

## Quadrennial Defense Review Report

Written as a complement to the National Security Strategy of 2010 (NSS 2010), the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report of 2010 is a 105-page document that addresses U.S. defense strategy, force planning, and resource priorities for the coming years including Future Years Defense Plan 2011–2015 and beyond. Claiming to be strategy-driven and analytical, it advances two main objectives: rebalancing the U.S. Armed Forces to prevail in today’s wars while preparing to deal with future threats; and reforming Department of Defense (DOD) institutions and processes to better support urgent needs of the warfighter, buy new weapons affordably, and make efficient use of resources. It is mainly preoccupied with conventional forces and preparations; it delegates nuclear and missile defense forces to two subsequent DOD studies (addressed below).

In his memorandum introducing the QDR Report, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates proclaims that because it is a truly wartime document, for the first time, it places current conflicts, especially Afghanistan and Iraq, at the top of DOD priorities. But he also states that because of the simultaneous need to prepare for a wide range of security challenges on the horizon, the United States requires a broad portfolio of military capabilities with maximum versatility across the entire spectrum of potential conflict. To meet those threats to the U.S. military’s capacity to project power, deter aggression, and aid allies and partners, Secretary Gates calls for more focus and investments in a new air-sea battle concept, and long-range strike, space, and cyberspace assets, along with other conventional and strategic modernization programs. He also calls for fresh efforts to work closely with allies and partners and to better integrate DOD activities with civilian agencies and organizations. Secretary Gates puts forth the twin agenda of rebalanc-

ing and reform as key mechanisms for pursuing this agenda in ways that employ scarce resources effectively and field the necessary U.S. military forces today and tomorrow.

As Secretary Gates's memo makes clear, the QDR Report, along with accompanying budget decisions, aspires to launch DOD on the path of major changes in strategic and military priorities. In particular, it aims at enhancing U.S. military capabilities for waging current conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, while trimming some forces and scaling back expensive modernization programs for the distant future. Such cutbacks are partly motivated by an assessment of strategic requirements, but they also anticipate a future in which DOD budgets will not grow rapidly (if at all), stiff priorities must be met, and painful tradeoffs made. A controversial document, the QDR Report's emphasis on enhancing current warfighting capabilities has gained widespread support in the United States. At the same time, its handling of the future U.S. force structure and modernization plans has attracted stinging criticisms. The result has been a mandate by Congress, supported by Secretary Gates, to instruct a team of outside experts to prepare an Alternative QDR Report that puts forth a different future agenda (discussed below). Past QDR Reports have always triggered debates, but this is the first time that a new QDR Report has provoked an officially sanctioned competitor.

To accomplish its purposes, the QDR Report contains the following sections, which are discussed in sequential order here:

- DOD strategy
- rebalancing the force
- guiding the force posture's evolution
- taking care of DOD people
- strengthening relationships abroad and at home
- reforming how DOD does business.

*Defense Strategy.* Similar to the NSS 2010, the QDR Report argues that the United States faces a complex and uncertain international security

landscape in which the pace of change is accelerating, thereby creating both challenges and opportunities. A key trend, it asserts, is that the distribution of global power is becoming more diffuse in ways that, while make the emerging international system hard to define, will leave the United States as the most powerful actor, but one increasingly obligated to work with allies and partners. As part of this trend, it continues, new powers are rising, nonstate actors are becoming more influential, and proliferation is threatening to spread not only weapons of mass destruction (WMD) but also other destructive technologies. In this setting, the QDR Report claims that the top DOD priority must be to prevail in current operations, especially Afghanistan and Iraq. At the same time, DOD must be mindful of broader trends that are shifting the operational landscape. Such trends, it states, include efforts by potential adversaries—states and nonstate actors alike—to offset U.S. military predominance by shifting to such new methods as hybrid warfare, antiaccess capabilities, and, by some states, long-range and precision weapons intended to contest for control of the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace domains. Moreover, it claims, failing states and growing radicalism mean that over the coming decades, conflicts are as likely to result from state weakness as from state strength. A major implication, it judges, is that U.S. military forces must remain capable of handling a wide spectrum of future conflicts and missions even as they attend to current conflicts.

To address these global dynamics in a manner that carries out the strategic guidance of the NSS 2010, the QDR Report states that DOD should pursue a defense strategy focused on four priority objectives:

- prevail in today's wars
- prevent and deter conflict
- prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies
- preserve and enhance the all-volunteer force.

Prevailing in today's wars, the QDR Report states, requires succeeding in Afghanistan and the border regions of Pakistan in ways that defeat al

Qaeda, suppress the Taliban, and strengthen the Afghan government, army, and police force. Success in Afghanistan, it argues, requires not only the ongoing surge of U.S. military forces and partner commitments, but also rapidly increasing the number and quality of such key enablers as air transports and helicopters, unmanned aerial systems, and other combat support/logistic support assets. In Iraq, the QDR Report envisions the continuing drawdown of U.S. military forces until total withdrawal is completed by late 2011. Elsewhere, it states, the ongoing multitheater fight against al Qaeda and its affiliates will necessitate a U.S. military contribution focused on two basic forms: a highly capable network of special operations and intelligence capabilities, and an enduring effort to build the capacity of key partners around the world.

Preventing and deterring conflict, the QDR Report argues, should focus on existing and potential threats in ways that defend the United States, protect allies, foster regional security, and preserve access to the global commons. While this goal requires multiple instruments and all aspects of national power, it states, DOD can contribute by assisting allies and partners in their defense efforts. It can do so by providing a global defense posture of forward-stationed and deployable forces capable of prevailing across all domains, protecting critical U.S. infrastructure including cyberspace, and sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal at the lowest levels consistent with U.S. and allied interests. The task of credibly underwriting U.S. commitments while pursuing deterrence, it asserts, requires tailored approaches to deterrence that include an in-depth understanding of the capabilities, intentions, and decisionmaking of adversaries including states and terrorist networks. The United States, it reports, is strengthening its approach to deterrence by three steps. The first is enhancing DOD ability to attribute WMD, space, and cyberspace attacks to hold aggressors responsible and deny them success. The second is closely consulting allies on creating new tailored regional defense architectures that include conventional forces, nuclear forces, and missile defenses. The third is enhancing U.S. and allied resilience—that is, the capacity to recover quickly from attack.

Preparing to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies, the QDR Report argues, requires that U.S. military forces must provide multiple employment options and capabilities now and in the future. Such options, it states, stretch from supporting a response to an attack or natural disaster at home to defeating al Qaeda and its allies and defeating aggression by adversary states. They also include securing or neutralizing WMD systems in a state that has lost control of them or thwarting a non-state actor that is trying to acquire them, stabilizing failed states that face internal security threats, and preventing human suffering due to genocide or natural disasters abroad. It further states that in the years ahead, DOD must be prepared to prevail in operations that may occur in multiple theaters in overlapping time frames. This includes the capacity to wage war against two capable nation-state aggressors and to carry out other missions in unpredictable combinations. It notes that while recent operations have stressed the ground forces disproportionately, the future operational landscape could portend significant long-duration air and maritime operations for which U.S. military forces must be prepared.

Preserving and enhancing the all-volunteer force, the QDR Report states, mandate attaching higher priority to a goal that for too long has been underemphasized. The long-lasting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it points out, have greatly stressed military personnel and their families with repeated deployments. Pursuing an improved situation, it claims, thus requires transitioning to sustainable rotational rates that protect the force's long-term health, even though DOD must remain prepared for periods of significant crises and multiple operations that mandate higher deployment rates, briefer dwell times, and use of the Reserve Component. The QDR Report calls for stronger efforts to address declining retention levels for key personnel and such healthcare problems as increased levels of combat stress, mental health issues, and even suicides. In addition, it states, DOD must expand its Civilian Expeditionary Workforce and spend substantial money on resetting equipment and platforms lost through combat and the strain of today's wars, although not necessarily on a one-for-one basis.

*Rebalancing the Force.* In the eyes of the QDR Report, rebalancing the force involves pursuing multiple steps aimed at remedying gaps in capabilities in the existing and future posture. It articulates two primary themes: U.S. forces would be better able to perform their missions if they had more and better key enabling capabilities at their disposal (for example, helicopters, unmanned aircraft systems [UAS], intelligence analysis and foreign language expertise, and tactical communication systems); and U.S. forces must be flexible and adaptable, so they can confront the full range of challenges that emerge from the changing international security environment.

By applying available resources wisely, the QDR Report aims at strengthening U.S. military capabilities appreciably in ways that reduce, but not necessarily eliminate, operational and strategic risks. Rebalancing the force, it states, requires investments in six critical mission areas:

- defend the United States and support civilian authorities at home
- succeed in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations
- build the security capacity of partner states
- deter and defeat aggression in antiaccess environments
- prevent proliferation and counter WMD
- operate effectively in cyberspace.

The mission of defending the United States and supporting civilian authorities at home, the QDR Report states, especially requires measures to safeguard against terrorist strikes on the homeland. Accordingly, this mission requires investments in multiple areas:

- field faster, more flexible consequence management assets by increasing the responsiveness of the original chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive Consequence Management Response Force, replacing two other response forces with smaller units focused on command, control, communications assets, and using the National Guard to create 10 Homeland Response Forces
- enhance capabilities for domain awareness by acquiring new technologies

- accelerate the development of standoff radiological detection capabilities by acquiring sensors that will permit better wide-area surveillance at home and abroad
- enhance domestic counter–improvised explosive devices (IED) capabilities by developing better tactics, techniques, and procedures.

The mission of succeeding in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations, the QDR Report states, is not a niche area, but instead requires high-level competencies from all military Services and will remain relevant for the indefinite future. In particular, the report asserts, investments are needed in multiple capabilities that are in high demand and provide key enablers of tactical and operational success:

- increase the availability of rotary-wing assets in the form of more cargo helicopters, naval support helicopters, and two more Army combat aviation brigades
- expand manned and unmanned aircraft systems for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) in the form of such long-dwell assets as Predator and Reaper
- expand intelligence, analysis, and targeting capability in the form of more trained manpower and critical support systems
- improve counter-IED capabilities, especially in the form of more and better assets for airborne electronic warfare (EW) currently in high demand
- expand and modernize the AC–130 fleet in the form of modernizing and enlarging the number of AC–130 gunships
- increase key enabling assets for special operations forces (SOF) in the form of more gunships plus more organic combat support and combat service support assets
- increase counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism capacity in the form of additional Army Stryker Brigades, naval riverine assets, and coastal patrol aircraft
- expand Civil Affairs capacity in the form of new Active-duty Civil Affairs brigades and better integration of Civil Affairs activities with

stability operations in Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Human Terrain Teams

- strengthen capabilities for strategic communications in the form of closer collaboration among multiple agencies at all levels, including DOD–Department of State cooperation.

Building the security capacity of partner states, the QDR Report states, is a longstanding but increasingly important mission that is carried out not only by Foreign Military Sales and Foreign Military Financing and officer exchange and education programs; it is also accomplished by new-era security force assistance missions that can involve deployment of sizable U.S. military forces to individual countries to help train, equip, and prepare host-nation forces and defense ministries. Key initiatives of the QDR Report for this mission include:

- strengthen and institutionalize U.S. military capabilities for security force assistance activities in the form of 500 more personnel assigned to trainer-to-trainer units of all four Services, more Air Force Regional Contingency Response Groups, and more Air Force light mobility and light attack aircraft for working with partner air forces
- enhance linguistic, regional, and cultural capacities in the form of additional funds for expanded programs in all three areas
- strengthen and expand capabilities for training partner aviation forces by doubling DOD capacity in this area, including more aircraft for the Air Force 6<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Squadron
- strengthen capacities for ministerial-level training in the form of expanded programs for providing civilian and military training
- create mechanisms to facilitate rapid transfer of critical materiel by reducing delays and bottlenecks
- strengthen capacities for training regional and international security organizations, including the United Nations and international peace-keeping efforts, along with increased training and education of the forces of participating nations.

The mission of deterring and defeating aggression in antiaccess environments, the QDR Report states, requires paying close attention to new emerging threats. Gaining access to contested zones, it claims, is critical to the U.S. strategy of forward defense and power projection in multiple regions, including the Middle East and Asia. In the past, it argues, this capacity could often be taken for granted, but in tomorrow's world, this no longer will be the case because potential adversaries are striving to acquire military capabilities that, unless countered, could deny access to U.S. forces, thereby permitting uncontested aggression by them. The QDR Report notes that North Korea and Iran are acquiring new ballistic missile systems that could target U.S. forces in ways threatening their sanctuary bases. In addition, it states, the Chinese modernization program is developing and fielding large numbers of medium-range ballistic and cruise missiles, new attack submarines, long-range air defense systems, electronic warfare assets, satellite attack assets, and cyber attack capabilities. A further menace, it notes, is that Russia is proliferating modern integrated air defenses, and even such nonstate actors as Hizballah are acquiring unmanned aerial vehicles and man-portable air defense systems. Nuclear proliferation, the QDR Report judges, would gravely enhance threats to U.S. forces, but increasingly strong conventional capabilities for antiaccess strategies pose significant challenges of their own. In particular, U.S. air and naval forces could be threatened, thereby making it harder to project large ground forces to contested areas.

To counter this antiaccess threat, the QDR Report advocates the following set of measures:

- develop a joint air-sea battle concept, now under study by the Air Force and Navy, that would enable U.S. forces to work closely together in all domains—land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace—to defeat antiaccess and area-denial threats
- expand future long-range strike capabilities in the form of enhanced assets for U.S. attack submarines, naval UAS systems, Air Force bombers, better surveillance, and other improvements to both penetrating platforms and standoff weapons

- exploit advantages in subsurface operations in the form of a new unmanned underwater Navy vehicle
- assure access to space and use of space assets, including use of growing international and commercial expertise, implementation of a 2008 Space Protection Strategy that will reduce vulnerabilities of space systems, and fielding capabilities for rapid augmentation and reconstitution of space capabilities to enhance resilience of space architectures
- defeat enemy sensor and engagement systems in the form of increased investments in capabilities for electronic attack
- enhance the presence and responsiveness of U.S. forces abroad by examining options for deploying and sustaining selective forces in regions facing new challenges, such as home-porting of additional naval forces.

The mission of preventing proliferation and countering weapons of mass destruction, the QDR Report states, is a top national security priority that requires many Federal agencies, with DOD playing a critical role. Portraying WMD proliferation and use as a grave threat with global ramifications, the report points out that WMD systems may fall into the hands of not only hostile states, but also fragile states and ungoverned areas. To counter this trend, it argues, the United States must increase its efforts to detect, interdict, and contain the effects of these weapons. Detering and defending against such threats, it states, can be enhanced through measures aimed at better understanding them, securing and reducing dangerous materials wherever possible, monitoring and tracking lethal agents, materials, and means of delivery, and, where relevant, defeating the agents themselves.

The QDR Report states that DOD will expand its efforts to counter WMD threats, strengthen interdiction operations, refocus intelligence requirements, strengthen international partnerships, support cooperative threat reduction efforts, and develop countermeasures, defenses, and mitigation strategies. Geographic containment of areas of concern, it continues, will be necessary to ensure that WMD and related materials do not fall into the hands of hostile actors and that effectively responding to WMD-armed

threats will require an integrated, layered defense network in multiple regions, as well as the in United States. Such layered defenses are essential, it states, to prevent an attack before it occurs, respond to attack should prevention fail, and help deny state and nonstate adversaries the benefits they seek through threatened or actual use of WMD by raising the costs and risks of such an attack. Accordingly, the QDR Report reveals that DOD will undertake the following steps:

- establish a standing joint task force elimination headquarters to better plan, train, and execute WMD-elimination operations
- research countermeasures and defenses to nontraditional chemical agents in order to create technologies for meeting and defeating these emerging threats
- enhance nuclear forensics to improve the ability to attribute nuclear attacks to their source in ways that enhance deterrence
- secure vulnerable nuclear materials by promoting stringent nuclear security practices for both civilian and military facilities across the globe
- expand the biological threat reduction program to countries outside the former Soviet Union in order to create a global network for surveillance and response
- develop new verification technologies to support a robust arms control, nonproliferation, and counterproliferation agenda.

The mission of operating effectively in cyberspace, the QDR Report states, requires efforts by DOD to protect its vast information networks from cyber attacks from multiple sources by remaining vigilant and prepared to react nearly instantaneously. It reveals that DOD is taking several steps to strengthen its capabilities in cyberspace:

- develop a comprehensive approach to DOD operations in cyberspace in the form of improved cyber defenses in-depth, resilient networks and surety of data, better planning, structures, and relationships, and new operational concepts such as dynamic network defense operations

- develop greater cyberspace expertise and awareness in the form of more cyber experts and greater attention to cyber security
- centralize command of cyberspace operations by standing up U.S. Cyber Command under U.S. Strategic Command
- enhance partnerships with other agencies and governments, including the Department of Homeland Security and international partners.

*Guiding the Force Posture's Evolution.* Notwithstanding its emphasis on current operations and capabilities, the QDR Report presents material on how the future DOD force posture should be guided, sized, and shaped. Its portrayal of trends for the main force components includes the following:

- U.S. ground forces will remain capable of full-spectrum operations with continued focus on counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorist operations
- U.S. naval forces will remain capable of forward presence and power projection operations, while being strengthened by missile defenses and other capabilities
- U.S. air forces will become more survivable as large numbers of fifth-generation aircraft (for example, the Joint Strike Fighter F-35) are added and will acquire greater range, flexibility, and versatility
- SOF capabilities will continue to increase
- across the board, U.S. forces will be improved by acquiring better enabling systems that include ISR, communications networks, base infrastructure, and cyber defenses.

The QDR Report further states that—owing to the DOD assessment of future requirements, budget constraints, and the need to make trade-offs—major cutbacks in procurement programs have been ordered. This step, it claims, reflects an effort to direct scarce resources away from lower priority programs so that more pressing needs can be met and shortfalls remedied. These cutbacks include ending production of the F-22 fighter, restructuring procurement of the DDG-1000 destroyer and the Army's Future Combat Systems, deferring production of maritime prepositioning

ships, stretching out procurement of a new class of aircraft carrier, and retirement of aging fourth-generation fighters (for example, F-16s). In addition, it states, DOD is proposing to conclude production of the C-17 transport aircraft, delay the LCC command ship program, cancel the CG(X) cruiser, and terminate the Net Enabled Command and Control program. While acknowledging that these cutbacks will slow the previously planned modernization of U.S. forces, the QDR Report states that DOD will be initiating studies of new operational concepts and examining future capability needs in several areas. These include ISR, fighters and long-range aircraft, joint forcible entry, and information networks and communications.

In addition, the QDR Report puts forth a new force-sizing and force-shaping construct. This construct replaces being prepared for two major regional wars as the main template with a broader approach to carrying out multiple overlapping operations of different types. The QDR Report states that in addition to maintaining ongoing overseas engagement activities, this new construct is anchored in the following combination of scenarios and associated requirements:

- a major stabilization operation, deterring and defeating a highly capable regional aggressor, and dealing with a catastrophic event in the United States
- deterring and defeating two regional aggressors while maintaining a heightened alert posture by other U.S. forces
- a major stabilization operation, a long-duration deterrence operation in a separate theater, a medium-sized counterinsurgency operation, and extended support to civil authorities in the United States.

The QDR Report suggests that while the first cluster of scenarios stresses the force posture's ability to defeat a sophisticated adversary, the second stresses the posture's combined arms capability, and the third stresses forces that perform counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations. It envisions that if major regional wars erupt while multiple stabilization and counterinsurgency operations are being carried out, forces

can be shifted from the former to the latter. By using this combination of scenarios, the QDR continues, its new force-sizing construct is aimed at supporting the defense strategy's four main goals while helping guide resource allocation decisions in the near and long term. It further states that as DOD transitions into a period of less intensive sustained operations, it will focus more heavily on preparing for a broader and deeper range of prevent-and-deter missions as part of a whole-of-government approach and in concert with allies and partners. Accordingly, it calls for the following force posture during the 2011–2015 period:

- Department of the Army: 73 combat brigades (45 Active and 28 Reserve Component) consisting of a mix of light, Stryker, and heavy Brigade Combat Teams, plus 21 combat aviation brigades, 15 Patriot battalions, and 7 Terminal High Altitude Area Defense batteries
- Department of the Navy: 10 to 11 carriers and 10 carrier air wings, 84 to 88 large surface combatants (including 21 to 32 Aegis missile defense combatants and Aegis ashore), 14 to 28 small surface combatants and 14 mine countermeasure ships, 29 to 31 amphibious warfare ships, 53 to 55 attack submarines, and 4 guided-missile submarines, 126 to 171 ISR and EW aircraft, 98 to 109 support ships, and 3 Marine Expeditionary Forces that include 4 divisions and 4 aircraft wings
- Department of the Air Force: 8 ISR wing-equivalents with 380 primary mission aircraft, 30 to 32 airlift and air-refueling wing-equivalents with 33 aircraft per wing, 10 to 11 theater strike wing-equivalents with 72 aircraft per wing, 5 bomber wings totaling 96 bombers, 6 air superiority wing-equivalents with 72 aircraft per wing, 3 command and control wings, and 10 space and cyberspace wings
- SOF forces: Approximately 600 special operations teams, 3 Ranger battalions, and 165 tilt-rotor and fixed-wing aircraft.

Compared to earlier plans, this posture calls for similar numbers of Army brigades, a similar number of Navy carriers and air wings (but somewhat fewer major combatants and support ships), similar numbers of Air Force bombers, fewer tactical fighter wings that are supplemented by new

ISR wings, and enlarged SOF forces. The overall implication is that compared to now, the future U.S. military posture will be similar in size in many areas, but with somewhat smaller naval and air forces. The QDR Report judges that this posture, enhanced by quality improvements in capabilities, will be adequate to carry out national defense strategy and the new force-sizing construct while providing the necessary flexibility and versatility. But by confining itself to verbal reassurances of adequacy, it does not provide penetrating analysis of the reasons why this future posture will be able to handle the three sets of scenarios, or why the cutbacks in procurement of new platforms and weapons will not unduly retard modernization.

*Taking Care of DOD People.* Pointing out that years of war have imposed considerable strain on the all-volunteer force, the QDR Report articulates a multipronged program aimed at elevating the priority attached to handling military and civilian personnel. This includes:

- caring for wounded warriors
- managing deployment tempo
- recruiting and retention
- supporting families
- keeping faith with the Reserve Component
- developing future military leaders
- developing the total DOD workforce.

The QDR Report's initiative for improving care of wounded warriors includes a set of measures aimed at enhancing funding and health benefits, establishing Centers of Excellence for treating traumatic injuries, creating a single Disability Evaluation System, improving information-sharing, and upgrading mental health care. The QDR Report's treatment of managing the deployment tempo calls for a goal in which Active military personnel remain 2 years at home for each year abroad, while Reservists spend 5 years at home for each year abroad. Its treatment of recruiting and retention calls for policies aimed at meeting future objectives in both areas, coupled with

attracting qualified people and providing more flexible ways for military personnel to transition between Active and Reserve Components. Policies for military family care call for increasing funding by 40 percent in this area, improving DOD schools, phasing out unaccompanied tours in Korea, improving family and community support services, and improving compensation for recovery from catastrophic illnesses.

In addition to highlighting the importance of the Reserve Component posture—National Guard and Reserve forces—in national defense strategy, the QDR Report calls for an improved incentive structure to create easier access to high-demand capabilities, a force-generation model that provides sufficient strategic depth, and a comprehensive study on the future balance between Active and Reserve forces. The QDR Report calls for improvements regarding how the Services generate and sustain their cadres of commissioned and non-commissioned officers. It especially focuses on efforts to improve talents for stability operations, counterinsurgency, and building partner capacities through better foreign language, regional, and cultural skills. In addition, its emphasis on professional military education calls for adequate resources and skilled faculty at DOD schools. Finally, its policies toward the total defense workforce call for proper training of the new Civilian Expeditionary Workforce, common professional training and education for flag officers and civilian senior executives, and a reduction in numbers of private contractors.

*Strengthening Relationships Abroad and at Home.* Proclaiming that cooperative relationships at home and abroad are key to DOD ability to pursue its strategic goals, the QDR Report puts forth a three-part agenda in this arena:

- strengthen relationships with allies and like-minded partners
- develop the supporting DOD global defense posture
- build close and sustained relationships with U.S. Government agencies and other critical actors at home.

The QDR Report's assessment of policies for improving relationships with allies and partners abroad begins by discussing the transatlantic part-

nership and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which it portrays as the cornerstone of security and stability in Europe and beyond. It calls upon DOD to work at ensuring a strong Alliance that provides a credible Article 5 security commitment, deters threats to Alliance security, has access to U.S. capabilities such as the phased adaptive approach to European missile defense against proliferation, and takes on such new threats as cyberspace attacks. It further urges NATO to develop its own comprehensive civil-military approach in such places as Afghanistan and to pursue greater cooperation with the European Union. It also calls for increased cooperation with Russia while respecting the sovereignty of Russia's neighbors, and for improved partner relations with Eurasian countries.

In Asia, the QDR Report states that bilateral treaty alliances provide the foundation for U.S. security policies aimed at promoting stability and security. It judges that the emerging security landscape requires a more widely distributed and adaptive U.S. presence that relies upon and better leverages the capabilities of U.S. allies and partners there. In Northeast Asia, it states that DOD is working closely with key allies Japan and South Korea to implement agreed plans and shared visions in order to build a comprehensive alliance of bilateral, regional, and global scope; to realign force postures and restructure allied roles and responsibilities; and to strengthen collective deterrence and defense capabilities. In the Pacific Rim, the QDR Report states that DOD is deepening its partnership with Australia and that, in Southeast Asia, DOD is working closely with longstanding allies Thailand and the Philippines, deepening its partnership with Singapore, and pursuing closer ties with Indonesia. While endorsing a cooperative relationship with China, the QDR Report notes that Chinese military modernization and decisionmaking processes raise legitimate questions about its future conduct and intentions in Asia and beyond. Accordingly, it calls for a U.S. relationship with China that is multidimensional and undergirded by a process that enhances confidence and reduces mistrust in a manner that reflects national interests. In South Asia, the QDR Report calls for close cooperation with India as its military capabilities continue to grow

in ways permitting it to be a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond. It also suggests the further development of a long-term strategic partnership with Pakistan in joint ways that help combat extremism and support its democracy and development.

In the Middle East, the QDR states that regional stability is critical to U.S. interests. Accordingly, it calls for continued close cooperation with Israel as well as growing security partnerships with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, other Gulf states, and Iraq. These partnerships are aimed at countering emerging threats, including extremism, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and maritime security challenges. It also proclaims that the United States will work with Middle East partners to develop a regional architecture that broadens and improves interoperable air and missile defenses. In Africa, the QDR Report calls for growing partnerships with key countries and international organizations in ways that help foster stability and prosperity, aid fragile and failed states, and cope with such security challenges as extremism, piracy, and violence. In the Western Hemisphere, the QDR Report states that the United States will work with Canada, Mexico, Brazil, and other partners to address such common problems as narcoterrorist organizations, illicit trafficking, and social unrest.

The QDR Report's assessment of regional policies for maintaining alliances and building partnerships provides a framework for guiding how the global U.S. defense posture should evolve. Noting that large U.S. military forces are deployed abroad for peacetime security-building purposes, it calls for the overseas posture to adapt and evolve in ways that respond to and anticipate changes in the international security environment. Judging that the future will require continuing innovations to meet new challenges, it calls for U.S. military overseas involvements that help foster a new architecture of cooperation. In this way, openings for U.S. forces to work closely with allies and partners can be generated in ways that create efficiencies and synergies from collaborating forces. Accordingly, it calls for a regionally tailored approach to the U.S. military posture that blends forward-stationed and rotationally deployed forces, allows for power projection from the United

States when needed, strengthens assured access to key bases and infrastructure, and provides a stabilizing influence that is welcomed by host nations.

In Europe, the QDR Report calls for a U.S. posture that protects national interests and fulfills NATO commitments, is flexible and deployable, and facilitates multilateral operations inside and outside Europe. Accordingly, it calls for the United States to continue deploying four ground brigades in Europe pending further review, to begin deployment of a revised U.S. missile defense architecture in Europe, and to enhance its forward-deployed naval presence to support improved missile defenses and increase multilateral cooperation on maritime security. In the Pacific, the QDR Report calls for an evolving and adaptive U.S. posture that continues to provide extended deterrence to Japan and Korea and preserves a strong combined U.S.–Republic of Korea defense posture on the peninsula. It also foresees pursuing the bilateral Realignment Roadmap with Japan in ways that retain adequate U.S. force there while transforming Guam into a hub for regional security activities, as well as otherwise promoting enhanced access, cooperative basing, and multilateral military cooperation on new challenges.

In the Greater Middle East and Africa, the QDR Report puts forth broad guidance to sizing and designing the future U.S. military involvement there. It calls upon DOD not only to handle the ongoing involvements in Afghanistan and Iraq, but also to focus on creating a regional strategic architecture that better serves U.S., allied, and partner interests in the medium and long terms. To this end, it calls for enhanced multilateral cooperation with allies and partners and for a reshaped U.S. defense posture that achieves reassurance and deterrence while remaining cognizant of regional sensitivities to a large, long-term U.S. military presence. In Africa, the QDR Report calls for a limited rotating U.S. military presence focused on partnership-building and access to facilities for launching multilateral contingency responses. In the Western Hemisphere, it judges, the United States does not need a robust forward military presence. Instead, it will retain a limited presence that helps foster cooperative multilateral ties and

provides capabilities for handling such challenges as control of illicit trafficking, detection and interdiction of WMD, border and coastal security, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

*Reforming How DOD Does Business.* The QDR Report argues that DOD must reform how it operates internally to provide more agile, innovative, and streamlined processes in five critical areas:

- reforming security assistance
- reforming how weapons are bought
- strengthening the industrial base
- reforming the U.S. export control system
- crafting a strategic approach to climate and energy.

The QDR Report argues that DOD handling of security assistance must be reformed in order to improve how a critical new mission is performed. Whereas during the Cold War, security assistance mainly focused on providing advanced weapons and related assets to close allies and friends, it argues that today it must address how to build defense sectors and pursue reforms in failing states and others requiring such help, many of which fall into the ambiguous gray zone between war and peace. Iraq and Afghanistan, it states, are examples of modern-day security assistance focused on enabling partners to respond to internal and external security challenges. In dealing with this mission, the QDR Report asserts, a whole-of-government approach that produces close interagency collaboration is required, but the DOD role is especially critical. Today's DOD system, it states, is slow and cumbersome, and often results in approaches that start from scratch in each contingency or failure and produces policies limited in scope, duration, and resources. Progress, however, is being made. In addition to gaining approval for recent legislation to strengthen security assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the QDR Report states, the administration has launched a comprehensive review of security sector assistance. Meanwhile, DOD is striving to increase its skilled manpower

in this area, meet urgent warfighter needs, and establish a fund that would allow it to maintain an inventory of items commonly needed by partners.

The QDR Report emphasizes that pursuing reforms in how DOD acquires new weapons and other costly assets is a key goal. Today, it says, the DOD acquisition process is encumbered by a small set of expensive weapons programs with unrealistic requirements, cost and schedule overruns, and unacceptable performance. Four key problems arise:

- requirements for new systems are often set at the far end of technological boundaries
- the acquisition workforce has been allowed to atrophy, including in critical skills
- the approach to defining requirements and developing capabilities too often relies on overly optimistic cost estimates
- delivery of logistical support to field commanders suffers from inefficiencies.

To help overcome these problems, the QDR Report states, the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act was signed into law in 2009 with the goal of limiting cost overruns before they spiral out of control, and of improving oversight of major weapon system programs. In addition, it reports, DOD is taking steps to develop a larger cadre of trained acquisition professionals. Beyond this, it states, DOD will strive to ensure that requirements for all new major weapons are subjected to careful analysis and to certify that new technologies are sufficiently mature before the final costly phase of engineering and manufacturing development is launched. Additional DOD reforms, it continues, include steps to improve cost analysis. They also include means to improve program execution by employing fixed-price development contracts, constraining the tendency to add requirements to programs, creating competitive prototypes early in the research, development, test, and evaluation cycle, certifying technology maturity through independent reviews, conducting realistic testing to identify problems as early as possible, demanding sound performance from contractors, and avoiding sacrifices to costs and schedules

for promises of improved performance. Finally, the QDR Report calls for steps to institutionalize a rapid, agile acquisition capability for speeding delivery of new systems and weapons when they are needed and to launch an effort to control DOD's rising costs for health care.

The QDR Report's treatment of measures to strengthen the industrial base calls for market-based efforts to lessen reliance on a few big contractors by working with the entire spectrum of defense firms, purely commercial firms, and other technologically advanced firms and institutions. Its approach to reforming the U.S. export control system claims that today, this system is complicated by too many redundancies, tries to protect too much, and poses a risk to national security in ways that mandate fundamental reform. It calls for steps aimed at lessening redundancies, roadblocks, and constraints while improving cooperation, technology-sharing, and interoperability with allies and partners. An overall goal is to strengthen controls on new technologies that need protecting, to speed delivery of weapons and other systems that should be made available abroad, and to encourage greater collaboration between U.S. and foreign industries. Its approach to climate and energy calls for greater DOD attention to both arenas in ways that increase use of renewable energy supplies, reduce energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, and make domestic facilities more efficient.

*Strengths, Shortfalls, and Lingering Issues.* By any measure, the QDR Report is a large and comprehensive document, much larger than previous QDR Reports issued over the past 15 years. Compared to those documents, it includes traditional material, but unlike them, it includes considerable material on new issues. Accordingly, it illuminates the extent to which the U.S. defense enterprise has become more complex and demanding in recent years. During the 1990s, the end of the Cold War in Europe and victory in Operation *Desert Storm* enabled DOD to focus mainly on preparing its military forces for traditional major regional wars, such as against North Korea. Beginning in late 2001, events compelled DOD not only to consider hypothetical regional wars, but also to launch a global war against terror and to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq. Simultaneously, DOD launched a major transformation agenda

aimed at configuring its military forces with new information networks and other systems to wage the high-tech wars of the future.

Looking back from the standpoint of today, even that demanding agenda seems relatively straightforward and simple. As the QDR Report makes clear, DOD must not only handle traditional missions but also carry out demanding stability operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, build security partnerships with internally troubled states, work with other U.S. agencies, attend to new homeland security and cyber defense challenges, and improve U.S. military forces for the long term with investment budgets that present significant shortfalls in available resources. Whether the QDR Report adequately addresses all of these challenges is debated by some critics, but regardless of how it is appraised, it does successfully illuminate the very complex challenges and thorny issues facing DOD today and tomorrow.

The QDR Report is complementary to the NSS 2010 in ways intended to harmonize U.S. national security strategy and defense planning, and it aptly discusses many defense issues that are not addressed by the NSS 2010. Similar to the NSS 2010, it is best evaluated not by how it handles a plethora of details, but by whether it judges the strategic and military basics correctly. A mixed appraisal seems appropriate because the QDR Report has many strengths but, in the eyes of critics at least, some shortfalls as well.

A main strength of the QDR Report is that it puts forth an overall U.S. defense strategy with four organizing concepts of prevail, prevent, prepare, and preserve. As it makes clear, prevailing in today's wars is top priority. Simultaneously, DOD must prevent and deter other conflicts and damaging trends, while preparing to defeat future adversaries and succeed in a wide range of operations and preserving the all-volunteer force. In addition, the QDR Report encapsulates DOD's emerging activities in two action-oriented terms: rebalance and reform. Whereas *rebalance* refers to how the force structure is to be strengthened now and in the future, *reform* mainly refers to how DOD acquisition process and security assistance efforts are to be improved to overcome their sluggish performance. By mating its four-pronged defense strategy with its two-pronged approach to change, the

QDR Report broadly illustrates the strategic agenda that DOD will be pursuing in the coming years.

The QDR Report devotes little discussion to how future defense budgets—which probably will not continue benefiting from major real growth—will unfold. But since its publication, Defense Secretary Robert Gates has made clear that stiff priorities will have to be set and some activities scaled back so that scarce funds can be saved and investment funds increased. As Secretary Gates pointed out, peacetime DOD budgets have grown by about 40 percent in real terms since 2001, but much of the increase has been consumed by rising costs for personnel and operations, thereby constraining growth of investment and procurement budgets. In 2009, Secretary Gates slashed several major programs for acquiring new weapons, thereby saving about \$350 billion over 10 years and bringing out-year procurement spending into alignment with budget realities. In 2010, he announced a plan to shift about 6 percent of DOD's budget from low-priority programs to high-priority ones, as well as steps to close U.S. Joint Forces Command and other staffs while trimming senior civilian and military posts and civilian contractors.

Meanwhile, Secretary Gates asked Congress to fund 1 percent annual real increases to DOD budgets in the coming years. His actions have been controversial in some quarters, but they are designed to harness the DOD budget to support the QDR Report's assessment of future defense strategy, rebalance, and reform. Secretary Gates's call for DOD to find \$100 billion in savings that could be reprogrammed was successful. It resulted in \$70 billion to be reinvested in the procurement accounts of all Services, and the additional savings to be spent on health care and other measures. As of early 2011, official forecasts were suggesting that the DOD budget would benefit from little real growth through 2011. Projected defense budget cuts of about \$78 billion through 2015 evidently will require manpower reductions of 27,000 to the Army and 15,000 to 20,000 to the Marine Corps, plus trimming of some procurement programs. Larger spending cuts—for example, up to \$400 billion in reductions over the next 10 years—will

require even deeper pairing of defense manpower, force structures, and improvement programs in ways that will mandate further reviews of U.S. military roles, missions, and responsibilities.

Another strength of the QDR Report is its handling of the rebalancing agenda by focusing on six key military missions that range from succeeding in current conflicts and helping partner states to strengthening U.S. forces for antiaccess operations, preventing WMD proliferation, and improving homeland security and cyberspace defenses. In addressing these six missions, the QDR Report puts forth 35 separate improvement programs and measures, all of which are intended to elevate U.S. military capabilities in their respective areas. The mission of succeeding in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations—a clear near-term priority—receives special attention, with nine improvement programs designed mainly to enhance ground force operations. The mission of developing better capabilities for operating in antiaccess environments—a longer term priority—also is noteworthy because it contains six measures that are mainly focused on enhancing naval and air forces against future threats that could be posed by such well-armed adversaries as China. A clear implication is that additional funds should be spent in these 35 areas in ways that impinge upon funds for other investments. Even so, the QDR Report seems correct in judging that if U.S. military forces improve in these six areas, they will be better prepared for challenges ahead.

Yet another strength is the QDR Report's treatment of how to bolster relationships at home and abroad by working closely with the militaries of allies and partners in key regions, deploying missile defenses as part of new regional deterrence architectures, and making improvements to U.S. forces and operations overseas. In this arena, the QDR Report helps close a gap in the NSS 2010, which did not devote adequate attention to regional security priorities other than the Middle East. In doing so, however, the QDR Report only addresses military issues, not underlying political design concepts. A final strength of the QDR Report is its handling of reforms to how DOD does business. In particular, its focus on pursuing reforms to weapons acquisition

addresses a longstanding problem that, over the years, has produced too many overly costly weapons well after they were needed. Whether the QDR Report's reforms will be fully acted upon remains to be seen, but they are pointed in the right direction.

A key shortcoming of the QDR Report, as critics have alleged, is a lackluster handling of policies and plans for guiding the future evolution of U.S. military forces. The QDR Report takes a step in the right direction by replacing the old template of two regional wars with a new force-sizing construct of three different scenario clusters. These reflect shifting combinations of stabilization operations, deterrence and defeat of two regional aggressors, long-enduring deterrence operations, and catastrophic events in the United States. Indeed, future U.S. military forces would have impressive capabilities if they were sufficiently large, diverse, and versatile to meet requirements for all three clusters. But will this be the case?

The QDR Report fails to address, much less answer, this question; it provides clarity about how the future force posture will take shape, but offers no metrics or penetrating analysis of whether and how this posture will meet these clusters of requirements or of risks and insufficiencies that might arise. This issue is more than academic. The United States currently has the best military in the world, but recent years have shown that it is often stretched thin by deployment operations and requirements in multiple theaters. Whether it can handle two concurrent regional wars has long been debated, and the new force-sizing construct seems to elevate requirements, not diminish them. The problem is that, in naval and air forces, tomorrow's posture will be smaller than today's. Will quality improvements offset potential shortages in numbers? Perhaps so, but the QDR Report does not reveal why this will be the case.

Another shortfall is the QDR Report's failure to discuss the importance of joint operations and how they can be improved. For the past decade and longer, strengthening the capacity for joint operations that involve land, sea, and air components has been a main goal of DOD and the military Services. While progress has been made, perfection is far from achieved. Instead of

highlighting the need for further progress, the QDR Report discusses the ground, naval, and air forces separately, largely in isolation from each other rather than in a joint context. The one exception is its endorsement of a new air-sea battle concept for dealing with antiaccess threats, but currently this is an idea under study, not a tangible program for acquiring new capabilities. Otherwise, the QDR Report offers assurances that all Services will be strengthened, but at times, its interpretation suggests a future bifurcated posture. Thus, ground forces will handle gritty conflicts in the Middle East while naval and air forces mainly focus on deterring powerful countries such as China. Perhaps a bifurcated posture reflects a natural evolutionary trend that responds to current events, but is it safe to assume that future conflicts will not require a close fusion of all three components? The QDR Report is silent on this question, but it needs an answer because future plausible wars with such countries as North Korea, Iran, and Russia could be hard to win in absence of one component or another.

A final shortfall comes from how the QDR Report handles future force modernization for the long haul. For most of the past decade, a main DOD clarion call for improving force capabilities has been transformation—the 20-year process by which U.S. military forces are not only to be modernized with new weapons but also to acquire new information networks, munitions, doctrines, practices, and other assets in order to be prepared for a future in which technologies and operational concepts will be different from the past. The QDR Report does not even mention the word *transformation*, much less describe its future course. Nor does it offer any replacement term or concept for guiding DOD in the years ahead. Nor does it address a more fundamental issue: the degree to which future U.S. forces are expected to retain their current qualitative superiority over adversary forces, which themselves will be improving. In principle, a U.S. defense strategy that relies on somewhat smaller forces to perform a broad spectrum of missions and to wage war against improved adversary forces would seem to place a high premium on preserving or enhancing qualitative superiority. The QDR Report seemingly shares this approach in its discussion of strategy principles.

Yet it does not reveal in any depth how this approach is being applied in concrete terms and whether it can be expected to succeed.

Beyond this, the QDR Report neglects to provide guidance on how specific modernization plans and programs—key engines for replacing aging inventories and building better capabilities—are to unfold. What it offers instead is a discussion of the many new weapons that have been cancelled or scaled back, some because they seemed gold-plated or low priority, but others because they could not be afforded in an era of overloaded procurement budgets. A main impact is that the Army, Navy, and Air Force have been stripped of several new weapons that they regarded as cornerstones of their modernization—for example, new Army combat vehicles, Navy cruisers and destroyers, and Air Force F-22 fighters and cargo planes. In some cases, replacement weapons and systems are being pursued. For example, the Air Force will benefit from large numbers of F-35 fighters, unmanned aerial system (UAS) aircraft, and deep-strike assets that will help offset loss of more F-22 fighters. But although the QDR Report proclaims that the Army and Navy will remain capable of carrying out their missions, it leaves the fate of their modernization plans unclear. Indeed, the QDR Report does not even provide the standard feature of most past QDR Reports and Secretary of Defense posture statements: a comprehensive list of major modernization plans that will be pursued by all four Services. As a result, the QDR Report fails to provide assurance, much less analysis, that when remaining, still-funded modernization programs are added up, they will produce an adequately equipped U.S. military posture 10 years from now. In this arena, the QDR Report seems so preoccupied with handling near-term imperatives that it largely produces an analytical void on where the distant future should be headed.