

**TRANSCRIPT: General Carter Ham Testifies
Before Senate Armed Services Committee
on Nomination as Commander, U.S. Africa Command**

U.S. AFRICOM Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, Nov 18, 2010 — General Carter Ham was nominated by President Barack Obama to be the second commander of U.S. Africa Command. As part of that confirmation process Ham testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on November 18, 2010, alongside of Air Force General Claude Kehler, who has been nominated as the next commander of U.S. Strategic Command.

Under the U.S. Constitution, nominations by the President must be approved by the Senate, and these public testimonies are a critical aspect of that process.

Senate committee members queried Ham on a range of topics related to Africa, as well as on the comprehensive review of the DoD "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy,, which should be presented to the Congress by December 1. Ham's current duties include co-chairing the working group writing the review.

Senators' asked Ham about relationships between Al Shabab and al Qaeda and continued to touch on extremist threat in Africa throughout their questioning. Other topics included Uganda's Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), activities in Somalia and Western Sahara. At one point, Ham was questioned about whether AFRICOM had enough resources and the correct set of skills to deal with the diversity of the African continent.

The physical location of the headquarters was raised several times during the hearing. Ham said had been asked by Defense Secretary Robert Gates to assess the most suitable long-term location for U.S. Africa Command's headquarters offices, currently in Germany. Several Senators offered their states as long-term locations.

Below is a full transcript of this testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

HEARING OF THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE SUBJECT: NOMINATIONS OF AIR FORCE GENERAL CLAUDE KEHLER FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER OF THE U.S. STRATEGIC COMMAND; AND GENERAL CARTER HAM FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER OF THE U.S. AFRICA COMMAND CHAIRED BY: SENATOR CARL LEVIN (D-MI) WITNESSES: THE NOMINEES TESTIFY LOCATION: 216 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D.C. TIME: 9:30 A.M. EST DATE: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2010

SEN. LEVIN: (Sounds gavel.) Good morning, everybody. The committee meets this morning to consider the nominations of General Robert Kehler, United States Air Force, to be commander of the United States Strategic Command and General Carter Ham, United States Army, to be commander of the United States Africa Command.

We give both of you a warm welcome, and we also have a warm welcome for two new colleagues, I believe, who are with us this morning. Senator Coons is with us this morning of Delaware. A warm welcome to you, Senator. Senator Manchin is not here, but I expect that he will be here.

Senator Burr is still with us. So we're not -- (laughter.)

General Kehler and General Ham, each of you have long and distinguished careers in the United States military, and it's a real pleasure to have both of you with us today.

As you and we all know, without the strong and continuing support of your families, that your military careers would not be possible. So we thank each member of your families for the

sacrifices that they have made and will continue to make when you assume the commands for which you have been nominated.

General Kehler, you're well suited to be commander of the United States Strategic Command. You've spent your entire career in space and nuclear assignments, and that includes two and a half years as the deputy commander of the Strategic Command. As you well know, Strategic Command is a challenging command with a global reach and a large number of challenging mission areas including the following.

Ensuring the United States has access to and freedom of action in space and cyber space; maintaining a reliable nuclear deterrent and being prepared to respond if deterrence fails; providing targeting and other support to U.S. joint force commanders; synchronizing global missile-defense plans and operations; coordinating regional efforts to combat weapons of mass destruction; planning, integrating and coordinating intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, ISR, assets in support of strategic and global operations; and guiding the implementation of the new START treaty when it's ratified.

On the subject of the new START treaty, I would note that there have been multiple hearings and briefings on the new treaty. Hundreds of questions for the record have been answered. The robust budget request for the nuclear weapons complex has been submitted to Congress.

It's now been a year since the United States has gone without a replacement for the expired START treaty and, thus, no ability to implement the new and important inspection and verification regimes of the new START treaty, and we will be asking General Kehler for his views on that new treaty.

Much of the technical superiority of U.S. military forces is reliant on space systems. While these systems provide significant advantages, they also present the potential for significant vulnerability.

Strategic Command helps to ensure that the global access to these important systems is maintained and sustained. One of the newest and most challenging areas of responsibility for the Strategic Command is the area of cyber operations, protecting and defending Defense Department networks and cyber assets and, if directed, engaging in offensive cyber operations.

Strategic Command must also plan and be prepared, if called upon, to assist other government agencies with the defense of their networks. There are many issues that remain unresolved in this area in which you will be involved, General, and we look forward to your views on these issues, including the questions of authorities, responsibility and rule of engagement.

General Ham, you've had a distinguished career in the Army, and we thank you for your willingness to serve our country over the last three and a half decades. If confirmed, you will be only the second commander of the U.S. Africa Command, AFRICOM, and you will be forced to balance the requirements of continuing to stand up this nascent geographic combatant command as well as play a supporting role in advancing U.S. policy objectives on the continent of Africa.

General Ham, the challenges facing AFRICOM are staggering: Terrorism and violent extremists in Somalia and West Africa; conflicts between state and non-state actors that rage across borders; fragile governments that lack the capacity to project their presence beyond the bounds of their capitals; illicit arms smuggling routes; nations where peacekeeping or peace-enforcing forces are the best and, sometimes, the only hope for security and stability. So we look forward to hearing your views on these and other matters.

At present, one of the most pressing concerns in the view of members of this committee is the evolving threat posed by certain al Qaeda and al Shabaab elements in Somalia, including the stated desire of these elements to attack the United States.

In addition to Somalia, there are a number of other areas where the committee will be eager to

learn of your views, including the January 2011 referendum in Sudan; the threat posed by al Qaeda in an organization known as al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb or AQIM; ongoing atrocities being conducted by the Lord's Resistance Army and potential areas for expanded military-to-military relations with a number of key countries in Africa.

One area where you will be working together is in combating the regional spread of weapons of mass destruction. You'll be working together on those -- on that issue. And with the support of this committee, the cooperative threat reduction or CTR program now has the authority to make a more global approach to combating weapons of mass destruction including identifying issues and actions in Africa.

Strategic Command's responsibility for coordinating both regional and global approaches to combating WMD and the CTR program's new authorities should result in a more comprehensive, coordinated approach to dealing with these challenges.

Senator McCain.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ): Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And let me thank our distinguished witnesses for joining us this morning and for their service to our nation.

I'd also like to join the chairman in welcoming our two new members, Senator Coons and Senator Manchin. We look forward to working with you.

I say to the witnesses, if confirmed, your respective commands will prove critical in countering a variety of strategic, asymmetric and terrorist threats to the United States.

General Kehler, the Strategic Command is responsible for ensuring freedom of access to space and cyber space and coordinating global missile-defense plans and operations. The missile threat from rogue nations like Iran and North Korea is increasing but, equally worrisome, is China's growing air and conventional missile capabilities.

According to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission 2010 report to Congress, it concludes China has the ability to strike five out of six U.S. Air Force bases in East Asia. The report also highlights China's increasingly sophisticated cyber warfare capabilities.

Earlier this year, the Chinese Internet service provider redirected global Internet traffic for at least 18 minutes, briefly hijacking what the commission report refers to as a, quote, "large volume of Internet traffic" including data from the U.S. military.

A large-scale cyber attack against Google in China was also reported, an incident Google described as a, quote, "highly sophisticated and targeted attack on its corporate infrastructure originating from China that resulted in the theft of intellectual property."

I predict that this committee and you will be spending a great deal of time on this whole issue of cyber warfare. We don't know a lot about it. We haven't really understood some of the things that our both friends and adversaries are doing, and it opens up, obviously, a whole new type of warfare that we are going to have to be much better prepared for than we are today.

As commander of U.S. STRATCOM, you will serve a critical role in countering these threats and advocating for our own nuclear missile- defense space and cyber capabilities, one of these responsibilities which the Senate has spent considerable time reviewing, the new START treaty, its references and legally binding limitations on ballistic missile defense and the modernization of both the nuclear weapons complex and the triad of nuclear delivery vehicles.

I look forward to hearing your views on the treaty's handling of missile defense, the current health of the nuclear weapons complex and the need for investing in the development and deployment of the next generation of delivery vehicles.

General Ham, I believe you were nominated for this command at a critical time not only with respect to security on the continent but with respect to possible growing threats to our homeland. In the past, I've been critical of U.S. military involvement on the Horn of Africa. Other than providing more financial support for the U.N. mission there and humanitarian support, I'm unclear of what the administration's short- or long-term plan is to achieve stability on the Horn.

But the threat from the region is our friends, our interests and even our homeland has changed significantly in the past few years. AFRICOM was born in the shadow of COCOM fighting two wars. Concerns about basing rather than the mission dominated the debate for years. And given the command's integrated interagency command structure, AFRICOM remains unique among equals, and it's why AFRICOM must be prepared and resourced to protect Americans, American interests and American security throughout its area of responsibility. As we all might remember, in 1998, al Qaeda launched attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killing 12 Americans. Al Qaeda and related groups have executed subsequent terrorist attacks in East Africa including an American suicide bomber in Somalia in October 2008. And this summer, in Uganda, al Shabaab, a Somali-Islamist insurgent group with ties to al Qaeda, conducted its first successful attack outside Somali territory killing 76 people including one American.

While al Shabaab has focused primarily on its neighbors, then director of national intelligence, Dennis Blair, at a Senate Select Committee hearing on intelligence hearing testified, and I quote, "We judge most al Shabaab and East Africa-based al Qaeda members will remain focused on regional objectives in the near term. Nevertheless, East Africa-based al Qaeda leaders or al Shabaab may elect to redirect to the homeland some of the westerners including North Americans now training and fighting in Somalia."

On August 5, more than a dozen Somali-Americans, permanent residents, were arrested. Attorney General Eric Holder announced that 14 people are being charged with providing financial support to al Shabaab. I trust that AFRICOM will continue to deliver its unique brand of interagency theater-security cooperation and building partner in this capacity.

However, it's imperative that AFRICOM also evolve and acquire the necessary capabilities to identify, deter and counter all relevant threats to our nation's security. I look forward to our witnesses' testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Senator Manchin, welcome.

There's a series of standard questions that we ask all of our nominees that I'll now ask, and you'll each just give us your responses together.

First, have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

GEN. KEHLER: I have.

GEN. HAM: I have.

SEN. LEVIN: Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power?

GEN. KEHLER: I do.

GEN. HAM: I do.

SEN. LEVIN: Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

GEN. KEHLER: I have not.

GEN. HAM: I have not.

SEN. LEVIN: Will you ensure that your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications including questions for the record in hearings?

GEN. KEHLER: I will.

GEN. HAM: I will.

SEN. LEVIN: Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to congressional requests?

GEN. KEHLER: I will.

GEN. HAM: I will.

SEN. LEVIN: Will those witnesses be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

GEN. KEHLER: They will.

GEN. HAM: They will.

SEN. LEVIN: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify upon request before this committee?

GEN. KEHLER: I do.

GEN. HAM: I do.

SEN. LEVIN: Finally, do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronics forms and communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good-faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

GEN. KEHLER: I do.

GEN. HAM: I do.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, General Kehler, General Ham.

We're going to now turn to you for your opening remarks. And please feel free to introduce any members of your family or others who may be with you today. Thank you. General Kehler, why don't you start?

GEN. KEHLER: Mr. Chairman, thank you, sir.

Before I begin, I would like to introduce my wife, Marjorie, who is here. This is the first time she's attended a hearing in the Senate. This is an exciting time for the Kehler family.

Unfortunately our two sons are grown, they couldn't be here with us today.

But I can tell you that if I may just put a plug in for military spouses, the phenomenal things that they do for our airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Marge certainly represents that. I'm very proud of her and very grateful for the things that she does. Especially, she has set aside an accounting profession to be part of a team to take care of our troops and their families. And I'm especially proud because she and others like her have been doing an awful lot to work in

support of our wounded warriors.

SEN. LEVIN: Well, we thank her for that and for all the things that she does for us and for you. We could use maybe some of your accounting talents in the Pentagon. Have you thought about -- (laughter) -- joining forces with your husband?

You're very, very welcome indeed, Ms. Kehler. General?

GEN. KEHLER: Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to come before you today. It's my sincere honor to appear as the nominee to lead U.S. Strategic Command. I thank the president and the secretary of Defense for nominating me for this important duty. I also thank the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for expressing his confidence in my ability to serve as a combatant commander.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to address the strategic challenges that face our nation. They are complex, unremitting and compelling, and U.S. Strategic Command plays a key role in each. Previous nuclear threats continue, while new ones -- state and non-state -- are emerging. New and complex transitional linkages provide opportunities for terrorism and other security concerns.

Space is no longer the sole purview of two superpowers and it is certainly not a sanctuary. Cyberthreats present national security problems that we are only beginning to understand, and organizing for this challenge is still in its beginning stages. International security relationships need to be forged with rapidly growing new regional powers.

All of these developments will require more intensive and extensive cooperation across many elements of our government and the governments of our friends and allies, and our ability to shape events to our interest will depend, as always, on the skill and dedication of the great men and women who serve our nation.

Leading Strategic Command is an awesome responsibility. If confirmed, I pledge to you that the strategic challenges facing our nation will command all the energy and commitment that I can muster. I'm very fortunate in that I have been the beneficiary of assignments and mentoring and operational experiences and command opportunities that align with Strategic Command's mission set and that I believe have prepared me for this challenge.

And if confirmed, I will also be fortunate and deeply humbled in following the path blazed by some of our truly great national leaders. I want to particularly mention the most recent one, General Kevin Chilton. His leadership has been deeply important in these past critical years to shaping our national posture, and Marge and I are grateful to count Chilly and his wife Kathy as our dear friends, and we certainly wish them the best as they proceed into retired life.

And of course, as always, if confirmed I will look forward to working with and caring for the world's best soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen, civilians and their families. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished committee members, it's a privilege to be here before you today and I look forward to your questions.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, General Kehler. General Ham.

GEN. HAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My family is not here but I'm hoping they're watching by Webcast. My wife Christie is a lifelong educator, having taught and served as a principal in numerous schools as we moved during our Army service. Our daughter Jennifer was born in Vicenza, Italy, and she and her husband, Army Captain Kyle Burns (sp), a Silver Star and Purple Heart recipient for actions in Afghanistan, live near Ft. Benning, Georgia. Jennifer and Kyle are parents to three-and-a-half month-old Jackson, our first grandchild.

Our son Jonathan graduated -- was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, graduated from the University of Georgia. He and his wife Sarah live and work in northern Virginia and they're expecting a baby

girl this spring. I'm certainly proud of all of them, and draw my strength from them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to mention them.

Mr. Chairman and Senator McCain and members of the committee, when I enlisted in the Army as a private in 1973, never in my wildest imagination did I envision appearing before the Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate to be considered as a combatant commander.

The day that Secretary Gates told me that he intended to recommend to the president that I be nominated to be the next commander of U.S. Africa Command, I was struck by two contradictory feelings. First, I was exhilarated to have the possibility to serve in a command which I believe is of great importance and for which there is such great opportunity.

But secondly, I felt a tremendous sense of humility, the humility and sense of honor that comes from being asked to continue to serve alongside the men and women of our armed forces as they and their families unselfishly serve our nation. I also recognize that if confirmed, I have big shoes to fill. I have been an admirer of General Kip Ward and Mrs. Joyce Ward for a long time and I'm proud to be their friend. In my opinion we owe General and Mrs. Ward our deepest thanks and appreciation.

Africa is important to U.S. interests. These interests include concerns over violent extremist activities, piracy, illicit trafficking, Africa's many humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and more general challenges such as the effect of HIV/AIDS. U.S. Africa Command, as the military component of a U.S. whole-of-government approach, has a role in addressing each of these issues. The key remains that Africa's future is up to Africans.

If confirmed, I look forward to building upon the command's efforts, to continue expanding the unique inter-agency composition of the headquarters, and to enhancing partnerships with African nations. I acknowledge that if confirmed I have a lot to learn about Africa and about U.S. Africa Command.

I pledge to you, Mr. Chairman, to Senator McCain, and to the members of the committee the same pledge that I gave to Secretary Gates. I will do my best each and every day to uphold the trust and confidence you place in me, to accomplish the many and varied important missions of the command, and to the very best of my ability provide for the well-being of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, civilians and families entrusted to my care. And if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to ensure United States Africa Command is correctly focused on accomplishing its role in support of U.S. policy objectives in Africa. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you so much, General Ham. Let's try a first round of seven minutes. We have a good turnout here today.

General Kehler, the committee has a provision in our 2011 defense authorization bill that would require the secretary of Defense to report to Congress by March 1st, 2011, on cyber warfare policy. The committee conducted an extensive examination of the department's proposal to establish U.S. Cyber Command as a sub-unified command under U.S. Strategic Command.

Our examination revealed that there are substantial and worrisome gaps in the policy and guidelines needed to govern U.S. military operations in cyberspace. Senior Department of Defense officials testified to this fact and assured the committee that the secretary of Defense understands the situation well and intends to have answers to many if not all of the major policy questions by the end of this calendar year.

Now these are just a few of the unresolved issues. First, rules of engagement and authorities for various command echelons, including Cyber Command itself. Second, how to limit escalation. Third, what constitutes a use of force in an act of war in cyberspace, including for compliance with the War Powers Act. And fourth, the lack of a deterrence doctrine, what deters cyber attacks.

Now, my question is kind of a status and process question. If you know the answer, what is the status of the secretary's cyber policy review, and is the department on track to fulfill the year-end commitment to complete the review that was given to the committee during the confirmation process for General Alexander?

GEN. KEHLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, let me say I recognize that in the whole area of cyberspace I have much to learn. If I am confirmed, this is one of the areas that is going to command a great deal of my time and energy early on. My perspective today is, as a service component to Strategic Command we have been working to align our cyberspace activities under the new construction of Strategic Command, U.S. Cyber Command and then the service components that fit that. So there's much for me to learn here if I am confirmed, and I would be delighted to dig into this further.

My understanding -- you have defined, I think, the issues very well.

And in my mind, this is about authority's responsibilities, oversight, doctrine, all of the pieces that need to be put in place to drive forward and where we need to be postured in cyberspace. That work is under way. I think you and the committee are aware that the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense have just signed a memorandum outlining roles and responsibilities and other steps that will be taken to partner together. Those are all positive steps but there's much more to do.

My understanding is that there is -- that the work on the report that you're referring to is continuing. In my preparation for the confirmation hearing, I was told that the expectation is that they will be delivering that on time.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you. Last year the secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs with the support from the combatant commanders unanimously recommended the so-called phased adaptive approach to missile defense in Europe and the president approved their recommendation. This year, the administration produced the ballistic missile defense review report that set forth U.S. strategy, policy and plans for missile defense. My question is, do you support the administration's missile defense policies and priorities, including the phased adaptive approach to missile defense in Europe?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir, I do support those policies and I do support the phased adaptive approach.

SEN. LEVIN: General Kehler, Secretary Defense Gates, Admiral Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Chilton, current commander strategic command and Lieutenant General O'Reilly, the director of the missile defense agency have all testified that the new START treaty does not limit or constrain our missile defense plans or programs. Do you agree?

GEN. KEHLER: Mr. Chairman, that's my understanding as well. Yes, I do.

SEN. LEVIN: Do you agree -- let me ask you a couple questions about the new START treaty specifically. Does the new START treaty limit our non-nuclear long range weapons?

GEN. KEHLER: Mr. Chairman, the new START treaty as I understand it does not limit. It does, however, under certain circumstances cause them to be counted under the limits of the new START treaty.

SEN. LEVIN: Does the new START treaty constrain our development and deployment of missile defense capabilities?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, in my opinion it does not. There's one relationship in the treaty to put a finer point on it about not being able to deploy missile defense interceptors in existing ballistic missile silos except for the five that we have already done so at Vandenberg Air Force Base. However, it

is not in our current plans as I understand them to do that.

SEN. LEVIN: Is the administration committed to replacing and modernizing our aging nuclear weapons laboratory and industrial infrastructure?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, my understanding is that they are. The '11 budget is on the Hill and has sustainment and modernization funds in it. I have not seen the '12 budget and can't comment on the '12 budget.

SEN. LEVIN: All right. Thank you.

General Ham, you and Jeh Johnson, the DOD general counselor, are serving as co-chairman of the Department of Defense working group tasked by the secretary of Defense to conduct a comprehensive review of the issues associated with implementing a repeal of the law that's commonly referred to as "don't ask, don't tell". Your report is due to the secretary of Defense no later than the 1st of December, I believe. When we met yesterday, you informed me that you are not authorized to discuss the content of the draft report before that time, and this committee will hold a hearing on the report shortly after the secretary provides it to Congress. We're urging that that be done, by the way, prior to December 1st if possible. And you will be available at that time to discuss the contents of the report.

My question is just on the timing issue, then, because I won't ask you about your views on the substance or what the substance is. Do you anticipate that the working group's report will be ready to be presented to the secretary of Defense before December 1st?

GEN. HAM: Mr. Chairman, I think it will take us until the 1st of December. The key factor remaining for us in the review group is to receive the review and comment by the service chiefs and service secretaries, which is ongoing. We anticipate their comments soon. Mr. Johnson and I will review those comments, make final adjustments to the report which is currently in draft form, and then deliver to Secretary Gates on 1 December.

SEN. LEVIN: Would you make every effort to deliver prior to December 1st if possible?

GEN. HAM: Yes, sir, in consultation with the secretary's office.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you. Senator McCain.

SEN. MCCAIN: General Ham, since the issue has been brought up, the survey went out to 400,000 military personnel, is that correct?

GEN. HAM: That's correct, Senator.

SEN. MCCAIN: And how many, what percent responded?

GEN. HAM: Senator McCain, we received a little over 115,000 responses.

SEN. MCCAIN: Like 25 percent?

GEN. HAM: A little more, about 28, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: Excuse me, 28 percent.

And isn't it true that the survey said in a preamble, said that DOD is considering changes to the "don't ask, don't tell" policy that, quote, "would allow gay and lesbian service members to serve in the military without risk of separation because of their sexual orientation." Is that true?

GEN. HAM: Yes, sir, it is.

SEN. MCCAIN: Question's also proceeded by a presumptive declaration that if "don't ask, don't tell" is repealed, quote, "the services will maintain their high standards of conduct," quote. Is that true too? Is that also true?

GEN. HAM: Sir, it is.

SEN. MCCAIN: Thank you.

General Ham, what do you understand be the relationship between al Qaeda senior leadership and Al-Shabab?

GEN. HAM: Senator, I know that from open source reporting that Al-Shabab has claimed that there is a relationship between --

SEN. MCCAIN: What's your view of the relationship?

GEN. HAM: Sir, their stating that they believe that they have a relationship certainly conveys to me that that's the type of operations that they want to engage in. I'm not privy to the detailed information intelligence yet that would verify or refute that allegation. But they are certainly a dangerous and disruptive organization.

SEN. MCCAIN: Well I'm sorry you couldn't answer the question. I was asking your view as to what the relationship was. But what is the threat to the U.S. from Al-Shabab particularly given recent arrests of U.S. citizens apparently planning to travel to Somalia to join Al-Shabab?

GEN. HAM: Senator, my understanding is that -- is that Al-Shabab is, while primarily focused on internal matters in Somalia, their recent activities outside of the country convey to me a very disturbing interest in conducting more widespread terrorist activities which certainly are of concern to the United States. And if confirmed, it'd be a very high priority for me to understand better how we might counter that threat.

SEN. MCCAIN: Well again, it's evidenced that Americans are joining Al-Shabab, right?

GEN. HAM: Sir, my understanding is that in this particular case, that's true.

SEN. MCCAIN: Whew.

General Kehler, notwithstanding Russia's threat to withdraw from the treaty, are you committed to advocating for the funding, development and deployment of all elements of the phased adaptive approach for missile defense in Europe as well as implementing the strategy as portrayed in the Ballistic Missile Defense Review?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir, I am.

SEN. MCCAIN: Do you believe that the Russian unilateral statement that the treaty is, quote, "effective and viable only in conditions where there is no qualitative or quantitative buildup in the missile defense system capabilities of the United States of America"? Have you heard -- you know that statement was part of the signing statement, time of ratification, right? I mean, agreement. Have the Russians made any public statement refuting that signing statement they made?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I don't know if they have or not. I'm not --

SEN. MCCAIN: To your knowledge have --

GEN. KEHLER: To my knowledge, they have not.

SEN. MCCAIN: And given your involvement, you might know probably if they did?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir -- yes, sir, although I will tell you that at this point in my current seat, I may not have seen everything, but I've not seen anything. I guess I'm not trying to be evasive, but I've not seen anything.

SEN. MCCAIN: Does it concern you that they would make a signing statement at the time that the agreement was signed that basically said that if there was any change, qualitative or quantitative build-up in the missile defense system capabilities of the United States of America, that it would -- that the treaty would not be viable, in their words?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, all I can answer with is that our position, as I understand it, is that those two are not related.

SEN. MCCAIN: But the Russians have made no statement that it is unrelated. It's just our position, right?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: A recent press reports state that North Korea's weaponry is showing design characteristics associated with the Shabab 3, Iran's most advanced missile. Are you concerned that apparently the two countries, Iran and North Korea, are collaborating to produce improvements in both arsenals?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I'm most definitely concerned.

SEN. MCCAIN: And we have seen -- I mean, in an unclassified manner, published reports have been that apparently they're working in coordination together to improve both arsenals. Is that your view as well?

GEN. KEHLER: It is. The proliferation of missile technology, I think, especially in those areas like North Korea and Iran is especially disturbing. My view, the number-one threat that we are facing these days is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the regional actors that pose a threat.

SEN. MCCAIN: Do you agree with DOD's assessment that with sufficient foreign assistance, quote, "Iran could probably develop and test an inter-continental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States by the year 2015"?

GEN. KEHLER: I agree with the DOD assessment, yes, sir. I'm wasn't aware that it was 2015. I have read that, but I do agree with the DOD assessment on this. Yes, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: So again I return to my previous statement. It seems to me that it's deeply concerning that both countries have areas of expertise on both nuclear capability as well as missile technology, and transfers between the two countries is deeply concerning

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir. I'd agree with that.

SEN. MCCAIN: And are you concerned about Mr. Ahmadinejad's new relationship with Mr. Chavez down in Venezuela?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir.

SEN. MCCAIN: How serious do you think that relationship is?

GEN. KEHLER: Again, from my current perspective I'm not much more aware of that relationship than what we've just been discussing here in the open forum. This is one of those areas that if confirmed I'm going to have to push into to get a better feel for those specific points. STRATCOM does have some responsibility here, working with the regional combatant commanders to address these kinds of threats that can go outside the regional boundaries.

SEN. MCCAIN: Well, thank you, General. I just want to repeat again what I said in my opening comments. This whole cyber-war issue is one that we've been working with Senator Lieberman and the Homeland Security Committee and the Intelligence Committee and it covers a number of jurisdictions here in the Congress, but I would argue that it is the greatest threat of which we have the least knowledge and expertise than just about any threat that we face. Would you view that as an overstatement?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I wouldn't view that as an overstatement. I do think it's a significant area of concern. Certainly again in STRATCOM's portfolio, if I'm confirmed, this is one of those areas that demands, I think, the same sense of urgency that has been put on it here over the last year or so, and my pledge will be to dig right into this and be as helpful as I can.

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

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, Senator McCain, and as Senator McCain points out, the relationship of our committees that have jurisdiction over parts of that issue is extremely important. And our working together, which is under way with Senator Lieberman and his ranking member, Senator Collins, and the intelligence committee is, if not as important, very important, just the way interagency working together is very significant and very important, as Senator McCain points out.

Senator Lieberman.

SEN. JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN (I-CT): Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Let me just pick up from your comments and Senator McCain's about how real the threat of cyber attack is and how much I think that members of Congress and the general public are not aware of it. Perhaps even some are skeptical of how serious it is.

Yesterday on the Homeland Security Committee we held a hearing on the so-called Stuxnet worm, which was discovered -- really this is another world but the ability -- I mean, just to show how complicated it is, as the experts said to us yesterday, we don't know where this originated. We don't know what its target was, but we know it's out there and it has the capacity -- it's now infected 60,000 different computer systems in the world, including some in the U.S.

It has the capacity essentially on command to disrupt the digital systems, the computer systems that control, for instance, electric power plants. And when you think about the havoc that could be unleashed in a country like ours, it's profoundly unsettling. So I appreciate -- a very significant step forward in the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, a pretty clear division of responsibility here.

DOD has responsibility for, obviously, Defense websites and our offensive capacity and defensive capacity; Department of Homeland Security for the civilian infrastructure and the federal government non-Defense websites. But DOD and of course NSA have such extraordinary capabilities that they can now inform what DHS does. I appreciate that, our committees are going to continue to work together.

I was actually very proud yesterday that all the witnesses agreed that it was a group at the Department of Homeland Security, more than anybody in the private sector or anywhere else, that actually had the comprehensive capability to unravel the Stuxnet puzzle, if you will. But we need your help and I appreciate your commitment to that, General. I look forward to working with you on both committees.

Thank you both for your service to our country. You're both just extraordinarily prepared for this next assignment that the country has asked of you. General Ham, I just wanted to ask a quick question about the working group on "don't ask, don't tell," not appropriate to ask -- first, I appreciate that you've told us this morning that the report will definitely be out by December 1st and if possible, working with the secretary, earlier if you complete the work.

I wanted to ask you just for informational purposes, not about the contents, but in a sense about the table of contents. There's been a lot of focus on the leaks about the survey done of military personnel. But am I right that that's just one part of what you're going to do? And I wonder if just in summary you could describe what else you and Mr. Johnson tend to cover in the report.

GEN. HAM: Senator, I would. Essentially in those terms of reference which Secretary Gates issued to Mr. Johnson and myself, gave us two tasks. The first was to assess the impacts upon effectiveness, readiness, unit cohesion, recruiting and retention should repeal occur.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Right.

GEN. HAM: And then the second part of our charge was understanding those impacts, develop a plan for implementation so that if the law is repealed and the policy changes, the department is prepared for that. We would call that in military parlance contingency planning. The directive to assess the impacts contained a specific issue or statement from Secretary Gates to conduct a systematic engagement of the force to include families.

We did this in a number of ways. The survey of the service members, active, Guard and Reserve, was one. We also had a survey for family members. In addition to those two statistically sound and analytically rigorous assessments, we conducted a number of engagements across the force in groups both large and small to get a sense of what were the topics of interest to the force and to their families.

We conducted small demographically focused focus groups. For example, a group of perhaps nine to 12 junior enlisted Marines from the combat arms and other similarly organized groups. We established what we call an online inbox, an opportunity for members of the military and their families to provide anonymously their comments to us with regard to their thoughts about "don't ask, don't tell."

The most difficult challenge we had, probably, at least in my opinion, was how do we get the sense from those who are gay men and lesbians that are serving in the force today without triggering the requirements of the law that would cause them to separate?

And so we established what we called a confidential communication mechanism through a third-party, non-DOD entity to try to get a better assessment of that.

All in all, Senator, we believe this is probably, as far as I could tell, the most comprehensive assessment of a personnel policy matter that the Department of Defense has conducted.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Thanks for that. Obviously, I agree it's very comprehensive, and it should inform the decision that Congress makes in voting on the question and also, obviously, if it's repealed, facilitate the transition that the Defense Department itself will make.

So I thank you for that.

I want to ask you one question about the Africa Command. It seems to me that -- and I agree with you, of course, in highlighting the threat posed by al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Al-Shabab, that you're highlighting the two highest counterterrorism priorities in Africa. It also reminds us that, really, the war against Islamist terrorism is a world war. We're, obviously, involved intensively on the ground in Afghanistan now, scaling down in Iraq, but this enemy is appearing all over the world.

I view these two terrorist groups in Africa and the countries in which they're located as tests of whether we can essentially stop them or contain them before they spread and they become something like Afghanistan, if you will. And I note in your response to advance questions that you've said that the AFRICOM -- the Africa Command -- faces significant resourcing challenges in almost every field.

I hope, upon your confirmation, that you'll conduct a top-to- bottom assessment of your command's requirements for personnel, ISR, security assistance, funding and other resources and convey them directly, obviously, both up the chain of command, but when you appear before the committee, to this committee.

Can we count on you to do that?

GEN. HAM: Yes, sir.

SEN. LIEBERMAN: Thank you. That's all the questions I have this morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe?

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

Well, let me get the unpleasanties out of the way first. As I read this -- and there are many things about the START treaty that I don't like, but a major concern is one that was brought up by Senator McCain.

And when I read something like this, the unilateral statement -- this is the wording they use -- they talked about the extraordinary events would cause them to release themselves. Consequently, the extraordinary events referred to in Article 14 of the treaty also include a build-up in the missile-defense system capabilities of the United States of America such that it would give rise to a threat to the strategic nuclear -- and then that was further simplified, I think, by the Russians when they said the treaty can operate and be viable only if the United States of America refrains from developing its missile-defense capabilities quantitatively and qualitatively.

I guess why question is: What's ambiguous about that?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I'm not exactly sure what you just asked me.

SEN. INHOFE: Well, I'm asking you -- I mean, I read that, and it says that they'd bail out if we enhance our systems.

GEN. KEHLER: Oh, I see. Well, I don't -- I don't -- it doesn't sound like the Russian position is ambiguous. But, again, as I understand it, our position is not that one. Our position is that these are not related. Again, as I understand it, the regional threat drives our missile-defense planning. The strategic balance between the United States and Russia is driven by the strategic forces --

SEN. INHOFE: Well --

GEN. KEHLER: -- that are covered by the treaty.

SEN. INHOFE: Well, we are going to have to be enhancing our missile-defense system. I think most people here -- they may not say it that way, but we are going to. I know a lot of us were very much concerned when the ground-based capability was taken out of Poland, and it was just pointed out by Senator McCain that Iran would have this capability with a delivery system by 2015. That's not even classified. That's a position that everyone agrees with.

Now, I guess I'd just ask you one question. Do you think, in the absence of that capability, that we are not more in danger -- and I'm talking about in Western Europe and eastern United States -- by the removal of that system in Poland? Quick answer.

GEN. KEHLER: As I understand it, I don't think we are endangered provided that we go ahead

with the phased adaptive approach.

SEN. INHOFE: All right.

General Ham, I enjoyed our long, long, long visit that we had on the subject that's been discussed here. I can only tell you that the soldiers in the field, the ones you talk to, don't feel that their input was heard during this inquiry that was announced that was supposed to be taking place until December 1st.

It was the impression, at least what I hear from them in the field, that they're saying, all right, we're going to adopt this position. Now, how do we best implement this thing? So I only want you to know that we'll be talking about this in some length in the future.

But I am interested in what you're going to be doing, as I told you, in some of the problems in Africa that I'm very personally interested in. General Wald handled this thing during the transition. Then General Ward came along and has done an incredible job, I think, with limited resources, with inadequate resources at least in my impression.

We've had a problem -- a lot of little problems in Africa that people don't know about. Of course, they're familiar with what's happening in Zimbabwe. They're familiar with Somalia, the problems between Eritrea and Ethiopia. One of the biggest things that I've been concerned with and personally involved in trying to do something about is the LRA, Lord's Resistance Army.

Starting in Northern Uganda, it's also spread through Rwanda, eastern Congo, and it wasn't until a few weeks ago that we passed -- and it was signed by the president -- a policy of this country to take out Joseph Kony in the LRA.

I'd like to get your opinion as to the -- for those members of the committee who might be new, let me just say that Joseph Kony started about 30 years ago in this -- some people call it the child soldiers, little kids, 13, 14 years old. They train them to be soldiers, and the first thing they have to do is go back to their villages and murder their parents and all this. If they don't do it, they cut their lips off.

This is really something that nobody likes to talk about and a lot of people don't know about. What's your level of concern and your interest in implementing the direction that we gave in the law that we passed a few months ago concerning the LRA? GEN. HAM: Senator, I agree with you. I need to learn more about the Lord's Resistance Army, but what I do know from my previous assignment as the director for operations on the joint staff and what I've read in open source, it is a horrific situation. And as we discussed yesterday, Senator, I look to learn more about that personally and find ways that, if confirmed, that Africa Command can contribute to the solution to that problem.

I am aware that Africa Command has been engaged in developing the capability of the Ugandan forces, and I think that's a step in the right direction. And if confirmed, Senator, I'll look at that issue much more closely to see what the command might be able to do.

SEN. INHOFE: Well, I would say that President Museveni in Uganda and President Kagame in Rwanda and Joe Kabila, all three now agree that it's kind of a joint problem because of the fact that this movement is moving around between these countries and Central Africa, too, I guess, Central African Republic.

So, anyway, that's going to be something that I would like to be the clearing point for any activity that you have and be updated on a regular basis, because I would like to have it during your command -- and I think you're going to be doing a great job in that command -- that we will have this problem eradicated by that time.

Now, there are a lot of other -- people know about Somalia. People know about some things that you get -- the Sudan -- a lot of publicity. But a lot of things are happening that they're not aware

of.

I'm quite upset with the Morocco attack on the Western Sahara that took place. I'm going to try to do something on the floor with the resolution on this thing, the horrible thing that took place there and these people who've been out in the wilderness for some 30 years now.

Are you interested in trying to come up with a solution that James Baker was not able to do, I have not been able to do, but working with us to try to correct the problem that is out there in the Western Sahara?

GEN. HAM: Senator, my understanding is that the issues in Western Sahara and Morocco are not primarily military, but if confirmed, I certainly want to explore what the role of U.S. Africa Command might be, again, in support of a U.S. whole-of-government approach to that matter.

SEN. INHOFE: Well, and I appreciate that. I would think, though, that it becomes military when armed forces are invading there, although I understand what you're saying.

My time's up, and it went too fast. So you and I talked at some length, and I just want to make sure that you are on record on some of the things that you want to get done. One last question, if I could, Mr. Chairman. That is, we made a decision -- a good decision -- on this committee several years ago -- in fact, it was right after 9/11 -- that we would assist the Africans in building five African commands geographically located around -- ECOWAS is successful. It's in West Africa.

But the rest has kind of been lingering. People are not really -- the Africans are not as aware as how we're trying to help them take care of their own needs. And so what I'd like to do is have you look at that, and I'm sure that General Ward would agree that we haven't done enough with that, and before the terrorist start coming down in greater numbers through Djibouti and through the Horn of Africa, to try to have this in place so that we won't be sending our troops over, they'll be able to take care of their own problems. Would you consider that to be a priority?

SEN. HAM: Senator, I would and I believe regional approaches are a good way ahead in Africa.

SEN. INHOFE: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Ben Nelson.

SEN. BEN NELSON (D-NE): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, General Kehler and General Ham, for your service and for your willingness to extend your service in these new positions. And a special thank-you to your families for supporting you in this effort.

General Kehler, the current commander of STRATCOM, General Kevin Chilton recently said -- has been very vocal about the need for a new strategic command headquarters building at Offutt. And I've been extremely pleased with the progress that we've made so far in addressing this vital need. The existing facility's failings have put STRATCOM's mission and its personnel at some risk. I know you have previous duty as the vice commander of STRATCOM and that you would have views on the need and importance of the new STRATCOM headquarters facility.

To date, the design nears 60 percent completion and construction is planned to break ground in late 2011. The progress is a strong indication of the Department's commitment to STRATCOM's mission.

What is your view on the need for new headquarters at STRATCOM to replace the existing facility?

GEN. KEHLER: Senator, I can base my view on this from the time that I was the deputy commander there, and we went through a series of electrical fires and electrical outages and other problems that reflect I think the sort of the state of health of a building that was built in the 1960s. And clearly something needs to be done about all of that. The demands of the mission there at STRATCOM have placed some stresses on that facility. That whole complex -- as you know, there's an underground complex as well that that was never designed to address. And so if I'm confirmed, certainly I'll make sure that I am looking into that and looking after an appropriate way forward to make sure that the people there have what they need to get the job done.

SEN. NELSON: Appreciate that.

One of the things that I've always tried to look for back here, and as a governor as well, stovepipes within government, whether it's in the military or whether it's in civilian government, which establishes duplicate services, duplication of efforts over mission effectiveness or the expenditure of taxpayers' money. General Chilton has previously highlighted the importance of sharing information among the agencies including Homeland Security, the intelligence community, Department of Defense in addressing the security risks, particularly in cyberspace.

Just yesterday, Secretary Gates said the future cyber threat was, quote-unquote, "huge" and that's no understatement. My concern is that without strong coordination, agencies will continue to build their own protective walls around their own unique situation. And what is your view of the role of STRATCOM and its subunified command CYBERCOM, what is the role that it should play in coordinating this national defense against a growing cyber threat, both to our military and to our civilian agencies?

GEN. KEHLER: Senator, I think that Strategic Command sits in a very unique position to have a very strong influence on the way the Department of Defense proceeds and also on these other relationships that you talked about. I think that as we look at STRATCOM's role to integrate, STRATCOM's role to advocate, STRATCOM's role to oversee some of the activities that go on in the subunified and the other activities, STRATCOM's role to engage with the other combatant commanders to make sure that cyberspace is being addressed across the military forces -- and then of course STRATCOM's ability to look up into the policy world, where I think there's a role for the commander of Strategic Command to play there as well.

So I think there's a big role there for Strategic Command to play in all of this and most of that is handed to them by the president and the unified command plan.

SEN. NELSON: If we partner with all the private entities, whether it's Google or any other similar company that has significant interest and considerable experience in what we would call cyber, in developing that partnership, could that also, let's say, enhance our national defense? In other words, can we learn something from the private sector as well as having the private sector learn something from us?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, my experience to date is that in many cases we're learning more from the private sector than they are learning from us. Some of the latest technologies of course, techniques and approaches are there. I think again you're defining the big challenge of cyberspace. It is the ultimate partnership activity and that is something that we need to be working on. And again, I think Secretary Gates' comments yesterday about the DHS/DOD partnership is a real positive step here in terms of aligning responsibilities and authorities.

SEN. NELSON: Well, maybe we'll someday tear down all the stovepipes.

General Ham, AFRICOM has limited personnel to address a rather vast and diverse continent. One of the deficiencies we experienced in Afghanistan was that we lacked a cadre of soldiers that possessed the right language and cultural training. Given the diversity in Africa, are we developing the right skills, the right mix of skills in our forces to be able to engage in successful

operations recognizing the diversity in Africa?

GEN. HAM: Senator, if confirmed, I'll look at that. My sense is yes but not quickly enough. I think we start to see that the cultural understanding, the language skills emerge first in our special operating forces where they develop those attributes. As forces become available as general purpose forces become available, I think it would be highly appropriate to seek ways to further understanding of African matters in the general purposes forces. A way to do that is through the state partnership program.

SEN. NELSON: So, this will be one of your high priorities as you step into the new position to make certain that we direct enough of our resources so that we can get the kind of result that we need to get. We can't get it any other way. If we don't have the cultural and language understanding that is required, we're not going to be able to make our mission as successful as we might otherwise.

GEN. HAM: Senator, I agree and if confirmed, I know I have to do that personally and also look at that across the command.

SEN. NELSON: My time has expired.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Senator Thune.

SEN. JOHN THUNE (R-SD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and General Kehler and General Ham. Thank you so much for your great service to our country and your willingness to take on these important positions and responsibility. General Kehler, in your response to the advance questions, you state that the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command is, and I quote, "responsible for the plans and operations of U.S. forces conducting strategic deterrents," end quote, which includes the mission of deterring attacks on U.S. vital interest. As the nominee to be the combatant commander responsible for strategic deterrents and responsible for missions such as ensuring U.S. freedom of action and delivery of integrated kinetic and non-kinetic effects and support of joint operations, how important in your view is it to you that the Air Force develop a new long-range nuclear and conventional strike aircraft that's capable of penetrating any access in area denial systems and technologies?

GEN. KEHLER: Senator, I think it is critically important that we continue with both sustainment and modernization of all the legs of the triad, and I do agree that a long-range strike replacement is appropriate and would advocate for that.

SEN. THUNE: The Air Force for some time has been working on requirements to identify requirements and convince the office of the secretary of the need for a manned next-generation long-range strike platform. What do you foresee as your role in developing and advocating for that type of a system?

GEN. KEHLER: Again, if confirmed, I do think that one of the things a combatant commanders do is they establish requirements. And again, if confirmed I would be responsible, I think, for setting requirements for such a platform.

I know that the Air Force is looking -- studying some preliminary ways forward, and I would look forward to participating as a combatant commander if I'm confirmed.

SEN. THUNE: There are on the order of about 25 studies that have been done with regard to next-generation long-range strike aircraft and yet there hasn't been any significant progress made to date. And so it's a follow-up to my previous question. What can you see yourself doing differently than your predecessors when it comes to successfully advocating for this capability to

the office of the secretary?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I don't know if I -- I don't know if there's anything different that needs to be done right now. I know, again from my Air Force hat, that this is getting a lot of attention. And it's a difficult set of issues to grapple with to make sure that they have the requirements correctly stated and outlined and a way forward that matches those requirements.

So I don't know that there is one thing, if I was confirmed, that I could do that would be different. However, I would just restate that, again, if confirmed, my belief is that modernization of the -- sustainment and modernization of the entire deterrent force elements, and the sustaining stockpile that goes behind it, the command and control that supports it and the ISR that contributes to it are all important and I would advocate for all of those.

SEN. THUNE: Okay, and as well as follow on our next-generation long-range strike.

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir, that's part of that. In the meantime, there's also sustainment effort underway for the B-52s and the B-2s, and so we shouldn't ignore that.

SEN. THUNE: Another question. This has to do with the START Treaty, which I know you've answered -- responded to some questions about that already, but the new START Treaty includes a ceiling on operationally deployed nuclear warheads of 1,550 warheads and 700 strategic nuclear delivery systems. What do you foresee as the possible implications of reducing our number of delivery vehicles under the treaty?

GEN. KEHLER: If you mean to get down to the treaty limits, again, I haven't been part of the analysis, nor was I part of the negotiation activity. So, what I would say at this point is what I understand from my current seat. And from my current seat, I understand that at those levels -- 1,550 operationally deployed warheads, 700 operationally deployed delivery vehicles, up to 800 deployed and non-deployed -- that we can still achieve our deterrence objectives.

SEN. THUNE: The current plan to comply with the treaty would reduce the number of nuclear-capable bombers to a maximum of 60. And if my math is right, we have 20 B-2s that would remain nuclear-capable and would require us to reduce the number of nuclear-capable B-52s by about half to somewhere around 40 to stay under what they expect to be the 60 number of bomber delivery vehicles.

What will the impact be on STRATCOM's mission of nuclear deterrence using the triad strategy, and at what level of reduction in bombers do you start to become nervous about the viability of the bomber leg of the triad?

GEN. KEHLER: Well, sir, first of all, the treaty -- well, first of all, we've decided to retain a triad, which I think is the foundational step that we've taken. The exact mixture of that triad has yet to be determined, and I know there have been some numbers stated, but we have entry into force plus seven years to get to the appropriate mixture of weapons.

I would like to take the opportunity, if I'm confirmed, to come back with a more fulsome discussion about what I think about the mixture of each individual leg.

SEN. THUNE: Okay. If the U.S. develops a Prompt Global Strike weapon, these systems would further reduce the number of bombers or ICBMs in our inventory. What's your position on the development of Prompt Global Strike? Is this a must-have-type capability and is it important enough that we further reduce the other legs of the triad?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, first of all, again, as I understand the treaty, a Prompt Global Strike weapon could count. It depends on its characteristics whether it is actually made into an intercontinental-range ballistic missile.

So it wouldn't have to count but it could, depending on how we went forward. And my view is we

should go forward on continuing to develop long-range strike -- conventional strike of some type. And I think, again, if confirmed, this is one I'd like to come back and have a further discussion with you.

SEN. THUNE: Okay. Well, I think it would be important in terms of reviewing the treaty too, to determine whether or not those -- whatever that Prompt Global Strike would consist of would in fact fall under those caps and therefore impact the other --

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir. **SEN. THUNE:** -- considerations with regard to the triad.

I see my time is expired, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all very much for your service.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Thune. Senator Webb.

SEN. JIM WEBB (D-VA): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And gentlemen, I'd like to congratulate both of you for having been selected to undertake these responsibilities. I have no doubt from the quality of the service you've already given our country that both these commands will be in excellent hands.

General Kehler, it was interesting to visit with you yesterday. As we discussed, my father spent a good bit of his Air Force career in SAC, did two tours at Vandenberg and one at Offutt, and it brought back a lot of memories of the really amazing work that his generational cohort did in terms of pioneering these programs that have matured now into the discussions we're having today.

And a lot of people don't realize the jeopardy this country was in in the late 1950s after the Soviet Union had gotten ahead of us with the Sputnik program. So, the discussions that we're having and the issues that we're facing now are a direct product of, I think, the quality of the work that that generation put into this. And I, having grown up a good part of my life on those two bases, I wish you the best.

And General Ham, we've had discussion here about the DOD study on the "don't ask, don't tell" issue, and I would like to say as the chairman of the subcommittee how much I appreciate the cooperation that you and counsel Jeh Johnson gave us in terms of designing this study.

And I think it's important, if I may, to quote from what Senator Lieberman just said when he said, "This study should inform the decision that the Congress makes in voting." We tend to forget that in our political haste here. This is a very important study for us, not simply to receive but to examine and to discuss.

And your background as a former enlisted and as an infantry officer I think is very, very important to the credibility of whatever comes out of that study. And I think -- I can't -- again, having spent five years in the Pentagon, I can't remember a study on this type of issue that has been done with this sort of care, not even having seen it or knowing the results, but I know the preparation that went into it. So it's going to be a very important study for us to look at and examine.

As I told both of you yesterday, I regretfully put a hold on civilian and military nominations based on an issue of what I believe was non-cooperation from the Department of Defense. More than three months ago I asked for a series of comparable historical data that goes into our analysis of all of these commands and the efficiencies which Secretary Gates is attempting to put into the Department of Defense and the efficiencies I fully support.

But this should not have taken this amount of time. This is a basic -- providing us data so that we can participate in the discussions. This was not a political ploy. Basically, if you don't have the information, you don't have the tools, you can't do the analysis so that you have a discussion about where these reductions might be going in our commands.

And I'm very happy to point out that last night at close of business, we did receive the first cut on this data, so I'm happily going to release any of these holds that we were forced to put in place in order to do this. We're going to examine this data. We're going to have follow-on questions, but it's a very important part of how you're going to bring efficiencies into the Department of Defense. So, you're free at last. (Laughs.)

I have a question, General Ham, on Africa Command. Where do you think the headquarters is going to go?

GEN. HAM: Sir, as you know, the headquarters today is in Stuttgart, Germany. When I had a discussion with Secretary Gates about the possibility of him recommending me to the president for this job, one of the things we talked about was the necessity to conduct an assessment of the headquarters' location. And so, if confirmed, I will certainly do that.

And we'll consider a wide variety of locations, to include the current location, perhaps other sites in Europe. I think we ought to consider locations on the continent of Africa; and certainly there are some locations in the continental United States that have -- that have asked to be considered as well. And so if confirmed, Senator, I'll do just that.

SEN. WEBB: Let me suggest you examine Norfolk.

GEN. HAM: I understand, sir.

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

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, Senator Webb. And thank you so much for your action on the nominations.

SEN. WEBB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Senator LeMieux.

SEN. GEORGE LEMIEUX (R-FL): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank both of you for your service to our country, and congratulate you on these appointments.

General Ham, if I may ask you some questions about AFRICOM and some of the concerns I have about that region. And before I do, with all due respect to my friend from Virginia, you know, please look at Florida also, would be a -- we are so pleased to have three combatant commands in Florida, and we'd appreciate your evaluation of Florida as well.

SEN. LEVIN: If you'd yield, I think you'd better add Illinois and Michigan at this point. (Laughter.) We don't have any commands, and so we really feel we're entitled to one. I can't speak for Illinois, but I think it's about time we had a command. At any rate, Senator LeMieux, thank you --

SEN. LEMIEUX: Thank you, Chairman.

I had the opportunity to visit Yemen as well as Djibouti this past August and talk about the -- and see first-hand what our forces there are trying to do to combat AQAP as well as Al-Shabab. And I'm very concerned about what's happening in Somalia. I'm very concerned about the ties between al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the ties that they have with Al-Shabab, and that destabilized area.

And I would -- you may have already spoken to this point, but I'd like for you to tell me what your view is of the area; what will be the plan of this country in the coming years to combat terrorism; and the links between Yemen and Somalia and other African countries and radical

Islamic groups, and what we're going to do to combat their threats to this country.

GEN. HAM: Senator, I agree with you. I believe that the extremist threat that's emerging from East Africa is probably the greatest concern that Africa Command will face in the near future. And if confirmed, that becomes a very-high priority, I think, consistent with what I believe to be the command's highest priority, which is to detect, deter, and, if necessary, defeat threats that would emerge from the continent toward the U.S. homeland or to U.S. interests.

One of the challenges, I think, for us will be that, as you -- as you correctly point out, Senator, that area sits astride two geographic combatant command areas of responsibility. One of the things I learned as the director for operations on the Joint Staff, it is in those boundary areas where we must pay great attention to ensure that extremist organizations and others find no safe haven and no opportunity to transition unimpeded between geographic combatant commands. So, Senator, if confirmed, I would look forward to working very closely with U.S. Central Command and General Mattis and his crew, to ensure that we counter that threat appropriately.

SEN. LEMIEUX: I appreciate that. I believe that, outside of the Pakistan Af-Pak region, the most dangerous place in the world for us right now is Yemen and then the ties to Somalia. These ungoverned territories, and the presence of people like Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen, who are using sophisticated recruiting tools, who know -- you know, was it -- grew up in the United States, understands how to use social media to attract recruits. It's as dangerous of a place in the world as it could be.

And there's a lot of concern, and it's probably not something for an open hearing, but there's a lot of concern about the communication and connection now between AQAP and Al-Shabab, and the fact that they may be recruiting folks through Yemen and training them in Somalia. So being focused on that, I think, is of very-high importance.

GEN. HAM: Sir, if confirmed, I would certainly take that as a high priority.

SEN. LEMIEUX: General Kehler, I want to talk to you a little bit about your new responsibilities at Strategic Command and the concerns about, you know, cyber -- cyber concerns and cyber warfare, and where that will -- I know that there's -- we are -- we're looking at a cyber command, but tell me how that will play into your new responsibilities.

GEN. KEHLER: Senator, when the secretary of Defense decided, in consultation with the president, to stand up a subunified command, what he essentially did was he consolidated, if you will, a number of disparate activities that were going on inside the Department of Defense related to cyberspace into one place, with a four-star -- much like the relationship between Pacific Command and U.S. Forces-Korea, where that's a subunified command of Pacific Command. It exists within Pacific Command and yet it operates with some degree of autonomy to take care of a mission that they've been assigned. That's the same relationship that we have here.

Strategic Command, as I have reread the mission here recently, still has responsibilities to advocate, to integrate, to be part of the command relationships with the other combatant commands. And so there is still quite a bit of work, both direct and indirect, work that goes on at Strategic Command level, but the day-in and day-out activities, and command-and-control of network activities, those types of things are going on in USCYBERCOM.

SEN. LEMIEUX: So, it won't be your specific day-to-day operations; it's -- sir, it's kind of like a command within a command?

GEN. KEHLER: It is a command within a command, yes, sir.

SEN. LEMIEUX: Okay.

Can I talk to you a little bit about space policy? That is within your responsibility. And with the degrading of our plans for NASA -- although we were able to make some accomplishments before

we went out for our recess in trying to continue the space program -- tell me about your views of where we'll be on the military side of our space program, and whether or not you feel that we're doing all that we can to make sure that we command space for military purposes.

There's always the view that we have to maintain the high ground. At one time, aviation was the high ground. But we know space is the ultimate high ground, and we do not want to be in a position where a future competitor to the United States has command over space. Tell me what your view is of where we are, strategically, in terms of the command of space.

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, the nature of our -- of space really has changed pretty dramatically in the last five to 10 years. It is now -- and you'll hear these words used in the Department of Defense -- space is now "congested, competitive and complex," and you'll also hear the word "contested" used sometimes.

So I think what has happened is that, from 1957, when there was one man-made object on orbit, to today when there are over 20,000 that are softball-sized and larger; the fact that there are now over 50 nations that are involved in some way in space; the fact that those nations that are spacefaring, with their own capabilities to get there and stay there, are growing; given that China and others are emerging in space in a significant way, with very ambitious programs -- things are different.

And so as a result of that, a new national space policy was just issued. It says essentially that we need to still maintain the competitive advantages here that it gives us, in terms of our warfighting capabilities, and it says that to go about that, we will need to be more collaborative and cooperative with allies, with friends, with partners and with commercial. And so from a military side, leveraging those kinds of space capabilities has become the way that we think we need to go to the future. We have turned the corner, I believe, in many cases, in acquisition difficulties. That is not to say we don't have any, but we have turned the corner in many of our acquisition difficulties.

And then finally, in terms of our relationship with NASA -- of course, those are two separate and distinct organizations with two separate and distinct missions -- but we do collaborate and we do partner.

Since the beginning of the space age, we're looking for ways that we can leverage NASA, the Department of Defense and the National Reconnaissance Office to make sure that we are all working together to be more efficient while becoming more effective.

SEN. LEMIEUX: I thank you for those comments. My time is up. I think, if I were in your position, the two things that would be keeping me up at night would both be cyber and space as two priorities where we have to keep our advantage. And I appreciate your focus and attention on that.

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, if I am confirmed, you can rest assured that those two will be at the top of my list, yes, sir.

SEN. LEMIEUX: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator LeMieux.

I have Senator Burris down as being next, and I think that that is correct. Senator Burris.

SEN. ROLAND BURRIS (D-IL): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Of course, this, as you know, is more than likely my last appearance before your great committee. And I just want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, for your wonderful work and the

opportunity to be able to serve on this Armed Services Committee.

SEN. LEVIN: It's been a real pleasure for us and a real advantage for us to have you here.

SEN. BURRIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To both the generals, I'm pleased to meet both of you all today. I have more of a statement than I do of questions. But if I have enough time after my statement, I would like to ask a couple of questions. And after reviewing both of your resumes, I'm confident that you will both serve commendably at STRATCOM and in AFRICOM.

I've had the privilege of visiting both AFRICOM and STRATCOM over this past year, so I've been able to see the capabilities in which you will serve and the capacity -- I mean, the challenges which you face. And I see that there are some challenges out there, gentlemen. And General Kehler, I traveled to Omaha to see the STRATCOM facilities in July and was impressed by the sophistication and dedication to mission shown by the entire staff. I hope that you look at those individuals and hold on to them. They're good people.

I see in your biography that you're the deputy commander at STRATCOM, so you need not reiterate the important role that your command has played in defending our nation from ballistic threats. I'm confident that you are the right man for the job. And should I be here to vote, rest assured you'd have my vote. But I will be following your success, sir.

And to General Ham, your predecessor has laid the groundwork to take this unified command to the next level of proficiency and interagency cooperation. As you know, the United States African Command does so much more than train African troops in stability and security operations. They represent the United States and our military throughout the entire continent of Africa.

And General Ham, what we find out in America, that most Americans speak of Africa as a country. They have no idea the size of this continent, the complexity of this continent, with 53, I think, different separate entities and countries on this continent. I stress that point clearly, as it has potential to be both your greatest challenge and your greatest success.

The men and women that you command -- through the USAID, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of State operations throughout the continent, but it is the presence of your men and women in uniform that Africans will remember the most.

And General, this is a new and highly engaged command post. I'm excited to see its progress as I continue to follow your career upon leaving the Senate.

Again, I would like to thank both of you for sitting before this committee today and for your service to our country. You've had a lot of years of service in. I take my hat off to all you generals who made it through the ranks and made it up to the status that you've made it, because of the contributions that you've made and the confidence that people have placed in you. And you're taking on added responsibility now with these two commands.

So I am proud to support your nomination. And should I be here, I will be voting for it.

And General Ham, I just have a couple of points on AFRICOM. The AU, African Union -- I visited them in Addis Ababa, and come to find out I think I was the first United States senator. There are a lot of congresspersons that have been to the AU. But as the deputy minister of the AU told me, I was the first senator to come and visit them at their headquarters. They're building a new wonderful headquarters there in Addis Ababa. So please encourage my colleagues through your contacts to check out the AU. They're looking forward to seeing us and to letting us hear their concerns.

I also visited the eastern -- the eastern -- let me get the correct title -- the East Africa Standby Brigade that really have all these different countries in it, where they're certainly trying to bring

peace and security into those East African nations. And they are concerned too about our participation.

General Ward has certainly stood up this command. He's done his best. The resources are a problem. And the other agencies that are there are really seeking to, you know, do what their responsibilities are. But I think a lot of it's depending on the military. I found out that they were a little concerned about what standing up an Africa Command was. They didn't communicate it properly. So you still have a PR job to continue to do, as General Ward has tried to do, in terms of those African countries in just what is our purpose.

And General Ham, we are also going to compete as well with China as they move into these various countries with their assistance. Africa has -- it is the future for all of our existing countries, because the resources are there. And we have to look to how we can build our relationships with those African countries in spite of the terrorism and in spite of the conflicts that exist. We need to have a better presence on the continent.

And as far as the headquarters is concerned, I wouldn't mind Chicago. (Laughs.) But I was in Stuttgart. By the way, my second language is German. I visited the headquarters in Stuttgart and had a great time there with the staff and went on into Djibouti and to visit Lemonnier there and to -- and into Nairobi in Kenya, and turned in to my chairman a report of my experience that I received there, and just hoping, General Ham, that we can really step up our presence and that the African countries understand that we are there to assist them.

We're not there to -- they were concerned about to take them over. "Here comes big America." So you'll have that to deal with, as I was able to pick up too, General Ham. But you also must work with those different factions that exist in all those different -- (laughs) -- all those different countries. And I have a great deal of sympathy for you as you undertake that.

So my -- of course, you answered my headquarters question. So where do you think it's going to go? Do you have any idea?

GEN. HAM: Sir, I don't. And I think I should approach this, if confirmed, essentially with a blank piece of paper and start -- what's the requirement, and then come up with the best recommendation for the headquarters location.

SEN. BURRIS: Yeah, I think every African country want headquarters there. So you're going to have problems if you select an African country.

I see my time is up. Gentlemen, continue the service. Continue to do it for the American public and to take our message abroad to the other countries. Let them know that we're here not as conquerors, but we're here to help move civilization forward for the betterment of all mankind.

God bless you all and your families, and keep up the good work. Thank you.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you very much, Senator Burris. And again, thank you for your major contribution to our nation and to this Senate and to this committee. It's really been appreciated.

Senator Udall.

SEN. MARK UDALL (D-CO): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me echo your words about Senator Burris. I'm going to miss him. And I've really enjoyed serving with the former attorney general of Illinois and now Senator Burris.

I look forward to your advice and counsel as we continue our work in the Senate.

Generals, thank you for being here today. Thank you for your service.

General Kehler, if I might start with you, I think you're familiar with a joint op-ed that Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton wrote this week where they said, quote, "A more stable, predictable" -- and this is on START; I should give you that overview -- that a ratified treaty creates, quote, "a more stable, predictable and cooperative relationship between the world's two leading nuclear powers," end of quote.

Russia and the U.S. today, I think they comprise over 90 percent of the supply of nuclear weapons. As a strong regional power, Russia has a great deal of influence in dealing with Iran and its nuclear- weapons program.

I believe that new START will help to bolster our relationship with the Russians, and in turn, our ability to leverage Russian support to put pressure on Iran. Would you agree? What are your thoughts on that particular situation?

GEN. KEHLER: Senator, I would agree that an arms control agreement contributes as a piece of a broader relationship in many ways, and I would agree that -- my personal opinion is that a treaty will in fact be helpful in the ways that you suggest.

SEN. UDALL: Well, thanks for that insight. I am on the record strongly supporting new START as a new start, as a step forward. There will be more work to do. We discussed the other day the tactical weapon arsenal that the Russians have, but I think by passing new START we could continue to have those negotiations further about tactical nuclear weapons. But if we believe Iran is the center of our efforts in the Middle East, I think we have to ratify the new START Treaty. Thank you for your comments.

Let me move to cybersecurity, if I might. I recently spent some time with Secretary Napolitano. I know that DHS and DOD has signed a cybersecurity memorandum of agreement. I'm really encouraged by the progress that both departments are making and leveraging their capabilities to keep our nations' networks safe. Could you talk a little bit more about your involvement and the importance of this effort?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, again, if confirmed, as I mentioned before, Strategic Command I think has an important role to play. Strategic Command sits at the confluence of a lot of activity in the Department of Defense. Strategic Command I think has a strong advocacy role, certainly an integration role, and my intent, if confirmed, would be to try to continue to make Strategic Command a better and better and better partner, both inside the Department of Defense and then as necessary with DHS and others.

SEN. UDALL: I know you're passionate about this and I know we've talked about the very interesting similarities between outer space and inner space -- inner space including this area of cyber and cybersecurity. So I look forward to working with you when you're confirmed. I know that's --

GEN. KEHLER: Thank you, sir. **SEN. UDALL:** -- certainly my intent.

General Ham, if I might move to you and then I may have a moment to come -- well, actually, let me -- one final comment for General Kehler. Could you tell me about the status of the final Space Posture Review? Can you provide any insights into when we would see it and any additional thoughts you might have?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I'm not sure I can. I'll have to get that for the record. But what I do know is of course the Space Posture Review, in large part, contributed to two important documents. One is the new National Space Policy that the president signed some months ago. The other is a strategy -- now a National Security Space Strategy document that is being prepared as a follow on to the policy.

And so, I'm not sure if there will be a separate Space Posture Review document released or whether that is now rolled into the National Security Space Strategy. That National Security

Space Strategy is in coordination and should be available soon. I can't specify exactly when. And I will get that information for the record for you.

SEN. UDALL: I would appreciate that. And I think we both agree that we're increasingly reliant on space for our economy and for our national security, and we also know it's an increasingly -- that is space-congested and contested environment and we need to stay on the front end of this, and I'm looking forward to your continued advice and counsel in your new position, given your past experience and expertise.

General Ham, I might -- I'd like to turn to you and -- as I understand it, one of AFRICOM's missions is to enhance the kinetic capabilities of Africa's militaries through assistance programs.

Another part of your mission would be to conduct or support actions and programs in conjunction with U.S. government agencies and other partners to reduce the potential for intra -- and there's plenty of intrastrate conflict but there's also interstate conflict in Africa -- by enhancing the governance stability and economic development of the countries that are in the AFRICOM sphere of responsibility.

Of those two basic missions, do you see either as more important than the other, and in particular in the context of short, mid- and long-term concerns? I know that's a big question but it's an important question. I know you've considered it.

GEN. HAM: Senator, in my view they are indeed complementary efforts. I think the role of the command is through a wide variety of programs and authorities to help build the capacity that African nations need at their national level, and then, importantly, also to build regional capacity. And if confirmed, I think this becomes an important requirement, an important task for the command, to see how we can best leverage the authorities and the resources that are available to achieve the best effect.

SEN. UDALL: So those two basic missions you don't elevate one above the other. You see them as both equally important -- training the military and then also operating in that civilian-military space to build governing capacity.

GEN. HAM: Senator, I think they do go hand in hand. If confirmed, I would have to take a look at that, as I would all the other requirements of the command, and see if a prioritization was necessary, particularly in the application of resources. So, certainly if confirmed I would take a look at that.

SEN. UDALL: I see my time is about to expire. Let me make one final short remark and then ask you for a commitment I think you'll be able to meet, but the Defense Science Board has been charged by the current AFRICOM commander and the undersecretary of Defense with assessing the security implications of climate change on Africa and the potential role for AFRICOM in addressing these impacts.

I'd like to ask you to commit to providing the committee -- as you get your feet on the ground -- with your personal view on the findings and recommendations of that task force at an appropriate time next year. Could you do that?

GEN. HAM: Yes, sir, if I'm confirmed, I will.

SEN. UDALL: Thank you. Thank you, General. Thanks again, both of you, for being here.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Udall. Senator Begich.

SEN. MARK BEGICH (D-AK): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you both for being here. And I will also just state for the record that I am looking forward to supporting both of you in these new positions. I think you are very qualified -- highly qualified for these new challenges that you're taking on.

Also, thank you and your families for the commitment they have to make in this new venture and stress that will be added to your household. So thank you both very much for that willingness.

I want to -- General Ham, I'm not going to have really -- most of my questions have been answered except I would put in my pitch of course that Alaska would be happy to take the command when you look for a location. We would tell you that we're 90 percent by air to anyplace in the Western world. We can access most places through our airport technology, and we don't close our airports under any conditions. So I'll just leave it at that.

I know General Kehler knows that about Alaska and the uniqueness, but I had to give my pitch, and it seems like everyone else did. General Kehler, let me walk through -- mine are going to be a little parochial but I want to give first a broad theme because I did hear some comments, as usual on this committee, from some that are somewhat worked up over the START Treaty. I'm not. I think it's a good treaty and I'm looking forward hopefully to vote on this at some point.

But let me be a little bit parochial but really clarify -- and I think you will -- I anticipate your answer on this so it's more of a setup because I want to make it clear one more time that the START Treaty -- and I know there's some discussion of missile defense and how it interacts with it. My understanding is that the START Treaty does not restrict the missile defense system in any way. And let me ask it in a formal way if I can. If confirmed, will the START Treaty hinder your ability to advocate for ballistic missile defense requirements for this country?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I don't believe it will.

SEN. BEGICH: You know, it's almost like we have to do this every hearing with every person from the military when we talk about this START because there seems to be a discussion to kind of put it in the air, let people, you know, spin out there a little bit and let the press carry it as maybe it will, but what I hear over and over again, especially when we have Secretary Clinton here and Secretary Gates, that it was very clear that it does not hinder our capacity.

And I want to just say first, thank you for once again, from the military, putting it on the record so it's clear, and hopefully maybe we'll end that part of this debate around the START Treaty.

But now let me kind of hone in, if I can, on the missile defense system, especially in Fort Greely, Alaska. As you know, that's the -- the majority of the ground-based interceptors are deployed there, and I'm interested to know how you will, in your -- assuming you're confirmed -- in your position help advocate and represent the requirements and the capability of what's up there? Can you give me kind of your sense and your feeling or your understanding of the need, but how you will advocate for basically our last line of defense when it comes to missile defense for this country?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, as you well know, the current policy of our government is that we will deploy a limited defensive system against long-range threat from regional powers that could reach out and strike the United States of America. That is the basis on which the sensor network and of course the ground-based mid-course interceptors in Alaska and a handful at Vandenberg were postured.

So my responsibility, I believe, is to help advocate for that capability, certainly as long as that's our country's view about what we need to do.

SEN. BEGICH: Very good. Let me take you -- I don't know if you've ever been to Fort Greely. Have you been up there?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I have not. I've not been --

SEN. BEGICH: We'll invite you. We would love to have you up there. I know the director of the Space Missile Defense Command has been -- always comes up. He always picks January. I think

that's great, gives him a lot of extra credit points when you come to Alaska in January. But we would love to have you up there.

It's a very unique situation, but also there are some -- what I would call some deficits. The nearest town has one doctor and there's no clinic on base, to give you a sense of what they have to work in, the conditions they work in. So we would love to have you up there at some point at your convenience because I think once you're on the ground there -- first you'll find a very committed community within range of the base that is very supportive in helping any way they can. But I think it's also important to kind of see. So if you're confirmed, we would love to participate in any way we can to help make that happen.

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir. Just to put a finer point, I've been to Alaska a number of times but I just haven't been to Greely. Typically I go to Clear.

SEN. BEGICH: Oh, very good. And that's actually, as you know, another piece of the equation with Fort Greely. I don't have a question on Clear but I'm glad you brought it up because at some point I'll want to have some conversation about the long-term plan. I know there is one, of rehabilitation, renovation to the facility, and just to make sure we're kind of on track on the dollar requirements. I know in these tight budget times everyone's looking to push where they can. But obviously we think Clear is critical long-term and that investment that is being considered over the next several years will hopefully be continued. So I don't have to have a conversation on that right now.

Let me ask you just kind of a general question on support and development of the two-stage ground-based interceptor as a hedge in the event of the proposed development and deployment of the long-range phase, phased adaptive approach, if it is not achieved by 2020. In other words, if we can't get to our schedule, do you see the two-stage ground-based interceptor as a hedge to make sure we're covered? Your thoughts on that.

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I don't know enough about this. I'd like to take that one for the record, if I could.

SEN. BEGICH: I would like that. That would be great because it's -- not that I would say that the military is not always on schedule, but there are times where planning and development, especially new technology, gets delayed, and if we don't have something that backs against it to protect ourselves as we develop our technology as things change -- I want to make sure we have a kind of cohesive plan in that arena and not just say we're done here because we have this new plan down the road, and then we miss some timetables. So if you could take that for the record, that would be very good.

GEN. KEHLER: I will, sir. I apologize but I'm just not familiar enough with the details of General Riley's lay-down to render a comment.

SEN. BEGICH: No problem. I know when I talked to General Riley, he has it down to the detail. He lives and breathes it, but I know that you're just getting into this position so I'd appreciate if you could.

The other one is, in some advance questions we gave you, policy questions, you made a comment, it's "robust access to space is a national imperative," which I 100 percent agree. In Alaska we have the Kodiak Launch Complex. I'm not sure if you're familiar with that. It is very flexible, efficient and does commercial as well as military launch capacity.

The space development and test wing currently have I think two missions scheduled in Kodiak this year. We would -- it has very unique capability and I don't know if you're familiar with it, but I would love, again, the same thing. If you're not, I would encourage you to kind of look at that and then help our office understand, help me understand what you see is the potential, if at all potential, of long-term relationship from your office and your operation with the Kodiak launch facility.

There's a lot of federal dollars in there to build that facility. It has great capacity. Again, as I said, there are already two missions this year from one component of the military. So if you could just -- brief comment. My time is expired, but any comment on that at this point?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I think the mission is tomorrow, actually. I think one of them is tomorrow.

SEN. BEGICH: I think you're right.

GEN. KEHLER: And yes, sir, if confirmed, I'd be more than happy to get involved with you and have discussions about Kodiak.

SEN. BEGICH: Excellent. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, that's all the questions I have, and I just appreciate the time. And again, congratulations for, again, your willingness to take on additional responsibility and commitments to this country. Thank you both.

SEN. LEVIN: Thank you, Senator Begich. Senator Bill Nelson.

SEN. BILL NELSON (D-FL): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, congratulations on your appointments to these positions. Thank you both for your public service, your long service to our country.

General Kehler, as we have discussed many times, the nation's space program, now you're just - you're taking it to a different level. In the Strategic Command you are going to have to be concerned with the nuclear program. I would encourage you to -- as one of your first things that you do, which I encouraged General Chilton to do the same thing, and I think he would reaffirm that this is good advice. Go visit the three national labs. It's my suggestion. I think -- have you visited the three before?

GEN. KEHLER: Sir, I have not visited all three. I've been through pieces of them in the past. You had mentioned this to me several days ago. I will do this if I am confirmed because there are some deficiencies that I have in getting eyes on to some of the aspects of what needs to happen, and I will go visit there. Plus the rest of the weapons complex, I will go and put eyes on early-on.

SEN. NELSON: Also, with regard to the triad and the Nuclear Posture Review states that, quote, "Each leg of the triad has advantages that warrant retaining all three legs," and that, quote, "strategic nuclear submarines represent the most survivable leg of the U.S. nuclear triad." Do you think that we should retain all three legs of the triad?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir, I do.

SEN. NELSON: You want to discuss the significance of the next generation of the ballistic missile submarine? **GEN. KEHLER:** Sir, I think it's important that as we look to the future, I think it's important that two things happen. Number one, I think it's important that we sustain the legs that we have today, and I know that the services have invested in sustaining those legs. I think it's important that we sustain the command and control that makes sure that the president is always linked to those forces. And I think it's important for us to sustain the ISR capabilities that support all of those activities. And then I think it's important that we put in place the modernization efforts to make sure that we can get to the next versions of each of these.

It looks like -- my understanding of the programatics of this, it looks like the first to come up for modernization investment will be the replacement to the Ohio class ballistic missile submarine, and I'm looking forward if I'm confirmed to working with the Department of the Navy to make sure that we understand and have clarified requirements, and that they are actively moving forward.

The other legs are under way, studies at various levels. I think it's important also to have a replacement long-range strike aircraft, and I also think it's important for us to begin the process

to modernize the nation's land-based strategic deterrent.

I'd mention one other thing. Clearly survivability is a key aspect that the triad brings to bear. No doubt about it. On a day-in and day-out basis the submarine ballistic missile force is the most survivable. But if generated, the bombers are equally survivable.

SEN. NELSON: General Ham, we've got a problem of drugs going into West Africa and then it just goes right on up to Europe. You want to comment on that?

Of course a lot of those drugs are coming out of -- unfortunately, even though they're coming out of Colombia, they go into Venezuela. And then, from Venezuela, they're either going straight to West Africa or they're going to the island of Hispaniola, either the D.R. or Haiti, and they get dispersed out of there.

But they're coming into West Africa, and they're using that as a trans-shipment point then to get it on into other places, primarily Europe. Do you want to comment about that?

GEN. HAM: Senator, it's a very real concern. Certainly, not exclusively a military or even primarily military challenge, but I think Africa Command, in its uniquely interagency composition, is in a posture to contribute to countering that effort.

The illicit trafficking of narcotics and other illicit trafficking destabilizes nations and regions, all of which are unhelpful in trying to provide security. So I think this is -- this is a challenge for the whole of government, and I will, if confirmed, look at AFRICOM's appropriate role in that regard.

SEN. NELSON: Have you had any thoughts about what should we do about that as a commander of AFRICOM?

GEN. HAM: Senator, I think the way in which AFRICOM could probably bring military assets to bear are in maritime domain awareness. In this regard, if I'm confirmed, I would very much like to partner with U.S. Southern Command, who participate in these kinds of efforts on a routine basis. I suspect but don't know that Africa Command has already done so to learn from the experience of Southern Command and find how we might best leverage that experience in Africa.

SEN. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, this is a great example -- General Ham just mentioned Southern Command. It's Southern Command and African Command is just a great example where all the agencies of government are coming together to address a particular problem.

It has certainly been true with regard to drugs in South America, but it's also being true with regard to drugs with regard to Western Africa and through that command. And so it's the DEA, it's the FBI, it's the CIA as well as the military components that are all working together.

So often we are giving deference and kudos to our young men and women in uniform, which is most appropriate, and they are held in such high esteem. Often, we don't realize the changing nature of projecting the interests of the United States and the free world is a combine of all of these agencies, sometimes led by the U.S. military, but other times working just directly in a partnership.

And I think it's fascinating. And West Africa is clearly a place where we have that going on right now as well as the U.S. Southern Command.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. LEVIN: Well, thank you for that comment. It's something that's important to make, and it's not made often enough. And I'm glad, Senator Nelson, that you have pointed out that -- made that point.

I just want to ask one question about the START treaty, and then, unless there's other questions,

we can adjourn the hearing.

You have pointed out, when you were asked about the Russian unilateral statement, that it's not part of the treaty, it's not binding on us, it's their point of view, and that we've made our own unilateral statement at the same time that we're going to proceed with missile defense. And our statement and -- our unilateral statement made at the same time theirs was made, April 7th, says that U.S. missile-defense systems would be deployed to defend the United States against limited missile launches and to defend its deployed forces, allies and partners against regional threats. The United States further noted its intent to continue improving and deploying its missile-defense systems in order to defend itself against limited attack and is part of our collaborative approach to strengthening stability in key regions.

I think you point that out, General Kehler, that our unilateral statement was made at the same time as their unilateral statement. Their unilateral statement is not binding on us. It is not part of the treaty.

But what is not pointed out enough, it seems to me, is that the exact same thing happened at the time of START I. There were unilateral statements made by the Russians. That had to do with the ABM. If we pulled out of the ABM treaty, then what they said was that this is the unilateral statement, and that time on the Soviet side -- so when there was a Soviet Union -- this treaty may be effective and viable only under conditions of compliance with the treaty between the U.S. and the USSR and limitation of ABM systems assigned on May 26, 1972. That's the statement they made, and we made a unilateral statement at the same time saying, sorry, we're not bound by that statement and we could make changes in the treaty or pull out of the treaty if it's in our supreme national interests to do so.

And, as a matter of fact, we did pull out of the ABM treaty. And, as a matter of fact, they did not as a result terminate the START I treaty despite their unilateral statement. Is that correct, General? Are you with me so far?

GEN. KEHLER: Yes, sir. That's the way I understand it.

SEN. LEVIN: And what I don't understand is why, when our witnesses are asked about the unilateral statement and why, after they point out it's not binding on us, that Russian unilateral statement -- we have made our own unilateral statement saying it's not binding on us and we intend to proceed, and it's not going to threaten you in any way -- why our witnesses don't point out, hey, we've been there before; we just went through that exact same unilateral versus unilateral back in 1991. And I'm just curious. You're aware of the history, I gather. But why is that not something which is used to address this constant refrain we hear about a unilateral Russian statement on this particular treaty? Why isn't that part of the response, the history?

GEN. KEHLER: Probably a deficiency on my part.

SEN. LEVIN: No, no. It's not a deficiency on your part. Most witnesses don't get there. I'm just curious as to -- is it not as important as I think it is that, hey, we've been there, done that, listened to that before and it had no effect? I'm not critical of you. I'm just curious, frankly, because the witnesses don't seem to focus on what seems to me is not only obvious that their unilateral statement isn't binding on us. We make our own unilateral statement saying it's not binding on us and, by the way, we intend to proceed with our missile defenses.

We've been through this exact same unilateral-unilateral before, and it didn't have any impact. Rightly or wrongly, we pulled out of the ABM treaty. I thought it was a mistake, but that's not my point. My point is we pulled out of the ABM treaty, and they did not pull out of the START I treaty even though they had made a unilateral statement saying the two weren't related.

And so I'm really curious, I'm not at all critical, because your not making reference to that history is fairly typical of our witnesses. So is it not as important as I think it is? You can be totally blunt or --

GEN. KEHLER: No, sir. I just --

SEN. LEVIN: As diplomatic as you wish. Either one.

GEN. KEHLER: Well, no, sir. I just think -- certainly, to describe the full context of the debate, you've captured it better than I did, for sure. And I don't know why I didn't capture it that way but --

SEN. LEVIN: So, again, it's not -- it's kind of a pattern, frankly. Maybe, you know, people don't want to sound defensive. Maybe that's it. But it's not defensive not to -- it's not defensive to make reference to this unilateral history, in my judgment. So that's my opinion.

And I want to thank you both of you. You've served our country well. Your family support, we know how critical that is. We thank your families again and appreciate your making reference to your families the way you do.

And unless there's further questions by me, which there are none -- and there's nobody else here to add any -- we will, again, stand adjourned. I want to thank -- well, thank you both.

But I also want to thank Senator Webb for the step that he's now taken to allow our nominations to proceed. He had a legitimate interest in getting information. He has obtained that information now and has indicated the release of the hold on nominations, and hopefully that not only will facilitate a number of other nominations which have been pending but also will help speed up your nominations and confirmation as well.

We're going to try to get a quorum as quickly as we can of this committee so that we can address your nominations. I don't know if there's any other -- (off mike).

Thank you both. We'll stand adjourned.

END.