



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

OCT - 5 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Guidance from Secretary Jim Mattis

The start of a new fiscal year serves as an opportunity for greater alignment as we reconfirm our commitment to the America. As a member of the U.S. Department of Defense, you play a vital role in supporting the three million men and women – uniformed and civilian – who fight for our Nation’s interests abroad. We protect and defend the Constitution, our people, and our values, and America’s military reinforces traditional tools of diplomacy, ensuring President Trump and our diplomats negotiate from a position of strength.

We are a Department of war. We must be prepared to deal with an increasingly complex global security situation, characterized by an accelerating decline in the management of the rules-based international order. North Korea’s provocative actions and reckless rhetoric continue despite United Nation’s censure and sanctions. Russia has violated the borders of nearby nations and seeks veto power over the economic, diplomatic, and security decisions of its neighbors. China is a long-term strategic competitor that seeks to intimidate its neighbors while escalating tensions in the South China Sea. Iran continues to sow violence and remains the largest long-term challenge to Middle East stability. Despite recent gains against ISIS, terrorist groups continue to murder the innocent and threaten peace.

Pursuit of global security and stability requires our armed forces to remain the world’s preeminent fighting force, and our Department has three lines of effort to enable us to remain the world’s preeminent fighting force:

First, restore military readiness as we build a more lethal force. We will execute a multi-year plan to rapidly rebuild the warfighting readiness of the Joint Force, filling holes in capacity and lethality while preparing for sustained future investment. This line of effort prioritizes a safe and secure nuclear deterrent, the fielding of a decisive conventional force, and retains irregular warfare as a core competency.

Second, strengthen alliances and attract new partners. Alliances and multinational partnerships provide avenues for peace, fostering conditions for economic growth with countries sharing the same vision. Strong alliances also temper the plans of those who would attack other nations or try to impose their will over the less powerful. History is compelling on this point: nations with strong allies thrive, while those without stagnate and wither. We will continue to work with our allies, partners, and coalitions – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,



Association of South East Asian Nations, the Defeat-ISIS Coalition, and others – to reinforce the safety and security that underpins peace and economic prosperity for all nations.

Third, bring business reforms to the Department of Defense. This line of effort instills budget discipline and effective resource management, develops a culture of rapid and meaningful innovation, streamlines requirements and acquisition processes, and promotes responsible risk-taking and personal initiative. Some specific reforms are already in progress, such as the Congressionally-mandated creation of a Chief Management Officer and realignment of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, as well as the Department's preparations for its first full-scope financial audit in FY 2018. Others are forthcoming, as we seek to modernize the defense travel system, protect our infrastructure and intellectual property, improve information technology business operations efficiency, and implement real cost accounting.

I expect you to pursue actively these three lines of effort. Set disciplined goals, collaborate across components, and model appropriate ethical behavior. Remember, attitudes are caught from those who set the example – use your force of personality to lead with a sense of urgency and purpose every day, so that we leave this Department in even better shape for those that follow.

CHARGE!

John Mattis