

United States Department of Defense

Speech

On the web: <http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040623-0522.html?http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040623-0522.html>

Media contact: +1 (703) 697-5131

Public contact: <http://www.dod.mil/faq/comment.html> or +1 (703) 428-0711



Prepared Statement before the House Armed Services Committee

As Prepared for Delivery for the House Armed Services Committee by Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas J. Feith, Washington, DC, Wednesday, June 23, 2004.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you on the Bush Administration's review of the U.S. defense posture around the world, including the consultations we have had with our allies and friends. We appreciate the bipartisan support and the leadership this committee provides regarding this project and all the work of our armed forces and the Defense Department.

Let me begin with some general remarks on what we aim to accomplish through realigning our worldwide defense posture. I would like to discuss:

- Why transforming our global defense posture is necessary;
- The key ideas guiding the realignment decisions; and
- The consultative efforts with Congress and with our allies and partners that have informed our work.

Transforming U.S. Global Defense Posture

We are performing the most thorough restructuring of U.S. military forces overseas since the major elements of the U.S. Cold War posture were set in 1953, when the Korean War ended. This initiative is intended to improve our military's forward presence to increase our ability to fulfill US security commitments and to work with allies and partners in the decades to come in military activities across the spectrum of endeavors from combat to peace operations.

The goal of our realignment is to update our defense posture so that it looks forward, not back toward the Cold War. We want our posture to enable more effective military operations in the future – greater

flexibility for our forces, their ability to deploy powerful capabilities rapidly anywhere in the world where they are needed. We want our posture to enrich our ties with our defense partners around the world – making it easier for us to cooperate, lightening our footprint, eliminating unnecessary irritations, helping them as well as us to modernize our armed forces. And we want our posture to be efficient – to be affordable – with the right kind of command structures, facilities and equipment for the work that may be required in the future.

I would like to be clear about what we aim to achieve and what are not aiming to do:

- We are not aiming at retrenchment, curtailing U.S. commitments, isolationism or unilateralism. Instead, we want to increase our ability to fulfill our international commitments more effectively.
- We are aiming to ensure that, in the future, our alliances remain capable, relevant, affordable and therefore sustainable.
- We are not focused on maintaining numbers of troops overseas, instead we are focused on increasing the capabilities of our forces and those of our friends.
- We are not talking about fighting in place, but on our ability to move to the fight.
- We are not talking only about basing, we're talking about the ability of our forces to operate when and where they are needed.

The September 11 attacks clarified our understanding of the key security challenges that we will face in the 21st century. These include:

- The nexus among terrorist organizations, their state supporters and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- Ungoverned and under-governed areas within states, which can serve as breeding grounds and sanctuaries for terrorists; and
- Asymmetric warfare that adversaries will use to counter U.S. conventional military superiority.

As part of the transformation of our strategy and our alliances to deal with our new strategic circumstances, we are transforming our global posture. Much of our current posture still reflects the mentality and reality of the Cold War – forward deployed forces configured as defensive, tripwire units and expected to fight near where they were based.

In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's disintegration, the United States substantially reduced our troops that were deployed forward. But they still remained concentrated primarily in their Cold War locations in Northern Europe and Northeast Asia. It is from these locations that they deployed to deal with crises in the Balkans, the Persian Gulf, Central Asia and other locations.

Now, nearly 15 years after the end of the Cold War, we no longer expect our forces to fight in place; our forces need to be able to project power into theaters that may be far from where they are based.

The Principles for Realignment

President Bush decided it was time for a comprehensive review of the U.S. global defense posture, a review that could serve the President's broader purposes to transform the US armed forces for the future.

This review of our Global Defense Posture has been guided by five key policy themes --

Strengthen Allied Roles. First, we want to expand allied roles and build new partnerships. We have worked to ensure that our allies and friends recognize that, in transforming the US posture, we're safeguarding the US commitment to help defend our common interests. Changes in the U.S. global posture also aim to help our allies and friends modernize their own forces, doctrines and strategies. As we discuss the U.S. realignment with our allies and partners, we are exploring ways in which we together can transform our military capabilities. At the same time, we seek to tailor the physical U.S. "footprint" to suit local conditions. Our goal is to reduce friction with host nations, the kind that results from accidents and other problems relating to local sensitivities.

Flexibility to Contend with Uncertainty. Second, we have to create greater flexibility to contend with uncertainty. Much of our existing overseas posture was established on the premise that we knew where we would fight. The lessons of the last 15 years tell us that we often are required to conduct military operations in places that were not predicted. It is clear that the Defense Department needs to plan, but we must plan to be surprised. Our goal is to have forces deployed forward in such a way that they can quickly reach crisis spots as necessary in the future.

Focus Within and Across Regions. Third, in the Cold War, we tended to focus on threats to specific regions, and tailored our military presence to those regions. Now we're dealing with challenges that are global in nature – so global strategies and actions are necessary to complement our regional planning. We need to improve our ability to project power from one region to another and to manage forces on a global basis.

Develop Rapidly Deployable Capabilities. Fourth, because our forward-deployed forces are unlikely to fight where they're actually based, we have to make those forces rapidly deployable. For this concept to work, U.S. forces need to be able to move smoothly into, through, and out of host nations, which puts a premium on establishing flexible legal and support arrangements with our allies and partners.

Focus on Capabilities, Not Numbers. Finally, our key purpose is to push relevant capabilities forward. That does not require us to push additional forces forward. In fact, we can now have far greater capabilities forward than in the past, with smaller numbers of forces permanently stationed abroad. In gauging the degree of commitment the US has to a given region, the key concept is not numbers of forces or platforms we have stationed there, but the magnitude to the military capabilities we can bring to bear there rapidly.

A goal of the many consultations we have conducted with our allies and friends has been to demonstrate that, in transforming our posture, the United States is increasing its ability to help secure our common interests, whether we are increasing or decreasing the numbers of personnel or units in a given area.

Our goal is to be positioned to deal with uncertainty, with the right forces, the right relationships, the right authority and the ability to execute our missions within and across regions.

Elements of Posture – Relationships, Activities, Facilities, Legal Arrangements, and Surge

The term “posture” means not only bases or facilities. It encompasses also activities, relationships, legal arrangements, and surge capability.

When we speak of our posture in a region, we are referring not just to bases, but to the military **activities** we perform there. These activities include training, exercises, and operations. They involve small units working together in a wide range of capacities. They involve major formations conducting elaborate exercises to achieve proficiency in joint and combined operations. They involve the “nuts and bolts” of providing support to ongoing operations. And they involved the force protection that we and our allies provide to one another.

Another aspect of our posture in a region are the defense **relationships** we have with partners there. These relationships involve interactions at all levels – from heads of state to the students that interact in the many school houses that we and our allies provide.

Our posture, of course, also includes the **facilities** where our forces live, train and operate. In addition to retaining, but consolidating, our main operating bases in places like Germany, Italy, the U.K., Japan, and Korea, we intend also to rely on forward operating sites with rotational presence and pre-positioned equipment. Additionally, we’ll need access to a broader range of “cooperative security locations,” the term we use for facilities with little or no permanent U.S. presence, but with periodic service or contractor support.

Fifteen years of operational experience tells us that we need a new, more innovative, more joint approach to pre-positioned equipment and stocks that reflects the new requirements for operational flexibility. We are reaping benefits from rapidly advancing information technologies by consolidating administrative functions in the U.S. and elsewhere through what is called “reachback.”

Fourth, many of our current **legal arrangements** date back a half a century or more. We want our international agreements to be up-to-date – to reflect new realities and enable operational flexibility. They have to help, not hinder, the rapid deployment and employment of U.S. and coalition forces worldwide in a crisis. And these legal arrangements should encourage responsibility and burden-sharing among our partners and ourselves, while providing the necessary legal protections for our personnel.

Finally, US military forces need to be managed globally in a way that will allow us to **surge** a greater

percentage of the force rapidly wherever in the world this may be required. Combatant Commanders no longer “own” forces in their theaters. The President and Secretary of Defense apportion the forces as needed – taking them anywhere in the world as the circumstances warrant.

Regional Implications

The changes we are effecting in activities, relationships, facilities, legal arrangements, and surge capacity will improve our nation’s ability to support diplomacy and perform across the spectrum of military operations globally.

In Asia, our ideas build upon our current ground, air, and naval access in Central, Northeast, and Southeast Asia to overcome the vast distances. We plan to bring additional naval and air capabilities forward into the region. We envision consolidating facilities and headquarters in Japan and Korea to gain efficiencies and enable regional and global action. Our plans would establish nodes for special operations forces and multiple access avenues for contingency operations.

Our plans for our posture in Europe include lighter and more deployable ground capabilities, leading-edge air and naval power, advanced training facilities, and strengthened special operations forces, all positioned to deploy more rapidly to the Middle East and other hot spots.

In the Middle East, we propose to maintain what we call “warm” facilities for rotational forces and contingency purposes, building on cooperation and access provided by host nations during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

In Africa and the Western Hemisphere, we have in mind a diverse array of smaller cooperative security locations for contingency access.

Working with Allies, Partners, and Congress

It bears reemphasizing: our military forces, both forward-deployed and based at home, are only part of our military capability. The network of alliances and security relationships we have created with other nations is a key element of our ability to defend U.S. interests. When the United States acts in the world, we do not act by ourselves, but as a part of a community of states.

On 25 November 2003, President Bush stated that the U.S. would intensify consultations with friends, allies, and partners overseas on our review of global defense posture. The results of our senior-level consultations at NATO and in key European, Asian and other capitals helped to create understanding and cooperation regarding our posture realignment. Our foreign counterparts appreciated that their input was sought before key decisions have been made and they understood our global, long-term view and the strategic rationale for conducting the review at this time.

The global posture review had its origins in the 2001 Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review. We

have made significant progress during 2003-2004, and proposals have been shared frequently with the Congressional leadership, committee leadership and members, and committee staffs. Today, we are providing an update on the decision process for strengthening U.S. global defense posture.

As the administration moves forward in discussions with allies and partners on specific proposals, Administration officials will remain in close consultation with the Congress. This will be particularly important as our consultations with allies begin transitioning from proposals for changes, to negotiations about details of those changes, to agreements on our new plans.

Finally, the global posture decision process and BRAC are tightly linked, indeed they depend on each other. They are both key components of the President's transformation agenda, and they both will be critical instruments for stability in the lives of service members and their families. Together, they will help to provide more predictability in assignments and rotations.

The progress made to date on global posture enables DoD to provide specific input on overseas changes for BRAC 2005. That input will allow domestic implications of the global posture review – with forces and personnel either returning to or moving forward from US territory – to be accounted for as effectively as possible within the BRAC decision-making process.

Finally, as was the case with previous BRAC rounds, the U.S. will retain enough domestic infrastructure to provide for difficult-to-reconstitute assets to respond to surge needs, and to accommodate significant force reconstitution as necessary, including all forces based within or outside the United States.

In closing, we appreciate this committee's vision and support as we work to implement necessary, strategic improvements to America's global defense posture.

<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040623-0522.html>