From the Chairman

Moving Forward Together

With good reason, we are a proud force. The 10 years since 9/11 stand among the most searing in our military's history. We have persevered through a decade of war, keeping our homeland safe and advancing our national interests abroad. Our all-volunteer joint force is our nation's decisive advantage. The American people trust us to stay that way.

Our joint force faces three profound transitions in the coming years. We will transition from war to a more competitive and complex peace. We will transition from abundant resources to more constrained budgets. And many military men and women and their families will transition to civilian life. Any one of these would be difficult. Taken together, they will test our leadership at every level.

We will pass this test, and we will do it by focusing our efforts in four areas. I will soon publish a pamphlet on these key efforts and encourage you to read, discuss, and debate them. I need your support, and I challenge you to do what you can in your corner of our wonderful profession to improve these areas. To this end, let me briefly describe the four areas and why they are essential to our future.

Achieving National Objectives in Current Conflicts

In this decade of conflict, we stabilized Iraq when it was thought to be impossible. We reversed Taliban momentum while

General Dempsey addresses Joint Staff with Sergeant Major Bryan B. Battaglia, USMC, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman

DOD (D. Myles Cullen)

building a new army in Afghanistan. We helped protect the Libyan people as they turned the page in their history. And we have pursued al Qaeda to the edge of strategic defeat.

Yet al Qaeda and its affiliates, while increasingly isolated, remain a threat. We must pursue them relentlessly. We must remain committed to the development of Iraq's security forces, and we will meet that commitment through a normalized relationship and the Office of Security Cooperation–Iraq. Through the International Security Assistance Force and our international partners, we will provide the assistance that Afghan forces need to protect the Afghan people while becoming stronger and more self-sufficient.

Wherever we send America's sons and daughters, we must continue to provide them the support and the resources necessary to do their jobs.

Developing Joint Force 2020

We are developing today the joint force that our nation will need in 2020. This force will operate in a global security environment that will be more competitive and therefore more dangerous and complex. As we determine what this joint force should look like, we must offset our tightened budgets with more innovation and integration.

We must reexamine historically distinct mission sets. In Iraq and Afghanistan, general purpose forces worked collaboratively with special operations forces. We should continue to build toward greater interoperability and interdependence. We have learned that

Marine provides security at Combat Outpost Alcatraz, awaiting extraction flight to Camp Leatherneck, Helmand Province, Afghanistan

U.S. Marine Corps (Ricardo A. Gomez)

Marines with OAH–1W Super Cobra during tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel mission in Afghanistan

U.S. Marine Corps (Ricardo A. Gomez)

cyber and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities offer the potential for asymmetric advantage. They will continue to grow in importance.

The last decade has been focused and prioritized on the Middle East. The next will see accelerating demographic, economic, and military shifts into the Pacific. We will adjust to this shift but remain engaged throughout the world.

Moving forward, we will reexamine and revise the relationships among Active, Guard, and Reserve forces of our military. And we will need to be even more joint—pushing interdependence deeper, sooner.

Finally, in light of a new fiscal reality facing our nation, we will need to get smaller to stay strong. The scope and variety of our missions will demand leadership, creativity, and institutional courage. We will make hard choices, invest strategically where needed, and always put the needs of the Nation first. Finally, we will keep the force in balance with the people, training, and equipment to get the job done.

U.S. Navy (Robert Stirrup)

Family and friends greet Sailors returning to Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

Renew Our Commitment to the Profession of Arms

After 10 years of war, it is time for us to reflect on not only the lessons of war, but also who we are. We have an opportunity—indeed an *obligation*—to improve our profession by truly understanding and internalizing the lessons of the past 10 years.

We must understand, adapt, and promote the knowledge, skills, and attributes that define us as a profession. We will continue to reform and leverage the professional military education enterprise to advance the profession of arms. Above all, we must remain a *learning organization*.

Leadership is the core of our profession. We must all be leaders of consequence beyond our battalion, our squadron, our ship, our unit. We must develop leaders who can adapt and innovate in complex environments. The organization that wins the future is the one that learns and adapts more quickly.

U.S. Army (John Crosby)

Family and friends hold American flags as Indiana National Guardsmen return from year-long deployment in Afghanistan

Keep Faith with Our Military Family

Our military family—men and women in uniform, veterans of all generations, and their loved ones—has fought harder and sacrificed more over the last decade than many will ever know. They have shown remarkable commitment, strength, and resilience. They remain the heart and soul of our force.

Ten years of war have strained our family, and impending budget cuts have cast uncertainty among the ranks. The wars have left wounds both seen and unseen, the burden stretching far beyond the Active-duty force. Repeated deployments have upended families, employers, and communities. No aspect of the military family has been unaffected, no corner of the country untouched.

We are strong, and we are resilient, but we must never take this for granted.

Keeping faith means recognizing the military family's extraordinary contributions and sacrifices, supporting them in the ways they need most, and preserving the trust between us. In doing so, we must constantly learn, adjust, and improve how we will meet the long-term needs of those who defend the Nation.

U.S. Air Force (Jorge Intriago)

Airman's family reunites upon return from tour in Iraq

Looking Ahead

The American people have bestowed upon us a sacred trust. The past 10 years have proven that our joint force has earned this trust in a most extraordinary way. The next 10 years and beyond will demand the same. We will win the present and secure the future. We will affirm the profession of arms and build our next generation of leaders. We will stand by our military family. This is our nation's call. This is our time to answer. **JFQ**

MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff