

**Advance Questions for Admiral William J. Fallon, US Navy
Nominee for Commander, U. S. Central Command**

Defense Reforms

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and the chain of command by clearly delineating the combatant commanders' responsibilities and authorities and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These reforms have also vastly improved cooperation between the services and the combatant commanders, among other things, in joint training and education and in the execution of military operations.

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?

If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?

I have no recommendations for amending Goldwater-Nichols at this time. However, if confirmed, I would not hesitate to offer proposals in the future that I would consider helpful.

Do you believe that the role of the combatant commanders under the Goldwater-Nichols legislation is appropriate and the policies and processes in existence allow that role to be fulfilled?

Yes.

Do you see a need for any change in those roles, with regard to the resource allocation process or otherwise?

No.

Relationships

Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Other sections of law and traditional practice, however, establish important relationships outside the chain of command. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, US Central Command to the following offices:

The Under Secretaries of Defense

Commander, US Central Command coordinates and exchanges information with the Under Secretaries of Defense as needed to set and meet US Central Command priorities and requirements for support.

The Assistant Secretaries of Defense

Commander, US Central Command coordinates and exchanges information with the Assistant Secretaries of Defense as needed to set and meet US Central Command priorities and requirements for support.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense. Section 163 of title 10, US Code, allows communication between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders to flow through the Chairman. As is custom and traditional practice, and as instructed by the Unified Command Plan, I would normally communicate with the Secretary through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

I would communicate with and coordinate with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as required and in the absence of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Director of the Joint Staff

I would also communicate and coordinate with the Director as necessary and expect the Deputy Commander, US Central Command or Chief of Staff, US Central Command would communicate regularly with the Director of the Joint Staff.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments

The Secretaries of the military departments are responsible for the administration and support of forces assigned to the combatant commands. Commander, US Central

Command coordinates closely with the secretaries to ensure that requirements to organize, train, and equip Central Command forces are met.

The Service Chiefs

Commander, US Central Command communicates and exchanges information with the Service Chiefs of Staff to support their responsibility for organizing, training, and equipping forces. Successful execution of the US Central Command mission responsibilities requires close coordination with the Service Chiefs. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Service Chiefs of Staff to understand their service capabilities and to effectively employ those capabilities in executing the US Central Command mission.

The other combatant commanders

Commander, US Central Command maintains close relationships with the other combatant commanders. These relationships are critical to the execution of our National Military Strategy, and are characterized by mutual support, frequent contact, and productive exchanges of information on key issues.

The US Ambassador to Iraq

I would necessarily have a close working relationship with the US Ambassador to Iraq in order to ensure unity of effort between US military and all other US government activities in Iraq.

Qualifications

If confirmed, you will be entering this important position at a critical time for the United States Central Command.

What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?

I have benefited from a broad range of assignments during my nearly 40 years in uniform, from tactical to operational command, and have considerable experience with joint and coalition operations, including combat operations. I was privileged to command Carrier Air Wing EIGHT in USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT in 1991 during Operation Desert Storm. In 1995, as a flag officer, I served as Commander, Carrier Group EIGHT and Commander, Battle Force, US SIXTH Fleet during NATO Operation Deliberate Force in Bosnia. During these operations, I worked closely with joint US and combined forces in planning, coordinating, and executing sustained combat operations. I also served as Deputy Director for Operations, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, directing air operations in the Iraqi No-Fly Zones. I have additional experience in joint and combined planning and operations at both the operational and strategic levels through assignments as Assistant Chief of Staff, Plans and Policy, for the NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic and as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff for the US Atlantic Fleet and the former US Atlantic Command, the predecessor to US Joint Forces Command. For nearly three years, I served as Commander, US SECOND FLEET and NATO Striking Fleet Atlantic, working directly with all US armed services as well as those of our NATO allies in training and in developing and testing joint and combined tactics for the entire spectrum of combat operations. As Vice Chief of Naval Operations from 2000 to 2003, I worked in close cooperation with OSD, the Joint Staff, and the other Armed Services developing transformational strategies and Joint Requirements. As Commander, US Fleet Forces Command and US Atlantic Fleet from October 2003 to February 2005, I served as Naval Component Commander to US Joint Forces Command, and supported US Northern Command and US Strategic Command. In my current assignment as Commander, US Pacific Command, I have gained extensive experience in the largest Combatant Command AOR, with more than 60% of the world's population and 4 of the 5 largest economic GDPs. This area has presented several challenges, including the maintenance of sensitive alliances, insurgencies in SE Asia, the situation in North Korea, and the US relationship with the People's Republic of China. The widely varied opportunities I have had during my career have given me a deep appreciation of, and experience with, all branches of our Armed Forces, the interagency, and many of our allies and partners.

Major Challenges

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander, US Central Command?

- * Combatting the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan and directing the restoration of security and stability in these nations.*
- * Countering the extremist threat which destabilizes governments in the region, commits attacks on the US and numerous other nations, and continues to threaten the US Homeland.*
- * The relationship with Iran and its support to insurgents and destabilizing activities in regional nations.*
- * Protecting vital lines of commerce in the region.*
- * Continuing instability and humanitarian crises in Africa.*

If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

Specifically, I intend to:

- * Support US national interests and policies.*
- * Work closely with our ambassadors and military commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan to address the critical need for security and stability in these countries.*
- * Work in close consultation with US agencies and military commanders, and with our friends in the region to develop a clear understanding and appreciation of US national interests and the issues facing the nations in the US Central Command region.*
- * Signal the strong resolve of the United States to protect its national interests and to enhance regional stability.*
- * Posture US forces to deploy and respond rapidly to regional security concerns.*

Most Serious Problems

What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of Commander, US Central Command?

Clearly, the most serious problems are the ongoing combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?

My intention is to gain a full appreciation of the situation in the region as quickly as possible and then to provide appropriate direction and guidance to our military forces.

Iraq

What is your assessment of the current situation facing the United States in Iraq?

Significant progress has been made in developing Iraqi security forces and governing institutions since the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime. The Iraqi people have approved a new constitution and elected a permanent, multi-party government. The Iraqi government has recognized the requirement for security and has identified steps to improve the prospects for political reconciliation and economic growth.

However, the insurgent bombing of the Al Askariya Mosque in February 2006 reversed the momentum that followed the successful Iraqi elections. Sectarian-motivated violence now inhibits political progress, effective governance, and economic development. Many other factors, including poor infrastructure, corruption, and lack of experience at governance have exacerbated widespread mistrust between sectarian groups within Iraq.

Levels of violence perpetuated by Al Qaeda terrorists, insurgents aligned with the previous regime and competing sectarian death squads have increased steadily during the past year. Al Qaeda operatives and their allies target US and Iraqi security forces and innocent civilians in an effort to discredit the US and Iraqi governments and incite sectarian violence wherever possible. Their goal is instability and chaos. Other insurgents and sectarian entities are pursuing their own murderous agendas, receiving support from within Iran and Syria.

Although growing in number and confidence, much of the Iraqi security force has not yet demonstrated an ability to stand on its own in the face of multiple onslaughts to stability. US military strategy of having the Iraqi security forces lead most of the security effort has not been as successful as anticipated.

From your perspective, what are the top lessons learned from our experience in Iraq?

US forces in Iraq remain disciplined, spirited, and adaptable in the face of difficult battlefield conditions. Our forces have been training and have partnered with Iraqi security forces to establish a secure environment for the newly elected government of Iraq. This endeavor has proven more challenging than expected with many assumptions either incorrectly drawn or unfulfilled. Securing the stability of the country has been more difficult than anticipated. Our ability to correctly assess the political, economic, and security situation in Iraq has been lacking. While successful in clearing areas of insurgent and terrorist activity, we have relearned the need to hold these areas secure until Iraqi security forces and local political and economic activity have provided essential confidence to the population.

What do you consider to be the most significant mistakes the U.S. has made to date in Iraq? Which of these do you believe are still having an impact?

President Bush, in his 10 January address to the nation, highlighted the key mistakes:

- * Miscalculating that initial elections would bring Iraqis together;*
- * Believing that as we trained Iraqi security forces, we could accomplish our mission with fewer US troops;*
- * Underestimating the ability of al-Qaida and Sunni insurgents to provoke sectarian conflict;*
- * Failing to anticipate the extent of the response of radical Shi'a elements and death squads.*

The issues cited here are still effecting the situation but actions are underway by the Iraqi and US governments to address them.

What do you believe are the most important steps that the United States needs to take in Iraq?

The most important step we need to take in Iraq is to work with the Iraqi government to improve security. We also need to facilitate economic and infrastructure development while helping the Iraqis establish and maintain a viable representative political process.

What role, if any, did you play in the development of the new Iraq strategy recently announced by the President?

In my position as Commander US PACOM, I have not directly participated in the development of the new Iraq strategy.

Do you believe that there is a purely military solution in Iraq, or must the solution be primarily a political one?

Although the military effort is critical to progress, a successful Iraq strategy will require coordinated economic, diplomatic, and political as well as security development.

Do you believe that political compromise among Iraqi political leaders is a necessary condition for a political solution?

A successful political process requires compromise. The three principal factions in Iraq must find a way to cooperate on essential issues.

Do you believe that quelling the current level of violence is a necessary condition for a political solution?

Substantially reducing the level of sectarian violence is essential to facilitate improved political process.

What do you believe will induce Iraqi political leaders to make the political compromises necessary for a political solution? What leverage does the U.S. have in this regard?

Current levels of suffering experienced by the Iraqi population should motivate the political leaders to make progress. President Bush has clearly stated the need for a partnership between Prime Minister Maliki, Iraqi moderates, and the United States where all parties are clear on expectations and responsibilities. The Iraqi government has cited a number of actions it considers essential to national political progress. We should carefully monitor and assess the progress in these actions.

What do you see as a reasonable estimate of the time it will take to demonstrate success in securing Baghdad?

I would not speculate on the amount of time or levels of success which might be possible from my current position. But the urgent need to make progress is obvious.

In the fiscal year 2007 defense authorization and appropriation acts Congress prohibited the use of funds to seek permanent bases in Iraq or to control the oil resources of Iraq.

Do you agree that it is not and should not be the policy of the United States to seek permanent basing of U.S. forces in Iraq or to exercise control over Iraq's oil resources?

Yes.

If you agree, what are your views on the construction of any additional facilities inside Iraq for use by our military forces?

Operational commanders may request construction of temporary sites to facilitate necessary operations, and I would give appropriate consideration to such requests.

For the past several years, the Army and Marine Corps have had separate areas of responsibility in Iraq, with Marine forces assigned to the Anbar province. The two services have different logistics systems, and the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) appears to now focus almost exclusively on Army requirements.

Do you believe the Army and Marine Corps forces operating in Iraq have an appropriate degree of jointness?

From observation during my visits to Iraq and through discussion with various commanders, I believe the Army and Marine Corps forces operating in Iraq have demonstrated an adequate degree of Joint cooperation, both operationally and logistically. The 3rd Army Headquarters serves both as the Combined Forces Land

Component Command (CFLCC) and as the Army Forces (ARFOR) Command with Title 10 Logistics responsibilities. As the ARFOR Commander, 3rd Army conducts joint and combined logistics operations, including support for Marine Expeditionary Unit rotations. At the tactical level, an Army Brigade Combat Team is deployed with the Marine Expeditionary Force operating in Anbar Province. An Army Corps Support Group, also deployed to Anbar Province, integrates logistic support for Marine units within the Theater Logistics Architecture. If confirmed, I will assess all aspects of jointness and ensure collaboration on operational and logistic matters between the Services.

Do you see any problems with the extent of reliance of US forces in Iraq on contractor support?

I do not have sufficient knowledge to address this question.

Afghanistan

More than four years after securing a military victory against the Taliban and al 'Qaeda in Afghanistan, that nation remains a place with areas of unrest.

What is your assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan?

Much progress has been achieved in Afghanistan. The expansion of the International Security and Assistance Force and transition of the counterinsurgency mission to NATO command are positive steps. The resurgence of the Taliban in some areas of the country is a concern and must be addressed if political progress and economic development are to be sustained.

What is the status of efforts to develop and field an effective Afghan Army and national police force?

The Afghan National Army (ANA) is becoming more professional and growing in confidence. As of this month, approximately 32,000 of the 70,000 planned ANA soldiers have received training and equipment and now routinely engage the enemy alongside US and Coalition forces.

More than 60,000 of the planned 82,000 Ministry of the Interior police officers have received training and equipment. Although they are not as professional or capable as the ANA, improvement has been noted. Continued focus on Afghan Police training and education will be critical to the future of Afghanistan, and close attention must be paid to ensure progress is being made in the effectiveness of the force.

In your view, what additional military or other assistance is required to ensure the transition of Afghanistan to a stable, democratic, and economically viable nation?

Continued military assistance to expand security will be the critical enabler of success. Support to the ANA and police must continue as well as economic assistance and expanding good governance throughout Afghanistan.

In October 2006, British LTG Richards, Commander of the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan, warned that coalition forces may be running out of time to show measurable progress in Afghanistan. He stated that if there is no progress in improving conditions for the Afghani people, they may choose "the rotten future offered by the Taliban" over the hopeful future which coalition forces have taken too long to deliver.

Do you agree with LTG Richards' assessment that coalition forces have a limited window of opportunity in which to show improvements in the lives of the Afghani people?

I would not speculate on the resilience of the Afghan people, although I would note they have endured the trauma of war for almost 30 years.

What steps do you believe coalition forces can take to improve the lives of the Afghani people in the near term?

We should strive to provide enhanced security in areas where the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and international aid agencies are assisting reconstruction efforts. We should look for economic development opportunities to offset the opium production.

We should support ISAF Afghan Development Zone (ADZ) initiatives, with security efforts in key regions setting conditions for reconstruction and governance. ADZs complement the Afghan Government's National Development Strategy for security, governance, rule of law, and human rights, and economic and social development. This overarching strategy deserves our support.

Military intelligence officials have stated that Taliban and Al Qaeda attacks across the Afghan-Pakistan border have increased fourfold since September when the Pakistan Government signed an agreement with tribal elders in the border region ceding control over some border areas in western Pakistan.

What more can be done to prevent cross border incursions by the Taliban and Al Qaeda from Pakistan into Afghanistan?

If confirmed, I intend to study the situation in Afghanistan and consult with the military leadership there to determine the best way to address this issue.

In your view, should the Pakistan Government be doing more to prevent these cross-border incursions?

Yes. I believe that more could be done, and I will focus attention on this issue to determine what recommendations I will forward in this regard.

What role do you believe US forces should play?

We can enhance the capacity of Pakistan's Frontier Corps through our security assistance program. We will continue to provide intelligence support as well.

Afghanistan is in the Central Command's area of responsibility. EUCOM oversees the NATO ISAF force in Afghanistan.

In your view, does this "seam" present any problems for the coordination and effectiveness of the ISAF and OEF missions in Afghanistan?

I do not foresee any issues with the CENTCOM-SHAPE Relationship. NATO involvement in Afghanistan has been closely coordinated with USCENTCOM.

Throughout the process, measures to ensure synergy, maintenance of momentum, and reliable deconfliction of operations were painstakingly considered. I have extensive personal experience with the NATO military and political processes, which should facilitate my interaction and effectiveness with the NATO-CENTCOM relationship.

Pakistan

What is your assessment of the current status of US-Pakistan military cooperation?

US-Pakistan military cooperation has progressively improved since 11 September 2001. We coordinate military activities through a US liaison team in Islamabad and the Pakistani military presence in Tampa, Bahrain and Afghanistan.

What is your assessment of the level of cooperation we have received from Pakistan in the war on terrorism?

Pakistan is an effective and vital partner in the war on terror. Pakistan has captured or killed more suspected AQ and Taliban than any other Coalition member.

What is your assessment of the current situation with regard to Pakistani-Indian relations?

Relations between India and Pakistan have improved through confidence building measures and dialogue during the past two years. Kashmir remains the core issue, but progress is being realized through incremental steps.

Former Soviet Union States

Several former Soviet states have played roles in supporting the US and coalition forces in the global war on terrorism.

What is your assessment of current US military relationships with these nations, including Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan?

Contributions from former Soviet states in Central Asia have been significant and helpful. Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan have provided basing and overflight from the beginning of the Global War on Terror. Other former Soviet states including Latvia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Georgia and Estonia have provided troops in support of the Coalition in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The U.S. military relationship with many of the former Soviet states continues to develop incrementally. Much of our interaction is focused on building the capacity of these nations to ensure regional stability and security.

What security challenges do you see in this portion of the CENTCOM area of responsibility?

The security challenges in the Central Asian states are of concern because of the impact of extremism and criminal activity on economic development and the fragility of the governments. Additionally, the harsh environmental legacy of Soviet weapons and industrial programs, combined with severely restricted supplies of fresh water, further hobble legitimate economic growth.

Iran

Ambassador John Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence, recently testified before the Senate Select Intelligence Committee about Iran's growing influence in the Persian Gulf region. He stated, "Under the Ahmadinejad government, Iran is enhancing its ability to project its military power, primarily with ballistic missiles and naval power -- with the goal of dominating the Gulf region and deterring potential adversaries."

Do you agree with Ambassador Negroponte's assessment to the Senate Select Intelligence Committee regarding Iran's goals in the region?

Yes. In addition to these conventional means, Iran is attempting to enhance its power through asymmetric means, such as support to international terrorism and the pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

What options do you believe are available to the United States to counter Iran's growing influence in the region?

We should continue to work through the United Nations Security Council to enjoin the Iranian regime to halt its enrichment of uranium and its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

We should continue to develop a regional security framework with our partners in the Gulf to deter Iranian aggression and protect our common interests. This framework can include security assistance, missile defense, joint exercises, and information sharing.

What is the view of US allies in the region with regard to the threat posed by Iran?

If confirmed, I intend to speak with our allies in the region about this issue. From my perspective as PACOM commander, I sense that our allies in the region are more concerned about the potential threat posed by Iran now than at any time since the Iran-Iraq War.

What is your assessment of the prospects for political reform in Iran?

Iran's political system is slowly changing as its people increasingly participate in representative processes. However, the unelected institutions of the Iranian regime are well entrenched, hold the preponderance of political power in Iran, and control of Iran's military forces and intelligence services.

Do you believe that a protracted deployment of US troops in Iraq, if the situation on the ground in Iraq does not improve, could strengthen Iran's influence in the region?

The protracted deployment of US forces in Iraq would not necessarily strengthen Iran's influence in the region.

Iraqi Refugees

The United Nations estimates that approximately 2.3 million Iraqis have fled the violence in their country; 1.8 million have fled to surrounding countries, while some 500,000 have vacated their homes for safer areas within Iraq.

What is your assessment of the refugee crisis in Iraq?

There are some refugee problems inside Iraq, and the UNHCR is currently working the situation in the Northern Kurdistan Region. A greater refugee challenge exists in neighboring countries, which are dealing with the situation with their own resources and the support of the International Community. Once Iraq is stable and secure, I believe that a majority will return. The larger problem in Iraq is Internally Displaced Persons who affect regional demographics and pose a potential threat to long term security and stability.

Beyond working to improve the security environment in Iraq, do you believe that the US military should play a role in addressing this crisis?

The US military's role in providing humanitarian relief for these persons will depend on the needs of the mission in Iraq and the availability of US forces.

Horn of Africa

One of CENTCOM's significant sub-regions is the Horn of Africa. Until a new African Command is stood up, CENTCOM will continue to be responsible for this region, which will likely experience continued instability and humanitarian crisis as demonstrated by recent events in Somalia.

What is the strategic importance of this region to the United States?

The Horn of Africa (HOA) sits astride one of the most critical sea lines of communication in the world. It is imperative that we maintain freedom of navigation to ensure strategic maritime access to the CENTCOM AOR and freedom of movement of ocean-borne commerce. We must remain engaged in the HOA to deny terrorist organizations the ability to operate freely by building host nation capacities and governance capability to reduce ungoverned spaces. CJTF-HOA has been engaged with key partner countries in the area, conducting humanitarian and civil military operations, as well as building host nation capabilities.

Over the last few weeks, the US military has had a very public presence in Somalia.

What is your understanding of the US government's policy for Somalia and how US military action there supports that policy?

The US has three principal goals in Somalia: 1) support the establishment of a stable government based on genuine national reconciliation; 2) promote security and stability on the ground; and 3) respond to the humanitarian needs of the Somali people.

Africa Command

Over the last year or so, the US Government has mobilized more of its resources to focus on the strategic importance of Africa. The Department of Defense has played an important role through two Combatant Commands – EUCOM via the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Program and CENTCOM via the creation of the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa. There are 53 countries in Africa – 42 are in the EUCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) and 11 are in the CENTCOM AOR.

Do you support the proposal to create a new unified command for Africa and to transfer responsibility for operations in the Horn of Africa to that new command?

Yes. If confirmed as Commander, USCENTCOM, I will support the stand-up of AFRICOM by doing whatever we can to implement this new command.

What impact would such a transfer have on the conduct of anti-terrorism and other operations in that region?

I would not anticipate any degradation in our anti-terrorism efforts.

What will you do to ensure a smooth transition and to manage the seams between CENTCOM and the new African Command?

To ensure a smooth transition, AFRICOM will be established incrementally with the support of EUCOM, which is responsible for military operations in most of Africa. This phased approach should minimize turnover concerns as mission sets are transferred from EUCOM, CENTCOM, and PACOM to AFRICOM.

With respect to seams between CENTCOM and AFRICOM, we will manage these situations through direct coordination between commands, just as we have done previously with EUCOM and continue to do with PACOM.

Detainee Treatment Standards

Do you agree with the policy set forth in the July 7, 2006 memorandum issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense England stating that all relevant DoD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes.

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?

Yes.

Do you share the view of the Judge Advocates General that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which US soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?

I believe that we should pay careful attention to ensuring that standards for detainee treatment comply fully with the law and reflect American values. We also should be aware of the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have an effect on the manner in which US soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines are treated should they be captured in future conflicts. US Armed Forces policy is to treat all detainees, no matter their status, humanely and in accordance with the law of war. However, as you well know, the enemy we are currently fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq have repeatedly demonstrated their absolute disregard for the law of war, including the provisions of Common Article 3.

Do you believe it is consistent with effective counterinsurgency operations for US forces to comply fully with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes.

How will you ensure that US forces in the Central Command area of responsibility comply with the standards in the Army Field Manual, the DOD Directive, and applicable requirements of US and international law regarding detention and interrogation operations?

I will continue to emphasize law of war training and specific training for those involved in interrogation. I will also ensure US operational commanders comply with all applicable regulations and law, including the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005.

Scientific Advisors for Combatant Commanders

Scientific advisors to combatant commanders have been effectively utilized as a means of technology transition and providing operators' solutions to warfighter challenges.

If confirmed, how would your command make use of the technical expertise available in the Services and their laboratories in order to provide scientific and technical advice to the warfighters?

If confirmed, I will task the Science Advisor to work closely with the broader scientific community—particularly the Service laboratories and the Office of the Director, Defense Research and Engineering—to ensure that US Central Command benefits from the best technical advice our nation has to offer. Routine interaction with these organizations would also help US Central Command shape the Department's research and development effort to match up with command requirements.

Bandwidth on the Battlefield

Unmanned assets, such as persistent unmanned aerial vehicles, require tremendous bandwidth capacity. Command and control, blue force tracking and movement of intelligence products also use significant amounts of bandwidth.

What challenges do you anticipate in fully utilizing these important assets with the limited bandwidth currently available to the warfighter?

The chief challenge is efficiently managing the bandwidth to achieve maximum impact from Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capabilities.

What is your assessment of the bandwidth available during Operation Iraqi Freedom?

My initial assessment is that bandwidth is sufficient for intelligence product dissemination and situational awareness. However, as the requirement for additional full-motion video ISR assets and other bandwidth intensive systems come online, the current bandwidth could become a limiting factor, but I would push hard for increased efficiency of utilization.

Missile and WMD Threats

Iran continues to develop short and medium range ballistic missiles and could develop ballistic missiles capable of reaching the United States in the relatively near term. The intelligence community assesses that Iran could test such a missile later this decade and will "likely" pose an ICBM threat to the United States by 2015. Iran also has a significant naval presence in the Persian Gulf, and shore-based anti-ship cruise missiles. The intelligence community also assesses that Iran is actively pursuing weapons of mass destruction, and could have nuclear weapons within the decade.

How do you evaluate Iran's current capability to use ballistic missiles and WMD against US forces, allies and friends, and what is your projection of Iran's future capabilities?

Iran can employ ballistic missiles up to 1300 km with little/no advance warning and with greater accuracy and effectiveness than Iraq demonstrated in 1991 and 2003. Iran has expanded ballistic missile forces and capabilities, but remains dependent on foreign technical support. Tehran can employ CW via missile, artillery and aerial weapons, although it is unclear if a standing CW stockpile exists. Iran is unlikely to produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon until mid-next decade.

How do you evaluate Iran's cruise missile capabilities, and Iran's ability to threaten US naval forces and commercial shipping in the Persian Gulf, the Straits of Hormuz, and the Arabian Sea?

Iran can threaten undefended commercial shipping and create a tactically challenging environment for naval forces in constrained waters of the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf region. However, Iran also has operational and tactical weaknesses that can be effectively exploited by US forces.

If confirmed, how would you protect the troops and allies under your command from these threats?

After consulting with select nations in the CENTCOM AOR and confirming their support, I would use a combination of US and Coalition Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) and Early Warning (EW) capabilities to protect both US and Coalition critical military and geopolitical assets.

Sexual Assault

If confirmed as Commander, US Central Command, you will be responsible for ensuring compliance with DOD policies on prevention of and response to sexual assaults throughout the Central Command area of responsibility.

What lessons did you learn in implementation of sexual assault training, reporting protocols and command awareness during your tour as Commander, US Pacific Command that can be applied in the US Central Command?

As PACOM Commander, I observed that training—both pre-deployment and response personnel training—is essential in preventing and effectively responding to allegations and incidents of sexual assault. Additionally, I believe that the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention Program has provided commanders clear, proactive sexual assault response protocols.

What are the unique issues that you believe need to be addressed to ensure that policies on prevention, reporting, medical treatment and victim support are available in the operational environments of Iraq and Afghanistan?

We should maintain sexual assault awareness in the operational environment by conducting recurring in-theater training. We should also continue to ensure that supplies, trained personnel, and transportation resources are readily accessible and available to deployed personnel.

If confirmed, how would you assess the current adequacy of such resources in the CENTCOM area of responsibility?

If confirmed, I would ensure that CENTCOM sexual assault policy and practice align with current Department of Defense policies as prescribed in DoDD 6495 and DoDI 6495. I would maintain command emphasis on these policies and the Sexual Assault Prevention Program.

Mental Health in Theater

The Army's Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT) has made 3 separate assessments over the past several years detailing the immediate effects of combat on mental health conditions of US soldiers deployed to Iraq. The most recent study, MHAT III, found that multiple deployers reported experiencing higher levels of acute stress, and that overall levels of combat stressors are increasing. These types of reports lend support to the fact that increasing numbers of troops are returning from duty in Iraq with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, and other mental health issues.

Please summarize for the Committee your understanding of the key findings of each of the previous mental health assessments, actions taken to address key findings in each, and the effect of such actions.

I understand these studies concluded that multiple or long deployments can lead to increased incidents of mental health issues. The level of combat and quality of NCO leadership directly affect service members' mental health. The Military Services have established an array of assessment, prevention, and treatment programs that provide mental health support before, during, and after deployments.

I understand that CENTCOM policy requires pre- and post-deployment mental health assessments and reassessments. MNF-I has created an expert working group to assess the status of mental health in the AOR. CENTCOM has also redistributed mental health staff to provide better coverage for deployed personnel.

If confirmed, would you support continuous mental health assessments of the US forces in Iraq, to include naval forces on the ground?

Yes.

Do you have any thoughts on how we can best address the mental health needs of our troops and their families, in terms of both prevention and treatment?

We must continue to re-examine whether we are doing all we should to meet the mental health needs of deployed personnel. Where possible, I will work with the Service Chiefs to ensure they have adequate programs and support systems at their respective installations to support service members and their families back home.

If confirmed, will you request additional behavioral health resources from all three services, if needed, to meet the needs of current and future units deployed to Iraq?

Yes. If additional Mental Health Forces are requested in support of OIF/OEF and GWOT, I will work with the Joint Staff and the Global Force Manager, Joint Forces Command for additional mental health resources.

The DOD Mental Health Task Force recently received testimony that the US military does not have enough adequately trained mental health professionals to meet the growing needs for mental health support in the military.

Do you share this concern about the adequacy of mental health professionals to support members of the armed forces, especially those in deployed and operational environments, and their families?

I am always concerned about the welfare of our service members, our DoD civilians, and their families. If confirmed, I would expect commanders to leverage all resources—morale, welfare, religious support, and family support programs as well as health professionals—to meet the mental health needs of our service members and their families. I believe that if additional capabilities were needed in the CENTCOM AOR, the Services would provide them.

As commander of the US Pacific Command, what steps have you taken to ensure adequate mental health support for deployed military members and their families?

As PACOM Commander, I have worked with my subordinate commanders to regularly assess our mental health requirements and the adequacy of available mental health resources.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the adequacy of mental health support and resources in the CENTCOM AOR both in general, and specifically in combat zones?

The mental health of deployed forces in theater is a major responsibility of the leadership of the Armed Forces. It is a responsibility to the individual soldier, sailor, airman and marine, to the fighting force as a whole, to their families, and to the Nation. The Military Services have in place a broad array of assessment, prevention, and treatment programs. Medical conditions that may limit or disqualify deployed service members are continually assessed, while screening, assessment, and educational programs take place across the entire deployment cycle. A spectrum of prevention, stress control, and mental health care is available in theater. Pre- and post-deployment health assessments are conducted. Each branch of Service has specific combat stress and deployment mental health support programs available before, during, and after the deployment cycle. These provide support tailored to the service's mission and risk factors their personnel might face. In addition, cross-functional planning teams bring together subject matter experts from across the services, the Joint Staff, and DoD.

I support a very robust program of mental health prevention, assessment, and treatment. I have not had an opportunity to be briefed on the Army's Mental Health Advisory Team

assessments, nor to develop a specific action plan to address any needed strengthening of the current program. If I am confirmed, I will look to both our health care professionals and command leadership to help me assess the needs, and will seek support from the military and civilian leadership of the Department. If I am confirmed and if I determine additional mental health professionals are needed in theater, I will ask for them.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

I agree.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

I agree.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Commander, US Central Command?

I agree.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

I agree.

Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

I intend to cooperate fully with the Congress to ensure an appropriate and timely response from US Central Command to all Congressional requests.