

## Chapter 2

# The Strategic and Joint Operational Environment

### The National Security Environment

We are a strong Nation. America wields strength and influence through the instruments of national power—diplomatic, informational, economic, and military—as it seeks to shape the international environment in pursuit of our enduring interests. America remains the most potent military power in the world, and The Army provides most its land forces.

The end of the Cold War did not, as some anticipated, make the world a safer place. Instead, it exposed several points of stress around the globe where American interests might be threatened. Threats to American security and interests have become more diffuse, harder to anticipate, and more difficult to combat than ever before. A growing number of borderless threats—including terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and organized crime—complicate the strategic environment, making our challenges less predictable.

Although the threat of a global war has subsided for now, the need for sustained military power, particularly land power, has increased. Since 1990, Army deployments in support of military operations other than war have increased dramatically, while the possibility of major theater wars remains. Even though day-to-day operations now consume substantial time, energy, and resources, The Army must always be prepared to fight the Nation's wars. Being demonstrably prepared to fight and win will reduce the likelihood of having to do so.

The Army supports the United States' national security strategy and foreign policy throughout the spectrum of conflict by providing the National Command Authorities a flexible force with broad, conventional deterrent capabilities. When directed, The Army conducts offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations. The Army supports the combatant commanders' theater engagement plans in peacetime—maintaining permanently stationed and rotationally deployed troops overseas, conducting peacetime engagement activities, and participating in multinational training exercises. It accomplishes these missions by active, daily engagement with the militaries, governments, and civilian

## FM 1

---

populations of other nations. The Army provides land forces to combatant commanders for major theater war, smaller-scale contingencies, and peacetime military engagement.

When directed by the National Command Authorities, The Army conducts operations in response to requests from the United Nations or other treaty organizations. As a by-product of its superb training and readiness, The Army can build alliances and coalitions and serve as a role model for militaries in emerging democracies.

The presence of Soldiers gives combatant commanders a flexible and versatile capability for influencing regional stability. Soldiers—on the ground—demonstrate commitment by the United States. For this reason, The Army provides the bulk of overseas presence and peacetime engagement forces in support of the national security strategy. Despite these proactive measures, deterrence sometimes fails. When it does, The Army is committed to fighting and winning—decisively.

## Enduring National Interests

The Constitution of the United States sets forth the national purpose in these words:

*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.*

These broad, enduring national goals are expressed more specifically in terms of national interests, which provide the basis for national security policies. The following national security objectives have remained essentially unchanged since the late 1940s:

- To preserve the sovereignty of our Nation, with its values, institutions, and territory intact.
- To protect U.S. citizens at home and abroad.
- To provide for the common welfare and economic prosperity of our Nation and citizens.

## **National Military Strategy Formulation**

*This Nation can afford to be strong—it cannot afford to be weak. We shall do what is needed to make and keep us strong.*

President John F. Kennedy

The President is responsible for national security. The National Security Council assists the President in determining how best to employ the instruments of national power in pursuit of national goals. The National Security Council coordinates the efforts of all government agencies to form a coherent national security strategy. The National Command Authorities—consisting of the President and the Secretary of Defense, or their authorized alternates—exercise authority over the armed forces through the combatant commanders for forces assigned to the combatant commanders and through the chiefs of the services for other forces.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in his capacity as the principal military advisor to the National Security Council, prepares the national military strategy. He does this in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the combatant commanders. The national military strategy contains the advice of the Chairman and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the strategic direction of the armed forces in implementing the national security strategy. The Chairman, on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, directs the combatant commanders to develop theater engagement plans as well as theater war and contingency plans.

## **National Military Objectives**

Our national military objectives are to promote peace and stability, to deter conflict, and, when necessary, to defeat adversary forces in combat. These objectives defend and protect U.S. national interests.

Within the context of the national security strategy, the armed forces of the United States execute the national military strategy. The Army, with the other services and multinational partners, must be prepared to fulfill its essential role in our collective security.

The national military strategy is fundamentally expeditionary in nature. It includes strategic responsiveness, overseas presence, power projection, and decisive action. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, defines an expedition as “a military operation conducted by an armed force to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country.” To achieve our national security objectives, our armed forces must be able to deter

or defeat enemy forces on land, in space, in the air, or at sea, whether by unified or joint action.

*No government will be disposed to violate our rights if it knows that we have the means and are prepared and resolved to defend them.*

President James Monroe

## **The Army in Unified Action—Joint, Multinational, and Interagency Operations**

The Army executes missions throughout the range of military operations and across the spectrum of conflict. Employing Army forces at the right place and time allows combatant commanders to conduct decisive land operations along with air, sea, and space-based operations. In combat, The Army ensures the full application and sustainment of integrated combined arms power.

The National Command Authorities exercise authority and control over the armed forces through a single chain of command with two distinct branches. The first runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commanders. The second branch, used for purposes other than operational direction of forces assigned to combatant commands, runs from the President through the Secretary of Defense to the service secretaries. The service secretaries exercise authority, direction, and control of their forces not assigned to combatant commanders through the individual chiefs of the services. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is not formally in either chain but is in the channel of communication. Orders are issued by the President or Secretary of Defense and are normally conveyed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by authority and direction of the Secretary of Defense.

A formal chain of command exists within each combatant command according to the needs of the command and the desires of the combatant commander. The Secretary of Defense specifies the degree of control that combatant commanders exercise over assigned forces. That degree ranges from combatant command (command authority) to tactical control as defined in Joint Publication 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces*. The combatant commander may elect to establish a subordinate unified command, a joint task force, functional component commands, service component commands, or a single service force—depending on the type of operation. The joint force commander designates the joint force land component commander, who may come from either The Army or the Marine Corps.

---

## The Strategic and Joint Operational Environment

In a joint force, a single commander exercises combatant command (command authority) or operational control over elements of two or more services. Within a joint force, service forces may work under subordinate joint commands or single service commands. Each military department (Army, Navy, and Air Force) retains responsibility for administration and logistic support of those forces it has allocated.

The Army contributes forces to combatant commands to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations on land. The objective of Army forces is land force dominance—defeating adversary land forces, seizing and controlling terrain, and destroying the adversary will to resist. The Army, supported by the Air Force and Navy, has a forcible entry capability that allows it to conduct land operations anywhere in the world. The Army also can achieve prompt and sustained land dominance across the spectrum of conflict. It concludes conflict decisively to achieve national political and military objectives.

The Army tailors forces with unique capabilities to achieve military objectives during major theater wars or smaller-scale contingencies. Army forces are assigned to a joint force commander under the direct command of an Army component commander or a joint force land component commander.

The Navy gains and maintains control of vital sea areas and lines of communication and, employing Marine Corps forces, conducts sea-based littoral power projection. Naval forces provide The Army with strategic, operational, and tactical sealift, and support ground combat operations.

The Air Force gains and maintains control of the air. It projects aerial combat power to provide close air support and air interdiction for ground force commanders. The Air Force also provides strategic, operational, and tactical airlift support and other functions described in Department of Defense Directive 5100.1 to support ground operations.

Commanders of major army headquarters may serve as the joint force land component commander or joint task force commander. Each combatant command also designates an Army service component commander responsible for providing Title 10 support to Army forces assigned to that command. In some cases, the numbered army commander may also be the Army service component commander.

Committing Army forces means committing the assets needed to deploy and sustain them. Today, many of those assets reside in the reserve components. The decision to commit The Army is a decision to commit the Nation. That commitment means that national interests are threatened and the Nation is determined to secure them.

## **FM 1**

---

Alliances result from formal agreements between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives that further the common interests of the members. Coalitions are temporary arrangements between two or more nations for common action in the context of specific strategic situations.

The Army's unique, sustained land power capabilities offer the National Command Authorities and combatant commanders more options for engagement, crisis response, and warfighting. The Army ordinarily provides the majority of land forces to combatant commands. Army forces provide capabilities for the combatant commander's theater engagement plans, which allow combatant commanders to shape the international environment, deter aggression and coercion, reduce potential conflicts and threats, and promote regional stability. When a crisis occurs, Army elements respond rapidly to enable the combatant commander to terminate a crisis or preclude opposition. Rapidly deployable land forces allow the combatant commander to control the land, its resources, and its population. If war occurs, Army forces conduct sustained combat operations. After the enemy's defeat, Army forces allow the combatant commander to achieve a lasting decision through continued presence.

### **Summary**

America is a strong Nation. It has abundant resources and a dynamic and productive population. It wields enormous political power and has the world's strongest economy. But without a strong military to protect its enduring interests, America's strength would soon wither. Since the end of the Cold War, the world has been in a state of significant transition. This transition is marked by increased uncertainty and potential vulnerability. The strategic environment is less stable than in the past, and threats to American interests are less predictable. National power remains relative and dynamic, and as such, the military must provide the National Command Authorities with flexible forces that can operate across the range of military operations and spectrum of conflict to achieve national security objectives. The Army operates as part of the joint force, and The Army constitutes the preponderance of the land component of that force. Acting as part of joint and multinational teams, The Army provides sustained land power capabilities to combatant commanders for engagement, crisis response, and warfighting in support of our national interests.