

STATEMENT OF
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SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
ON
FY10 DEPARTMENT OF NAVY POSTURE
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The Navy-Marine Corps Team—Prevailing Today, Preparing for Tomorrow

Chairman Murtha, Representative Young, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the seventy-fifth Secretary of the Navy. It is my great honor to serve with and represent the over 800,000 men and women of the United States Navy and Marine Corps—active, reserve, and civilian and their families. I am committed to ensuring that the Naval Force remains the preeminent sea power, ready to meet both current and future challenges.

I assumed my duties as Secretary of the Navy very recently. I am humbled by and proud of the responsibility of representing the wonderful men and women of our Navy and Marine Corps.

Our enduring seapower has been essential to furthering America's interests worldwide. Its importance cannot be overstated, over 70% of the planet is covered by water, 80% of the world's inhabitants live near the oceans, and 90% of global commerce is transported by sea. By maintaining U.S. maritime dominance, our Sailors and Marines promote security, stability, and trust around the world. Together, we provide a persistent forward presence, power projection abroad, and protection of the world's sea lanes. Our Sailors and Marines, in cooperation with our foreign partners and allies, continue to provide training, deliver humanitarian aid, disaster relief and other assistance throughout the globe.

Our naval forces are uniquely postured to deter aggression and prevent escalations. Should deterrence fail, we stand ready to fight America's wars and defeat our adversaries. In times of crisis, Navy and Marine Corps units are often already on the scene or the first U.S. assets to arrive in force. And they accomplish this all as a seaborne force with a minimum footprint.

To ensure and sustain an effective Navy and Marine Corps in an increasingly complex security environment, we must emphasize and promote a number of essential priorities.

First, we must ensure the proper care for our forces and their families. America's greatest military assets are the dedicated men and women who wear the uniform. Thousands of brave Sailors and Marines are currently engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan; thousands more carry out hazardous duties around the globe. Every one of these incredible Americans volunteered to serve, and they are protecting us and our way of life with unwavering commitment. As we drawdown in Iraq and increase our strength in Afghanistan, they once again stand ready to answer our Nation's call. We must show them the same level of commitment when providing for their health and welfare and that of their families.

Second, we must ensure that the Department of the Navy continues to meet our many missions of today, while preparing for the unknowable but inevitably complex challenges of tomorrow.

Third, we must continue to balance the Department of the Navy's programs, choosing to maintain or establish only those that are achievable, affordable, and responsive to our Nation's needs. We are committed to refining fiscal and budgetary discipline, tackling waste and cost overruns, and building our acquisition workforce. I look forward to working with you to make sure that the Department of the Navy does not shortchange our Sailors, Marines or our taxpayers.

I. TAKE CARE OF OUR SAILORS AND MARINES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Department continues to shape the force to balance today's missions and to provide flexibility for the future. The Marine Corps has accomplished its goal of growing the force to 202,100 Marines. This will help to provide our Marines greater dwell time and will provide the opportunity to address other training and missions that have not been accomplished in our recent history. The Navy force has stabilized. Both the Navy and Marine Corps are meeting their recruiting goals both in numbers and quality. Our reserves continue to play a key role as part of the Total Force and our civilians are a bedrock providing support around the globe to our warfighters and to our naval capabilities. Together, we thank you for your support in sustaining the people who stand in our ranks - military and civilian.

We must support and strive to find ways to improve the initiatives that provide for their physical and mental welfare. The following programs exemplify some of the actions we are taking.

Wounded Warrior Medical Care

We as a nation have no higher obligation than to care for our wounded heroes who have sacrificed so much to serve our nation. We have a solemn duty to ensure that when our forces go into harm's way, there is an excellent, comprehensive and sustainable plan for the care of our wounded, ill, or injured. The budget request reflects the Department of the Navy's commitment to this highest priority, providing exceptional, individually tailored assistance to our wounded warriors, with a comprehensive approach designed to optimize their recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The Navy Safe Harbor Program and the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment extend this assistance to the wounded, ill, and injured warriors and their families. The Navy Department is also collaborating with the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to foster continuity of care across all systems and facilitate efficient and effective transitions.

Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic Brain Injury is the defining wound of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The National Naval Medical Center Bethesda has a new state-of-the-art Unit to treat Traumatic Brain Injury. I recently had the opportunity to visit this unit and was deeply impressed both by the staff and the facilities. This clinic provides unsurpassed inpatient care for polytrauma patients with TBI, serving all blast-exposed or head-injured casualties medically evacuated from theater. The medical professionals are highly trained and actively

manage symptomatic patients and evaluate complex cases to fashion appropriate, individual treatment and rehabilitation plans.

To increase TBI detection during deployments, the Department of the Navy has implemented a strategy of lowering the index of suspicion for TBI symptoms and improving screening, detection, and treatment coordination between line and medical leaders.

The Department of the Navy has also expanded TBI research. Navy Medical Research Command is using new techniques to identify transmissibility of blast-wave energy into the brain, focusing on the nexus between the blast-wave energy transmission and the resulting brain pathology.

Psychological Health

To address Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other psychological conditions that effect more and more of our force, the Navy and the Marine Corps continue to improve their Operational Stress Control (OSC) programs. This comprehensive approach seeks to not only promote psychological resilience, but also a culture of psychological health among Sailors and Marines and their families. I am committed to removing any stigma associated with seeking help for mental health. To address this, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has established a centralized and comprehensive OSC program to indoctrinate psychological health-stigma reduction into the broader Navy-Marine Corps culture. This includes training and tools that line leadership can use from the newest accessions to flag and general officers. OSC is targeting perceptions within individuals and command leadership, as well as working to help care-givers overcome barriers to psychological health care.

Navy Medicine has established seventeen Deployment Health Clinics as portals of care for service members, staffed with primary-care medical and psychological health providers who support early recognition and treatment of deployment-related psychological health issues within the primary care setting. These examples are not all inclusive. Thank you for your continued support of these programs that are so vital to the overall strength of the Department.

Housing and Child Care

The world's finest naval force deserves the world's finest family support programs, including community and health care services and access to quality, affordable child care. The budget request demonstrates a commitment to our Navy and Marine Corps families by investing in family programs, housing, and infrastructure.

II. MEETING THE MISSIONS OF TODAY

While naval forces are conducting combat and combat-support missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Navy and the Marine Corps also stand ready to answer our Nation's call across the full spectrum of military operations. Despite a high operational tempo, our naval forces remain resilient and motivated, and they are performing superbly around the

globe. We will work to continue their proud tradition of readiness and to ensure that they are fully trained and equipped for their assigned missions.

Today our Marines and Sailors are undertaking a myriad of missions, from combat operations in the mountains of Afghanistan, to humanitarian assistance in Africa. The Navy has over 9,900 Individual Augmentees and more than 6,600 reservists deployed on the ground around the world in support of Overseas Contingency Operations. Nearly half of the combat air missions over Afghanistan are flown by naval air forces. There are 283 active ships in service - 76 percent of these ships, including four aircraft carriers and two large-deck amphibious ships, are underway. Over 50 percent of our attack submarines are underway, with nearly forty percent of our submarine force on deployment.

More than 25,000 Marines are deployed in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) and ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). The large majority are in Iraq; however, the process has begun drawing down those forces and increasing the number of Marines in Afghanistan. Nearly 5,700 Marines are deployed to various regions throughout Afghanistan — either as part of the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, Afghanistan, or in the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, Marine Special Operations Companies, Embedded Training Teams, or Individual Augments.

One of the most significant readiness challenges facing the Navy and the Marine Corps is balancing their current obligations to overseas contingency operations with other anticipated readiness requirements. To address these concerns, the Department of the Navy is working to expand our engagements with other nations in order to meet our common challenges.

Fostering trust and cooperative relationships with foreign partners is critical to national security, but trust cannot be simply summoned in moments of crisis. It must be developed over time. To revitalize existing relationships and create new ones, we need to show long-term commitment.

Our Naval Forces contribute significantly to cooperative security operations through forward presence and sustained, routine engagement with foreign partners and allies. We are committed to sustaining this core capability of the Maritime Strategy and ask for your continued support.

Additionally, in order to meet our readiness challenges, the Department is working to develop greater energy independence and conservation ashore and afloat. Energy costs siphon resources away from vital areas. The potential for disruption and the possible vulnerability of energy supplies could threaten our ability to perform on the battlefield.

The Department of the Navy has made good progress in increasing energy efficiency, reducing energy consumption, and capitalizing on renewable energy sources. We are the Department of Defense lead for solar, geothermal, and ocean energy, and today, 17% of our total energy requirements are provided through alternative or renewable sources.

The Navy and Marine Corps can, and should, do more. As we continue to increase conservation and develop alternative energy options, the Department of the Navy can mitigate the impact of energy volatility, use energy as a strategic resource for operational advantage, and become a leader in environmental stewardship.

III. BUILDING AND BALANCING THE NAVAL FORCE OF THE FUTURE

The Department of the Navy will continue to meet America's current commitments worldwide, while simultaneously developing a force capable of meeting the challenges of the future. We will focus on irregular warfare and hybrid campaigns, while continuing those more conventional capabilities where our technology gives us a strategic advantage. The FY-10 budget request puts us on the path towards the goal of balancing near-term requirements with those of the next decade and beyond.

The budget request provides balanced support for deployed and non-deployed steaming days, associated flight hours, and related ship and aircraft maintenance. It works to bolster our naval forces' independence and flexibility by building on their unique ability to operate at great distance with long staying power. This budget would also fund the critical "eyes and ears" of our forces with increases to Intelligence, Reconnaissance, and Surveillance programs and Command, Control, Communications, Computers programs. The budget shows commitment to maintain key capabilities such as power projection, sea control, interdiction, deterrence, and humanitarian assistance.

In an effort to continue to shape our future contributions to the joint force and our country, I look forward to engaging in the Quadrennial Defense Review, which strives to define the best, most affordable collective military force to defend our national interests at home and abroad.

Changes to how equipment is acquired are essential to building our forces for the future. We are committed to pursuing acquisition reform and cost control measures and look forward to implementing Congressional acquisition reform, as well as working with you to continue to find ways to produce the best results out of our acquisition process.

Our Sailors and Marines are a superb fighting force which can be lethal or compassionate, patient or quick, as situations dictate. They are well-trained, proud warriors that continue to deserve the appreciation of a grateful nation. As their new Secretary, I look forward to working together with you to continue to enhance a relationship built on trust and commitment to our nation, and the Sailors, Marines, civilians and their families who sacrifice for its cause.

On behalf of the more than 800,000 dedicated men and women of the United States Navy and Marine Corps, I express our grateful appreciation to Congress for its continuing and unflinching support.