

Chapter 6

The United States

The Trump Administration's National Security Policy

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On January 20, 2017, Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States. One of the primary factors affecting the Trump administration's Asia-Pacific policy is the threat of North Korea's nuclear and missile development program. To address this issue, the administration is pursuing a policy of "strategic accountability," in which it increases diplomatic and economic pressure on North Korea under the three pillars of additional economic sanctions, increased international pressure, and stronger efforts for nonproliferation.

On the other hand, in response to repetitive provocations by North Korea, the Trump administration showed the policy of strengthening military pressure on the country. That pressure peaked from April to June, and from October to November, but at the same time, the administration's attempts to prevent inadvertent escalation or misconceptions were also seen. Although some progress was made in the ballistic missile defense (BMD) flight tests in 2017, challenges for the US Navy's BMD posture in the region remain, among them the fact that two BMD-capable ships based in Japan had to leave the front line due to collisions. Meanwhile, the Trump administration is steadily maintaining or reinforcing the programs advanced by the previous administration in Guam, Southeast Asia, and Australia, showing continuation of US military presence in the Western Pacific.

The Trump administration positions the rebuilding of the US Armed Forces as its most important policy challenge. Along with restoring readiness, which had eroded under the budget cuts, while further working to meet the requirements of military operations underway in Iraq and other locations, it aims at "growing force structure at the maximum responsible rate." Symbolic of such efforts are expanding the navy to a 355-ship fleet and restoring the end strength of the army which has been decreasing under the previous administration. In order to support this expansion of military capabilities, the Trump administration is indicating the policy of cutting non-defense funding in its federal budget to make up for an increase in national defense funding.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration's Department of Defense inherited its predecessor's threat perception formulated in its final days as the "four-plus-one." The administration is also in substance carrying on with concepts such as the Defense Innovation Initiative and Third Offset Strategy, which the previous administration, in face of the military modernization by China and Russia and proliferation of military technologies, had advanced to secure US military

superiority into the future. In December, the Trump administration released its first *National Security Strategy* (NSS). The Trump administration positioned its NSS as one that “puts America First,” but it in essence raised the policies of previous administrations: the leadership role of the United States in the international community, commitment toward its allies and partners, and support for various international institutions that have supported the post-war international order.

1. Responding to Escalating Tensions in East Asia

(1) Response to the North Korean Threat

The foreign policy of the Donald Trump administration, which was established on January 20, 2017, is full of “uncertainty” and “unpredictability” due to statements made by the president himself, frequent personnel changes in the White House, and the fact that many of the key positions in the State Department and other parts of the government are still unfilled.

Amid such circumstances, addressing the problem of North Korea’s nuclear and missile development has become one of the major factors defining the Trump administration’s Asia Pacific policy. In 2017, North Korea conducted a total of fourteen ballistic missile launches.

Since the start of the Kim Jong Un regime in December 2011, there have been thirty-eight ballistic missile launches by North Korea. A dramatically increasing trend can be seen when this is compared to the one time under Kim Jong Il and five times under Kim Il Sung.¹⁾ Notably, the ballistic missiles used in the tests of July 4 and 28, and November 29, are presumed to have been a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)²⁾ that presents a more serious threat to the region and international community. Following this, on September 3, North Korea conducted a nuclear test—its sixth since its first successful test in 2006—estimated to have the largest yield ever of 160 kilotons.

In response to such actions for nuclear and missile development by North Korea, the Trump administration has repeatedly expressed its intentions to shift away from the approach of

dismantling North Korea's nuclear program taken by the previous Barack Obama administration. On March 17, 2017, during his visit to the South Korea, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that the Obama administration's "policy of strategic patience has ended," and that "all options are on the table," including the use of military force on North Korea.³⁾ During the joint press conference following the US-South Korea Summit meeting on June 30, President Trump stated, "The era of strategic patience with the North Korean regime has failed. ... Frankly, that patience is over."⁴⁾

The Obama administration's policy line toward North Korea, which was dubbed the policy of "strategic patience" as described by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, is said to have included the elements of: (1) commitment to close talks with Japan and South Korea, (2) adherence to the objective of denuclearization of North Korea, (3) stronger efforts for counter-proliferation, (4) bolstering of tailored deterrence against North Korea's provocations, and (5) while continuing economic sanctions, maintaining the possibility of dialogue under the condition that North Korea takes actions toward denuclearization.⁵⁾ There was, however, much criticism toward this policy as it was unable to deter North Korea's nuclear and missile development.⁶⁾

The Trump administration revealed that it will pursue a policy of "strategic accountability," in which diplomatic and economic pressure on North Korea is strengthened to achieve the "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" and to dismantle its ballistic missile programs. According to Susan Thornton, acting assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, in her testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on September 12, 2017, the pillars of the administration's strategy are: (1) pursuit of additional economic sanctions against North Korea, (2) stronger international pressure on North Korea, and (3) stronger use of authorities granted in domestic law and initiatives for nonproliferation. In parallel with such efforts, she clarified the US commitment to the defense of Japan and South Korea to deter and counter North Korea, and that deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system to South Korea and other necessary measures will be taken. On the other hand, Tillerson, Secretary of Defense James Mattis and other senior government officials have been strongly reiterating that US policy toward North Korea does not seek "regime change" or "collapse."

With regard to stronger additional economic sanctions, on June 15, 2017, the

US Department of Justice filed a complaint with the US Attorney's Office seeking forfeiture of some \$1.9 million from Mingzheng International Trading Limited, a Chinese trading firm, on the high suspicion of money laundering for the Foreign Trade Bank of North Korea. On June 29, the US Treasury Department announced the banning of transactions between US financial organizations and China's Bank of Dandong due to its involvement in North Korea's money laundering.⁷⁾ Furthermore, on August 22, the department announced the freezing of assets and other sanctions against Russian and Chinese companies for their involvement in North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs. Trump issued a presidential executive order on September 21 to the relevant departments for imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea. To that end, on September 26, the United States announced sanctions against eight North Korean banks and twenty-six individuals with North Korean citizenship for their use of financial systems to advance North Korea's development of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles and for their violations of United Nations Security Council Resolutions. On October 26, it was announced that as sanctions against serious human rights abuses by the Kim Jong Un regime, the assets of designated senior North Korean officials within US jurisdiction will be frozen. On November 20, it was revealed that North Korea would be re-designated as a state sponsor of terrorism, and on the following day, additional sanctions, including that concerning a Chinese businessman, were announced. Moreover, on December 27, the Treasury Department announced sanctions against two senior North Korean officials for their involvement in the country's nuclear and missile development.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration, as part of strengthening international pressure, also sought the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations Security Council for sanctions on North Korea. On August 5, 2017, Resolution 2371 was adopted unanimously by the Security Council. On September 11, Resolution 2375 was adopted unanimously by the Security Council in response to a nuclear test conducted on the 3rd. Furthermore, on December 23, in response to the ballistic missile tests conducted on November 29, Resolution 2397, which includes limits on the exports of petroleum products to North Korea and the repatriation of North Korean workers, was adopted unanimously by the Security Council.

The Trump administration is not denying the option of direct talks with North Korea regarding the nuclear problem. In fact, Tillerson, in China at the end of

September 2017, revealed that they were in direct communication with the North Korean government about this possibility. However, he states that as a condition for this, it is incumbent that North Korea indicate its “good faith” by immediately putting an end to provocative actions, including its nuclear tests and missile launch tests.

It has been pointed out that this policy line of the Trump administration is actually no different from the approach that was taken by the Obama administration. It does, however, have the notable feature of stressing that China should play a greater role in solving the North Korean problem. Tillerson and Mattis, in their jointly written contribution to the *Wall Street Journal*, state that as Chinese companies are involved with 90 percent of North Korean trade, China has a significant opportunity to assert its influence on the Kim Jong Un regime, and that China has a strong incentive to pursue the same goals as the United States. They underscored the point that China’s cooperation is indispensable for stopping nuclear and missile development by North Korea. China is also implementing sanctions on North Korea in a form that follows the requests of the United States and the resolutions of the UN Security Council. In his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Tillerson stated, “[China’s] cooperation I would say has been notable, but it has been uneven,” indicating the US stance of holding expectations that China will place more pressure on North Korea.⁸⁾

(2) Policies toward China

From statements made during the election campaign, trade issues garnered attention as the focal point in the Trump administration’s policies toward China. With regard to security issues, against the backdrop of the South China Sea issues, the Trump administration is showing a stricter position than the Obama administration. At the Sixteenth IISS Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue), Mattis, while mentioning that the United States welcomes China’s economic development, clearly stated that, “we cannot accept Chinese actions that impinge on the interests of the international community, undermining the rules-based order that has benefitted all countries represented here today, including and especially China.” He also showed a stance of containing China’s actions by saying that all countries have the right to voice their opinions in shaping the international system, “but doing so by ignoring or violating international law threatens all that this inclusive global community has built together during the last seventy years.”⁹⁾

The issue of Taiwan was also one focus of Trump's policies toward China. In December 2016, prior to his inauguration as president, Trump spoke over the phone with President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, becoming the first US president-elect to do so since the normalization of diplomatic relations with China in 1979.¹⁰⁾ Shortly afterwards, in a US news media interview, he declared, "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." This statement gathered a great deal of interest as a suggestion that the forty-year policy taken toward China since the normalization of diplomatic relations may be revised.¹¹⁾ The US "One China" policy is not an endorsement of China's "One China principle" but an acknowledgement by the US government of the "Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China." This was stated in basic documents such as the 1979 Normalization Communique, Taiwan Relations Act, the 1982 US-China Communique, and the Six Assurances.¹²⁾ With regard to this issue, on February 9, 2017 (February 10, JST), in a telephone conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump indicated that the United States intended to maintain its One China policy.¹³⁾ But on the other hand, on June 29, 2017, the Department of State decided on the policy of selling \$1.42 billion worth of arms to Taiwan.

On April 6, 2017, Trump held a summit meeting with Xi Jinping at Mar-a-Lago, his Palm Beach resort in Florida. Although a joint statement was not issued at this meeting, it was agreed that in place of the Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED), which had been held annually by the Obama administration, the Diplomatic and Security Dialogue (D&SD), Comprehensive Economic Dialogue, Law Enforcement and Cybersecurity Dialogue, and Social and Cultural Dialogue will be established as mechanisms for dialogue between the two governments. The D&SD was held on June 21 in Washington with attendance by State Secretary Tillerson, Defense Secretary Mattis and other officials from the US side, and from the Chinese side, State Councilor Yang Jiechi and Gen. Fang Fenghui, chief of the Central Military Commission's Joint Staff Department. Here, views were exchanged on the North Korean nuclear and missile development issue and the South China Sea issues, as well as US-China military exchange. With regard to economic issues, the Comprehensive Economic Dialogue was held in Washington on July 19, with the attendance of Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin and Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross from the US side and Vice Premier Wang Yang as the leader of the delegation from China. The Law Enforcement and

Cybersecurity Dialogue was held in Washington on October 4.

While requesting China’s cooperation for the North Korean issue, the Trump administration is also clearly laying out its stance of not making concessions concerning an issue of conflict between the United States and China—the South China Sea issues. At the Shangri-La Dialogue, Mattis said that China’s “artificial island construction and indisputable militarization of facilities on features in international waters undermine regional stability.” Moreover, he criticized the construction activities as disregard for international law and contempt for other nation’s interests.

Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the South China Sea attracted attention under the Obama administration as a US countermeasure for China’s policy of gradual expansionism in the South China Sea. FONOPs are operations in which US ships and aircraft are deployed to relevant waters and air space to demonstrate that the United States will not accept excessive maritime claims by coastal states. The United States has been performing these operations not only in the South China Sea, but on a global scale for over the past forty years. Beginning with the USS *Lassen*, an *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyer, sailing within twelve nautical miles of Subi Reef in the Spratly (Nansha) Islands on October 27, 2015, under the Obama administration FONOPs in the South China Sea were conducted a total of four times up to October 21, 2016. The Trump administration has conducted at least four FONOPs so far. On May 24, 2017, another *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyer, the USS *Dewey*, sailed within twelve nautical miles of an artificial island built by China on the Mischief Reef in the Spratly (Nansha) archipelago. This was followed by other destroyers in the same class: on July 2, the USS *Stethem* passed within twelve nautical miles of Triton Island in the Paracel (Xisha) Island chain; on August 10, the USS *John S. McCain* sailed within twelve nautical miles of an artificial island built by China on the Mischief Reef in the Spratly (Nansha) Islands; and on October 10, the USS *Chafee* passed near the Paracel (Xisha) Islands.

2. Ongoing and Increasing Military Presence in the Asia Pacific

(1) Military Pressure on North Korea

In 2017, the Trump administration, stating that North Korea is on a quest for

nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles, and is plainly demonstrating its intention to threaten the safety of the US mainland as well as South Korea and Japan, positioned North Korea as “our most immediate threat in the Indo-Asia-Pacific.” The administration clarified its stance on military action, saying that “all options are on the table” for a resolution to the issue.¹⁴⁾ On February 21, at the West 2017 conference held in San Diego, California, Joseph Aucoin, then commander of the Seventh Fleet, expressed his view that “If there’s a fight tonight, it’s probably going to happen on the Korean Peninsula.” The commander of the Third Fleet, Nora Tyson also took this scenario as the “number one probability.”¹⁵⁾ As military tension increased in this region, US military activities around the Korean Peninsula attracted great attention throughout 2017.

The Korean Peninsula situation reached one peak from April through June. In response to repeated provocations by North Korea, in an interview with a US media on April 12, President Trump suggested that he will be sending “an armada, very powerful” including submarines around the Korean Peninsula.¹⁶⁾ On April 25, the USS *Michigan*, an *Ohio*-class nuclear-powered guided-missile submarine (SSGN) capable of carrying a maximum of 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles and 66 special operations personnel, arrived in Busan. At the end of May, in the Sea of Japan, the *Ronald Reagan* carrier strike group (CSG), which completed its five-month planned maintenance period, joined the *Carl Vinson* CSG, which had been deployed to the area around the Korean Peninsula from the end of April. They conducted joint military exercises with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyers *Hyuga* and *Ashigara*. The *Ronald Reagan* CSG had also conducted exercises with the *John C. Stennis* CSG in June last year in the Philippine Sea, but this was the first dual-carrier operations since the 1990s to be conducted in the waters near the Korean Peninsula. Coupled with this deployment of carriers to Northeast Asia, on May 2, a *Los Angeles*-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN), USS *Cheyenne*, arrived at Sasebo; on May 11, an SSN in the same class, the USS *Santa Fe*, arrived at Yokosuka; and on May 31, a same class SSN, USS *Olympia* also arrived at Yokosuka. Furthermore, on June 6, the USS *Cheyenne* visited Busan. In this way, *Los Angeles*-class SSNs, whose primary mission is escorting an aircraft carrier, were successively deployed to the region. The presence of such forces as an *Ohio*-class SSGN and two CSGs, as well as B-1B bombers at Guam’s Andersen Air Force Base (observed more closely below), reveal that by June 2017, the United States did indeed possess “powerful” strike options.

However, after the training exercise in the Sea of Japan, the *Carl Vinson* CSG returned to its homeport of San Diego, and the *Ronald Reagan* CSG was also deployed to Southeast Asia, with both CSGs departing from Northeast Asia. When the USS *Nimitz*, assigned to the Third Fleet, sailed from San Diego on June 1, some expected that it would be deployed to the Western Pacific to replace the *Carl Vinson* CSG.¹⁷⁾ Nevertheless, after it participated in the Malabar 2017 joint naval exercises with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean, USS *Nimitz* was deployed around the Persian Gulf to join Operation Inherent Resolve against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq. In addition, with the USS *Michigan* having returned to the forward base of Guam in early June, it could be said that military pressure on North Korea, applied by showing the force of strong strike capabilities, was relatively reduced after June.

The other peak in 2017 was seen from around October through November. In September, North Korea embarked on its sixth nuclear test, and following that, it continued to pose clear military threats, suggesting a nuclear attack on Japan and the United States and the testing of a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean. In response, the US Air Force deployed bombers including B-1Bs and B-2s from Guam, either independently or jointly with allies, to the area around the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, munitions stocked at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam were increased by 10 percent from the latter half of August to the end of September, showing US preparedness for readily responding to military contingencies in the region. With regard to the US Navy, USS *Tucson*, a *Los Angeles*-class SSN, visited Jinhae in South Korea on October 7, the *Ohio*-class SSGN USS *Michigan* again visited Busan on October 13, and the *Ronald Reagan* CSG also visited Busan on October 21. In addition, on October 23, the *Theodore Roosevelt* CSG from San Diego, and on 25th, the *Nimitz* CSG, which had ended its mission in the Middle East, entered the Seventh Fleet's area of operations. From November 11 through 14, both CSGs conducted exercises in the Sea of Japan with the *Ronald Reagan* CSG. Indeed, multiple CSG operations per se are rarely seen,¹⁸⁾ but in 2017, such operations were conducted twice around the Korean Peninsula.

At the same time, the Trump administration's efforts to prevent inadvertent escalation or misconceptions were also seen. Mattis, visiting the demilitarized zone (DMZ) on October 27, stressed that the goal of the United States is not war with North Korea, but a complete and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean



(From top) USS *Nimitz*, USS *Ronald Reagan*, and USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. j.g. James Griffin)

Peninsula.¹⁹⁾ In addition, regarding the three-carrier exercise near the Korean Peninsula, the DOD, stating that this was a routinely-scheduled exercise and was not to address a specific threat, explained its aim as assuring US allies through a military presence that only the United States is capable of demonstrating.²⁰⁾ These points as well show that the Trump

administration's approach to North Korea, while keeping military options, revolves around diplomatic and economic pressures.

It is also important to note that along with military pressure mainly with strike capabilities, the United States accelerated its efforts to strengthen BMD capabilities. This can be distinctly seen from the fact that while only one live-fire flight test against ballistic missiles was announced by the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) in 2016, this number rose to seven in 2017. In addition, a notable feature regarding BMD is that the United States conducted a diversity of flight tests, including the first intercept test of an SM-3 Block IIA missile, which is being jointly developed by Japan and the United States (Table 6.1). Since stronger intercept capability against ballistic missiles would reduce the significance of nuclear weapons and its main delivery system—the ballistic missile—on which North Korea continues to focus its national resources, enhanced BMD capability would place indirect pressure on North Korea.

Meanwhile, collisions that potentially shake the foundations of the US Navy's Aegis BMD posture also took place in 2017. On June 17, an *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer, the USS *Fitzgerald*, and on August 21, another destroyer, USS *John S. McCain*, collided with merchant ships in the waters off the Izu Peninsula and Singapore, respectively. Although the latter is estimated to be back in service at a relatively early time, the *Fitzgerald*, which had suffered greater damage, is thought to require over a year for its complete restoration. With two ships out of the seven BMD-capable ships homeported in Japan leaving the front line, only five BMD-capable ships are left in the Forward Deployed Naval Force (FDNF). Moreover, the deployment of the *Arleigh-Burke* class destroyer USS *Milius*, which was

Table 6.1. US ballistic missile intercept flight tests in 2017

Date	Test	Interceptor	Target	Success/Failure
Feb. 3	SFTM-01	SM-3 Block IIA	MRBM	Successful
May 30	FTG-15	GMD	ICBM	Successful
June 21	SFTM-02	SM-3 Block IIA	MRBM	Failed
July 11	FTT-18	THAAD	IRBM	Successful
July 30	FET-01	THAAD	MRBM	Successful
Aug. 29	FTM-27 E2	SM-6	MRBM	Successful
Oct. 15	FS-17	SM-3 Block IB	MRBM	Successful

Sources: MDA documents.

Note: GMD, ground-based midcourse defense; MRBM, medium-range ballistic missile; IRBM, intermediate-range ballistic missile.

scheduled to move to Yokosuka to join the FDNF in summer 2017, was postponed until 2018, for the reasons of completing maintenance and modernization and testing of the ship's operations. The US Navy, in a document addressed to Congress in March 2015, states that at least nine BMD-capable ships with the advanced Aegis combat system are required for FDNF Japan.²¹) Given the situation of the Pacific Fleet, which is being forced to carry a heavy operational workload due to unstable regional affairs as well as the collisions, the delay in deployment of the *Milius* should have a certain degree of impact on the Aegis BMD posture in the region. Since the level of ballistic missile threat in Northeast Asia is heightening, the urgent rebuilding of BMD posture is required.

(2) US Military Presence in the Western Pacific

Along with strengthening its involvement in the North Korean issue, the Trump administration is also steadily maintaining or strengthening the programs in Guam, Southeast Asia, and Australia, which were advanced by the previous administration, thus demonstrating its continuation of maintaining US military presence in the Western Pacific. For example, in Guam—the United States' strategic hub of the Western Pacific—Continuous Bomber Presence (CBP), which has been implemented by the US Air Force since 2004, continued. The B-1B bombers were deployed to Guam's Andersen Air Force Base from August 2016, replacing B-52 bombers, and served as the core of CBP missions in the region throughout 2017. Those missions included conducting exercises with countries of

the West Pacific region and flying near the Korean Peninsula's DMZ in a show of force to North Korea.

US military presence was steadily demonstrated in the area around Southeast Asia in 2017 as well. In Singapore, rotational deployment of littoral combat ships (LCS) was continued. On April 17, the captain and over one hundred crew members of the *Independence*-class LCS USS *Coronado*, who were deployed there since June 2016, ended their ten-month stint and were replaced with a crew that arrived from San Diego. In 2017, the ship continued to conduct military exchange and joint training with the countries within and outside the Southeast Asian region, including Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Japan. The *Coronado* was the third ship, following the *Freedom*-class LCSs, USS *Freedom* and USS *Fort Worth*, to be rotationally deployed to Singapore under the Obama administration, but as evidenced by its antiship missile system, it has stronger offensive capacity than the other two *Freedom*-class ships. In a test conducted on August 22 in which the MH-60S Seahawk helicopter and MQ-8B unmanned helicopter embarked on the *Coronado* were used as airborne sensors, the USS *Coronado* successfully hit an over-the-horizon target with a Harpoon missile for the first time. In January 2017, the US Navy had officially launched the concept of Distributed Lethality, which adds offensive capabilities to all ships, including LCS and amphibious ships;²²⁾ the *Coronado*'s Harpoon missile test obviously reflected this concept.

With regard to US military presence in the Philippines in 2017, a certain level of change was seen especially when compared to the active presence of the first half of 2016. The Balikatan exercise held from May 8 to 19 centered on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and counterterrorism, presenting a different tone from the exercises of the previous year that had included island defense and other high-end elements. Another change from the year before was that there was no notable deployment of US military assets within the Philippines, including deployment to those bases agreed to in the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). On the other hand, Harry B. Harris, the commander of the United States Pacific Command (PACOM), expressed his understanding that close bilateral relations will continue to be maintained, with US and Philippine forces slated to conduct over 250 activities during 2017.²³⁾ Indeed, naval drills, joint patrols, and other activities between the United States and the Philippines were steadily implemented through 2017. Moreover, in

response to inroads made by ISIL into the city of Marawi on the Philippine island of Mindanao, the United States supported the Philippine forces' counterterrorism operations by providing urban combat equipment as well as advanced intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities such as MQ-1C unmanned aircraft systems deployed to Mindanao. In September, the US and Philippine governments implemented a bilateral, interagency counterterrorism drill, Tempest Wind, with the participation of foreign affairs, defense, and law enforcement agencies from both countries. In this way, US engagement in counterterrorism in the Philippines has gradually increased. The possibility is, therefore, that US-Philippine military cooperation, including that for counterterrorism, will expand even more if the Philippine government were to make such requests.

The United States showed especially brisk military presence in Australia in 2017. From April 18, 1,250 US Marines were deployed to Darwin in northern Australia for six months as the Marine Rotational Force in Darwin (MRF-D). In the 2017 MRF-D, thirteen aircraft were added to the deployment, including four MV-22B Ospreys participating for the first time. In 2017, the Enhanced Air Cooperation (EAC) program was also launched. As part of the Force Posture Initiatives agreed to between the United States and Australia in 2011, it was an effort aiming to strengthen US military presence in northern Australia and to further heighten the interoperability of the US and Australian air forces. Based on the EAC program, the US Air Force deployed twelve F-22 stealth fighters to Australia's Tindal air force base by February 14.

Furthermore, along with Australia and New Zealand, the United States in July conducted the Talisman Sabre 2017, a biennial joint military exercise. In the field training exercise (FTX), a surface action group (SAG)—comprising the US destroyer USS *Sterett* and four Australian frigates—which joined the USS *Bonhomme Richard* Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) that carried the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), formed an Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) and carried out drills deploying from offshore to the coastal area and landing forces ashore. In recent years, the US Navy has been calling an ESG that combines an ARG, which has the primary missions of landing Marines and providing close air support, and a SAG, which has antiship, antisubmarine and anti-air capabilities, an “up-gunned ESG.” This concept was said to have been tested in this FTX.²⁴⁾

Along with the SAG, other core elements of the up-gunned ESG include F-35Bs (short takeoff/vertical landing variant) deployed to Marine Corps Air

Station Iwakuni in January and an amphibious assault ship capable of carrying them. By deploying F-35Bs—which have multi-mission capabilities including air-to-air combat, air-to-ground strikes, electronic warfare, and early warning—to an amphibious assault ship, and operating it together with the SAG, the ESG's capacity to operate alone in the blue-water domain and the coastal area will be dramatically enhanced. Given that F-35Bs and F-35Cs carrier variant (as well as F-35A conventional takeoff/landing variant) have common basic capabilities and that the amphibious assault ship USS *Wasp*, which has been deployed to Sasebo since January 14, 2018, is said to be able to carry a maximum of twenty or more F-35Bs, the *Wasp's* capability is getting closer to the level of a light aircraft carrier. Amid the severe international security environment, demands for CSG dispatch to regions around the world are increasing. In view of such circumstances, expectations are held that the up-gunned ESG, which has a certain level of power projection capability, could play a role similar to that currently undertaken by CSGs alone.²⁵⁾ If the deployment of F-35Bs onto the USS *Wasp*, scheduled for 2018, proceeds smoothly, 2018 will mark the first formation of a full-fledged, up-gunned ESG and its deployment to the Western Pacific.

3. The Defense Policy of the Trump Administration: Changes and Continuity

(1) Trump Administration Pursues “Rebuilding the US Armed Forces”

During his election campaign, Trump criticized the downsizing and depletion of the US military under the Obama administration, and subsequently declared that he would “rebuild our military,” raising concrete goals such as an active Army end strength of 540,000 and a Navy of 350 ships. In the National Security Presidential Memorandum-1 (NSPM1) signed on January 27, one week after the start of the administration, Trump positioned “rebuilding the US Armed Forces” as the government’s policy, and ordered the Secretary of Defense to conduct a readiness review, develop a fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget amendment request, and establish levels for the DOD’s FY 2018 budget that will be necessary to improve readiness conditions, and submit to him a plan of action to achieve the levels identified in the readiness review before FY 2019. In response to NSPM1, Mattis, in the Implementation Guidance for Budget Directives in the National Security

Presidential Memorandum on Rebuilding the U.S. Armed Forces (“Implementation Guidance”), which was circulated within the department, revealed that this task will be advanced in three phases.

Phase I is the FY 2017 budget amendment request, which was submitted in March. It includes items to address “urgent warfighting readiness shortfalls” and “new requirements” arising from acceleration of military actions against ISIL. Phase II is the DOD’s FY 2018 budget request. While continuing to rebuild readiness, it focuses on rebalancing the program, and includes buying more critical munitions, accelerating facilities sustainment, demonstrating advanced capability, investing in combat support units and equipment, and “growing force structure at the maximum responsible rate.” Phase III is the National Defense Strategy (NDS) to be submitted to Congress in January 2018 (a summary was released on January 19), and the FY 2019-2023 Future Years Defense Program to be prepared along with the department’s FY 2019 budget request.

From Phase I to Phase II, the response for military action against the current threat of ISIL and addressing budget shortfalls for readiness and equipment purchase, which were impacted by budget cuts under the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), account for a large portion of the FY 2017 budget amendment request made during that fiscal year and the FY 2018 DOD budget request submitted in May. However, the national defense strategy indicated in Phase III was designed to determine an approach to enhance the lethality of the US military against “high-end competitors” and “effectiveness ... against a broad spectrum of potential threats.”

The Trump administration’s policy of rebuilding the military was also reflected in the FY 2017 amendment request submitted to Congress on March 16. For that fiscal year, in November under the Obama administration, an additional appropriations request had been made for overseas contingency operations (OCO). However, the additional appropriations request in March not only further increased OCO funding by about \$5.1 billion, but was also notable in requesting an additional \$24.9 billion for the base budget. In the additional appropriations request for base funding, Procurement (\$13.5 billion) and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) (\$7.2 billion) held a large share of 54.5 percent and 29.2 percent, respectively. These include addressing “near- and mid-term ... readiness requirements,” such as depot maintenance, weapons system sustainment, munitions for military operations against ISIL, and additional purchase of equipment used

Table 6.2. Comparison of FY 2017 and FY 2018 defense budgets (unit: USD million)

Fiscal Year	2017				2018					
	FY 2017 Budget Request (Feb. 2016)	FY 2017 Request after FY2017 Nov. 2016 Amendment	FY 2017 Request after March 2017 Amendment	FY2017 Enacted	BCA Cap	FY 2018 Budget Request (May 2017)	FY 2018 Request after FY2018 Nov. 2017 Amendment	FY 2018 Estimate made near the end of the Obama Administration	BCA Cap (before revision)	BCA Cap revised by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018
DOD Base Budget (A)	523,904		549,550	523,703		574,541	577,412	556,713		
Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funding (B)	58,798	64,573	69,653	82,769		64,573	64,970			
Other Agencies Defense-related Budget (C)	28,888		26,450	27,365		28,451		29,472		
DOD Budget Total (A+B)	582,702		619,203	606,472		639,114				
National Defense Category (excluding OCO) (A+C)	552,792		576,000	551,068	551,100	602,992		586,185	549,057	629,000
National Defense Total (A+B+C)	611,590		645,653	633,837		667,565				

Sources: Each fiscal year's DOD budget request documents, relevant appropriation acts, and Congressional Budget Office cost estimates.

at operational tempos that are faster than anticipated.

However, if the March request were to be accepted as is, the base budget would breach the spending caps established for each fiscal year (BCA cap) for discretionary spending (spending authorized through a regular appropriations act) in the “defense” and “non-defense” categories, and thereby could trigger sequestration like that of 2013. Thus, in order to have the base budget fall within the BCA cap, Congress accordingly arranged to transfer part of the request to OCO funding, which is not subject to sequestration. As a result, of the \$30 billion additional appropriations request made by the Trump administration, including the base budget and OCO funding, \$21 billion was approved (see Table 6.2).

For the FY 2018 budget request, the Trump administration, with respect to the defense category, requested a figure that was \$54 billion more than the current BCA cap, and for the non-defense category, requested a figure that was lower than that BCA cap for a decrease proportional to the increase in the defense category. Of the non-defense category, the departments and agencies that were subject to large budget cuts were not just those charged with domestic policies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, the departments of Labor, Energy (other than nuclear weapons), Health and Human Services, and Education, but also those that serve significant roles in national security such as the State Department and US Agency for International Development.

President Trump’s rebuilding of the US Armed Forces is symbolized by his goal to develop military capability to a Navy of 350 ships, and an active Army end strength of 540,000. As already mentioned, since the election campaign, Trump had argued for building a Navy of 350 surface ships and submarines. After his inauguration, on March 2, he visited the USS *Gerald R. Ford*, which was shortly to be commissioned by the Navy, and mentioned his “plans to undertake a major expansion of our entire Navy fleet, including having the 12-carrier Navy we need.”

Expansion of the Navy had been a topic of debate since before Trump took office. For example, the report submitted to Congress in August 2014 by the National Defense Panel (NDP) set up to review the report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) had called for a Navy of at least 323 to 346 ships. However, the Navy, in its Force Structure Assessment (FSA) conducted in 2014, set the goal at 308 ships, and did not agree with the NDP. But one month after the presidential election, on December 14, 2016, the Navy released the results of a new round of FSA, which set the force-level goal at 355 ships, 15 percent higher

than the 308-ship goal of the 2014 FSA. It includes 12 carriers (11), 104 large surface combatants (88), and 66 attack submarines (48) (figures in parentheses are the former targets).

However, in the FY 2018 budget request, the number of ships to be procured during that fiscal year was eight ships, akin to that of the previous fiscal year. At this point, there seems to be no large changes arising from setting a goal of a 355-ship fleet, but the question of when to achieve this target is a significant issue that will impact future buildup of naval capability. On February 9, 2017, acting Secretary of the Navy Sean J. Stackley submitted the United States Navy Accelerated Fleet Plan to Mattis. This plan studied how quickly the 355-ship fleet can be achieved from the points of defense industry production capacity and optimal rates of production that would yield maximum efficiency, without giving regard to budgetary constraints. It called for the production of 88 ships in the 7-year period from FY 2017 through FY 2023—29 more than the estimate at the time of the FY 2017 budget request—at an annual production rate of 12.5 ships. Moreover, a hybrid plan that would nearly achieve the 355-ship goal by 2030 by combining increased ship construction with the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) for existing ships, is also under study. However, this Accelerated Fleet Plan is just for study purposes, and has not been decided upon. The Accelerated Fleet Plan estimates that the average annual funding for Shipbuilding Construction, Navy (SCN) during the FYDP from FY 2017 to FY 2021 would be \$22.6 billion. This is a 40 percent increase from the estimate made at the time of the FY 2017 budget request, which premised a 308-ship goal (the FY 2017 Shipbuilding Construction (request) was \$14.4 billion). Unless there is a sustained increase in the defense budget, the 355-ship fleet will fall through.

In addition to the Navy, another point of controversy in expanding force structure was the Army. Under the Obama administration, the Army proceeded with a plan to draw down its Active Component (AC) end strength to 450,000 and the Reserve Component (RC) end strength to 530,000 by FY 2018, and in the FY 2017 budget request proposed an AC end strength of 460,000 and RC end strength of 530,000. However, during the process of legislation deliberations, the House Armed Services Committee recommended reversing the drawdown of the force, and put together a bill for the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that called for an Army AC end strength of 480,000 and RC end strength of 555,000. As a result, the FY 2017 NDAA, enacted immediately before Obama

left office (December 23, 2016), authorized Army AC end strength of 476,000 and RC end strength of 542,000, with the total end strength 28,000 higher than the initial request. The signing statement issued by then President Obama on the FY 2017 NDAA, criticized the HASC move: “Increasing force structure without adequate funding support in the base budget is dangerous; it will degrade, not enhance, readiness and modernization.” The Trump administration, established one month later, overturned the policy of the Obama administration and rather, on the premise of the additional personnel approved by Congress, requested a corresponding resource increase in the FY 2017 budget request amendment. This request was approved in the DOD Appropriations Act 2017 enacted in May. The Army recognizes this as helping to improve readiness and ensure that it has fully manned formations.

However, with regard to FY 2018, the Trump administration proposes that the Army end strength approved in the FY 2017 NDAA be maintained in FY 2018. US Army Chief of Staff General Mark Milley explains, “we want to make the force structure that does exist complete, whole, and fully ready before we move on to the next step, which is expanding the Army.”

With regard to this point, there was criticism from Congress, such as “inadequate end strength is forcing the Army to consume readiness as fast as it produces it. In other words, the Army will never truly restore readiness until it begins to grow.” (Senator John McCain, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee). Accordingly, the FY 2018 NDAA enacted on December 12, 2017, authorized Army AC end strength of 483,500—7,500 more than that requested in the DOD’s FY 2018 budget request.

Although the Trump administration is pledging to rebuild the military in this manner, it needs funding that can support the realization of this goal. After the budget request was submitted by the Trump administration, talks were conducted in Congress between the Republicans, who control both houses, and the Democrats, who are the minority party, but no agreement was reached on the appropriations measures for FY 2018, which started October 2017. In order to keep the government open, stop-gap funding measures were enacted. However, upon entering the new year, these funding measures expired twice: from January 20 through 22 and on February 9. A three-day government shutdown occurred during the period in January.

When the stop-gap measure briefly expired on February 9, the Bipartisan

Table 6.3. BCA cap revision in accordance with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (unit: USD million)

Fiscal Year	2018		2019	
	Defense	Non-defense	Defense	Non-defense
BCA cap	549,057	515,749	562,025	529,144
Revised BCA Cap	629,000	579,000	647,000	597,000
Increase	79,943	63,251	84,975	67,856

Sources: Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and Congressional Budget Office documents.

Budget Act (BBA) of 2018 was enacted, raising the BCA caps for the two years of FY 2018 and FY 2019 (see Table 6.3). Along with this stop-gap funding was extended through March 23 and suspension of the statutory debt limit through March 1, 2019. Although BBA is not an appropriations measure in itself—it merely raised the BCA caps—the BBA determined the framework for the budget over the next two years. Since the BCA was enacted in 2011, the BBA had been enacted twice—in December 2013 and November 2015—to raise the BCA caps for two-year periods. The 2018 BBA increase of the BCA cap for the defense and non-defense categories combined came to a total of \$296 billion for two years; this was 4.7 times larger than the increase of the 2013 BBA, and 3.7 times larger than that of the 2015 BBA. The DOD highly evaluates the 2018 BBA, saying that it “raises the cap to ensure a budget level that allows our troops to have the resources they need to carry out their mission.” On the other hand, the 2018 BBA was a remarkable departure from the Trump administration’s FY 2018 budget request. Trump’s budget request attempted to curb an increase of the total budget by significantly cutting the non-defense category to fund the increase in the defense category, but the BBA increased spending caps for both the non-defense and defense categories by roughly equivalent levels. This increase in the BCA caps was extremely high even in comparison to the two previous BBAs. It is also projected that there will be a decrease in tax revenues by more than \$1 trillion over the next ten years through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts, which was passed in December, even when accounting for partial offsets arising from the stimulation of the economy through tax cuts. These combined with other factors could deepen fiscal deficit over the long term and pose a huge hindrance to the Trump administration’s pursuit of rebuilding the military.²⁶⁾

(2) Continuity in Defense Policy

The defense policy of the Trump administration, which pledges to rebuild the armed forces, could actually be considered a continuation of the defense policies of the Obama administration in its last two years. With regard to the DOD's FY 2017 budget request, then Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, stressing that in Europe, the United States is starting to take a "strong and balanced approach to deter Russian aggression" and that the rising China is "behaving aggressively," indicated that the "return to ... great power competition" is driving the focus of US defense policy. The recognition that Russia and China, along with North Korea, Iran, and terrorism—the "four-plus-one"—pose primary threats that the United States has to address was shared by the former and current chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Martin Dempsey and Joseph Dunford, and has come to form the basis of the defense planning by the DOD.

Mattis, at the DOD FY 2018 budget request, revealed that the administration has inherited the threat perception of the previous administration. At the Senate Armed Services Committee's hearing on June 13, while maintaining that "the most urgent and dangerous threat to peace and security is North Korea," he stated, "A *return to Great Power competition*, marked by a resurgent and more aggressive Russian Federation and a rising, more confident, and assertive China, places the international order under assault" (emphasis added), revealing that they are carrying on with the theme of "return to great power competition," raised by Carter one year earlier. Moreover, he stated that Iran is sowing violence in security vacuums, provoking Sunni-Shia confrontation, and pursuing regional hegemony, and that "the breakdown of the broader Mideast order has given rise to terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)." These statements cover all the "four-plus-one" threats. When viewed in relation with Russia, in the DOD's FY 2018 budget request as well, the request for the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), an effort to enhance presence in Europe which was launched by the Obama administration at the time of the Ukraine crisis, was \$4.8 billion, nearly 40 percent higher than the FY 2017 request of \$3.4 billion.

Continuity of defense policy can also be seen in initiatives to secure military superiority into the future. This had been advanced by the Obama administration in face of military modernization by China and Russia and proliferation of military technology. In the Obama administration these initiatives were coined the Defense Innovation Initiative (DII) or the Third Offset Strategy, but the Trump administration

no longer uses such names. What is important, however, are not the names themselves. As then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work stated in his May 3, 2017, testimony before the Senate Appropriations, Defense Subcommittee, these initiatives are in essence designed “to take a look at these technological trends and make sure that we maintain our overmatch over time” and that “[t]here have been many ways we’ve described this over the past three years.”

The essence of these initiatives is inherited by the Trump administration. The DOD FY 2018 budget request prepared under Defense Secretary Mattis continues with the initiative “[to address] the erosion of technological superiority by identifying and investing in innovative technologies and processes to sustain and advance America’s military dominance.” The FY 2018 request also includes \$13.2 billion for Science and Technology, \$700 million more than the FY 2017 request. In addition, the FY 2018 request apportioned \$12 billion to the Strategic Capabilities Office (SCO), a \$300 million increase from the previous fiscal year request. The SCO, positioned as a “short-term solution” of the Third Offset Strategy, was established by then-Deputy Defense Secretary Carter for “identification, analysis, and introduction of disruptive applications and ... unconventional uses of existing systems and near-term technologies,” and was highly promoted by Carter at the time of the FY 2017 budget request. Regarding the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the budget request was \$200 million more than the previous fiscal year, at \$3.17 billion.

Presumably, Mattis’ visit to the West Coast on August 10 and 11 was designed to underscore his intentions to continue promoting these initiatives begun under

the Obama administration to maintain military superiority. Speaking to members of the media during the flight to his first stop, Seattle, he confirmed his intent to engage with the same level of urgency in the third offset strategy advanced by former Defense Secretary Carter, and stated that maintaining the “competitive edge” of the US forces into the future is a “top-level priority.”



Secretary of Defense James Mattis in a meeting with Google CEO Sundar Pichai and other executives at the Google headquarters (August 11, 2017) (DoD photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jette Carr/DoD photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jette Carr)

During his visit, the defense secretary met with Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos at the company's headquarters in Seattle, then moved to Silicon Valley, where he toured the headquarters of the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental (DIUx). In addition, at the Google headquarters near DIUx, he had a meeting with CEO Sundar Pichai and other top executives to "discuss innovative new technologies and methods to best leverage advancements in artificial intelligence, cloud computing and cybersecurity for the Department of Defense." Mattis explained his reason for visiting Amazon and Google by saying that he was not only interested in the technological innovations of these companies, but that he was a "big admirer" of the way "they germinate ideas, the way they harvest ideas, from one breakthrough, rapidly, to another." In addition, artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy, which are said to be the key to the third offset strategy were on the agenda at the Google headquarters. In association with the fact that DIUx is investing in many AI companies, Mattis indicated to the traveling press that there is an "A.I. plan for how to use this in defense" and stated that the accomplishments of Silicon Valley need to be integrated by the DOD. These comments surely highlight the reason for his trip to the West Coast.

The DIUx, which was one of the sites he visited, was established in 2015 as part of the Defense Industry Initiative (DII) to serve as a "point of presence" for the DOD in Silicon Valley and a hub to build relationships with companies and research institutions outside the traditional defense industry and to scout for new technologies. Offices were also opened in Boston and Austin, Texas. The DIUx receives "mission critical problems" submitted from the Services and other DOD entities, translates the "problems" for commercial innovators, who are not familiar with defense-specific contexts, and provides funding to companies that propose viable solutions. For a while after the establishment of the DIUx in 2015, it was unable to produce expected outcomes because it was hobbled by the Defense Acquisitions Regulations. Concerns were also so strong in Congress that a limitation on availability of funds for DIUx was included in the FY 2017 NDAA. In May 2016, the DIUx was removed from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, to become a direct report to the Secretary, and its top management was changed. Since then investments have been increasing both in number and amount, but there were concerns voiced over whether it would continue to exist, especially due to the change in administration. However, in this visit to DIUx, Mattis, when asked about the survival of the DIUx,

which serves as a bridge between the DOD and innovative companies such as Amazon and Google, stated that “there is no doubt in my mind that DIUx will not only continue to exist, ... it will grow in its influence and its impact on the Department of Defense.” He then expressed his thanks to his predecessor in the Obama administration, and even cited his name, saying, “I’m grateful that Secretary Carter had the ... foresight to put something in place to anchor the Department of Defense out there [in Silicon Valley].” As is symbolized by these words, the visit by Mattis to the West Coast clearly demonstrated that he will essentially carry on with the policy launched by Secretary Carter, his predecessor in the Obama administration.

(3) The NSS Rollout

As explained in the previous sections, the defense policy of the Trump administration is carrying on with many elements of the policy that had been taken by the Obama administration in its approach to adapt to the worsening security climate. However, as Trump had risen by harshly criticizing the Obama administration, he needed to show both America and the world his own security strategy, including how he will deliver on the issues he advocated during the campaign, implement this in a form that was as consistent as possible, and do it urgently as well. The administration began by formulating the NSS, which is the US government’s highest ranked document on strategy. It was released on December 18, 2017. While the NSS was set down in the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 as a document to be prepared and submitted to Congress every fiscal year, the 2017 NSS was the seventeenth to be released, following the Obama administration’s NSS in 2015.

In the first term of presidents inaugurated since the NSS legislation—George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama—each administration submitted its first NSS in the year following the administration’s establishment (March 1990, July 1994, September 2002, and May 2010, respectively), making this the first time that an administration has been able to complete the NSS in the inaugural year of its first term. It was also notable that when the NSS was released on December 18, a speech was given by Trump himself. In addition, under the FY 2017 NDAA enacted in December 2016, the form of NSS was changed to that of a classified document with possible attachment of an unclassified summary. That it was prepared as usual as a public document despite this amendment, could be

Table 6.4. Comparison of main items of the 2015 and 2017 editions of the NSS

2015 NSS (Obama administration)	2017 NSS (Trump administration)
1. Introduction	1. Introduction
2. Security	2. Pillar I: Protect the American People, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life
(1) Strengthen Our National Defense	(1) Secure U.S. Borders and Territory
(2) Reinforce Homeland Security	(2) Pursue Threats to Their Source
(3) Combat the Persistent Threat of Terrorism	(3) Keep America Safe in the Cyber Era
(4) Build Capacity to Prevent Conflict	(4) Promote American Resilience
(5) Prevent the Spread and Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction	3. Pillar II: Promote American Prosperity
(6) Confront Climate Change	(1) Rejuvenate the Domestic Economy
(7) Assure Access to Shared Spaces	(2) Promote Free, Fair, and Reciprocal Economic Relationships
(8) Increase Global Health Security	(3) Lead in Research, Technology, Invention, and Innovation
3. Prosperity	(4) Promote and Protect the U.S. National Security Innovation Base
(1) Put Our Economy to Work	(5) Embrace Energy Dominance
(2) Advance Our Energy Security	4. Pillar III: Preserve Peace Through Strength
(3) Lead in Science, Technology, and Innovation	(1) Renew America's Competitive Advantages
(4) Shape the Global Economic Order	(2) Renew Capabilities
(5) End Extreme Poverty	(3) Diplomacy and Statecraft
4. Values	5. Pillar IV: Advance American Influence
(1) Live Our Values	(1) Encourage Aspiring Partners
(2) Advance Equality	(2) Achieve Better Outcomes in Multilateral Forums
(3) Support Emergency Democracies	(3) Champion American Values
(4) Empower Civil Society and Young Leaders	6. The Strategy in a Regional Context
(5) Prevent Mass Atrocities	(1) Indo-Pacific
5. International Order	(2) Europe
(1) Advance Our Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific	(3) Middle East
(2) Strengthen Our Enduring Alliance with Europe	(4) South and Central Asia
(3) Seek Stability and Peace in the Middle East and North Africa	(5) Western Hemisphere
(4) Invest in Africa's Future	(6) Africa
(5) Deepen Economic and Security Cooperation in the Americas	

Sources: 2015 and 2017 editions of the NSS.

considered to be a message sent to allies and partners, or other countries to have them know the direction of the Trump administration's security policy, and to add momentum domestically or within the government for the directions shown in the NSS.

Dubbed "an America First National Security Strategy," the 2017 edition included

themes that were raised by Trump since the election campaign, such as border and immigration issues including strengthening border control and implementing more rigorous screening of immigration applications (see Table 6.4). However, although these issues were emphasized in the speech given by Trump himself at the release of the NSS on December 18, giving the impression that they form the core of Pillar I, in actuality, they were merely taken up after issues that were addressed by previous administrations, such as dealing with the threat of weapons of mass destruction and measures against pandemics and biothreats.

The distinctive features of the Trump administration are probably revealed more strongly in Pillar II: Promote American Prosperity. Here is where challenges raised by the Trump administration such as deregulation, tax reform, and improving domestic infrastructure are included. In addition, based on an awareness that intellectual property such as US-born technology is being stolen or illicitly acquired by competitors such as China, it is stressed that the National Security Innovation Base (NSIB), a “network of knowledge, capabilities, and people—including academia, National Laboratories, and the private sector” needs to be defended against competitors, and from this perspective, it speaks of strengthening the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States and restricting visas issued to foreign students studying specific fields.

Pillar II also includes the concept of energy dominance, which Trump brought up in a speech given at the Department of Energy on June 29, 2017. Since the election campaign, Trump has been arguing for the removal of various regulations on the production and consumption of energy and to expand energy production in the United States, and in his address at the Department of Energy, he spoke of “energy dominance,” presenting the concept of not just seeking energy independence, in which America does not need to depend on energy imports from overseas, but exporting the “near-limitless” supplies of energy all across the globe to provide energy security to friends, partners and allies. He proposed export promotion policies for each energy resource, including nuclear, coal, oil, and natural gas, to realize this. In the 2017 NSS, this energy dominance concept was positioned as a part of the security strategy.

On the other hand, as can be seen in appraisals such as “[the 2017 NSS is] well within the bipartisan mainstream of American foreign policy,”²⁷⁾ it was also noteworthy that the NSS included an element of internationalism, which had been maintained by previous administrations although they may have differed in tone

and emphasis. “America First,” which appears in the 2017 NSS, was also used in the late 1930s in a movement opposing US involvement in World War II and thus strongly echoes of isolationism, and because Trump himself, during the election campaign, used it within the context of criticism toward the role the United States has been playing to maintain international order, there were concerns over the use of “America First” by the Trump administration as implying that the United States will reduce its international role. However, contrary to this, it could be viewed that the NSS attempts to position “America First” as embracing a more active international role. The NSS maintains that “Our America First foreign policy celebrates America’s influence in the world as a positive force that can help set the conditions for peace and prosperity and for developing successful societies.” Such attempts to reinterpret “America First” so that the words could be taken to mean a more aggressive show of leadership by the United States in the international community were also seen in the op-ed titled “America First Doesn’t Mean America Alone,” coauthored by White House National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster and National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn, which appeared in the May 30, 2017 issue of the *Wall Street Journal*.²⁸⁾

On this foundation, the NSS reconfirms the significance of alliances for the United States in Pillar IV: Advance American Influence, saying that “Allies and partners are a great strength of the United States.” In the Indo-Pacific, it states that “while expanding and deepening relationships with new partners,” the United States will “redouble our commitment to established alliances and partnerships” and strengthen military relationships with these countries. Regarding Europe, it declares that “The United States remains firmly committed to our European allies and partners,” positions NATO as “one of our great advantages over our competitors,” and reconfirms the US commitment to Article V of the Washington Treaty, which establishes collective defense with NATO allies. With regard to international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization, which have underpinned the post-war world order along with the alliance networks, the NSS stresses that the United States “will continue to play a leading role” in these organizations, while seeking their reform.

The NSS is also giving active significance to development aid. Citing examples such as the Marshall Plan after the end of World War II, and postwar recovery assistance given to Japan and South Korea, it states that through “patient partnerships with those who aspired to build prosperous societies and join the

community of democratic states,” “mutually beneficial relationships” were built with these countries. It goes on to say that the United States will continue to advance collaboration with “aspiring partners” and places priority on providing development assistance to these countries. As part of that support, the NSS declares that “the United States will also assist fragile states to prevent threats to the U.S. homeland,” noting that jihadist terrorists often operate from “fragile states.”

Another notable feature of the NSS is that it not only carries on the recognition of threat that the Obama administration raised in its final days, but also presents views that go one step beyond. The NSS groups the challengers to US security into three main sets: (1) the “revisionist powers” of China and Russia, (2) the “rogue states” of Iran and North Korea, and (3) jihadist terrorist groups.

With regard to China, it indicates that China is seeking to “displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific,” has “expanded its power at the expense of the sovereignty of others,” and is modernizing its military and growing its nuclear arsenal. What is of note here is that such trends of China were mentioned within the context of fundamental criticism of engagement policies. The NSS states that China and Russia are “attempting to erode American security and prosperity” and “challenge American power, influence, and interests.” It adds that the United States needs “to rethink the policies of the past two decades—policies based on the assumption that engagement with rivals and their inclusion in international institutions and global commerce would turn them into benign actors and trustworthy partners,” and concludes that “For the most part, this premise turned out to be false.” In this context of engagement policy, the NSS specifically points to China, saying that “U.S. policy was rooted in the belief that support for China’s rise and for its integration into the post-war international order would liberalize China,” but “contrary to our hopes,” China is expanding its power. As past administrations have consistently maintained an engagement policy toward China, this implies that the direction of such fundamental policy may be overturned. How this will be reflected in actual policy will be closely watched.

With regard to Russia, the NSS indicates that along with seeking to restore its great power status and establish spheres of influence around it, Russia aims to weaken US influence, divide the United States from its allies, and has been investing in nuclear and other military capabilities, and cyber capabilities. It also states that “Through modernized forms of subversive tactics, Russia interferes in the domestic political affairs of countries around the world” and “The combination

of Russian ambition and growing military capabilities creates an unstable frontier in Eurasia.” Although no specific country is named, the NSS asserts that “Rival actors [as seen from the United States] use propaganda and other means to try to discredit democracy,” and “They advance anti-Western views and spread false information to create divisions among ourselves, our allies, and our partners.”

The 2017 NSS also emphasizes “rebuilding our military,” which was raised in the NSPM1. It points out the necessity of modernizing the military, reforming acquisition, securing force size, and improving readiness, as well as issues of the defense industrial base such as supply chains. It also defines the role of nuclear weapons by noting, “nuclear deterrence strategies ... are essential to prevent nuclear attack, non-nuclear strategic attacks, and large-scale conventional aggression.” It had been reported in the last months of the Obama administration that the National Security Council was studying the possibility of the United States declaring a No First Use declaration for nuclear arsenal. However, the 2017 NSS emphasizes the role of nuclear weapons by clearly indicating that it will reserve the possibility of using nuclear weapons for conventional aggression.

The NSS emphasizes “peace through strength,” which was espoused earlier by President Ronald Reagan, and it reiterates the doctrine that military strength supports diplomacy. Namely, it maintains that the United States will seek cooperation with its competitors, but this will be from a “position of strength,” stating that “a strong military ensures that our diplomats are able to operate from a position of strength.” Such arguments strongly echo the comments by Secretary of State George Schultz under the Reagan administration: “The hard reality is that diplomacy not backed by military strength is ineffectual. ... [Military]Power and diplomacy are not alternatives. They must go together, or we will accomplish very little in this world.”²⁹ On December 18, Mattis, in an issued statement concerning the publication of the NSS that day, repeated the notion of diplomacy backed by military force, deliberately stating that the US military “ensure[s] our diplomats always speak from a position of strength,” in order to underscore the ties between the military and diplomacy.

The 2017 NSS could be understood to be an attempt to re-launch the international role that the United States should serve amid the increasingly severe security environment by rearranging it to align to all possible extent with the themes and policy challenges that were stressed by Trump during the presidential campaign. If this is true, as indicated by Richard Haass, president of the Council

on Foreign Relations, “the biggest problem with the [recently released] National Security Strategy is not the document itself, but rather the frequent disconnect between the document—between the National Security Strategy and the actual foreign policy of the Trump administration,” it cannot be denied that a certain amount of discrepancy could arise between the policy indicated in the NSS and decisions and actions actually implemented by the government.³⁰⁾ Although “It is unreasonable to expect any omnibus document to bridge every gap between word and deed,” it is believed that there is a great need to closely watch how the policy indicated in the NSS will or will not be reflected in actual policy.³¹⁾

NOTES

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- 2) Japanese Ministry of Defense, “Kita-chosen ni yoru Kakujikken / Dando Misairu ni tsuite [Regarding North Korea’s Nuclear Tests and Ballistic Missile Launches].”
- 3) Rex Tillerson, “Remarks With Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se Before Their Meeting,” March 17, 2017.
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- 6) Rex Tillerson and James Mattis, “We’re Holding Pyongyang to Account,” *Wall Street Journal* August 13, 2017.
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- 11) *Time*, December 11, 2016.
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- 13) White House, “Readout of the President’s Call with President Xi Jinping of China,” February 9, 2017.
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