



THE HONORABLE MARK T. ESPER

Secretary of Defense

NDS Implementation: First Year Accomplishments

This July, to mark the one-year anniversary of my tenure as Secretary of Defense – as well as two and a half years since the release of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) – I want to take a look back over the past 12 months and thank the Department of Defense (DoD) and our partners across industry, academia, Congress, and around the world for all that we have accomplished together.

During my confirmation hearing last July, I made clear that my top priority would be implementing the NDS, which informs us that we are now in an era of Great Power Competition; and that China, then Russia, constitute our top strategic competitors. To be successful in this new global environment, we must work along three lines of effort: first, improve the lethality and readiness of the force; second, strengthen allies and build partners; and third, reform the Department for greater efficiency and accountability. I also made a personal priority of taking care of our Service members and their families.

Soon after I came into office, civilian and uniformed leaders across the DoD and I met to develop detailed plans to implement these lines of effort. We created a list of ten targeted goals, each with sub-tasks, and we set out to accomplish most of these by the end of 2020. They are as follows:

1. Review, update, and approve all China and Russia plans;
2. Implement the Immediate Response Force, Contingency Response Force, and Dynamic Force Employment enhanced readiness concepts;
3. Reallocate, reassign, and redeploy forces in accordance with the NDS;
4. Achieve a higher level of sustainable readiness;
5. Develop a coordinated plan to strengthen allies and build partners;
6. Reform and manage the Fourth Estate and DoD;
7. Focus the Department on China;
8. Modernize the force—invest in game-changing technologies;
9. Establish realistic joint war games, exercises, and training plans; and,
10. Develop a modern joint warfighting concept and, ultimately, doctrine.

I am proud to report that we have made real progress on these goals, with most on track to be accomplished on time. Today I want to highlight what we have accomplished by working together.

Focusing the Department on China

First, in light of challenges to the international rules-based order by our strategic competitors in this era of Great Power Competition, one of our top ten goals – the priority that drives and underlies many of our efforts today – is to focus the Department on China. This is the primary lens through which we are advancing each line of effort under the NDS, which guides us in addressing near-term challenges while preparing us once again for high-intensity conflict in the future.

Our Department-wide focus on strategic competition is made possible by senior leadership team meetings held regularly to drive integrated action on China first, then Russia. A newly established China Strategy Management Group further pushes that agenda forward. A vital part of that action is the training and education of personnel across the U.S. Armed Forces. Our future leaders must understand how China thinks about war, how the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is organized, what kind of weapons and equipment they

use, and how they fight – the way our past leaders and I were once required to understand Soviet systems and doctrine.

To hone these skills and reorient the force toward our priority theater, I directed the National Defense University to refocus its curriculum by dedicating 50 percent of the coursework to China, and I tasked the Military Departments and Services to make China the pacing threat in all of our schools, programs, and training.

At the same time, our teams are taking a hard look at DoD requirements, acquisition, and other systems to strengthen the foreign military sales process, bring to bear the U.S. defense industrial base, and successfully compete with both China and Russia.

Line of Effort 1: Building a More Lethal Force

Modernizing the Force

Another major goal among our top ten is to modernize the force, to include by investing in game-changing technologies as we transition from a legacy military to a more capable future force. This will allow us to maintain our long-held battlefield overmatch, which is more important than ever, as China and Russia continue to modernize their militaries and pursue advantages in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and 5G.

Our Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget request supports this and related priorities toward irreversible implementation of the NDS. Moreover, we have successfully secured funding for our top 11 modernization initiatives, including hypersonics, artificial intelligence, quantum science, biotechnology, directed energy, microelectronics, and 5G networks, with the largest research and development budget in the Department's history. Additionally, we released modernization roadmaps for these technologies.

- Hypersonics: accelerating development of hypersonic weapons with plans to start fielding in 2023. We ramped up flight testing, with over 40 flight tests planned in the next five years; a recent test of the Common Hypersonic Glide Body demonstrated readiness by hitting its target after traveling over 2,000 miles in less than 20 minutes, reaching a peak speed of 17 times the speed of sound.
- Artificial Intelligence: accelerating the fielding of AI capabilities at scale to meet warfighter needs through the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center and created the first-ever AI Ethics Principles to ensure the United States is the global leader in the responsible development and use of AI.
- Microelectronics/5G: accelerating our access to advanced commercial and specialty microelectronics, and working to leverage the power of 5G for our mission, while preventing adversaries from using it against us. As part of this effort, we initiated large-scale experiments to test and evaluate 5G communications capabilities at 12 DoD bases, working alongside industry partners.
- Cyber: U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) continuing to pursue DoD's "Defend Forward" strategy that ensures we are persistently engaged with cyber actors to defeat them online, improve the lethality of our Combatant Commands, and support a whole-of-government effort to deliver a safe, secure, and legitimate election;
- Advanced DoD's digital modernization efforts to enhance IT architecture through cloud; AI; command, control, and communications; and cybersecurity.

The Department is also recapitalizing the strategic nuclear triad and our nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) system as a top priority; we have made great strides in ensuring the strength and

reliability of our Nation's nuclear deterrent. Over the past year, we fielded the new W76-2 submarine-launched, low-yield ballistic missile warhead. We also developed and executed flight tests of experimental versions of two intermediate-range, conventional strike weapons in less than 12 months, following U.S. withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty due to Russia's repeated violations of the agreement. At the same time, we are developing next-generation interceptor and ballistic missile defense systems to keep pace with adversary missile systems and ensure layered defense of our homeland.

Among our modernization efforts, the Department conducted a comprehensive review of the Future Naval Force and shipbuilding plan to meet our needs in the years ahead. In doing so, we are working towards a more lethal, survivable, adaptable, and sustainable fleet of at least 355 ships—and likely more—that will probably include more and smaller surface combatants, a larger submarine force, and optionally/lightly-manned vessels that will ensure continued U.S. dominance on the high seas.

- Divesting from legacy systems to reinvest in NDS priorities, including:
 - 177 F-15C aircraft, saving \$1.7 billion (Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)) as part of our reform efforts
 - 17 B-1 aircraft, saving \$82 million (FY2021); \$1.3 billion (FYDP)
 - 10 MQ-9 Combat Lines, saving \$216 million (FY2021); \$639 million (FYDP)
 - 16 KC-10 aircraft, saving \$48 million (FY2021); \$551 million (FYDP) upon divesting remainder of the fleet
 - 24 RQ-4 Block 30/EQ-4 Block 20 aircraft, saving \$269 million (FY2021); \$1.95 billion (FYDP) as part of our reforms
 - 13 KC-135 aircraft, saving \$40 million (FY2021); \$363 million (FYDP)
 - 13 C-130H aircraft, saving \$11 million (FY2021); \$307 million (FYDP) upon divesting additional 32 aircraft
 - 42 A-10 aircraft, saving \$1.1 billion (FY2021); \$5.65 billion (FYDP) upon divesting 21 additional aircraft in FY2022

Develop a Modern Joint Warfighting Concept and Doctrine

Among our top ten goals is the development of a modern Joint Warfighting Concept and, ultimately, doctrine, to enable our transition to All-Domain Operations by aligning our personnel, equipment, organizations, training, and doctrine. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is driving this important effort to prepare us for future warfare.

Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC) attributes have been validated, and cross-Service JWC supporting concept teams have been established to move this effort along deliberately, with workshops, wargames, and senior leader tabletop exercises planned over the coming months.

As part of this effort, the Air Force is leading the Department's new Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) initiative, which is vital to linking any sensor to any shooter on the battlefield in real time.

We are also implementing novel concepts such as Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations, which allow us to maintain lethality across land and sea in preparation for future conflict, while the Army is developing and experimenting with Multi-Domain Operations.

Additionally, we published a Defense Space Strategy and developed new operational techniques for CYBERCOM that increase our capability.

Enhancing Lethality and Readiness

Several other goals among our top ten are meant to drive the Department's efforts to enhance lethality, as we balance near-term operations and contingencies with readiness. These include the following –

Review, Update, and Approve All China and Russia Plans;

Establish Realistic Joint War Games, Exercises, and Training Plans;

Implement the Immediate Response Force (IRF), Contingency Response Force (CRF), and Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) Concepts; and,

Achieve a Higher Level of Sustainable Readiness.

Many of the achievements listed below fall under one or more of the goals listed above:

- Updating key war plans for the first time in years through expanded efforts to ensure greater effectiveness, alignment with national policy, and consistency with the NDS;
- Re-examining the DoD's joint exercise program and funding to ensure alignment with NDS priorities;
- Conducted large-scale, no-notice test of sealift readiness to inform and focus our plan to accelerate sealift recapitalization;
- Studying the proper mix and composition of Active Component and Reserve Component forces to ensure war plan timelines can be met with a reasonable degree of confidence;
- Streamlined pre-deployment training, preparations, and medical requirements by returning those decisions to the Military Departments, consistent with Title 10 of the United States Code;
- Realigned the military medical system to focus on operational medicine for wartime and related requirements, including directing a change that ensures operational forces have the type and number of medical professionals necessary to support them in combat.

The Department has made historic changes to Global Force Management to balance readiness with near-term operations and contingencies. Among those changes, we are reviewing the availability, disposition, and employment of high demand/low density items (such as Patriot air defense systems; RC-135 aircraft; Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance platforms; and Anti-Submarine Warfare assets) around the globe, and reducing deploy-to-dwell breaks for the Army and Marine Corps.

We are also implementing the Dynamic Force Employment concept to become more operationally unpredictable and complicate adversary decision-making, to test the readiness of our IRF forces, and to enable the rapid repositioning of forces to become more responsive to future threats. As part of this effort, we implemented the Immediate Response Force and Contingency Response Force concepts and then scoped the objectives and expanded the size of the IRF and CRF to make forces more ready and available for NDS priority missions. Our achievements include the following:

- Approved the new Directed Readiness Tables for IRF and CRF forces, which help us balance the demand for forces from the Combatant Commands with the availability of ready forces from the Military Departments, and facilitate decision-making on risks and readiness in ways we have not done before as a leadership team;

- Approved the FY2021 Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP), which further aligns the global allocation of forces with NDS priorities, creating strategically predictable and operationally flexible opportunities by increasing the size of the IRF and shifting forces from lower to higher priorities;
- Adopted the Bomber Task Force operational concept globally to improve the readiness and strategic flexibility of the bomber force, support all Combatant Commands more effectively, and enhance our operational unpredictability.

Furthermore, we established U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM) in August 2019 and the U.S. Space Force in December 2019, creating the newest Combatant Command and first new branch of the military since 1947 to maintain the freedom of use, commerce, and navigation in, to, and through space. Both initiatives recognize the growing importance of space as a warfighting domain. Notably, we launched a communications satellite in March 2020 as the Space Force's first national security mission.

Line of Effort 2: Strengthening Alliances and Attracting New Partners

Develop a Coordinated Plan to Strengthen Allies and Build Partners

Another priority among our top ten is to develop a coordinated strategy for our allies and partners, recognizing that these like-minded nations are an unmatched advantage that China and Russia do not have. An essential component of the NDS involves incorporating our allies and partners into our plans and planning; that also means many of them must commit to sharing more of the burden for their capabilities and capacity, as well as the security and stability of their regions and the world.

We launched a whole-of-DoD integrated approach that includes senior leader engagements with key countries and security cooperation programs, and our OSD Policy staff now runs the Department's first-ever detailed campaign plan to improve our alliances and partnerships worldwide. We are presently working on developing the metrics that will both guide and measure our performance in this initiative.

I have also personally conducted over 200 meetings with foreign partners from over 60 countries across the globe and engaged world leaders during more than a dozen conferences – from NATO Defense Ministerial meetings to Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) Defense Minister meetings – to reaffirm the United States' role as the global security partner of choice and reinforce the importance we place on allies and partners.

Among the results, we have enhanced NATO's readiness by securing increases in the defense spending of NATO Allies by more than \$130 billion cumulatively since 2016, doubling the number of countries that will spend at least 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense by 2021, and making the NATO Readiness Initiative a top priority. We are also on path to increase the participation of key countries in International Military Education and Training (IMET) by 50 percent over the next five years.

Additional accomplishments under this line of effort include:

- Conducted hundreds of exercises with allies and partners around the world to strengthen joint readiness and enhance interoperability;
- Conducted a record number of freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea over the past year, more than in any other year since 2015, to deter China's malign behavior;

- Conducted operational rotations of fighter squadrons to the Indo-Pacific as part of Dynamic Force Employment to project air power and reaffirm our commitment to allies and partners in the region;
- Improved Foreign Military Sales (FMS) policy and practices by lowering costs and introducing competitive financing opportunities, which increased U.S. competitiveness and improved interoperability among partners.
 - In FY 2019, we maintained sales of more than \$55 billion for the second consecutive year, which increased our three-year rolling average for sales by 16 percent.
 - We improved the time it takes to respond to partner nation requests by 17 percent.

Line of Effort 3: Reforming the Department for Greater Performance and Affordability

Reform and Manage the Fourth Estate and DoD

Many of you are familiar with our ongoing efforts to fulfill another top ten priority: reform and manage DoD's Fourth Estate, and the entire Department. This means making difficult choices across the DoD, which are essential to ensuring that our time, manpower, and resources are directed toward NDS priorities. We have already made great strides to that end.

In our Defense-Wide Review last year, we identified \$5.7 billion in defense reforms and efficiencies across the Fourth Estate, which is composed of more than 29 separate agencies and organizations performing distinct functions outside of the Military Departments/Services – examples include the DoD Education Activity, Defense Health Agency, and Defense Threat Reduction Agency. This year, we are on track to identify billions more in additional savings.

We also completed our second Department-wide financial statement audit, which covered assets of more than \$2.9 trillion, improving the quality of our enterprise data used to drive decision-making and ensuring we remain good stewards of government resources – and accountable to the American people. Much progress is being made, but we must keep working toward a clean audit opinion.

Additionally, for the first time ever, we have a senior defense official, the Chief Management Officer (CMO), responsible for the administration and management of the Fourth Estate. The Fourth Estate, which has a combined budget of over \$100 billion, is now participating in the annual budget and Program Objective Memorandum (POM) processes just like the Military Departments/Services do, with direction and oversight from the CMO to validate requirements and review proposals.

Since the FY2017 budget cycle, the Department has realigned nearly \$25 billion in annual savings into NDS priorities, including \$9.1 billion in reform savings in our 2021 budget request. Of that, our Military Departments, the Defense Health Agency, and the Missile Defense Agency identified \$3.4 billion in reform savings, which included divestments from legacy systems and programs. The \$25 billion also includes \$15.7 billion from the continuation of reform initiatives identified in the FY2017-2020 budget cycles.

Our reforms also include a new adaptive acquisition framework to streamline and modernize the acquisition process, making it easier for the defense industrial base to do business with the DoD and allowing us to field technology more quickly, and at lower cost. As part of that effort, we replaced a decades-old, time-consuming process with six distinct acquisition pathways, and delegated Milestone Decision Authority for the majority of our major defense acquisition programs to the lowest appropriate level.

We are seeing significant cost savings as a result; for example, we achieved an average overall price reduction of 12.8 percent per aircraft across all F-35 variants, from Lot 11 to Lot 14.

Other related achievements for the Department include:

- Reviewed 100 percent of DoD's existing regulations and reduced regulatory burdens to save \$132 million, and are now working toward a 15 percent reduction in DoD solicitation provisions and contract clauses by the end of this fiscal year;
- Directed Military Departments/Services to conduct "clean sheet" reviews to identify savings and efficiencies and to develop plans for reforms;
- Launched a new intellectual property strategy to balance the Department's needs with those of industry and allow us to fully leverage the capabilities of the private sector;
- Released the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification, a new framework to verify the cybersecurity posture of DoD contractors and our supply chain;
- Implemented "Big Data" analytics solutions to provide business insights across the DoD enterprise;
- Moved the DoD to a telework posture at an unprecedented rate and scale to mitigate disruption from COVID-19 by creating the Commercial Virtual Remote telework collaboration capability used by 900,000 personnel and ensuring cyber security of networks to support the full range of DoD missions.

Reallocate, Reassign, and Redeploy Forces in Accordance with the NDS

As part of our reforms, we are working toward reallocating, reassigning, and redeploying our forces in accordance with the NDS. Each Combatant Command is going through a clean-sheet review to consolidate and reduce legacy missions, tasks, and posture, in order to optimize our operational footprint. We are in the middle of this process now, with ongoing reviews and adjustments taking place in U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM), U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), U.S. European Command (EUCOM), CYBERCOM, and SPACECOM. In the coming months, we will also begin reviews with U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), and U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

These reviews have already generated savings in time, money, and manpower that we are realigning toward higher-priority NDS requirements, while also improving the posture, readiness, and flexibility of U.S. military forces globally. The following are a few highlights:

- AFRICOM
 - Enhanced focus on Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) threats to the homeland, which will allow a reduced footprint in north and east Africa;
 - Realigned Crisis Responses Forces (CRF), which generated a global look more broadly at CRF forces, and has freed up several units for greater alignment with NDS priorities;
 - Created efficiencies in Djibouti, permitting a reduction in forces there for other NDS priorities.
- SOUTHCOM
 - Deployed additional Navy and Coast Guard ships, aircraft, and resources to enhance the counter-narcotics mission, which has led to numerous drug interdictions in this area of responsibility (AOR);
 - Deployed elements of the first Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) to South America, in support of counter-narcotics and information sharing;

- Optimized Naval Station Guantanamo Bay manning, and on track for a 20 percent manning reduction by the end of July 2020, with further reductions planned to achieve a more sustainable footprint without compromising mission success.
- CENTCOM
 - Consolidating, reducing and hardening our footprint in Iraq to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, protect U.S. and partner forces, and provide assistance in support of a stable, secure, and independent Iraq;
 - Deployed several thousand personnel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) since May 2019 to reassure partners and deter Iran;
 - Reduced U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan to 8,600, a month ahead of schedule, with further reductions likely as conditions allow;
 - Launched a long-term assessment of our missions and strategic footprint in the AOR, which included reduction of the total number of dependents in theater.
- U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM)
 - Conducted a comprehensive review of special operations forces (SOF) culture and ethics across the SOCOM enterprise, focused on recruiting; assessment and selection; leader selection and validation; ethics education and training; and addressing ethical shortfalls through accountability;
 - Realigned \$881 million in SOCOM as a result of the Defense-Wide Review.
- EUCOM
 - Planning for the repositioning of more than 9,500 troops from Germany to enhance deterrence of Russia, strengthen NATO, reassure allies and partners, and improve both U.S. strategic flexibility and EUCOM operational flexibility;
 - Increasing rotational deployments from the United States to Europe for exercises and training.
- STRATCOM, CYBERCOM, and SPACECOM
 - Examining and assessing options for gaining efficiencies and improving effectiveness in support of the NDS, with major reform initiatives under active study and coordination;
 - As decisions are finalized, they will be communicated and implemented based on timelines consistent with national interests and commitments.

As part of this goal, we have also updated guidance regarding the assignment and allocation of forces globally in an out-of-cycle review of the Forces For document. We are conducting a review of the Unified Command Plan as well. Meanwhile, the Joint Staff has launched an extensive, months-long review of all missions, tasks, and other directives assigned to the Combatant Commands to ensure they are all relevant in today's strategic environment, consistent with the National Security Strategy and NDS, and are not diverting time, money, manpower, or capabilities to non-NDS priorities.

Taking Care of Our Military Personnel and Their Families

We recognize that our people are our greatest resource. Their hard work at home and abroad keeps our Nation safe and determines the success of the NDS. That is why I continue to prioritize the well-being of our Service members and their families, and routinely hold family and force town halls during my domestic and international trips to hear directly from them about their concerns.

To ensure we continue to attract and retain the best warfighters, this past year we secured robust pay and benefits packages, worked to improve childcare availability for our uniformed personnel, directed that

spousal license reciprocity be a factor in basing decisions, and are implementing much-needed improvements to on-base housing, including beginning to implement the Tenant Bill of Rights.

Recently, we launched three major initiatives to promote equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion in our ranks, and to ensure all of our personnel are given every opportunity to succeed in our military and maximize their potential. As part of that effort, we established a Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion, which will provide ideas by the end of the year to address racial diversity. I am also creating a Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services, with the independence and resources necessary to build upon the work of the Defense Board.

Other related achievements include:

- Directed the Department to adapt policies related to deployments, assignments, professional military education, and other matters to remove barriers to the advancement of pregnant Service members;
- Implemented a strategy to standardize the Exceptional Family Member Program to ensure the program meets our families' needs and is consistent across the Military Services;
- Established a Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) task force in July 2019 to protect Service members and communities surrounding military installations;
- Released the first annual DoD Suicide Report, with new and additional recommendations to combat suicide in our ranks;
- Engaging the State Department to improve on- and off-base hiring of spouses and dependents;
- Implemented all 22 recommendations from the Sexual Assault Accountability and Investigation Task Force, and launched a program to help identify serial offenders; overall, DoD has seen a more than 30 percent decrease in sexual assaults from 10 years ago and a four-fold increase in reporting;
- Launched an effort to improve the security of medical records to ensure privacy;
- Working to improve flexibility in Service members' careers by allowing them to take time off or move between the Active Duty and Reserve Components in order to raise families, care for aging parents, or address other life circumstances.

Changing the Culture and Processes of the Defense Department

The success of the NDS requires more than a strategic shift in the Department's approach to today's issues; it requires process and cultural shifts as well. This is no simple task in light of the sheer scale and complexity of our enterprise and mission. The DoD employs nearly 3 million people operating in more than 160 countries. We manage nearly \$300 billion in inventory, more than six times the size of the largest retail company in the world, Walmart. Our Military Services fly roughly 16,000 aircraft, while a typical commercial airline manages between 300 and 1,600. We maintain approximately 573,000 facilities across over 4,500 sites, and we provide health care coverage for more than 9 million people through one of the nation's largest health care systems.

It should come as no surprise that implementation of the NDS is a unique challenge that requires us to update our Cold War-era management structures and processes, and ensure the seamless integration of our leadership team across the OSD, Joint Staff, Military Departments/Services, and Combatant Commands. In today's world, slowness is a strategic liability, which is why we have adopted this new approach.

When I came into office last July, I believed it important to reaffirm civilian control of the military, while also building a cohesive team of military and civilian leaders to move the Department forward. I made

immediate changes in our weekly and quarterly battle rhythm to foster shared accountability for NDS outcomes.

First, I launched Monday morning weekly forums for uniformed and civilian leaders to receive and discuss together the quarterly briefings that I directed regarding topics such as readiness, nuclear modernization, the performance of our major defense acquisition programs, our work with allies and partners, and issues that are important to Service members and their families.

Second, Monday afternoon sessions were established as the forum by which these same leaders and the Combatant Commanders would meet to discuss our operational plans and strategic issues, and assess progress in NDS implementation.

Third, OSD Policy's role was strengthened in Joint Staff review processes and other mechanisms to ensure that our activities are consistent with U.S. and DoD policy.

Prior to establishing these new weekly meetings, this leadership team used to meet twice per year. Under our new operating system, DoD's organizations are now becoming aligned more quickly and effectively than ever before, and working better together as an integrated team.

Continuing Our Missions Around the World

In addition to our NDS accomplishments, we have also responded to countless world events, as we continued our important national security missions around the globe. The following are some notable examples:

Countering Violent Extremism

Over the past year, the Department conducted or supported international counterterrorism operations that removed dozens of key terrorists from the battlefield, most notably ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and at least four Syria-based senior leaders responsible for managing ISIS's global organization.

- Baghdadi and the thugs who followed him were responsible for some of the most brutal atrocities of our time, including the murder of American citizens, hundreds of beheadings, the killing of thousands of captured Iraqi and Syrian prisoners of war, and the genocide of Yazidis.

Our counterterrorism operations also resulted in successful strikes against al-Qa'ida, killing several senior leaders and other key personnel across Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, including the leaders of al-Qa'ida affiliates in North Africa, South Asia, and Yemen. Additionally, we removed Qasem Soleimani, the head of the terrorist-designated Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps – Qods Force, in a missile strike in Iraq.

- Soleimani was responsible for the death and maiming of hundreds of U.S. Service members over many years, was behind the attacks by Shia militia groups against U.S. personnel in Iraq, and was planning additional attacks against U.S. personnel in the region.

Meanwhile, the United States has maintained its leadership role in the Defeat-ISIS Coalition and helped grow it to 82 members. Together, our work resulted in the destruction of ISIS's physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria and the liberation of more than 5 million people who suffered under its rule.

Finally, we continue working with our Resolute Support Mission partners in Afghanistan to encourage intra-Afghan negotiations on power-sharing and the peace process, following the signing of the conditions-based agreement earlier this year.

Responding to Destabilizing Activities of Rogue Regimes

The U.S. military has deterred aggressive activities perpetrated by rogue States such as North Korea and Iran, as well as near-peer competitors Russia and China, as we continue to make it clear that we will not hesitate to defend U.S. forces and interests, and our allies and partners around the world.

We repeatedly warned the Iranian regime and its Shia militia proxies against malign activities, and we launched defensive strikes against the Iranian-backed Kata'ib Hizbollah in Iraq and Syria after their attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq last December.

Additionally, we have preserved freedom of navigation and commerce in contested waters, from the Arabian Gulf to the South China Sea. For example, we worked with partner nations to form the International Maritime Security Construct last September to deter threats to global trade in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Moreover, to deter repeated Iranian naval provocations and harassment of U.S. ships, we also reinforced our rules of engagement in the Arabian Gulf, which reaffirm our forces' right to self-defense.

Meanwhile, we continue to monitor North Korean weapons tests, while we strengthen our alliance with South Korea and support diplomatic efforts toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Supporting Whole-of-Nation COVID-19 Response

Global COVID-19 response efforts have reinforced the necessity of a rules-based, international order rooted in transparency, openness, honesty, and other shared values. While the Chinese Communist Party spent the critical, early days of the coronavirus outbreak suppressing information, clamping down on dissent, and misleading the international community, the U.S. military was on the frontlines of the battle against the virus since day one in January.

I am tremendously proud of the more than 60,000 uniformed and civilian personnel who have been engaged in the Nation's response to the coronavirus pandemic since January, including more than 47,000 National Guard members and roughly 4,200 medical personnel who often risked their own lives to help their fellow Americans. Their efforts include the following achievements:

- Provided \$2.9 billion in life-saving supplies and equipment to Service members and Federal departments and agencies as part of the whole-of-nation response, and assisted dozens of partner nations with diagnostics support and the provision of personal protective equipment;
- Engaged in the fight against coronavirus from week one, on January 29, when we received the first planeload of hundreds of Americans from China into March Reserve Air Base in California, and then cared for them over a period of weeks;
- Provided housing at 13 military installations – including Travis Air Force Base, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and Lackland Air Force Base – to Americans returning from abroad, allowing them to quarantine safely;
- Deployed hospital ships, Army Field Hospital Centers, Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces, and Navy Expeditionary Medical Facilities to hotspots across the country to support overwhelmed hospitals and provide life-saving medical care to Americans;

- Constructed dozens of Alternate Care Facilities to supplement civilian hospital capacity and deployed teams of medical professionals to over 30 major metropolitan areas nationwide;
- Leveraged elements of the Defense Production Act to produce critical medical resources and announced over \$500 million worth of contracts to sustain essential domestic industrial base capabilities;
- Helped to develop and now co-leading the national program, Operation Warp Speed, and working with the private sector to accelerate the development and distribution of vaccines and therapeutics, at scale, by year's end.

We ensured the safety of DoD personnel and the readiness of our forces throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by doing the following:

- Issued a dozen medical guidance memos, many to Military Department Secretaries, Service Chiefs, and Combatant Commanders – all of whom have extensive medical staffs and resources – on how to protect Service members and others from the spread of COVID-19, dating back to the first advisory on January 30;
- Implemented the DoD pandemic global response plan on February 1;
- Raised the Health Protection Condition (HPCON) level for all DoD installations;
- Issued a 60-day stop movement order on March 11, restricting DoD personnel travel to, from, and through high-risk areas, and extended the order on April 20 through June 30;
- Developed a tiered prioritization plan for all forces to facilitate testing and monitoring worldwide;
- Cancelled and/or modified exercises to prioritize force protection;
- Maximized the use of telework to ensure the safety of uniformed and civilian employees.

Other Civil and Interagency Support to Protect the Homeland

The men and women of the United States military are trained and prepared to answer the call to serve in a wide range of missions, including right here at home, in support of civil authorities, and alongside interagency partners. CYBERCOM, for example, is working with the National Security Agency (NSA) as part of the joint Election Security Group to defend the integrity of our democratic processes against foreign threats, which is vital to securing our elections not just this year, but also well into the future. We also continue to provide civil support for natural disaster relief efforts. Last year, this included our assistance to the U.S. Agency for International Development in the Bahamas, as well as to the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other partners in the wake of Hurricane Dorian.

Today, the DoD is also supporting the Department of Homeland Security by providing National Guard and Active Duty personnel to help secure the southern border and conducting counter-drug activities in the Western Hemisphere. Roughly 5,000 military personnel are engaged in operational, infrastructure, aviation, and detection and monitoring efforts. Additionally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is helping to construct roughly half of the 450 miles of border barrier slated for completion by the end of this calendar year.

In June, more than 43,000 Army and Air National Guard personnel responded to civil unrest in cities across the country in support of law enforcement, at the direction of Governors and as part of the presidential mission to safeguard Americans' First Amendment right to peaceful assembly and protest, while also protecting life, liberty, and property from the violent actions of a few. Our National Guard personnel did important work to restore and maintain order, uphold the rule of law, and protect their communities at the height of the unrest.

The Way Ahead

An important factor in protecting the gains we have made toward irreversible implementation of the NDS is our emphasis on ethical conduct at all times. The Department enjoys the highest trust and confidence of the American people because our actions are grounded in duty and honor, and because of our sworn oath to support and defend the Constitution. Throughout our Nation's history, and in every conflict, our values and respect for the rule of law have been among our greatest strengths – this remains true today, particularly in contrast to the malign behavior of the Chinese Government. We will continue to foster ethical leadership across the force, and execute our mission with the utmost integrity.

Moreover, the path ahead for irreversible implementation relies on institutionalizing the Department's reforms and making them part of the DNA of the Pentagon, independent of individual leaders across our vast and complex enterprise. We simply cannot return to an intensely federated system that accepts the status quo. We must shed our risk-averse culture and recognize the value of making tough choices and ruthlessly prioritizing our resources in order to prevent our competitors from eroding our advantages. We must also foster an environment where experimentation is incentivized and innovation is rewarded.

To ensure these efforts become lasting changes for the Department, we will continue to reform our governance model in ways that integrate civilian and military leadership. We will continue to leverage data analytics and digital systems to increase the Pentagon's speed of decision-making. And, we will continue to cut red tape and unnecessary bureaucracy, while identifying efficiencies for greater performance.

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone that our military remains the greatest force for good in our Nation's history, in large part because of the oath our personnel take to support and defend the Constitution of the United States – one that I myself have taken many times during my career. Under that oath, we commit to protecting the rights of the American people, including the freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. And, we carry with us a deep respect for the rule of law, as we safeguard the hard-earned trust of the public, and remain apolitical in executing our mission.

As you can see, we have accomplished a great deal over the past 12 months, despite a global pandemic and external events that demanded our time and attention. I am proud of all that has been done to keep America safe and implement the NDS along our three lines of effort. However, while much has been achieved, we still have much further to go.

The work we do today will allow us to maintain and grow our competitive edge, build a stronger and more ready and resilient future force, and prevail across every domain. With the support of our allies and partners, we will defend the long-standing, rules-based international order. And, together we will ensure the United States preserves peace through strength, now and well into the future.

Thank you once again for your great efforts, and for your steadfast commitment to supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States. I look forward to working with you over the next year, and building upon the tremendous progress we made together this past year. Our collective efforts will ensure the irreversible implementation of the NDS in defense of our great nation.

Thank you.