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**Re-evaluating the 2 Major Theater War Strategy**

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Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify this morning before this distinguished group. I would like to commend you at the outset for holding this hearing on the two Major Theater War (MTW) force sizing and shaping construct, and for your willingness to tackle this critical issue. Too often, our days are filled with the immediate, but today you have chosen to focus on the important. I applaud your leadership in taking a proactive approach to this central issue of defense strategy, and I am honored to have been asked to contribute to your deliberations by discussing alternatives to the two-MTW standard.

Among the most critical tasks of any administration in articulating a defense strategy is to set the criteria for sizing and shaping the U.S. military. Typically, force-sizing criteria delineate the number and types of operations the U.S. military should be able to conduct concurrently. Missions or activities not explicitly cited are generally treated as lesser-included cases: things that the military may be required to do, but for which additional forces are not provided.

As you know, the primary standard for sizing U.S. conventional forces for the past eight years has been two nearly simultaneous Major Theater Wars or MTWs, with the exception that naval forces are also sized for forward presence. All other military operations and activities are treated as lesser-included cases as far as force sizing is concerned. In practice, this has meant that U.S. conventional forces are generally dual-tasked or even triple-tasked; they are expected to remain ready for warfighting (by training, exercising, etc.) while also being able to conduct the full range of peacetime operations, such as multiple concurrent smaller-scale contingencies, presence missions, and peacetime engagement activities with allies and friends.

**The Two-MTW Debate**

In recent years, the two-MTW standard has become a focus of heated debate, making it a major issue for the 2001 QDR. Supporters of the standard argue that maintaining a credible two-MTW capability is central to deterring opportunistic aggressors and to ensuring that the U.S. military can defeat aggression by an adversary that is more capable (or under circumstances that are more difficult) than expected. They further argue that maintaining a two-MTW force gives the U.S. military added flexibility, the depth of capability to respond effectively across the spectrum of operations, and credible combat power that translates into U.S. influence around the globe. Supporters also warn that falling off a two-MTW capability would call into question America's standing as a global power and the credibility of its security commitments to key allies around the globe. Also at work, of course, is the desire not to let go of a known standard until convinced that there is a better alternative.

Critics argue that the two-MTW standard has become synonymous with two particular MTW cases—Iraq and Korea—that do not capture the full range of challenges for which the U.S. military should be preparing. In practice, these two illustrative examples have become canonical cases and the focus of the vast majority of DOD planning. They also contend that the two-MTW standard has lost its credibility with key constituencies, most notably with those who champion military transformation, because it is perceived as focusing the U.S. military—and the entire defense program—on known near-term challenges ("fighting the last war") rather than on more significant future challenges.

Others have become dissatisfied with the focus on two MTWs for a different reason. The last several years, they argue, have demonstrated that a force built primarily for two MTWs does not necessarily have the capabilities needed to handle the full range of other contingencies without putting undue strains on the force, as evident in the existence of so-called "low density/high demand assets" and pervasive reports of overstressed units and personnel in peacetime. These critics advocate greater emphasis on sizing and shaping the force for the full range of demands placed on the U.S. military, including priority peacetime missions.

### **The Need for and Key Elements of a New Standard**

Although I was one of the people responsible for keeping the two-MTW standard front and center in the 1997 QDR, I believe that the time has come to articulate a fundamentally new and more compelling rationale for the size, capabilities, and resource requirements of the U.S. military, one that changes the denominator of the equation (to something other than MTWs) and that reflects the broader range of missions that U.S. forces must be prepared to perform to protect and advance American interests. Over the last several years, I have become convinced that what began as a generic - and I believe sensible -- standard to be able to fight and win two major wars nearly simultaneously has become too narrowly focused on the ability to wage two particular campaigns: a war in Southwest Asia and a war on the Korean peninsula. This narrow focus on two canonical wars is not a sound basis for U.S. defense planning at the dawn of the 21st century.

So, what should we look for in a new set of criteria to size and shape the force? I would offer four key elements:

*First, any new criteria should maintain the ability of the United States military to conduct major combat operations in more than one theater at a time.* As a global power with global interests, the United States needs a military that can be decisively engaged whenever and wherever our vital interests are challenged. We must continue to have a multi-theater strategy and multi-theater capabilities. To do otherwise would be to forsake U.S. leadership and risk U.S. preeminence.

*Second, it should broaden the set of scenarios used to size and shape the force to be more representative of the range of future challenges the U.S. military may well encounter.* Today's narrow focus on the two particular scenarios of Iraqi and North Korean aggression is problematic for several reasons. Both scenarios involve large armored invasions on land, but not every plausible MTW would take this form. One need only contemplate the possibility of Iranian aggression across the Strait of Hormuz, or the defense of Taiwan against Chinese aggression, to recognize that the challenges and requirements of other MTW scenarios might be vastly different from those for which U.S. forces are currently sized and shaped.

In addition, different MTW scenarios might involve different end-state objectives. Whereas in one case we might seek to restore the international border between victim and aggressor and impose a sanctions regime, in another we might seek to remove the aggressor from power, usher in a new regime, and help to restore stability post-conflict: a much more ambitious undertaking that would require substantially more forces and more time to execute. This might be dismissed as a technical point of force planning, were its implications for the size and shape of the U.S. military not so profound.

Furthermore, the two canonical MTW cases of Iraq and Korea do not represent the full range of challenges that the U.S. military could face in the future—even the near future. For example, more capable regional foes might employ anti-access strategies to thwart U.S. power projection. Given the diffusion of advanced military technologies and weapons of mass destruction (WMD), an adversary might be armed with longer-range ballistic and cruise missiles, WMD, advanced integrated air defense systems, or sophisticated anti-ship mines and missiles by 2010, if not sooner. If these systems could delay or deny U.S. access in a distant theater of operations, the threat would require the U.S. military to employ very different operational concepts for a rapid and decisive response to aggression. Such operational concepts could put a premium on combinations of capabilities quite different from those that have been optimized for the Iraq and Korea scenarios.

Finally, there are plausible scenarios involving situations other than large-scale, cross-border aggression (an MTW as currently defined) that could require a comparable level but different type of effort from the U.S. military if it were directed to intervene. Consider these scenarios as illustrative examples: the collapse of North Korea creates a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions; Colombia erupts in full-scale civil war between drug cartel-backed guerrillas and government forces; or the United States embarks on another coercive campaign on the scale of recent operations in Kosovo.

In the end, any new standard must shift the focus of U.S. force planning from optimizing the force for two particular scenarios to building a portfolio of capabilities that is robust across a broad range of emerging and future threats. If U.S. defense planning is to proceed on sound footing, we must broaden the set of scenarios used to size and shape our forces to include a wider range of potential threats, end-state objectives, operational constraints (such as adversary use of anti-access strategies), and joint concepts of operations.

Once we have broadened the scenario set, we must look across the range of scenarios to identify the most demanding combinations of challenges for each element of the force, and then sizing each element accordingly. For example, the Navy might be most stressed by a combination of scenarios involving the closure of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and cross-straits aggression. The Army might be most stressed by cases involving defeating large land invasions, supporting a regime change, and restoring stability on the ground post-conflict. Sizing different elements to meet the most stressing combination of plausible MTW challenges would make force sizing a more iterative process in which the capabilities of U.S. forces would be optimized across a larger range of scenarios and challenges.

*The third key element of a new force sizing criteria is that it should take into account not only the strategy's warfighting requirements, but also its high-priority peacetime, homeland security, and transformation demands.* The past decade of experience has made it abundantly clear that forces sized primarily for warfighting cannot meet the full range of peacetime demands without putting undue strains on the force. My own analysis suggests this will be true even if U.S. military involvement in SSCs becomes more selective, as the Bush administration hopes. In addition, homeland security missions may place demands on U.S. forces that should be considered in addition to the warfighting demands they might have to meet concurrently. QDR planners should also take a second look at the size and shape of the force through the lens of future capability requirements to ensure that the force structure chosen in the QDR puts the U.S. military of 2001 on the right path to becoming the U.S. military envisioned for 2010 and 2020.

*Finally, any force sizing criteria should be explicit about where to place emphasis and where to accept or manage a degree of risk.* If it is going to provide meaningful guidance for force planning and resource allocation within DoD, it must be clear about the relative priorities that should guide trade-offs in the defense program. During the campaign and in its first months in office, President Bush and his advisors have expressed various priorities for the U.S. military: accelerating transformation, improving military readiness, and increasing investment in homeland defense (especially missile defense), among others. The key challenge in today's resource-constrained environment is to be clear about where to spend and where to cut when resources fall short of the

ideal. When trade-offs have to be made, what should come first - transformation, readiness or homeland defense - and how much risk can we afford to accept in lower priority areas? Any new defense strategy and force sizing criteria must be crystal clear about where to place emphasis and where to accept or manage risk.

## **Conclusion**

Let me conclude by noting that the challenge of developing a compelling alternative to the two-MTW standard will be made even more substantial by the fact that the audiences for U.S. defense strategy are many and diverse, ranging from Congress at home and U.S. allies abroad to potential adversaries in every region of the world. Nor will these words be lost on the men and women who serve in the U.S. military; what is said in U.S. defense strategy has a very real impact on the perceptions and morale of those who serve. Are they being deployed to missions that are recognized as legitimate? Have they been given the resources they need to live up to the stated standard? The QDR will offer the Bush administration an opportunity to rethink our defense strategy and force-sizing criteria and to articulate a standard that will maintain U.S. military superiority into the future while offering a more compelling and complete rationale for U.S. forces and defense expenditures.

I believe we must replace the two-MTW standard with one that maintains the United States ability to project and sustain decisive combat power in more than one theater at a time (a "multi-theater" capability), but broadens the scenario set to include a more representative set of future challenges. The new standard should facilitate a shift in the focus of U.S. force planning from perfecting the force for two particular cases to ensuring that the force and its capabilities are robust across the broad range of emerging and future threats. In addition, any new standard must also address priority demands other than warfighting, such as forward presence and homeland defense requirements. Finally, we must ensure that the size and shape of the force that emerges from the QDR puts the U.S. military in the right path to becoming the military we want to see in 2010 and 2020. Ultimately, the job of any Secretary of Defense is to balance the need to meet today's priority demands with the need to ensure that the U.S. military will be able to meet the priority demands of the future.

The challenge is large, the resources constrained, and the time short. But the elements of a more compelling standard for sizing and shaping the U.S. military are clear.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the Committee on the question of criteria for sizing and shaping U.S. conventional forces. I remain available to assist you in any way I can as you grapple with this critical issue.

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Previously, she was a Distinguished Research Professor at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University where she founded and led NDU's QDR 2001 working group, which was chartered by General Hugh Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to develop intellectual capital in preparation for the Department of Defense's 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review. The group's final report, *QDR 2001: Options and Issues for the Next Administration*, was published in November, 2000 and its book, *QDR 2001: Strategy-Driven Choices for America's Security*, was published in May 2001. For this work, she was awarded the Joint Distinguished Civilian Service Award by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Prior to joining NDU, she was dual-hatted as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Threat Reduction and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy. In this capacity, she oversaw three Policy offices in the Office of the Secretary of Defense: Strategy; Requirements, Plans and Counterproliferation; and Russia, Ukraine and Eurasian Affairs. She was the principal author of current "Shape, Respond, Prepare" defense strategy and led several

critical efforts for the Department of Defense, ranging from the drafting of PDD-56 on managing complex contingency operations to various post-QDR assessments of U.S. military capabilities required to carry out the strategy. She was awarded the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service by Secretary William Perry in 1996 and the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service by Secretary William Cohen in 1998.

Prior to joining the Department of Defense in 1993, Ms. Flournoy was a Research Fellow at the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. There she edited two volumes - one on U.S. nuclear weapons policy after the Cold War and another on managing proliferation - and directed the Avoiding Nuclear War Project. She also served as the principal policy advisor to the Carnegie Commission on Reducing the Nuclear Danger, chaired by the late McGeorge Bundy, Admiral William Crowe, Jr., USN (Ret.), and Dr. Sidney Drell.

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In addition to two edited volumes, Ms. Flournoy has published dozens of articles and book chapters on a variety of international security issues. She has a B.A. in Social Studies from Harvard University and an M.Litt. in International Relations from Balliol College, Oxford University, where she was a Newton-Tatum Scholar. She is a member of the Defense Policy Board, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Aspen Strategy Group, the International Institute of Strategic Studies, and the Executive Board of Women in International Security. She also served on the Defense Science Board Task Force on Transformation.