**House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith**

**Opening Statement - Prepared**

**Full Committee Hearing on Readying the U.S. Military for Future Warfare**

**January 30, 2018**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome our witnesses today and to thank them for sharing their views. Their testimony will be beneficial as we continue to evaluate the recently released National Defense Strategy and the future conflicts our military could confront.

In the future, our country will continue to face a range of national security challenges. The international rules-based order is threatened in a variety of ways by Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations, such as ISIL and al Qaeda.

The threats posed by Russia are especially concerning. Russia is seeking to weaken liberal democratic institutions in order to promote authoritarianism. Russia has meddled in electoral processes, has adopted a revanchist posture in Europe, used influence operations for malign intent, and systematically pursued efforts to undermine alliances and partnerships of which we are a part. Deterring Russia will require working in close cooperation with our partners and allies in Europe. We cannot face these threats alone. Cooperation with allies and partners will be essential to deter future conflict and successfully implement the National Defense Strategy as envisioned.

The United States must concentrate its efforts on countering this threat. As the National Defense Strategy accurately asserts, long-term strategic competition and our national security involves much more than defense. We must adopt whole-of-government approaches to strengthening our defenses and meeting future challenges. Just as addressing violent extremism requires more than military force, future challenges will almost certainly continue to require addressing the political, economic, and social conditions that fuel them.

Such a whole-of-government approach is essential to successfully implementing the National Defense Strategy’s line of effort to expand partnerships and strengthen alliances. That said, the Administration must now demonstrate that alliances and partnerships are a priority at the highest levels through cooperative efforts, support for diplomacy and development, and by ensuring that State Department and USAID programs receive adequate funding.

Further, fiscal certainty is required to successfully implement the National Defense Strategy and build the force to meet the challenges that the spectrum of capabilities future warfare may present. Long-term planning requires a reliably funded, comprehensive, long-term national budget. We have not yet seen the President’s request for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2019 but, if press speculation is accurate, it could once again exceed the budgetary caps imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (the BCA).

I continue to believe that Congress should eliminate sequestration and lift the BCA caps. I also believe that defense dollars should not come at the expense of the non-defense accounts. As I’ve said before, investments in diplomatic efforts, foreign assistance programs, and emergency preparedness are just as important to our national security as traditional defense spending. We also need to invest in infrastructure, research and innovation, energy solutions, education, health care, and many other facets of enduring national strength.

If we truly care about making sure that our troops have enough money, we need to make tough budget choices. If the national defense strategy exceeds the amount of money we have, the ones left holding the bag are our troops. They are the ones who are asked to train and execute missions that they are not adequately resourced and equipped to perform. As but one example, the $1.2 trillion nuclear weapons enterprise expansion is devoid of any budget realism or realistic planning. When you look at the national defense strategy along with all of the government programs that the public wants funded, they are beyond the amount of money that we have.

As we look to the future, we need review our investments and take actions that will yield savings or raise revenues. We have a duty to manage our country's resources responsibly in fielding an effective military. We must invest wisely when it comes to national security and take a hard look at spending. Our overall strategic approach must coherently match our national security goals with the resources necessary to support them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses.

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