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This article appears also as a chapter in Newport Paper 26, a collection of studies of issues related to the U.S. worldwide basing posture.

TRANSFORMING THE U.S. GLOBAL DEFENSE POSTURE

Ryan Henry

At the end of 2004, the world was witness to an event that no one could have foreseen. Even more startling than the shock of the Indian Ocean tsunami itself was the scale of its impact. But the very suddenness and speed with which the tsunami struck gave a glimpse of how valuable it is to posture our forces for uncertainty. Had the tsunami occurred in 1985, at the height of the Cold War, it is difficult to imagine that the United States could have surged the forces and logistical support needed to deliver food and water to the areas of the eastern Indian Ocean that were the hardest hit. It is even more difficult to imagine that the United States could have depended on an extensive network of partner nations to assist us in exercising our global responsibility to act. Only through the transformation of the U.S. military's capabilities and the growing flexibility of our overseas posture was the United States able to respond as quickly and effectively as it did during this crisis.

The security environment at the start of the twenty-first century is perhaps the most uncertain it has been in our nation's history. This article focuses on the strategic realities that are driving the transformation of the American global defense posture to contend with that uncertainty, and the resultant changes the Department of Defense is working to bring about in our relationships and partnership capabilities around the world.

NEW STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

The impetus for the transformation that put us in a position to respond quickly and effectively to the Indian Ocean tsunami was the emergence of a new strategic landscape. Since 2002, the U.S. military has been adapting the posture of its forces to address the key security challenges that our country will face in the

twenty-first century. Traditional, state-based military challenges—for which our Cold War posture was optimized—will remain, but as the 11 September 2001 attacks revealed, a broader range of security challenges has emerged. The events of 9/11 showed the destructive potential of terrorists and the vulnerability of the United States and of its allies to unwarned attack. It showed the effectiveness of asymmetric methods in countering U.S. conventional military superiority and sounded an early warning of the approaching confluence of terrorism, state sponsorship of terrorism, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) enabled by globalization. It focused our attention on a hostile ideology that openly advocates the killing of innocents for political gain, and it proved that globalization has made failed states and ungoverned areas in the most remote corners of the world grave dangers to our security.

The Secretary of Defense's 2005 *National Defense Strategy* provides a conceptual framework for understanding this new strategic landscape, which may be said to span four types of security challenges: *traditional, irregular, catastrophic,* and *disruptive.*

- Traditional: states employing military forces in well-known forms of military competition and conflict (such as major combat operations employing conventional air, sea, and land forces)
- Irregular: nonstate and state actors employing "unconventional" methods to counter stronger state opponents (for instance, terrorism, insurgency, civil war, and other methods aimed to erode influence and political will)
- Catastrophic: terrorists or rogue states employing WMD or WMD-like effects against American interests (for example, massive attacks on the homeland, collapsing global markets, or loss of key allies that would inflict a state of shock upon political and commercial activity)
- Disruptive: competitors employing breakout technologies or methods that counter or cancel our military superiority (e.g., advances in bio-, cyber-, or space war, ultra-miniaturization, directed energy).

As recent experience has shown, these challenges often converge and overlap. Our adversaries in Iraq and Afghanistan have employed both traditional and irregular approaches, and terrorist organizations like al-Qa'ida are posing irregular threats while actively seeking catastrophic capabilities.

THE BROAD VIEW OF "TRANSFORMATION"

President Bush came to office in 2001 with an aggressive agenda for defense transformation. He charged Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld with transforming the Defense Department for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The administration's sense of the changed strategic landscape led to a new assessment of our needed global defense posture. What is emerging from that assessment is the most profound reordering of U.S. military forces overseas since World War II and the Korean War. The key to understanding this realignment effort is transformation.

When he arrived at the Pentagon, Secretary Rumsfeld recognized the need for change. He understood that the strategic and operational environment today is defined by uncertainty, that the world is changing in relation to that environment, and that we need to view that world as it is and adapt to it as necessary. The threat-based planning system prevalent in the Cold War—through which we could project a seemingly predefined and predetermined Soviet threat and how to posture against it—had become obsolete. Overcoming our preconceptions of that era, Secretary Rumsfeld led the department in taking the first step of transformation by shifting away from threat-based planning and toward a capabilities-based approach that addresses the full spectrum of feasible threats. This approach posits that unlike in the Cold War, we no longer know precisely what threats we will face in the future, who will pose them, and where, much less when. However, we do believe there will be future challengers to American interests and to the interests of our allies and partners, and that we must plan against the kinds of capabilities potential adversaries may employ to exploit our vulnerabilities.

Revisiting the framework of the four security challenges, this approach means first recognizing that the Defense Department's (and the nation's) comfort zone has long been in the realm of "traditional challenges." Through transformation, the department has moved beyond this traditional focus and begun applying its thinking and capabilities to the other three sets of challenges—irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive. Our global defense posture realignment will leave us in much better shape to face the uncertainty that inheres within these nontraditional challenges.

Our sense of the new strategic landscape—and the opportunities opened up by emerging technologies—has led to a new way of measuring military effectiveness. Numbers of troops and weapon platforms are no longer the key metrics. Rather, military effectiveness is now a matter of capabilities—speed, stealth, reach, knowledge, precision, and lethality. Thus, our defense planning should place less emphasis on numbers of forward forces than upon capabilities and desired effects that can be achieved rapidly.

Transformation also calls for increased effectiveness and efficiency. Within the Defense Department, it has strengthened jointness among military services through joint presence policy, as well as smarter business practices for managing the day-to-day workings of the institution. At the interagency level, it has improved transparency and generated new approaches to problem solving.

Transformation has also strengthened momentum for changing the relationship between the department and its people, by keeping faith with their expectations of quality of life in a time of increased operational tempo.

If changing relationships is a hallmark of transformation, the greatest impact of all has been on American relationships with allies and partners. The administration understands that the United States cannot "go it alone" in world affairs. Among our country's key strategic assets is the network of alliances and partnerships that allows us to enjoy the benefits of international cooperation in virtually every endeavor we undertake. This network is the most vital asset we have as a nation in the Global War on Terror. It is instrumental in developing a common understanding of shared threats and in working jointly to contend with them, particularly through partnership capacity building.

We call the relationships dimension of transformation *security cooperation.* It is important to understand that this term is not synonymous with "engagement"—or with showing the U.S. flag overseas as an end in itself. Rather, security cooperation is the means by which the Department of Defense encourages and enables allies and partners to work with us to achieve common strategic objectives, thereby building the capability and capacity of the partnership.

In a sense, security cooperation is capabilities-based planning as applied to relationships with our allies and partners. Whereas during the Cold War we supported our NATO and Pacific Rim allies against threats to their borders, today we work with allies and partners who share our sense that security challenges transcend specific borders and threaten societies on a global scale. Just as capabilities-based planning positions the United States to contend with adversarial capabilities in an uncertain environment, security cooperation enables the United States to confront a spectrum of threats to its own security and that of allies and partners—anywhere, at any time. This invokes an important, symbiotic relationship between security cooperation and our global defense posture. Global posture serves as the platform for implementing security cooperation activities. Conversely, security cooperation activities help develop and maintain the access needed for posturing our forces to contend with future uncertainties.

In sum, transformation is far more dynamic than the common conception of applying high technology in war. For the Defense Department, it is about:

- A command climate that swept away preconceived notions of strategic affairs and of the department's traditional role in those affairs
- The shift from a threat-based to a capabilities-based approach
- The need for increased efficiency and effectiveness
- The shift from engagement to security cooperation.

Transformational thinking respects the facts, rejects fixed ideas, and promotes new and necessary relationships and capabilities that position us to contend with the uncertainty of the new strategic landscape.

THE GENESIS OF THE U.S. GLOBAL DEFENSE POSTURE

Before turning to how this transformation has helped drive the strategy for realigning our global defense posture, a bit of history is in order. In 1985, at the height of the Cold War, the United States had 358,000 military personnel deployed in Europe, 125,000 in East Asia, and nine thousand in the Persian Gulf. In Europe, ground, air, and naval forces were stationed in support of NATO from Iceland in the northwest to Turkey in the southeast. In the Pacific region, forces were stationed in Korea, the Philippines, and Japan. Our defense posture at that time was the product of the collective legacy of the wars of the mid-twentieth century, but our basing and operating patterns were relatively well matched to the challenges of the Cold War era. Forces in Europe and Asia were primarily designed to fight in place—potent for defensive operations close to garrison, but difficult to deploy outside of the theater where they were stationed. Essentially, we maintained forward-deployed forces that served as defensive tripwires.

The end of the Cold War dramatically altered the global landscape. As a result, during the first half of the 1990s the United States closed or turned over to host governments about 60 percent of its overseas military installations and returned nearly three hundred thousand military personnel to the United States. During the 1990s the United States also closed large military facilities in the Philippines, Spain, and Panama.

By the mid-1990s, although we had dramatically reduced the overall numbers of forward-stationed military forces, they remained concentrated largely in Western Europe and Northeast Asia. After the end of the Cold War, however, our operating patterns had diverged from our basing posture. Western Europe and Northeast Asia had become springboards for operations in the Balkans, the Persian Gulf, and later, Central Asia. The result was a shift in the rationale for our forward posture—forces were no longer expected to fight in place. Rather, their purpose was to project into theaters that were likely to be some distance away from their garrisons. In other words, while a primary purpose of forward presence was to provide for the direct territorial defense of treaty allies, this could no longer be the sole purpose. Threats to the security of our nation and that of our allies had begun emerging in unexpected and faraway lands.

However, new necessities of geopolitics and operational flexibility overseas were not the only motivations for transforming our global posture. The other major impetus was domestic in nature. Stresses on our military forces and their families also dictated that we review our posture globally. “Accompanied tours”

(in which families moved with the service members) designed in an era of static deployments had become more of a hardship for families as service members deployed more frequently from their forward stations. In increasing numbers, accompanying dependents faced "double separation"—separated both from their loved ones in uniform and from their communities and extended families back in the United States.

In his 2001 review of our defense strategy and capabilities, Secretary Rumsfeld challenged the Department of Defense to change how it conceptualized and projected American presence overseas so as to contend with uncertainty and surprise. Some remained unconvinced of the need for change, but the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 abruptly dispelled any doubt. No one foresaw this catastrophic event, but our administration had already made the mental leap—expect uncertainty and surprise—inherently necessary to respond effectively. The attacks coincided in a tragic manner with the defense transformation already under way.

The confluence of these transformational factors—the president's sense of the new strategic landscape, the mandate for change from the 2001 review, and the shock of 9/11—galvanized the forces of change. In the midst of these coalescing events, the secretary of defense initiated the Global Defense Posture Review, a comprehensive, strategy-based reassessment of the size, location, types, and capabilities of our forward military forces. We surveyed the new strategic landscape and developed a global posture strategy that hinged upon achieving geopolitically sound relationships and a disposition of relevant capabilities forward to contend with uncertainty. This strategy was developed through a wide range of consultations—with policy makers and military leaders throughout the department, within the interagency realm, and with defense intellectuals. The secretary then turned to his combatant commanders* to devise specific proposals for posture changes to implement the strategy. This ensured that what seemed strategically sound could be made operationally feasible. The development of these proposals largely revolved around three general areas of realignment:

- Adjusting our presence in Europe by shifting away from legacy Cold War structures
- Reforming our posture in the Pacific, with increased emphasis on key capabilities to assure allies more effectively, dissuade potential competitors, deter aggressors, and defeat adversaries if called upon to do so

* The combatant commanders, who report through the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the secretary of defense, are currently those of the U.S. Central, European, Joint Forces, Northern, Pacific, Southern, Special Operations, Strategic, and Transportation commands. See www.jcs.mil.

- Developing the operational flexibility and diversity in options needed to contend with uncertainty in the "arc of instability"—the vast region from North Africa across the Middle East and South Asia to Southeast Asia.

In 2002, the president confirmed the change of direction in defense planning in the *National Security Strategy of the United States:* "To contend with uncertainty and to meet the many security challenges we face, the United States will require bases and stations within and beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia, as well as temporary access arrangements for the long-distance deployment of U.S. forces."

The Defense Department's strategy was exported to the U.S. government as a whole, so that the Global Defense Posture Review would not be driven just by military considerations. The Defense Department collaborated closely with its interagency partners—particularly the State Department—from the start. The National Security Council, as the body overseeing posture changes, provided high-level guidance and input. Thus the global defense posture realignment became the strategy of the U.S. government.

The Defense Department also consulted extensively with allies and partners. In November 2003 the president formally announced intensified consultations with allies and partners on the Global Defense Posture Review. Subsequently, senior Defense and State officials held joint consultations in over twenty foreign capitals, many of which are still going on in various forms.

GLOBAL POSTURE STRATEGY UNVEILED

On 16 August 2004, in a culminating point for Defense Department planners, the secretary's new global defense posture strategy, molded by interagency input, was adopted by the president in an announcement of the administration's intention to move forward: "Today I announce a new plan for deploying America's armed forces. . . . The new plan will help us fight and win the wars of the 21st century. It will strengthen our alliances around the world while we build new partnerships to better preserve the peace."

While the global posture strategy does not comprise everything the American defense establishment is doing overseas, its implementation serves as the foundation for changing U.S. defense policy abroad. It is the department's vehicle for translating transformation into relevant and effective defense relationships and capabilities for the emerging security environment. The global defense posture strategy is composed of five key themes, which emerged from the review and the evolving transformational thinking of the department described earlier. These themes now serve as the measures of effectiveness for global posture changes.

Improve Flexibility to Contend with Uncertainty. Much of our existing overseas posture was established during the Cold War, when we thought we knew

where we would have to fight. Today, however, we often have to deploy to places that few people, if anyone, would have predicted. Thus, we should plan in ways that mitigate surprise. Our goal is to have forces positioned forward on a continual basis, with access and facilities that enable them to reach any potential crisis spot quickly.

Strengthen Allied Roles and Build New Partnerships. Changes to our global posture aim to help our allies and friends modernize their own forces, strategies, and doctrines. We are exploring ways in which we can enhance our collective defense capabilities, ensuring that our future alliances and partnerships are capable, affordable, sustainable, and relevant. At the same time, we seek to tailor our military's overseas "footprint" to suit local conditions, reduce friction with host nations, and respect local sensitivities. A critical precept in our global posture planning is that the United States will place forces only where those forces are wanted and welcomed by the host government and populace.

Create the Capacity to Act Both within and across Regions. In the Cold War years, we focused on threats to specific regions and tailored our military presence to those regions. Now we are dealing with security challenges that are global in nature, relationships that must address those challenges accordingly (e.g., Japan's involvement in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, or NATO's involvement through the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan), and defense capabilities that must be global in reach. We need to improve our ability to project power from one region to another and to manage forces on a global basis.

Develop Rapidly Deployable Capabilities. We no longer expect to have to fight in place. Our forces need to be able to move smoothly into, through, and out of host nations. This puts a premium on establishing flexible legal and support arrangements with our allies and partners. It also strengthens the demand for capabilities that provide increasingly global reach, such as the Army's Stryker brigade combat teams, the worldwide disposition of key prepositioned materials and equipment, and improvements to global en route infrastructure and strategic lift.

Focus on Effective Military Capabilities—Not Numbers of Personnel, Units, or Equipment. Our key purpose is to push relevant capabilities forward—capability being defined as the ability to achieve desired effects under certain standards and conditions. We now can have far greater capabilities forward than in the past, even with smaller permanently stationed forces. The Cold War practice of "bean counting" numbers of personnel in administrative regions is no longer the case. Capabilities matter, not numbers.

A COMPLEX UNDERTAKING

The implementation process for realigning our global defense posture is an enormously complex undertaking. These changes are not happening in a static environment. Global posture is a dynamic, rolling process that incorporates the transformational mind-set described earlier—continuously assessing the geopolitical environment, incorporating new ideas into the strategy, and making adjustments as necessary.

The key to understanding this dynamic undertaking is the recognition that global posture is not monolithic—not just a matter of the physical military footprint of bases and personnel overseas. It includes:

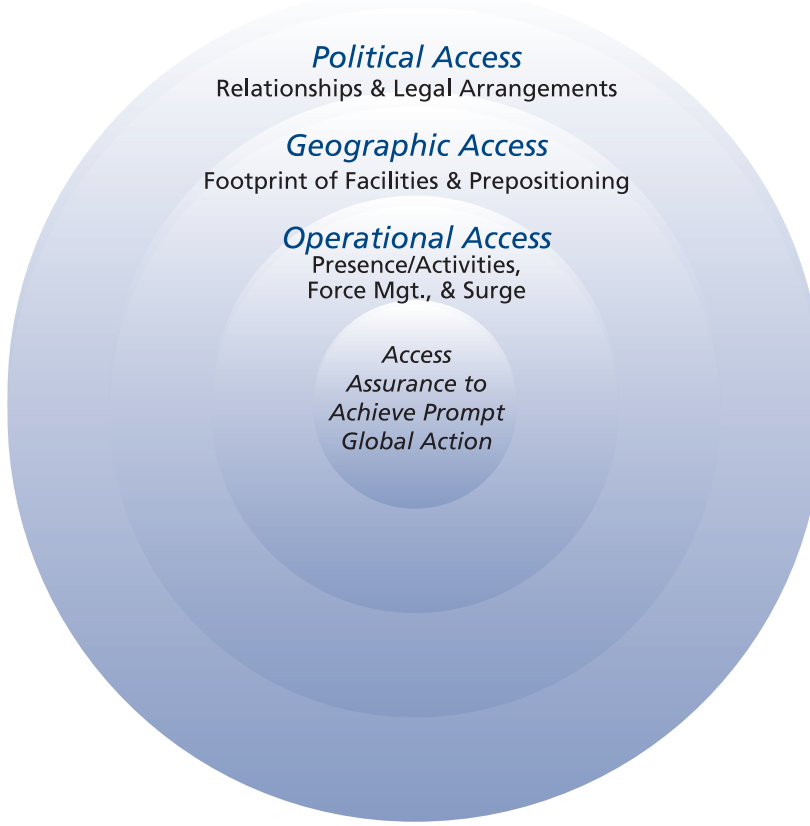
- Our *relationships* with host nations
- The *presence* of activities overseas
- The *legal arrangements* needed to support that presence
- Our *capacity* to surge forces
- Our *prepositioned equipment*
- The *global sourcing* (or "force management") needed to meet competing demands.

The interrelationship among these posture elements is akin to an ecosystem. This "ecosystem" (see figure) is defined by interdependent layers of political, geographic, and operational access that enable security cooperation and prompt global military action when needed. Changes on one level can have secondary and tertiary effects on others. For example, changes in the legal arrangements (an element of political access) that we have with one host nation can affect our freedom of action (geographic access) throughout a theater and, consequently, our ability to push relevant capabilities forward for operations. Achieving and sustaining good political access through our relationships with host-nation partners ensures the desired geographic access and, subsequently, the desired operational access to rotate forces in theater for security cooperation activities or to surge forces when needed in support of contingency operations. The challenge for global posture, which is akin to adjusting that ecosystem deliberately, is in striking the right balance between our relationships and capabilities overseas on the one hand and the dynamics of the complex and changing security environment on the other.

Each of these layers of access deserves a closer look.

Political Access

Building and sustaining political access—that is, the will of host-nation allies and partners to support U.S. military action when needed—require two posture



elements: relationships and legal arrangements. Our ability to act around the world is supported by key security relationships with allies and partners. These relationships involve interactions at all levels—from heads of state to students studying together in the schoolhouses that we and our allies provide. Changes in global posture seek both to strengthen our existing relationships and to help cultivate new relationships founded upon common security interests and common values. These are critical to enhancing allied and partner military capabilities in key areas, such as counterterrorism.

The set of bilateral and multilateral legal arrangements pertaining to our military personnel and activities worldwide constitutes the formal framework for our military presence, access, and activities in other countries. It defines the rights and obligations of the parties, sets the terms for military access and activities, and provides protections for American personnel. Some of our planned posture changes require a foundation of new and more flexible legal arrangements. Our new legal arrangements tend to be more concise than the elaborate arrangements we entered into after World War II, addressing only key things the United States needs for an expeditionary (rather than permanent) presence. These

include operational flexibility, training, logistics, financial arrangements, and status coverage for our forces. Critical to our success in this effort has been close collaboration by the State and Defense departments to develop a solid interagency team and a good diplomatic structure for consultations and negotiations.

Geographic Access

Geographic access means having the necessary en route infrastructure to maintain our freedom of action globally; in posture planning it requires considerable versatility in overseas facilities where our forces live, train, and operate. The realignment of our global defense posture combines a network of traditional and new facilities to enhance our capacity for prompt global action. This network consists of three types of facilities—*main operating bases* (MOBs), *forward operating sites* (FOSs), and *cooperative security locations* (CSLs).

Main operating bases, with permanently stationed combat forces, have robust infrastructures such as family support facilities and strengthened arrangements for force protection. Examples include Ramstein Air Base in Germany, Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, and Camp Humphreys in Korea. We are retaining and consolidating many of our MOBs in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, and elsewhere. We also rely heavily on forward operating sites, expandable "warm facilities" maintained with a limited U.S. military support presence, and, possibly, prepositioned equipment. Greater use of prepositioned equipment, strategically located and globally managed, will support training with our allies and partners and facilitate the rapid deployment of forces where and when they are needed. FOSs largely support rotational rather than permanently stationed forces and are focuses for bilateral and regional training. Examples include the Sembawang port facility in Singapore and Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras.

We also will need access to a broader range of facilities with little or no permanent American presence. Relying instead on periodic service, contractor, or host-nation support, cooperative security locations provide contingency access and serve as focal points for security cooperation activities. A good example is Dakar, Senegal, where the Air Force has negotiated contingency landing, logistics, and fuel contracting arrangements, and which served as a staging area for the 2003 peace operation in Liberia. A June 2005 *Atlantic Monthly* article by Robert Kaplan discusses presence in the Pacific in a way that captures the idea behind CSLs:

> We will want unobtrusive bases that benefit the host country much more obviously than they benefit us. Allowing us the use of such a base would ramp up power from a country rather than humiliating it. . . . Often the key role in managing a CSL is

> played by a private contractor[,] . . . [u]sually a retired American noncom. . . . He rents his facilities at the base from the host country military, and then charges a fee to the U.S. Air Force pilots transiting the base. Officially he is in business for himself, which the host country likes because it can then claim it is not really working with the American military. . . . [T]he very fact that a relationship with the U.S. armed forces is indirect rather than direct eases tensions.

Operational Access

Finally, operational access comprises the presence, global management, and surging of our forces overseas, all enabled by the political and geographic access we enjoy with host-nation partners. Presence is defined by the permanent and rotational forces that conduct military activities (training, exercises, and operations) worldwide, from security cooperation to crisis response. That presence consists of both small units working together in a wide range of capacities and major formations conducting elaborate exercises to achieve proficiency in multinational operations. Second, our posture supports our new approach to force management, which seeks both to relieve stresses on our military forces and their families and to manage our forces on a global, rather than regional, basis. Combatant commanders no longer "own" forces in their theaters; rather, forces are managed according to global priorities. Third, managing our military forces globally also allows us to surge a greater percentage of the force wherever and whenever necessary.

Tempo of Global Posture Changes

There is another dimension of global posture that underscores its multidimensional nature: the cycle of interdependent processes at work in the Defense Department—a cycle that sets the pace for posture changes, including institutional transformation within the services, the U.S. government's deliberations with host-nation partners, and the Base Closure and Realignment (known as BRAC) process. Global posture's flexible, rolling decision-making process must ebb and flow with these three processes.

Specifically, the process of consultations and negotiations with allies and partners establishes a tempo for bringing American forces home. Over the next ten years, from sixty to seventy thousand military personnel (along with approximately a hundred thousand family members and civilian employees) are to return to the United States from overseas installations. This realignment will also entail a net reduction of approximately 35 percent in our overseas facilities.

The pace for these changes is set through a deliberative diplomatic process with current and potential host-nation partners in which we achieve common understandings of the security environment, develop plans that ensure mutual benefits and reliable defense commitments, and work to reduce any frictions

attending upon the U.S. military presence. Multiple variables in negotiations—such as host-nation stability and sensitivity to American presence, security challenges in the region, and existing levels of host-nation infrastructure and cost sharing—are weighed across a diverse range of countries and regions.

U.S. forces that relocate as a result of this diplomatic process will be affected by the absorptive capacity of service transformation efforts and by BRAC. The planned posture changes directly support service initiatives—such as the Army's modularity and unit rotation concepts, the Navy's Fleet Response Plan, and the Air Force's ongoing force management improvements—designed to facilitate personnel management, provide predictability in scheduling, and offer more stability at home. Returning forces meet the services' need to refit their units for increased modularity. These transformed units then provide the combat power for prosecuting operations in the Global War on Terror, including Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Of course, the absorptive capacity of returning units is also directly impacted by BRAC, which sets the pace for reconstitution of those forces in the continental United States.

Thus, a symbiotic relationship exists among global posture consultations/negotiations overseas, service transformation, and BRAC, in which each informs and dictates the pace of the others. Imagine a clock running on three wheels, each wheel's gears interlocked with the others. Slowing one wheel would slow the entire clockwork, thereby impeding the pace of transformation to support the war on terror and enable our long-term realignment effort.

REGION-BY-REGION SYNOPSIS

Europe

Peace in Europe is no longer threatened by an enemy with tens of thousands of armored vehicles poised to invade across the North German plain. We no longer need heavy maneuver forces as the central element of our defense posture in Europe. A transformed posture—one that supports NATO's own transformation goals—requires forward forces that are rapidly deployable for early entry into conflict well beyond Europe. Such forces will continue to train alongside other NATO forces to improve interoperability for twenty-first-century operations.

There are two basic components to posture changes in Europe: increasing rotational presence toward the south and east of Europe, and pushing the most effective and relevant capabilities forward for expeditionary presence and spurring allied transformation. Our future posture in Europe will be characterized by lighter, more deployable ground capabilities (for example, Stryker and airborne forces). Such ground forces will have leaner command and support structures than they have today. They will rely on existing advanced training

facilities (such as in Grafenwoehr, Germany) and high-capacity mobility infrastructure (in Ramstein, Germany, for instance). Special Operations forces will play an increasingly important role in our future European posture. They will be repositioned in the theater for training and operational efficiencies and for ease of movement. Our naval and air capabilities in the theater will remain very robust and will enable rapid movement of forces into, through, and from Europe. They too have already undergone transformations to leaner and more deployable command structures.

The Asia-Pacific

In the Asia-Pacific region, we seek to strengthen our ability to execute the National Defense Strategy and to solidify relationships that can help win the Global War on Terror. We want to improve our ability to meet our alliance commitments by strengthening our deterrent against threats such as that posed by North Korea while helping our allies strengthen their own military capabilities. The forward deployment of additional expeditionary maritime capabilities and long-range strike assets in Alaska, Hawaii, and Guam will increase both our deterrent effect and our capacity for rapid response. In this region—in light of the vast distances that military forces must traverse in crises—deterrence also means increasing our ability to project military forces rapidly and at long ranges, both to the region and within it. Where appropriate, we also will consolidate our facilities and headquarters for more streamlined command and control and increased jointness. This facilitates a more expeditionary posture, as is the case with the transformation of the U.S. Army's Japan headquarters into a deployable joint task force–capable headquarters. Finally, we seek to reduce the number of American military forces in host nations where those forces abut large urban populations. We will strengthen our relationships by reducing the frictions—accidents, incidents, and the like—associated with normal military activities in urban settings.

In a related initiative, over the past two years we have engaged with our Japanese hosts in a series of sustained security consultations. These talks were aimed at evolving the U.S.-Japan security alliance to reflect today's rapidly changing global security environment. The Defense Posture Review Initiative (DPRI) has focused on alliance transformation at the strategic and operational levels, with particular attention to the posture of U.S. and Japanese forces in Japan. In the DPRI, we have negotiated several important force realignment initiatives designed to relieve stresses in our relationship with Japan while strengthening our deterrence and global flexibility. Among the more significant of these initiatives are the consolidation of carrier jet aircraft based on mainland Japan, and a significant reduction and reorganization of the Marine Corps posture on Okinawa.

Our current ground, air, and naval access throughout the Asia-Pacific region serves as a basis for a long-term presence that will be better structured for more effective regional and global action. For example, the Army's modular transformation will streamline headquarters elements and strengthen joint capabilities. The forward-deployed Air Force Strike ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) task force in the Pacific will also enable greater regional and global reach. We also are establishing a network of forward operating sites and cooperative security locations to support better the war on terror and to provide multiple avenues of access for contingency operations. Such facilities will serve to expand U.S. and host-nation training opportunities, helping our partners build their own capacities in areas such as counterterrorism.

On the Korean Peninsula, our planned enhancements and realignments are intended to strengthen our overall military effectiveness for the combined defense of the Republic of Korea. Stationed forces are relocating away from the increasing congestion and sprawl of the greater Seoul area and consolidating into two major hubs in the central and southern sections of the country. Rotational and rapidly deployable combat capabilities such as Stryker units and air expeditionary forces will complement these permanently stationed units. We seek to retain a robust prepositioned equipment capability in Korea to support rapid reinforcement.

The Middle East

In the Middle East, we seek to maintain a posture of "presence without permanence"—prosecuting the Global War on Terror and assuring our allies and partners, but without unduly heavy military footprints. Cooperation and access provided by host nations during ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM provide us with a solid basis for long-term, cooperative relationships in this region. We seek to maintain or upgrade—and in isolated cases establish—forward operating sites and cooperative security locations for rotational and contingency purposes, along with strategically placed prepositioned equipment and forward command-and-control elements. Our posture also aims to strengthen our capabilities on the peripheries of this region, including in the Horn of Africa and in Central and South Asia. In addition, we continue to identify advanced training opportunities with our regional partners for capacity building in such areas as counterterrorism and for broader military interoperability.

Africa and the Western Hemisphere

Our aims in Africa and the Western Hemisphere are to broaden relationships, build partnership capacity, obtain contingency access, and facilitate practical security cooperation activities, without creation of new bases or permanent military presence.

Ungoverned and undergoverned areas in vast swaths of sub-Saharan Africa and South America can serve as breeding grounds not just for domestic insurgents but for international terrorists and other transnational threats that increasingly find their "home bases" disappearing in other regions. We therefore seek an array of CSLs in these regions for contingency access into remote areas. Often this access will take the form of "gas and go" operations, as has been recent practice as formalized in the Air Force's Africa Fuels Initiative. Such CSLs will not require a permanent combat presence. They will be focal points for combined training with host nations and other allies and partners, and they will have the capacity to expand and contract on the basis of operational needs.

Though much work remains, the realignment of the U.S. global defense posture is well under way, particularly through the ongoing strengthening of American military capabilities in Europe and the Pacific. The 1st Infantry Division has commenced its redeployment from Germany. A brigade from the 2nd Infantry Division in the Republic of Korea will redeploy to the United States upon completion of its rotation in Iraq. In Japan, the DPRI process has resulted in an agreement on specific force posture realignments that will have far-reaching, beneficial impacts for the U.S.-Japanese alliance. Also, the services are undergoing expansive transformation and consolidation of their headquarters structures, the better to support expeditionary operations.

The new U.S. global posture strategy is set to emerge as one of the most far-reaching of the national defense legacies of this administration. It reflects the American commitment to a global insurance policy for an emerging security landscape. Collectively, proposed posture changes provide a framework for our alliance and defense commitments overseas and for harmonizing our forces' skill sets with the shifting uncertainties of that new landscape. Global, geopolitical circumstances will continue to change, our relationships with allies and partners will evolve, and our capabilities will mature. Well beyond the tenure of this administration, our new global defense posture will provide a foundation upon which the U.S. military and its supporting defense establishment can build adaptively for decades to come.