

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

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ON READINESS

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Introduction

Chairman Forbes, Ranking Member Bordallo, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today to discuss the readiness of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region, the implications of China's rise, and the challenges North Korea poses to security. These are all issues of significance to U.S. defense and foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific. I am happy to be here this afternoon to speak with you and the Committee about the work that the Obama Administration and we, at the Department of Defense, are doing in the region. To be clear the Department of Defense, and the men and women in uniform wherever they may be stationed, at home or abroad, are ready to meet any challenges that they may face in the near, medium, or long-term. However, for purposes of this hearing I will focus on our state of readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

Before I begin my testimony, I would like to reiterate that our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Japan. I was in Japan last week when the earthquake struck and though I was not near the affected area, the magnitude of the earthquake in both real and psychological terms was palpable. We are still learning the total extent of this earthquake and tsunami.

But right now, the men and women of Japan, its government, and its armed services are working around the clock to rescue survivors and those trapped by the earthquake. The U.S. government is offering, as President Obama directed, whatever assistance is needed by our Japanese friends. We have already offered support from USAID, the State Department, and from our navy, ground, and air personnel in Japan and around the Pacific. In addition to humanitarian assistance like drinking water, blankets, and emergency food, we are providing helicopter search and rescue operations, support from U.S. Navy ships including the Ronald Reagan Carrier strike group which is providing services such as water purification, medical teams and hospital beds, to expedite relief at this critical time. Our forward presence in Japan and throughout the Asia-Pacific has allowed us to respond to Japan's urgent needs very quickly, and will continue to facilitate rapid engagement where needed until the crisis is passed.

We will work to provide all the support we can, while ensuring the highest-possible levels of safety for our service-men and women, especially in areas in or around the nuclear electricity facilities damaged by the earthquake.

Overview

By many measures the Asia-Pacific region is the most important and most dynamic region in the world today. It holds over half the world's population, more than 1 trillion dollars in annual U.S. trade is conducted with countries in Asia, 15 of the world's largest ports, and 5 of the world's largest armies, which includes the militaries of China, India, South Korea, North Korea, Russia, Japan, and the United States all reside in Asia. Also, as misfortune would have it, over 60% of the world's natural disasters occur in the Asia-Pacific region, as the most recent earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan remind us.

Looking to the future, if the Asia-Pacific is to maintain its extraordinary growth, it will have to find ways to manage traditional and non-traditional security challenges, as well as find ways to enhance and maintain peace, stability, and prosperity.

As remarkable as the region's stability and prosperity has been over the years, history teaches us that periods of regional transition – notably highlighted by the rise of China – without careful management - can precipitate discord or even conflict. Therefore, our principal objective must be to ensure that the region's hard earned peace and prosperity are maintained and that great power rivalries and “zero-sum” competitions do not arise.

In order to fully achieve this objective it will require broader actions and engagements from the United States with regional allies and partners, as well as a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive bilateral relationship with China (to include military-to-military relations).

The security environment within Asia is complex and dynamic. Increased provocations by North Korea against South Korea, and the growing threat North Korea poses to the United States, Japan, and others in the region have heightened security concerns in Northeast Asia. China's growing military capabilities, its assertive behavior, and insufficient transparency into its long-term intentions are also causing concern within the region. Additionally, the growing need to tackle non-traditional threats such as those posed by climate change, piracy, and natural disasters are increasing demands on our forces in the region. It is clear to the Department of Defense that the imperative for the United States to remain forward deployed and actively engaged in the Asia Pacific has not waned.

U.S. Force Posture in the Asia-Pacific

The United States will continue to be globally postured to secure our homeland and citizens from direct attack and to advance our interests around the world. There should be no mistaking the importance of U.S. military power as one of the essential elements of our strategy for protecting our national interests in the Asia-Pacific. The Department of Defense evaluates our global posture on an ongoing basis to better position our forces to maintain deterrence, contingency response, and to actively shape, the security environment in ways that strengthen stability, peace, and prosperity for all. This subject will be addressed in greater detail in an upcoming global posture review. However, the important point to note is that the U.S. defense posture in Asia is shifting to one that is more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable. For example:

- More geographically distributed in the Asia-Pacific means that we must enhance U.S. presence throughout the region by capitalizing on opportunities in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean to help better protect sea lines of communication.
- Operationally resilient means that we must work to ensure the U.S. advantage across a range of contingencies through greater hardening, redundancy, responsiveness, and dispersal of capabilities—as well as by having more flexible defense agreements and more predictable and sustainable basing arrangements that enable greater protection of military capabilities.
- Political sustainability means ensuring that our presence is acceptable to host nations and local populations in the region over the long-term.

U.S.-Japan Alliance

The U.S.-Japan alliance remains the lynchpin of U.S. posture in the Asia-Pacific and absolutely crucial to peace, stability, and prosperity in the region. The U.S.-Japan alliance celebrated its 50th anniversary last year and remains as important to regional security today as it was when it began—it is indeed the cornerstone of our future success and progress in the region. The fundamental underpinning of the Alliance remains solid. In short, by hosting our forces and providing significant Host Nation Support, Japan directly enables military readiness, which in turn enhances U.S. influence and capabilities in the region. As it pertains directly to this hearing, however, I would like to focus on our efforts to implement the Realignment Roadmap as the path

we are taking with our Japanese partners to adapt the alliance to the evolving regional and global security environment. For this, the value of the work that has been done with our Japanese allies must be appropriately underscored.

Alliance Transformation and Realignment Implementation

The Departments of Defense and State have established an effective process with the government of Japan to implement the realigning of our military presence in Japan. Through this process, we have achieved important milestones of alliance transformation. I would like to offer a few examples of these achievements:

- We have deployed alliance missile defense capabilities including sensors, interceptors and other active defenses, and command and control capabilities that offered significant protections for the people of both our nations.
- We have built, tested and exercised the new Bilateral Joint Operations Command Center at Yokota Air base.
- The Government of Japan completed a nearly \$2.5 billion runway project at MCAS Iwakuni.
- The Government of Japan has met all of its agreed financial commitments to facilitate the expansion of defense capabilities on Guam.
- Expansion of the bilateral air combat training continues to improve the readiness of Alliance air defense.

In other areas, our progress has proven more difficult.

For example, the focus on the implementation of the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma has, for certain, been intense. However, our two governments are working closely together to identify ways to maintain a U.S. force posture in Japan ready to respond to the full range of operational requirements. It is important to note that both Prime Minister Kan and Defense Minister Kitazawa have publically affirmed the importance of the Alliance and of U.S. Marine Corps force forward-deployed to Okinawa.

This view is shared by the senior leadership at the Defense Department. There is no substitute for maintaining a highly capable forward deployed ground presence – III Marine Expeditionary Forces – west of the international dateline. It provides us with the capacity to

respond quickly to multiple regional challenges—both traditional and non-traditional challenges. In the Asia-Pacific, U.S. ground forces are the Marines. This means the only deployable U.S. ground forces between Hawaii and India are the U.S. Marines on Okinawa. Those are the ground forces assigned to defend Japan and to maintain security in the Asia-Pacific. It is impossible to deter, defend, and defeat without the ability to deploy ground forces rapidly in times of crisis. Without expeditionary ground forces, the deterrent power of our Alliance would be greatly weakened. Events in the region have conspired to remind all of us of the importance and the continued necessity of Marine forces in Okinawa. Actions by North Korea nearly a year ago in late-March—the sinking of the CHEONAN—highlighted for many Japanese the vital deterrent role played by U.S. forces in Okinawa and across Japan.

Partly as a result of these events, the way ahead to a Futenma Replacement Facility, while still unresolved, is so important for the alliance and the region. The Joint Statement issued on May 28, 2010 by Secretaries Gates and Clinton and their Japanese counterparts designates the location of the new facility in the Camp Schwab area. We also anticipate a configuration decision by the upcoming 2+2 meeting, and we are working with the Government of Japan to develop the timetable for construction to begin.

Of course, the Futenma Replacement Facility at Camp Schwab is but a single component of a larger plan to consolidate the U.S. military presence on Okinawa and to move our forces away from the densely populated southern portion of the island. The full Okinawa realignment package will allow us to reposition more than 8,000 Marines from Japan to Guam and return nearly 70 percent of the land south of Kadena Air Base. This will ensure a much more sustainable and enduring presence for U.S. forces on Okinawa that also preserves the alliance's operational needs and capabilities. Most importantly to the Okinawans, it directly addresses their noise, safety, and environmental concerns.

Strategic Value of Guam

The realignment of more than 8,000 Marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam is a critical element of the Roadmap. It will further several related strategic goals:

- First, the realignment will ensure the continued long-term presence of U.S. forces in Japan and in the Western Pacific, sending a positive message to our friends and allies in the region.
- Second, it will strengthen our alliance with Japan, which serves as the foundation of our presence in the Asia-Pacific. By reducing our footprint on Okinawa, while keeping forces in Guam ready to respond to regional contingencies, we create conditions for a more stable presence, thus helping to further strengthen the Alliance.
- And third, by making better use of Guam's strategic location and advantages, we will array U.S. forces in Asia more effectively for the evolving security environment.

Guam is an essential component of U.S. strategy in Asia and of U.S. national security more broadly. Guam's advantages as a stable, secure, and robust operating base on American soil make it a unique and critically valuable location. The island provides flexibility and freedom of action necessary to support peacetime engagement, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and capacity-building of partners in Asia more broadly.

Issues on the Korean Peninsula

The U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Alliance is another key pillar of U.S. strategy and long-term readiness for a region undergoing tremendous political, economic, and security-related change. This comprehensive relationship, spanning the defense, diplomatic, and economic spheres, continues to serve as a source of stability in the face of unpredictable and provocative North Korean behavior.

Last year we commemorated the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. At its most basic level, the mission of our Alliance today remains the same as it did 60 years ago: to deter aggression against the ROK, and to fight and win should deterrence fail. In the last 12 months, North Korea has attacked and sunk a ROK naval vessel, killing 46 sailors, publicly revealed a uranium enrichment program in contravention of multiple UN Security Council Resolutions, and launched an artillery attack that killed both ROK Marines and civilians. These provocations are a somber reminder of the active threat that North Korea poses to regional stability and of our need to remain forward deployed, highly capable, and ready to deal with growing threats emanating from North Korea.

In such a high-threat environment, the U.S.-ROK Alliance's mission to deter and defend takes on a very real significance and remains our primary focus. While this "deter and defend" mission remains the top priority of the Alliance, the U.S. investment in Korea's security has helped create an alliance whose value extends far beyond the security of the Korean Peninsula to also help to promote a peaceful and prosperous Asia.

To achieve this, the United States must maintain a forward military posture on the Peninsula. It is our forward presence, more than 28,500 strong, that most effectively communicates our resolve to defend our allies and preserve our vital interests in Asia. Successful deterrence relies on credibility as much as, if not more than, capability. In making sure that capability is enhanced and maintained we engage in regularly scheduled annual exercises with our ROK allies. Exercises like Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, enhance the ROK-U.S. alliance's ability to defend the ROK and protect the region. These exercises demonstrate U.S. commitment to the ROK-U.S. alliance and enhance the combat readiness of ROK and U.S. supporting forces through combined and joint training.

The security dividend resulting from our longstanding military presence in the region is generally well known, but the ongoing efforts to transform the alliance for the future deserve some attention as well. Strategic Alliance 2015 (SA2015) is an umbrella concept that encompasses and harmonizes many different alliance transformation efforts. The foundation of SA2015 is a plan to transition wartime operational control (OPCON) of forces to the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff. Some of the related initiatives that support OPCON transition, which is now scheduled to take place by December 2015, will result in military plans and exercises that are updated to better account for the most probable threats we could face today and in the near future.

China's Rise and Regional and International Role

As important as it is to maintain our presence and adjust our future posture in Asia to maintain long-term readiness, our relationship with China will also play an important role in promoting Asia-Pacific peace and prosperity. As the second largest economy in the world, China is translating wealth into improved capabilities and capacity in a number of other areas,

including its military. The future of the Asia-Pacific region would benefit significantly from further positive contributions from China. From climate change to non-proliferation, there are many issues that our positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship with China is addressing. Likewise, it is easy to imagine the global challenges problems that could worsen if China does not contribute to their ultimate resolution.

As President Obama and Secretary Gates have said, the U.S. welcomes a strong, prosperous and successful China that plays a greater role in world affairs. And we welcome and strongly encourage China's active and positive contributions to the stability, resilience, and growth of the international system. We see some positive examples of cooperation and partnership from China on certain regional and global challenges, and we will look to China to grow its contributions.

Uncertainty over China's Rise and Strategic Intentions

Over the past several years, China's growing capabilities, uncertain regional and global ambitions, and assertive behavior in recent years (particularly in the South China Sea and maritime domains) have been a source of anxiety in the Asia-Pacific and, over the long-term, could pose serious security challenges to U.S. national interests. This is a topic that we discuss quite openly and frankly with Chinese policymakers at all levels of government. Given the two decades of neglect of its military following initiation of its reform period in 1979, it is quite natural for China to modernize its military beginning in the mid-1990s. However, the lack of transparency, both in terms of capabilities and intentions, about the nature of its modernization program has caused concern in the United States and the region.

China's Military Modernization

At the Department of Defense, we have a special responsibility to monitor China's military and maintain deterrence. Consistent with this responsibility is the Department's annual report to Congress on Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China.

What is clear from several years of publishing this report is that the pace and scope of China's military transformation has increased in recent years, fueled by acquisition of advanced

foreign weapons, continued high rates of investment in its domestic defense and science and technology industries and far-reaching organizational and doctrinal reforms of the armed forces.

PLA modernization trends suggest Beijing is interested in generating capabilities to employ military force to support a broad array of mission sets. Preparing for a Taiwan contingency appears to be the primary driver, but as we have seen in recent years, China's forces are also focused on operations other than Taiwan.

China's comprehensive military modernization is supported by continued increases in funding. On March 4, 2011, China announced a 12.7% increase in its defense budget, an increase to 601.1 billion RMB (\$91.5 billion). This continues more than two decades of sustained annual increases in China's official military budget. We continue to believe, however, that even this figure under represents actual military expenditure in China.

China sustained defense investments have paid off. Of note, China has the most active land-based ballistic and cruise missile program in the world. In addition to some 1,000-1,200 conventional SRBMs opposite Taiwan, China is quickly developing a variety of long range land attack and anti-ship cruise missiles, and conventional medium range surface-to-surface and anti-ship ballistic missiles. China continues to invest heavily in a robust undersea warfare program with a mixture of second generation nuclear and conventionally powered submarines. Likewise, China is building the capability to project air power through development of an aircraft carrier, and long range land based air superiority and multirole aircraft, including its first stealth fighter (J-20). China is also continuing to invest in an array of strategic capabilities, including modernized nuclear forces, space and counter-space systems, and cyber warfare capabilities. Taken as a whole, we see the potential for China's armed forces to contribute to the delivery of public goods, but we also see these capabilities enabling China to engage in regional aggression or coercion, and to restrict freedom of access and freedom of maneuver in peace time or greater ability to engage in regional conflict scenarios using what we would term anti-access or area denial capability.

It is imperative that the United States maintain its ability to project power around the region and across the globe. In this respect, long-term readiness means that the Department of Defense must be prepared to respond to this challenge by procuring new capabilities, modernizing our existing inventories, and developing new ways to counter these emerging threats.

U.S.-China Military-to-Military Relations

Long-term readiness also means that the United States must continue to work with our allies and partners and China to positively shape China's rise both within the Asia-Pacific region and globally. U.S. strategy must be flexible enough to anticipate and respond to multiple possible outcomes, and it must be able to capitalize on the cooperative potential of the U.S.-China relationship while also managing the risk inherent in China's rise.

As China's military capabilities continue to improve, both the U.S. and China benefit from having a healthy, stable, and reliable military-to-military relationship. During the recent visit by President Hu Jintao, both sides agreed on the need for enhanced and substantive dialogue and communication at all levels: to reduce misunderstanding, misperception, and miscalculation. Indeed, it is precisely because we see the serious security concerns dividing our two countries that we need to temper them by building cooperative capacity, fostering greater institutional understanding, and work to build common views on the international security environment and related security challenges.

We are seeing positive momentum in the wake of Secretary Gates' trip to Asia and President Hu's visit to Washington in January. We are working with the PLA to arrange spring meetings of the Defense Policy Coordinative Talks (at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level), Military Maritime Consultative Agreement Working Group meetings, and a meeting to discuss developing a frame to guide the military-to-military relationship. Admiral Mullen is preparing to host his counterpart PLA General Chen Bingde in the late spring as well. We are also working with our colleagues at the Department of State to open a dialogue with China to discuss strategic security issues. .

The U.S. remains committed to building a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive U.S.-China relationship for the 21st century, which serves the interest of the American and Chinese peoples and the global community. We are currently experiencing positive momentum in the military-to-military relationship, which we look forward to continuing throughout 2011. However, we are also mindful of the need to maintain our strong presence in the region and robust alliance structure, further develop our own capabilities, and clearly communicate our resolve to maintain peace and stability in the Asia Pacific.

Conclusion

The United States is an Asia-Pacific power, as evidenced by our long-term commitment to and military presence in the region. We are—and will remain—forward deployed and highly capable to defend our interests and maintain our commitment to defend our allies and partners well into the 21st century. However, being ready to meet the dynamic nature of the security challenges in the region will, however, require a strong commitment to work with and enhance the capabilities of our allies and partners, and the ability to manage and shape in a positive way the rise of China. Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.