Adapting Forces to a New Era: Ten Transforming Concepts

by Hans Binnendijk and Richard L. Kugler

Overview
A key Department of Defense goal is to build highly capable forces whose mastery of high-tech warfighting will allow decisive victories against new threats and well-armed opponents in future operations. A set of new operational concepts, many of which have surfaced in the ongoing defense strategy review, may facilitate this goal. They focus on rapid and decisive operations in distant theaters rather than on homeland defense. As generic concepts for future warfighting, they offer valuable insights on combat capabilities that should be acquired. Before these principles can be adopted, they must be scrutinized on their individual merits and integrated to provide balanced guidance to force development.

New operational concepts must be embedded in a sensible transformation strategy that should be carried out in measured, purposeful ways. The strategy should focus on the mid term, during which new threats may appear but entirely new forces will not be able to be built. The standard of preparing for two regional wars should be replaced with one that focuses on capabilities for the widening spectrum of conflict and operations in new geographic locations. A three-theater standard should be adopted that readies forces to wage one big war in any single theater while also having sufficient assets for medium-sized strike missions and traditional operations elsewhere. Transformation should strive to create adaptable forces that can handle shifting challenges, unfamiliar missions, and periodic strategic surprises.

It should produce a future posture dominated by improved legacy forces but including some ultra-high-tech forces for special missions. If new operational concepts are capable of producing such forces and capabilities, they may deserve serious consideration.

Ten new operational concepts have emerged as candidates for inclusion in transformation and Joint Vision 2020. These concepts focus on building better forces for multiple purposes and employing these forces in specific ways. If the concepts are adopted, creating combat and support forces for them will require programmatic measures. Many of the concepts can be pursued by reorganizing existing forces, continuing normal modernization, or acquiring new information systems and smart munitions. Nonetheless, they will require some budget increases plus a resource strategy that responds to fiscal constraints. Investing wisely in a full set of new concepts will produce stronger forces than focusing on a few concepts in ways that deprive others of funds. The combination of new concepts, not any of them individually, offers promise for the future. Moreover, these concepts, which focus on creating high-tech strike forces, must be accompanied by capabilities for low-intensity conflict and by investments in such often-overlooked areas as logistic support, bases and infrastructure, maintenance, and war reserves.

Pursuing Change and Transformation
Senior Department of Defense (DOD) officials have publicly stated that creating improved force capabilities for new operational
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concepts is a key goal of transformation. But what new concepts should be embraced? How are they to work together to create operationally capable forces for the future? This paper identifies potential candidates that might help answer these questions. The term operational concept is used in a similar manner to its use in Joint Vision 2020 (JV2020). An operational concept can be defined as an idea or construct to help determine how U.S. forces are employed for warfighting, as opposed to using them for such broader political-strategic purposes as reassuring allies and dissuading adversaries. An integrated family of such concepts can provide guidance for building improved forces with desired characteristics and for using them in combat missions to carry out commander-in-chief campaign plans in the conflicts ahead.

JV2020 puts forth a set of operational concepts, general and specific, for this purpose. While they remain valid, the recent DOD defense strategy review and other writings have generated a new set of 10 candidates for inclusion not only in JV2020 but also in the Defense Planning Guidance, service plans, operations, and military support, and other documents. This paper examines them individually and as a whole. Along with identifying these concepts, it endeavors to portray their main features, to briefly evaluate possible roles in transformation, and to suggest strengths and weaknesses. This paper does not provide the in-depth treatment needed to make decisions about these concepts.

But it does call for them to be studied carefully because they may have an important impact on the course of transformation.

In previous writings about the implications of change and transformation, the authors analyzed how DOD can broaden the two-major theater war (two-MTW) standard and addressed how it can manage change by pursuing a balanced combination of capability, adaptability, and transformation. This paper can best begin by briefly recapitulating the three main arguments of these earlier papers, for they offer a strategic framework for assessing new operational concepts.

- DOD should pursue transformation neither slowly nor impulsively, but in a purposeful and measured way. It should focus on the mid term, when new threats may appear but entirely new forces will not be able to be built. A mid-term focus helps bridge the critical gap between near-term plans to maintain high readiness and long-term efforts to create new platforms and forces as exotic technologies become available.
- DOD should adopt a three-theater standard that prepares forces and capabilities for one large regional war in a variety of places while maintaining one medium-sized cluster for high-tech strike missions and another for infantry combat, peace enforcement, and similar traditional missions.
- DOD should strive to build adaptable forces. Instead of focusing on a few fixed plans, it should create forces that can handle a widening spectrum of contingencies in new geographic locations. Such forces should have the modularity to combine in different ways, allowing them to adjust to changes in strategic conditions.

Enacting transformation carefully and deliberately is more logical than either crawling slowly ahead while clinging to the status quo or prematurely pursuing technologies whose time has not yet come. Such a transformation should focus on the mid term of 5 to 15 years because newly emerging threats and dangers could take shape then in ways that existing U.S. military forces might not be able to handle. Improved operational capabilities will be needed, but exotic new technologies will not yet be fully available. A mid-term focus calls for DOD to pursue transformation in ways that blend continuity and change. It helps empower near-term improvements with more farsighted vision, and it helps set the stage for determining how long-term transformation can best take shape. By acquiring such new fighter aircraft as the F–22, the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), and the F/A–18 E/F, for example, U.S. forces gain the experience with emerging weapons that will better enable them to judge requirements for the following generation of technologies.

A mid-term focus adds weight to the case for moving beyond the two-MTW standard. This standard served well over the past decade, but the future seems destined to present both different wars in unfamiliar places and better-armed threats than those mounted by medium-sized rogue states in the 1990s. The purpose of a new standard is not to reduce U.S. forces but to make better use of existing forces. Above all, U.S. forces cannot be so rigidly committed to two improbable wars that they are unavailable for other conflicts that could erupt in many places (for example, along the unstable Southern Belt that stretches from southeastern Europe, through the greater Middle East/Persian Gulf, and along the Asia littoral). A new standard that prepares for a single big war in a variety of places and provides two medium-sized force packages—one high tech, the other traditional—will better prepare U.S. forces for the wide spectrum of crises ahead without losing a capability for waging two MTWs if necessary.

Building adaptable forces is a logical accompaniment to broadening defense plans beyond the two-MTW standard. The idea is not new: JV2020 explicitly endorses a focus on flexible, agile forces for the future. U.S. combat forces already possess substantial adaptability as a result of their diversity and multiple capabilities. But adequate adaptability in the future should not be taken for granted. The coming era may require the Armed Forces to handle numerous surprises and to carry out complex operations with a variety of force packages. Operational plans and service programs must be carefully prepared to ensure that the combat forces can be swiftly combined to generate new, responsive joint packages capable of handling each crisis. Equally important, mobility forces and logistic support forces must also be prepared with adaptability, modularity, and innovative responses in mind.

**The coming era may require the Armed Forces to handle numerous surprises and to carry out complex operations with a variety of force packages**

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A mid-term focus on adaptability likely will produce a future posture that combines legacy forces and ultra-high-tech forces. For example, legacy forces might characterize 80 to 90 percent of the posture. But owing to transformation, they will be restructured and equipped with new information systems and weapons now emerging from the research and development pipeline. Ultra-high-tech forces, equipped with new platforms and exotic systems, might comprise only 10 to 20 percent of the posture, but they will provide invaluable niche capabilities for especially important, demanding missions. Some proponents judge that in the future posture, ultra-high-tech forces might provide the tip of the spear and improved legacy forces furnish multiple powerful shafts. If this metaphor illuminates the future, U.S. defense strategy and forces will be endowed to deal with strategic challenges in the early 21st century.

**New Operational Concepts**

If a purposeful transformation is to succeed in changing U.S. forces wisely, it must be guided by sound operational concepts. The term *operational concept* here means a construct for guiding how U.S. forces should be prepared, deployed, and employed for combat missions and warfighting. Normally, a single concept covers one domain of operations. An integrated family of concepts must therefore be created to craft a composite strategic theory of force operations covering all services and missions. If defense transformation remains anchored in old concepts, it risks perpetuating the status quo even if it alters forces and weapons. But if transformation is guided by concepts that grapple with the coming era, it acquires greater promise of producing meaningful changes. Designing and installing new concepts entail risks, but the adoption of good concepts can unlock the door to continued U.S. military superiority.

The critical role of operational concepts can be illuminated by briefly recalling past transformations. The nuclear transformation of the 1950s was driven by a single design that proved short-sighted. Nuclear war was dangerous, but not necessarily the way of the future. Nuclear transformation was anchored in old concepts, it risks perpetuating the status quo even if it alters forces and weapons. But if transformation is guided by concepts that grapple with the coming era, it acquires greater promise of producing meaningful changes. Designing and installing new concepts entail risks, but the adoption of good concepts can unlock the door to continued U.S. military superiority.

New concepts entail risks, but the adoption of good concepts can unlock the door to continued U.S. military superiority.

The new operational concepts fall into two categories, each of which has five members. The first category provides concepts primarily for building transformed forces through new technologies and reengineering of structures. Because of their general characteristics, such forces could be employed in combat in different ways depending upon commander-in-chief needs. The second category provides guidance on more specific ways to employ these forces in crises and wars. These 10 concepts are:

- **Power projection and rapid reinforcement** called for a better capacity to deploy U.S. forces swiftly to Europe, Asia, and the Persian Gulf.
- **Maritime supremacy** called for the Navy to switch from defensive missions to offensive operations aimed at seizing the seas of enemy blue-water navies.
- **Expeditionary operations** encouraged the Marine Corps to evolve beyond amphibious assault to become a more flexible, multi-purpose force.
- **Multimission air operations** led the Air Force to move beyond air defense to pursue interdiction, close air support, and other contributions to the land battle.
- **Operational art** led the Army to move away from linear defense toward mobile reserves, maneuver, and powerful counterattacks. Air-land battle, in turn, provided a concept for coordinating ground and air missions in attacking enemy forces.

**JV2020** currently provides the main intellectual leadership for defense planning. Focused on joint operations for full-spectrum dominance, its core strategic concepts call for decisive force, power projection, overseas presence, and strategic agility. Employing this strategic architecture, the key operational concepts of **JV2020** include information superiority, dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full-dimension protection, and focused logistics. Within the armed services, the concepts of rapid decisive operations and effects-based operations have also gained favor. While **JV2020** remains valid, recent defense reviews and other assessments have produced 10 new operational concepts that are potential candidates for inclusion. Each of them is significant individually, but seen collectively, their importance grows. To the extent they withstand close scrutiny, they offer potent ideas for guiding transformation in new directions that could produce large strategic benefits.

Virtually all of these concepts focus on keeping U.S. forces superior to future adversaries; most do so through acquiring new technologies and systems. They are anchored in the judgment that future adversary forces will be stronger than they are now, will have access to information-era systems, and will employ asymmetric strategies to help foil U.S. operations. In particular, these concepts assume that enemy forces will launch swiftly unfolding strikes to win quickly before U.S. forces can converge on the scene. As a result, these concepts call upon U.S. forces to deploy swiftly and to win quickly and decisively, with minimum U.S. and allied casualties. They thus seek to dominate future wars by controlling them, defeating enemy forces operationally and destroying them, occupying key territory, and producing favorable political outcomes.

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- joint response strike forces for early entry operations
- enhanced information systems and space-based assets for force networking
- accelerated deployment of theater missile defenses for force protection
- realigned overseas presence and better strategic mobility for swift power projection
- interoperable allied forces for multilateral operations
- maritime littoral operations for projecting power ashore
- standoff targeting and forcible entry for antiaccess/area denial threats
- enhanced tactical deep strikes for joint air operations
Defense

decisive close combat operations and deep maneuver for ground forces

deliberate and sustained operations.

Joint response strike forces for early entry operations. This concept is anchored by the premise that U.S. forces must become better at deploying to a crisis during its critical initial days and weeks. It calls for configuring a portion of the military posture for rapid deployment as well as the demanding set of defensive and offensive operations that take place in the early stages, often in the face of enemy surprise attacks aimed at winning before U.S. reinforcements arrive. The resulting strike forces would be highly capable of counterterrorist operations as well as a wide spectrum of other missions, including against well-armed opponents. Some proponents argue that this concept could result in the creation of standing joint task forces in the major theater commands and the continental United States (CONUS), charged with deploying rapidly and fighting aggressively.

Regardless of command arrangements, this concept calls for joint forces configured for early entry that are capable of halting the attack, seizing the initiative by degrading enemy forces, striking such critical targets as weapons of mass destruction (WMD) systems, and securing rear areas for reinforcements. To its proponents, the strength of this concept is that it could focus defense planning on tip-of-the-spear forces. However, it could result in insufficient attention to follow-on reinforcements that also could be critical to winning.

Because forces must begin arriving within 2 to 4 days of a decision to deploy and must complete deployment within 30 days, they must be highly ready, capable of moving rapidly, and unencumbered by ponderous logistics. Limited in size and often outnumbered, these forces must be equipped with advanced information systems, modernized weapons, and ultra-tech systems that provide high lethality, survivability, and tactical flexibility. Air forces would require stealthy interceptors and fighter bombers, supported by airborne warning and control systems and joint surveillance and target radar attack systems (JSTARS), and ample stocks of ultra-smart munitions. For example, 3 to 6 fighter wing equivalents, backed by strategic bombers, could be needed. Naval forces must have potent littoral capabilities for initially defending zones of joint operations, supporting troop movements ashore, and bombarding enemy forces from long distances. A carrier battlegroup, an amphibious ready group, and other specialized combatants normally will be needed. Ground forces must be capable of protecting airbases and seaports, conducting active reconnaissance of enemy forces, and engaging in blocking actions and limited meeting engagements when necessary. Other units that probably will be necessary are light mechanized forces—light enough to deploy swiftly but strong enough for intense combat—or lean armored units, coupled with air assault and deep fire assets (at least a division and preferably a corps).

The recent effort to accelerate deployment of theater missile defenses is a major departure in U.S. defense strategy and an important part of transformation. This concept calls for accelerated efforts to develop new, high-tech systems that could further enhance combat operations. Its ultimate goal is to fully network all joint forces so they can work together in conducting high-speed, simultaneous, and decisive operations. This network would bring all forces—across all services and missions, from top to bottom of the command structure—into close contact in ways providing high coordination even if the forces themselves are widely distributed. The concept calls for a network of interlocking information grids that provide dominant battlespace awareness: an intelligence grid, a communications grid, an engagement grid, and a logistics support grid. It also requires strong information warfare assets: the capacity to defend U.S. networks against enemy attacks and to degrade enemy networks.

This concept also envisions greater use of space-based assets. Modernized satellites for communications, navigation, and intelligence surveillance will be needed, with systems capable of operating in all weather conditions and linked directly to the deployed forces. Also envisioned is a global satellite system that provides near-real-time targeting data: a JSTARS in space. In the short term, weapons in space likely will be limited to missile defense systems, but in the distant future, other strike assets and transport systems might be deployed there. Greater reliance on space will necessitate defensive systems for protecting against enemy interference, coupled with capabilities to degrade enemy use of space. The overall strength of this concept is its capacity to move U.S. forces more boldly into the information age with technologies that enemies will be hard pressed to match any time soon. But preoccupation with information systems and space should not come at the expense of neglecting combat forces and weapons. Seeing the battlefield better than the enemy sees it does not itself guarantee victory.

Accelerated deployment of theater missile defenses for force protection. The recent effort to accelerate deployment of theater missile defenses is a major departure in U.S. defense strategy and an important part of transformation. Currently, public attention is focused on national missile defenses (NMD) and other homeland defense measures. The deployment of theater air and missile defenses (TMD), nonetheless, may be more important for facilitating overseas military operations. Whereas NMD will protect U.S. territory, TMD will protect U.S. forces in war zones from attack by theater ballistic missiles and cruise missiles armed with WMD or conventional warheads. TMD also will help protect allied countries and their forces. Several systems are presently being developed. Lower-tier systems that provide defense against short-range missiles include the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 and the Navy Area Defense System. Upper-tier systems defend large areas against medium- and intermediate-range missiles; included are theater high altitude area defense, the Navy Theater Wide system, and airborne lasers.
The combination of a realigned overseas presence and better mobility for swift power projection offers promise in the mid term.
campaigns. In the coming years, these naval missions may be conducted against enemies that likely will possess missiles, mines, and submarines capable of threatening U.S. ships. In addition, naval forces, supported by joint assets, will be operating along the vast littoral from Southwest Asia to Northeast Asia for the strategic purposes of reassuring allies and friends, protecting critical sealanes and commerce zones, dissuading China from excess geopolitical ambitions, and carrying out counterterrorist missions.

The combination of heightened threats and Asian littoral missions has spawned debate over the Navy’s future. One issue is the size of the Navy: whether its current number of ships (310) should stay level, grow, or decline as a result of slow shipbuilding. Another issue is the nature of future ships: whether big carriers and traditional combatants should dominate, or if the Navy should procure such platforms as smaller carriers, Streetfighter and other small littoral ships, the DD–21 destroyer for projecting power ashore, big surface ships and submarines with many cruise missiles, and mobile offshore platforms.

A third issue is political: determining how to employ Asian littoral operations in a manner that advances U.S. interests and regional stability, rather than inflaming an already tense situation. Resolving these issues wisely will be key not only to charting the course of the Navy but also to carrying out U.S. defense strategy and foreign policy in an era of accelerating globalization.

**Standoff targeting and forcible entry for antiaccess/area denial threats.** This operational concept is focused on overpowering antiaccess/area denial threats so that U.S. forces can gain decisive entry into hot crisis zones. Its two components are intended to work together on behalf of the same strategic purpose. Whereas standoff targeting helps suppress enemy defenses, forcible entry operations complete the job and establish U.S. forces at forward locations in the crisis zone.

Standoff targeting involves using strategic bombers, cruise missiles, and future exotic systems to bomb enemy targets from long distances in wartime. Using strategic bombers to support theater campaigns is hardly new: the United States employed B–52s in Vietnam and made significant use of bombers and cruise missiles in *Desert Storm* and Kosovo. The idea has gained added prominence recently for two reasons. Some analysts fear that in future conflicts, U.S. forces either will lack access to forward bases and infrastructure or will be unable to operate safely against enemy antiaccess/area denial threats. In addition, the existing force of nearly 200 bombers and ships with cruise missiles can generate up to one-quarter of the military air-delivered firepower. The growing accuracy of smart munitions is giving them the capacity to carry out lethal bombardment campaigns independently from rear bases and outside enemy threat envelopes. A key effect can be to help suppress enemy defenses, thereby allowing other U.S. forces to converge. The time has arrived to make full use of these increasingly effective assets in U.S. plans for future theater war.

Standoff targeting clearly has a contributing role to play in future defense strategy. At issue is whether it should be supplemental to traditional forward-deployed forces or instead central in ways that replace these forces. Arguments against relying too heavily on this concept are severalfold. Abandoning forward commitments in favor of rearward stationing could unnerve allies and friends that rely on U.S. security guarantees, while signaling adversaries that the United States is losing the willpower to resist them. Some analysts dispute the notion that forward bases will regularly be lacking, and they assert that future enemy threats can be readily overcome by counteractions. Relying heavily on standoff targeting could necessitate a big increase in associated forces, perhaps necessitating more B–2 bombers and cruise missile ships in numbers that divert major funds from other combat forces.

Forcible entry asserts that U.S. military strategy should remain anchored in forward operations but acknowledges that future antiaccess/area denial threats will necessitate a concerted effort to become better at directly inserting combat forces in the face of concerted opposition. Supporting this concept is historical legacy. U.S. forces have been operating successfully against such threats since World War II. The threat posed by Soviet forces during the Cold War was considerably more potent than that likely to be mounted by future rivals any time soon. Nonetheless, the combination of enemy ballistic missiles and cruise missiles, submarines and mines, and WMD systems means that future crisis interventions in the Persian Gulf and Asia will be more difficult than those of the past decade, when little opposition to U.S. deployments was encountered.

Forcible entry will require a joint, coordinated effort by all services. The challenge will be to improve the forces in ways that are effective, balanced, and affordable. Better standoff targeting and other strike assets will be needed to help suppress enemy defenses. The Navy will require better networked defenses against cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, and other threats. The Air Force and Army will need to become proficient at swiftly deploying stealthy air interceptors and enhanced Patriot batteries. The Army and Marines will need to be able to deploy light, dispersible forces in the early stages. Airfields, ports, and other infrastructure will require hardening. Improved capabilities will be needed for offshore logistics and force projection into unprepared areas. Often lost in the clamor for expensive programs in this arena is recognition that better allied forces potentially can carry much of the early defense load, thereby easing the forcible entry challenge for U.S. forces.

**Enhanced tactical deep strikes for joint air operations.** This concept aims at upgrading the capacity of forward-committed U.S. forces to conduct lethal air bombardment of enemy formations in their rear areas, behind the front lines. While strategic bombers and cruise missiles can help, a deep strike campaign will be carried out primarily by tactical air forces, multiple launch rocket systems with Army tactical missile systems, attack helicopters, and long-range artillery. Major progress has been made recently in strengthening the Armed Forces in this arena, but further gains are possible. JSTARS and navigational satellites permit near-real-time targeting, including against mobile ground forces. Such munitions as joint air-to-surface standoff missiles, joint direct attack munitions, joint standoff
weapons, sensor-fused weapons/Skeet, and brilliant antiarmor submunitions permit highly accurate, lethal strikes against a wide spectrum of targets, including armored vehicles. The F–22, JSF, and F/A–18 E/F provide stealthy aircraft for suppressing enemy air defenses and carrying out major bombardment using the full spectrum of modern munitions. As unmanned aerial vehicles and unmanned combat aerial vehicles mature, they will be useful complements to these combat aircraft.

As these systems are acquired, deep strike campaigns will become an increasingly important part of operational strategy for keeping enemy forces at bay, destroying them rapidly, and winning wars decisively. Effects-based targeting can help determine optimal ways for allocating strikes against enemy forces, infrastructure, and industry, thereby further enhancing the effectiveness of deep strikes. Although deep strikes normally can help defeat enemy forces, they cannot win wars on their own. Strong ground combat forces also will be needed, especially if the weather is bad, terrain is difficult, the enemy must be overpowered in a few days, or territory must be occupied. For deep strike campaigns to succeed, smart munitions must be available in adequate quantities, and air forces must have the support assets and spares needed to generate high sortie rates. Because shortfalls already exist, buying sufficient stocks of smart munitions is a critical priority. Modernization with new combat aircraft is important, but the high cost of buying several thousand new models will necessitate a resource strategy of phased procurements to ensure affordability.

Decisive close combat operations and deep maneuver for ground forces. This concept focuses on ways to strengthen Army and Marine forces for close combat and deep counter-thrusts so that they can maintain superiority over enemy forces in situations where crushing, fast-paced ground campaigns are needed, accompanied perhaps by war-termination efforts that occupy enemy territory. Currently, active Army forces provide four light divisions (infantry, airborne, and air assault) and six heavy divisions (armored and mechanized). In its interim force plan, the Army intends to reconfigure six brigades with light armored vehicles so they can deploy rapidly, including aboard tactical air transports. In pursuing its objective force over the long term, the Army plans to create new fighting vehicles that will replace heavy tanks and artillery tubes with lighter weapons that have comparable firepower and survivability. This vision depends heavily on major progress in exploratory research and development programs that will take years to develop, and even then it probably will have serious trouble creating new ground weapons that are light but survivable, powerful, and embedded in protective systems. Until then, the Army may be well served by anchoring its plans on interim forces, keeping its tanks and other weapons, and making better use of prepositioning to deploy faster than it does now. Heavy forces with prepositioned equipment often can deploy faster than light forces (with no prepositioning) from CONUS.

Some critics argue that the present focus on technology should be accompanied by continuing efforts to reorganize and reengineer Army force structures. Progress in this area could help reduce multiple Army command layers and large logistic support assets while creating new combat formations for swift maneuvers and decisive strikes in joint operations. The Army and Marines are not pursuing near-term modernization with full suites of new weapons, but they are pursuing some new systems—for example, the Comanche helicopter, the Crusader artillery tube, the V–22 Osprey, and upgraded tanks and infantry fighting vehicles. Progress in these programs will be needed as part of any effort to pursue this operational concept.

Deliberate and sustained operations. The previous nine concepts assume that U.S. forces will swiftly deploy to a crisis and then launch aggressive operations aimed at rapidly overpowering the enemy and attaining decisive victory within a few days or weeks. Afterward, U.S. forces presumably would withdraw from the scene as soon as possible. Such short, explosive, high-tech wars may characterize most future efforts, but U.S. defense strategists should remember that alternative types of wars may be waged. Some conflicts may be marked by deliberate operations aimed at controlling a crisis over a lengthy period rather than overwhelming enemy forces immediately. Regardless of whether wars are won quickly or deliberately, a sustained U.S. presence may remain to exert control over the political fallout in the aftermath. This concept calls attention to the need for U.S. forces to remain prepared for these longer duration operations, even as they acquire greater capabilities for winning rapidly and decisively.

Deliberate operations may not be a preferred norm of U.S. military strategy, but they can be necessitated by a host of considerations: crises that build slowly, allies that balk, physical constraints that prevent U.S. forces from deploying quickly, enemies that refuse to be beaten, or wars interspersed with periods of diplomacy. Sustained operations can occur as a result not only of wars dragging on without a conclusion but also of political decisions to occupy the territory of a defeated enemy, perhaps as part of war-termination policies. The current no-fly zones in Iraq are an example of compelled political settlements that require an enduring postwar presence on friendly soil. Peacekeeping, of course, is a hallmark of deliberate sustained operations. Remaining prepared for such operations requires a focus on special combat forces (such as infantry), logistic support units, and war reserve stocks that otherwise might lose favor in a defense strategy focused on winning rapidly and decisively. It also necessitates remaining aware that modern war may not always take the form that U.S. plans, forces, and technology want or expect.

Future Directions and Resource Strategy

Provided these 10 concepts are embedded in a sound overall transformation strategy focused on the mid term for adaptability, they offer plausible candidates for building highly capable forces for new era operations over the coming decade and beyond. Their main thrust is to prepare high-tech forces that can deploy rapidly and strike lethally against well-armed enemies. Their defensive measures will help protect U.S. forces against new era threats, especially

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The appeal of these 10 concepts lies not in their individual features, but in their capacity to work together to create a composite theory of force preparations and operations. Any effort to pursue only a few concepts, while neglecting others, could produce an imbalanced force incapable of the full-spectrum decisive operations required by future strategic challenges. For example, preoccupation with missile defense, standoff targeting, and littoral maritime operations could result in inadequate forces for direct crisis interventions. Likewise, an emphasis on forcible entry and deep strike, to the exclusion of close combat capabilities, could result in a lack of strong ground forces.

The Armed Forces will be served best by investing wisely in a full set of valid new concepts in affordable, well-planned ways, while attending to the other aspects of defense preparedness. In the final analysis, a strong military posture will be marked by the capacity to perform many missions and operations effectively—rather than a few superbly and others poorly. This is a central lesson of the past decades, during which the United States struggled hard to build its superior forces of today. It likely will prove to be the guiding beacon for building and using transformed forces for the 21st century.