

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, from Washington, DC area here in Virginia on a great day. And Aloha, Admiral Davidson, in Hawaii. A good morning to you, sir. I am Riki Ellison. I am the founder and chairman of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance. I've been involved with missile defense since the conception of the modern-day missile defense back in 1980. We formed this group in 2002, in the aftermath of the 9/11 situation, that we just honored last week. And we formed it as well as an advocate after the ABM treaty was withdrawn from in 2002. This is our fifth event that we are doing virtually, because of COVID. And we are having an opportunity to really get some great leaders in the community on this issue and on the world.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

As we see in today's world that the use of ballistic missiles, the use of cruise missiles, the use of rockets and missiles are being proliferated. They're being developed. They're being demonstrated. And we have firings of them in CENTCOM or the Middle East on a daily basis. And for all of us, for the world, for our nation, our ability to have systems to be able to negate and defeat, and most of all, deter that type of force projection is vastly important and a priority for our nation and for the world, that we as a world, to be able to the deal and negate that type of threat. So, today we are very, very fortunate to have the head of INDOPACOM as our speaker today and discussion on the challenges that they face in that arena that drive a missile defense solution, to help deter and defeat those missile threats that are proliferating more than anywhere else in the world in this region.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

So, I'd like to introduce to you the 25th Combatant Commander of the Indo-Pacific Combatant Command. It is the biggest and the oldest. There are 36 nations in that, and it has over 50% of the world's population. But I think the new general Jim Dickinson's gonna argue with you now of his new Space COCOM may be the biggest of it now. So, Admiral Davidson is overseeing 380,000 American men and women in his role. And I want to give you credit, sir, for going through the COVID-19 as you have, and securing the region and stability and peace as you have. He is, out of all our COCOMs, has really led in priority the number one, from our perspective, on leading forward with the NDS, that in 2018, that stated we are shifting our military doctrine -from the Department of Defense- into near-peer competition against Russia and China.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

He was put in his command three months later after that speech. And he is the leader of our COCOMs in the drive for the integrated air and missile defense out of the COCOMs. And the COCOMs and all of us look up to him for his leadership in this specific issue. He has put forward the Indo-Pacific Deterrence Initiative, which is a initiative to bring additional funding into the arena for capacity and capability to help him deter better than he is today. It is something that we've done before under President Obama. We've done that in Europe and over 22 billion has been spent in Europe, additional to their funds since 2014. The Russian invasion of Ukraine caused that. And I think you can see a similar China threat to this arena that's causing this to happen. So, he's led that, and that is in Congress today. It is authorized for 1.4 billion, I think this year, and a little bit more the following year.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Admiral Davidson has to address the biggest threats to the United States in the world today. So, he has in his arena Russia, China, and North Korea. So, that is a tremendous challenge that he has to face. I

think one of the greatest things that he does is he's a unifier with our allies, and we can't fight this fight alone. We can't deter alone. And his leadership and bringing together those 36 nations, or a lot of those 36 nations together to be on one team, one fight, to help us continue the preservation of the way of life that we have earned, and we have prospered by, and our allies have prospered by, is a tremendous aspect that he has done. And I think the success that he's had with the RIMPAC recently under COVID conditions has brought that even tighter to that. So, I'd like everybody to welcome a great leader of our nation, a great peacemaker of the world, Admiral Davidson.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Thank you very much, Riki, for the introduction. You're doing too well, far more humble than that. Thank you for the framing of the combat command itself for those... Well, first to everybody out there, good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. And aloha from Hawaii. Riki and I were talking just a few minutes ago about the weather in our respective places. Alexandria, Virginia has turned to Fall there, and Hawaii is what it is 365 days a year. It's another pleasant day here.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Just to tell everybody the area in a short narrative, it went like this. It stretches from Hollywood to Bollywood. So, from California to the west coast of India, and from polar bears to penguins. So, from the Arctic down to the Antarctic. And most of that area of responsibility is blue.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Goes without saying, but there are a number of challenges here in this theater. We recognize five major threats, beginning with North Korea actually. North Korea, as long as they retain the capability to shoot long-range missiles and to continue to develop nuclear weapons, will remain, really, in my view, our most immediate threat. General Abrams, our US Forces Korea Commander in Korea and myself are very focused on what that means, not only for our ally, the Republic of Korea, but our allies in the region and certainly U.S. Homeland territory in Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana's, all the way to Hawaii, and then of course the continental United States.

ADM Philip Davidson:

I will tell you that China is the most significant strategic threat and will be the challenge to the United States for the 21st century. And I'm going to spend probably the lion's share of our discussions today on China, and I'll get back to that in a few minutes. Russia, of course, is present in our theater. Just in the last few weeks, Russia has been running a major exercise in the Arctic and in the northern Pacific. Their activities over the course of the last few years outpace and outnumber the number of activities that they've done since the end of the Soviet Union in 1989. We are starting to see them operate surface ships farther afield than at any time in the last 30 years. And there's a number of other factors here, and I'd be happy to answer some questions.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Of course, the threat of violent extremist organizations persists in this region. We've been providing supports to our ally in the Philippines for almost two decades now, in advice and assist and providing some technologies to help them in their battle to defeat ISIS in the Philippines and some other malign groups, Abu Sayyaf, for example, and others. And of course we have some regional efforts underway to help other partners in the region in South Asia and in Southeast Asia to combat violent extremist organizations through other means.

ADM Philip Davidson:

So then of course, the Pacific -half the globe-, it's the most natural disaster-prone region of the world. We live here on the rim of fire, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, typhoons. My phone goes off every day with a warning or an experience somewhere. We do a lot to plan to assist other nations, certainly to mitigate those threats as they might happen for the areas of responsibility I have in the region: Hawaii, American Samoa, for example, and the U.S. territories that I mentioned earlier.

ADM Philip Davidson:

To Riki's point, the Indo-Pacific is the single most consequential region for America's future. I made mention of China and the threat there before. And the nation's national security strategy and our National Defense Strategy, we currently highlight these facts. At INDOPACOM, we are working to implement the National Defense Strategy in the Indo-Pacific by aligning policy, capability, and our budget priorities to our requirements that are dictated by the National Defense Strategy here in the region.

ADM Philip Davidson:

In combination, we are trying to design a posture that will persuade potential adversaries that any preemptive military action that they might take will be costly and likely to fail. This is accomplished by sustaining a posture of credible combat power forward in the Western Pacific, that provides our national leaders with the options to deter and to manage crisis all the way up to full war planning and war-planned execution, if it becomes necessary. In short, we must field, sustain, and posture a joint force throughout the region that has the capability and the capacity to deter by denial, convince our adversaries that any malign military actions that they might take or other coercive actions they might take are likely to fail.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Of course, that force has to be fully ready to be able to fight and win. We've been in the process of restructuring our approaches, since these 2017 changes to the National Defense Strategy directed us to plan and assure our capability in case of a potential conflict with the People's Republic of China. Riki made mention earlier that people have to understand the complexity of our relationships with China, given the economic entwinement, not only of ourselves with China, but all of our allies and partners in the region as well.

ADM Philip Davidson:

China has a 100-year plan in place. They are some 70 years into it now, and it's fully designed to supplant the United States' role as the global economic leader, as the global military leader, and the diplomatic leader, to enable peace and prosperity in the region. In the military sense, they invest very heavily in sea, air, missile, space, and cyber offenses and defense. And they hope to project that capability to challenge the idea of a free and open Indo-Pacific. They use it in peace time to threaten and coerce our neighbors into submitting to Chinese will in the economic sphere, in the diplomatic sphere, in the information sphere, and things like that. There are direct threats that if other nations do not agree with China's viewpoints, that China will use its entire capability of its nation. Some of those are economic tools. Some of those are cyber tools, certainly the military tool, to cow those nations into submission.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Again, in the military sphere, the threat of air and missile attacks alone from an increasingly capable China should be concerning for everyone of us, and not just my Combatant Command. Riki mentions Space Command as well and General Dickinson. And certainly there are other Combatant Commands that have to be very concerned about China as the priority in the National Security Strategy.

ADM Philip Davidson:

I mentioned earlier that I believe that China represents the greatest long-term strategic threat to security in the 21st century, certainly to the United States. And not only in the Indo-Pacific, but to the entire globe. The Communist Party of China is actively seeking to supplant the established rules-based international order to dictate new international norms and behaviors and new relationships in the region. Our National Defense Strategy recognizes this and has directed our military to retool, after 20 years of counter-insurgency warfare in Southwest Asia, to help protect against these existential threats from peer adversaries, China and Russia, going forward.

ADM Philip Davidson:

In an effort to regain our military advantages in this environment, to support our needs against any peer adversary, we must increase our joint and combined force lethality. Our investments must harness the advanced capabilities provided by a network of leading-edge technologies, such as Integrated Air and Missile Defense, Long Range Precision Fires, joint and coalition command and control networks, and resilient logistics and sustainment networks and suppliers. These capabilities cannot be U.S.-only solutions. US Indo-Pacific command works hand-in-hand with our allies and partners in the region, and indeed across the globe, to ensure advanced capabilities can be part of this deterrent apparatus, and of course could be brought to bear, to fight and win if called upon. Air and Missile Defense alone is a leading area for partner and allied integration with Australia, Japan, and Korea in this AOR, all only Aegis systems, with...

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ADM Philip Davidson:

[inaudible 00:16:00] Aegis systems and with regular rehearsals or training exercises, for employing these systems together. The potential large scale fight with a peer adversary will require all that we can bring to bear of what our joint forces can offer. They must be integrated together eventually at the machine level in a way that we have not been able to do in the past, but is now a requirement. There's a lot of energy out there in develop, ground baking... Excuse me, groundbreaking efforts are underway across the joint force to tackle the challenge of high-end warfare, including air and missile defense against peer adversaries. However, we risk missing opportunities and creating vulnerabilities if emerging service-developed systems are not brought together in a joint system construct. Indeed, air and missile defense going forward is going to require support from the land, from the air, from the sea, from cyber, and from space systems.

ADM Philip Davidson:

And in this theater joint missile defense and all those systems are going to be required to work together to coordinate and prosecute engagements, to maximize the strengths of our forces, minimize the weaknesses of our forces, and to overcome any peer's numerical advantages. The most important action we can take to increase the lethality of the joint force and fully implement the NDS is to introduce a 360-degree persistent air and missile defense capability in Guam in the near term. Or on this U.S. homeland.

It's part of our territory, but also more than just homeland to US Indo-Pacific Command, it is a critical nexus for our command & control, for our sustainment, for our logistics, and for our power projection.

ADM Philip Davidson:

For many in the region, it defines us as a Western Pacific power. By integrating together the best of each services programs of record, under one battle management system, we can close gaps and provide defenses against a mix of advanced air and missile threats with our joint employment. An integrated capability will extend forward to support maneuvering forces as well from Guam, be it Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marine elements, this will help improve the maneuverability and the fires capability of those terrestrial forces. It is all within our near term reach, in my view, and working with the Missile Defense Agency, Vice Admiral Hill, because we are not starting from scratch, but simply bringing together in the near-term the best that the services current and future programs of record have to offer to create the joint effects and link them with the best sensors and the best effectors to achieve the outcomes we need. It's important that we invest now in this missile defense for our most critical force projection platforms in the Pacific to implement the National Defense Strategy.

ADM Philip Davidson:

It's not necessarily about designing or creating a defense subsystem that is impenetrable or invulnerable against the entire missile inventory of a potential adversary. Rather, it is about developing a combat credible deterrent by denying the adversary the ability to quickly, cheaply, and easily knock us out of a fight before it begins. Active defensive, capable of defeating a full range of threat systems are needed to provide the freedom of movement and maneuver necessary to dynamically enable follow-on forces in the region, enable our allies and partners to operate and maneuver, and to be able to fully flow logistics and sustainment.

ADM Philip Davidson:

This raises the threshold required for all of these things, and the system capable of doing that to Guam raises the threshold for an attack by an adversary and creates doubt in his ability to achieve their outcomes and to acceptable levels. It removes any ambiguity around our intentions, the capability, the capacity, the willingness of our allies and partners to respond, but it requires investment in the defenses of Guam at a level commensurate with the adversary we face.

ADM Philip Davidson:

It is also important to acknowledge the other challenge we face in this theater, namely the threat posed by North Korea. North Korea has consistently demonstrated its intent to threaten an attempt to hold its neighbors hostage through its missile arsenal, in an effort to secure favorable concessions from the international community. We must continue to keep pace with a missile threat from North Korea to assure our key allies and partners in the region and to maintain the US-backed peace and stability that has been the defining feature of the region for nearly 70 years, and indeed, has enabled not only peace and prosperity in the Western Pacific but has enabled our prosperity in the United States.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Finally, we must continue to refine command and control systems to ensure we are ready to rapidly make the decisions necessary to win against a highly capable and highly advanced adversaries. Although China is a global actor, conflict is most likely to occur in a regional setting, particularly in the nearest terms and below the level of threshold of our strategic nuclear deterrent. While we can and should

pursue efficiencies and acquisition and monetization and support of our global forces, and for potential employment in homeland defenses, we must prioritize our ability to employ these forces regionally, as well. That enables our joint force lethality, knits together the allies and partners that are so important to the global economy and global peace, and enables all of us to be able to respond against a highly capable adversary.

ADM Philip Davidson:

So, I think I'll cut it there, Riki. I look forward to the questions from you. I appreciate the discussion very much, and I look forward to any insights from the audience, as well, that might help us improve our approach here in the region. I wish you all good health and look forward to the conversation. Thank you very much.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Phil. That was a great presentation. As you mentioned, the 360 degree threat challenges that you face on a fixed site or fixed sites throughout the Pacific, that, in combination with the ballistic missile [defense] capabilities that you have in place for our homeland in Guam against North Korea, how are you and John Hill creating that architect that brings both offense and defense together? Where MDA's a defensive oriented only C2BMC, and where you now going to bring 360 and possibly with ABMS or convergence, or what we demonstrated in Washington, DC, last week, with connecting artillery with aircraft, your F-35s, so you're not a fixed-site problem solution where you can expand that out a little bit to give the opponent a lot more options, or a lot more deterrent capability, by doing that instead of just going fixed site only? Are we looking at expansion of that capability to offense integration and off of that...

Mr. Riki Ellison:

And I just wanted to say, your Aegis ships, as you know, with your aircraft carriers, are the very best in the world, a 360, IMD-layered all the way up, but they're on the water, they're not on land. And that's been a huge issue, or a huge challenge, for our nation to be able to protect those spots on those islands. So, I'm just throwing that out at you and how we best approach that, whether it's from the JADC2 down or from the ground up from what we've got already in place and build out in that way to a cross-domain joint solution.

ADM Philip Davidson:

No, I appreciate that, Riki. First, time is a factor here, the capability as it's grown in both North Korea, but from China significantly, requires us to build from where we are, and my own experience with the Aegis system, looking back over it's nearly 35 years since its inception, what it was originally designed to do and how highly adaptable it's been is critically important. First on the defense side, it brings together the sensor, the network, the command and control, and the effectors, or the interceptors, the missiles, in a way that supersedes any other capability that we have in the past or currently. As originally designed, it was meant to intercept long range bombers before they could launch nuclear weapons at carrier strikers.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Then we evolved that radar to be able to detect cruise missiles breaking over the horizon, 10, 12, 13 feet above the water, and it was successful at being able to intercept that. Then we created the ballistic missile defense capability out of it, and that's bridged all the way now to the capability that we're

currently fielding in baseline nine and 10 systems so that we could do air defense, cruise missile defense, and ballistic missile defense. And the capacity of the magazines that go with that then enables us also, at sea, in the past, to have be able to employ opposite systems like Tomahawk, or the interceptors that we use in air missile and cruise missile defense can be used in offensive roles, as well, and we've tested that in the last few years.

ADM Philip Davidson:

It's important to remember that that system, though, I should say that platform, is just one component of a system that now, going forward, is going to integrate space, cyber, has the capability to integrate THAAD. We've done integration operations with F-35 fighters and the Aegis weapon system. It really opens up the aperture for all the capabilities that we will need going forward and enable not only defenses, but enable all offenses as they are developed, as well. But as I mentioned at the very beginning, and I want to circle all the way around back to it again, time is of the essence, and the capability that we enjoy now in Aegis Ashore systems, solid state radars, baseline 10 capabilities should be our departure point to enable this broadly. Back to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you. That's General Hyten's "speed of relevance" to get this done before the long-term aspects come in. So, with the Aegis Ashore being put in Guam and having now a possibility, or I guess the growth to an offensive capability with that with VLS, how does it now connect to the other applications? Are we waiting for the ABMS? I think there's a ramp up coming into your arena. Or we're going to stay with the Navy solution on this? And to me, you are the lead of everybody, so if we get this right, we do this architecture right, and mixing both Army capabilities, Navy, Air Force capabilities in your defense, that would be now the universal architecture for other AORs in our other combat and commands so we save money instead of doing different designs everywhere around the world.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

This is where I think it's got to start, and you have opportunity here to lead everybody on that, as well as bring the allies in with their capabilities, their NASAMS, their so forth, or what they add to the picture here. So, to that point, where are we? Are we going down that path, or we not going down that path?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Yeah. Thank you for the question, Riki. Again, great question. And I want to link back to something that you said in the introduction, as well. It's been my recommendation that the departure point should be in the Aegis Ashore facility in Guam. You mentioned at the very beginning of our discussion the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, that that was born from here. It actually wasn't born from here. It was a born on the Hill, and I have to give credit to Senator McCain. The PDI is in part of this year's... this coming year, excuse me, the fiscal year 2021 Senate Authorizing Bill. It is not yet law. I don't quite know how it is going to turn out just yet, but the Senate is conferring with the Hill. And when we get a budget, whatever that might be, given the risks or the potential for a continuing resolution, then we'll have a clear sight picture of the PDI, but I want to make sure we give credit to Senator McCain for that.

ADM Philip Davidson:

As I mentioned, I made the recommendation that Aegis Ashore be the beginning of it. I was quite encouraged by the Air Force's discussion this week about ABMS, and I mentioned earlier the long journey we've been on with Aegis. I think all these systems, as we think about sensor networks and the

ability to link them together, and you think about a battle management network that can decide what to do with that information, is critically important. So, CEC and the Navy Cooperative Engagement Capability, NIFC-CA, the Naval Integrated Fires Counter Air Network in the Navy, ABMS, these are all things that are going to contribute and take us to what I hope is JADC2. General Hyten has spoken quite eloquently, I think, on this going forward.

ADM Philip Davidson:

The important thing, I think, for people to understand is there are attributes here that have to be common to all. Right? There has to be a set of standards and protocols so that these systems can work with each other and ensure that we don't have little stove pipes of platforms occupying the battlefield, but we actually have a system that's able to, ultimately, match the best interceptor or offensive weapon with the sensed target with the, one day, artificial intelligence support that will be working hand in hand with the manpower, in the field and at headquarters, so that the right authorities are given at the right time to affect that outcome. But again, we can't take a pause, wait for some perfect solution to manifest itself in 2035 or 2040. We are in the threat environment now. The trajectory of Chinese development since 2012, especially, but certainly throughout the course of the 21st century, the advancements that Russia has made over this past decade-

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ADM Philip Davidson:

- Russia has made over this past decade are critically important for us to move out now, and that's going to require moving with the current systems that we have now and bridging them forward. Back to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

And those are the programs of record that you talked about, that we've got to implement as soon as possible and find ways to make those fixes to go forward. You've got MDA that is somewhat of the acquire of these systems, but they're limited because they're budget driven and they have other AORs or other combat and commands they have to give to. So that's where that Pacific initiative funding is an addition to help that thing move in that direction to be able to get those initial resources to get you going on the program of record, then build out and wait on these future systems to go forward. So thank you for that. I am now going to turn it over to my MDAA board member, the former under secretary, John Rood, who can articulate a little bit better than I can on some of these critical issues that we're talking about, and we also have a couple other of your shipmates involved here as well to help better clarify where the advocacy needs to come from and where the education needs to come from. So, John Rood, could you please step in here, sir?

Mr. John Rood:

Greetings, Admiral Davidson, from Alexandria. I get the honor of trying to synthesize the questions that we've received from the audience, as well as bring it together, and very popular, your remarks. We've got about, I don't know, 10 pages of questions here by quick look that have come in. We could do three or four of these sessions before we get through, but regrettably, we won't have enough time, but one of the things right at the top was you talked about the national defense strategy three years ago, identified China as the greatest long-term threat to the United States' national security, and it talked about, as you did today, that there's been an erosion in US military capabilities in the edge enjoyed by American forces since the last few years. A lot of effort has gone on since the NDS was released. How do you assess the

trend line? In other words, is the United States closing some of the gap and reducing the erosion of that edge? Or is China able to keep pace with the efforts that you and your colleagues are undertaking? I mean, how do you assess the trend? Is it improving, worsening, or is it about the same as it was a few years ago?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Well I made mention at the beginning that China is pursuing a whole-of-nation approach. For many of those in the audience that might be concerned about how they're doing that, what that means actually is China is trying to supplant the United States leadership role, economically, militarily diplomatic role across the globe, and the way to think about that from how China is doing it is they're trying to erode our standing writ large. We're seeing it manifest in the military sphere, and I'll kind of keep the rest of my remarks constrained to that, in four important areas. First, it starts with development and advances in Chinese highly capable systems and weapons. So where are they going? They're building fourth and fifth generation fighters. We have fourth generation fighters. We are developing fifth generation fighters and starting to deploy them to the Western Pacific, like the F-35.

ADM Philip Davidson:

They're developing long range air to air missiles. China is developing maneuvering and hypersonic ballistic missiles. They're building advanced warships like the Renhai cruiser, very similar to the US Ticonderoga-class cruisers. They're building Luyang III: very modernized destroyers, comparable to United States Navy, Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. All these have a wide array of anti-ship, anti-air, anti-submarine weapons and they're putting them in multipurpose launchers, like are very similar to our mark 41 launcher. Second, they're training with these systems and they're doing it in realistic and integrated joint exercise, something that we didn't see in the past. They have a major exercise going on right now, some of which you read about several weeks ago. It was an earlier phase of the exercise and it continues, and they're starting to integrate joint forces across it.

ADM Philip Davidson:

As I mentioned, those include the PLA's rocket force with live fire ballistic-missile shots, and you have to remember, what is their standing when it comes to ballistic missiles? They fire more ballistic missiles in exercise mode than any other nation on the planet. Third, the PLA has restructured, and they did that in 2016 to have better command and control of all of their forces in a joint construct. Similar to how we're organized in the United States military: they have five theater commands now, organized and equipped for very specific mission sets and scenarios, and they, essentially, as I mentioned, mirror the concept of the U.S. geographic combatant commands, as well. Lastly, they're building all domain capability and combat support capability. What does that mean? They are building cyber courses and they're active in cyber attacks, they have space forces, and they're actively pursuing offensive and defensive space capability as well.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Combat support they need to command a control to provide networks, to do logistics, joint intelligence. That's all part of what they're doing. So for many of you, I would recommend the China military power report that came out about a week ago from OSD that articulates quite clearly the capability and capacity gains that China has made over time, but to just dis-aggregate that into these four elements, I think it's important to understand how they're evolving their force, and it's not a static set of capabilities and capacities that China has had during the course of the 21st century. They have greatly expanded in

all of those forces, terrestrial, land, sea and air, cyber and space, what they were capable of at the turn of the century, and I'll leave it at that.

Mr. John Rood:

And as a followup to that, given those advances in China's capabilities, what are the war fighting capabilities that you therefore prioritize the highest, that you need the most given your role as the combatant commander for that region?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Well, I'll speak to the priorities categorically. First is sensing. When you start to think about all the threats in the battle space as they're developing, the speed at which some of these capabilities can be projected, whether it's non-kinetic effects like cyber, or electronic warfare effects like jamming of satellites and things like that, instantaneous speed, hypersonic glide vehicles that may be pursuing at multiple mock speeds. When you're thinking about maneuvering ballistic missiles or cruise missiles coming from on the sea, in the air, or under the sea, this requires a level of sensing that's going to require ... and I spoke to it more directly in a systems sense earlier, but it's going to require a level of sensing in the terrestrial layer, land, air, and sea, in space and in cyber, that then needs to be netted into command and control networks that will allow us to link multiple platforms, again, across all those domains that I just mentioned, with the kind of big data management in a near term, battle management aids in the near term, hopefully in the future artificial intelligence that will enable us to knit together the understanding the command and control across all the systems and pair the best interceptors and effectors, and some of those may be not kinetic effects.

ADM Philip Davidson:

What are the outcomes? And achieve the dominance that will be required to secure our posture, to protect U.S. citizens and interests broadly, but since we fight forward so that we're not fighting in a rampart on the coastlines of the continental United States or here in Hawaii, having that force be able to protect forward, as well as the allies and partners that are so important to the global economy and our economic standing. Back to you.

Mr. John Rood:

Now, of course part of what you talked about in your overview was the role of allies and the US not doing it alone. So you just spoke to some of the highest priority needs that you have from the US to provide that, but obviously then we have these alliance relationships, and one of the ones that there've been several questions about is what do you see happening next in Japan? There's a new Prime Minister there with Mr. Suga replacing Prime Minister Abe. Japan, very relevant for this group, recently made a decision to suspend it's Aegis Ashore a pursuit and was evaluating what to do next, and so a number of the questions were along the lines of what will happen next in Japan overall? What will happen next to Japan on the Aegis Ashore or other missile defense system? And one of the questions that we got from our former CNO, Admiral John Greenert was, is an alternate to Aegis Ashore for Japan something like Aegis Ashore on single-purpose ships or a barge? Or what about a mobile operational base? And so Admiral Greenert is one of several questioners who asked questions along these lines. Can you address that please?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Yeah. No, thank you for the question, John. Certainly with the change in leadership there, Prime Minister Suga just coming to the role and a need to form his cabinet as it goes forward. I think that will be a factor in what I know is a continuing dialogue between Japan and the United States, not only at a government to government level, but at an industry level as well. As you know, Japan, Australia, and South Korea are all partners when it comes to missile defense. They've all demonstrated the capability to field combat credible forces here. We routinely exercise with Japan ballistic missile defenses. We routinely exercise with Korea ballistic missile defenses on the pen, and we routinely train and exercise the three of us together in a trilateral nature. That persists, and importantly, all three of us, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and the United States are partners in the Aegis weapon system and partners in the Patriot system as well.

ADM Philip Davidson:

And not to mention, Japan has been a key partner in the effectors when it comes to SM3 to Alpha, specifically. So these are irreplaceable contributions, and when we think about the network of defenses that protects the continental United States and Hawaii from a rogue threat in North Korea, the United States has radars in Japan, and I would submit that Aegis Ashore capability in Japan would augment that capability in a way that would be very, very powerful for the defense of Japan, for its deterrent posture, and for the network of allies and partners that are trying to preserve the international order and the global economy going forward. There's a lot to understand here. As the cabinet gets set in Japan, we'll continue this completely-transparent collaboration and coordination when it comes to missile defense, and frankly, just about everything we do in Western Pacific with Japan, and look forward to advancing that discussion as things settle out there.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

And Phil, can I ask about India? That seems to be a major ally, if we could get that type of deterrent or work with them in some of the defensive technologies and offensive capabilities. I know they're not aligned, but can you speak to that a little bit? Are we developing a relationship with them?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Advancing our relationship with India is a high priority, not only for us here at Indo-Pacific Command, but I would submit for the Department of Defense as well, if I could be so bold. We have cooperated in a service-to-service basis in the past, but I can tell you that I spend more time consulting with the Indian chief of defense than, I think, any of my predecessors were able to do, speaking with him just as recently as a couple of weeks ago. Certainly Chinese malign activities along the border between India and China creates, I think, understanding in India of the profound malign influence that's not focused -from China- on the U.S. alone, but on China and on it's partners ... or not partners, but it's not only it's nearest abroad, but the globe, going forward. India is very proud of it's non-aligned policy. I've been encouraged by the connections that have happened at the government at the ministerial level. There's talk about ministerial-level dialogue between India, United States, Japan, and Australia, going forward. I've been encouraged by the amount of U.S. weapons that India actually buys. Some 70% of all of their foreign sales hook back to the United States alone. People have to recognize that for a long time, their investments were born from the Soviet Union and the relationship with Russia. They still have -

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ADM Philip Davidson:

From the Soviet Union and the relationship with Russia, they still have some legacy capabilities there that they have to sustain that would require them to continue to populate those things. But when it comes to new systems, India is reaching out to us. One of the key systems, again, not a missile defense system, but when we talk about sensing broadly, our ability to tactically and operationally cooperate in maritime domain awareness and maritime patrol aircraft, specifically like the P-8, I think has opened India's eyes to the benefits of a closer relationship with the United States. And I think it would behoove the United States. And it's certainly part of our portfolio here to help advance that relationship going forward. Back to you.

Mr. John Rood:

Admiral Davidson, can I take you back to your comments on Guam? Quite a few questions were submitted that touch on parts of that, and I'll try to synthesize them along the lines of, you talked about the importance of defense of Guam to the United States and the defense against a missile attack. I assume you mean that that would include cruise missile attack and hypersonic missile attack, 360 degrees. Where do you see that going next in terms of the next steps on that? For instance, one of the related questions that was asked about, in general, what happens next to you've talked about a departure point being Aegis Ashore.

Mr. John Rood:

So what should we expect to be the process for the department to consider that going forward? There's the part about the system architecture and the system that would be developed. One of the questions we got also was, given that MDA is leading the analysis of alternatives for the defense of Guam, who do you see manning the system, or the systems, assuming it'd be broader than a single thing, to defend Guam? Would that be the Army, the Navy, National Guard, contractors, how do you see all that coming together? And, really, several of the other questions essentially just get at different parts of that basic piece. Could you address that please?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Yeah, I guess for your last point, I'm somewhat agnostic about who mans it. Every one of the services is involved in missile defense, and as SpaceCom comes along and CYBERCOM comes along, they're going to have capabilities that are going to be important to integrate into this posture, as well. So, I'll set that aside for just a moment. The other thing that's going to be required... Excuse me, not required, but to continue to understand, is the defense of Guam is going to be an all the main thing as well, right? It's not all about just missile attack. The kind of experience that we had in World War II that it took to protect our logistics, our sustainment, movement of personnel, all that other kind of stuff has to be a component of this.

ADM Philip Davidson:

But that system, acting in a terminal defense role for an area with so much defense investment into it, multiple submarines, the maintenance to do the submarines, bombers, multiple airfields. What the Marine's ambition is to grow to several thousand troops there, the U.S. citizens that populate the island of Guam. There are billions of dollars in defense capability on Guam at this moment. There are billions of dollars programmed by the United States and Japan to advance those capabilities, offensive, and command and control, sustainment, and all that stuff, in Guam. There needs to be some investment in defending that, as well. And I think that's where Aegis Ashore is a critical system. And again, to me, Aegis Ashore, temporally, is the capability that must be there now to dissuade and deter the threat. It is also

our gateway to the future and links to other systems that are either in a concept phase right now, or in development, that might help that missile defense in the future.

Mr. John Rood:

One of the related followup questions was, of course, you have THADD on Guam today, what's your degree of concern about other threats to things like that, such as drones, UAVs? And then, another related question that we received was, what about the Chinese cruise-missile threat and your ability to deal with that beginning in Guam, but elsewhere, and what do you need for that capability?

ADM Philip Davidson:

Yeah, the threat of drones and UASs is a threat to all our defense capability, down to the individual soldier. And our ability to defend against those things are going to be required to be resourced and defended against, there's no doubt about it. The trajectory of Chinese submarine deployments is going to require 360 degree protection of Guam going forward. And we're starting to see farther afield deployments of Chinese submarines on a routine basis. So that becomes critical. THADD, right now, fixed to the ground and possessing only 120-degree arc of sensing, it was pointed at North Korea to defend against a rogue North Korea threat. And, frankly, that's the capability that that system there has. It's going to require a much deeper, 360 degree persistent capability. And I think the most efficient system for that, and what I've recommended to the department, is Aegis Ashore Guam to provide that 360 degree threat, and to provide the magazines that would enable cruise missile defense, ballistic missile defense, hopefully, maneuvering ballistic missile defense in the very, very nearest term, and bridging us to hypersonic defenses in the future. Back to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Phil, would you consider, is hypersonic offense coming in that application to create the ultimate deterrent, regionally? Hypersonic offense that would coordinate with this as power projection with this architecture? And I would suppose hypersonic defense has got to come in, as well.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Yeah, I certainly think that this is the gateway to hypersonic defenses. It's going to require... I'm getting a little concerned that you're talking to me about a single platform. I'm talking about an important node that's going to be required in the system of defenses, not only for Guam, but for the protection of the joint force, writ large. That's going to require other capabilities, as well. The department and INDOPACOM is highly interested in long range precision fires.

ADM Philip Davidson:

This is an asymmetry right now. You asked me at the very beginning of this discussion about areas in which China might have an advantage. China has a profound advantage in ballistic missiles against the United States. They also have a profound advantage in ground launch cruise missiles. We have to get into that offensive fires game, as well, and a system like Aegis Ashore, with its magazines, its sensors, its command and control capability, would have the potential to provide for offensive systems, also.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Back to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

We have about a couple of minutes. So if you want to wrap up or ask a last question, you could have some closing remarks and we'll give it to Admiral Davidson for his closing remarks.

Mr. John Rood:

Well, just one thing in combining both of those, one exit question and then summing up. First of all, I think listening to you talk, Admiral Davidson, it's clear the broad sweep of the number of challenges across the most critical area of operation for the United States, in terms of America's security, and where the economy of the United States and our military and political interests lie. So thank you for taking on that big challenge. And where you ended was transition from defenses, but also offenses. And some of the big muscle movements have been things like withdraw the United States from the INF Treaty to give you some greater flexibility. Maybe you could just sum up about how does that offense, defense mix look to you? Do you think some of the allies in the region would be willing to host intermediate range defenses? What is the prospect of you getting the right capabilities in place that the allies also have companion capabilities so that the edge that you talked about eroding, we can start to see that reverse itself? Just as an exit question, sir. And thank you for doing this.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Thanks very much for the question, John. Certainly every nation is going to make a policy decision of their own on the hosting of capabilities, or their own indigenous development of that. The asymmetry that exists when it comes to the vast capacity that China possesses when it comes to land-based, ground-based cruise missiles, and ground-based conventional missiles, where they're headed with ground-based hypersonic missiles presents an offensive threat throughout the region that is alarming not only to the United States, but certainly all our allies and partners there, as well. Our ability to deter use of those systems cannot be solely dependent on missile defenses. We have to raise the cost of entry for China to employ such weapons. That's going to require closing that asymmetry that they enjoy right now. This is not to underplay what our air and maritime capability in United States brings to bear.

ADM Philip Davidson:

But we have to be thinking in terms of the total joint force capability, how that joint force needs to be modernized in order to sustain an advantage in the theater, and protect not only the United States, but our allies and partners, and our interests abroad. So I'll leave it there. Thanks very much for the question, though, John. I appreciate it. Riki, over to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Phil. What a great presentation. Just a great education to all of us on the levels and depth of both the threat and where we're going. We're going to the right place, you've called it out, it's happening there. All of us, I think, are in agreement in the support that you need to get it done and to move forward as fast as you can, and to build off this as the leading example in the world on how to best deter the threats that you face out there.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

You're a great example, sir. Thank you for your time. It was awesome to see this and have you take some of your time to talk about this specific issue. Thank you very much.

ADM Philip Davidson:

Thank you, Riki. I appreciate the opportunity and I have to thank you for the Advocacy Alliance's engagement, for your foresight of thinking on bringing all of us together: government, industry, the military... On these issues, and for asking such insightful and helpful questions along the way. I hope the time was useful to you and your audience. And I look forward to seeing you again, and another opportunity to doing this. Thank you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Admiral.

Mr. John Rood:

Great job.

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