

Chapter 7

The United States: Addressing the “Return to Great Power Competition”

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The Barack Obama administration pursued a policy of rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific with the aim of strengthening ongoing engagement in the region. One of the key pillars of the administration's Asia-Pacific policy was its policy toward China. Accomplishments have been made here through engagement, however, challenges still remain as it has not been able to deter China's progressively expansionist and oppressive behavior in the East China Sea and South China Sea. Meanwhile, the United States is advancing initiatives to strengthen relationships with allies such as Japan, and partners such as India and Vietnam. In 2016, against the backdrop of heightening tensions in the South China Sea, the United States built up its forward presence in the region by deploying the Third Fleet's *John C. Stennis* Carrier Strike Group for over four and a half months to carry out dual carrier operations with the Seventh Fleet's *Ronald Reagan* Carrier Strike Group.

In consideration of China and Russia's military modernization and proliferation of military technology, the US Department of Defense (DOD) is advancing the "third offset strategy" to maintain US military superiority. In this strategy, Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work focuses on artificial intelligence and autonomy, and revealed the "five building blocks" of strategy based on this position. The use of autonomy is noted as also being particularly beneficial for operations in an anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environment in the Asia-Pacific. In addition, under the third offset strategy, implementation of initiatives of a shorter-term are also underway, in which new technological elements are added to existing hardware to enable their utilization in new missions.

To address the rising threat of Russia, the United States had been conducting the "reassurance" initiative for its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies of Central and Eastern European and the three Baltic states through increased joint exercises and rotational deployment, but it is gradually developing this into an approach based on deterrence by denial, which relies on the capability to fight off aggression if deterrence fails. To that end, the budget for this was increased by over fourfold in the DOD budget request for fiscal year 2017 (October 2016-September 2017; fiscal year will be abbreviated hereafter as FY). Moreover, the fragility or lack of capability of the US military itself was recognized anew when compared to the capabilities of the Russian forces demonstrated by the Russian military intervention in eastern Ukraine.

On January 20, 2017, Donald Trump was inaugurated as president of the United

States. The identities of those chosen to fill the very senior positions within the White House and federal agencies under the new administration have been gradually revealed over the period since Trump's winning of the presidential election on November 8. It remains essential to get the candidates through the Senate's confirmation process and firmly establish a functioning organization within the government from cabinet to working-level. With regard to concrete diplomatic issues, as there were more than a few unclear or contradictory statements made by Trump during and after the election, close attention will be paid to initiatives taken from now on. In addition, Trump, who vows for "peace through strength," made proposals for strengthening national defense, even raising some concrete figures during the election. The cooperation of Congress will be indispensable to realize these measures, which will require significant increases in defense spending. How these proposals will be realized will be closely watched.

1. Implementation of Asia-Pacific Policy: Pursuing a Rebalance Policy

(1) Trends in Policy toward China

The Obama administration has, since 2011, clearly indicated its stance for the United States to engage more aggressively in maintaining order in the Asia-Pacific region, and has been pursuing this policy as a "rebalance to the Asia-Pacific." This initiative takes on a form that is not limited to the military field, but also includes diplomacy and economy to cover a number of areas of policy and issues. Its purpose is to strengthen relationships on various levels with allies and partners in the region, and regional institutions, centering on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).¹⁾ Among such relationships, the Obama administration placed particular focus on its approach to China, as it believed this has major impacts on the national security of the United States and order in the Asia-Pacific region.

A major characteristic of the US relationship with China is the fact that two contrasting relationships exist in parallel: a cooperative relationship that needs the proactive role of China to resolve issues such as climate change and North Korea's nuclear threat, and a competitive and confrontational relationship in which different interests such as cybersecurity and the South China Sea issues exist. In consideration

of such structural characteristics, it is said that the Obama administration has been pursuing efforts that weave together “engagement” and “balancing” toward China.²⁾ In fact, Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken in his testimony before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated that US policy toward China seeks to “broaden and deepen practical cooperation on issues of shared concern; it directly confronts and then tries to resolve or narrow our differences wherever we can; and where we can’t to manage those differences peaceably.”³⁾

Through engagement with China, the Obama administration hopes that China will play a role in resolving regional or global issues. To that end, since its establishment the Obama administration has placed importance on institutionalizing stable opportunities for dialogue with China to facilitate mutual understanding.⁴⁾ Specifically, as a new forum for senior government officials of both countries to discuss not only economic issues, but strategic issues concerning national security as well—the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED)—was launched from 2009. Furthermore, active military-to-military exchange has been conducted as an endeavor to cultivate trust between the military authorities of the two countries. It could be said that these initiatives have generated a certain amount of results: the eighth S&ED was held in Beijing on June 6, 2016, and Chinese vessels participated in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise held for two months from July 9, making this China’s second participation following the last exercise in 2014. On September 3, President Barack Obama had a summit meeting with President Xi Jinping during his visit to Hangzhou, China, to attend the Group of Twenty meeting (G20), which includes the countries of the Group of Seven (G7) Summit and the European Union (EU).

On the other hand, challenges still remain. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find solutions to issues such as how to restrain China’s actions, which are bringing instability to the region, or whether such actions can be changed. Notably, a sense of alarm is increasing within the Obama administration and the United States with regard to China’s gradually expansive activities in the East China Sea and South China Sea.

The posture adopted by the Obama administration is that of not taking a particular position on the issue of territorial sovereignty. However, it places importance on the necessity for the countries concerned to: (1) make their claims in accordance with international law; (2) make their claims in a peaceful manner without resorting to weapons or coercions; and (3) adhere to international law and

standards for conduct in the open seas, in particular, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

In an address given at Stanford University on April 21, Daniel Russel, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, pointed out “there’s a tremendous amount of concern in the region about much of the Chinese behavior in the South China Sea. That includes the...large scale destruction of coral reefs, the vacuum cleaner fishing, the reclamation, the construction, of outposts; and... obviously military capable runways, and ports, and other facilities.”⁵⁾

In order to protect the lawful use of the open seas and the airspace above, the DOD is conducting freedom of navigation operation (FONOP) by sending naval vessels and aircraft to waters where coastal states are making “excessive national maritime claims.” As a part of a series of FONOPs in the South China Sea, following the October 27, 2015, transit of the US Navy destroyer USS *Lassen* inside the twelve nautical miles of Subi Reef, the guided-missile destroyer USS *Curtis Wilbur* sailed within twelve nautical miles of the Paracel Islands on January 30, 2016, and the guided-missile destroyer USS *William P. Lawrence* did the same near Fiery Cross Reef on May 10.

With regard to this issue, much note was taken of the fact that on July 12, 2016, the arbitral tribunal of The Hague ruled unequivocally against China’s claim of sovereignty over the South China Sea. The Obama administration indicated its recognition of this award as legally binding to China and the Philippines, and is requesting that the two countries clarify their claims to sovereignty in a form that is in compliance with international law and to follow their legal obligations.

(2) Bolstering Relationships with Allies and Partners

Based on its rebalancing policy, the Obama administration continues to pursue endeavors to modernize alliance relationships and strengthen security cooperation with partner countries. With regard to Japan, based on the new Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, which was agreed to at the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) meeting held on April 27, 2015, initiatives are being pursued to deepen cooperative relationships including an alliance coordination mechanism and a bilateral planning mechanism. Furthermore, President Obama, during his visit to Japan to attend the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, visited Hiroshima on May 27, 2016, as the first sitting US president to do so.

With regard to the Republic of Korea (ROK), in order to address the threat of North Korea as it continues to conduct nuclear tests and missile launching tests in violation of international agreement, the US and ROK governments announced on July 8, 2016, that the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system will be deployed to ROK. Moreover, in response to a nuclear test by North Korea on September 9, the Obama administration is strengthening efforts to raise the effectiveness of its economic sanctions. On September 26, sanctions were imposed and a civil forfeiture action also filed against a Chinese company and its four Chinese executives who were charged for allegedly violating US sanctions and illegally helping North Korea in its nuclear weapons development through activities such as money laundering. With regard to Australia, the United States is not only strengthening cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, but cooperation to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as well.

The Obama administration is also strengthening security cooperation with the Philippines. In the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) signed in April 2014, the Philippine government provides US forces, US contractors and others with “agreed locations” from which they can operate. Following that, talks were advanced between the United States and the Philippines on where these “agreed locations” will be. At the United States-Philippines Bilateral Strategic Dialogue held on the two days of March 17 and 18, 2016, it was decided that the Philippines government will provide Antonio Bautista Air Base, Basa Air Base, Fort Magsaysay, Lumbia Air Base, and Mactan-Benito Ebuena Air Base to the US forces.⁶⁾ Basa Air Base, located seventy kilometers northwest of Manila, is about 200 nautical miles from the Scarborough Shoal, the territorial rights of which is disputed between China and the Philippines; and Antonio Bautista Air Base on Palawan Island is also located about 200 nautical miles from Mischief Reef.⁷⁾ In addition to such bilateral relationships, the Obama administration is also placing importance on trilateral cooperation between its allies. Russel pointed out that



Defense Secretary Carter (left) shaking hands with Philippine National Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin after visiting the USS John C. Stennis during its deployment to the South China Sea (April 15, 2016) (DoD photo by Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Adrian Cadiz)

“the old 20th century kind of hub-and-spoke alliance system...is pretty much over,” and stated the importance of “an integrated network system that allows us to work trilaterally.”⁸⁾

Regarding countries other than its allies, in recent years, the Obama administration has been advancing security cooperation with India and Vietnam. On August 29, 2016, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter had his sixth meeting with India’s

Minister of Defence Manohar Parrikar, who was visiting Washington, D.C., and confirmed the importance of deepening military-to-military exchanges and expanding collaboration on defense technology and innovation. At this meeting, Carter welcomed the participation of India in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and reaffirmed that the US supports India’s membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). It was decided to establish working groups on naval and air systems; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); chemical and biological protection; and others systems under the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) meeting which was launched in 2012 to advance bilateral defense trade relations. They also signed the bilateral Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) at that time.

On May 23, 2016, Obama visited Vietnam for the first time since his inauguration. He was the third president to do so following Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Obama, who met with Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang, announced his intention to further pursue a comprehensive partnership and his policy of completely lifting the arms sales embargo. On October 2, two US Navy ships became the first to moor at Cam Ranh Bay since the end of the Vietnam War.

The Obama administration is also continuing to bolster its relationship with ASEAN, which was raised to a strategic partnership at the US-ASEAN Summit meeting in 2015. In February 2016, ASEAN heads of state were invited to California for the US-ASEAN Summit. On October 1, Defense Secretary Carter invited the defense ministers of the ten ASEAN countries to Hawaii for the US-

ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting. Stating “We all recommitted our militaries to keeping the [Asia-Pacific] region’s waterways open and secure,” Carter expressed his expectations toward improvement of coordination among the ASEAN militaries through an ASEAN maritime dialogue and maritime domain awareness exercise hosted by the United States.⁹⁾

(3) Force Posture in the Asia-Pacific

In 2016, against the backdrop of heightening tensions in the South China Sea due to China’s unilateral large-scale and rapid land reclamation, construction of facilities, and other activities, the United States heightened its forward presence in the region. One such initiative was the deployment of the carrier strike group to the South China Sea; notably, the *John C. Stennis* Carrier Strike Group (JCSCSG) assigned to the Third Fleet was deployed from the US East Coast to the Western Pacific, the Seventh Fleet’s area of responsibility (AOR), for over four and a half months from February 4 to June 25. The carrier strike group maintained its presence in the South China Sea for over sixty days, from March 1 to 6, and from mid-April to end-May, with participation in Exercise Foal Eagle in the Republic of Korea in the time between these two deployments. Following this deployment to the South China Sea, the JCSCSG moved to the Philippine Sea to “train in a high end scenario” with the Seventh Fleet’s *Ronald Reagan* Carrier Strike Group (RRCSG) on the two days of June 18 and 19.¹⁰⁾ After completing its training with the JCSCSG, the RRCSG also moved to the South China Sea and conducted patrols there until the end of July.

Conventionally, the Third Fleet’s carrier strike groups are primarily charged with maintaining presence in the Middle East. There are times, however, when a strike group is deployed to the Western Pacific. The last carrier deployment from the Third Fleet to the west Pacific was conducted by the *Carl Vinson* Carrier Strike Group, before and after its deployment to the Middle East as part of its participation in Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) from October 2014 to April the following year. On that occasion, along with the *George Washington* Carrier Strike Group, based out of Yokosuka, it participated in the Pacific Command (PACOM)-sponsored exercise, Valiant Shield, held in the waters around the Mariana Islands, and along with such dual carrier operations, during its return, it conducted bilateral exercises with the Malaysian Navy in the South China Sea. In contrast to this 2014 deployment of the *Carl Vinson* Carrier Strike Group to the Western

Pacific, which was conducted before and after its warfighting missions such as OIR, this time's deployment of the JCSCSG to the Western Pacific was wholly for the purpose of conducting activities there, especially in the South China Sea. In addition, JCSCSG's dual carrier operations with the RRCSG was the first time for such operations to be carried out since the 2014 deployment to the Western Pacific of the *Carl Vinson* Carrier Strike Group and the *George Washington* Carrier Strike Group. This time, large numbers of senior level US government and military officials visited the JCSCSG during its deployment to the Western Pacific. These included the April 15 visit to the *John C. Stennis* by Carter, who was visiting the Philippines, with Philippine Secretary of National Defense Voltaire Gazmin. Regarding the presence of a carrier in the South China Sea, Carter stressed that, "it's a message to the region that the United States intends to continue to play a role in keeping peace and stability in this region."¹¹) The JCSCSG deployment to the Western Pacific "became a symbol of the U.S. response to increasingly aggressive Chinese moves across the region."¹²)

Ships other than carrier strike groups were also active in the South China Sea. As the Pacific Surface Action Group (PAC SAG), three Aegis destroyers of the Third Fleet conducted patrols in the Western Pacific and South China Sea from April through November "for maritime security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific." Usually, when ships of the Third Fleet conduct activities in the Western Pacific, they fall under the operational control (OPCON) of the Seventh Fleet commander, as the AOR of the Third Fleet encompasses areas east of the International Date Line. But this PAC SAG conducted activities in the Western Pacific with the Third Fleet commander retaining OPCON over it through the "Third Fleet Forward" initiative, which expands the fleet's role in the Western Pacific.

In 2016, deployment to the Philippines also became active. In the background was the previously mentioned agreement at the United States-Philippines Bilateral Strategic Dialogue, held on the two days of March 17 and 18 that year, for five Philippine military bases to be provided to the US forces under the EDCA. In April, rotational deployment of US air contingents to the Philippines began. According to Carter at a joint press conference in the Philippines, its aim was to help build the capacity of the Philippine Air Force and improve the interoperability of the US and Philippine armed forces. Under Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) planning, air contingent detachments of the US Navy and Air Force will deploy to Philippine military bases for about half a month and conduct joint training with

the Philippine Air Force. The first rotation took the form of having some of the US Air Force detachment (five A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft, three H60G Pave Hawk helicopters, one MC-130H Combat Talon aircraft, 200 airmen) remain at Clark Air Base after it completed the Balikatan 2016 exercise, which was held from March through April. The second rotational deployment took place at Clark Air Base from June 15 through the beginning of July. EA-18G Growler airborne electronic attack aircraft and 120 airmen from Washington state were deployed and conducted training including that with the Philippine Air Force. The third rotation took place at Mactan-Benito Ebuen Air Base, which is located off Cebu Island, from September 24 through mid October with two C-130 Hercules aircraft from the 374th Air Wing at Yokota Air Base and the 36th Contingency Response Group from Andersen Air Force Base participating in a disaster response drill. In this way, training based on a variety of themes is held in the rotational deployment of air units to the Philippines.

In the Balikatan 2016 exercise, it was also of note that training was conducted with China's A2/AD capabilities in mind. In this exercise, F Battery, Second Battalion, Fourteenth Marine Regiment, from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was sent to the Philippines as the first unit equipped with a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) and conducted HIMARS firing training. During the exercise, Marines with the Fourteenth Marines fired HIMARS at the Crow Valley firing range located about twenty kilometers from Clark Air Base, and maneuvered to Antonio Bautista Air Base in Palawan by transport aircraft.

Maj. Gen. Richard L. Simcock II, commanding general, 3rd Marine Division, wrote about this exercise in the *Marine Corp Gazette*, stating that HIMARS used in Balikatan 2016 is "a key platform for rolling back an adversary's A2/AD capabilities" and that "these operations in the maritime environs of the Western Pacific demonstrate, in fact, a return to operational relevancy for maritime forces [including the Marine Corps] operating within—yes within—the A2/AD envelope that has already been established in the region." In other words, he is saying that within the first island chain, including the Philippines, "HIMARS providing shorebased fires across a maritime battlespace can disrupt an adversary's integrated air defenses, deny use of forward airfields, or disable C2 [command/control] nodes," and if multiple mutually supporting HIMARS firing positions can be secured, an adversary's ability "to isolate its objective area will be severely challenged, driving up the cost of aggressive action and serving a natural deterrent

effect.”¹³⁾ Since 2013, the Marine Corps has been actively studying the introduction of HIMARS to strike ships in the Asia-Pacific. The concept of having a battery equipped with HIMARS conducting repetitive anti-ship and anti-ground strikes by firing Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) missiles from HIMARS while moving from deserted island to island within the adversary’s A2/AD sphere on a landing craft air cushion (LCAC) was revealed, and in 2014, this concept was also tested by a battery at RIMPAC and other exercises.¹⁴⁾

On June 29, 2016, Lt. Gen. John E. Wissler, commander, US Marine Corps Forces Command, in a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), revealed the plan of newly establishing an amphibious ready group (ARG)/marine expeditionary unit (MEU) in the Asia Pacific in FY 2019 to create additional presence in Southern Asia. With this, when combined with the 31st MEU in Okinawa and the ARG based in Sasebo, there will be a total of two ARG/MEUs deployed to the Asia-Pacific. It is believed that the plan is to deploy an ARG/MEU to both Northeast Asia and the South Pacific. In addition, while saying that the details of the MEU making up the new ARG is still under study, Wissler suggested that the marines deployed to the Marine Rotational Force in Darwin (MRF-D) for half a year from March to September to avoid the wet season, may be used.

2. The “Third Offset Strategy” and Its Implementation

(1) The “Third Offset Strategy” and Its “Five Building Blocks”

US military superiority, which was established after the Gulf War and appeared to be unshakeable, is now being eroded with the progress of China and Russia’s military modernization, and the spread of advanced weapons and military technology, even to non-state actors such as terrorist organizations. Addressing this situation to maintain military superiority into the future is thus the most important challenge facing the United States. The third offset strategy, promoted by the DOD since its announcement on November 15, 2014, by then Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, is a strategy to respond to this challenge.

The so-called offset strategy is a long-term competitive strategy, which is an “approach to military competition that seeks to asymmetrically compensate for a disadvantaged position.”¹⁵⁾ Namely, “rather than competing head to head in an area where a potential adversary may also possess significant strength, an offset

strategy seeks to shift the axis of competition, through the introduction of new operational concepts and technologies, toward one in which the US has a significant and sustainable advantage.” In another words, these are strategies that “maximize [US] strengths and exploit the weaknesses of potential adversaries.”¹⁶⁾ In the 1950s, the first offset strategy sought to counter the conventional superiority of the Soviet Union by introducing battlefield nuclear weapons. In the 1970s, the second offset strategy attempted to counter conventional superiority of the Soviet Union through ISR, stealth, and precision-guided munitions. The strategy currently advanced is called the “third offset strategy.”

Although the general principles of the third offset strategy had been explained up to now, what kind of specific measures will be advanced under this strategy was not. However, from the end of 2015 to 2016, the areas of focus and programs being advanced began to be clarified, albeit partially.

The areas of focus are artificial intelligence and autonomy, which have made distinct advances in recent years. At a forum hosted by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) on December 14, 2015, Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work pointed out that while the first offset strategy became a reality by the miniaturization of nuclear weapons components and the second offset strategy, by digital microprocessor technology, the third offset strategy will be realized through artificial intelligence and the subsequent autonomy of weapons and systems.¹⁷⁾

In his speech at the CNAS, Work classified the capabilities pursued for the third offset strategy under “five building blocks,” each of which is deeply related to artificial intelligence and autonomy.¹⁸⁾ In “autonomous deep learning systems,” the first of the five building blocks, and “human-machine collaboration,” the second, machines can assist humans in decision making, process high volume data and a variety of data types at a speed that is not possible for humans, and give instructions for decisions to be made by humans (see Table 7.1 for the details on the five building blocks).

This point was raised as a benefit by the Defense Science Board (DSB), a federal advisory committee established to provide independent advice to the secretary of defense, in its final report on research conducted on the possibility of applying autonomy in military operations. This report analyzed that greater needs are arising for speed in decision making due to advancements in military technologies of adversaries, pointing out that as adversaries “make use of more sophisticated technology and weaponry, maintaining vigilance against potential

attacks and responding rapidly to threats will require increasing use of autonomy-enabled capabilities.”¹⁹⁾

Indeed, there are two development projects related to autonomous deep learning systems underway at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which are related to electronic warfare (EW) capabilities: Adaptive Radar Countermeasures (ARC) and Behavioral Learning for Adaptive Electronic Warfare (BLADE) (see Table 7.1). These are explained as systems that enable, for example, a pilot of the EW aircraft, EA-18G Growler, who has detected an unknown radar signal, to deduce a way to respond to the situation during the mission through machine learning, thus eliminating the need to take it back to the base for analysis. In the current EW environment, a potential ability to quickly change waveforms including radio jamming signals is emerging. In order to respond to this climate the United States must also achieve “near real-time system adaptation“ in its EW capabilities. In the DSB report, it is pointed out that this is the reason for employing autonomy.²⁰⁾

The growing importance of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) that can implement operations under an A2/AD environment is also raised, but it is said that with the decreasing number of US submarines and the enhanced ASW capabilities of potential adversaries, US submarines forces may be at more risk of sustaining losses during a conflict. The DSB report proposes the introduction of the unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) to mitigate such risk; specifically to launch extra-large autonomous UUVs from the homeport or from surface ships to travel autonomously to the area of operations. From there, cascaded operations can be conducted in which smaller UUVs with automated target recognition capabilities are launched to strike the adversary’s ship. The DSB report notes that for missions that may be difficult to be conducted by manned submarines due to the duration and the potential risk of damage from such missions, if UUVs are used instead, it would be possible to restrict adversary ship actions even from sites located far away. On the other hand, it would be difficult to remotely control a UUV because radio waves do not travel well in water. Accordingly, the DSB report points out that “Autonomous UUVs, in particular, hold great promise” because they can make judgments on their own.²¹⁾ The fact that the introduction of autonomy can, in this way, make operation of UUVs possible in environments where communications cannot be secured, is another point raised by the DSB report as an advantage autonomy can deliver to military operations.

Table 7.1. Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work's five building blocks of the third offset strategy and specific examples

Technology	Overview	Specific examples
Autonomous deep learning systems	Analyzing large amount of data sets and identifying patterns and models in near real time, and then providing advice for decisions or making decisions based on that analysis. For use in cyber defense, EW, missile defense, vehicle protection systems, and other areas requiring faster reactions than are possible by humans.	DARPA: Cognitive EW which responds in real time to interfere with new, unknown electromagnetic spectrum signals emitting from enemy radar and communications systems (Adaptive Radar Countermeasures [ARC], and Behavioral Learning for Adaptive Electronic Warfare [BLADE]). Air Force: Neuromorphic Fusion of Timely Intelligence (NFTI) program (automated intelligence gathering system based on deep learning technology, which automates threat detection and classification and generates in-mission intelligence reports)
Human-machine collaboration	By teaming humans with support systems, enables humans to make better and faster decisions.	Air Force: Machines assist humans from falling into information overload. Examples include the F-35 helmet, which combines huge amounts of sensor and computer data, and arranges and presents this in a format that the pilot can understand).
Assisted human operations	Machines and systems assist humans to enhance their performance. Wearable technology, head-up displays, combat apps, etc.	Air Force: "BATMAN-II" (wearable technology developed for special operations airmen, which integrates sensors, computers, and communications gear)
Manned-unmanned combat teaming	Manned and unmanned systems cooperate in conducting operations.	Army: Upgrade to enable AH-64D/E pilots to control UAV operation (MQ-1C Grey Eagle, RQ-7B) Navy: P-8 and Triton UAV Air Force: Integrate autonomously operating platforms and a manned strike package. (First, a UAV identifies surface-to-air threats through ISR, and then the manned package receiving the information relayed from the UAV conducts follow-on EW. The second group of autonomous platforms provides defensive coverage or even serves as a "munitions truck." This is the concept of the arsenal plane.)
Cyber and electronic warfare (EW) hardened and network-enabled semi-autonomous weapons	A system that can effectively operate even when communications and GPS are obstructed.	Air Force: Small Diameter Bomb (SDB), that has the capability to continue an attack even when losing the link with the aircraft or access to GPS by sharing data with other weapons.

Sources: Department of Defense and others.

These points also lead to the belief that autonomy is beneficial in dealing with A2/AD threats. The *Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy* released by the DOD in August 2015 also pointed out that in order to offset the proliferation of A2/AD weapons in maritime Asia, robotics, autonomous systems and other breakthroughs need to be utilized along with innovative operational and organizational concepts.

The DOD emphasizes that the third offset strategy is also reflected in the FY 2017 DOD budget request. Stephen Welby, assistant secretary of defense for research and engineering, explained that in order to “help spur research, development, test, evaluation and procurement of advanced capabilities that will enable future offset strategies,” the DOD is appropriating \$3.6 billion for FY 2017 and \$18 billion for the Future Year Defense Plans (FYDP) over the five years from FY 2017 through FY 2021, of which focus is placed on weapons and concepts for surface-strike and air-to-air combat to contend with A2/AD threats, submarines and undersea force, human-machine teaming, and other areas. While “relatively modest compared to the Department’s overall program,” he states that “these investments will enable the development of leading-edge, primarily asymmetric capabilities and help spur development of new ways of warfighting to counter advanced adversaries.”²²⁾

(2) Use of Existing Capabilities for Near-Term Solutions

However, in the third offset strategy, not only is technological development for the future being promoted, but also solutions that use technologies and weapons that already exist or will be possible to use in the near term. On February 2, 2016, in a speech he made in Washington, D.C., Carter revealed that in 2012, when he was deputy defense secretary, the Strategic Capabilities Office was established to “help maintain our advantages now.”²³⁾

According to Director William B. Roper, Jr. of the Strategic Capabilities Office, the office is the “near-term component” of the third offset strategy, and has as its goal “to enhance deterrence backed by an arsenal of surprises and sleights of war using systems we have today.” It aims to “rejuvenate our military playbook by reimagining its strengths—ships, subs, aircraft, vehicles, etc.—using them in unforeseen, and hopefully uncontested, ways.”²⁴⁾ According to Roper, much of the technologies considered in the third offset strategy require time before they can become reality, and with potential adversaries striving to close up to the United States in military strength capabilities, the center is “buying time” by making full

use of existing capacities.²⁵⁾ Taking the opposite path from the conventional weapons development process of creating weapons based on operational needs, the Strategic Capability Office emphasizes innovativeness in uncovering operational needs by effectively utilizing hardware or software that exist (or already under the process of development in the Services or other Agencies), and is promoting projects in cooperation with the Services, related Agencies, and other organizations. It has already implemented fifteen projects since its establishment in 2012, and its operating costs have grown by over six-fold from the \$138.41 million of its first FY 2014 budget to the \$901.89 million of the FY 2017 budget request.

On February 3, 2016, Carter announced in his remarks at Naval Base San Diego that a program is underway to modify the SM-6, the Navy's latest anti-aircraft, anti-ballistic missile, to add anti-ship capabilities. This is also one of the programs implemented by the Strategic Capability Office. With regard to the anti-ship modification of SM-6, before that speech, on January 18, a test was conducted with the Aegis destroyer USS *John Paul Jones* firing an SM-6 at a target ship in the waters off Hawaii, sinking it. According to Carter, as the test was able to confirm that the modified SM-6 can be used in an anti-ship mission, a total of \$2.9 billion will be requested to procure 600 missiles within the next five years (the actual budget request for FYDP was \$2,616.76 million for 625 missiles).

Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr., US Navy, commander, US Pacific Command, at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Armed Services (SASC) on February 23, 2016, stated that the Harpoon, the main anti-ship missile of the US Navy, is essentially the same subsonic ship-to-ship munition as the Navy had about forty years ago. With competitors now possessing supersonic ship-to-ship and land-based missiles, he appealed for the necessity of “efforts to turn the tables back in our favor—quickly.”²⁶⁾ And through modifications that add anti-ship capabilities to the SM-6, with a speed of Mach 3.5 and a range of more than 200 nautical miles (about 370 kilometers), the US Navy is demonstrating that it can possess long-range, supersonic speed anti-ship capabilities never before had, without the need to invest large additional costs.

In addition, as a similar initiative promoted by the Strategic Capability Office, there is the hyper velocity gun weapons system (HVGWS) project. This aims to allow a hyper velocity projectile (HVP), which was developed from a projectile originally developed for firing from an electromagnetic railgun, to be fired from

the Army's M109 howitzer Paladin, a conventional powder gun, and MK45 5-inch guns equipped on the Navy's cruisers or destroyers. When fired from a 5-inch gun, the HVP is said to be able to attack its target at a speed and range double that of conventional artillery shells due to its superior aerodynamic design. It is anticipated that by coupling an HVP with a sensor and guidance system, guns generically deployed to the Navy or Army can be utilized for missile defense missions.

The benefits of such an initiative are said to be the low costs and the larger depth of magazine. Until now, due to the expensive costs of US missile interceptors compared to the relatively inexpensive ballistic missiles of China and other countries, a point of issue was the cost-exchange ratios between the attacker and defender being much too unfavorable to the defending side. However, if the HVP can be used in missile defense by mounting this in the conventional 5-inch guns, it is anticipated that the cost-exchange ratios will return to being more favorable to the defense side. Carter stated that through the introduction of the HVP, "instead of spending more money on more expensive interceptors...we can turn past offense into future defense. Defeating incoming missile raids at a much lower cost per round and thereby imposing higher costs on an attacker."²⁷

Originally, expectations were held on directed energy weapons and railguns as solutions to the issues of cost and depth of magazine. However, as it will take time for these to become available in the field, the HVGWS project, the combining of already developed technologies with existing weapons—the 5-inch gun and the Paladin self-propelled howitzer—can be said to answer the demands of the third offset strategy for comparatively low cost and near-term solutions.

One more point is that, as indicated by Carter that the HVGWS project "can turn past offense into future defense," the approach to generate new capabilities by switching defense and attack missions for existing equipment is another feature of the initiatives taken by the Strategic Capabilities Office. In other words, this switch is pursued in ways such as using the SM-6, originally an anti-air missile interceptor, for anti-ship missions, and using 5-inch guns and Paladin self-propelled howitzers, which are essentially used for anti-ship attack and fire support, for missile defense.

One of the projects revealed to be underway by the Strategic Capabilities Office is the "arsenal plane." This is an old model aircraft that carries long-range missiles to serve as a "flying launchpad." Its concept is to fire long-range missiles based on target information received from fifth generation aircraft that have penetrated the

enemy's air defense network, and is "essentially combining different systems already in our inventory to create whole new capabilities," according to Carter.²⁸⁾ Through such operations, the usefulness of non-stealth aircraft, which are vulnerable to the enemy's integrated air defense systems (IADS), can be restored. It is said that the Strategic Capability Office will partner with the Air Force to build and test a prototype by FY 2020.

3. The "Russian Threat" and Its Impact on Defense Policy

(1) Qualitative Change in Security Commitment toward Europe: From "Assurance" to "Deterrence"

The position of Russia within US defense policy is also undergoing significant change in 2016, two years since Russia's annexation of Crimea. Carter, in the FY 2017 DOD budget request, raised as the first "challenge" determining the budget's areas of focus, the "strong and balanced approach to deter Russian aggression" (second: China; third: North Korea; fourth: Iran; fifth: ISIL).²⁹⁾ With regard to Russia, in the previous year's DOD budget request, Carter only stated that budget was for "maintaining a strong commitment to security and stability in Europe and the Middle East," and did not go so far as to say that this was to "deter" Russian aggression.³⁰⁾ Regarding the aim to deter Russian aggression, which was expressed in the FY 2017 request, Carter stated that "we haven't had to devote a significant portion of our defense investment to this possibility for 25 years," but emphasized that the FY 2017 budget "breaks new ground by re-envisioning and recommitting to deterring—and, if deterrence fails, defeating—any aggression against our allies in the future."³¹⁾

As specific measures to deal with Russia, since FY 2015, the DOD, within the framework of the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), has been reinforcing rotational deployment of troops, bilateral and multilateral exercises, and the sending of ships mainly to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the three Baltic states, enhancing the prepositioning of equipment and supplies in Europe, and improving facilities in the NATO countries. These efforts were taken with the aim of reassuring the three Baltic states and NATO allies of Eastern Europe, which were seriously concerned that the next military intervention by Russia will be in their countries, that the United States will guarantee their security. However, in the FY 2017 budget request these ERI activities are changing

into initiatives aiming for deterrence. On July 13, 2016, Rachel Ellehuus, DOD principal director for Europe & NATO Policy, before the Lower House Committee on Armed Services, positioned the FY 2017 ERI request as representing “a significant augmentation of these [ERI] efforts, enabling us to move from assurance to deterrence.”³²⁾ Accordingly, the FY 2017 ERI budget request was expanded to \$3,419.7 million, over four times more than the enacted amount of the previous fiscal year. This came from a perception that “there are large gaps in our capability to deter Russian aggression,” despite the “substantial impact” the ERI has had on assurance.³³⁾

Symbolic of the shift from assurance to deterrence in the FY 2017 ERI-related budget is the bolstering of prepositioned stocks, centering on the new establishment of Army Prepositioned Stocks in Europe providing one armored brigade combat team (ABCT), a fires brigade, a division headquarters, and a sustainment brigade; accordingly, the FY 2017 budget request provides \$1,903.9 million, thirty-three times that of the previous fiscal year. These are equipment for use by the ABCT when additionally deployed to Europe in the event of a crisis, and is positioned as “[increasing] warfighting capacity on the [European] continent.”³⁴⁾

On the other hand, since 2014, the ABCT has been deployed from the Continental US (CONUS) to Europe as the European Rotational Force (ERF; details on ERF to follow), and the ABCT, when deployed in Europe, used the

Table 7.2. Budget request for the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) (USD million)

Item	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Increased presence	423.1	471.4	1,049.8
Additional bilateral and multilateral exercises	40.6	108.4	163.1
Enhanced prepositioning	136.1	57.8	1,903.9
Improved infrastructure	196.5	89.1	217.4
Building partnership capacity	13.7	62.6	85.5
ERI transfer fund	175		
Total	985	789.3	3,419.7

Source: OUSD(C), *European Reassurance Initiative, Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2017*, 2016, p. 1.
 Note: FY 2015 and FY 2016 are enacted amounts, and FY 2017 is the requested amount.

European Activity Set (EAS) for joint exercises and training with its NATO allies. The EAS was at the time of its placement in 2014, a single battalion set, but with the addition of equipment for two battalions, it was expanded to a full ABCT equipment set during rotation in 2015. In addition to the set's original storage site in Germany, equipment has been moved to forward storage sites in Lithuania, Romania, and Bulgaria, which are facing threats from Russia. Funds for these were also included in the FY 2017 budget request.

Along with the increase in prepositioned equipment, a continuous rotational presence in Europe through deployment of an ABCT from CONUS was also included in the FY 2017 ERI request. This is positioned as a measure to “modify the Army’s posture in Europe,” in order to “deter or defeat further Russian aggression.”³⁵⁾ Rotational deployment of an ABCT to Europe had already begun as the ERF in 2014. This was initiated with the purpose of augmenting heavy presence in Europe after the last two remaining ABCTs in Europe were inactivated under the Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) of January 2012. At the time of its start in 2014, one battalion from a CONUS-based ABCT was sent to Europe twice a year (for two months each time). However, in response to the Ukraine crisis, from fall 2015, this was expanded to one nearly full ABCT being sent twice a year (for three months each time). Although there was no difference in the FY 2017 budget request as to the size of the unit sent, it provides for continuous, heel-to-toe rotational presence of an ABCT in Europe, while extending the duration of deployment to nine months each. This will be implemented from February 2017.

Whether it is an increase of prepositioned equipment stock or continuous ABCT rotational development, the Army plays a major role in ERI, making up over 80 percent of the total ERI budget. It is maintained that such initiatives for continuous rotation of one ABCT and the increase of prepositioned equipment, along with troops and equipment already in Europe, will “allow us to rapidly form a highly-capable combined-arms ground force of division-plus strength that can respond theater-wide if necessary.”³⁶⁾

(2) “Discovering” Vulnerability against Russia’s Military Strength

The impact of Russia’s “threat” on US defense policy is not limited to change in military posture in Europe, which includes increased rotational deployment to Central and East European NATO allies and more joint exercises with them, as well as the increase of prepositioned equipment. As mentioned before, the DOD

is giving the explanation that it is shifting the focus of its commitment to the security of Europe from providing assurance to its allies to deterrence. And, that deterrence is based not on deterrence by punishment, but on deterrence by denial, which stems from the ability of “if deterrence fails, defeating—any aggression against our allies in the future.”³⁷⁾ After a realistic study on whether the United States can defeat Russian aggression, the clear gap in capabilities and the vulnerability of the US forces in comparison to the Russian military capabilities displayed by its intervention in eastern Ukraine, were perceived anew.

In this context, the point at issue is the Army. The SASC held a hearing on army modernization on April 5, 2016, and there, a significant portion of the discussion was devoted to how to consider Russia’s military strength demonstrated through its military actions in Ukraine. In a written statement, officials of the Department of the Army who attended the hearing gave the assessment that, “It is clear that while our Army was engaged in Afghanistan and Iraq, Russia studied US capabilities and vulnerabilities and embarked on an ambitious and largely successful modernization effort.”³⁸⁾ As a result, one of the witnesses at the hearing, Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster, director, Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC), testified that the Army “risks losing qualitative overmatch in future conflicts.”³⁹⁾

The first specific area raised here was EW capabilities. In Ukraine, the Russian forces used EW to block the communications of the Ukrainian forces, and by jamming global positioning system (GPS) signals and controller communications, disrupted the operation of Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). In addition, the Russian forces used EW capability to deny demonstration by the Ukrainian forces of their fighting capabilities, such as by defeating Ukrainian artillery and mortars rounds by using EW to cause their electronic fusing to malfunction. It is also said that the Russians detect Ukraine’s electromagnetic emissions (including radios, Blue Force Tracker, Wi-Fi and cellphones) and use them to pinpoint strike targets.⁴⁰⁾

Concerns over the US forces lagging behind in EW capabilities are not limited to the Army, but are shared throughout the DOD. In its report on US electronic warfare capability released in July 2015, the DSB states, “A perception that the [Soviet] threat had disappeared as well caused U.S. attention to EW to relax.” Meanwhile, realizing that US military capability following the Gulf War depends on information superiority, “adversaries have spent significant time, effort, and resources toward lessening the U.S. ability to gather, distribute, coordinate, and

act on that information,” and as a result, the report concluded, “this superiority in electronics is now severely challenged.”⁴¹⁾ Against the backdrop of such perceptions, the DOD, in its FY 2017 budget request, emphasizes the policy to position and prioritize the electromagnetic spectrum (where EW takes place) as a domain and warfighting area that stands alongside air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace.

The second issue is Russia’s “tiered enemy air defense capabilities,” which, according to McMaster, has “established [Russia’s] air supremacy over Ukraine from the ground.”⁴²⁾ This is an issue that has also been pointed out by Gen. Philip M. Breedlove, commander, US European Command, and Gen. Frank Gorenc, commander, US Air Forces in Europe, since 2015.

Third is the improved operational capability of Russia’s artillery, which was also raised at the abovementioned hearing. While there are concerns over the fact that Russia’s missiles and cannon artillery systems “outrange and are more lethal than US Army artillery systems and munitions,”⁴³⁾ Army officials also sense a threat in how these systems are operated. Reportedly, the Russian forces located the general disposition of Ukrainian forces by skimming social media and detecting electromagnetic emissions from these troops, then identified the target with UAV, and used massed artillery fire to inflict severe damage on the Ukrainian forces.⁴⁴⁾ Russia has thus demonstrated that it has significantly enhanced the effectiveness of artillery fires, a very traditional means of warfare, by employing a new technology—UAV.⁴⁵⁾ This combination of advanced capabilities is said to depict “a high degree of technological sophistication.”⁴⁶⁾ In addition, it is estimated that over 80 percent of damage to Ukrainian forces in east Ukraine comes from fire strikes. This is due to Russia’s massed use of area suppression weapons including cluster munitions, thermobaric warheads, and scatterable mines.⁴⁷⁾ On the other hand, in the United States, based on a June 2008 DOD policy to not possess cluster munitions that leave over 1 percent of unexploded submunitions in the field, the US Army has suspended procurement of cluster munitions for its Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS).

“Improvements in the mobility, protection, and lethality of Russian heavy forces,” symbolized by the introduction of new combat vehicles such as the T-90, and active protective systems (APS) to protect vehicles from anti-tank missiles, were also indicated.⁴⁸⁾ In contrast, taking for instance, the introduction of APS, “the U.S. is still in the science-and-technology phase” (Tom Cotton, chairman, SASC Subcommittee on Airland), and with no program to develop new ground

combat vehicles as well, it is perceived that the current main vehicles, “the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the Abrams tank will soon be obsolete.”⁴⁹⁾

The Army had, up to now, relied on the supremacy of other domains in its operations. According to McMaster, the reason why the Army was able to have “smaller and smaller forces to have a greater and greater impact over larger areas on land” was due to “air supremacy, the ability to project power onto land.”⁵⁰⁾ The fact that the US Army substantially reduced artillery from its force structure following the end of the Cold War is also a reason for its current disadvantage in artillery compared to the Russian forces. But to begin with, this was made possible by the end of the Cold War and dissolution of the Soviet threat, and moreover, by the fact that the subsequent military operations, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, were carried out under the assumption that air supremacy is always secured and air support can be received whenever requested. As testified by Lt. Gen. John M. Murray, deputy chief of staff of the Army, G-8, who stated, “we have got a great Air Force, but here recently within the last year or two, we have got to challenge that assumption,” the Army came to realize that when it comes to a showdown with a near-peer competitor such as Russia, they can no longer rely on supremacy in other domains, like air supremacy, as a given, as the Army had long assumed in its past military operations.⁵¹⁾

This perception of its vulnerability toward Russian military forces is also affecting the future development of the US military capability.⁵²⁾ One notable trend is that the US forces have recognized the possibility of being open to enemy attack. One concise example of this is that the Army is again focusing attention on avoiding detection in its studies on how it should fight future wars. In his speech at the CSIS on May 4, McMaster stressed, “we’ve become almost transparent to certain enemies with certain capabilities,” because US forces are broadcasting signals at high power in all directions. He said, the Army is assessing how they are emitting electromagnetic waves and signals to enemies from signals intelligence (SIGINT) and electronic intelligence (ELINT) perspectives, and they are reemphasizing tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) to conceal their own force’s positions. He went on to explain that the US Army is advancing a study called “Russia New Generation Warfare,” and conducting a “vulnerability assessment” of the US forces based on Russian capabilities. He argued that Russia’s actions are affecting the direction of US military force development, stating that the study “is going to put us on a different path in terms of the way we

develop capabilities.”⁵³⁾

Such a recognition that the Army will need to operate under the threat of enemy attack, can also be noted from the fact that Defense Secretary Carter, in his statement on the FY 2017 budget request, raised “ground-based air and missile defenses” as investments that are relevant to deterring Russia.⁵⁴⁾ In the final report by the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFCA), which was established to conduct a review of the Army’s force structure based on the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2015, short-range air defense (SHORAD) was given as an example of an “important shortfall.” The report noted that although “in the post-Cold War era, the Army envisioned little threat from the air forces of potential adversaries,” “recent activities in Ukraine and Syria have demonstrated the threat environment has changed.” Furthermore, the NCFCA report points to that fact that there are no SHORAD battalions currently residing in the regular army and that, with no air threats against the Army forces, modernization of SHORAD has fallen so far behind that it is “unacceptable.”⁵⁵⁾ Similarly, in a report by the CSIS, which assessed the US ground force in Europe, under the same understanding as the NCFCA, it was proposed that rapid modernization of SHORAD systems be undertaken for integration into regular army brigade levels.⁵⁶⁾

These measures are related to the shift in focus of commitment to security in Europe from assurance to deterrence. McMaster stated that since offshore balancing or the threat of punitive action is not effective, in order to deter Russia, which is fighting a limited war for a limited purpose, from taking invasive action toward NATO allies, it would be necessary to take “an approach to deterrence that is consistent with deterrence by denial, convincing your enemy that your enemy is unable to accomplish his objectives at a reasonable cost.”⁵⁷⁾ Should the position for deterrence by denial be taken, if a specific act of aggression by Russia occurs, the United States must be able to drive this back using military force. Accordingly, the fact that vulnerability of the Army in Europe, heretofore unacknowledged, is now being recognized, would suggest that the United States is beginning to realistically assess its capacity and vulnerability in concrete terms from the perspective of implementing deterrence by denial. Now, over two years since the March 2014 annexation of Crimea by Russia, it would appear that this shows how serious the DOD perceives the Russian threat.

4. Change of Administration and Future US National Security Policy

(1) The New Trump Administration and Foreign Policy Challenges

On January 20, 2017, Donald Trump was inaugurated as president of the United States. Since he won the presidential election on November 8, his selection of nominees to the very senior positions within the White House and federal agencies have been steadily revealed, and the focus is moving toward the Senate confirmation process. In the case of the first Obama administration in 2009, it is said that for the sixty top posts in the departments and agencies alone, after the selection of personnel by the White House and a vetting process including investigations into the financial affairs of the candidates, it took over a year to fill all of the positions, with only about 50 percent having received approval by the Senate as of one month after the establishment of the administration, and 85 percent before the Senate recess in August. In order to promote various policies, it will be essential to firmly establish the organization from cabinet to working-level.

President Trump positions “peace through strength,” an approach formerly raised by President Ronald Reagan, as the core of foreign policy. Although his vision is to “promote regional stability, and produce an easing of tensions in the world” while advancing US national interests, as more than a few unclear or contradictory statements concerning concrete policy were made during and after the election, close attention will be paid to initiatives taken from now on.

With regard to policy toward China, which is one of the pillars of the administration’s Asia-Pacific policy, trade issues form the core of his arguments. During his campaign, Trump had criticized that China is damaging the interests of the United States by (1) being a currency manipulator, (2) violating the intellectual property rights of American companies in areas such as proprietary technology, and (3) providing export subsidies to Chinese companies that go against international rules.⁵⁸⁾ Accordingly, bringing back “fairness” to trade relations with China was indicated to be a key policy goal. His telephone call with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen and statement that, “I don’t know why we have to be bound by a One-China policy unless we make a deal with China having to do with other things, including trade,” which were made immediately following his election, attracted attention as suggesting a review of traditional China policy.⁵⁹⁾ Moreover, on December 21, 2016, he announced the establishment of the White

House National Trade Council (NTC) to advise the president on trade negotiation strategies, assess US manufacturing capabilities and the defense industrial base, and generate employment opportunities for US workers in the skilled manufacturing sector, and appointed University of California professor Peter Navarro, known for his hardline approach to China, as its director.

With regard to US military presence in the Asia-Pacific, he positioned actions to “strengthen the U.S. military and deploying it appropriately in the East and South China Seas” as part of strategies for trade negotiations with China, and through this “discourage Chinese adventurism that imperils American interests in Asia and shows our strength as we begin renegotiating our trading relationship with China.” He believes that a “strong military presence” will show other nations the global leadership of the United States.⁶⁰

In contrast to this China policy, during the election Trump showed a cooperative stance in the relationship with Russia, stating, “an easing of tensions and improved relations with Russia—from a position of strength—is possible.”⁶¹ He also chose ExxonMobil Chairman Rex Tillerson, who has a close relationship with Russia, as Secretary of State. An upcoming point at issue will be whether the United States actually eases or removes the economic sanctions against Russia, which have been levied by the Obama administration since 2014. With regard to the Syria issue, from the position of placing importance on dealing with ISIL and international terrorism, there is also the possibility that the administration will show a cooperative stance toward Russia, which supports the Assad regime. But as there are deeply rooted perceptions of the Russian threat in US Congress, including the issue of hacking during the election, there is also the possibility that Trump’s policy of cooperation with Russia will face resistance by Congress. Moreover, the position to bolster relations with Russia will most probably have an impact on the US relationship with the NATO countries as well.

With regard to security policy, during the campaign Trump appeared to place

his strongest emphasis on counterterrorism, especially how to deal with ISIL. In particular, in his September 7 speech on national defense policy given in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he also highlighted military response, declaring that he will advance a fight that covers military, cyber, financial and ideological warfare to destroy ISIL, and will request the armed forces to present him with a plan to “defeat and destroy” ISIL within thirty days of taking office. But considering that Trump said that he plans to put an end to the current “nation building” and “regime change” strategies implemented by the Obama administration, if it is assumed that this happens, there would be limits to the deployment of ground forces to deal with ISIL. In any case, as Trump himself acknowledges, not only military measures, such as requesting the armed forces to present a plan within 30 days of his inauguration, but initiatives in a wide variety of areas will be required to deal with ISIL.

(2) Strengthening National Defense under the Trump Administration

In his campaign speech delivered in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia on September 7, 2016, Trump made an appeal to “rebuild our military” as a part of the approach for “peace through strength,” and indicated his policy of significantly bolstering military strength; specifically, building an active Army of 540,000 troops, building a Navy of 350 ships, building a Marine Corps with 36 battalions, and building an Air Force of at least 1,200 fighter aircraft (see Table 7.3).⁶²⁾

As mentioned in the above speech, these figures were mainly based on the results of studies conducted by the Heritage Foundation. The foundation has been publishing the *Index of U.S. Military Strength* report annually since 2015. The criteria for its assessments is the “two-war requirement”—the ability to fight two major regional conflicts (MRC) occurring nearly simultaneously in two geographically separated locations.⁶³⁾ The two-war requirement was formulated in the 1993 Bottom-Up Review (BUR) as forces sufficient to fight and win two MRCs, and since then, was established as the goal for developing the US forces, but the force level to fulfill these objectives were gradually lowered in successive strategic reviews following the BUR. Then in the DSG released in January 2012, the goal in the second MRC was revised from defeating the enemy to “denying the objectives” of, or “imposing unacceptable costs” on the aggressor, and this was also adopted in the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The goals

Table 7.3. Trump campaign’s plans for defense buildup in the 2016 elections

	Trump proposal (Sept. 7 speech)	Status as of FY 2016	Trump campaign’s probable sources of reference
National defense budget		\$556.7 billion	\$637.5 billion (NDP, as of FY 2016)
Army end strength (active component)	540,000 soldiers	475,000 soldiers (30 BCT)	
Navy (no. of ships)	350 ships	280 ships	346 ships (The Heritage Foundation)
Marine Corps (infantry battalions)	36 battalions	24 battalions	36 battalions (The Heritage Foundation)
Air Force (fighter aircraft)	1,200 aircraft	1,159 aircraft	1,200 aircraft (The Heritage Foundation)

Sources: Compiled from public documents

proposed by Trump in his September 7 speech was adopted from the recommendations made by the Heritage Foundation. As the foundation’s figures were based on the two-war requirement with reference to the BUR and other studies, Trump’s goals are significantly higher than the current military force, which was based on the 2014 QDR.

Regarding defense spending needed to achieve these “long-term goals,” which were designed to “rebuild our military,” Trump said that he will ask the secretary of defense to prepare a new budget request, and did not, at that time during the campaign, raise specific goals. However, it is believed that the figures he has in mind are those of the FYDP, which was formulated along with the FY 2012 DOD budget request—the final budget request submitted before enactment of the 2011 Budget Control Act, which resulted in sequestration. In this FY 2012 FYDP, the FY 2016 defense budget is estimated at \$637.5 billion. Both the Trump camp at that time and the Heritage Foundation’s *Index of U.S. Military Strength* seemed to have compared figures with the FY 2012 FYDP when touching on the reduction of national defense funding under the Obama administration, and used this as reference in proposing an increase in defense spending.⁶⁴⁾

Because these proposals for strengthening national defense will result in a significant increase in defense spending, during the election Trump called for elimination of the “defense sequester.” While the spending caps and sequestration mechanism apply to both defense and non-defense spending, it is believed that the

proposed removal is limited to defense spending, and this was also raised in the Republican party platform on the day of the election. In the above speech on September 7, Trump explained that the increase in defense spending can be offset by several means. Specifically, (1) reducing improper government payments (which are said to be as high as \$137 billion in FY 2015, centering on Medicare and Medicaid),⁶⁵ (2) reducing uncollected taxes, which are due but fail to be paid to the Internal Revenue Service (estimated to be over \$400 billion per year),⁶⁶ (3) reducing the federal government workforce, and (4) reducing expenditures by 5 percent for programs that are not authorized under law due to expiration of the relevant law (estimated to be over \$310 billion in FY 2016).⁶⁷ He estimated that such efforts will “fully offset the costs of increased military spending.”⁶⁸

However, the Congressional Democrats strongly oppose Trump’s proposal to abolish only defense sequesters. In addition, in view of the fact that the Obama administration has already attempted to streamline government spending, it is unlikely that enough funds will be produced to “fully offset the costs of increased military spending” as stated by Trump during the campaign.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Trump has indicated his intention to introduce large tax cuts and promote the domestic development of infrastructure. This could lead to increasing the budget deficit, which is opposed by Congressional Republicans. How the administration will receive stakeholder consent for such initiatives will be closely watched.

Abbreviations in the notes are as follows.

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS); Congressional Budget Office (CBO); Defense Science Board (DSB); Department of Defense (DOD); Department of the Army (DA); Department of State (DOS); House Committee on Armed Services (HASC); Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer (OUSD(C)/CFO); *Political Transcripts by CQ Transcriptions (PTCQT)*; Senate Committee on Armed Services (SASC).

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