

Chapter 7

The United States: Challenges for the Global Power

In recent years, skepticism has arisen even within the United States about the materialization and sustainability of the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific, promoted by the Barack Obama administration. Such views were reinforced by the federal budget sequestration, which went into effect in 2013, and the forced cancellation of President Obama's tour of Asia scheduled for fall of that same year in the aftermath of the federal government shutdown.

However, the Obama administration has been continuously pursuing the rebalance policy and engaging actively with the issues relating to the regional order. This consistent stance seems to reflect the administration's perception that China's recent actions have already begun to affect the regional order. Since the United States emphasizes the peaceful resolution of disputes based on international rules and norms, it has a heightening sense of crisis over China's actions in the South China Sea.

Against the background, the United States has been modernizing its relationship not only with the allies including Japan, Australia, South Korea, and the Philippines, but also with key regional partners such as India and Vietnam and ASEAN-centered regional institutions. In addition, despite fiscal constraints, it is reinforcing its military presence in the Asia-Pacific. Plans that have been revealed include the deployment of the USS *Ronald Reagan* from San Diego to replace the USS *George Washington*, which will be leaving Yokosuka for defueling in FY 2015, and the forward deployment of two additional Aegis ballistic missile defense (BMD) ships to Yokosuka. Rotational deployment of the US Marine Corps to Australia was also implemented on a significantly larger scale than in 2013.

On March 4, 2014, the Department of Defense (DOD) released its 2014 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (2014 QDR). Under the policy of giving priority to reducing force structure, modernizing the forces and investing in readiness, while the 2014 QDR proposals include the downsizing of the Army's end strength, the retiring of all Air Force A-10 ground-attack aircraft, and a phased modernization program for the Navy's Aegis cruisers, it also lays out the policy of investing in equipment needed for operations in anti-access and area-denial (A2/AD) environments. On the other hand, these "tough choices" cannot be achieved without the cooperation of Congress. Actions taken by Congress, including whether sequestration from FY 2016 onward can be avoided, will be watched closely.

A series of events testing US leadership in areas other than the Asia-Pacific arose during 2014. In the Ukraine crisis, as Operation Atlantic Resolve, the United

States provided reassurance through measures including enhancement of troop rotations to Central and East European countries. In response to the crisis caused by the growing power of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the United States sent military personnel to train and advise Iraqi forces for the first time since its full withdrawal at the end of 2011, and also staged limited airstrikes on ISIL in Iraq and Syria. It could be said that while demonstrating its leadership in countering such real crises, the United States is working to advance its rebalance to the Asia-Pacific.

1. Developments in Asia-Pacific Policy

(1) Mounting Concerns over China's External Actions and Progress in the Institutionalization of US-China Dialogue

In recent years, skepticism has arisen even within the United States about the materialization and sustainability of the rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific, promoted by the Barack Obama administration.¹⁾ These views were reinforced by the March 2013 federal budget sequestration and the cancellation of President Obama's tour of Asia in October that year due to the US government shutdown.

However, the policy of the Obama administration has been continuously pursuing the rebalance policy and engaging actively with the issues relating to the regional order. In order to sweep away the skepticism, the administration has, both domestically and abroad, vigorously promoted the US position of attaching importance on the Asia-Pacific, with the president himself embarking on a tour of Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Malaysia at the end of April. At a press conference held with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe after the Japan-US summit meeting, Obama strongly signaled the US presence by stressing that the United States is a Pacific nation and stating, "America's security and prosperity is inseparable from the future of this region, and that's why I've made it a priority to renew American leadership in the Asia Pacific."²⁾

One of the main reasons why the Obama administration places importance on the Asia-Pacific region, or why it cannot disregard this region, is its belief that China's recent actions have already been affecting the regional order. The security priorities of the United States in this area were clarified in the speech by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel at the IISS Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) held in Singapore at the end of May. He highlighted four priorities of the United

States: (1) encouraging the peaceful resolution of disputes; upholding principles including the freedom of navigation; and standing firm against coercion, intimidation, and aggression; (2) building a cooperative regional architecture based on international rules and norms; (3) enhancing the capabilities of its allies and partners to provide security for themselves and the region; and (4) strengthening the regional defense capabilities of the United States itself.³⁾

Among these four priorities, the United States attaches particular importance to the peaceful resolution of disputes based on international rules and norms. Concerning regional security, Hagel stated, “One of the most critical tests facing the region is whether [the region’s] nations will choose to resolve disputes through diplomacy and well-established international rules and norms.” And, while confirming that the United States takes no position on competing territorial claims, he stressed, “we firmly oppose any nation’s use of intimidation, coercion, or the threat of force to assert those claims.” With regard to this point, Hagel mentioned that China “has restricted access to Scarborough Reef, put pressure on the long-standing Philippine presence at the Second Thomas Shoal, begun land reclamation activities at multiple locations, and moved an oil rig into disputed waters near the Paracel Islands” and criticized that China “has undertaken destabilizing, unilateral actions asserting its claims in the South China Sea.”⁴⁾ Such a statement, exceptional in the fact that it criticizes the behavior of a specific state by name, reveals the United States’ sense of crisis that future actions taken by China could destabilize regional order.

As indicated by many experts, US-China relations consist of a cooperative side and a confrontational and competitive side.⁵⁾ President Obama, while holding expectations on relations with China, saying, “... with a huge population, a growing economy, we want to continue to encourage the peaceful rise of China,” expressed his position of emphasizing to China that “all of us[, both large and small countries alike,] have responsibilities to help maintain basic rules of the road and an international order.”⁶⁾ Hagel said that the United States seeks to

develop with China a new model of relations: “a model that builds cooperation, manages competition, and avoids rivalry.”⁷⁾

In this way, the United States wishes to relatively expand its cooperative relations with China, but in recent years the confrontational and competitive side of the relationship has tended to be more prominent. In addition to China’s actions in the South China Sea, the United States has shown strong opposition to the “East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone” established and announced by China in November 2013 and the incident in the beginning of December that same year in which the Aegis cruiser USS *Cowpens* was confronted by Chinese naval vessels while sailing in international waters in the South China Sea. Moreover, on August 22, 2014, the Pentagon announced that a Chinese air force plane conducted dangerous intercepts of a US Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft, which was flying in international airspace over the South China Sea. Pentagon press secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby criticized that such behavior “not only is unprofessional, it’s unsafe,” and stated that they registered their strong concerns to the Chinese government.⁸⁾

The United States is also growing increasingly concerned over the actions taken by China in the global commons, namely cyber space and outer space. On May 19, 2014, US Attorney General Eric Holder announced that five Chinese military personnel had been indicted for cyber espionage—specifically, for hacking into the computer systems of US corporations and stealing sensitive information.⁹⁾ On July 25, the DOD issued a statement that China had conducted an antisatellite test (ASAT), criticizing this as an act threatening the long-term security of outer space.¹⁰⁾

Against the backdrop of such recent tendencies, the Obama administration is seeking the stable implementation of summit and working-level dialogue and military-to-military exchange, as initiatives to manage the confrontational and competitive aspects. With regard to dialogue, President Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry, and Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew attended the Sixth Round of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which was held in Beijing for two days from July 9, 2014. There, they discussed a broad range of areas including security, diplomacy, trade and commerce, and financial issues with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Prime Minister Li Keqiang, and other officials. In early November, Obama visited China to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit held in Beijing, and met with Xi Jinping.

With regard to military exchange, in addition to ongoing implementation of reciprocal visits between senior defense officials, progress has been made in efforts to build a mechanism to reduce misunderstanding and to avoid military incidents. In the beginning of April 2014, Hagel visited China, where in addition to touring the aircraft carrier *Liaoning* in Shandong Province, he not only met with senior defense officials including Fan Changlong, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, and Chang Wanquan, minister of national defense, but also President Xi. Chinese vessels participated for the first time in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) held regularly by the United States. Following the visit to China in July by Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the chief of naval operations, Navy Admiral Wu Shengli, commander in chief of the People's Liberation Army, visited the United States in September. After the US-China Summit talks in November, it was announced that the US and Chinese defense departments had agreed on the signing of memorandums of understanding on confidence-building measures (CBMs) including reciprocal notification of major military activities and security policies and strategies, and rules of behavior for safety of air and maritime encounters.

(2) Strengthening the Alliance Relationships for Preserving a Stable Regional Order

Given the rise of China in recent years, the United States is continuing with efforts to strengthen relations with its allies, and is pursuing initiatives to raise the capacity of its allies and strengthen their cooperation with the US military forces. Assistant Secretary Daniel Russel of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State, in a hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific in early March, reaffirmed, "our alliances in the region have been and will remain the foundation of our strategy towards the Asia-Pacific."¹¹⁾

With regard to the Japan-US alliance, based on the agreement reached at the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee ("2+2") held in October 2013, a review of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation (Guidelines) is under progress, with an interim report released on October 8, 2014, to promote understanding of the revision both within Japan and abroad.¹²⁾ Following this, in December, both governments decided to deepen the discussions further to work toward finalizing the revision of the Guidelines during the first half of 2015, and released this as a "2+2" joint announcement. On April 25, 2014, Japan welcomed Obama and the Japan-US Summit meeting was held. Following the meeting, a

joint statement was released by the two countries in which it was confirmed that US commitments extend to all the territories under the administration of Japan, including the Senkaku Islands, and that the US-Japan security alliance will be strengthened and revised accordingly with the changing situation.

Regarding the US-ROK alliance, the Fifth Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue was held in Washington, DC for two days from April 15, 2014. In this dialogue, the two countries discussed the enhancement of capabilities of both military forces and continued implementation of combined exercises for the defense of the ROK and to deter armed invasion from North Korea, as well as the issue of transition of wartime operational control (OPCON) scheduled for 2015. On April 25, Obama, who visited Seoul after Japan, had a meeting with President Park Geun-hye. On October 24, ROK Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se and Minister of National Defense Han Min-koo visited Washington, DC for a Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting. At the Forty-sixth ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) held at the Pentagon the day before, it was agreed to delay the timing for wartime OPCON transition.

The United States is strengthening its efforts to secure US military presence and constant access to the Asia-Pacific region. On April 28, 2014, immediately prior to Obama's arrival in the Philippines, Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). Because the EDCA is an executive agreement and not a formal treaty, it does not require the approval and ratification

of the senate in either country. The EDCA, which was the result of eight rounds of negotiations carried out since August 2013, established the legal framework for US rotational presence in the Philippines, but its specific contents such as the size of the force, place, and time of deployment is scheduled to be decided later through negotiations between the two governments.

Furthermore, on August 12, 2014, at the Australia-United States



US President Obama inspecting the honor guard with Philippine President Benigno Aquino III during the arrival ceremony at the Malacañan Palace (Official White House Photo by Chuck Kennedy)

Ministerial Consultation (AUSMIN) held in Sydney, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, Defense Minister David Johnston, US Secretary of State John Kerry, and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel signed the US-Australia Force Posture Agreement. This agreement, which was agreed to between Obama and Prime Minister Tony Abbot during his visit to the United States in June that year, provides a policy and legal framework and financial principles for implementation of the force posture initiatives in Australia which had been discussed between the two governments since 2011. Through this agreement, joint and combined training and exercises between the US Marine Corps on rotational development to Darwin, Australia, and the Australian Defence Force were implemented, and progress was made in strengthening collaboration between the US and Australian militaries.

(3) Strengthening Relations with the Region's Countries and ASEAN

Other than with its allies, the Obama administration is continuing to work to strengthen relations with its key regional partners of Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and India, and its involvement with regional institutions such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). With regard to Indonesia, the Comprehensive Partnership was signed in 2010; cooperation in a broad range of areas including security, economic development, social culture, education, and science is under discussion; and Kerry visited the country in February 2014 to attend the Fourth Joint Commission Meeting of the US-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership and visited again in late October to attend the inauguration of President Joko Widodo as Obama's envoy.

In relations with Malaysia, Obama visited the country in April 2014 as the first US president to do so since Lyndon Johnson forty-eight years before. At a joint press conference held with Prime Minister Najib Razak after their meeting, it was announced that the Malaysia-US relationship will be elevated to a "comprehensive partnership" with the aim of strengthening relations between the two countries in a wide range of areas including politics, diplomacy, economy, education and culture, and security and defense. Cooperation was also deepened on the working level; for example, a US naval ship participated in the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 307, which went missing in March 2014.

Relations with Vietnam have shown steady progress since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1995. On the foundation of the Comprehensive Partnership Agreement concluded in July 2013, the United States is seeking to strengthen

bilateral cooperation in the areas of security, trade and investment, and science and technology. With regard to the US-Vietnam Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which was signed by the two governments in October 2013, on May 6, 2014, US Ambassador to Vietnam David Shear and Vietnam's Minister of Science and Technology Nguyen Quan officially signed a bilateral agreement on the civilian use of nuclear energy. Regarding security, on August 16 of that year, US Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), visited Hanoi and exchanged views with Vietnam's Chief of Defense Lt. Gen. Do Ba Ty on military-to-military exchange between the two countries. At the meeting it was agreed to advance cooperation in areas including maritime security, search and rescue activities, and education and training. On October 2, Vietnam's Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh, visiting the United States, met with Kerry. While also discussing the nuclear agreement and economic relations, here it was revealed by the United States that the embargo on Vietnam with regard to equipment contributing to maritime security would be partially lifted.

Concerning relations with India, the Obama administration is showing its posture of continuing to strengthen cooperative relations with the Narendra Modi government, which launched in May 2014. In addition to the Indian Navy participating for the first time in the RIMPAC exercises of July that year, the US-India joint naval exercise, Malabar, was also conducted with the participation of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. On July 31, Kerry visited India and the Fifth US-India Strategic Dialogue was held. On September 30, Obama met with Prime Minister Modi, who came to the United States, and they agreed on strengthening relations in the areas of defense and security.

Since 2011 the United States had been holding an informal meeting with the ASEAN defense ministers at the time of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting held in a member country. Hagel, however, invited the defense ministers of the ten ASEAN countries to an informal meeting held in Hawaii for three days from April 1, 2014. This US-



US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in a meeting with the defense ministers of ASEAN member countries at the US-ASEAN Defense Forum (DOD photo by Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo)

ASEAN Defense Forum, which was the first ASEAN ministerial conference to be held in the United States, was moderated by Hagel and Dr. Rajiv Shah, administrator of the US Agency for International Development (USAID). At the forum, meetings were held on humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HA/DR), tours were conducted at US military installations in Hawaii and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, and issues concerning regional security such as initiatives to promote cooperation for maritime security and to ease tensions in the South China Sea were discussed. On August 10 that year, Kerry attended the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asian Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Naypyidaw, Myanmar. Moreover, in order to participate in the EAS and Second US-ASEAN Summit meeting held there from November 12, Obama visited Myanmar for the first time in two years.

(4) Strengthening Military Presence in the Asia-Pacific

In 2013, sequestration, across-the-board cuts to federal spending came into effect, but considerations were taken so that large impact would not be felt on the measures launched by the United States to strengthen its presence in the Asia-Pacific. These measures are being promoted in 2014 as well.

With regard to naval presence, then Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced in 2012 that a plan is underway to increase force in the Pacific from the 50/50 percent split between the Pacific and the Atlantic to about 60 percent. At the time of the FY 2015 budget submission, it was revealed that the US Navy plans to increase its presence in the Pacific from about fifty ships on average in FY 2014, to fifty-eight in FY 2015 and about sixty-seven by 2020.¹³⁾ This was an upward revision¹⁴⁾ from the sixty-two ships estimated for 2020 in the previous year's FY 2014 budget submission.¹⁵⁾

In January 2014, the US Navy announced that the USS *Ronald Reagan*, homeported in San Diego, will leave the 3rd Fleet for forward-deployment to Yokosuka to replace the USS *George Washington*, which will depart Yokosuka for Virginia for defueling.¹⁶⁾ (See Section 2 for developments involving possible early retirement based on sequestration from FY 2016.)

And, in place of the USS *Ronald Reagan*, the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* will depart its homeport of Norfolk for deployment to the 3rd Fleet to serve the *Ronald Reagan*'s former role as a 3rd Fleet rotational carrier.¹⁶⁾ According to US Navy

documents, this shift is slated for August 2015.¹⁷⁾ In addition, following the announcement by Hagel that the United States is planning to forward deploy two additional Aegis ballistic missile defense (BMD) ships to Japan by 2017, the US Navy announced on October 16, 2014, that these ships will be the USS *Benfold* and USS *Milius*, both homeported in San Diego, with deployment scheduled for summer 2015 and summer 2017, respectively.¹⁸⁾ Moreover, on January 19, 2015 it was revealed that an additional Aegis guided-missile cruiser, the USS *Chancellorsville*, will deploy to Yokosuka in summer 2015.¹⁹⁾ The USS *Fort Worth* departed its home port of San Diego on November 17, 2014, and arrived in Singapore on December 28 for littoral combat ship (LCS) rotational deployment there, which began in 2013.²⁰⁾ In contrast to the LCS USS *Freedom*, which was deployed for roughly ten months from March to December 2013, the USS *Fort Worth* is scheduled for a sixteen-month deployment.²¹⁾

Rotational deployment of US Marines to Darwin in northern Australia has been implemented since 2012. During Obama's trip to Australia in November 2011, the goal to gradually establish a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) presence of around 2,500 personnel was announced. Aspiring toward this goal, in 2014, rotation was done on a scale of 1,150²²⁾ for six months from the beginning of April²³⁾ to mid-October.²⁴⁾ The MAGTF mentioned here is the principal organizational construct for conducting missions by the Marine Corps; it is a self-contained organization and generally made up of the command element (CE), ground combat element (GCE), aviation combat element (ACE), and logistics combat element (LCE). In the 2014 rotational deployment, the GCE consisted of about 1,000 Marines from 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, stationed at Camp Pendleton, California, and the ACE consisted of four CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters and one hundred service members from Marine Corps Base Hawaii.²⁵⁾ Not only was the size of the deployment expanded with a full infantry battalion as the mainstay of the GCE, but it is said that with its own ACE and LCE, this was the first time for Marine Rotational Force Darwin to have the capabilities of a full MAGTF.²⁶⁾

2. The 2014 QDR and "Tough Choices"

(1) The 2014 QDR and the 2012 DSG

On March 4, 2014, the DOD released the results of the 2014 *Quadrennial Defense*

Review (QDR) along with its FY 2015 budget request. As indicated by the Pentagon's statement that the 2014 QDR is an "evolution of our strategy" and "builds on and incorporates many of the priorities that were outlined in the defense strategic guidance in 2012,"²⁷⁾ the 2014 QDR carries on many of the considerations of the *Defense Strategic Guidance* (DSG, released January 2012), which described the policy of taking a defense strategy that "transitions our Defense enterprise from an emphasis on today's wars to preparing for future challenges."

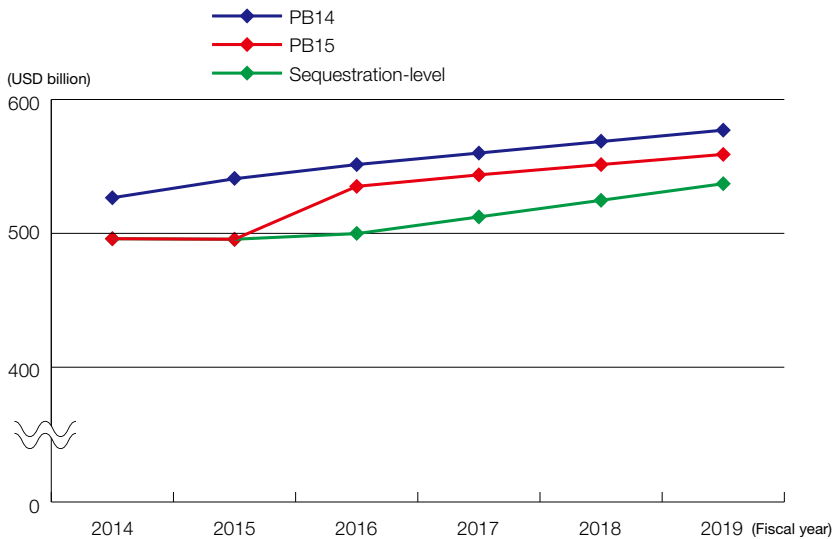
The main focus of the 2014 QDR was, if anything, to make "tough choices" on what to cut and what to maintain in order to achieve the policies of the DSG under a fiscal situation that is growing ever more severe. As a part of the work of the 2014 QDR, the DOD conducted a Strategic Choices and Management Review (SCMR) from March through July 2013 with a focus on studying the trade-off between capacity and force modernization (R&D and equipment procurement) and between capacity and readiness. As a result, the DOD took the approach of "prioritizing a smaller, modern, and capable military over a larger force with older equipment" (Hagel).²⁸⁾ The 2014 QDR also showed the policy of "reducing force structure in order to protect and expand critical capabilities, modernizing the forces, and investing in readiness."

The 2014 QDR and the FY 2015 President's Budget (PB15) were formulated on the premise of a budget at a level halfway between sequester-level funding after FY 2016 and the level of the FY 2014 President's Budget (PB14) submitted to Congress the year before (see Figure 7.1).

However, a situation existed that forced the policies indicated in the 2014 QDR to be conditional and provisional. Although sequestration was avoided for FY 2014 and 2015 due to the enactment of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 at the end of 2013, it is currently prescribed by law that sequestration will again be implemented in FY 2016, to continue until FY 2021. This situation will not change unless an agreement is reached between Congress and the president on measures to eliminate or reduce sequestration. For that reason, although the plan set forth by the DOD in the 2014 QDR is based on the assumption that sequestration will be avoided from FY2016 and beyond, the possibility that this cannot be avoided must also be considered. The existence of such elements of uncertainty that cannot be controlled by the DOD is strongly reflected in the plans for each service. (Details are given in the following section.)

An evaluation of the impacts that would occur if sequestration were again to be

Figure 7.1. DOD base budget projections from FY 2014 to FY 2019 (PB15, PB14, and sequester levels)



Sources: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/CFO, *United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request Overview* (Washington, DC, 2014), p. 1-4; Department of Defense, *Estimated Impact of Sequestration-Level Funding* (Washington, DC, 2014), p. 2-2.

Note: Regarding the FY 2014 funding, the PB14 figure is the amount requested, and the PB15 figure is the amount enacted by the FY 2014 appropriation acts.

implemented is given in the *Estimated Impacts of Sequestration-Level Funding*, a report released by the DOD on April 15. This report shows the changes in force structure based on funding prospects of the PB15 submitted by the Obama administration in March and changes in force structure if sequestration is imposed from FY 2016.

(2) “Tough Choices” in the 2014 QDR

The policy described in the 2014 QDR of reducing force structure in order to prioritize force modernization and readiness was reflected, for one, in the plan to reduce the Army’s end strength. This has been a consistent trend since the 2012 DSG, but with the budget situation becoming increasingly harsh, the downsizing of the Army’s end strength has been changing—becoming more accelerated and of a larger scale (see Table 7.1).

In the plan to reduce the Army’s end strength (released February 2012), which

was formulated to follow the policies of the DSG, it was scheduled to reduce active end strength to 490,000 by the end of FY 2017. However at a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) on November 7, 2013, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond Odierno revealed the policy of moving this up by two years for implementation by end FY 2015.²⁹⁾ The 2014 QDR not only accelerates the schedule for reduction to 490,000, but takes a step further in reducing the active Army's force to between 440,000 and 450,000 soldiers by the end of FY 2019, and it indicates that if sequestration-level cuts are again imposed in FY 2016 and beyond, end strength will be further decreased to 420,000 by the end of FY 2019. This would be an additional 70,000 decrease from the reduction plan at the time of the release of the 2012 DSG. The DOD explains that unless the sequestration provision is removed from law it intends to advance plans based on a reduction to 420,000.

However, the Army argues in the *2014 Army Posture Statement* that such a reduction in force under sequestration “would not enable the Army to execute the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance.” Namely, under the structure of an active end strength of 420,000, the Army would lack “the capacity to conduct simultaneous major combat operations while defending the nation at home, sustaining minimal presence in critical regions, and retaining a Global Response Force (1 BCT [Brigade Combat Team]) at the direction of the Commander-in-Chief.”³⁰⁾

Moreover, the *Posture Statement* states that the Army will be able to execute the policies of the 2012 DSG with a force of 450,000 soldiers indicated in the 2014 QDR, which assumes that sequestration will not be imposed from FY 2016, but that this “will be at significant risk.” However, on October 14, 2014, Odierno, at the Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army, stated that with crises arising in Ukraine and Iraq, the global situation is growing worse than it was when the 2014 QDR and the PB15 were formulated, and “I now have concern about whether even going below [the reduction target set at the time of the DSG of] 490[,000] is the right thing to do or not.”³¹⁾

The Army's acceleration of downsizing regardless of the accompanying “risks” comes from consideration of the balance between readiness, modernization and force structure. When sequestration was implemented in FY 2013, the greatest impact was felt on training and equipment sustainment—areas related to readiness.³²⁾ Accordingly, it is believed that if future budget cuts cannot be avoided, it would be necessary to reduce end strength as early as possible and limit the

Table 7.1. Changes in the US Army's drawdown plan

Fiscal year	Actual Strength			DSG · PB13			SASC Hearing (Nov. 7, 2013)			2014 QDR · PB15			If sequestration goes into effect from FY 2016		
	Active	National Guard	Reserve	Active	National Guard	Reserve	Active	Reserve	National Guard	Active	Reserve	National Guard	Active	Reserve	National Guard
2001	480,801	351,829	205,628	480,801											
2010	566,045														
2012	550,064			562,000	358,200	205,000									
2013	532,043	357,735	198,209	552,100	358,200	205,000									
2014	508,210						510,400	354,200	202,000						
2015				490,000	490,000	350,200	490,000	350,200	202,000						
2016															
2017				490,000	353,200	205,000									
2018															
2019				440,000	335,000	195,000	440,000	335,000	195,000	420,000	315,000	420,000	315,000	185,000	

Sources: Compiled from information released by the DOD.
 Note: Figures are strength at the end of each fiscal year.

strains on modernization and readiness through savings in the military personnel account, and also reduce force in a form where readiness can be sustained even under a limited budget. Nevertheless, the Army estimates that, “For the next 3 years, as we continue to draw down and restructure into a smaller force, the Army will continue to have degraded readiness and extensive modernization program reductions,” and believes that the balance between readiness, modernization and force structure will not, under the funding levels of the PB15, be restored until FY 2019, and not until FY 2023 if sequestration is imposed.³³⁾

Efforts to maintain readiness and modernization by reducing force structure within the setting of budgetary constraints can also be seen in the Navy. One example is the issue of the refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) of the USS *George Washington*, currently homeported in Yokosuka. It used to be stipulated under law that the US Navy shall possess no less than eleven aircraft carriers.³⁴⁾ When the USS *Enterprise* was retired in December 2012, this stipulation was changed to at least ten carriers for the period until USS *Gerald Ford* comes into commission (currently scheduled for May 2016),³⁵⁾ and currently the Navy has ten. This, however, was planned as a provisional measure until the scheduled commissioning of the USS *Gerald Ford* in FY 2016, with restoration of the number of carriers to eleven after it comes into commission.³⁶⁾

Yet, in the 2014 QDR, the DOD revealed that if sequestration is unavoidable, it plans to retire the USS *George Washington* (commissioned in 1992),³⁷⁾ which is scheduled for RCOH in FY 2016.³⁸⁾ However, on the condition that the Congress approves the PB15 budget levels from FY 2016 and beyond, the DOD states that it will maintain its eleven carriers,³⁹⁾ and the future of the *George Washington* will, in the end, be indicated in the FY 2016 budget submission.⁴⁰⁾

Accordingly, the Navy decided to include advanced planning funding for defueling in the FY 2015 budget request, which would become necessary regardless of whether the ship is retired or undergoes RCOH to resume deployment.⁴¹⁾ However, the Navy does not believe that ten aircraft carriers are enough, stating that whether it be for maintaining presence or extending deployment to maintain presence, at least eleven are needed when considering scheduled repairs of carriers and the tolls on the personnel who have to leave their home ports for long periods of time.⁴²⁾

Other than this, from FY 2015, the DOD included in the PB15 a plan⁴³⁾ to remove a total of fourteen ships⁴⁴⁾ —the younger half (CG 63–73) of the twenty-

two *Ticonderoga*-class Aegis cruisers (CGs), and three *Whidbey Island*-class dock landing ships (LSDs)—from routine deployment and place these in long-term layup status for its Phased Modernization Plan. Although the LSDs will be upgraded one at a time, the DOD will stand down all eleven of the *Ticonderoga*-class cruisers for a period from four to nine years.⁴⁵⁾ Ships that have completed their modernization process will be returned to active service, replacing older *Ticonderoga*-class Aegis cruisers (CG 52–62) that will be retired upon reaching their service age.⁴⁶⁾ Of the eleven cruisers, the first to undergo repairs and return to active service will be the USS *Gettysburg*. It will replace USS *Bunker Hill*, which is slated to retire in FY 2019. Through this framework, eleven *Ticonderoga*-class CGs will be in a “deployment ready” state up until the mid-2030s.⁴⁷⁾ For the DOD to place all eleven of the CGs in a layup status for some ten long years, despite the fact that the eleven CGs cannot be repaired at the same time, comes from its aim to save on personnel and operational expenses during this period.⁴⁸⁾ In addition to these eleven ships, the *Estimated Impacts of Sequestration-Level Funding* indicates the DOD’s plan to remove another six *Ticonderoga*-class CGs from deployment if sequestration is imposed from FY 2016.

Regarding the Air Force as well, the 2014 QDR states, “We will incorporate next generation equipment and concepts into the force to address sophisticated threats.”

Giving priority to the F-35A fifth generation fighter, Long Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B), and KC-46A next-generation tanker/cargo aircraft, in order to secure resources for these investments, it indicates the policy for the Air Force to “make near-term capacity reductions in mission areas such as lift, command and control, and fighters.” A “critical element” in force reduction to generate funds for modernization is the plan for phased retirement from FY 2015 of the entire A-10 Thunderbolt II fleet (total of 283 planes, with 89 to be retired in FY 2015), which was introduced in the latter half of the 1970s and provided close air support (CAS) in past conflicts, including the Iraq War.⁴⁹⁾ It is explained that this decision was the result of favoring multi-mission systems that enable the Air Force to survive in anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) environments over the non-stealth A-10 that can only perform a “single mission” of CAS.⁵⁰⁾ The Air Force plans to reduce the number of aircraft, including the A-10, by 500 over a period of five years.⁵¹⁾

It is furthermore stated that if sequestration goes into effect again from FY 2016, retirement of the entire KC-10 fleet of fifty-nine aerial refueling tankers and eighty aircraft including the RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 40, delayed procurement

of the F-35, reduction of combat air patrol (CAP) by the unmanned aerial vehicles, MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper, and other measures will be taken. With regard to the F-35, the *Estimated Impacts of Sequestration-Level Funding* estimates that as a result of the above cuts, reduction of F-35A procurement during the period of the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP, 2015–2019) would amount to that of one squadron.

By making the above kind of “tough choice” of reducing force structure, the DOD is showing its policy of raising funds for the modernization program and preparing for future challenges, and this is also reflected in the DOD budget submission. In the PB15 formulated in line with the 2014 QDR, procurement costs related to sophisticated platforms that will enable activities even in A2/AD environments, or research, development, test & evaluation (RDT&E) funds are basically maintained, albeit with some minor increases and reductions from the PB14 (see Table 7.2).

The Air Force’s Long Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B) is expected to serve an important role in operations under an A2/AD threat environment, and it has been budgeted in the RDT&E funds from FY2012. With the aim to achieve initial operational capability by the mid-2020s,⁵²⁾ the PB15 reflects a plan to rapidly advance R&D during the FYDP up to FY 2019 and also indicates prospects that RDT&E funding for LRS-B will increase by over tenfold from \$258.7 million in FY 2013 to \$3,451.22 million in FY 2019. Procurement of the F-35A, which will become the next generation’s main combat fighter, was reduced from the planned twenty-six to nineteen due to FY 2013 sequestration, but in PB15, the number has been returned to twenty-six in FY 2015, with plans to also increase production in the years to follow.

For the Navy as well, although there was a downward revision from the target of 117 to 109 in the plan to procure the new P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, which began to be manufactured in FY 2011, it is planned to proceed with its procurement in PB15. Similarly, a budget has been allocated for the development of UCLASS, the Unmanned Carrier-Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike system.

US recognition of the increasing threat against space systems, which are crucial in conducting military operations, has also been reflected in the DSG up to now. In the 2014 QDR, it is mentioned that securing freedom of access in space is vital to the US ability to “project power and win decisively in conflict.” For this, a

Table 7.2. Examples of funding requests for platforms to deal with A2/AD threats (PB14 and PB15)

Fiscal year	UCLASS R&D			LRS-B R&D			P-8A procurement			E-2D procurement				
	PB14	PB15		PB14	PB15		PB14	No. of unit to be procured	PB15	No. of unit to be procured	PB14	No. of unit to be procured	PB15	No. of unit to be procured
Previous years	193.663	144.994	581.315	258.707	8,714.064	37	8,430.733	37	8,078.473	64	7,926.296	64		
2014	146.683	121.673	379.437	359.437	3,503.149	16	3,359.525	16	1,263.649	5	1,224.195	5		
2015	522.497	403.017	1,045.328	913.728	3,627.933	16	2,051.784	8	1,242.758	5	1,045.635	4		
2016	652.344	668.749	1,818.046	1,590.578	3,341.806	16	3,205.188	15	1,323.427	6	1,118.823	5		
2017	622.527	665.18	2,707.315	2372.23	2,790.552	14	2,587.718	13	1,393.566	8	1,083.814	6		
2018	619.412	663.884	2,836.047	3,090.831	2,173.871	10	2,597.225	13	1,262.206	8	932.913	5		
2019		269.86		3,451.225	1766.6	8	1,713.216	7			1,158.548	5		
Total				25,917.98	117	24,002.462	109	18,798.333	114	17,272.753	106			

Sources: Department of the Navy and Department of the Air Force budget request materials (FY 2014 and 2015).

Note: In PB14, the FY 2014 figure is the amount requested, and from FY 2015 onward the figures are FYDP estimates. In PB15, the FY 2014 figure is the amount approved by the Department of Defense Appropriation Act, the FY 2015 figure is the amount requested, and from FY 2016 onward the figures are FYDP estimates.

“multi-layered approach” will be taken to deter attacks on space systems, and that it will “defend against, and if necessary, defeat” adversary efforts to interfere with or attack US or allied space systems. Moreover, to counter adversary obstructions or attacks on space systems, not only will the survivability of individual satellites be increased, but “resilience” will also be improved, including the satellite system and the securing of alternative means to space support. It is also stated that initiatives to counter adversary space capabilities, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and space-enabled precision strike, will be accelerated.

Regarding nuclear weapons, the 2014 QDR mentioned that the DOD would continue to invest in modernizing the nuclear delivery systems, warheads, warning, command, and control, and nuclear weapons infrastructure. In association with this, at a press conference on November 14, Hagel and Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work announced that as billions of dollars of additional investments will be needed over the next five years to strengthen the nuclear enterprise, there will be about a 10 percent increase over each of those years from the current level of \$15 to \$16 billion.⁵³⁾ Hagel had ordered both an independent review and internal review⁵⁴⁾ on personnel, training, organization, higher commands’ oversight of nuclear forces, and investment associated with nuclear weapons in response to a series of scandals in the nuclear forces that had come to light at the start of 2014.⁵⁵⁾ He stated that these reviews revealed problems including manning, infrastructure, skill deficiencies, a culture of micromanagement, over-inspection, and inadequate communication. Maintaining that one of the root causes of the problems is a lack of resources, he said that funding would be increased.⁵⁶⁾

Moreover, while attempting to raise funds for modernization by making the abovementioned “tough choices,” the DOD is also working to propel the Defense Innovation Initiative, announced by Hagel during his address at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library on November 15, 2014.⁵⁷⁾ Against a backdrop “where American dominance in key warfighting domains is eroding” due to the proliferation of advanced technologies and weapons, modernization of the Chinese and Russian militaries, and other factors,⁵⁸⁾ the Defense Innovation Initiative is a “department-wide initiative to pursue innovative ways to sustain and advance [US] military superiority for the 21st Century and improve business operations throughout the Department.”⁵⁹⁾ Concrete areas that will be covered by the initiative include human resource development, wargaming, new operational

concepts, business practices, and long-range research and development programs.⁶⁰ The initiative will be headed by Work, and promoted by the Advanced Capability and Deterrent Panel chaired by Work and made up of senior leadership from across the DOD.

In so doing, Hagel states that rather than taking straight line approaches such as simply increasing the size of the force or spending, in order “to overcome challenges to our military superiority, we must change the way we innovate, operate, and do business.” Maintaining that many of the technologies that the DOD seeks to take advantage of “are no longer also in the domain of DoD development pipelines or traditional defense contractors,” he revealed that the DOD will collect ideas by going beyond the existing defense industry, actively seeking proposals from “the private sector, including ... those firms and academic institutions outside DoD’s traditional orbit.”⁶¹

Hagel also announced the establishment of the new Long-Range Research and Development Planning Program (LRRDP).⁶² This follows the example of the development program for extended-range precision-guided munitions, stealth aircraft, and new ISR platforms launched in the 1970s under then Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to secure US military superiority to offset the superiority in number of the Warsaw Treaty Organization forces. The LRRDP will aim to “help identify, develop, and field breakthroughs in the most cutting-edge technologies and systems” from fields including robotics, autonomous systems, miniaturization, big data, and advanced manufacturing.⁶³ Under Frank Kendall, under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, work on the LRRDP is underway with the aim to allow input to the FY 2017 budget submission.⁶⁴ A request for information (RFI) was also presented to the private sector on December 3.⁶⁵

Acquisition reform is also an important part of the Defense Innovation Initiative due to demands for more results in a more appropriate manner while using limited resources.⁶⁶ Acquisition reform is being promoted under the Obama administration as the Better Buying Power (BBP) initiative. Reform proposals compiled in BBP 1.0 and BBP 2.0 were announced in 2010 and 2012, respectively, and the latest BBP 3.0 proposal was released on September 19, 2014.⁶⁷ With the aim to raise efficiency and productivity of the acquisition process, core BBP initiatives include continuing to set and enforce affordability constraints for R&D projects, controlling costs by seeking to achieve cost reduction goals, anticipating and

planning for responsive and emerging threats on a continuing basis, incentivizing productivity and innovation in the defense industry, and eliminating unproductive processes and bureaucracy.⁶⁸⁾

Efforts had been underway to promote many of the individual items included in the Defense Innovation Initiative from before the release of the initiative. However, it is believed that the top-down decision by Hagel to place this under the leadership of Work as a department-wide initiative was done with the aim to give Work the leverage to promote reform and add momentum to the reform effort.

(3) Congressional Reaction and Future Prospects

Many choices were made in the 2014 QDR and PB15, but the cooperation of Congress would be indispensable to achieve them. In the *Chairman's Assessment of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Gen. Martin Dempsey, JCS chairman, stated, "I urge Congress—again—to move quickly to implement difficult decisions and to remove limitations on our ability to make hard choices within the Department of Defense." Nevertheless, the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (FY15 NDAA), enacted on December 19, 2014, and the FY 2015 DOD Appropriation Act (FY15 DODAA), enacted on the 16th of that month, rejected such "difficult decisions," albeit not totally.

With respect to the aircraft carrier USS *George Washington*, which was slated to be retired without the scheduled RCOH should sequestration from FY 2016 be unavoidable, the FY15 NDAA provided RCOH-related funding of roughly \$800 million⁶⁹⁾ and included a provision that prohibited funds from being used to "conduct tasks connected to the inactivation ... unless such tasks are identical to tasks that would be necessary" for the RCOH of the vessel in FY 2015.⁷⁰⁾ However, the a provision included in the House bill that would force the DOD to begin RCOH by freezing 50 percent of the budget for the Office of the Secretary of Defense until the secretary obligates funds "to commence the planning and long lead time material procurement" associated with RCOH, was shelved.⁷¹⁾

Concerning the PB15 plan to place eleven *Ticonderoga*-class CGs and three *Whidbey Island*-class LSDs in long-term layup status, the FY15 NDAA, along with prohibiting the use of funds "to retire, prepare to retire, inactivate, or place in storage" a CG or LSD during the fiscal year, also stipulated that the Navy shall begin the modernization and upgrade of two of the eleven CGs during FY 2015.⁷²⁾ Moreover, the FY15 DODAA set a ceiling that allows no more than six CGs to be

placed in layup for phased modernization at any time, and provided an additional \$540 million in funds to maintain these vessels.⁷³⁾

Regarding the plan to retire the entire A-10 Thunderbolt II fleet, the FY15 NDAA prohibited the use of funds “to retire, prepare to retire, or place in storage” any A-10 aircraft, with the exception of those the Air Force had planned to retire as of April 9, 2013 (sixty-one aircraft⁷⁴⁾).⁷⁵⁾ It did, however, recognize that the Air Force could move up to thirty-six A-10 aircraft in the active component to “backup flying status” and reposition the maintenance personnel.⁷⁶⁾ The FY15 NDAA also included provisions prohibiting or limiting the planned reduction or transfer of other aircraft in the DOD’s retirement and modernization plan.⁷⁷⁾ A provision prohibiting A-10 retirement and other associated measures was included in the FY15 DODAA as well.⁷⁸⁾ In addition, as the steady downsizing of the military is leading to a surplus of facilities, the DOD has been requesting Congress to authorize a new round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) to study their integration and closure. This was also requested in the PB15 for implementation in 2017,⁷⁹⁾ but was rejected by the FY15 NDAA.⁸⁰⁾

In response to such actions by Congress, on December 19 Hagel issued a statement in which he pointed out that “Congress continues to prevent the Defense Department from pursuing many cost-savings measures,” and warned that “The longer we defer tough choices, the more difficult they will become down the road.”⁸¹⁾ However, as some of the intentions of the administration have been included in the legislative process of Congress, it would not necessarily be impossible to receive the cooperation of Congress on these “tough choices.” Future actions taken by Congress must be followed closely, including the course of action for sequestration from FY 2016 onward.

3. Global Commitment and the Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific

(1) Crisis in Ukraine and Operation Atlantic Resolve

As explained earlier, in 2014 the United States continued with efforts to strengthen its presence in the Asia-Pacific in order to advance its rebalance to the region, but in the meantime, this policy was being confronted by various challenges. One is the crisis that originated from the political change in Ukraine.

As can be seen through statements such as “Our relationship with our European allies remains the cornerstone for U.S. engagement with the world, and a catalyst

for international action” (2010 *National Security Strategy Report*), and “Most European countries are now producers of security rather than consumers of it” (DSG), under the Obama administration, US security relations with Europe were positioned with greater weight placed on promoting cooperative relations with areas outside Europe, rather than the security of Europe itself. The DSG then concluded that military posture in Europe is focused on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with the drawdown of these operations, “our posture in Europe must also evolve.” In accordance with this DSG policy, the DOD decided that of the US forces stationed in Europe, two out of the Army’s four BCTs, the Army’s V Corps and related units, and three forward-stationed Air Force squadrons would be phased out. As a result, from FY 2006 to FY 2012 the Army had already closed 102 theater sites, and was advancing a plan to close 30 more by fiscal 2015.⁸²⁾

On the other hand, to make up for this reduction of forward deployed forces, the DOD worked to establish its presence through rotational deployment. As a part of such efforts, the 1st BCT, 1st Cavalry Division in Fort Bliss, Texas, was committed to the NATO Response Force (NRF). This was the first time for the United States to provide primary fighting formations to the NRF.⁸³⁾ In this manner, its basic perception of positioning Europe as a “producer of security” and its policy to supplement the reduction in forward deployed forces through rotational deployment from the US mainland, were also followed in the 2014 QDR released on March 4, 2014.

Yet, as the situation worsened with the Russian invasion of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea from February 27, its illegitimate move to annex Crimea on March 18, and the outbreak of fighting between the pro-Russian separatists receiving military support from Russia and the Ukrainian government forces, the United States was pressed by the necessity to demonstrate that “America’s support for our NATO allies is unwavering,” (Obama, March 20). The target of such efforts were the Central and Eastern European NATO countries of Poland and the three Baltic states, which are located closer to Russia and, from a historical background as well, are highly wary of Russia. The United States strengthened rotational deployment and the sending of troops for joint exercises and training to these countries from areas more to the west such as Germany and Italy, and from the US mainland as well. These initiatives, labeled Operation Atlantic Resolve, are undertaken with inclusion of the framework for exercises and rotational development implemented from before.

First, in order to participate in the NATO Baltic Air Policing, which guards the airspace over the three Baltic states, on March 6, the United States deployed six additional F-15Cs to augment the four F-15Cs already in the area for the same mission.⁸⁴⁾ In mid-March, twelve F-16s and 200 personnel assigned to Aviano Air Base, Italy,⁸⁵⁾ were sent to the US Air Force Aviation Detachment activated at Lask Air Base, Poland,⁸⁶⁾ at the end of 2012. This was said to be a deliberate effort to “reassure NATO allies of commitment and solidarity to collective defense,” and since then, rotational deployment of its fighter fleet has been continued.⁸⁷⁾ Also, from mid-March the United States has been flying refueling missions to support NATO airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft flights over Poland and Romania, which are conducted to monitor the situation of Ukraine airspace.

In April, the US Army’s 173rd Airborne BCT stationed in Vicenza in northern Italy deployed a company-sized contingent (about 150 paratroopers) to each of the three Baltic states and Poland—a total of 600 personnel—for joint training exercises with the respective military forces.⁸⁸⁾ The 173rd Airborne BCT continued to be deployed to Poland and the Baltic states until September, at which time it was then replaced by the 1st BCT, 1st Cavalry Division (about 800 soldiers), on deployment from Texas for a scheduled three months.⁸⁹⁾

Since 2010, the US Marines Black Sea Rotational Force (BSRF) has been deployed to the Black Sea coastal states, which are similarly located near Russia, using Romania’s Mihail Kogalniceanu Airfield as its staging base.⁹⁰⁾ The rotation in 2013, BSRF-13, was for six months from March to September,⁹¹⁾ but in 2014,

duration was extended with year-round presence maintained for the first time.⁹²⁾ The 2014 deployment was initially for six months from mid-September 2013 to late February 2014,⁹³⁾ and implemented as BSRF-14. This was succeeded by the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, from February to late August as BSRF-14.2, which was then succeeded in August by the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment as BSRF-14.2A for deployment during the winter



173rd Airborne BCT paratrooper receives a welcome from President Dalia Grybauskaitė in Lithuania (April 28, 2014) (Sgt. A.M. LaVey, 173rd Airborne Brigade Public Affairs)

season.⁹⁴⁾ During their rotational deployment, these forces conducted training exercises with the Black Sea coastal states and the three Baltic states.

As tensions mount in the Ukraine situation, the United States is also deploying naval vessels to the Black Sea. In order “to reassure our allies of the US commitment to the region,” beginning with the participation of *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer USS *Truxtun* in a Passing Exercise (PASSEX) with Romanian and Bulgarian naval forces in the Black Sea,⁹⁵⁾ by the end of 2014, a total of nine naval vessels have entered the Black Sea to participate in joint exercises with the naval forces of the region’s countries and to conduct port visits.⁹⁶⁾

In response to the Ukraine crisis, the United States has conducted many bilateral/multilateral exercises and training with European militaries in order to show US commitment to its NATO allies, including rotationally deployed troops. By the end of 2014, the joint exercises and training conducted with the NATO member countries within the framework of Operation Atlantic Resolve, numbered twenty-nine for the Army and Marines, nine for the Air Force, three for the Navy, and ten for the Special Operations Forces.⁹⁷⁾

In FY 2015, a budget of \$985 million was approved as requested by the Obama administration for the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI).⁹⁸⁾ This includes (1) increasing and strengthening military presence in Europe, (2) additional implementation of bilateral and multilateral exercises and training with allies and friendly nations, (3) improvement of infrastructure, (4) strengthening the prepositioning of equipment in Europe, and (5) reinforcing initiatives to support capacity building of new NATO allies and friendly nations.⁹⁹⁾

Based on such changes in the situation in Europe, there are also arguments for revising the plan to reduce US forces stationed in Europe, which has been advanced under the 2012 DSG policy. For example, in the report by the National Defense Panel (NDP), which conducted an assessment of the 2014 QDR, it is stated that “the Russian invasion of Crimea and ongoing threat to Ukraine call into question the 2014 QDR’s conclusion—a conclusion that echoes several previous reviews—that Europe is a net producer of security,” and it argues that “developing a plan for a more robust presence in Eastern Europe” is necessary for protection from the threat of Russia and the overthrow of the government.

Gen. Philip Breedlove, USAF, commander of the US European Command (and concurrently Supreme Allied Commander Europe), in the European Command Posture Statement for Congress dated April 1, stated, “Our close strategic

relationship starts with the stationing of U.S. forces in Europe,” and that the regular deployment of US forces to Europe facilitates “habitual partnerships” necessary for response to crisis. “Preserving the U.S. strategic partnership with Europe in the 21st century requires maintaining sufficient U.S. forces in Europe,” and the forward deployment of especially the ground and air forces for training with allies and partners will sustain interoperability and maintain Europe’s trust in the United States. He went on to express his view that because “virtual presence” by US forces will be interpreted as “actual absence,” although the temporary presence of rotational forces may complement an enduring forward deployed presence, it cannot substitute for it.¹⁰⁰⁾ At a press conference at the DOD on June 30, Breedlove took this one step further to comment that although there is infrastructure that can be brought down, as far as forward deployed forces are concerned, reductions underway should be temporarily suspended and the reduction plans should be reviewed.¹⁰¹⁾ At another press conference at the DOD on September 16, he maintained that the reduction in forward-deployed forces in Europe was planned before the Ukraine crisis, and suggested that a review of those decisions may be underway.¹⁰²⁾

(2) Response to the ISIL Crisis

The other crisis in 2014 that required response by the United States was the growing power of ISIL, an extremist Sunni group in Iraq. In January 2014, ISIL captured Fallujah, a city in Al Anbar Province in west Iraq, and part of the province’s capital of Ramadi. After capturing Iraq’s second largest city of Mosul on June 10, 2014, it advanced toward Baghdad, capturing cities along the Tigris River such as Tikrit and Tal Afar, and those along the Euphrates, including Haditha, home to a hydroelectric power plant that generates the second largest amount of power in Iraq, thus expanding its control in northern Iraq. Then, on the 29th of that month, it renamed itself the “Islamic State” and declared the establishment of a “caliphate” over areas under its control in Iraq and Syria. Following that, in the beginning of August, it launched attacks on the Kurdistan Region, the Kurd autonomy in northern Iraq governed by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and along with closing in on its capital, Erbil, on August 7 it seized Iraq’s largest producer of power, the Mosul Dam.

The collapse through surrender or retreat of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), which was deployed to the north to fight ISIL and other insurgents, allowed ISIL to expand its power. Regarding the ISF situation, at the Senate Armed Services

Committee (SASC) on September 16, JCS Chairman Gen. Dempsey expressed his view that of fifty ISF brigades, only twenty-six were assessed to be “reputable partners,” with the remaining twenty-four having issues of infiltration, leadership, and sectarianism.¹⁰³⁾

In response to this deteriorating situation in Iraq, it was not until mid-June, after the ISIL takeover of Mosul, that the Obama administration set forth a concrete response. At a press conference held on June 19, President Obama announced five policies: (1) secure the US Embassy and personnel operating inside Iraq, (2) increase ISR assets, (3) continue to increase support to the ISF, (4) position additional US military assets in the region, and (5) lead a diplomatic effort.¹⁰⁴⁾

Regarding the deployment of military personnel to Iraq, the first action taken by the Obama administration was to send up to 275 armed forces personnel to Iraq to “provide support and security for US personnel and the US Embassy,” which was revealed in the “Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to Iraq” dated June 16. After this, personnel deployed for the security of the US embassy and its personnel was increased to up to about 825, including those providing security at Baghdad International Airport, which would serve as an escape route in the event of evacuation.

Furthermore, with regard to the deployment of US military personnel with the objective of providing training and advice to ISF, at a press conference on June 19, Obama revealed that the United States would be sending 300 personnel.¹⁰⁵⁾ These people established joint operations centers in Baghdad and Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan region, for coordination with the Iraqi side. Initial operating capabilities of the centers were established by the beginning of July.¹⁰⁶⁾ The KRG has its own military force, the Peshmerga, and has established the Ministry of Peshmerga to manage it,¹⁰⁷⁾ but it is said that liaison and coordination with the Peshmerga are conducted at the joint operations center in Erbil.

Obama maintained that US military personnel deployed to “advise and train” were at first engaged in work “to assess how we can best support Iraqi security forces.”¹⁰⁸⁾ However, as was revealed by Hagel at the SASC on September 16, the activities of these personnel is transitioning to an “advise-and-assist” mission, with more than 15 teams deployed to the headquarters of the Iraqi Security Forces to provide “strategic and operational advice and assistance.”¹⁰⁹⁾ Based on such change in mission, on September 24, Hagel ordered the deployment of 500 soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division headquarters element from Fort Riley,

Table 7.3. Deployments of US forces to Iraq announced by President Obama (2014)

June 16

Up to approximately 275 US Armed Forces personnel are deploying to Iraq from June 15 and onward to provide support and security for US personnel and the US Embassy in Baghdad.

June 19

A small number of additional American military advisers—up to 300—will be sent to assess how to best train, advise, and support Iraqi security forces going forward, and to establish a joint operations center for information sharing and planning and coordination with the ISF.

June 30

Up to approximately 200 additional US Armed Forces personnel will be sent to Iraq to reinforce security at the US Embassy, its support facilities, and the Baghdad International Airport.

September 2

Approximately 350 additional US Armed Forces personnel were authorized to deploy to Iraq in order to provide support and security for US personnel and the US Embassy in Baghdad.

September 23

The DOD was directed to deploy 475 additional US Armed Forces personnel to Iraq. (In association with this, Hagel announced that the command and control function will come out of the 1st Division.)

November 7

Authorization was given for the deployment of up to 1,500 additional military personnel to train, advise, and assist ISF, including Kurdish forces (Peshmerga).

Sources: President's letters to Congressional leaders and his remarks made at press conferences.

Note: Dates are when Obama authorized deployment or when he announced the authorization.

Kansas. Among them, approximately 200 are to be deployed to Iraq, and 300 to the Central Command area of responsibility other than Iraq.¹¹⁰⁾ According to the explanation by Dempsey, the deployed command personnel are “a coherent standing war fighting organization that understands how to integrate these multiple activities and to manage the activities of the coalition,” and this is “an organization that actually has the bandwidth and the skill sets to manage a campaign [as opposed to single operations].”¹¹¹⁾

Moreover, on November 7, the White House and DOD announced that President Obama had authorized the deployment of an additional 1,500 US military personnel.¹¹²⁾ On December 19, the DOD revealed that of these 1,500, Hagel ordered the deployment of 1,300 troops to Iraq, of whom 1,000 will be soldiers from the 3rd BCT, 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.¹¹³⁾

Based on this additional deployment, US Central Command decided to establish several sites across Iraq for the training of nine ISF and three Peshmerga brigades.¹¹⁴⁾ At the end of December, training for the ISF began in Taji, north of Baghdad, and at the Al Asad airbase in Al Anbar Province.¹¹⁵⁾ It could be said that in this way the support system for the ISF and Peshmerga in Iraq is gradually expanding. According to the President's letter to Congressional leaders dated December 11, US military personnel deployed to Iraq will be on a scale of 3,100.¹¹⁶⁾

The provision of weapons and ammunition are also among the measures taken by the United States as its support to Iraq. Against the backdrop of deteriorating security in Iraq with ISIL's occupation of Fallujah, a city to the west of Baghdad, in January 2014 the US government received the approval of Congress to sell AH-64 helicopters to Iraq in response to the request by the Iraqi government. The policy of selling 24 AH-64E Apache Longbow attack helicopters to Iraq was revealed, with six AH-64A to be leased for training the personnel on operation and maintenance until the AH-64Es are delivered to the Iraqi government in 2017.¹¹⁷⁾ The leased six AH-64As were originally scheduled for delivery in July 2014, but because the Iraq side did not agree to the US offer by the August deadline, the offer to sell and lease the AH-64 expired.¹¹⁸⁾ It is said that behind this turn of events was Russia's prompt provision of Su-25 ground attack aircraft and Mil-28NE and Mi-35M attack helicopters to Iraq.¹¹⁹⁾ On July 28, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced that in order "to help improve the Iraq Security Forces' capability to support current on-going ground operations," it will provide 5,000 AGM-114K/N/R Hellfire missiles and associated equipment, parts, training and logistical support for an estimated cost of \$700 million as Foreign Military Sales (FMS).¹²⁰⁾

Of issue in the provision of weapons was assistance given to Peshmerga. US military assistance is normally provided to the central governments. However, a distinguishing feature of this case of Iraq is that assistance is not given just to ISF, the official military force of the Iraqi government, but to Peshmerga as well, mainly in the provision of light arms and ammunition via the ISF.¹²¹⁾ It has also been reported that these are being directly provided through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).¹²²⁾

Moreover, Obama announced that military assistance to the Syrian opposition will be strengthened, and requested Congress for "additional authorization and resources to provide training and equipment" to the Syrian opposition.

Congressional support on military assistance to the Syrian opposition was quickly received, and in the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2015, the Secretary of Defense was authorized to provide training, equipment, supplies, and sustainment to the Syrian opposition.¹²³⁾

Such deployment of military personnel for “advice and training” and the sales of arms are positioned as “our support to forces fighting these terrorists [ISIL] on the ground” (Obama, September 10). It could be said that on the other hand, airstrikes launched against ISIL are done by the United States to directly act against ISIL. At a press conference on June 19, Obama disclosed that activities to collect information about potential targets associated with ISIL have been increased to prepare for possible implementation of airstrikes,¹²⁴⁾ but actual actions were not taken until nearly two months later on August 8.¹²⁵⁾ In early August, ISIL began launching attacks on the region under KRG control in northern Iraq. With the aim to prevent the fall of Erbil, the United States implemented targeted strikes to provide air support to the Peshmerga who were defending Erbil.¹²⁶⁾ When Obama announced that he had directed the military to implement airstrikes against ISIL on August 7, he explained that such operations were necessary to protect the US consulate in Erbil and American military personnel in the city.¹²⁷⁾ Adding to the situation was the fact that this is also a region of deep interest and concern to the United States, with American multinationals such as ExxonMobil and Chevron having expanded their businesses to the oil-rich Kurdistan region and its capital of Erbil because of the relatively stable security situation there compared to other parts of Iraq. These airstrikes on ISIL around Erbil were conducted intermittently from August 8.¹²⁸⁾

Moreover, when Obama announced his policy for airstrikes on August 7, he additionally disclosed that he has also approved attacks that aim to rescue and support the Yazidis, a Kurdish religious minority who had fled to Sinjar Mountain to escape from ISIL. When Sinjar, located near the border with Syria and where many Yazidis reside, was attacked by ISIL, the Yazidis were forced to evacuate to the mountain to escape persecution and faced “a horrible choice: descend the mountain and be slaughtered or stay and slowly die of thirst and hunger” (Obama).¹²⁹⁾ Because of this the Peshmerga and ISF were fighting ISIL to rescue the Yazidis, and it was decided that the US forces would give them air support.¹³⁰⁾ Attacks on ISIL who had the Yazidis besieged, were launched from August 9.¹³¹⁾ With a similar aim, airstrikes were also implemented on August 30 to lift the ISIL

siege that had continued from June on the northern town of Amirli, home to the Shiite Turkmens.¹³²⁾

Airstrikes were also implemented to secure Iraq's important infrastructure. Since August 15, strikes were launched against ISIL around the Mosul Dam. These strikes were conducted to support the ISF and Peshmerga in recapturing the dam, which had fallen into the hands of ISIL on the 7th of that month.¹³³⁾ Subsequently, on the 18th, it was announced that the ISF and Peshmerga had retaken Mosul Dam,¹³⁴⁾ but airstrikes were still launched on ISIL in the area around the dam.¹³⁵⁾

The Obama administration was dealing with the situation in these ways since June. However, in a statement made at the White House on September 10, ISIL was positioned as a threat to not just Iraq and Syria but the broader Middle East, and if left unchecked, could pose a growing threat to other regions, including the United States. Upon this position, and on top of the many measures that had been taken up to then, Obama expressed his objective to "degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL," revealing that "a comprehensive and sustained counterterrorism strategy" will be taken to accomplish this aim. As part of this strategy, Obama stated that strikes will be conducted to support the "Iraqi forces," namely the ISF and Peshmerga, as they go on the offensive against ISIL, and went on to say that he will not hesitate to take action against ISIL in Syria as well, thus indicating the United States' changing position on airstrikes and its policy of broadening their range.¹³⁶⁾ Indeed, the first airstrikes on targets in Syria were conducted from September 22 to 23 on ISIL training compounds, headquarters and command and control facilities, storage facilities, a finance center, and supply trucks and armed vehicles. Participating in the attacks were Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, with Qatar in a supporting role.¹³⁷⁾ Airstrikes were also conducted on the training camps, an explosives and munitions production facility, a communication building, and command and control facilities in Syria of the Khorasan group, an al-Qaeda-linked radical group that was said to be "[plotting an] imminent attack ... against the United States and western targets."¹³⁸⁾ According to documents of the US Air Forces Central Command (USAFCENT), within the context of such changes, the strikes on ISIL, which began in August, had also increased significantly over the period to end December. According to the DOD, during the period from August 8, when the airstrikes were first launched, through January 2, the expense of military operations against ISIL averaged \$8.2

million a day for a cumulative total of \$1.2 billion.¹³⁹⁾

The building of a broad international alliance is crucial in the Obama administration’s strategy against ISIL. In the September 10 address in which Obama announced the strategy against ISIL, he also said, “America will be joined by a broad coalition of partners,” clarifying the United States’ intention to expand partners in its operations against ISIL. Prior to this, at the NATO Wales Summit held on September 4 and 5, Secretary of State Kerry and Secretary of Defense Hagel, along with the foreign and defense ministers of the United Kingdom, held a meeting on measures against ISIL.¹⁴⁰⁾ In addition, Kerry attended a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on September 11 and requested their cooperation in strategy against ISIL,¹⁴¹⁾ and then on the 15th, also participated in a meeting held in Paris to discuss measures against ISIL, which was attended by the foreign ministers of twenty-six countries including those in Europe, the Middle East, as well as Russia and China. As a result of such approaches, the DOD stated that over sixty countries “have committed themselves to the goals of eliminating the threat posed by ISIL and have already contributed ... to the effort to combat ISIL ...”¹⁴²⁾

Strategies against ISIL are not limited to military response. It would also be necessary to block the flow of funds that support ISIL activities. According to David Cohen, under secretary of the Treasury for terrorism and financial intelligence, from mid-June ISIL was earning about \$1 million a day by selling the oil extracted from ISIL-controlled fields to smugglers.¹⁴³⁾ The United States has taken measures to identify and sanction those who have had transactions with ISIL, as well as those who did not have direct transactions with ISIL but have traded in oil sold by ISIL, and to also restrict ISIL’s access to the international financial system. In the airstrikes implemented from late September to October, strikes were conducted on fifteen to twenty modular oil refineries in Syria, making many of them inoperable.¹⁴⁴⁾ Also, with regard to foreign fighters joining ISIL, at

Table 7.4. Number of airstrikes against ISIL

August	September	October	November	December	Total
211	760	1,641	1,407	1,867	5,886

Sources: US Air Forces Central Command, “Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2010-2014 Airpower Statistics, As of 31 December 2014.”

Note: Figures are number of weapon releases in the airstrikes.

the head-of-state level meeting of the United Nations Security Council chaired by Obama, which was held on September 24, 2014, UNSC Resolution 2178 was adopted to call for measures to be taken by all countries to prohibit actions such as the recruiting, travelling, and financing of foreign terrorist fighters.¹⁴⁵⁾

(3) Global Leadership and the Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific

As explained up to now, a number of events testing US leadership emerged in 2014. These were countered through measures such as Operation Atlantic Resolve, which was implemented in Europe to provide reassurance during the Ukraine crisis, and the first military intervention in Iraq since the full withdrawal of US troops at the end of 2011. It could be said that these events also presented a challenge to the Asia-Pacific rebalance. This is particularly because the rebalancing was explained and understood as being based on the premises that “today’s wars” in Iraq and Afghanistan are drawing to a conclusion and that the security environment in Europe is stable.¹⁴⁶⁾

To begin with, however, the rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific was not based on the premise of taking other regions lightly. In her memoirs, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton explains that the reason why the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific was launched was because, in consideration of the growing importance of the Asia-Pacific region, the US had come to a “pivot point” and had felt that it was time to do more in the “areas of greatest opportunity.” On the other hand, Clinton maintains that it was simultaneously necessary to also deal with the “threats that remained,” and that, “We worked to make clear that America had the reach and resolve to pivot *to* Asia without pivoting away from other obligations and opportunities.”¹⁴⁷⁾

In 2014, the actions taken by the United State in the crises in Ukraine and Iraq were to show that “without pivoting away from other obligations and opportunities” and by dealing with such “threats,” it will fulfill its responsibilities in other regions of the world; this means none other than that the United States, as a global power, is expected to exhibit global leadership. Like it or not, the United States, which has a responsibility to ensure global security, cannot avoid being pressed to respond to crises occurring in various parts of the world. This, however, is not in contradiction to the simultaneous pursuit of stronger presence in the Asia-Pacific—an area “of greatest opportunity” according to Clinton—but is a position that should be advanced in parallel. It could be said that the events occurring in 2014 have highlighted this fact.

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