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## Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing Statement

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SEN. LEVIN: Good morning, everybody.

We have with us today three of our combatant commanders, to get their assessment of the issues and challenges facing each of them. And on behalf of the committee I'd like to welcome Admiral Tim Keating, commander of United States Pacific Command; General Kevin Chilton, commander of the United States Strategic Command; and General Skip Sharp, commander of the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea.

The committee appreciates your long and faithful service to our nation and the many sacrifices that you and your families have made for us. And please thank, on behalf of the members of this committee, the men and women that you lead, both military and civilian, for their service and patriotism, and their selfless dedication that helps keep our country strong.

Now, this may be Admiral Keating's last hearing with us as commander of the Pacific Command, as his new -- I guess as his current tour is soon going to be over. That's what we have heard. That's what the announcement yesterday was. And it's an expected announcement, so it comes as no surprise.

However, there's obviously an element of sadness because you've been terrific, and you've been a wonderful help to this country, to our committee. We congratulate you on a successful tour at PACOM and we -- again, thanks for all the cooperation and support and counsel that you have provided us over the years. We wish you and your family all the best.

Although much of our nation's military and diplomatic efforts are understandably centered on the ongoing challenges in Afghanistan and Iraq, it's critical that we also stay engaged elsewhere in the world. At today's hearing we will hear the views and assessments of these senior U.S. commanders in the Asia and Pacific region, together with those of the commander responsible for our world-wide strategic capabilities.

The U.S. Pacific Command's vast geographic area of responsibility includes 36 countries, over half the world's population, three of the world's five largest economies and five of the world's six largest militaries. Security and stability in the region is vital to our interests and the interests of our allies and our partners.

And while the region remains largely stable, we cannot afford to take that stability for granted. Indeed, there are pockets of significant instability in the region which demand our attention. We must reassure our allies that we will continue to work with them to further our mutual interests and continue to make it clear to those who would contribute to instability and threaten security that we're prepared to stand in their way.

China's influence continues to grow regionally and globally. In 2009, China will increase military spending by nearly 15 percent, which is their 20th straight year of double-digit growth in defense spending. In addition, China's economic growth, although slowing, appears to be on-track to surpass Japan as the number two economy in the world. And we need to continue to assess what this military and economic growth means to the region and the world, while also, of course, continuing our efforts to find common ground.

To this end, mutually beneficial military-to-military relations with China need to be developed further. The recent incident involving the harassment of the USNS Impeccable by Chinese ships in the South China Sea, while disconcerting, appears to be less about military might and more against a disagreement over claims of sovereignty and freedom of navigation.

Such a disagreement is an example of what we may benefit from if we had meaningful military-to-military conversations designed to reduce misunderstandings and to avoid miscalculations. Admiral Keating, we're interested in your assessment of China's military modernization and the way forward on establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relations with China.

On the Korean Peninsula, North Korea's rhetoric has grown increasingly acerbic in recent months and their plan for a satellite launch in the next few weeks has raised concerns. The Six-Party Talks have stalled, frustrating efforts to identify nuclear capabilities and to move to Phase Three, which would go beyond Phase Two's disablement requirement into a verifiable dismantlement of the full North Korean nuclear weapons program.

At the same time the U.S. alliance with South Korea remains strong, and this week our two militaries are wrapping up another round of combined military exercises. General Sharp, the committee is interested in hearing your assessment of the U.S.-South Korea relationship; the progress being made toward the force positioning and command-and-control changes which are planned in the next several years; and what needs to be done to ensure peace and security on the Peninsula as those changes reach fruition.

In South Asia, the interests and fates of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked. The Mumbai attacks of last November, and the aftermath, remind us that tensions still exist between India and Pakistan and that stability between these two countries is important to stability in the region.

Likewise, the recent unrest in Pakistan and the continuing threat of terrorism in both Pakistan and India highlight the precariousness of the situation there, and raise questions about what more can be done to stabilize Indo-Pakistan relations and to address the threats that are common to each. This is of particular concern as both Pakistan and India possess nuclear weapons and a regional nuclear arms race would be dangerous and destabilizing.

The challenges and responsibilities of the Strategic Command are global, varied and vital. From an operational perspective, Strategic Command has three main mission areas: Strategic Deterrence, Space Operations, and Cyberspace Operations. In addition, Strategic Command has coordinating responsibilities across the combatant commands for missile defense; combating threats of weapons of mass destruction; allocating high-demand, low-intensity intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, the ISR assets; and integrating information operations.

Over the course of the last two years our nuclear program has come under necessary increased scrutiny as lack of discipline appeared. Now, after multiple panels, boards and teams have completed numerous reports, it is time for action to be taken to ensure that discipline is restored.

General Chilton, we look forward to hearing from you on your view of the status and progress of the security of U.S. nuclear forces; the safety, security and reliability of nuclear weapons. A new nuclear posture review is due at the end of the year, which I hope will bring about a new and carefully considered discussion of the role of nuclear weapons in national strategy, and the size of the stockpile to support that role.

The START Treaty also expires at the end of the year and a new replacement treaty will need to be negotiated. The CTBT remains unratified. Strategic Command will be closely involved in the analysis to support the decisions that will be reflected in those efforts. And, General Chilton, we look forward to working closely with you to ensure that necessary reductions are made in the size of the nuclear stockpile and that excess weapons are dismantled.

A second domain over which the Strategic Command has responsibility is space. As a leading space-faring nation, the United States must sustain and protect its space assets. On the other hand, how these space assets actually contribute to military operations is not always well understood. Today we have an opportunity, with General Sharp and Admiral Keating here to understand the importance of space systems and what would happen to our military abilities if these capabilities were lost or degraded.

Finally, the role of the military in combating weapons of mass destruction, and how these capabilities are integrated with other elements of the U.S. government and the international community, is an additional challenge confronting the Strategic Command. The Asia-Pacific region continues to be one of the hotbeds of proliferation for both nuclear and missile technologies. Remnants of the A.Q. Khan network may still be active in the region, and with A.Q. Khan recently released from house arrest what becomes of this network is very uncertain.

It's, again, a pleasure to have each of you with us this morning. We look forward to a very interesting discussion on a range of very challenging topics.

Senator McCain.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to join you in welcoming the witnesses here today. I want to thank each of you for your long and honorable service to our country and express my appreciation to all the men and women who serve under your command.

Perhaps no region of the world is undergoing change as rapidly as the Asia-Pacific. Nine years into what some have termed as "the Pacific century" we see economic power migrating East, and Asian militaries growing in strength as well. The United States, as an Asian nation (sic), has a vital national interest in supporting stability, prosperity and human rights throughout Asia. And I look forward to our witnesses views on how we can further that interest in the future.

Key to that endeavor is maintaining and strengthening our alliances. I have long viewed our alliances with Japan and South Korea in Northern Asia, together with our alliance with Australia in the South Pacific, as the pillars of U.S. engagement in the region. Now we have opportunities to go further with closer military ties to India, Vietnam and Indonesia, among others. As a country that faces terrorism within its own borders, and cooperates with the United States in its counterterrorism mission, Indonesia is a key partner in the war on terror.

Admiral Keating, I'd invite you to comment on our current military-to-military relationship with Indonesia and how we are assisting Indonesia in developing more effective counterterrorism strategies. I'm especially interested in hearing about how our IMET program is fostering closer military ties with the Indonesian military.

I also look forward to hearing our witnesses' views on how to deal with the challenges that plague the region. Burma remains a pariah in the world where Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest. Minorities and political opponents face certain retaliation and the junta shows no sign of relenting in its violent oppression.

The military imbalance across the Taiwan Straits continues to grow, and there have been repeated naval skirmishes in the South China Sea and Islamic terrorists are still active in the heart of Southeast Asia.

With respect to China, I'm growing -- and we all are growing -- increasingly concerned about China's irregular engagements with U.S. vessels in the Pacific. As Chairman Levin pointed out, last week's Chinese fishing boats harrassed the ocean surveillance ship U.S.S. Impeccable which was conducting standard operation in international waters east of Hainan Island. I'd very much appreciate your comments on that.

Asia Pacific boasts some of America's most mature and formidable alliances, none as robust as the U.S./Japanese alliance. Admiral Keating, I'm interested to hear your views on the strategic benefits to the Asian Region of the Defense Policy Review Initiative, specifically our agreement with the Japanese government to invest over \$10 billion in the next five years to relocate 8,000 U.S. Marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam. I'd like to ensure this committee understands the full range and benefits to be gained from the substantial costs of this move.

North Korea continues its belligerent and inscrutable ways, and I'm encouraged by testimony before this committee that the U.S. can intercept a North Korean missile targeting our homeland. Pyongyang still poses multiple threats to the world, from assisting other countries in developing ballistic missile programs to the atrocities it commits against its own people to the chaos that a collapse of the North Korean regime may threaten.

General Sharp, I look forward to hearing about the progress of transferring wartime command to South Korea and your assessment of the readiness and capabilities of both the South Korean and North Korean military.

General Chilton, the United States Strategic Command serves as a steward and advocate for our nation's strategic capabilities. In the face of an increasingly complex strategic environment, U.S. STRATCOM is a vital element of our national security structure, and the mission of your command is critical to our nation's defense and long term strategic goals. I look forward to hearing your assessment of the progress you're making in adopting our strategic forces to deal with today's new threats.

Admiral Keating, I understand this will be your last appearance, at least in uniform, before this committee. I want to thank all three of you for your service to the country, but especially you Admiral for a long and outstanding career of service to this country. And I thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you so much, Senator McCain. I understand that there are three votes scheduled at 10:50, at least as of late yesterday. And then there's going to be I believe a 30-minute debate and then a final passage. So we may have as many as four votes here this morning, and it's our hope that we'll be able to work right through those votes.

Admiral, let's call on you first this morning. Admiral Keating.

ADM. KEATING: Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee, thanks very much for the opportunity and the privilege to represent the 325,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of the United States Pacific Command in annual testimony before your committee. I'd like to introduce three members of our party -- I use that term loosely -- you'll understand what an understanding that is.

First Chief Master Sergeant Jim Roy who's our senior enlisted leader and a man who has remarkable impact in his travelings throughout our area of responsibility.

Next, Ambassador Gene Christy, our foreign policy advisor who's making great strides in helping us realize and implement smart power throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

And finally most important my wife Wanda Lee, proud mother of a Naval Aviator and mother-in-law of a Naval Aviator. She, too, serves in a very important ways for all of us.

SEN. LEVIN: Special thanks to your spouse, but welcome to all of you.

ADM. KEATING: Thank you, Chairman.

SEN. MCCAIN: Where did they go wrong? (Laughter.)

ADM. KEATING: We should change places, I think.

Chairman, Senator McCain, as you both highlight, the importance of our region to the United States and to the world we think is hard to overstate, particularly given what all of us expect in the future given current economic, energy and demographic trends. We at the Pacific Command are pleased with our current conditions in the region and we are optimistic about continued progress. We're proud of our legacy and leadership role in the region and we're committed to doing everything we can to guarantee continued success. We want to ensure our capacity and capability to succeed and our primary mission is not diminished, and that is to defend our nation and our allies and our interests in the region.

To do all that, we employ a strategy which concentrates on partnership, readiness and presence. We think this is a blueprint for enhancing United States relationships and we think we take advantage of a capability of our allies and regional partners to address challenges and leverage significant opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region. We want to enhance our position as the indispensable partner with all of those in the region through sustained and persistent collaboration and cooperation and by employing those forces that are necessary to strengthen the partnerships and support all those conditions which preclude a necessity for combat operations.

Senator McCain, you asked for a little bit on the Defense Policy Review Initiative, we regard Guam as a strategic centerpiece for us in the decades ahead. It is a United States possession, we have our flag flying there and so any and all efforts we can make to ensure continued access to the waters and the air and the training areas around Guam we think are vital to our strategy.

Our region's characterized by what is today a remarkable level of stability. The continuation of those conditions that underpin freedom and prosperity, it is not a foregone conclusion. There are challenges to be sure and you both addressed some of them.

Foremost is the spread of violent extremism or curtailing and extinguishing violent extremism in our region. You asked for an opinion on Indonesia, Senator. Indonesia's become an increasingly important partner of ours. We have the Leahy Amendment to observe and there are aspects of that which cause Indonesia certain problems. I'll be happy to elaborate on those if necessary.

Writ large, however, we are increasingly active with Indonesia. I have been there three times. The efforts of Indonesia to curtail terrorism are beneficial and productive as a direct result of 1206 funding from this body. The Indonesians are cooperating in a much greater fashion with the countries in their region as a direct result of this cooperation enhanced by or improved by 1206 money. Incidents of terrorism and piracy in the Strait of Malacca have gone from 45 or so three years ago in 2006 to two in 2008, and we think that's a direct reflection of the support provided by 1206 money amongst other reasons including cooperation and collaboration by those countries.

A second and important challenge in the work with Chile (sp) and his folks is the spread or curtailing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and watching technology proliferation in our region. Of course, of particular concern there is North Korea and we work closely with Skip Sharp and his folks in that area and I'd be happy to address that in questions.

And finally a few words about the People's Republic of China. We think we made some real headway in the first part of 2008 after, you'll recall, the denial of port access by the Chinese to the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk battle group in Thanksgiving of 2007. Since then we've installed a hotline, we've provided several immediate response efforts, a couple of C-17s each time to cold weather and earthquake relief. We've had senior level officer exchanges, aforementioned Chief Master Sergeant Jim Roy led an inaugural senior enlisted leader delegation to China and they reciprocated by coming back to our headquarters in Hawaii.

All that said, the relationship certainly isn't where we want it to be. The Chinese suspended mil-to-mil activity following the announcement of our arm sales to Taiwan and U.S.N.S. Impeccable incident two weeks ago causes us significant concern. Those are vivid reminders that a mature, constructive mil-to-mil relationship is hardly the reality of the day and the PRC's behavior as responsible stakeholder has yet to be consistently demonstrated.

To be sure, the slight warming in relations across the Strait, particularly following the election of President Ma in Taiwan we think that warming is a good sign that China and Northeast Asia are somewhat stable and are willing to consider alternatives. But the Impeccable incident is certainly a troubling indicator that China, particularly in the South China Sea, is behaving in an aggressive, troublesome manner and they're not willing to abide by acceptable standards of behavior or rules of the road.

Thanks again for this opportunity, Mr. Chairman. I think the more familiar you all become with the region and the issues, the more you appreciate and experience our environment, our people and our challenges, the better you and our nation will be able to retain influence and remain indispensable.

Thank you very much. I'll be happy to take your questions.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you so much, Admiral. General Chilton.

GEN. CHILTON: Thank you Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the Committee, I certainly appreciate the opportunity to be with you here today, And also appreciate the opportunity to testify with my colleagues and friends, Skip Sharp and Tim Keating. And if I might take a moment to add my congratulations to Admiral Keating and Mrs. Wanda Lee, I had the distinct pleasure of being their next door neighbors on a previous assignment when he was the commander of NORAD NORTHCOM.

I think it's not insignificant that this nation has had the trust in this man's leadership to command two combatant commands back to back - two very important combatant commands. And he's done it in such a spectacular fashion.

And I can't begin to describe the love and passion this couple has for the men and women under their command. I saw it in person as their next-door-neighbor and I've admired it from afar. So I give my best congratulations to them both.

Sir, since my last opportunity to testify before this committee, which was in the fall of 2007, I've been honored by the committee to counsel and the close relationship that we have. And I want to thank you all and your staffs for their time and the time they spent out at

Omaha at STRATCOM and visiting our folks and getting to understand U.S. Strategic Command's mission even better -- and particularly for your strong support of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marine and civil servants in U.S. Strategic Command, which make the mission happen for us every day.

Today, America faces unique national security challenges and equally unique leadership opportunities. These challenges include global population changes, serious economic difficulties both at home and abroad, resource competitions, bids for regional and global power, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and an era of often persistent and irregular warfare. Coupled with an exceptional rate of technological challenge, it often outpaces capabilities and policies.

These challenges make this year an especially noteworthy year as we look forward to the report of the congressional commission on the strategic posture of the United States and prepare to conduct both a Quadrennial Defense Review and a Nuclear Posture Review. The recommendations made in these studies will shape our national security capabilities long into the future.

As a combatant command chartered with a global and operational perspective, our responsibilities and relationships uniquely position STRATCOM to execute global operations, support the regional combatant commanders and to close potential seams between those combatant commands and provide a clear and consolidated warfighter position on future global capability requirements.

I'm pleased to tell you that today, U.S. Strategic Command's capability to execute deterrent space in cyberspace operations has been enhanced and continues robustly every day.

Additionally, our unique global perspective has given us a good platform for advocating for the nation's needs for missile defense, information operations, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities and the things we need to both enhance our information operations and our planning for combating weapons of mass destruction.

Focusing on our three main lines of operations, today deterrents remains as central to America's national security as it was during the Cold War, because as ever, we prefer to deter war rather than to wage it.

Last year, the secretary of Defense approved our strategic deterrence plan, a significant first step towards integrating deterrence activities across our government. Still, credible deterrents rests first on a safe, secure, reliable and sustainable nuclear enterprise -- including our stockpile of weapons; on delivery, on command and control systems and on ISR platforms; on space-based capabilities on our laboratories and industrial base and most of all on our people -- our most precious resource.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has substantially reduced our deployed nuclear weapons, dismantled our production capability and ceased nuclear testing. And despite our reductions and lack of modernization of weapons and infrastructure, other states still seek nuclear weapons.

Additionally, many of our closest allies continue to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. This reliance should be considered as we look forward to address nuclear proliferation issues.

The most urgent concerns for today's nuclear enterprise lie with our aging stockpile, our aging infrastructure and our aging human capital. This year will be an important year to act to relieve growing uncertainty about the stockpile's future reliability -- and I emphasize future, because it is safe, secure and reliable today -- and the stockpile's sustainability by addressing these important issues.

Space-based capabilities provide our nation and our forces essential, but often unnoticed, abilities to act and operate. The satellite constellations that carry these capabilities, however, require more careful attention to eliminate delays that can leave us just one launch failure away from an unacceptable gap in coverage in the future.

We have made progress is in space situation awareness. The capability gaps remain and require sustained momentum to fulfill -- as evidenced by the recent collision between an active communication's satellite and an inactive Russian satellite.

Turning to cyberspace: This domain has emerged as a key war- fighting domain and one on which all other domains in the war-fighting environment depend. We remain concerned about growing threats in cyberspace and are pressing changes in the department's fundamental network, culture, conduct and capabilities to address this mission area and share our best practices. Still, the adequate positioning of the cyber mission -- especially with manpower -- remains our greatest need.

Finally, the command-to-advocacy efforts for missile defense, ISR management, information operations support and plans to combat weapons of mass destruction continue to mature and I believe positively influence acquisition processes with inputs that we collect from all of the combatant commands.

In this uncertain world, your support is critical to enabling successful execution across the command's assigned missions and realizing our mission to be leaders in strategic deterrents, preeminent global warfighters in space and cyberspace.

Thank you again for this opportunity and for your support and I look forward to your questions.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, General Chilton.

General Sharp.

GEN. SHARP: Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee: I am honored to be here before you today.

And I would also like to thank and recognize Tim Keating and Wanda Lee for their friendship over the years. I had the honor to be able to

follow Tim as the director of the Joint Staff and then continue to work with him when he was at NORTHCOM and now at PACOM and I've learned a lot and it has been a great, great honor.

As the commander of United Nations Command Republic of Korea/U.S. Forces Command and U.S. Forces Korea, it is a privilege to represent the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Department of Defense civilians and their families who serve in the Republic of Korea.

On the behalf of all these outstanding men and women, thank you for your continued commitment to improving the readiness of our forces and the quality of life for all of our servicemembers and their families. Your support is vital and it allows us to ensure the security of the Republic of Korea, promote prosperity and stability in Northeast Asia and protect our national -- our shared national interests in that region.

The Republic of Korea plays a vital role in the region that accounts for 22 percent of all U.S. goods. It is a first-class economic power, our seventh largest training partner and one of the most technologically and scientifically advanced countries in the world. It is also our partner that must, I believe, be considered our strongest and most successful alliance -- an alliance that has maintained its strength and grown stronger over the last 50 years; an alliance that was forged in blood and maintained by and enduring commitment to the friendship and the commitment of the Korean and the American people.

The Republic of Korea Armed Forces have fought alongside Americans in Vietnam. They've participated in Operation Desert Storm and deployed troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Republic of Korea has participated in United Nations' peacekeeping operations and currently have presence in six of those operations around the world.

The Republic of Korea deployed a 4,500-ton destroyer and an anti-submarine helicopter to the waters off of Somalia for the conduct of anti-piracy operations. And most recently, the United States and the Republic of Korea demonstrated their enduring commitment to the alliance by signing a special measures agreement that will provide ROK funding -- Republic of Korea funding support -- for U.S. forces in Korea over the next five years.

I want to thank you, the members of Congress, for passing legislation that elevated the Republic of Korea's foreign military sales status to that of a level on par with countries of NATO, as well as our nations that we have longstanding U.S. alliance. This legislation will go a long way to enhancing the alliance's combined war-fighting capability.

And if I might note, the Republic of Korea now has over \$12 billion worth of FMS cases that are opened -- 566 FMS cases. And this legislation you've passed will continue to contribute and increase our war-fighting capability.

While Northeast Asia generates a significant share of the world's commerce, it is also characterized by uncertainty, complexity, rapid change and is constantly posed the most difficult security challenges. Beyond the North Korean threat, the presence of four of the world's six largest militaries and two proven nuclear powers -- as well as historical animosities, territorial disputes and resource competition all combine to pose long-term regional security challenges. The Republic of Korea sits at a nexus of a region that is influenced by and they are influencing an emerging China, a resilient Russia and a prosperous Japan.

North Korea remains the primary threat to stability and security in Northeast Asia. The regime's survival remains North Korea's overriding focus. North Korea remains the world's leading supplier of ballistic missiles and related technology and remains a major proliferator of conventional weapons as well.

North Korea's recent provocation actions to include severe restrictions on the Republic of Korea activity at the Kaesong Industrial Complex and the Mount Kumgang Tourist Resort; threats to the Republic of Korea in the West Sea; unilateral nullification of South-North Basic Agreement; the North Korean's stated inability to protect the safety of civilian airliners traveling through its airspace; and its intent to launch a ballistic missile are all in attempt to ensure regime survival, improve its bargaining position at international negotiations to gain concessions.

We continue to be concerned with the threat posed by North Korea's large conventional military, artillery, ballistic missiles, and special operating forces -- all located very near the Republic of Korea in the North Korean border. My first priority as the commander is to maintain trained, ready and disciplined combined and joint command forces that is prepared to fight and win in any potential conflict. Facing any number of challenges that could arise on the peninsula with little warning, our commitment to the alliance spans the entire spectrum of conflict. Given the varied potential challenges, our forces constantly strive to maintain the highest possible level of training and readiness.

My second command priority is to continue to strengthen this great alliance. In addition to improving combined military capabilities, the U.S. and the Republic of Korea forces are adapting to the changing conditions in this dynamic region and are transforming into a more modern and capable force. This will enable the Republic of Korea forces to retain wartime operational control on April 17, 2012. An enduring U.S. force presence in Korea after OPCON transfer in 2012 will ensure a strong alliance which is fully capable of maintaining security in this critical part of the world. I am absolutely confident this transition will be a success for both the United States and the Republic of Korea and will serve as the key foundation for future regional stability.

My third command priority is improving the quality of life for all servicemembers, DOD civilians and families serving in Korea. Our goal is to make Korea the assignment of choice for all servicemembers and their families. Our implementation of tour normalization, which is normal three-year tours for the majority of our accompanied service members, will significantly increase our warfighting capability and improve the quality of life for our personnel while eliminating long and unnecessary separation of service from their families.

The Yongsan Relocation Program which moves U.S. forces stationed in Seoul to Camp Humphries, which is approximately 40 miles south of Seoul, and the land partnership program, which provides for the relocation of the 2nd Infantry Division to south of the Han River, will also significantly improve the quality of life for our servicemembers and their families as they move into world-class training and living

facilities.

The U.S. presence in Northeast Asia is a long term investment in regional stability. In the Republic of Korea, U.S. alliance today is more relevant to the national security interests of the United States than it has ever been before. The alliance will remain essential to the protection and the advancement of U.S. national interests in this strategically vital part of the world well into the future.

The ROK-U.S. alliance could not have been successful over the last 50-plus years without the significant contribution of the noncommissioned officers serving in Korea. The Army has declared 2009 to be the year of the NCO, and it is my great privilege to have the dedicated and professional NCOs from all services defending this great alliance. Without them, none of the advances we have made in the Republic of Korea -- U.S. alliance would have been made possible.

I am extremely proud of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, the DOD civilians and families serving in the Republic of Korea -- who selflessly support the alliance and help maintain stability in this important region. On behalf of them I want to thank you for your continued support and know you will agree how important it is to provide these fine Americans the very best working, living, and training environment possible.

Again, thank you for your support of our troops and their families and I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, General Sharp. General, let me start with you and ask about the situation on the disablement of the nuclear facilities in North Korea. By the way, I think we'll have a seven-minute first round here and try again to work through it. We now expect these votes I made reference to to be at around 11:00 (A.M.) or 11:15 (A.M.), rather than 10:50 (A.M.)

In October of 2007, General, there was a so-called Phase II Actions Agreement signed at the six-party talks, including North Korea. And it was in that agreement North Korea pledged to disable certain facilities and I understand that eight of the 11 disablement tasks have been completed and the ninth task is 80 percent completed. Is that accurate, first of all?

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir, it is.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. Now there was a threat last year by North Korea to halt their disablement activities after the talks broke down. In fact, are the Phase II disablement activities ongoing?

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir. The halt was when we initially did not take them off the terrorism list. Once we did take them off the terrorism list, they started up again the disablement -- meaning, specifically, they started disabling and taking some of the rods out of the reactor. They are continuing to do that today, however at a very slow pace.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. Now there's also commitments made to deliver, I guess, fuel oil to North Korea's part of this agreement. Have we lived up to our commitment in that regard?

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir, we have.

SEN. LEVIN: Has Russia?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, I'll have to get back to you on Russia. I'm not sure.

SEN. LEVIN: Do you know whether Japan has lived up to their commitment?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, again, I'll have to get back to you on that.

SEN. LEVIN: The Admiral.

ADM. KEATING: If I could confirm. It's my understanding this withholding movement of fuel oil was pending some resolution of the abductee issue.

SEN. LEVIN: Was there a condition to their commitment to deliver fuel oil in the agreement that was reached with North Korea?

ADM. KEATING: I am unaware of it. We'll find out, chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Admiral, you've made reference to military-military relations with China on the importance to try to improve those relations. Would one helpful improvement be if there was a direct phone line between you as commander and your Chinese counterpart?

ADM. KEATING: It would, sir.

SEN. LEVIN: And has that been proposed to the Chinese?

ADM. KEATING: It has.

SEN. LEVIN: And what has been their response?

ADM. KEATING: There has been no response. Now, to be clear, Chairman, there is a Washington-Beijing hotline which has been used recently by the Chief of Naval Operations. I have used it from Hawaii but it is not a direct link from me to my counterpart.

SEN. LEVIN: It is not a what?

ADM. KEATING: It's not a direct link. We have to go through other switchboards.

SEN. LEVIN: And so the most direct link and a dedicated link would be is -- if you had a line directly to your counterpart in China?

ADM. KEATING: That's correct, sir, and we do not have that.

SEN. LEVIN: All right, but you like it and have proposed it?

ADM. KEATING: You bet.

SEN. LEVIN: Admiral, what is the U.S. Pacific Command doing to assist with counterterrorism efforts in India?

ADM. KEATING: Several efforts, Chairman. We have sent our lead intelligence team -- led by Rear Admiral Rogers -- to India in the immediate aftermath of the Mumbai attacks to begin the process of initiating intelligence and information sharing with India -- that is underway. We have had a previously scheduled exercise -- that is to say scheduled before the attacks on Mumbai, which we elected to continue as with the support of India for counterterrorism training for some special operations forces in India. And we have increased dialogue with senior levels of the Indian leadership during which we discussed aspects of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you. General Chilton, the director of Operational Tests and Evaluation has issued two recent reports that express concerns about the operational effectiveness, suitability, and survivability of the ground-based mid-course defense GMD missile defense system. And one of the reports says that "GMD flight testing to-date will not support a high level of confidence in its limited capabilities." You and I have talked about these reports. Would you agree that it's important to address the concerns that are raised by the director of Operational Tests and Evaluation about the GMD system?

GEN. CHILTON: I would, Senator, and I've met with General O'Reilly, the new director of MDA, and I've taken a high level review of his plans for addressing testing issues as we go forward there and I think he's on the right track to address some of these important points.

SEN. LEVIN: And General, your predecessor at the Strategic Command, General Cartwright, had constructive interaction with his Russian counterparts. Since you've become commander of the Strategic Command I don't believe you have yet met with your Russian counterparts for strategic forces or for space either one.

Do you believe it does make sense to pursue engagement and cooperation with Russia on security matters including the possibility of cooperation on missile defense efforts?

GEN. CHILTON: Sir, I've always been a great supporter of mil-to- mil dialogue with both friend and potential adversary for the benefits that I think Admiral Keating has spoken about -- transparency and understanding.

But I think they have to be in line with of course, from a mil- to-mil, has to be in line with our greater government policy. You're correct, I have not had the opportunity to engage with either my Russian counterpart in the space or in the nuclear area. The last times those engagements occurred were with General Cartwright back in 2006, and those positions have turned over as they've obviously turned over here in the United States.

As we look forward to this administration's policy adjustments with regard to Russia, I'm anticipating and hoping that there'll be opportunities there to reestablish those mil-to-mil contacts.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you. Admiral, Senator McCain made reference to the relocation of the Marines from Okinawa to Guam. In your estimation are there any hard spots that could complicate or delay this move?

ADM. KEATING: Sure.

SEN. LEVIN: Could you identify what would be possible problems that could arise?

ADM. KEATING: There is an environmental impact statement affecting the construction of the Fatinma (ph) replacement facility in the northeast portion of Guam, initiation of which is essential to begin moving our Marines out of Camp Schwab so that that impact statement, which has been working its way through the system, that is -- could possibly delay our initial move there.

There are some infrastructure challenges in Guam that will have to be addressed as we move 8,000 Marines and a number of their family members from Okinawa to Guam.

So there are several aspects of the initiative that could be challenging.

SEN. LEVIN: Are you expecting, however, that this will move as scheduled, and that those hurdles can be overcome? Or are you worried that they may not be overcome?

ADM. KEATING: I'm sure they'll be overcome, Mr. Chairman, and the goal remains implementation by 2014.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you so much.

Senator McCain.

SEN. MCCAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And again, thanks to the witnesses for being here.

Admiral Keating and General Sharp, today there is an article that states that Japan's ambassador to the United States said Wednesday that North Korea should not escape punishment from the United Nations if it goes ahead with a planned missile launch. And we all know that North Korea has announced it would launch a, quote, "communications satellite between April 4th and April 8th". But the United States and other countries think it will be a test of a long range ballistic missile that could reach Alaska.

One, what is your assessment of that launch? Do you recommend any action taken of any kind if that launch takes place? And what is the potential if that launch is successful? Is it a threat to the United States, or is it -- exactly what is this all about? I don't care who goes first. Maybe the oldest, Admiral. (Laughter.)

ADM. KEATING: Senator, we at Pacific Command are continuing our planning efforts to support various contingencies that would be coordinated with --

SEN. MCCAIN: First of all, in all due respect, what does this mean? What does it mean that they announced that they're going to launch a satellite which is interpreted as could be an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach Alaska?

ADM. KEATING: I think it means nothing more or less than that, Senator. There are activity -- there is activity underway --

SEN. MCCAIN: I mean, is that a threat?

ADM. KEATING: No, sir. I would not think North Korea would have issued it as a threat. It was a normal notification process which they didn't do in 2006 when they attempted a launch from the same facility. But there are -- there is equipment movement and there are personnel -- increased levels of personnel --

SEN. MCCAIN: I guess I'm talking about that capability along with a nuclear weapon, does that pose a long term threat to America's security in your view?

ADM. KEATING: That would pose a long term threat, yes, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: Or a short term threat?

ADM. KEATING: It could be a threat as early as 4 April.

SEN. MCCAIN: Okay, please continue.

ADM. KEATING: We're continuing our planning efforts to support the lead element, Department of State diplomatic efforts, to ensure that our government is fully prepared to respond, we through the military channels, should it be so directed, should that response be so directed. We are watching Taepodong carefully. We're talking with Skip minute by minute. We're getting reasonable intelligence as to the activities around Taepodong, and we will be prepared to respond.

SEN. MCCAIN: If a decision was made, do we have the capability to shoot that down?

ADM. KEATING: The United States has the capability to do so, yes, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: General.

GEN. SHARP: Sir, first off, if North Korea launches any sort of ballistic missile as they claim they will do somewhere between the 4th and the 8th, it is against UN Security Council Resolution 1718, which specifically says, demands that North Korea not conduct any future nuclear test or launch of a ballistic missile. And it goes on to say there's a moratorium on missile launching. And it is very clear that this will be against UN Security Council Resolution 1718.

And secondly, I think that the threat that Admiral Keating is talking about is real. It is felt in South Korea, the threat of having the capability to be able to deliver any sort of warhead anywhere in the world is indeed a threat. And we call on North Korea not to act in this provocation -- do this provocation, but instead go back and focus on what they promised to do during the six-party talks.

SEN. MCCAIN: We're not the only country that has the capability of intercepting that launch. Is that true?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, if I could try to address that. For a launch from there that might threaten the Continental United States, or threaten the islands of Hawaii, I believe we are the nation that would have the capability and rightly so to defend ourselves.

SEN. MCCAIN: Thank you.

General Sharp, I don't expect you to have a great answer to this. But what do you make of the obviously very erratic, even more erratic behavior, on the part of the North Koreans? They've always been erratic, but there's rumors about the health of the dear leader. There's threats of retaliation against South Korean naval exercises -- I mean, you could chronicle them for the committee and for the record.

What do you make of all this behavior on the part of the North Koreans? And how do you feel that the Chinese -- what's your view of whether the Chinese have been constructive or not in our efforts to rein in some of these activities in the most repressive regime on earth?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, I think Kim Jong Il is doing everything he -- in his power to try to ensure regime survival and his personal survival. I think the issue that he had -- health issue that he had last summer maybe woke him up and his people up a little bit, and saw that he is not immortal.

You take a look at some of the actions as far as the balloons that have been going into North Korea that have been telling the truth about Kim Jong Il, and the fact that Kim Jong Il has cut off in the western industrial complex the ability to be able to -- for workers to bring simple things like CDs and newspapers into North Korea.

You look at the number of open air markets that are continuing to stay open longer than they have in the past, I think Kim Jong Il realizes that some of the people, a small amount, but some of the people within North Korea right now are starting to realize what an oppressive regime they have, and what conditions they live under, and how just south of the DMZ they are living in totally different conditions.

I think that what he is trying to do is, number one, demonstrate that he is in control; he has control of his military; and to be very very forceful of that within North Korea, all going back towards two things, regime survival, and getting the most he can out of the international community as far as concessions.

SEN. MCCAIN: And the role of China?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, I believe that China through the six-party talks has tried their best to be helpful. Their influence in North Korea I think is questionable now and into the future, but over the recent history of six-party talks, especially after the nuclear test that North Korea did in 2006, I think that they have been helpful. Admiral Keating has probably -- has done much more talking to them, but I believe that they have been helpful in -- (inaudible).

SEN. MCCAIN: Well, are not the Chinese balancing the problem they would have, huge problem they would have, with the collapse of the North Korean government and subsequent refugee and economic problems with the need to cooperate so we don't have an escalation of profound consequences in the region?

GEN. SHARP: Sure they are. Yes, they would be happy just to have the status quo in a non-nuclear North Korea if they could get to that point, where they were not threatened in any case, I think.

SEN. MCCAIN: So the question of succession is -- of leadership in North Korea is a very big factor you think in some of the behavior recently, particularly since the illness of the dear leader?

GEN. SHARP: Yes, sir. I think there is -- Kim Jong Il was schooled by his father for many many years before he actually took command, took the leadership role. And not much of that if any has gone on at this time. And I think the illness not only for Kim Jong Il himself but within the leadership of North Korea, they are looking much more, okay, what is going to be the future.

But at the same time I can't underestimate, Kim Jong Il is in charge. Every major decision is coming directly from him, I believe, and he's trying to shore up that ability right now.

SEN. MCCAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

SEN. JOE LIEBERMAN (ID-CT): Thanks, Mr. Chairman. As I said to the chairman while Senator McCain was asking his questions on this committee, we think of Senator Levin as the dear leader. (Laughter.)

SEN. MCCAIN: And the great leader.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: And the great leader.

SEN. LEVIN: Yeah, I decline both, but thank you.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Thanks to all three of you for your service and leadership. Admiral Keating, it's been a great honor to get to know you in your various commands, and I thank you for everything you've done. I thank your wife for the way she's supported you. It strikes me, may I take the liberty to say, as I look out at the two of you, that you must occasionally be asked a question I'm asked, which is, how did you end up with such a good looking wife. You don't have to answer that question though.

I want to get serious of course because this is serious business. I want to focus in on missile defense both because of the extraordinary progress I think we've made, remarkable progress, in developing missile defense; but also frankly because this program as well as others may be recommended for cuts in the budget we are going to get. So I want to explore this with you.

And I want to go to the North Korean situation that we talked about. Admiral Keating, do you agree that there is good reason to believe that the North Korean launch will not be a communication satellite but more likely a test of the Taepodong-2 intercontinental ballistic missile of North Korea's?

ADM. KEATING: I don't think we can make that definitive a statement, Senator.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: You don't? General Sharp, do you have an opinion on it?

ADM. KEATING: I would agree with Admiral Keating. But I would say, just looking in history, at our own history, we used similar rockets, the Atlas, the Titan, to do both the intercontinental ballistic missile mission and to launch payloads into orbit. So even if there is a satellite launch on this as the North Koreans have said it will be, it will help advance the technology of long range missiles.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Right. General Sharp?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, I agree. They have said it's going to be a satellite launch. And just to reiterate what I said a minute ago, even if it is a satellite launch, it's still in violation of the UN --

SEN. LIEBERMAN: A very important point; I'm glad you made it. Assuming it is a Taepodong-2 intercontinental ballistic missile, how -- how close could it come to U.S. territory including obviously Hawaii and Alaska? General Chilton?

GEN. CHILTON: First of all, Senator, this is all theoretical estimations --

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Sure.

GEN. CHILTON: -- because they not successfully flown this version of the missile. But we worry about defending -- its ability to reach the West Coast of the United States as well as the Hawaiian Islands and of course Alaska.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Okay, so it's that serious. Admiral Keating, let me ask you this question: based on the current state of our missile defense, if the North Koreans did fire a missile, an intercontinental ballistic missile that was aimed at the United States, what is the probability that we could knock it down?

ADM. KEATING: We'd have a high probability, Senator.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: In other words, that we have brought our missile defense, presumably what's in Alaska and in California, to a point that you are prepared to say that there is a high probability that we could knock down, hit an incoming missile?

ADM. KEATING: We can provide the specific probability of intercept numbers through Chile (ph) and northern command, Senator. But in this forum we can say we have a high probability.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Good. Senator Chilton, do you want to add anything to that?

GEN. CHILTON: The only thing I would add, sir, and that is given adequate warning, which we obviously I believe we have, collection capability. Because the system still does revert back and forth between test and online, and that is one of the things that the U.S. Strategic Command oversees and monitors and makes recommendations on.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: So we've come a long way in the development of our missile defense. General Maples from the Defense Intelligence Agency was here testifying last week, and cited what he described I believe the words were rising threat of ballistic missile capability, not just in North Korea and Iran, but a lot of other countries that might not wish us or our allies around the world well.

General Chilton, in your testimony you emphasize that the missile defense programs provide a critical deterrent against certain existing and potential threats; increase the cost of adversaries' already expensive technologies; and reduce the value of their investments.

You also emphasize the importance, and I quote, of increasing the redundancy and depth of the ballistic missile system.

General Sharp, in your testimony you point to the importance of the development of airborne laser systems. I want to ask the two of you, and Admiral if you want to get into it, about -- about how important you feel it is to fund the ongoing development of our missile defense, including the redundancy of it, the various systems that we're developing.

GEN. CHILTON: Well, Senator, I'll start.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Good.

GEN. CHILTON: First, I think it's important that when we talk about missile defense we look at it in a couple of contexts. One is with regard to our strategic deterrent, because it was developed under a policy that included that in the calculus of how we position ourselves to deter against a potential adversary like a North Korea, who may not be otherwise -- who may not be looking for a one-on-one confrontation with the United States, but for an opportunity to perhaps blackmail the United States, or perhaps dissuade the United States engagement in the Pacific Region or on the Korean peninsula in a conventional conflict.

So that links them -- so we have to be -- take it in the total context, which is why the NPR this year, having the NPR this year is important I believe to see if that still fits as part of our nuclear posture review and our calculus for deterrence.

Then we also need to look at it with regard to how the missile defense system writ large, which not only includes the defense of the United States, but also includes technological development to defend our troops deployed forward in all the regional combatant commanders.

And in my view I think we have to make sure we strike a careful balance between those two, and continue to look at missile defense in light of its strategic importance for the defense of the United States, but also, for its operational and tactical importance for the defense of our regional and deployed forces.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: General Sharp, do you want to add anything to that?

GEN. SHARP: Just that with the number of missiles in North Korea and that threat, the ability to have a multi-layered defense, to be able to not only see them earlier, but to be able to knock them down at various stages after they launch I think is critical.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Admiral Keating, let me ask you a final question, and it's this: obviously our nation's focus generally speaking in recent years has been in the Middle East and now South Asia. But it strikes me that within the context, allowing for the exception of the threat that North Korea represents, and the challenge we have, but we are doing pretty well at it, of peacefully constructively managing our relations with China, my impression is that our relations in the region that you are overseeing, the Asian Pacific region, are about as good as they've been in a long time, with growing alliances, with Japan, India, South Korea, Australia, and a lot of smaller nations.

Do you agree?

ADM. KEATING: Senator, I do and we do. Juan Lee (ph) and I have been able to visit nearly 30 of the 38 countries in our AOR in two years. And to varying degrees -- Roger that -- but each and every visit we have not just mil-to-mil but mil with ministries of foreign affairs, with other international bodies, including commercial partners, they regard, all of them, the United States as the indispensable partner throughout the Asia Pacific region. So I think your statement is correct, sir.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: I thank you for the very important role that you've played in bringing us to that point.

GEN. SHARP: Mr. Senator, can I make one more comment on the Taepodong 2, just to remind the senators, last time when they tried to launch a Taepodong 2 about the same time they also launched about six other missiles. And we are watching very closely to see what else they will do between the 4th and the 8th of April and that we're prepared for that.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: I appreciate your -- so we should be prepared for more than the one launch. Thank you.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe.

SEN. JIM INHOFE (R-OK): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am reminded that this week is the 26th anniversary of the initiation of the program that's dominating this hearing right now and I -- by Ronald Reagan -- and I think it would appropriate to read two sentences into the record that were made 26 years ago this week. "What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack? That we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies. Wouldn't it be better to save lives than to avenge them?"

I think that's a very appropriate statement to be reminded of today.

During Senator McCain's questioning, General Sharp and others, I think your response on Kim Jong-Il was that he would do anything. He's at a point in life where it's -- he would try almost anything. Then the scary thing is, to me anyway, that they're going to be launching a missile. And is it correct, do you feel, that there's any way of determining when something has been launched whether it has a warhead or whether it's a satellite?

GEN. SHARP: I'd like to defer to General Chilton, he's been studying that very hard.

GEN. CHILTON: Senator that's a really difficult problem. There are -- we -- there are different trajectories that you would fly depending on whether you want to go to space or a ballistic missile. Ballistic missile typically goes on a very high trajectory. Usually space flattens out early and then tries to accelerate because velocity is very important to stay in orbit.

But being able to make that determination real time is really -- can be very difficult for us.

SEN. INHOFE: Yeah, that -- which is scary.

We were talking about the -- where our weaknesses might be. I have a chart that I've been using for quite some time and I know things change but it's my understanding that we have some level of comfort when you look about the boost phase, the midcourse phase, and the terminal phase. In terms of the midcourse phase we actually do have some redundancy and the terminal phase. It's the boost phase that concerns me. Can you respond as to what our capabilities are and then what we're looking forward to to try to improve that?

GEN. CHILTON: Right, Senator. I think the approach for missile defense has been a layered defense, as you've described, that looks at opportunities to engage in the boost phase, in the midcourse, and then terminal.

The boost phase is attractive because this is, obviously, the vehicle's moving slower, a lot of heat coming out of the back of the rocket and so it has some easier signatures to track.

The midcourse phase gets more difficult and relying heavily on radar today.

And then the terminal phase, of course, the issues with that is it's hard to have a broad area of defense in the terminal phase. You've really got to have your defensive capabilities pretty closely located to what could be an indeterminate target on the -- (inaudible) -- of the adversary.

So we look for capabilities and advocate for capabilities in all of these areas and I would say the area that's least mature is the boost phase.

SEN. INHOFE: Yes. Well the reason I bring that because there's always resistance. They say, well we have redundancy you don't need both systems and I think we're all on record saying, yes, we want redundancy in all three phases. Anyone disagree with that? No.

I have -- during our command hearings I have wanted to get a response from all commands that deal with some of my favorite programs, the 1206, 1207, and 1208, train and equip, which, Admiral Keating, you and I talked about and you've already mentioned in your opening statement. As well as the CIRC program and then the globalization with the CCIF, I guess, program, and IMET. Could you comment on those programs and the significance of those programs?

ADM. KEATING: Each of -- thank you, Senator -- each of those to the Pacific Command are very important. We cited 1206, we hope to continue support there, 1207 of similar importance. Commander's emergency response fund we did not enjoy funding in 2008, we would enjoy re-initiation of that support. It can be of critical importance to our allies who have lower -- less capabilities than we do and if our forces are not in the immediate area we can provide funding to an area, a country, who has been adversely affected by natural disaster and they can use that money for immediate relief, short term relief is probably a better term.

SEN. INHOFE: And so the CIRC should be continued to be globalized.

ADM. KEATING: We would appreciate that, yes, sir.

And on the issue of IMET, it is one of the most important tools in our box. We have around 185 students attending various educational institutions, foreign students attending various educational institutions in the United States as we speak. There are 70 foreign students at our military academies. These are short term investments will have significant long term dividends.

SEN. INHOFE: Yeah, I think, General Sharp, you made some comments to the value of that program in Korea, IMET.

GEN. SHARP: Sir, we -- of course, Korea pays for their own way to come to send students but I did. The philosophy of being able to students from other countries attend all of our schools, which Korea has funded some of them, just pays great value that we see over and over again.

SEN. INHOFE: I bring that up because there was a time when people thought that when we had and IMET program that we're somehow doing them a favor and I've always felt that that's why we made the change in Article 98 requirement that they're really doing us a favor and that there are countries like China out there that have aggressive programs and they would be doing it if we didn't, which I think you probably would agree on that.

Admiral Keating, you mentioned this President Ma, you referenced him and the president and the fact that he's reached out to China in an effort to improve their relations. How much success do you think he's having?

ADM. KEATING: We would regard his success as significant, Senator. The measures of effectiveness are not quite that startling, perhaps, exchange of rare animals, increased cross channel commercial flights, the consideration of confidence building measures. All of these steps relatively small in and of themselves but they have lead to an obvious decrease in tension across the strait and that each day goes by that there isn't kinetic military activity we would view that as a day closer to an eventual solution. President Ma's efforts have been significant.

SEN. INHOFE: You mentioned the mil-to-mil is always a good idea but, I think, if I understood your testimony, it wasn't -- hasn't achieved the success that we'd like to have it achieve with Russia so far.

ADM. KEATING: Is that from the Pacific Command perspective, Senator?

SEN. INHOFE: Well, actually I believe it was General Sharp that made that comment, maybe it wasn't. Okay, fine.

My time has expired. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Inhofe. Senator Reed.

SEN. JACK REED (D-RI): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me join my colleagues in thanking you all for your service to the nation and particularly, Admiral, for your distinguished service, you and your family, to the Navy and to the nation. Thank you very much.

Let me follow up on the line of questioning about the activities in North Korea and I'll address it to Admiral Keating first but General Sharp, General Chilton, please, feel free to respond.

Does the intelligence community have any indication that North Korea's planning to launch a ballistic missile or does it assess that this is a launch of a satellite, which are two different systems? General Keating.

ADM. KEATING: Senator, I don't believe the intelligence community has information that would specifically rule out either option. It is a missile body that could be used for either.

SEN. REED: General Sharp.

GEN. SHARP: I agree with that completely.

SEN. REED: And General Chilton.

GEN. CHILTON: I agree. We just have the North Korean statement that the intent is to be a space launch at this point.

SEN. REED: If it is a -- turns out to be a launch of a satellite does that automatically assume that they have the capacity to launch a ballistic missile, intercontinental ballistic missile? Or is there much more work that has to be done to design a reentry vehicle and design a system that will deliver a missile?

GEN. CHILTON: Yes, Senator, there's other elements that would have to be matured. As you point out rightly, a reentry vehicle, which is not a trivial thing. Obviously, the difference between a reentry vehicle for a short or medium range and a long range are different because it's a different, much hotter environment for a long range flight to survive.

So working on the reentry vehicle and then weaponization is an issue as well.

But we have no insights into their efforts in this area but certainly they also require a booster with that to perform its capability.

SEN. REED: At this juncture we have their statement, which offers a range of possibilities.

And, in fact, from your previous testimony, this statement is a warning that they didn't give prior to the previous launch, and it would be -- the statement would be -- ironically, I think, more consistent with the practice of nations who are preparing to launch vehicles. Is that correct?

GEN. CHILTON: You're correct. They did not make a similar statement last time, and today space-faring nations around the world do make announcements of their plans for launching into space.

SEN. REED: So, again, this is hard to ascribe to North Korea, but they seem to be following, at least procedurally, what other nations do in terms of the preparation for a launch of a satellite or any type of space vehicle. Correct?

GEN. CHILTON: I would say that there's -- there may be an attempt there, not probably as specific, procedurally, as done. But I would also pile-on to General Sharp's comment that, you know, there's this -- the U.N. resolution there that is really the big, big difference.

SEN. REED: Yeah. This might be completely inadvertently complying with "the rules of the road," but it is something I think that should be -- that you've noted, and I think it bears emphasis.

Let me shift gears. Admiral Keating, we have Special Operations Forces that are stretched considerably -- the situation in Iraq, build-up in Afghanistan. You have an area of operations running through Indonesia, through the Philippines, which requires -- and had extensive commitment of Special Operations Forces -- do you think you have sufficient Special Operations Forces in your theater of operations, and associated resources?

ADM. KEATING: We could use more, Senator. An earlier question as to our relation -- the dialogue we have, the activity we have with India is a case in point. If we had access to more Special Forces it is likely we could conduct more small, unit-level training with countries who have terrorism challenges beyond those that we're conducting now.

SEN. REED: And a related question is the platforms that -- you know, the delivery platforms of Special Operations troops, the surveillance platforms -- again, you could use more?

ADM. KEATING: Same answer, yes, sir.

SEN. REED: General Sharp, in your theater of operations do you feel pressure in terms of Special Operations Forces and capacities?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, of course, we have a very small contingency that's actually assigned to the Republic of Korea, mainly to help bring in additional Special Operating Forces during times of conflict. In fact, we have a number that are there right now doing our "Key Resolve" "Foal Eagle" annual exercise, doing training with the Korean -- (inaudible) --, which are also very good.

They are key to our warfight because of the ability to be able to get into North Korea, to identify ballistic missile launches, to identify different locations. So, their requirement is key to our warfight.

SEN. REED: Let me pose a question to both General Chilton and Admiral Keating, and that is, in January, 2007 the Chinese demonstrated the capacity to knock down satellites in low-earth orbit, which would be a significant challenge to our infrastructure -- telecommunications, GPS, et cetera.

What do you make of that? I mean, you've had continuing dialogue with the Chinese, was that a, was that part of a conscious strategy to suggest their ability, or was that an activity that was -- now is being reassessed and perhaps not being pursued? Can you comment on that -- both gentlemen?

ADM. KEATING: We visited China shortly after that anti-satellite test, Senator, and the military officials with whom we had conversations kind of shrugged their shoulders and said it wasn't any big deal -- the shot wasn't any big deal; what's all the commotion?

When we mentioned the fact that it was unannounced; that it was in violation of the same United Nations resolutions that Chili and Skip

have cited; that it introduced massive amounts of space debris, which remain a challenge for us, those Chinese military officials said, if -- we didn't -- they indicated something less than full knowledge of the event, shall I say. So, we encouraged them to be more forthcoming. This is a recurring mantra in our discussions with them.

As to their continuing pursuit of that technology, I think Chili is much better -- capable than I of addressing that part of it.

SEN. REED: General?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, clearly, in my view, that was an irresponsible move on the part of the Chinese. We're very concerned about debris in space. They added over 2,000 pieces of trackable debris -- we expect tens of thousands of other, that won't be up there for days, months and years, but decades, at an orbital altitude that impacts other nations' lower orbiting satellites.

A day does not go by at U.S. Strategic Command where I do not receive reports of potential conjunctions, or collisions, or close passes from debris from that test, with other satellites that are of interest to the United States of America and other countries.

And so contrast that to what the U.S. did a year later, where, with the great work and coordination with U.S. Pacific Command to intercept a errant NRO satellite for the sole purposes of protecting the populous of the earth. We did that responsibly, at an altitude, but that all of the debris -- all of the trackable debris from that intercept has reentered the earth's atmosphere and no longer poses a threat to orbiting assets.

Clearly, there's a difference between those two tests. Clearly, the Chinese were developing an anti-satellite capability, and I think irresponsibly so.

SEN. REED: Do you think that they have received that message that you've just made very clear to us?

GEN. CHILTON: I would anticipate that they have, sir. I've spoken of this -- we have all spoken of this on many occasions --

SEN. REED: Thank you.

GEN. CHILTON: Turn to Admiral Keating and --

SEN. REED: Do you have a final point? My time is expired, but is there a final point, sir?

ADM. KEATING: It's been a subject of discussion. They've no doubt received it, Senator. Whether or not it has sufficient impact or not, I can't say.

SEN. REED: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Thune.

SEN. JOHN THUNE (R-SD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And gentlemen, thank you to all of you for your outstanding service to our country, and to all those who -- to serve under your command.

Admiral Keating, during last week's hearing on current and future world-wide threats, Lieutenant General Maples, the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said, and I quote, "China, from an air defense standpoint, has developed a very modern, layered air defense capability and depth, and is seeking additional air defense capabilities that will project even out to a range of 400 kilometers. This significantly affects potential U.S. operations in that region."

In an article published in the Foreign Affairs journal in January of 2009, Secretary Gates wrote that "China's improved air defenses, coupled with investments in other asymmetric capabilities such as cyber warfare, anti-satellite warfare and anti-ship weaponry, all threaten our ability to project power in the Pacific and will require us to rely on long-range, over-the-horizon systems such as the "next generation" bomber.

My question, Admiral, is, do you agree with Secretary Gates and Lieutenant General Maples' assessment of China's anti-access capabilities?

ADM. KEATING: I do, sir.

SEN. THUNE: As the combatant commander that's responsible for the Pacific theater, how important is it to you that the Air Force field a new long-range bomber in the 2018 timeframe that's capable of penetrating these advanced defenses?

ADM. KEATING: Any capability that our country can provide for the men and women in uniform to -- should the necessity arise to engage in that sort of conflict, is a capability we would support, sir.

SEN. THUNE: And that would include the next generation bomber?

ADM. KEATING: That would be true, sir.

SEN. THUNE: General Chilton, as the combatant commander that's responsible for long-range strike missions, how important is it to you that the Air Force field a long-range bomber in the 2018 timeframe?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, thank you.

As an advocate for the regional combatant commanders, and the expressed need for the penetration capability for the conventional bomber capability, we would advocate in support of that -- development of that weapons system.

But, also, when I look at our nuclear deterrent -- our current nuclear deterrent posture, (when) we look to the future, part of the credibility of that air-breathing leg is the ability to get to the target and to deliver its weapons. And so, from a nuclear posture -- deterrent posture, we also support that that type of platform have a nuclear capability --

SEN. THUNE: And is that --

GEN. CHILTON: -- in line with current policy where we are today. Of course, this will be an issue that we'll look at in the next nuclear posture review as well.

SEN. THUNE: Right. And that was going to be my next question, is that from your responsibility of maintaining deterrence, the importance of making sure that that system has nuclear capabilities is a high priority.

GEN. CHILTON: In our current strategy and policy today it is an important, and one that we have advocated for in U.S. Strategic Command, and the Air Force has told us they will include as part of the requirement set for that weapons system.

SEN. THUNE: Okay.

I would just -- as sort of a follow-up to that make, I guess, the observation that the B-52s are old. The B1s don't have that nuclear capability anymore. The B-2s are becoming less survivable against modern defenses. And having stated the importance that you placed -- the priority that you place on developing that bomber, I guess my question is, is that something, as the DOD and the White House in their FY'10 Defense budget, as they go through that process, is that something that you are advocating for, that's on your priority list, in terms of the -- modernizing the Air Force and the weapons systems that it provides to your commands?

ADM. KEATING: Yes, sir. It is part of our integrated priority list for Pacific Command.

GEN. CHILTON: And although I can't discuss any deliberations --

SEN. THUNE: Right.

GEN. CHILTON: -- partly out of ignorance at some level, but certainly, as I've said, we have advocated for the nuclear requirement on the so-called "next generation" bomber as a requirement that should be part of that, and supported the need for a penetrating bomber capability under our current policy.

SEN. THUNE: Good. And I'm not -- and I'm not asking you to divulge your internal discussions, but simply saying, as the people who are responsible for the commands, you are in the best position to determine what those requirements that we are --

GEN. CHILTON: Absolutely, Senator --

SEN. THUNE: -- advocating --

GEN. CHILTON: -- and we have a seat at the table.

SEN. THUNE: Okay. Terrific. Thank you.

I -- the only questions I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you Senator Thune.

Senator Akaka.

SEN. DANIEL AKAKA (D-HI): Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me express my welcome and my aloha to our esteemed panel of military leaders and also express my appreciation for all of the men and women of the military who serve under you and with you to secure our country. And also my personal and warmest mahalo to my close friend, Admiral Keating and his lovely lady Wanda Lee for being here today and coming all the way from Camp Smith in Hawaii. And let me thank our panel for the dedicated service that you've given to our country over the years.

And I want to commend Admiral Keating since we've learned that this is his last appearance here in Congress and thank him for his outstanding leadership for maintaining the high level of capacity among our military. And secondly for the good relationships that he brought internationally with other countries in your Asia Pacific jurisdiction. And thank you so much for that.

Admiral Keating, I'm afraid this morning that due to the important of PACOM and to my home state of Hawaii, all of my questions will be addressed to you. Admiral, only a few weeks ago and this was mentioned by Senator McCain, he asked about the United States and China incident that occurred off Hainan with the vessel U.S. ship Impeccable. And I've read some of the accounts that happened there.

My question to you and because of your relationships with China, what do you think this incident has shown to our country? Is it a sign of increased military aggressiveness from China?

ADM. KEATING: Senator, the short answer is I'm not sure. To elaborate a little bit upon that, at the same time the Chinese are behaving in such an irresponsible, I want to say illegal fashion in the South China Sea, as you know they have three ships conducting anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden working in close concert with the commander of the task force there working for Gortney and General Dave Petraeus while in the Gulf of Aden they're doing things the right way, if you will. And our commander has gone to have lunch with their commander and vice versa. They exchanged bridge to bridge communications, they e-mail each other.

So at the same time they're playing by the rules in the same sandbox, they're clearly in violation of long standing, centuries old rules of the road and responsible maritime behavior. So it's conflicting to us and it is confusing. And this goes to the root cause we think, root issue of what are really their intentions? What is their strategic intent? Where does China expect to be 10, 20, 50 years from now and do we the United States have prominent role in their mil-to-mil calculations? I think the answer to that question is yes we do have a prominent role, but for us to realize productivity and benefit we have to engage in discussions and right now we are not able to do so because they have suspended mil-to-mil relations.

SEN. AKAKA: Thank you, Admiral.

I'm very pleased that PACOM has developed an approach to its mission of protecting our nation and enhancing the stability of the Asian Pacific region through a strategy of partnership, presence and military readiness and I pointed, as I pointed out I think you've done a tremendous job in this area. And I feel that PACOM's emphasis on these three components will go a long way towards preserving the security of this region. Do you feel that the Pacific command has the military personnel, equipment, and facilities to effectively implement this approach?

ADM. KEATING: Yes, sir, we do. We report our readiness on a monthly basis and our classified level to the Secretary of Defense. In two years, our readiness has remained steady. There are of course assets, Senator Reed mentioned as an example special operations forces, we would like more of them and it's not just case of give us more, more, more. We think we can utilize a wide range of forces both in capabilities and services across a very broad spectrum throughout the Asia Pacific region. And the JOs and the command have a bumper sticker now that says virtual presence equals actual absence, nothing replaces boots on the ground, jets in the air, Marines coming ashore, whatever the service component you want to describe. And for us to continue to do so will require significant support from the Congress and we hope we can continue that.

SEN. AKAKA: You have mentioned that China is looking towards the future and so I'd like to ask you Admiral Keating about China's continuing their efforts to become a viable blue water navy.

For example, our recent -- (inaudible) -- report that China was considering adding an aircraft carrier to its navy and cooperation and collaboration and partnerships will be vital if China continues to build this blue water navy's capability. What is your assessment of China's ability to extend its operation, region to the high seas in the near future?

ADM. KEATING: China's ability is growing in terms of power projection capacity and capability. It is not close to that that we enjoy in the United States at Pacific Command but it is growing, Senator, and is a cause for concern for us at United States Pacific Command.

SEN. AKAKA: Finally Admiral, you recently completed the U.S.'s signature exercise in Asia Pacific region, exercise Cobra Gold. This multinational exercise has long been on an important mechanism in our commitment to fostering multilateral relationships to enhanced stability in the region. What is your biggest take away from this year's exercise?

ADM. KEATING: This is about the 30th Cobra Gold exercise we've conducted, Senator, maybe 25 to 30 something like that. Each of them more complex, each of them more demanding, each of them more sophisticated, each of them literally field training exercises. Thailand affords us a great opportunity to train in a multilateral, multinational joint way, coalition way.

Interestingly, People's Republic of China liberation army forces observe this exercise at our invitation for three and a half days during this latest Cobra Gold. So you counter that, their desire to watch these exercises, and we hope eventually participate to a degree because an aspect of Cobra Gold included humanitarian assistance, disaster relief exercises and United Nations peace keeping operations. So Cobra Gold is as you say, it's a signature event for us, it gets tougher, harder each year in terms of the level of engagement and the quality of play by all those involved and it's a very important part of our theater cooperation plan.

SEN. AKAKA: Thank you very much for your responses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, Senator Akaka.

Senator Ben Nelson.

The vote -- excuse me for interrupting, Senator Nelson.

SEN. : I'm just checking on the votes.

SEN. LEVIN: The first roll call has just begun, so we, some of us hopefully can vote -- excuse me -- vote now early in this roll call and then maybe at the end of the second roll call, there's no certain way of figuring who would go next but our staff will do the best to keep this order. And Senator Nelson.

SEN. BEN NELSON (D-NE): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you gentlemen. Thank you Admiral Keating, I know I'll look forward to a

very happy voyage into the sunset years and we appreciate your service. We thank General Chilton and General Sharp for your service as well.

General Chilton, you've testified before we know that within DoD and STRATCOM is the global war fighter for cyberspace, it's charged with operating and defending the global information grid, planning and acting when directed to maintain our freedom of action in this domain. Obviously cyberspace is a key front and is itself a war fighting domain upon which all others depend to one degree or another. So those who hack into the network vary from the unsophisticated to trained military hackers who can target industry, academia, government, and the air/land/maritime/space domain.

So we know that U.S. STRATCOM is protecting DOD but I guess the question is who's protecting the networks of dot gov sites such as our networks here in Congress? My question truly is is this a mission that STRATCOM could or should undertake?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, the policy has been that that mission set beyond the defense of the military networks, defending the remainder of the critical networks of America is a mission set for the Department of Homeland Security, one that has not been given to the Department of Defense.

That said, we are asked to support the Department of Homeland Security and we have been sharing lessons learned with them, exchanging personnel between our command and control centers.

So we have learned a lot, I would say, in the Department of Defense, and particularly at U.S. Strategic Command, about what it takes to defend our DOD networks, and we're ensuring that we are sharing those lessons in support of the Department of Homeland Security today.

SEN. NELSON: Are you comfortable that in sharing the lessons learned that the Department of Homeland Security is achieving some level of excellence in its ability to protect the dotgov site?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, this mission set was just given to the Department of Homeland Security last year, and then funding is just beginning to flow into this area, and so they are still standing up. And we have been working this problem in the Department of Defense since, I believe, the mission was first given to U.S. Space Command back in 1998 and '99 time period. And of course that mission transitioned to USSTRATCOM when U.S. Space Command merged with us, along with our space mission.

So we've had the advantage of working this problem for 11 years in the Department of Defense. So we not only just share -- we do more than just share information with the DHS team. We also share knowledge we have of threats that are coming in and how we're addressing those specifically.

SEN. NELSON: So it's more than the technology; it's you're also sharing information and intelligence, right?

GEN. CHILTON: That's right.

SEN. NELSON: Well, I think it was last week or the week before in the hearing on worldwide threats I asked Admiral Blair if we have the capabilities to determine if an intrusion into our cyberspace is a criminal act or an act of war. In other words, can we determine the perpetrator by the intrusion? I guess I'll ask you, General Chilton.

GEN. CHILTON: The question on whether -- how do we come to grips with activity in cyberspace and whether or not there are acts of war is one that is still open for debate and discussion and needs to be looked at. There are some easy things to say; that is, if some activity in cyberspace caused the death or destruction of American citizens or American resources, then I think that would be an easy one to say.

SEN. NELSON: Sure.

GEN. CHILTON: But there are other issues as well; for example, stealing of information, or espionage, which is classically handled in this country by the FBI. And then in the middle there's criminal activity -- so, espionage, criminal activity and then threat to life and property of the United States of America.

So how we think about that and lay that out for the future I think is an important discussion point.

SEN. NELSON: Well, we wouldn't necessarily be stumbling over ourselves in trying to determine that. I suspect we would be talking to the appropriate entities to try to straighten out and assign responsibility at this point in time and into the future as well.

GEN. CHILTON: Absolutely, Senator. Today we work very closely with the other agencies, to include the FBI and other intelligence agencies and other authorities because, as you can imagine, the cyber domain crosses multiple authorities here -- Title 10, Title 50, Title 18. And so it's key for us to -- and we have put in place in U.S. Strategic Command, a group that allows us to make sure we're integrating and coordinating across those various bodies and authorities to make sure we follow the appropriate instructions.

SEN. NELSON: In another field, we've been reducing our nuclear warheads around the world for some period of time as an indication of -- we do see a level of hostility potential and to try to develop deterrent factors -- or having them work as dissuasive efforts of others to not engage in nuclear development. Given the fact that we're faced with North Korea and Iran in moving toward their own nuclear capability, do you think that our efforts at reducing our own arsenal with the former Soviet Union reducing its arsenal, have we achieved any deterrence or dissuasive effect, in your opinion?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, a couple facts here. One, both the Soviets -- the former Soviet Union, now Russia, and the United States have made dramatic reductions in our strategic stockpiles and inventories since the end of the Cold War. Two, there have been new actors on

the international scene that, in spite of that reduction, have launched or continued, more likely, nuclear weapons development programs. But also we can count many, many friends and allies who have not started nuclear weapons programs because of their confidence in the U.S. strategic deterrent, which they can still maintain today and should.

So there's linkages between friends and allies and confidence in our ability to support them and proliferation -- potential proliferation, but there's also a fair question to ask -- have our reductions influenced certain countries -- and the hard part is to prove the negative, that maybe there was another set of countries out there who have observed this reduction and have not started programs that they otherwise would have. I think this area bears further study.

SEN. NELSON: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Have you voted, Senator Nelson?

SEN. NELSON: I have not.

SEN. LEVIN: Do you want to start, or should we just put us in recess?

SEN. NELSON: May I just ask a couple of questions?

SEN. LEVIN: Sure. After we're done, if there's no one else here would you put us in recess until someone returns?

SEN. NELSON: Okay. How much time do we have?

SEN. : Six plus five.

SEN. NELSON: Six plus five. Okay.

General Chilton, what do you feel is our highest missile defense priority? Should it be to provide our regional combatant commanders with an effective missile defense against the many existing short- and medium-range missiles?

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, we have to look at both support -- in my view, support to the regional combatant commanders but certainly defense of the United States of America. And so I think we need a balanced missile defense program that goes forward that addresses both those critical needs, both for our citizens at home and for our deployed forces abroad.

SEN. NELSON: Okay, let me ask Admiral Keating and General Sharp, since you all are commanders that are facing many of the short- and medium-range potential threats from North Korea, would you agree that you don't have sufficient missile defense capabilities to meet your operational needs to defend against those existing short- and medium- range missiles?

ADM. KEATING: Senator, we can provide for the defense of American citizens and American territory in the Pacific Command AOR with the assets that we have. We could obviously use more assets in that it is -- we are not at a one-to-one ratio. They have more potential offensive weapons than we have extant defensive weapons.

GEN. SHARP: Sir, North Korea has got over 800 missiles. We have currently on the Peninsula 64 Patriots from the U.S. and the Republic of Korea, just purchased 24 and we're starting to incorporate those into the defense also. Could we use more? Yes. And we are working hard to make sure that the ballistic missile defense of the Patriots are properly linked together, that we have the intelligence to properly cue, and that we have them positioned at the right places to be able to defend our most critical warfighting assets, but it does leave -- it does leave other areas uncovered and we could -- both we and the Republic of Korea could use more, and we're working hard at that.

SEN. NELSON: So, for the two of you, your highest missile defense priority is fielding effective capabilities to meet your operational needs?

GEN. SHARP: Yes, sir.

ADM. KEATING: Yes, sir.

SEN. NELSON: Okay.

General Chilton, hackers are trying to invade our military computers, and you recently had a statement which was very good -- "Every day" -- and I'm quoting you -- "Every day there are attempts to penetrate our network." And since I'm down to three minutes to go vote, let me say that we're working at a lot of different levels -- classified -- and I just came from a hearing with regard to non- classified computers, in the Commerce Committee to try to get our arms around this problem, which we have to.

This senator has had his office computer -- I have had my office computers invaded three times in the last month, and one of them we think is very serious. So we're going to have to continue this, and I underscore that for you. And if you will excuse me so that I can record my vote, the committee will stand in recess subject to the call of the chair. Thank you.

GEN. SHARP: Thank you, Senator.

(Recess.)

SENATOR MARK UDALL (D-CO): Thank you for responding. We have a series of votes on, as I think everybody knows, but the

committee is eager to take full advantage of your presence here, and thank you again, all three of you, for being here.

I thought I would -- General Chilton, with all due respect meant to your colleagues here -- turn to STRATCOM and ask you a couple of questions in that area, and great to see you here. I know both you and Admiral Keating have Colorado ties and Colorado roots, and you were a great leader at Space Command, as was Admiral Keating at Northern Command.

General, in your testimony you note the strengths gained from our space-based and cyber-enabled capabilities but you also warn that asymmetric advantages carry asymmetric challenges. We can't rule out the need for capabilities force-on-force conflict areas, but you also note in the near term it's unlikely that any state would chose such a course with the United States. I think we probably all agree that that's the reality. In your view, how do we best prepare for such an uncertain future at a time when our resources are so constrained? And you talked in particular about cyber activities, cyber attacks, so if you would respond, I would appreciate it.

GEN. CHILTON: Sure. Thank you, Senator. US Strategic Command is -- our department is Defense Cyber Command, and we take that mission of defending the DOD global information grid exceptionally seriously. What I believe we need to do in the cyber domain is to look at our culture, our conduct and capabilities -- the three C's I'd say. We have all grown up with computers on our desk and they have been looked at as a convenience. I think all of us in America have. First we ignored them and then we got used to them; now we're kind of chained to them. But we have to change the culture, and when we think about our military networks and computers, to clearly appreciate the fact that they are integral to the way we conduct military operations, and so they are no longer a convenience; they are a necessity.

The conduct piece, we need to make sure that we approach our systems from a commander's perspective. Every commander needs to be concerned not just about the readiness of their airplanes, the readiness of their ships, the readiness of their tanks, but the readiness also of their networks to support their operations. And in the capability area, there are technologies that we can field and field faster that will help us better understand what's going on on our networks, who's trying to get in them, what the configuration of the defenses of our networks are, et cetera, and I think it's important to invest in those -- in addition, I would say, in our people. We still, in my view, have not adequately resourced the people element of this to address the threats and requirements to operate.

In the other what I would say asymmetric advantage domain that we have, and that would be in space operations, again, space capabilities have become integral to not only our daily life as Americans but also to military operations, whether it be missile warning from space, communications that we rely on to control predators from the United States of America on the other side of the world, or to pass critical command and control information in support of nuclear forces, GPS, weather warning, we have come to take these things for granted, I would say, sometimes but they have become dependencies. And so as we look to the future we need to be thinking about these constellations as something that we could not ever afford to gap or have a degradation in capability, and we need to take better care, in my view as we look to the future, to ensure that we never put ourselves in a position where we're counting on every single launch of a satellite capability 100 percent to be successful because history tells us, we know, that that won't always happen.

Thank you, Senator.

SEN. UDALL: Admiral, did you want to make a comment or -- I think the general covered it quite well, and certainly covers all the service branches and the concerns that have been expressed. I'd like you to talk a little bit about the space situational awareness concept and this collision we experienced recently, and if you might just explain how this has happened, briefly, and what can we do to take some steps to ensure that we reduce, if possible, to zero the probability that this happens in the future.

ADM. KEATING: Happy to, Senator. We took a real close look at this most recent collision between a U.S.-owned and operated communications satellite and a non-functioning Russian satellite, and our conclusion is, looking at it, that there really wasn't much -- there was nothing, in fact, that could have been done, given the way that satellite operator operated their satellite, given the way we surveil space today and do our work today that could have prevented that collision.

But, as we look to the future, there are things that we can do to improve space situational awareness in three areas: one, increase the amount of surveillance capabilities that we have. So we surveil space with radars and telescopes today. We need to have a more robust sustainment but also spread out that capability. And there is an opportunity here, I believe, to partner with other nations to increase this. Believe it or not, geography matters in this case. As you surveil the heavens, most of our sensors are in the Northern Hemisphere, placed there because we were most interested in the Soviet Union of old. But we do need to increase the amount of energy we put up, if you will, to collect and refresh our databases more frequently on what's up there and its position.

Secondly, as you bring that data in -- and, oh, by the way, there's opportunities to cooperate with other satellite operators that can give us the information we need rather than us having to look for it -- once we bring that in we have the opportunity to improve our computer capabilities and our display capabilities at our Joint Space Operations Center to improve the fusion of that information, which today we're still kind of trying to do in the commander's head out there by looking at PowerPoint charts.

And then improving the calculation capability to calculate and anticipate potential collisions in the future is another area that we could improve. Today we only do collision analysis on the top priorities for the United States of America, which are manned space flight vehicles, space shuttle, space station, and then our most valuable national security satellites. So we're not doing collision calculations for the 19,000-plus pieces of debris and the 1,300-some-odd active satellites up there today. We don't have the capacity. We can get better at that, I believe, in the future.

SEN. UDALL: Thank you for that analysis. It's tempting for me, sitting here as the acting chair, to continue to ask questions and prevent my colleague from Alaska from having the floor, but I did want to yield to him with one comment for the record. You and I have talked about continuing our work for a comprehensive space treaty, and there are some in place, but there are certainly some analogues, and the way we treat the Antarctic is one that's been mentioned. It's not one-to-one, obviously. There are differences between space and how we treat, as a world, the Antarctic, but there is still more work to be done there and I look forward to working with you and through the committee to find a way to use space as we all want to, for peaceful purposes, for economic development, for all the marvelous advances

that it's presented us with.

So thanks again to the panel, and it's an honor to yield to the Senator from Alaska, Mr. Begich.

SEN. MARK BEGICH (D-AK): Thank you very much, and thank you all for being here. And, you know, when you're toward the end, most of the questions have been asked that I'm interested in especially because there are so many senators interested in Alaska and the missile defense, so I was very pleased about that. I hope that continues as we get to the budget process.

But let me follow up very quickly on what Senator Udall mentioned on cybersecurity. And I don't know who could answer this question. Within all the military -- and I might have missed this because I came in toward the end of his commentary on this -- is there a coordinating body that works together within the military operations on cybersecurity -- not by just agent, by Army or Air Force, but a coordinating body that actually looks at how to improve the technology and what you can do together?

GEN. CHILTON: Well, in our command -- in the combatant command of USSTRATCOM, I have to component commanders that work together very closely, who are operating and defending the network every day, and that requires sending out orders, sending out updates to anti-viruses, checking on the status and configuration of the network, supporting degradations in the network. It also includes a great and robust relationship with the National Security Agency, which provides us tremendous intelligence support in this area.

And when we think about, as directed -- if we are directed to do offensive operations in cyberspace, we need to have close ties with all of the potentially affected parties within our government, and we have established a coordinating body to do that, whether it's with the FBI --

SEN. BEGICH: (Inaudible.)

GEN. CHILTON: Exactly right, Senator. And so we recognize the complexities in this area and have put pieces in place to address them. Again I'd say our biggest challenge is properly manning those command and control elements, those centers for the future.

SEN. BEGICH: Let me, if I can -- and, again, any one of you three can answer this or all of you, but again I appreciate your commentary and your discussion on the missile defense system, especially because in Alaska -- not to be too parochial, but we think it's important where it is, strategically and otherwise, and I think you've laid out many reasons because of the issues with North Korea. Can you -- and if this puts you on the spot, just let me know, but on a 1-to-10 scale, if each one of you can kind of give me a sense of how you see North Korea in the overall global picture of threats, and especially to our country but around the world. I know that's -- and if you don't feel like you want to put a number on it, because I'm sure people here at this table of the press will probably pin you to it, so I won't hold you to it. I just want to get kind of a feel of how you see -- because, you know, from Alaska we're very concerned with the missile activity, or their launching activity I'll just say -- their launching activity, and it does concern me.

it concerns our community and their capabilities of what they will do or what they say they will do or what will really happen. Admiral?

ADM. KEATING: Senator, from the theater perspective, as we talk with countries throughout our region, the 37 in addition to North Korea, I would think it would be fair to characterize North Korea as the largest day-to-day concern in the eyes of most of the countries in our region and it is not just because of potential Taepodong activity. And Skip is the best qualified amongst us so I'll stop in just a second.

Their leadership is perhaps characterized as erratic. The succession, which Skip discussed earlier, is not clear. What happens next is not clear. Their day-to-day activities are unpredictable and can be very confrontational. They close certain international airspace routes. They close their own border to their own economic disadvantage. So, writ large, North Korea is probably one of if not the most unsettling -- their policies are the most unsettling of any in the region.

SEN. BEGICH: Very good. Do most people agree?

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir. And I'll just add it's a regime that in order to survive depends almost solely on provocations and their ability to get what limited amount they can by selling technology, missile technology, and proliferation and have publicly stated that they have a -- we know that they've done a nuclear test and they're working hard to be able to show the world that they have the power to be able to deliver that anywhere in the world. So it is definitely, I believe, a regime that we have to watch very closely and we have to be prepared for.

SEN. BEGICH: Thank you.

GEN. CHILTON: And, Senator, just from the global perspective at STRATCOM, I look at their activities that give me greatest concern -- nuclear development of a nuclear weapon and long range missile capabilities that can hold the Continental United States at risk and their proliferation activity with regards to their missile technology; and it gives me concern with where they might go with proliferation of their nuclear technology that they've developed, given the characterization that the other commanders here have given of the motivations of this country in the past. So I look at their behavior and it does give us pause.

SEN. BEGICH: Very good. Thank you. I have maybe one or two more questions -- and, again, if these have been asked I apologize. But how do you see with North Korea and China the international impact of the economy around the globe and how that's impacting their ability or are they accelerating their capacity to move to improve or add to their military capacity? In other words, is the economic conditions of the world having an impact on them in a positive or a negative way or are they taking some efforts because of the situation to take advantage of what's going on? I just want a little discussion on that? Admiral?

ADM. KEATING: To the best of our ability to determine, Senator, there has been no short term demonstration of a reduced capability, capacity or intention on the part of the People's Republic of China in terms of military development. It's -- counter that with the observation that containers are stacking up in Shanghai. So their export market is reduced; there have been numerous, hundreds and hundreds of factory closings in the past couple of months.

Their economic growth, while a number that might be the envy of other countries -- 6 (percent) to 8 percent if that's an accurate forecast - it's down by about 50 percent from what China had been advertising -- 12 (percent) to 15 percent growth hoped for in '09. So all of that combines to lead us to be a little skeptical of their professed percentage of gross domestic product applied to defense.

In People's Republic of China, those are suspect numbers to begin with. The Chinese tell us we, in China, are beginning to understand that the cost attendant to an all-volunteer army; they don't have that yet but they are realizing, because of the efforts of folks like Chief Master Sergeant Jim Roy, how important a senior noncommissioned officer corps is; how expensive quality of life improvements are for their forces. And they say most of their percentage -- a large percentage of their budget is going towards those human factors elements and less toward hardware and technical capabilities.

We don't necessarily subscribe to that theory -- a long answer to a short question. We don't see any short term impact because of economic downturn. We're watching it very carefully.

SEN. BEGICH: And in North Korea?

GEN. SHARP: The same. North Korea, because of their very few amount of exports, the amount of money that comes in has for years -- and Kim Jong-il just recently said again in his, if you will, state of the union address several months ago -- that it's a military first policy and that he will do everything to make sure that his military is as strong as possible and had even went as far as asking the common people to understand the shortages that they will have to endure in order to be able to maintain and continue to improve a strong military.

SEN. BEGICH: Thank you very much. My time has expired and I do have to go, so I'm turning it back to the chairman. And even though I would love to hold this away from him, but I will turn it back to Chairman Udall. Thank you.

SEN. UDALL: Thank you. I think Senator Begich and I are thrilled to be able to have a chance to have a conversation with all three of you. And I know the second vote was voiced and we're now in the process of debating the third vote. So I'd like to take advantage of your presence and also alert you all if there's something you didn't have a chance to mention in your earlier testimony that you would like to touch on -- I'm happy to make sure that we hear.

But Admiral, I thought I'd turn just to an interesting question -- I know you're well aware of this. But when you look at the interface between CENTCOM and PACOM, you have oversight of India, General Petraeus has oversight of Pakistan. So much of what we see in Pakistan we believe is the Northwest territories and that interface with Afghanistan. But when you drill down to what's happening in Pakistan, historically and politically, often it's about their relationship with India. Would you talk to whatever extent you're comfortable about that relationship and how you interact with General Petraeus and his important responsibilities?

ADM. KEATING: Yes sir, thank you, it's a great question, it's an important question and it's topical. There are those who think a reexamination of the unified command plan, which, as you described, affords CENTCOM authority and oversight of Pakistan and affords Pacific Command oversight in the ultimate relations with India.

We at Pacific Command think the unified command plan is well-written, it is sound, and we don't think that there is sufficient reason to change the border between CENTCOM AND Pacific Command with respect to the India-Pakistan border itself; the reasons are several. I had the privilege of going to India in the mid-1980s as a member of the Pacific Command staff and I have been there once and am going in a couple of weeks. As I mentioned earlier, we have frequent dialogue at many levels of mil-to-mil and diplomatic agencies throughout India.

The dialogue today is much healthier; it is more robust; it is more vigorous; it is more comprehensive; it is more forthcoming than that I observed in the mid-Eighties. In addition, India is a significant strategic partner for us, the United States writ large and us in Pacific Command in particular. Their demographics are significant; their economic engine continues to churn; they are the world's largest democracy, of course, and their national elections are coming up.

All of this combines for me to recommend to you that the Unified Command plan as written is sound and that I assure you that mil-to-mil relations between Pacific Command and India are solid and actually are bearing direct productive fruit.

SEN. UDALL: Thank you for that insight and, of course, India is already a strong economic powerhouse -- as you point out, the world's largest democracy. I see nothing but a bright future for our relationship with the kind of leadership and the kind of connections we have. I too have spent time in India -- they're wonderful people, a fascinating culture, long history; a much older nation than The United States of America. They have the potential to teach us.

General Sharp, they're trying to hook me but I thought I'd give you a chance to talk a little bit about the point you made that one of the challenges you face is insufficient training, range capacity and capability when it comes to our air forces in Korea. You have some ideas, I'm sure, about how those challenges could be mitigated. Could you take a minute or two and share those with the committee?

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir. And I also have a connection with Colorado in that my son will graduate, get his master's degree, from The University of Colorado in climatology on May 8th and I look forward to visiting back to your state on that day.

SEN. UDALL: Outstanding. Forgive me for not mentioning your connection as well.

GEN. SHARP: You've got a better intel officer so that -- (laughs).

SEN. UDALL: Maybe one of my fellows could be out of your intel office --

GEN. SHARP: Yes sir -- (laughs). So first let me comment upon the strength of this ROK-U.S. alliance and the capabilities that we have

and what we need in the future. First, I was stationed in Korea in 1996 to 1998 as a colonel one-star. The Korean military at that time were good but the professionalism and the capability that has improved over those 10 to 11 years is absolutely phenomenal. They track and abide by and believe in our training -- the way we train our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines.

They completely work through the AAR systems -- after action review systems -- and they really have got a strong capability right now, especially on their ground forces, in order to be able to do what we're doing or be prepared for any sort of contingency. I am absolutely confident when they take command of the war fight and take control of that on April 17, 2012 they will be ready for that.

We are going through many different exercises and training in establishing planned processes and organizations to make sure that we are ready for them to do that.

After OPCON transfer, the U.S. will be just as necessary, but will be in a supporting to supported role, rather than the opposite. The 28,500 troopers that we have there now from all services I believe to be about the right number for the future well past OPCON transfer to stay in this very, very important part of the world in a country that has wanted us there for over 50 years and key to the security and stability and in Northeast Asia.

We are working very closely with the Republic of Korea military in order to make sure that we do have all of the training ranges that we need in order to be able to properly train our servicemembers. And the most difficult one is the one that you mentioned. It is ranges for the new modern systems of our air forces to be able to have significant size and safety in order to be able to drop the ordnates given the precision and the safety requirements that we have. They're committed to it. We're committed to working this very closely together to be able to do it.

And the last thing I'll say is the agreement by our Department of Defense in the direction to move the three-year accompanied tours also will greatly increase the capabilities we have in Korea.

SEN. UDALL: Is that --

ADM. KEATING: Three years instead of one year at a time just gives me great capability -- it reduces stress, (lack ?) of an unaccompanied tour anywhere in the world if you don't have to and then it really does show our commitment -- not just to Korea, but all of Northeast Asia, which I think goes straight back to the security and stability for this important part of the world.

SEN. UDALL: Your point's important, but Wanda Lee's really nodding behind you like that would really make a big difference.

So I thank you for your indulgence. And on behalf of the ranking member, the chairman, thank you all.

The committee's going to stand in recess until further notice. And thank you very much. (Sounds gavel.)

(Recess.)

SEN. LEVIN: Well, you folks have been around here long enough to know how the Senate works. I want to apologize. It just goes with the territory.

We'll be back in order and Senator Webb is recognized.

SEN. JIM WEBB (D-VA): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And if any of you gentlemen can figure out how the Senate works and let me know, I would appreciate it. It's the one body of government where they say you can keep things from getting done, rather than doing things. We tend to be pretty good at that.

Gentlemen, I'd apologize also for the delay here. We got a couple of hearings going -- we had a hearing on Russia in the Foreign Relations Committee this morning and also these other delays.

I can say, first of all, I appreciate the visits that a number of you have made personally to my office to talk with me and with my staff and I hope we can continue to do that.

General Chilton, as you may know, my father served in Strategic Air Command. We had a discussion about that -- very proud of his service. He was not only a bomber pilot, but was a pioneer in the missile program. He put the first Atlas missile in for the United States Air Force. And as I think I told you, I used to play baseball right across the street from where you live right now. So I have great memories of the Air Force and also Offutt.

And Admiral, I'd like to wish you and your wife the very best into the future. And thank you for your long years of service. And actually, as some of this testimony was going back and forth, I was thinking about how long I've been doing this as well. I think I was in my last year at the Naval Academy -- your plebe year. We were talking about the move to Guam.

I actually wrote about -- proposing this 37 years ago -- it's kind of scary to say that -- I wrote the first book that I wrote on our strategic positioning in the Pacific and how it would affect the Guam-Mariana Islands access. I went out, I spent time as a consultant to the governor of Guam, walked and drilled every square inch of that territory in Guam, Tinian and Saipan.

I'd like to reiterate my offer to your staff or your successor if they want to come by and bounce any of these thoughts off of me, I'm happy to respond. I don't think Guam and Tinian have changed that much over the years. I've had a number of conversations with the Marine Corps in terms of what they are attempting to do.

And Mr. Chairman, I would like to say something. I had a long conversation with Admiral Keating in my office the other day with respect to China. I'm not going to go into it in the same kind of detail during my time today, but I would like to say that I have concerns I think that are greater than any of those that have been expressed -- at least in the parts of the hearing that I've been involved in today.

One of the things that Admiral Keating and I were discussing was: What is this going to look like 10 years from now? And it actually came back to me that I wrote fairly extensively on this 10 years ago. I wrote a piece 10 years ago last month in The New York Times about China's change in military policy from defense to power projection. I wrote a piece in the Wall Street Journal right after the (E-3 ?) incident in April of '01 expressing my concern about how vulnerable we'd become strategically to the Chinese -- not only in a military sense, but in an overall national and strategic sense in the way that we overinvested in their economy to our potential detriment.

I just think we tend, when we have these hearings -- when we talk about these snapshots -- to confuse the ramifications of tactical confrontations with what we might be taking away with respect to China's larger strategic goals. And I think we must keep those on the table. I think that these tactical confrontations -- it's rather interesting thinking about the P-3 incident eight years ago, because it was very similar in terms of responding on a tactical level to what had gone on to the incidents that occurred earlier this month.

The tactical confrontations are largely data points. That if we think about them, can they illuminate the larger changes that are taking place in this region? And they're not simply military issues, which makes them difficult to discuss in a military context or even in this committee. They are very largely, with respect to the waters off of East Asia, sovereignty issues. And they have taken place in concert with our unprecedented vulnerability in terms of our own economic situation and our trade policies and these sorts of things. And they aren't limited to us.

You could do the data points on the Spratly Islands from 1996 when I was out there in 1996 when I was out there as a journalist -- '96 and '97 -- compared to today in terms of China's presence and its military capabilities. We've seen incidents in the Senkaku Islands, which are claimed by Taiwan, Japan and China.

I was in Vietnam in December and they were very concerned about -- as I mentioned to you, Admiral, during our meeting -- with the pressures that the Chinese government had been putting on American companies doing business in Vietnam.

So this isn't something that can clearly be addressed in the context of an incident, but I think it's very important for the record, Mr. Chairman, that we attempt to examine these issues in a larger strategic framework before going to make judgments about what relations really look like between our two countries.

The piece that I wrote in The Wall Street Journal I started with a quote from Sun Tzu. And he said, "Draw them in with the prospect of gain; take them by confusion; use anger to throw them into disarray." And you know, if you compare the tactical with the strategic, that's probably a fairly good summation of the way that these incidents have accumulated.

So I don't really even have a question about that. I wanted to say it for the record.

And I wanted to extend my appreciation to you, Admiral Keating, for all the service you've given to our country; and to all of you for what you've been doing to try to maintain the balance in that region as we sort this out, hopefully, on a national perspective.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Webb.

General Sharp let me go back to the issue of the six party talks with North Korea and who hasn't done what and who has done what according to the Phase Two agreement. My understanding is there was a commitment in exchange for dismantlement that there would be a delivery of some fuel oil, about apparently a million tons of fuel oil to the North Koreans. And I guess the right word is disablement instead of dismantlement, phase two was disablement. My understanding is that we and the South Korea and Russia have completed our 200,000 tons. The Republic of Korea -- I'm sorry, we, China and Russia have completed the 200,000 tons, the Republic of Korea has gotten most of it, like 145,000 tons. But the missing piece of the million is that Japan has not provided any energy aid because of the question of the abduction. Is that a fair summary of where we are?

GEN. SHARP: Yes, sir. Very close. I've got -- 146 is what the Republic of Korea has donated, so 54 short.

SEN. LEVIN: Right.

GEN. SHARP: I think I ought to point out also though that the agreement was kind of a step-by-step in order to be able to make sure that as much as possible North Korea lives up to its expectations. So of the -- really the 11 steps that need to be able to take place as you noted eight are complete, so around 80 percent. About 80 percent of the rods have been pulled out of the fuel pond so again about 80 percent. And the amount of heavy fuel oil that has been given to the Republic of Korea is right at 75 percent. So again, there's a balance there I think of them North Korea doing what they promised as this fuel oil gets delivered.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. And my understanding is it's eight of the 11 disablement tasks have been completed and the ninth is 80 percent complete. Is that correct?

GEN. SHARP: That is correct. And the ninth being the taking of the fuel rods out.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. Now the -- whether or not the Japanese work out with the North Koreans the issue that obviously is a major issue in Japan, the million ton commitment is not conditioned upon the Japanese and the North Koreans working out their difference, is it? In other words, the million ton commitment's got to come from somewhere.

GEN. SHARP: I'd have to go back and look at the exact language whether each of the five countries promised 200,000 or whether there was a million total promised --

SEN. LEVIN: All right.

GEN. SHARP: -- and I'll get back with you on that, sir.

SEN. LEVIN: If you would, that'd be helpful.

Now one other question, I think you were the one who testified about the interest of the North Korean regime to being their own survival essentially. That's it -- I mean that's their goal. They'll starve their own people in order to support their military but their goal is the survival of that regime, number one, number two and number three goal. Is that basically fair?

GEN. SHARP: Yes, sir, that is fair. And I think he's proven that over the years and will go to any measure in order to be able to make sure that happens.

SEN. LEVIN: Is there any doubt you think in their mind that if they attack the United States that that would be the end of their regime?

GEN. SHARP: I think there's no doubt if they attack the alliance -- the Republic of Korea alliance and the United States which has been so strong over the last 50 years -- that they would not be successful and that their regime would end. They would cause huge damage, though, on South Korea --

SEN. LEVIN: I understand that, the damage is clear. But could there be any doubt in their mind that if they attacked us or the South Koreans that that would be the end of their regime?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, there should not be because I believe it would be.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. (Off mike consultation.)

General Maples who's director of the DIA at our hearing a few days ago said that the North Koreans announced that they are going to do a space launch. And I believe he said that's what they intend. That's our DNI -- I'm sorry, that's our DIA director. Do you have any reason to disagree with his assessment? Any of you?

Well let me start with you, General, General Chilton.

GEN. CHILTON: I wouldn't disagree with the DIA assessment on that --

SEN. LEVIN: All right.

GEN. CHILTON: -- that's what their assessment is. And so --

SEN. LEVIN: All right. General Sharp, do you have any reason or Admiral?

GEN. SHARP: Sir, I have no reason to disagree. And again, just to remind as I said earlier I believe he'll do other things that day also as he tried to do back in 2006.

SEN. LEVIN: All right.

General Chilton, I made reference before to the director of Operational Test and Evaluations report where he said that GND flight testing to date will not support a high level of confidence in its limited capabilities. Your testimony is that there's a high degree of probability that we could knock down a North Korean attack or missile. There seems to be a pretty clear difference and do you agree there's at least a difference between the two of you on that point that -- and I'm just wondering how you explain that difference between our director of OT&E saying that the testing to date won't support a high level of confidence in the limited capabilities of GND and your statement earlier today.

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, I've not had the conversation specifically with the individual so I would presume, that's part of this now, a contextual issue here on this particular point. One, the point that I'd make is the testing that was done in the deployment of this system which really didn't begin until around 2003 I guess time period was very different than what you would do in a classic development program.

In fact, if we follow the classic development program and I'll just use an aircraft development for example, we would have nothing deployed today. Because there is much more rigorous testing in that development area. But the decision was made to take risk in the testing part and also to allow different authorities to the missile defense agency to accelerate the development of this program because of the perceived need. I think as a result of that, we're in a pretty good position today to be ahead of North Korean capabilities as they field them.

Not to say that this -- so my position is that I believe that we have in the limited deployment capabilities that we have out today for the system, it is adequate to defend against what we believe the North Koreans could potentially put forward as a threat to the United States today.

SEN. LEVIN: That --

GEN. CHILTON: Is it for their future, I would say no. And so as we look to the future, we have an opportunity and I think General O'Reilly's on the right path here. To improve the testing of the current system to fill in if you will the dots on the matrix of a normal test plan for the purposes of increasing our confidence but also to fill out the models, the points on the models so that, realizing we can never test this system because of cost and expense at the level that you would take an airplane to Edwards Air Force Base and fly hundreds of times, we will rely on sophisticated models for the future to anticipate its performance and filling in those key elements of that model I think is the right path forward here to ensure that we stay ahead of threats as they develop in the Pacific.

SEN. LEVIN: Are you saying that we're going to rely on modeling, we're not going to have testing to show that it's operationally effective?

GEN. CHILTON: No, sir, I -- you need both. You need both, but I think there's a realization. If you look at a classic test program, like -- for example, for an airplane you have the opportunity because of the affordability and availability to do a lot of --

SEN. LEVIN: A lot more testing --

GEN. CHILTON: -- fulfilling of test matrices.

SEN. LEVIN: -- (inaudible).

GEN. CHILTON: So here the key will be to continue testing but pick the points on the graph that allow you to connect the dots if you will through modeling to increase your confidence in the system and validate the design of the system.

SEN. LEVIN: And would you, you used the word that North Korea has limited capabilities, that we're ahead of that current limited capability. It's your goal and our goal hopefully to stay ahead of their capability. One way to stay ahead of it would be if we can negotiate the end of their nuclear program. Now that doesn't directly effect the missile program, but it effects the strength or the impact of their missile program. So the effort to get them off their nuclear program I think you would agree would be also very, very important in terms of limiting their capability in the total world.

GEN. CHILTON: Senator, when you combine what General Sharp has described I think very accurately the North Korean leadership and regime and their motivations and combine that with a long range missile technology that can reach the United States and combine that with their nuclear weapons program gives us great concern. And so I agree --

SEN. LEVIN: I understand your concern.

GEN. CHILTON: -- eliminating you know that part of it would be very important to us.

SEN. LEVIN: I understand the concern but I think it's also, General Sharp said as also I think generally agreed upon which is that the North Korean leadership has only their own survival in mind, that's their goal.

And if they believe -- and General Sharp, I think, agrees with our intelligence that they do believe, and must believe -- that any attack on us or the South Koreans would lead to their own destruction, in other words, defeat their number one goal, that that deterrence should work with North Korea.

GEN. CHILTON: Senator --

SEN. LEVIN: It may not work with Iran, since it's a different kind of regime, but it ought to work with a regime whose only goal in life is their own survival, should it not?

GEN. CHILTON: Well, you bring up a great point, in that, you know, that there's no one-size deterrence that fits all. And so your point about an Iranian -- what would deter Iran, versus North Korea versus another potential adversary, is, I think, an incredibly important point. And we need to think about our deterrence posture force, and the way our government approaches this, and look at each individual country.

The only thing I would offer, as a -- not even a counterpoint, but a consideration, with respect to North Korea is this: One, there is always the possibility that when put in a corner, where one's survival is recognized to be a very, very low probability -- of the "use-or-lose" capability that you might develop, and so being in a posture to defend against that low-probability, but high-consequence condition I think is important to us.

And then the other thing, we only --

SEN. LEVIN: Who would put them in a corner?

GEN. CHILTON: Look, if you could imagine a conflict where -- a conventional conflict that would break out on the Peninsula, and our great South Korean-American alliance would be very effective I believe in defending that, and then bringing that to resolution in our favor, that could be a case where the leadership there could be -- feel cornered.

The other thing we have to ask ourselves, though, as we look at ourselves, what deters us, and what might influence us? And does the risk of this capability alone -- the thought of, would you trade an attack on the United States versus our desire to engage on a particular problem on the Korean Peninsula, et cetera, et cetera -- how we perceive that potential threat --

SEN. LEVIN: Sure.

GEN. CHILTON: -- is something we have to consider as well when we consider the value of a missile defense system against this type of regime.

GEN. SHARP: Senator, there's another element to this deterrence of North Korea. I agree that if he ever attacked us, or South Korea, the regime would come to an end. But his ability to be able to launch a ballistic missile, and demonstrate he has that capability, goes a long way in the road of helping him proliferate that to other countries around the world and to be able to get cash back in order to go again -- back into regime survival.

And so this missile launch is not so much, in my view, about (achieving ?) the ability to attack the United States, it's "I've got the ability;" countries that need this, and would be willing to negotiate with North Korea, they'd now have a demonstrated capability. That's where I think the real threat is, is the proliferation side.

SEN. LEVIN: I agree with you.

I want to see if any of my colleagues are going to -- do we know if anyone's coming back? Is the third vote on yet?

SEN. : They're still in the debate and we have no indication of anyone else -- (off mike).

SEN. LEVIN: Okay.

I don't know if anyone else has asked this question but, Admiral, let me ask you this question. In terms of the current readiness of our forces, given the focus that's been on Iraq and Afghanistan, has that -- if you haven't already been asked, in any way detracted from your ability to deal with the challenges you face?

ADM. KEATING: Senator -- Chairman, it has, but not to a great degree. In the case of supporting Skip, should we be so tasked, we would not have at our immediate disposal as many ground forces as we would have absent commitments to the Central Command.

That said, we'd work with Skip all the time, and we could, in some cases, supplant or supplement the ground-force requirement with Naval and air power projection capability. I report our readiness on a monthly -- we report our readiness on a monthly basis to the secretary, and in two years it has not wavered. The actual evaluation is classified but it hasn't changed in two years, sir.

GEN. CHILTON: And, sir, just to follow on to that, I agree that what we have in Iraq and Afghanistan affect the ground forces the way that Admiral Keating -- but there should be -- nobody has any concern which forces would get there, and we would win the conflict. It would be a little bit longer than what we would like if forces are not committed in other places around the world, but they would get there and we would be successful in our war plan. There's no doubt in my mind about that.

SEN. LEVIN: Well, that's reassuring news.

There just is one other question about the disablement issue -- if I can just get the facts on this. It has to do with the parts that were disabled, of the nuclear -- in the nuclear program we were disabling the -- what's it called? -- the disabling of the reactor and the reprocessing facility -- there was two facilities, began, as I understand it. And there was a threat on the part of North Korea that they would --

GEN. CHILTON: Reverse it.

SEN. LEVIN: Reverse it.

GEN. CHILTON: Roger.

SEN. LEVIN: Has it been reversed, do you know?

GEN. CHILTON: There was a threat when we did not immediately take them off the terrorism list, that they were going to -- in fact, they did, kick the IAEA inspectors out. Said they were going to start taking the seals off of the different parts.

We then took -- we then took them off the list, and then now they have continued down the process of those 11 steps, and to the point where the secondary cooling loop has been disabled, the dry mechanisms have been disabled, some of the overhead cranes have been disabled, the mechanism for fuel and deloading has been disabled.

So, as you accurately said, 11 steps that are required for the disablement. Eight of them have been completed. The ninth one, of removing the rods, is about 80 percent. And then there's the last two that will need to happen after the rods are completed, of the rod control mechanism being disabled. And the final one is the disablement of the (fresh ?) fuel system -- for all 11 of those steps to be completed.

SEN. LEVIN: But the threat to reverse the disablement was not carried out, and the disablement has continued, as I understand it. And the threat was made at the time they were not taken off the terrorism list, but when they were taken off some months later, I believe, then that threat was removed and the disablement has continued.

GEN. CHILTON: That's correct -- although, at a very, very slow rate.

(Cross talk.)

GEN. CHILTON: Could have been well done with this months ago if they had done it at a reasonable rate.

SEN. LEVIN: And the rate that was continued at the same rate as fuel has been delivered approximately?

GEN. CHILTON: Approximately, yes sir.

SEN. LEVIN: And you're going to let us know, for the record, whether or not the commitment to deliver the fuel is going to be carried out by four countries if Japan does not participate?

GEN. CHILTON: My great staff says that it was (an) agreement of one million tons -- did not break it out 200,000 for each one of the five other countries. And I don't know whether there's been discussions among the five countries in the Six-Party Talks of how to make that up or not.

SEN. LEVIN: Good.

Thank you all. Sorry for this kind of chaotic way to approach this. But, your service has been terrific and constant -- a lot more constant than our hearing this morning. And we will stand adjourned, again, with our thanks to you and your families.

Source: <http://www.fmsg.com/transcript.htm?id=20090319t2439&nquery=&query=LEVIN>

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