

CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY

2022



STRATEGIC DISCIPLINE



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

The Joint Force is at an *inflection point* during what will be a *decisive decade*. Geopolitical relationships are shifting, economies are rising – and falling, rapid technological advances are fueling militaries' modernizations at scale, and external factors like climate change and pandemics are changing the way people live, work, and go to war. An undeniable and intentional violation of sovereignty has shocked the international system. Large-scale combat has now been introduced into the strategic competition between autocracies and democracies, further stressing the rules-based international order.



For the first time in our Nation's history, the United States faces two major nuclear powers that may employ nuclear coercion as a way to meet their national objectives. Both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia possess the will and the means to pose an existential threat to our way of life. The PRC is our most consequential strategic competitor, modernizing its military and preparing to fight and win a war with the United States. Russia poses acute threats, pursuing power and influence through cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns, while its attack on Ukraine represents a moment on par with 9/11 in terms of global consequence and challenge to U.S. and international security.

The current environment requires the Joint Force to strengthen and integrate deterrence across domains, theaters, and the spectrum of conflict; modernize the nuclear enterprise; assure allies and partners; and prepare to prevail in great power conflict. The United States must meet this challenge with alacrity, discipline, and fortitude – the window to seize the strategic initiative is *now*. This National Military Strategy (NMS) is a wakeup call: **Adapt Now, or Lose Later.**

This NMS renews our focus on campaigning now and building and sustaining warfighting advantage in tandem. Both are critical to prevail in war, and both are necessary to preserve the peace. War is a terrible endeavor, and Great Power War is especially terrible – but it is not inevitable, so our Nation strives for peace. As the U.S. does so, its Joint Force will defend, deter, modernize – and prevail if deterrence fails – realizing that the surest way to prevent escalation and war is always being prepared to defeat our Nation's foes.

The time is now and the window of strategic opportunity we have is closing. What we do in the next few years is going to set conditions for victory or defeat in the next war. We must adapt now in order to win the next war, and by doing so, we will deter the war from happening in the first place.


MARK A. MILLEY
General, U.S. Army

The 2022 NMS is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's (CJCS) strategic guidance that provides the logic and framework to achieve the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) priorities and build the future Joint Force. This NMS offers guidance for every Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard, and civilian member to take bold and transformative action now to protect the security of the American people and defend the democratic ideals at the heart of the American way of life. This strategy is about the Joint Force obtaining lasting positions of relative advantage in peace and achieving decisive victory in war.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ **THREATS.** The classified NMS clearly describes the near and real threats faced by the Joint Force in the strategic environment. As our most consequential strategic competitor, the PRC is unequivocal in its pursuit to reshape an authoritarian world order with no democratic values. The PRC is the pacing challenge for the Department. Russia is an acute threat with aggressive intent – as seen by its brutal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine – that seeks to consolidate and strengthen its perceived Eurasian sphere of influence to counter Western influence. Other persistent threats include North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations.
- ▶ **TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS.** Both commercial and military technologies will advance rapidly and proliferate the global technology landscape. These capabilities alone may not ensure military victory, but creative application will shape the outcome of any contest.
- ▶ **EXTERNAL TRENDS.** Pandemics, climate change, demographic changes, and resource scarcity will destabilize the security environment and impose changes and constraints on domestic political contexts.
- ▶ **MILITARY TRENDS.** For the first time, the United States will simultaneously contend with two major nuclear powers. Future warfare will include advanced threats to the Homeland, elements in the Gray-Zone, and protracted conflicts in contested environments. Militaries that incorporate new technology with innovative operational concepts and develop leadership to harness the changes will create decisive advantage.
- ▶ **GEOPOLITICAL TRENDS.** Amidst institutional and economic fragility and the ongoing health crisis, adversaries will test the post-World War II international order, attempting to weaken U.S. leadership and rewrite international rules and norms to their own benefit.
- ▶ **ECONOMIC TRENDS.** Growing economic strength drives global influence and undergirds other elements of national power, which will continue to fuel the PRC's coercive actions.



The nature of the problem the 2022 NMS aims to solve is meeting the Joint Force Strategic Objectives in the context of the strategic environment. The solution to the problem is informed by the NDS' strategic approach. The result is a theory of success that allows the Joint Force to operate from an advantageous position with respect to threats, maintain awareness of strategic trends, remain in line with civilian guidance, and advance toward our objectives.

So how does the Joint Force rapidly develop future warfighting advantage while deterring effectively today, with the PRC as the pacing challenge?

This is the central military problem this NMS seeks to solve.

The NDS strategic approach employs three strategic ways (integrated deterrence, campaigning, and building enduring advantage) to foster Integrated Deterrence. Aligned with the NDS, the NMS implements Integrated Deterrence through ruthless prioritization to calibrate decision-making and activities of the Joint Force now in order to succeed.

INTEGRATED DETERRENCE

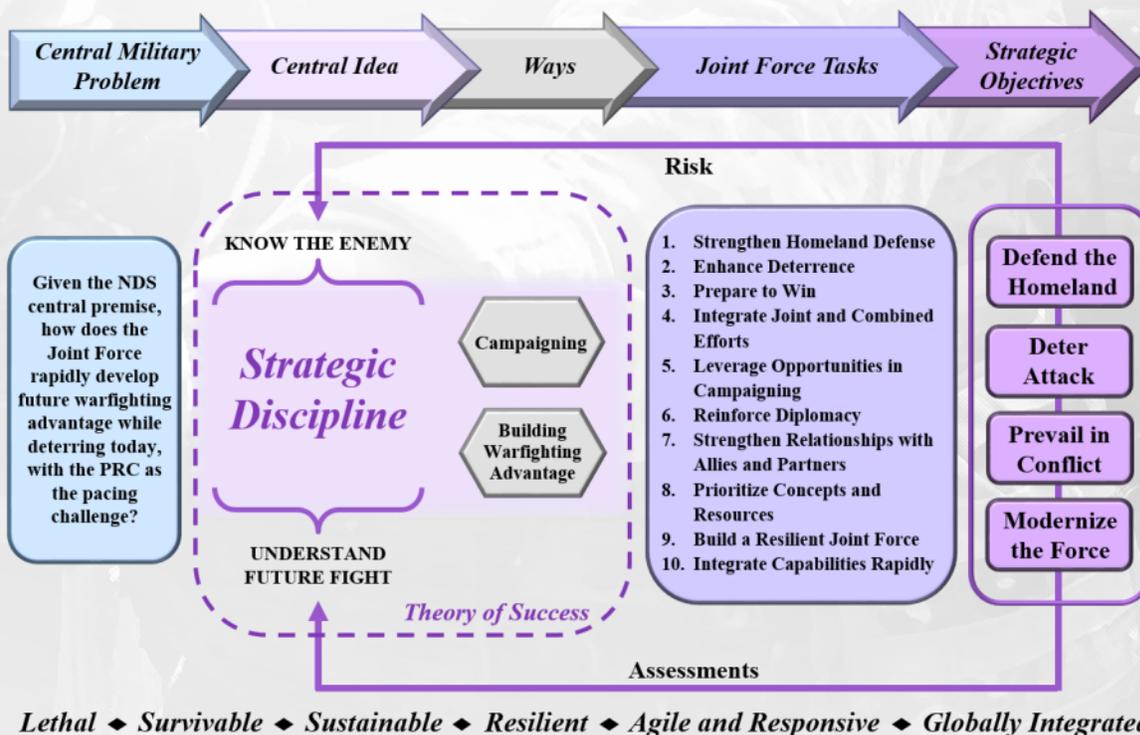
Integrated Deterrence, the NDS’ principal strategic approach, generates warfighting advantages by synchronizing operations across warfighting domains, theaters, the spectrum of conflict, instruments of national power, the interagency, private sector, and allies and partners.

Integrated Deterrence influences adversary decision calculus by affecting perception of costs, benefits, and consequences of restraint.

The Joint Force’s contribution to Integrated Deterrence is combat-credible forces, backstopped by a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.

Through the NMS’ theory of success, the Joint Force contributes to Integrated Deterrence to reduce an adversary’s perceived benefit and increase the adversary’s perceived cost of aggression, incentivizing restraint as a result.

IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED DETERRENCE



“You want to deter your potential opponent from even thinking or contemplating that they could have a war with the United States.”

General Milley, CJCS
(Brookings Institution, 2 December 2020)

The NMS seeks to solve the central military problem within the framework of the NDS through an informed theory of success that enables disciplined decision-making by framing risk and assessing progress toward strategic objectives.

The NMS Theory of Success is to *exercise Strategic Discipline to continuously calibrate Joint Force weight of effort between campaigning and rapidly building warfighting advantage to deter now and reduce future risk.*

STRATEGIC DISCIPLINE

Strategic Discipline is the ruthless prioritization and calibration of Joint Force operations, activities, and investments, consistent with policy guidance and strategic aims, between the Joint Force strategic ways of campaigning and building warfighting advantage.

Strategic Discipline is enabled by a robust understanding of the strategic environment, including a deep awareness of our adversaries and ourselves, ally and partner equities, and the future character of warfare. This understanding is enhanced by strategic assessments that enable risk decisions to bias toward decreasing future risk. This approach provides the Joint Force with the agility to focus on enduring priorities and generate military options for emergent changes.

Campaigning

Campaigning is how the DoD sequences day-to-day defense initiatives and develops advantageous conditions to deter conflict, accomplish strategic objectives, and prevail against adversaries across the spectrum of conflict, to include the Gray-Zone.



Risk

To implement the NMS effectively, the Joint Force must take a globally integrated approach to risk while thinking across multiple time horizons. Decision-makers must consider transferring risk away from priority threats/theaters and be more risk tolerant in the present to reduce risk in the future.



Building Warfighting Advantage

Building Warfighting Advantage requires deliberate investment to develop leaders, concepts, and capabilities through materiel and non-materiel solutions in order to achieve strategic objectives in the future.

Assessments

Joint assessments guide the Chairman's military advice and the balance of resource decisions between future modernization and current requirements. These assessments guide iterative adjustments to implement NDS Defense Priorities and Joint Force Strategic Objectives.



1. **STRENGTHEN HOMELAND DEFENSE**

Modernize and integrate to protect our way of life.

2. **ENHANCE DETERRENCE**

Develop capabilities that deter adversaries from advancing their goals, employing their military strengths, or attacking U.S. interests.

3. **PREPARE TO WIN**

Ensure a properly trained and resourced combat force capable of defeating our adversaries abroad.

4. **INTEGRATE JOINT FORCE AND COMBINED EFFORTS**

Synchronize actions with allies, partners, and the interagency to address trans-regional, all-domain, and multi-functional challenges and continuously advance national security objectives.

5. **LEVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES IN CAMPAIGNING**

Proactively identify and leverage opportunities to frustrate adversaries' strengths, exploit vulnerabilities, and expand U.S. partnerships, access, and basing.

6. **REINFORCE DIPLOMACY**

Support diplomatic efforts to preserve the rules-based international order and provide credible military options that enable leaders to interact from a position of strength.

7. **STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALLIES AND PARTNERS**

Seek opportunities to collaborate and improve interoperability with allies and partners to confront enduring and emerging challenges. Foster strong relationships now — because we cannot surge trust in crisis.

8. **PRIORITIZE CONCEPTS AND RESOURCES**

Refocus our current warfighting ideas, systems, and practices to improve combat effectiveness.

9. **BUILD A RESILIENT JOINT FORCE**

Harness robust and effective combat capabilities that can resist degradation and quickly reconstitute in future combat.

10. **INTEGRATE CAPABILITIES RAPIDLY**

Timely integrate advanced capabilities to amplify existing warfighting advantages.



“We are now in the seventy-sixth year of the great-power peace following World War II and the structure is under stress. We can see it fraying at the edge. And with history as our guide, we would be wise to lift our gaze from the never-ending urgency of the present and set the conditions for a future that prevents great-power war.”

General Milley, CJCS
(US Air Force Academy Graduation, 26 May 2021)

JOINT FORCE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ **Defend the U.S. Homeland** against all-domain threats, prioritizing the PRC.
- ▶ **Deter strategic attacks** and other aggression against the United States, allies, and partners.
- ▶ Ensure the Joint Force possesses the combat-credible capabilities necessary to **prevail in conflict** against the PRC in the Indo-Pacific, then Russia in Europe.
- ▶ **Focus technical and non-technical modernization** into a resilient Joint Force and maintain the ability to respond to crises.



CONCLUSION

To meet the challenges described, now and in the coming decisive decade, this strategy outlines the Joint Force's vision to deter, and if necessary, to defeat potential adversaries now and into the future. We're at an inflection point, requiring the Joint Force to exercise Strategic Discipline to sustain and strengthen Integrated Deterrence – we must Adapt Now, or Lose Later.

The success of this strategy depends on the innovation and discipline of the Joint Force and its leaders at every rank. Future Joint Force success – like the past – will continue to be anchored by the American people and our values, the U.S. government, and our allies and partners. The Joint Force will defend, deter, modernize – and prevail if deterrence fails.

