

A pennant flag with a blue and white diagonal design. In the center is an eagle with a shield, perched on a branch. Above the eagle are three stars. The flag has a gold fringe along its edges.

The seal of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, featuring a shield with the American flag, crossed swords, and the words "JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF" and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA".



The United States Armed Forces remain unrivaled. We deter threats, assure partners, and defeat adversaries. We are strong—and our Nation is secure—because we commit to being the best led, best trained, and best equipped force as our non-negotiable imperative.

The men and women of the Joint Force—all volunteers—are our Nation's qualitative military edge. We are who we are because of your commitment and determination. And you are supported by strong and resilient families. These things are true, not because they are easy, but because you have dedicated your lives to the service of our Nation.

The world is not getting any safer, but we are becoming more adaptable. We are facing three transitions—to a different force posture, to a smaller defense budget, and for some, to civilian life. At the same time, we are facing a historic convergence of fiscal challenges. As a Nation, we are making choices to restore the economic foundation of our national power.

Our profession demands that we anticipate the defense needs of the Nation and remain attuned to the risks of a growing diversity of threats. Our profession continues to evolve, and we will lead its evolution in the 21st century. We can only lead through these transitions with the trust of the force, our families, and the American people.

This midpoint of my term as the 18th Chairman prompts an assessment of our work so far and informs the work we still have to do. I'd like to update you on my focus areas and how I intend to guide our activities for the next two years. It builds on what you have already accomplished. I am confident that, together, we can fortify the foundation of the future force.

ACHIEVE OUR NATIONAL MILITARY OBJECTIVES

At its core, our military keeps the nation free from coercion. Whether at home or deployed, the Joint Force deters adversaries, protects our critical infrastructure, preserves the free flow of commerce, responds to crisis, and builds partner capacities.

The enduring power of the Joint Force comes from our ability to balance our response, rotation, and reset activities. Despite the current budget uncertainty, we must prioritize threats, articulate risk, and allocate resources in support of a systematic and sustainable strategy.

*"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality,
tied in a single garment of destiny.*

Whatever affects one directly, affects us all indirectly."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.



ACHIEVE OUR NATIONAL MILITARY OBJECTIVES

Implement and sustain national strategic guidance

First and foremost, we will always defend the Nation. We will meet our commitments in Afghanistan.



We will continue to counter threats to U.S. interests from violent extremists and actively defend against Weapons of Mass Destruction and cyber attacks. We will provide military support to the U.S. Government's pursuit of transnational criminal organizations, particularly along our southern flank.

Even as we perform these important missions, we must also prepare for emerging threats around the globe. We will deepen and strengthen military-to-military relationships throughout the world.

Adapt readiness to preserve military options for the Nation

We have to provide the Nation options. These options depend on the creativity of our people, the readiness of our forces, and the risk we are willing to underwrite.

Achieving our national military objectives also requires that we develop and evolve our relationships with our interagency and international partners. The cooperative practices we establish will play a large part in our success.

Our prioritization of security interests drives our military planning efforts and the flexibility of resources. To generate a variety of practical options in the future, we must consider the posture of our forward-deployed and rotational forces, as well as the capacity of our Guard and Reserve forces to mobilize in support of contingencies. We will also institutionalize the new security requirements to protect U.S. diplomatic facilities abroad.



ACHIEVE OUR NATIONAL MILITARY OBJECTIVES



military relationships as we provide military options and articulate risk. This is the Chairman's unique job description, but the Chairman does not shoulder this responsibility alone. When I meet with the Nation's leaders, I bring with me the sum total of the expertise and experi-

ence you provide every day.

Apply wartime lessons learned to provide best military advice and inform U.S. policy objectives and strategic guidance

The lessons we learned during the past 12 years are being applied today and will help us to adapt to the challenging days ahead. The combat-tested knowledge of the force—from battlefield leaders to combatant commanders—will inform the key strategic documents we will develop over the next two years.

This frontline wisdom will enhance the dialogue in operational theaters and across U.S. interagency decision-making processes. We must communicate our capabilities and requirements to our Nation's senior leaders and strengthen our civilian-



DEVELOP JOINT FORCE 2020



“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”

— Socrates

The Joint Force of tomorrow must be able to achieve our national security objectives against a threat that is increasingly difficult to define, even as we reduce budgets.

Our military does not face this challenge for the first time in its history, but these decisions are new for most of us. Moreover, our decisions will have historic impacts. We must use this period of transition to renew our commitment to the cornerstone of our military advantage—innovation and leader development.

We created the aircraft carrier from existing capabilities after World War I and developed stealth technology after the Vietnam War, during periods of similar budget reduction. In both cases, a vision of the future guided research and development efforts, and both technologies continue to contribute to our decisive advantage.

We need to reassess what capabilities we need most, rethink how we develop the Joint Force, and reconsider how we fight together. To sustain our strength, we will continue to protect investment in decisive capabilities, develop leaders who can adapt in the security environment of tomorrow, and innovate how we operate jointly.

DEVELOP JOINT FORCE 2020

“...without resource constraints, strategy would be unnecessary. Limited resources thus create the need for strategy. As resources become more constrained, strategy becomes more important.”

— Todd Harrison, Defense Strategist

Advance a fuller vision of Joint Force 2020

We are also increasing our effectiveness by more deliberately integrating Special Operations Forces, improving Mission Command capabilities, and moving toward a global Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance network. We must also advance and integrate the capabilities provided by remotely-piloted systems across all domains. We will harden organizations against stress on their technological systems, and train organizations to be resilient should their technological systems fail.

Our investments in cyber and a new Joint Information Environment are changing how we fight and defend the Nation, including its critical infrastructure.

We must develop a research and development strategy that maximizes our ability to nurture promising technologies and deliver them out into the force. The technology bets of today, if made skillfully, will enable the force of tomorrow to re-



main decisive. Becoming the force of the future demands that we develop, test, and refine concepts for the future fight. We must mobilize the entire Joint Force Development enterprise to forecast those capabilities.

DEVELOP JOINT FORCE 2020

Undertake reforms that drive jointness further

Fundamental to Joint Force 2020 is interoperability. Our capabilities, tactics, techniques, procedures, and terminology must be able to translate across the services, the interagency, and with our partner nations. We must define and enforce interoperability standards for future capabilities and build joint exercises and war games that evaluate our ability to operate across the Joint Interagency Intergovernmental and Multinational environment.

We know we will be a smaller force and that we must adapt to be increasingly agile.

Our task is to carry forward those lessons learned from yesterday into the context of today. We must also establish clear interoperability standards for innovative technologies to succeed in meeting the needs of the force quickly and efficiently. Innovative solutions to joint capability gaps must be developed horizontally, across the Joint Force Development enterprise, industry, and academia, and vertically, from headquarters staffs to the warfighter.



RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

Our profession is grounded in our sacred oath to defend the Constitution. We remain committed to defending our Nation and the values it has pursued for more than 200 years. Generations of men and women have fought to preserve this ideal in times of peace and war, and some have given everything to protect it.

We must hold true to these enduring values of service even as we remake our force and its capabilities. The times ahead will require more of each one of us. The cornerstone of service must be dignity and respect among all members of the force. And the mortar is leadership. We must set the example of extraordinary character and exceptional competence at every echelon.

We will uphold the leadership, learning, and service that are the pillars of our uncommon profession. Each of these initiatives reinforces a building block of our profession. It will take each of us leading from the front to maintain it.

“Great necessities call forth great leaders.”

— Abigail Adams

RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

Maintain high standards of professional excellence

The ethical decisions and proper behavior of each member of the Joint Force mold our professional reputation. Each one of us—from the private to the general—represents the whole of our profession. Our actions speak louder and echo longer than our words.

We will continue to champion the core values of the Profession of Arms, highlighting excellence in core competencies and leader attributes. We cannot overlook our obligation to one an-

other. We must seek and share best practices to combat sexual assault, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, and other high-risk behaviors.



Maintain the high standards of education and training

Our force is as diverse and rich in experience as it has ever been. Twelve years of war have created a generation of leaders experienced in joint and interagency operations. The future force will require the skills and knowledge of both our battle-tested veterans and the contributions of new service members who bring fresh skills and perspectives to new ways of warfare.



RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

New accessions and combat veterans alike possess diverse skills and frames of reference relevant to the warfare of tomorrow. Education will serve as a hedge against surprise, much as it has during previous interwar pe-

Maintain the high standards of military leaders

We will implement 360 degree reviews for all general and flag officers on the Joint Staff, to make us aware of our strengths and



riods. Professional Military Education should adapt to meet these dynamic needs. As we continue to advance “One University” initiatives at National Defense University, we will update the joint PME curriculum across the force to emphasize key leader attributes. We will also explore how best to adapt our learning institutions to serve a global Joint Force, evaluating degree accreditation and distance-learning delivery methods.

weaknesses and grow as leaders of the Joint Force. I will also extend these reviews to the Combatant Commanders and senior officers inbound to the Joint Staff, as well as to the O-6 and equivalent civilian personnel on the Joint Staff. These reviews serve as overt reminders of the uncompromising standards of our conduct and the enduring tenets of our oath. We safeguard our profession reinforcing these principles every day.

KEEP FAITH WITH OUR MILITARY FAMILY



“We are each other’s harvest; we are each other’s business; we are each other’s magnitude and bond.”

— Gwendolyn Brooks, American Poet

We keep faith with the Nation and with those who serve by making sure the Joint Force is the best led, best trained, and best equipped in the world, ready to meet any mission. We have earned pride in our exceptional performance over our years of combat, but we can’t presume that we have earned a blank check.

We must balance our commitment to the Nation with the commitments we have made to the entire Military Family—Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Veteran, Retiree, and families alike. The choices ahead must reinforce the enduring nature of our profession. We must preserve the legacy of military service and promote the intangible rewards, while remaining aware of the inherent risks, of this uncommon life. Trust remains the bedrock of our profession and defines how we keep faith with our Military Family.

KEEP FAITH WITH OUR MILITARY FAMILY

Earn the trust of our people

The health and wellbeing of our people is critical to our national security and the future of the force. We also know that we



need to make changes to how we support and compensate the Military Family to ensure the All Volunteer Force remains sustainable in the future.

We are committed to being upfront and honest about the tough choices we face and the changes that will occur, as they affect our people personally. We will stay engaged and continue to adjust and improve how we will meet the needs of those who sacrifice to defend the Nation.

Earn the trust of our families

The force can commit fully to their duties when they know their families are safe and supported in the ways they need most. During the past decade, the philosophy of military family support has been one of “letting a thousand flowers bloom.” Now, with fewer resources, we must optimize how we care for the Military Family and realign our support services to be as agile as the force they serve.

We must prioritize and synchronize our support to reflect the needs of today’s Military Family, which is as diverse as the Nation it serves.

We must ensure we are investing in the



right services at the right time while adapting for the future needs of the force.

KEEP FAITH WITH OUR MILITARY FAMILY

Earn the trust of our fellow citizens

The establishment of a professional military comprised entirely of volunteers is one of our Nation's finest achievements. It's been so effective that it can be taken for granted. We must consider what our military means to the people it protects—our fellow citizens—and how the last 12 years has impacted how we relate to each other.

On our part, we must actively dispute



labels often applied too generally across the force and inform a richer conversation about the character

of those who volunteer to serve. Our stories are as diverse as our people. We owe it to the Nation to tell those stories. We also have a duty to the Nation

to listen. Our fellow citizens may have different perspectives that we need to hear and understand.

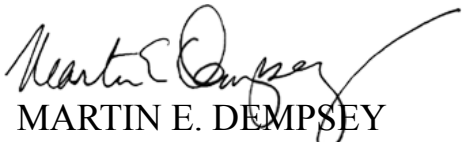


The public's interest in our Military Family, which has been so strong over the last decade, may begin to wane as we conclude our operations in Afghanistan.

But the needs of the military families reintegrating into their civilian communities, our Wounded Warriors, and our Gold Star Families will remain for years to come. How we discuss and engage these issues must reinforce the Nation's trust in military service. Military service is about stability, meaning, and variety, and we must continue to inspire those who will volunteer to serve in the future.

Our Nation counts on us to lead our way through the challenges we face. I have been impressed with what the Joint Force has accomplished in my two years as Chairman, over 12 years of war, and throughout my 39 years of military service. But there is more work to be done, and I need your help to do it. I trust you and I have confidence in you. Our continued commitment and work together will ensure we remain the most respected profession, the global leader, and our Nation's strength.

I'm proud to serve with you,


MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army

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"For lesser professionals, this would be a problem ..."

— Col. Doug Douds, USMC

