

**Some considerations about
21st century dynamics and possible
implications for the Department of
Defense**

by

Dr. Sorin Lungu

20 September 2010



Disclaimer

The views expressed are the author's alone and do not represent those of the National Defense University, the U.S. Department of Defense or any U.S. government agency.



Agenda

- **21st century dynamics, strategy and strategic foresight**
- **Some challenges for the DoD defense investment portfolios**
- **Q&A**



Set of dynamic tensions that could transform tomorrow's global economy, culture, geopolitics

- Will fundamentalists of all stripes obliterate secularism and usher in a new age of faith?
- How will the emergence of China and India change everything from economics to values?
- Will U. S. military preeminence be financially affordable and will it continue to translate into global political leadership?
- Will U.S. military hegemony prevail or be trumped by (transnational) non-state actors?
- Will scientific and technical advances accelerate or be slowed down by concerns over their risks and ethics?
- What will happen as developed nations rapidly age?
- Will global markets increase prosperity for all, or plunge some areas into decline?
- Can humanity manage its growing planetary footprint?
- And how can we, as individuals and organizations, mobilize and align our passions and power to create better futures?



21st century security environment

The global security challenges of the 21st century will be (most likely) powerfully driven by *“material forces”*:

- demographic change,
- resource scarcities,
- environmental stress, and
- technological shifts.

WHAT IS SECURITY and what role does the military instrument play in this paradigm?



21st century security environment

AS GLOBAL SYSTEMS BECOME MORE COMPLEX

Causation is increasingly both :

**Multivariate
Synergistic**

And system behavior is:

Non-linear (driven by positive feedbacks)

Such factors might easily reduce the government's ability to predict outcomes and make system management far more difficult for government entities



21st century security environment

Converging stresses and global security

These stresses could easily:

- Inhibit food production
- Undermine economies
- Deepen inter-group cleavages
- Provoke mass migrations
- Weaken states

IT COULD LEAD TO CHANGES in patterns of behavior and governance (at both regional, state and non-state level) in the international system



21st century security environment

Converging stresses and global security

These changes, in turn, could easily:

- Boost grievances that motivate violence, and create opportunities for actors to engage in violence.
 - Poor societies will most likely be affected first and most severe.
- *Conflict might become almost entirely sub-national.*
 - *How should one think about: (sub-)regional players, transnational actors, soft and hard power?*
 - *What role does “time” play in such events?*
- *Breakdown of key political, economic, social (and ecological) systems is perceived/assessed as becoming increasingly likely.*



21st century security environment

The emergence of an increasing perception of governmental/systemic **OVERLOAD**

STRESS

COPING CAPACITY

**CHANGE, ASSESSMENT AND
ADAPTATION**



Anticipatory governance

- (1) We are facing an acceleration of major historical events, some of them carrying the potential for major societal and international consequences;
- (2) Society in general and government in particular, need to address such possibilities as far in advance as possible, in terms of policies and resources; and
- (3) There needs to be a system to help government visualize more consistently what may be approaching from the longer-term future, and to deliberate in a more timely way about possible responses.



Strategic thinking

“Strategic thinking is intent driven. *It provides a point of view about the long-term market or competitive position that an organization hopes to achieve over a defined time period.*”



Strategy

- Since strategic problems are “wicked” & ultimate outcomes are not predictable, strategies are *best guesses (heuristics)*.

*“He who predicts the future lies, even if he tells the truth”
— Arab Proverb*

- In competitive situations, *strategies are about identifying or creating asymmetries that can be exploited to help achieve one’s ultimate objectives* despite the active, opposing efforts of adversaries or competitors to achieve theirs.

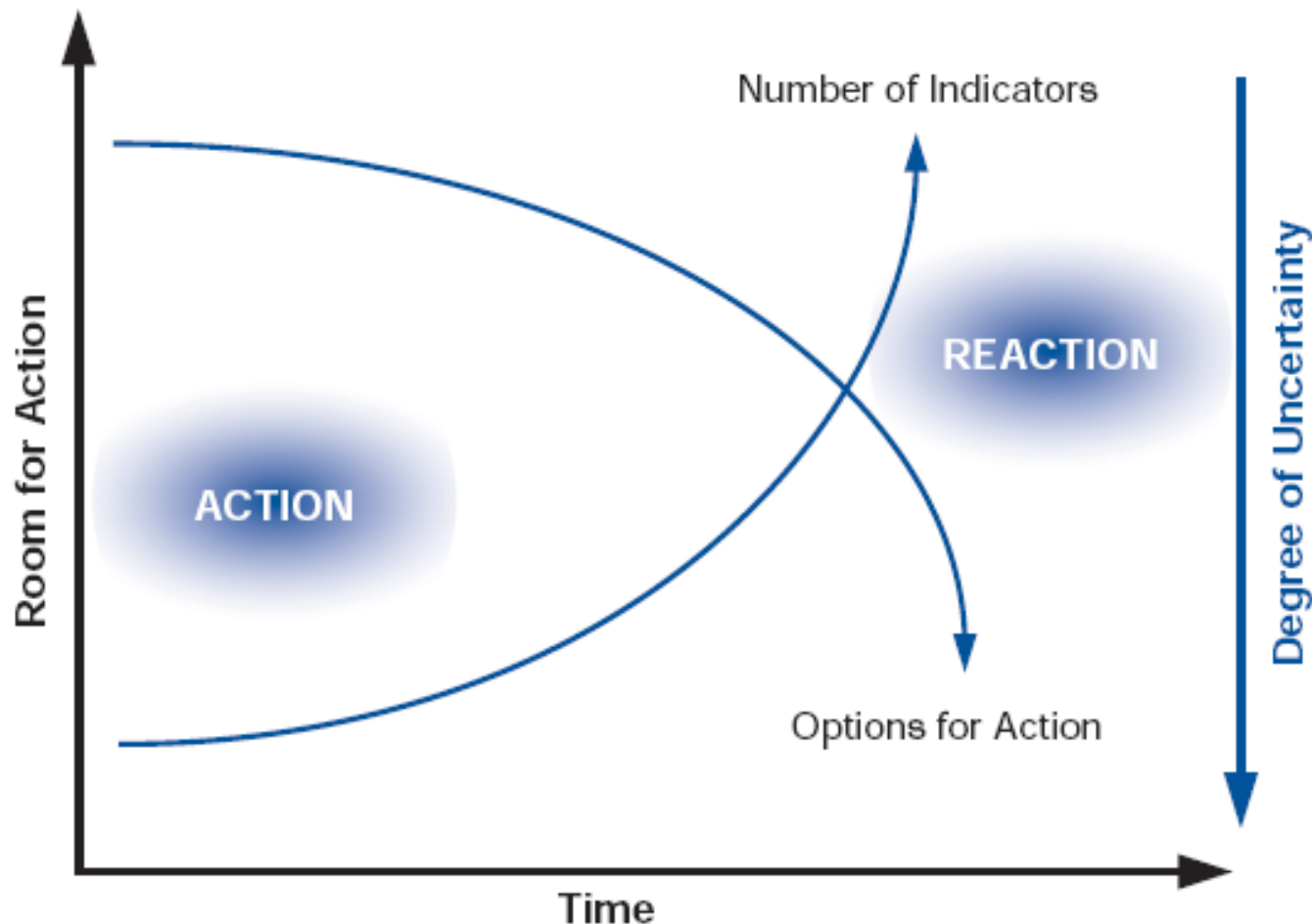
“The quintessential strategy story is of unexpected strength brought against discovered weakness. Not simply the deft wielding of power, but the actual discovery of power in a situation, an insight into a decisive asymmetry.”

— Richard Rumelt, 2004



Longer-term foresight: the policy dilemma

- As time progresses, information about a given risk event may increase. But as it does, the options available for effective mitigation are bound to reduce.





Longer-term foresight: the policy dilemma



PREVENTION

\$

**REACTION
and/or
ADAPTATION**

\$\$\$



What is STRATEGIC FORESIGHT?

Strategic foresight:

- Is the ability to systematically think about and develop alternative futures.
- Is the planning that results when future methods are applied to real-world situations.
- Is the theory and practice of envisioning alternative future scenarios in order to make better decisions today, turning insight into opportunity.



What is STRATEGIC FORESIGHT? (continued)

- *Contributes to coping with uncertainty and complexity.* It deals with the identification, assessment, and usage of emerging signals to recognize and give warning about threats and opportunities at an early stage.
- *Successful strategies are rarely achieved by spontaneous flashes of genius, but rather result from the systematic collection, analysis, and evaluation of facts, circumstances, trends, and opinions.*



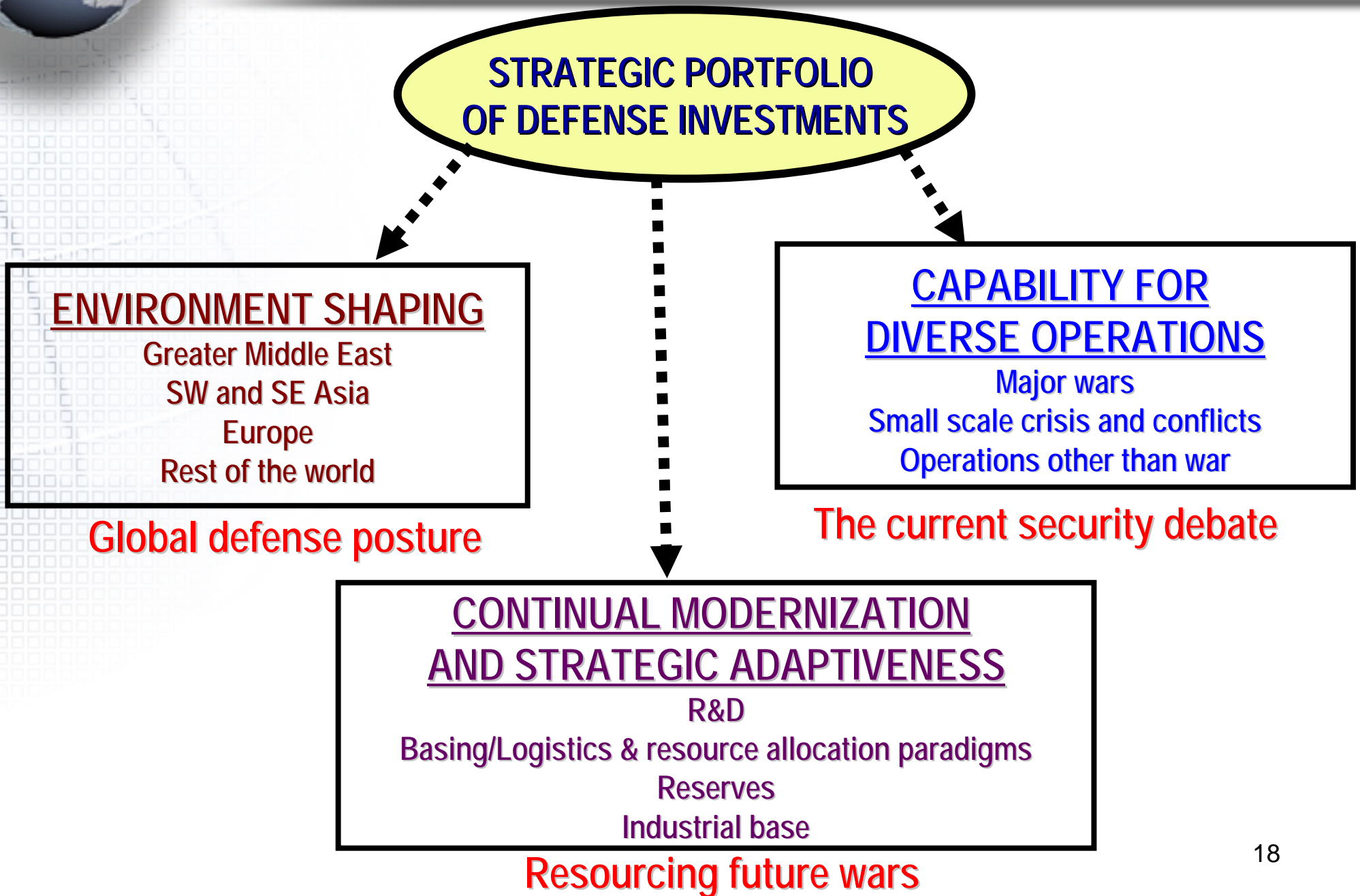
DoD top level objectives

- **Defense planning must deal simultaneously with many worldwide objectives**
 - *Not only for the “here-and-now,” but also for the mid- and long-term*

- **Think of the higher-level categories of DoD objectives as:**
 - *Environment shaping*
 - *Acquiring adaptive military capabilities for dealing with a wide range of conflicts*
 - *Assuring continual future modernization and strategic adaptiveness.*



DoD defense investments portfolios



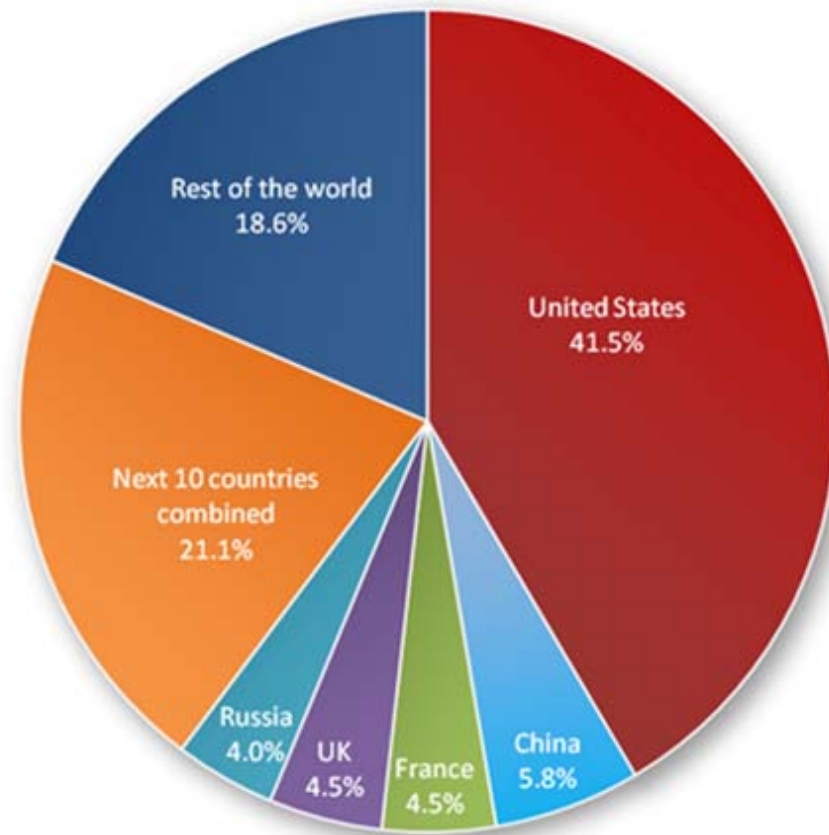


“Resources *versus* commitments”

Actual & projected direct budgetary costs of U.S. military activities since 9/11 (in billions FY 2008 \$)

Category	2001-09*	2009-18**	Total (2001-18)
Military Operations (DoD)***	816	315-694	1,131-1,509
Indigenous Security Forces	40	42	82
Foreign Assistance and Diplomatic Activities	45	20	65
Veterans' Affairs***	3	40-62	43-65
Total***	904	416-817	1,289-1,721

Global Distribution of Military Expenditure in 2008



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Yearbook 2009

“To date, some **4,800** U.S. service members have been **killed** in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and about **33,000 wounded**. The direct budgetary costs of these wars through 2018 will total “some **\$1.3-1.7 trillion**.”

Steve Kosiak, CBSA, December 2008



Q&A

