

Defense Strategic Guidance
“Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense”
Fact Sheet
5 January 2012

- After 10 years of war the United States and our military are at a strategic inflection point.
- Seminal changes require a reshaping of our defense priorities. The global security environment has grown more complex; at the same time as we end our military mission in Iraq, transition our mission in Afghanistan, continue to pursue al Qaeda and its leadership, and our nation faces serious deficit and debt problems.
- We continue to face disparate and complicated threats that demand a military capable of responding to a wide range of threats as well as opportunities.
- In reshaping our defense priorities, the U.S. does not have to choose between fiscal responsibility and a strong national defense. The Budget Control Act requires \$487B in savings from the Defense Base Budget over the next 10 years; more than \$250B of those reductions are in the Future Years Defense Program (FY13-17) to be submitted with our FY13 budget in February.
- The President has insisted that reductions in defense spending be driven by strategy and our defense needs in the coming decade. This strategy has been developed at his direction. It is the result of an inclusive process; the Secretary and Chairman worked closely with all Departmental leaders including the Service Secretaries, Service Chiefs, and Combatant Commanders.
- This strategy articulates priorities for a 21st century defense that protects the country and sustains U.S. global leadership. It reflects the need for DoD and the military to adapt in order to proactively address the changing nature of the security environment and to reflect new fiscal realities.

Four Basic Guiding Principles:

- Maintain the world’s finest military that supports and sustains U.S. global leadership.
- Avoid hollowing out the force. A smaller, ready military is preferable to a larger force that is ill-prepared because resources are not made available for training, maintenance and modernization relative to force structure.
- Everything must be considered, including politically sensitive areas that will likely provoke opposition from parts of Congress, industry, and advocacy groups.
- Preserve the quality of the all-volunteer force and ensure our troops are treated fairly.

Force of the Future:

- U.S. forces will remain capable across the spectrum of missions, fully prepared to deter and defeat aggression and to defend the homeland and our allies in the world's complex security environment. The force will be:
 - Smaller, but flexible, agile, and ready. We will resist sacrificing readiness in order to retain force structure.
 - Leaner, reducing the cost of doing business and finding further efficiencies in overhead, business practices, and other support activities.
 - Technologically superior and networked across the services, with diplomatic, development and intelligence agencies, and with allies and partners.
 - Able to regenerate and mobilize for an unpredictable future, preserving our industrial base.
 - Led by the world's finest, best cared-for, and battle-tested all-volunteer military.

Key Strategic Elements:

- Sustaining global presence; renewed emphasis on Asia together with continued focus on Middle East; maintaining our commitments and evolving our presence in Europe; and building innovative, low-cost, small-footprint approaches to partnership around the world.
- Protecting new capabilities and investments to respond to the changing nature of warfare; preserve lessons, capabilities, and expertise of the past ten years; and ensuring our technological edge to meet future challenges.
- Aligning size and composition of forces to be capable of a range of missions and activities.
 - We will be fully prepared to deter and defeat aggression. Even if we are committed to a large-scale operation in one theater, we will be able to deny an opportunistic adversary the ability to achieve its objectives in another theater.
 - Having ended our military commitment in Iraq, having commenced a drawdown in Afghanistan, and as we look to future threats, we will no longer size our force for sustained, large-scale stability operations. We will field a smaller force while focusing modernization to address emerging threats.
- Ensuring reversibility to maintain the ability to surge, regenerate and mobilize to counter any threat, while preserving our industrial base so we are able to address unforeseen challenges.