



U.S. Marine Corps General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, meets with Servicemembers before USO holiday troop visit at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, December 8, 2015 (U.S. Air Force/Robert Cloys)

From the Chairman

Our Force and Our Fight

During my first 90 days as Chairman, I have engaged Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen at all levels. I am confident that our nation has the most professional and capable military in the world. The Joint Force has proved effective and resilient throughout years of combat, kept the homeland safe, and advanced our national interests across the globe. Every day, in every task, our men and women in uniform deliver. But we should expect no credit tomorrow for what we did yesterday.

We must continually adapt to meet current challenges and innovate to develop the capabilities we will need to win future fights. As we do that, we will focus

on improving our joint warfighting capability and joint readiness and developing leaders who will be the foundation of Joint Force Next. This contribution to *Joint Force Quarterly* is intended to provide some initial thoughts regarding these three priorities.

In the months ahead, my intent is to use this space to share thoughts about where we are headed, while generating an open dialogue that will allow us to fully leverage the insights and ideas of leaders across the Joint Force.

Improving Our Joint Warfighting Capability

The strategic landscape is characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and rapid

change. While the nature of war is enduring, the character of war today is extraordinarily dynamic. Information operations, cyber, space and counter-space capabilities, and ballistic missile technology are among the true game changers on the modern battlefield. Both state and nonstate actors are constantly looking for ways to harness such capabilities in order to avoid our strengths and exploit our vulnerabilities.

This dynamic has significant implications for how we will fight, and makes it probable that future conflicts will most often be transregional and fought across multiple domains and functions. Driven by this assumption, one of my highest warfighting priorities is to improve our

ability to integrate joint capabilities in a transregional, multidomain, and multi-functional fight. From my perspective, our current organizational and command and control constructs are optimized neither for the current fight nor for the challenges we will confront in the future.

Whether we are confronting state or nonstate actors, we must be able to quickly and decisively bring to bear the full weight of the Joint Force. Collaboration and cooperation across regions, domains, or functions is not enough. We must achieve true integration. The Joint Staff will lead an effort to further frame and tackle this challenge.

Joint Readiness

A ready Joint Force is one that can effectively meet the steady-state requirements of the combatant commanders, deter our adversaries, and respond decisively in the event of a contingency. A comprehensive approach to joint readiness requires that we focus on the traditional metrics associated with unit readiness while also assessing and adjusting our posture to deliver joint capabilities where it matters, when it matters.

The Secretary of Defense, supported by the Joint Staff, determines the right inventory of Service capabilities and capacities to meet our national security requirements across the range of military operations. The Secretary also determines how the force is best postured to support our defense strategy. The Services, in turn, must focus on ensuring that units are properly led, trained, organized, and equipped. When assessing joint readiness, we must consider all three of these elements.

One combatant commander has suggested the term *comprehensive joint readiness* to describe a holistic view of the relationship between unit readiness, the Joint Force inventory, and the posture of the Joint Force. This is how we will define joint readiness in the future. We will refine our readiness processes and metrics to ensure that we maintain the right balance of unit readiness, the right inventory of joint capabilities, and the optimal posture in support of our defense and national military strategies.

Develop Leaders for Joint Force Next

The men and women of the all-volunteer force are our true competitive advantage and greatest asset. The future operating environment will place new demands on leaders at all levels. To best prepare our future leaders for success, we must continuously assess and refine our leader development. The Joint Staff will lead an effort to define the qualities and characteristics of the leaders we will need in the Joint Force Next. This study will inform how we will select, train, educate, and manage the talent of tomorrow's leaders.

Our Mutual Responsibilities

Meeting the challenges of today's dynamic and demanding operating environment while preparing the Joint Force to win future fights will be a team effort. To be successful, we must harness the intellect, insights, and innovative ideas from men and women across the Joint Force. I have an obligation to encourage and energize the dialogue. We all have an obligation to contribute—it is our force and our fight.

In closing, it is an honor to serve as your Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from you.

GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR.
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



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Understanding Putin Through a Middle Eastern Looking Glass
by John W. Parker



The resurgence of Russian influence in the Middle East has surprised Moscow as much as any other capital.

Russia has done better than the Kremlin and its Middle East experts feared when the Arab Spring began. Despite Moscow's deep involvement in the Ukrainian crisis, Russia is now in a stronger position with national leaderships across the Middle East than it was in 2011, although its stock with Sunni Arab public opinion has been sinking.

The Western reaction to Russian actions in Ukraine has given Putin a greater incentive to work toward a more significant Russian profile in the Middle East. As Moscow sees it, this impulse by Putin is being reciprocated in the region.

No outside power may be up to a controlling role in the region any longer. But realism restrains all sides from believing that Russia is anywhere close to eclipsing the major role the United States still plays in the Middle East.



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