC and MDA have a strong history of close coordination to ensure missile defense policy and capability align. I would continue to work closely with the MDA Director as we advocate for missile defense capabilities that satisfy the policy priorities of the Defense Department.

### **The Administrator and Deputy Administrators of the National Nuclear Security Administration**

- In the Nuclear Weapons Council and other venues, the ASD(SPC) works with the Administrator and Deputy Administrators of the National Nuclear Security Administration to provide policy support to the USD(P) and the Secretary of Defense on strategy and policy issues relating to nuclear weapons modernization and related issues.

## **Major Challenges and Priorities**

### **10. If confirmed, what would be your vision for the Office of the ASD(SPC)?**

- If confirmed, it would be important for every member, civilian and military, within the ASD(SPC) team to understand their important role in National Defense—from developing strategic guidance through overseeing plans development and force management. The Office of the ASD(SPC) should always maintain a strategic perspective that supports all of the other DoD components in a coherent approach to implementing the NDS.

### **11. In your view, what are the major challenges that confront the ASD(SPC)?**

- As the Department implements the NDS, it is important to ensure balance in maintaining a long-term focus on Great Power Competition while remaining responsive to current challenges such as the Middle East and Northeast Asia. SPC should continually monitor for an inflection point when meeting current challenges could affect the Department's ability to achieve the long-term objectives outlined in the defense strategy.

### **12. If confirmed, specifically what management actions would you take, in what order of priority, and on what timeline—to address each of these challenges? Please be specific.**

- If confirmed, my first order of business would be to establish a positive working relationship with the Congress, followed closely by establishing relationships with my counterparts in key ally and partner nations. Additionally, gaining an in depth understanding of the tension between specific Service readiness challenges and Combatant Command demands and associated risks – near and long term – is key to making informed recommendations to leadership.

## **Contingency Planning**

### **13. One of the purposes of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to increase military and civilian attention to the formulation of strategy and contingency planning. The ASD(SPC) supports the USD(P) and the Secretary of Defense in preparing written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans and in reviewing such plans.**

- I agree that a key responsibility of the ASD(SPC) is assisting the USD(P) and Secretary of Defense in preparing written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans and in reviewing such plans.

### **14. What is your view of the civilian role, as compared to the military role, in the formulation of strategy and contingency planning? Please explain your answer.**

- Civilian control remains a critical and statutory responsibility in the formulation of strategy and contingency planning. No plan developed strictly by the military is viable. Civilian oversight and input is critical to a plan that can be successfully implemented by the DoD and the interagency. It is the role of civilian leadership to provide end states, expectations for options development, approve strategic assumptions, and any other information needed to frame military planning. This ensures proper direction to military planners. The civilian role does not stop with

the issuance of guidance. To ensure proper alignment between political objectives and military, continual interaction between civilian and military leaders is required, starting with a robust plan review process. Additionally, civilian leadership must engage in an iterative and open dialogue with military leadership to ensure the development of achievable strategies and feasible plans.

**15. If confirmed, specifically what actions would you take to exercise the appropriate level of civilian control and oversight of strategy formulation, contingency planning, and force planning and development?**

- As Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans and Posture, I worked to renew the OSD operational plans review process which includes multiple reviews by Department civilian leaders of military planning, culminating with approval by the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I would maintain a steady, prioritized effort to ensure existing and future plans are reviewed by civilian leaders in a collaborative fashion, with feedback provided to the military to enhance planning.

**16. What is your understanding and assessment of the capability and capacity of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff to provide comprehensive, objective, and realistic joint analysis in support of formulating and evaluating strategy and operational plans, and the related force planning and development functions?**

- With renewed OSD oversight, the Joint Staff's effort over the past few years to apply a global integrated look to operational planning of specific challenges has increased the Department's ability for comprehensive, objective and realistic analysis of operational plans. This informs near risk assessments and associated force planning and development.
- The Joint Staff-led Joint Warfighting Concept development will further inform longer term force development. ASD/SPC has oversight responsibilities in this concept development effort.

**17. A number of geographic combatant commands' contingency and operation plans are currently under Department of Defense review.**

- Yes, the Department is currently reviewing combatant command plans.

**18. If confirmed, what factors would you consider in determining whether modifications to a contingency or operation plan are warranted due to geo-strategic changes, risk assessments, potential U.S. and adversary capability enhancements, or fiscal realities?**

- Every planning effort starts with a comprehensive Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Environment (JIPOE), followed by approval of mission, assumptions, constraints and restraints, taking into consideration available resources matched against an adversary's likely or most dangerous courses of action. Should any of these conditions change, a review of the plan is warranted.

**National Defense Strategy**

**19. What is your understanding and evaluation of the Department of Defense's**

**processes for strategic assessment, analysis, decision making, and reporting with regard to the implementation of the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS)?**

- Thanks to the congressional requirement of a National Defense Strategy and an assessment of the National Defense Strategy in years that DoD does not produce an NDS, the Department now has a feedback loop for strategic assessment, decision-making, and reporting—underpinned by analysis throughout. During development of the 2018 National Defense Strategy, the DoD successfully leveraged the expertise of the whole Department, in collaboration with external organizations, through a deliberate, multi-step approach to strategic planning. That methodology identified key issues in problem-framing, generated a wide array of potential solution space, and included rigorous comparative analysis within that space. As the Department implements the National Defense Strategy, we will continue to conduct analytically-grounded assessments that highlight risks and tradeoffs in an evolving security and fiscal environment

**20. If confirmed, what recommendations would you make, if any, to improve the Department's processes for strategic assessment, analysis, policy formulation, and decision making?**

- If confirmed, I would contribute to advancing new Joint and combined concepts, experimentation, and capabilities—informed by deliberate and transparent analysis across the enterprise.

**21. Do you consider the Department's war gaming capabilities to be adequate to develop a new Joint Warfighting Concept and implement the 2018 NDS? What, if anything, needs to be done to improve the Department's war gaming capabilities, in your view?**

- My initial sense is the Department has adequate war-gaming capabilities, resident both in Component analytic offices and in partnership with Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and educational centers. A different question is whether these capabilities are used effectively. There are opportunities to improve war-game design and structure to more clearly identify key variables for insightful sensitivity analysis, iterate within gaming to better account for human or random events, and refine the way we portray evolving adversary capabilities, doctrine, and strategic decision-making. If confirmed, I would review both the capability and effectiveness of Department wargaming.

**22. If confirmed as the ASD(SPC), specifically what would be your role in generating and shaping the content of the:**

○ **Guidance for Employment of the Force**

- The Guidance for the Employment of Force (GEF) previously provided classified, near-term strategic policy guidance. The GEF was the primary source document for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, which tasked the Combatant Commanders to develop campaign, contingency, and posture plans. Key facets of the guidance provided by the GEF are now incorporated into the Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG),<sup>7</sup> which ASD(SPC) is responsible for developing.

I understand that a key responsibility of the ASD (SPC) is assisting the USD(P) and Secretary of Defense in preparing strategic policy guidance.

○ **Defense Planning Guidance**

- The Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) translates the Department's defense strategy into specific force development, analytic, and investment direction to all DoD Components. ASD(SPC)'s role would be to implement the Secretary of Defense's vision through the DPG to prioritize force planning and resourcing of National Defense Strategy priorities, and ensure the Department's ability to prevail in competition and in conflict.

**23. If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to update, improve, or make these documents more useful to the Department and to Congress?**

- First, we must always ensure these documents provide the Department's Components with effective, resource-informed modernization, force structure, and readiness priorities for the future Joint Force. Second, as the security environment continues to evolve, the Department must use its analytic and force planning processes to improve how we examine risk trade-offs in the Joint Force over time and assess alternative future warfighting concepts with associated force design implications.

**24. Will you commit that, if confirmed, you would undertake all necessary action to ensure that each of these strategic guidance documents is timely generated and issued, and updated, as necessary to reflect changes in assumptions, policy, or other factors?**

- Yes.

**25. What is DOD's process and metrics for evaluating progress in NDS implementation? If confirmed, what would be your recommendations for improving this process and the associated metrics?**

- The Secretary remains personally focused on providing guidance, developing and refining performance measures and metrics, and evaluating progress in NDS implementation. ASD/SPC continually assesses the NDS from the standpoints of Validity, Implementation and Effectiveness and recently incorporated the Secretary's objectives, upon his confirmation. Accurate assessments are always challenging and it is good practice to question and challenge the process as well as bring in outside experts for their independent review.

**26. What revisions or adjustments would you recommend that the Secretary of Defense make to the 2018 NDS when next he submits to the Congress the assessment required by section 113(g)(1)(F) of title 10, U.S. Code? Please explain your answer.**

- The 2019 Assessment of the NDS identified key gaps in guidance and defense planning that merit correction, development, or amendment through NDS implementation and/or in the next strategy review. Specifically: 1) framing and understanding competition and implications for DoD; 2) clarifying guidance on allies and partners, to assist in prioritizing engagements and activities; 3) improved wartime simultaneity guidance; 4) refinement of operational problems to better focus DoD efforts; and 5) tailored guidance for focusing the efforts of the defense

intelligence enterprise. If confirmed, I would work to address these gaps.

**27. The NDS references “expanding the competitive space” and “dynamic force employment” as two important concepts in NDS implementation. What is your understanding of the meaning and the implications of both concepts in practical terms vis-à-vis great power competition with China and Russia?**

- More than any other nation, the United States can expand the competitive space, seizing the initiative to challenge our competitors where we possess the advantage. The approach set out in the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy expands the competitive space by applying all elements of national power, not just military, across the full spectrum of competition. The dynamic force (DFE) employment concept calls for the Department to be strategically predictable, but operationally unpredictable and capable of countering coercion and subversion and conducting deterrence more effectively. DFE is a tool that will allow us to optimize our operations with the need to rebuild readiness.

**28. In your assessment, will changes to U.S. global force posture be required to implement the “dynamic force employment” and Global Operating Model concepts animating the NDS?**

- Dynamic Force Employment can be employed using today’s posture and, along with our plans, will inform any recommended adjustments for a future force posture to more effectively compete day-to-day with Great Powers and if required, support the execution of our operational plans.

**29. In your understanding, does the “dynamic force employment” concept influence decisions about posture and overseas stationing? If so, how?**

- Dynamic Force Employment combined with an update to our operational and campaign plans could influence decisions about posture and overseas stationing. Many factors are considered, including our ability to compete and deter day-to-day, and to respond in a timely manner, should a crisis occur.

**30. In your understanding, does implementation of the “dynamic force employment” concept require a greater share of U.S. forces to be postured inside the Continental United States (CONUS)?**

- My understanding of Dynamic Force Employment is that it can be executed in our current posture, but the Department always assesses possible improvements to enhance the effective employment of our forces, balancing the reset of our readiness while enhancing operational unpredictability.

**Joint Requirements**

**31. In your opinion, how accurate are the Department’s current processes for assessing and predicting U.S. and adversary capabilities? If confirmed, what would be your recommendations for improving these processes?**

- The Office of the Secretary of Defense works closely with the Military Departments and Services, the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, and the Intelligence

Community to conduct war-games and analyses that assess both U.S. and adversary capabilities. The Secretary of Defense has also put an emphasis on establishing a red cell to enhance our processes for assessing and predicting potential adversary capabilities which can always be improved. From my experience, we benefit from the most realistic red cell that is free to challenge our processes and planning, enabling us to improve. If confirmed, I commit to accelerating the development and incorporation of this cell into our processes.

**32. The NDS emphasizes long-term strategic competition with China and Russia.**

**What are the key areas in which the Department of Defense must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force in order to prevail in great power competition and potential conflict with China? In great power competition and potential conflict with Russia?**

- To achieve the NDS aim of a more lethal, resilient, agile, and ready force, the Department needs to prioritize investments in several key areas including: nuclear force modernization; resiliency of forward forces, command and control, and logistics; assured space and cyber operations; missile defense, advanced fires, and strike options; munitions; and readiness recovery for major warfights. Over the long-term, DoD must continue to invest in advanced technology development ( e.g., autonomous systems, hypersonics, artificial intelligence) to ensure the Joint Force remains capable of defeating adversaries across all domains and the full spectrum of conflict.

**33. What are the specific capabilities the Joint Force needs to support U.S. interagency approaches to compete below the threshold of armed conflict?**

- The Department of Defense should support U.S. interagency approaches and work by, with, and through our allies and partners to secure U.S. interests and counter adversary coercion below the threshold of armed conflict. DoD must continue to develop and nurture strong relationships abroad with our allies and partners using security cooperation tools through a well-planned strategy which would include, but not limited to, combined training exercises, bi-and multi-lateral planning opportunities, and activities to exploit strengths and address weaknesses of key partners.

**34. What is your understanding of the Department of Defense's current process for establishing a prioritized list of Joint Force requirements derived from the NDS?**

- My understanding is that the Department is making the tough choices to implement the NDS, balancing near-term demands with long-term projections on how the force could be redesigned, postured, and readied for future challenges. The Secretary of Defense has instituted fora to increase collaboration between the Joint Staff, Commandant Commands and the Services to make fully informed choices between readiness regeneration and current operations consistent with the NDS.

**35. If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you make to improve the Department's processes for establishing and prioritizing Joint Force requirements?**

- The Secretary of Defense has directed the development of an updated Joint Warfighting Concept. Once developed, this concept will enable the prioritization of requirements across the Joint Force. If confirmed, I would exercise oversight to

ensure this concept is rigorous, considers a range of alternatives that are sufficiently tested, enabling the concept to remain relevant and inform Department capability investments.

### **Joint Concept Development**

**36. What is your understanding of DoD's current organizational structure, capability, and capacity for the development of joint warfighting concepts?**

- The organizational structure and capacity within the Department is sufficient to develop the joint warfighting concept. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Joint Staff, and the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation have synchronized the Department's analytic capacity toward this effort, across both top-down and bottom-up approaches, to account for the unique benefits of a range of methodologies. We continue to review options to integrate Service and Joint concepts and leverage the strengths within various organizations' analytic research capabilities.

**37. In your opinion, what are the respective roles and functions of the ASD(SPC) and the Joint Staff in the development of a Joint Warfighting Concept? How are these roles and functions integrated? Where do these roles differ and where do they overlap?**

- The Joint Staff is the Department's lead for the development of the Joint Warfighting Concept. ASD(SPC), working closely with Director, CAPE provides analytic oversight and strategic policy guidance for the effort. ASD(SPC) and CAPE integrate analytic efforts with the Joint Staff while preserving independent analysis to assess risks and interdependencies among concept alternatives, based on common assumptions.

**38. If confirmed, what specific recommendations, if any, would you make to improve the Department's organizational structure, capability, and capacity for the development of joint warfighting concepts?**

- The organizational structure, capability, and capacity for the development of the Joint Warfighting Concept are sufficient. However, the development will require the consideration of multiple scenarios in a sequential manner until arriving at a fully mature concept. If confirmed, I plan to work with Director, CAPE and the Joint Staff to conduct a series of reviews at various points in concept development to identify areas of improvement that we can apply to subsequent scenarios.

**39. If confirmed, how would you work to ensure that Military Service Warfighting Concepts are properly nested under the Joint Concept, and to ensure that the Military Departments and Services focus on generating capabilities that support the Joint Warfighting Concept?**

- Nesting Service warfighting concepts under the Joint Warfighting Concept is a foundation for its development. The challenge is that Service concepts are in various stages of maturity. Therefore, the initial focus is on challenges common to the Joint Force like logistics, command and control, etc. Since the Services are full partners in the development of the Joint Warfighting Concept, this will help ensure the generation of complementary capabilities and reduce unnecessary redundancy. If

confirmed, I will maintain oversight to ensure a unified effort.

## **Joint Force Capabilities**

**In a late 2017 report, the RAND Corporation asserted, “U.S. forces could, under plausible assumptions, lose the next war they are called upon to fight.”**

**40. Do you agree with this assessment as regards a potential conflict with China or Russia? If so, what are the most significant strategic and operational factors that lead you to support such an assessment?**

- While the first goal is to avoid conflict, I believe that the US will prevail in any potential conflict with China or Russia, but the risk is high. As the NDS states, our advantage has eroded over time, but we are necessarily addressing the challenges to increase that edge across all domains. Through day-to-day competition using "below threshold of armed conflict" means to achieve their ends (e.g., information warfare, ambiguous or denied proxy operations, and subversion), our strategic competitors seek to change the "starting conditions" from which the Joint Force would contest future aggression. Further, Russian "New Generation Warfare" and Chinese "systems destruction warfare" concepts and capabilities aim to contest Joint Force activity in all domains. We are purposefully developing both warfighting concepts and capabilities to meet these challenges.

**41. In your opinion, what forward force and posture resiliency capabilities are most critical to implementation of the NDS strategy in both the European and Indo-Pacific theaters?**

- U.S. global defense posture is the most tangible expression of our interests abroad. To allies, partners, and adversaries alike, our posture demonstrates our ability to respond rapidly to developments that affect our national security. The NDS calls for the Department to develop a lethal, agile, and resilient joint force posture and employment. In my view, the most critical investments for increasing joint force lethality and resilience in the European and Indo-Pacific theaters include: survivable and resilient communications and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems; survivable long-range strike platforms and munitions; and cost-effective missile defenses capable of engaging sophisticated air, cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic threats. In particular, DoD will have to make significant investments to maintain and extend the joint force's advantages in the undersea, air, space, and cyber domains.

**42. In your view, what deficits in these capabilities exist today and how would proceed to address and remediate those deficits, if confirmed?**

- DoD faces key deficits in agile and resilient logistics which will be addressed in the development of the Joint Warfighting Concept. There are multiple means to address this deficiency, including investments to prioritize prepositioned forward stocks and munitions, enhance mobility assets, and partner and allied support. The Joint Warfighting Concept will allow us to priority our investments to address this deficit.

**43. What is your assessment of Integrated Air and Missile Defense capabilities providing protection to our fixed bases in the European and Indo-Pacific theaters?**

- We have deployed significant integrated air and missile defense capabilities into the Indo-Pacific theater and are prepared to deploy more integrated air and missile defense assets into Europe should a crisis arise. That being said, these systems are high demand/low density assets, but when combined with our partners' and Allies' capabilities, passive defense, and attack operations, we will be able to protect our high value assets in theater.

**44. If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing “contested logistics” issues associated with projecting power in the European and Indo-Pacific theaters?**

- Same as question #42.

**Responsibility for nuclear and missile defense policy currently vests in the ASD(SPC). Responsibility for cyber and space policy is currently aligned with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security.**

**45. In your view, is this the most effective way to divide responsibility for policy in these key joint warfighting domains?**

- There are trade-offs in how responsibilities are divided within the Office of the USD(P). Changing organizational responsibilities will likely create other seams or span of control issues. ASD(SPC)'s close relationship and proximity to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security enables close coordination on these strategic capabilities.

**46. In your opinion, is there a more effective and efficient way of aligning responsibility for all strategic capabilities, including nuclear weapons, missile defense, cyber, space, and electronic warfare? Please explain your answer.**

- No. The current alignment of portfolios allows the ASD/SPC office to integrate strategy, plans, deterrence, and burden sharing effectively.

**Global Force Posture**

**47. The NDS emphasizes “forward force maneuver and posture resilience.” Please explain your understanding of this key capability.**

- The NDS recognizes the need to make investments that will solidify our competitive advantage and modernize how we operate. To that end, the Department seeks to make investments that prioritize U.S. forces that can deploy, survive, operate, and maneuver while under attack. The Department will also focus on transitioning from large, unhardened infrastructure to smaller, dispersed, resilient basing that incorporates active and passive defenses.

**48. What is your assessment of the progress the Department has made in this area since the 2018 NDS was promulgated? If confirmed, what would be your priorities for enhancement in this area?**

- It is my understanding that the Department is making progress in these areas which requires significant coordination with the State Department. If confirmed, I would work with the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands and the State Department to accelerate identifying and addressing requirements.

**The Commander, U.S. European Command told this committee in February 2020 that the European Defense Initiative (EDI) “corrected many of our posture problems in Europe.”**

**49. Do you agree with this assessment? Please explain your answer.**

- Yes, EDI funding has enabled DoD to increase U.S. force presence in Europe, improve critical capabilities, establish pre-positioned equipment sets, and execute readiness-building exercises, all of which have contributed greatly to USEUCOM’s warfighting capabilities and to correcting posture problems in Europe. I believe that EDI funding continues to provide important capabilities and capacity to USEUCOM that are essential for maintaining a combat-credible force in Europe to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression.

**50. Do you believe that the U.S. must now focus similarly on posture in the Indo-Pacific? If confirmed, on what priorities would you focus first in addressing posture problems in the Indo-Pacific?**

- Yes, I believe that the United States must now focus on improving our posture in the Indo-Pacific. Adapting our current posture concentration in Northeast Asia to a broader, more distributed posture is an important element of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command’s strategic objective of denying adversaries sustained air and sea dominance in the region. This is also critical to improve our resilience and ability to maintain varied contingency response options.

**51. In your view, what recent shifts in the strategic and operational environment do you believe have the most significant consequences with regard to how U.S. forces are postured around the world, particularly in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East?**

- The National Defense Strategy argues that for decades the United States has enjoyed uncontested or dominant superiority in every operating domain. Today, every domain is contested—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace. We face an ever more lethal and disruptive battlefield, combined across domains, and operations conducted at increasing speed and reach— from close combat, throughout overseas theaters, and reaching to the U.S. homeland. Some competitors and adversaries seek to optimize their targeting of our battle networks and operational concepts, while also using other areas of competition short of open warfare to achieve their ends (e.g., information warfare, ambiguous or denied proxy operations, and subversion). These trends, if unaddressed, will erode our competitive military advantage and challenge our ability to deter aggression.

**52. What is your understanding and assessment of the relative costs and benefits of permanent forces, as compared to rotational forces forward stationed overseas, particularly in Europe and the Indo-Pacific? How do these relative costs and benefits differ among the Military Services?**

- Forward-stationed forces play an important role in assuring allies and partners and deterring potential adversaries, especially in the Indo-Pacific and European theaters that the NDS identifies as priorities for the Department. The proper balance among forward-stationed, rotationally deployed, and surge forces will vary from region to region, and from Service to Service, and is constantly changing based on a dynamic security environment. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department pursues a methodical and analytic approach to determining the appropriate overseas force structure.

**53. What is your understanding and assessment of the methodology and assumptions DoD employs to evaluate the relative cost of overseas posture compared to stationing forces in the United States? What, if any, changes would you recommend?**

- I understand that the Department employs a continuous review process to determine the appropriate balance between U.S.-based and overseas-stationed forces. We look at a number of cost factors to evaluate the most efficient and effective stationing of U.S. forces, from host nation cost-sharing to rotational costs to base infrastructure costs to military construction costs. We combine this analysis with an accounting of the conditions in each region, the operational demands on U.S. forces, and the benefits of burden sharing with allies and partners who host U.S. forces. If confirmed, I would consider whether any changes are needed to the review process to ensure the most effective balance between U.S.-based and overseas force posture.

**54. How important is Africa to the implementation of the NDS, particularly given the intersection of Russian and Chinese influence, as well as continued threats from al-Qaeda and ISIS?**

- As part of the Secretary's efforts to implement the NDS, the Department has initiated a full review of the Combatant Commands to calibrate strategic priorities, harvest opportunities to reduce costs, and realign forces in support of the NDS. Thus far, we have ongoing reviews of U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Southern Command. This effort will enable the Department to shift greater emphasis to our highest priority region, the Indo-Pacific, while allowing us to build military readiness and focus on great power competition. The Department will also continue to target violent extremist organizations that pose a threat to the Homeland. The Secretary's recent decision to deploy elements of a U.S. Army Security Force Assistance Brigade to Africa to replace units from a brigade combat team is an example of how this process is enabling us to better match resources to the mission of each combatant command.

**55. What is your understanding and assessment of the methodology and assumptions DoD employs in striving to counter Iran's asymmetric threat in U.S. Central Command?**

- In the Middle East, the Department remains committed to working alongside our allies and partners to deter Iranian malign activities and to be prepared for

contingencies should deterrence fail. It is my understanding that the Department has carefully assessed the Iranian asymmetric threat, and has taken actions over the past year, including the deployment of additional forces to the region to improve our defensive capabilities, enhance our partnerships, and dissuade destabilizing Iranian activities.

## **Nuclear Posture Review, Nuclear Policy, and Arms Control**

### **56. Do you support the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and its recommendations?**

**Please explain your answer.**

- Yes. Nuclear weapons have played and will continue to play a critical role in deterring nuclear attack and in preventing large-scale conventional warfare between nuclear-armed States for the foreseeable future. I support the 2018 NPR's recommendations regarding the need for a flexible, adaptable, and resilient set of nuclear capabilities in order to tailor the U.S. approach to deterring diverse potential adversaries in different circumstances. The 2018 NPR confirms the findings of previous NPRs that the nuclear triad-supported by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) dual-capable aircraft and a robust nuclear command, control, and communications system-is the most cost-effective and strategically sound means of ensuring nuclear deterrence.

**The NPR describes what might be called a “deterrence gap.” Russian leaders appear to believe that threatening, or even the actual limited use of nuclear weapons, would serve to de-escalate a regional conflict on terms favorable to them. The NPR also describes comprehensive modernization of the Russian nuclear arsenal, including both strategic weapons accountable under the New START Treaty and tactical weapons outside any treaty.**

### **57. Do you agree with this assessment of Russian nuclear doctrine and forces?**

- Yes, I agree with this assessment of Russian nuclear doctrine and forces. The magnitude of the imbalance in non-strategic nuclear weapons, when combined with Russian nuclear modernization, doctrine, and practice, is concerning. Russian investment in these weapons and its behavior during exercises provide indicators that Russia believes it can leverage these weapons to coerce the United States and our allies and partners.
- The supplemental capabilities called for in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review address Russia's doctrine of using nuclear weapons to de-escalate a conflict on terms favorable to it. The supplemental capabilities demonstrate the United States' commitment to extended deterrence and send a message that we are prepared and have a range of means to respond to the threat or use of nuclear weapons.
- Regarding Russia's comprehensive modernization of its nuclear arsenal, Russia is modernizing "legacy" Soviet nuclear systems and developing and deploying new nuclear warheads and launchers. These efforts include multiple upgrades for every leg of the Russian nuclear triad of strategic bombers, sea-based missiles, and land-based missiles. Russia is also developing at least two new intercontinental-range systems--a hypersonic glide vehicle and a nuclear-powered, undersea autonomous torpedo.

- Russia is also building a large, diverse, and modern set of non-strategic systems that are dual-capable (may be armed with nuclear or conventional weapons). These theater- and tactical-range systems are not accountable under the New START Treaty, and Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons modernization is increasing the total number of such weapons in its arsenal, while significantly improving its delivery capabilities.

**58. How do you believe China and Russia will respond to the changes recommended by the NPR?**

- I believe China and Russia are pursuing nuclear strategies and developing nuclear forces based on determinations of their own national security requirements, made long before the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) was issued. As the 2018 NPR notes, Russia already has been pursuing a comprehensive modernization of its nuclear arsenal, and I would expect Russia to continue modernization of its strategic and non-strategic systems that began before the 2018 NPR release. China continues to modernize and add new military capabilities to its nuclear forces by enhancing silo-based intercontinental ballistic missiles and adding more survivable mobile delivery systems.
- The 2018 NPR makes only modest adjustments to the previous Administration's nuclear policy and posture, and these were made to strengthen deterrence, not to threaten China or Russia.

**59. If confirmed, what responsibilities and interaction do you expect to have relative to the Nuclear Weapons Council?**

- The Nuclear Weapons Council is the primary interface for coordinating nuclear weapons enterprise issues between the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy. Its top priority is to sustain and modernize the nuclear weapons stockpile and nuclear weapons infrastructure, which has suffered the effects of aging and years of underfunding.
- If confirmed, I would support the USD(P) in his role as a principal member of the Nuclear Weapons Council, and would work closely with the staffs and the other Nuclear Weapons Council principals to implement stockpile-related 2018 Nuclear Posture Review recommendations and other elements of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

**60. What is your understanding of the role of the Nuclear Weapons Council regarding the budget of the National Nuclear Security Administration, both before and after the release of the President's budget?**

- Statute requires that the Nuclear Weapons Council (NWC) certify that National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) annual funding request is sufficient to meet NWC stockpile requirements for the upcoming fiscal year and the following four fiscal years. Sufficient funding for NNSA is needed to ensure the stockpile meets DoD requirements. If confirmed, I would work closely with the staffs and principals of the NWC to ensure I am able to advise USD(P) properly on the sufficiency of NNSA's budget.

**61. If confirmed, what roles and responsibilities would you expect to have relative to**

**policy development concerning future nuclear force structure and planning?**

- If confirmed, my responsibilities would include developing and coordinating DoD policy and guidance on U.S. nuclear deterrence, nuclear employment strategy, nuclear force structure, force structure requirements, posture, and plans; the effective control of nuclear forces and operation of the force in peacetime, crisis, and war; arms control negotiations, implementation, and verification related to nuclear weapon systems; and non-nuclear strategic strike capabilities, including force structure requirements, posture, and deployment plans.

**62. Depending on the treaty at issue, responsibility for arms control policy is distributed across multiple components of the Office of the USD(P).**

- Yes, but there is close coordination within OSD-Policy.

**63. In your opinion, should each of these arms control treaties be addressed as separate policy issues, especially in the context of possible violations by other states party to one or more treaties?**

- A treaty's value, in terms of its contribution to national security, should be judged in the first instance on its own merits. However, the treaty partner's behavior and compliance with other treaties are factors in determining that value.

**64. How does DOD unify arms control efforts with individual state actors given the distribution of policy responsibilities across the USD(P)?**

- DOD unifies its arms control efforts with individual state actors as part of a comprehensive interagency process led by State Department that funnels U.S. engagement with these actors through relevant diplomatic channels. If confirmed, my responsibilities would include oversight for DOD arms control policy matters related to nuclear weapons systems including coordinating positions with other DOD elements.

**65. If confirmed, what role do you expect to play in the Administration's decision on whether or not to extend the New START Treaty?**

- If confirmed, my responsibilities would include arms control negotiations, implementation, and verification related to nuclear weapon systems. This would include responsibility for advising the Secretary on a Department of Defense position on whether to extend the New START Treaty, and responsibility for representing the Office of the Secretary of Defense position in interagency discussions related to the Treaty.

**Missile Defense**

**66. Do you support the Missile Defense Review (MDR) and its recommendations?**

- I do. The MDR derives from and aligns directly with the Administration's 2017 National Security Strategy and the Department's 2018 National Defense Strategy. The MDR guides our missile defense initiatives and programs which protects the Homeland and provides regional stability and helps us meet our commitments to allies and partners. If confirmed, I would advocate for the capabilities necessary to implement the policies it addresses.

**67. If confirmed, what role do you expect to play in implementing the policies, strategies, and priorities set forth in the MDR?**

- If confirmed, I would be the lead Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy for missile defense, so I would have a direct role in implementing policies, strategies, and priorities as they pertain to both homeland defense and regional defense.

**68. In addition to U.S. missile defense capabilities in the European Command, Central Command, and Indo-Pacific Command areas of responsibility, what role do you see for other nations in contributing to regional missile defense capabilities? Should the role of allied partners be expanded, in your view? If so, how?**

- The Administration has provided clear direction to place a sharper focus on opportunities for increased missile defense contributions on the part of allies and partners to share more widely the responsibility for our common defense against missile attacks. If confirmed, I would encourage our allies and partners to acquire missile defense capabilities that can be integrated with U.S. and other allied and partner systems.

**69. Many of our primary competitors are increasing their ballistic and cruise missile capabilities. How should the U.S. adjust its investments in missile defense to keep pace with these potential threats?**

- The United States should continue to invest in modernization of our current air and missile defense systems and discriminating sensors, as well as advanced technologies such as directed energy and space-based tracking sensors to keep up with these threats.

**70. Do you believe homeland missile defense policy should be limited to countering only rogue nations, such as North Korea and Iran?**

- Our missile defense policy is to stay ahead of the rogue State ballistic missile threat to the nation. We rely primarily on nuclear deterrence to address the larger and more sophisticated Russian and Chinese intercontinental missile capabilities. However, we will defend against any missile projected to impact the homeland. Regional missile defenses are not limited to rogue State threats, though, and I believe we should employ our regional missile defense systems against any adversary.

**71. Do you believe we can afford to wait until 2030 to recapitalize the Ground-Based Interceptors at Fort Greely, Alaska?**

- First, I would like to make the point that the United States is currently protected against rogue state intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) threats. We are continuing to improve the reliability of the existing ground-based missile defense (GMD) system through a Service Life Extension Program (SLEP).
- We are also investing in a new ground-based discriminating radar in Alaska that will be operational in 2021, and are currently developing a new space-based sensor to track sophisticated missile threats such as hypersonic glide vehicles.
- To mitigate the interim effects regarding the deployment of 20 additional interceptors, we are exploring other options for layered homeland defense capabilities that would complement the existing GMD system. We are evaluating

the efficacy of a SM-3 Block IIA interceptor against an ICBM threat, and looking into the feasibility of developing a new Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) interceptor that could also play this role.

**72. What is your view on deployment of a layered homeland defense capability in the interim?**

- Should testing prove feasible, I would support deployment of a layered homeland defense capability as a supplement to the existing GMD system. This would provide additional options to engage missile threats in the late mid-course or as a backstop against those that were not engaged by the first (GBI) layer of defense. One or more of these layered capability options could likely be deployed mid-decade, prior to the deployment of the Next Generation Interceptor.

**73. Do you support the “fly before buy” approach to ensuring that operationally realistic flight testing is conducted before missile defense programs are procured and deployed?**

- Yes. Realistic testing before acquisition is essential to fielding systems the United States can count on in the future.

### **Stability Operations**

**74. In your view, what are the key lessons learned from the stability operations conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan?**

- The most critical lesson from stability operations in Afghanistan and Iraq is that stabilization is an inherently political endeavor that requires aligning U.S. Government efforts – diplomatic engagement, foreign assistance, and defense to create conditions in which locally legitimate authorities and security forces can peacefully manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence. Civilian-military integration and unity of effort are essential to successful stabilization efforts. Additionally, DoD must maintain the capability and scalable capacity to meet its core responsibility during stabilization activities, which is to support and reinforce civilian-led U.S. Government stabilization efforts, but also to lead U.S. Government stabilization efforts in extreme situations and less permissive environments until it is feasible to transition lead responsibility to other U.S. Government departments and agencies.
- To implement these lessons, last year the Administration proposed and Congress passed, a new authority (Section 1210A of the NDAA for FY 2020) for DoD to provide, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and in consultation with the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), support for the stabilization activities of other Federal agencies. We believe this new authority will play a major role in ensuring that the USG has a whole-of-government response to stabilization challenges.

**75. What do you believe is the proper role for DOD in the planning and conduct of stability operations in future contingencies?**

- As outlined within DoD Directive 3000.05—Stabilization, “DoD will plan and conduct stabilization in support of our mission partners across the range of military operations in order to counter subversion; prevent and mitigate conflict; and

consolidate military gains to achieve strategic success.” DoD, in its supporting role, is synched with interagency to foster a unified action to address stabilization and conflict prevention as tools of irregular warfare. The interagency will use these authorities to address risks of instability in fragile states to control the tempo of our adversaries below armed conflict, promote host nations' self-reliance, prevent VEO recruitment, counter transnational threats, and provide the USG a competitive advantage through thoughtful investments in geostrategic locations.

**76. How has the Department of Defense’s role in Afghanistan changed since the U.S. signed an agreement with the Taliban on February 29, 2020? How do you envision DOD’s role changing over the next 18 months?**

- The Department’s role in Afghanistan has not changed since the U.S. signed an agreement with the Taliban on February 29, 2020. The Department participates in two complementary missions – the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission to train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces to take responsibility for the security of their own country, and our counterterrorism mission with our Afghan Security Partners.
- The Department’s role in Afghanistan may evolve over the next 18 months if the Taliban uphold their commitments in the U.S.-Taliban agreement, which would lead to a conditions-based withdrawal of U.S. and foreign forces.

**77. What do you see as the Department of Defense’s role in Iraq moving forward, and how is this relevant to implementing the NDS?**

- The NDS calls for the Department to consolidate our gains in Iraq, disrupt violent extremist organizations, and rebalance our resources from the Middle East to NDS priorities. To implement this guidance, the Department is committed to supporting a strong and independent Iraq, working alongside our 82-member Defeat-ISIS coalition to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, and deterring Iranian aggression. We welcome NATO’s expanded role in training the Iraqi Security Forces, and are committed to increasing the capabilities of our Iraqi partners. A strong Iraq free from the threat of ISIS will be a pillar of regional stability, and will enable the Department to focus on NDS priorities in other parts of the world.

**Defense Security Cooperation**

**78. What is the appropriate role of the Department of Defense in the conduct of security sector assistance?**

- DoD helps achieve U.S. political-military objectives in priority theaters by implementing Title 22 programs and leading Title 10 efforts to conduct security cooperation initiatives that enable the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) to set the theater, deter conflict, or prevail in conflict alongside our partners and allies, if necessary.

**79. In your opinion, what is the appropriate Department of Defense relationship with the Department of State in the conduct of security sector assistance?**

- DoD activities always align with broader U.S. foreign policy. This alignment requires thorough coordination and collaboration with the State Department through the interagency process and robust engagement between the two departments at all

levels.

**80. In your opinion, what is the appropriate relationship between the USD(P) and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency as it relates to policy oversight, resource allocation, and execution of DoD security cooperation programs and activities?**

- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P)) works collaboratively with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) to provide the USD(P) with policy recommendations on security cooperation issues to ensure the maximum return on investment of DoD resources. OUSD(P) provides strategic policy guidance to the security cooperation enterprise, leads the prioritization and alignment of DoD Title 10 security cooperation resources with the National Defense Strategy (NDS), and oversees execution of DoD security cooperation programs. DSCA leads the programmatic planning and execution of security cooperation programs in coordination with Geographic Combatant Commands.

**81. What should be the strategic objectives of DoD's efforts to build the capabilities of a partner nation's security forces?**

- In line with NDS priorities, DoD's security cooperation objectives are focused on enabling allies and partners to address shared security challenges, enhancing the interoperability of allies and partners with the U.S. joint force, and ensuring DoD access in key areas in order to respond to contingencies.

**82. In your view, is DoD appropriately organized and resourced to effectively conduct such activities? If not, what changes would you recommend to the organizational structure and resourcing of this function?**

- DoD is moving in the right direction to align security cooperation resources with the NDS and maximize return on investment. However, there is more work to be done. Consistent with congressional reforms to the security cooperation enterprise prescribed by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, DoD is striving to ensure that our efforts are targeted, coherent, feasible, and supported by robust assessment, monitoring, and evaluation.
- For FY 2021, DoD produced the first globally prioritized list of security cooperation initiatives to support USD(P) resource allocation decisions and align planned initiatives with NDS priorities. The Department continues to build a rigorous assessment, monitoring, and evaluation system to incorporate lessons learned from past efforts into future security cooperation planning. Finally, ongoing efforts to institutionalize training and professionalize the security cooperation workforce will continue to improve outcomes across the enterprise. Through these efforts and others, we are driving the strategic application of DoD's security cooperation resources.

**Sexual Harassment**

**Relations survey administered in 2016, 14.2 percent of female and 5.1 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.**

**83. If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or otherwise become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the Office of the ASD(SPC)?**

- Any form of sexual harassment or discrimination is unacceptable. Throughout my career, I have addressed sexual harassment resolutely and in a timely manner, and if confirmed, I would continue to ensure the workplace maintains a climate where sexual harassment is not tolerated and employees feel safe from it and safe to come forward with a complaint, should an incident occur.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.**

**84. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress?**

- Yes

**85. Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner?**

- I respect Congress’s authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

**86. Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?**

- I respect Congress’s authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

**87. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports,**

**records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?**

- Yes

**88. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?**

- I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

**89. Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee?**

- I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

**90. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?**

- Yes, I agree to protect DoD personnel from unlawful retaliation.