Any Agreement on Residual U.S. Force in Afghanistan Based on Conditions – Not Trust – of Taliban, Joint Chiefs Chairman Says

A plan for an 8,600-person residual U.S. force in Afghanistan after any peace agreement came from military leadership – not President Trump – and such an agreement must be based on conditions and not on trust in the Taliban or the belief that they could prevent other extremists from planning an attack on America, the nation's top military officer said.

The purpose of the current U.S.-Taliban negotiations "is to deliver inter-Afghan deliberations" that will establish a path to a future political arrangement. And, "one thing we've all been clear on is any agreement will be conditions-based," Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said before the Council on Foreign Relations on Sept. 5. "We have very specific conditions, and if they are not met, my assumption is the negotiations will run down."

> *"One thing we've all been clear on is any agreement will be conditions-based."*
>
> *Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs*

of Staff

The primary conditions for an agreement are that it would reduce the Taliban-led insurgency in Afghanistan to a level that the Afghan security forces could handle, while U.S. and coalition forces deal with the extremist elements that would like to attack America, and it would set up negotiations between the Taliban and the government in Kabul on Afghanistan's political future, Dunford said.

In response to questions, Dunford said: "The number of 8,600 that the president has referred to was a number that was generated by military leadership," including the U.S. commanders in Afghanistan and Central Command.

"No advice I've provided is founded on trust in the Taliban … nor based on the assumption that the Taliban can protect us from over 20 extremist groups in South Asia," he emphasized. "The level of violence and extremism in South Asia is inextricably linked to the level of the insurgency in Afghanistan" and if it "can be reduced, then the Afghan security forces and the U.S. and coalition forces left can focus on counter-terrorism not the insurgency."

Afghanistan must be viewed "in context of the overall national defense strategy," Dunford said. "We need a fiscally, politically and militarily sustainable strategy against violent extremism," which will remain a

threat, so the military can focus its attention and resources on the primary
threat of great power competition with Russia and China, he added.

“Clearly, China and Russia are the benchmark against which we measure our strategy, how we think about risk and allocate resources for the forces today,” Dunford said. But they also “have to be able to deal with the threats we have today – violent extremism – at the same time we shift sufficient resources to ensure we maintain the competitive advantage we have today well into the future.”

Crafting a defense budget means making choices, he noted. “First and foremost, we must protect cyber, space, electronic warfare, the maritime capabilities … to make us more functional in the context of great power competition.” Dunford cited the growing defense capabilities of China and the aggressive efforts by Russian President Vladimir Putin to re-establish Russia as a major world player.

Asked about efforts to renew the U.S.-Russian New Start nuclear limitation treaty, Dunford said he “would be in favor of extending the agreement, providing if all the parties would follow the agreement.” But he noted it was “hard to say that” in wake of Russia’s violations of the INF treaty.

Navy Secretary Names Newest

Expeditionary Fast Transport Ship USNS Cody

An artist’s rendering of the future Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport USNS Cody. U.S. Navy

WASHINGTON – Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer announced the newest expeditionary fast transport (EPF) ship will be named USNS Cody (T-EPF 14), the secretary’s public affairs officer said in a release.

The future USNS Cody is the first ship named in honor of the city of Cody, Wyoming. At least 28 other U.S. Navy ships have been named after the state of Wyoming’s cities, places and people.

“The people of Cody are staunch supporters of a strong Navy and Marine Corps team, and it is fitting to name a ship in honor of this great city,” Spencer said. “I am pleased that the spirit of Cody will live on in the future USNS Cody.”

EPFs transport personnel, equipment and supplies. They can transport 600 short tons of military cargo with a crew of 26 civilian mariners – equipped with airline-style seating for 312 embarked troops, along with a fixed wing berthing outfitted for an additional 104 personnel.

With a shallow draft under 15 feet, a flight deck for helicopter operations, and vehicle offload ramp, EPFs can support a wide range of operations – from port access to littoral operations. Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama, is under contract to build the new EPF, which will be 338 feet long, have a waterline width (beam) of 93.5 feet, displace about

2,362 tons and be capable of 35-plus knots.

Raytheon OKs Next Phase of Next-Generation Jammer Mid-Band Program

EDGEWOOD,
N.Y. – Raytheon Co. has authorized CPI Aerostructures Inc. to begin production
of pod structures and air-management system (AMS) components for the system demonstration
and test article (SDTA) phase of the Next Generation Jammer Mid-Band (NGJ-MB)
program, CPI Aero said in a release.

The binding
notification provides about $2 million in funding to begin work and establishes
a maximum value of $23.3 million for a contract that is expected to be
finalized before the end of 2019. Deliveries of SDTA pods and AMS components
are expected to begin in August of 2020 and end in the first half of 2021.

Raytheon is designing and manufacturing NGJ-MB, a high-capacity and power airborne electronic attack weapon system for the EA-18G Growler aircraft. It is designed to protect air forces by denying, degrading and disrupting threat radars and communication devices. There are two NGJ-MB pods per EA-18G aircraft. CPI Aero announced in August 2018 that it is manufacturing the pod structure and AMS components for

Raytheon, which delivered the first NGJ-MB engineering development model pod to the U.S. Navy for ground and aircraft integration testing in July.

“CPI Aero has been a key supplier to Raytheon on this program since 2016, and we are proud to play an important role in getting this critical electronic warfare capability into the hands of the U.S. Navy for testing,” stated Douglas J. McCrosson, president and CEO of CPI Aero. “As we begin the SDTA phase, we reach another waypoint on the path towards receiving a decision by the U.S. Navy to proceed with low-rate initial production in late 2020 to keep the program on track to achieve initial operating capability in 2022.”

Leonardo DRS Wins $382 Million U.S. Navy Hardware Solutions Contract

ARLINGTON, Va. — Leonardo DRS Inc. has won a U.S. Navy contract for the development, integration and production of hardware solutions for various Navy platforms, the company said in a Sept. 4 release.

The indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract has a base award of more than $382 million. With options, the cumulative value of the contract is estimated at more than $830 million.

Under the contract, Leonardo DRS will provide design, procurement, production, sparing, test, installation, and support of displays,

workstations, processors, and network systems; the production of subsequent
systems, kits and enclosures; and engineering and technical services.

This contract combines purchases for the Navy and the
government of the United Kingdom under the Foreign Military Sales program as
well as under a memorandum of understanding with the Commonwealth of Australia.

“We are proud to continue our long history of providing the U.S. Navy with off-the-shelf and custom hardware systems that deliver the mission-critical modernization needs for our sailors. We have already delivered or are under contract for over 250 shipsets of products, going back to 1998,” said Lee Meyer, vice president and general manager of the Leonardo DRS Naval Electronics business.

The contract was awarded through the Leonardo DRS Laurel Technologies business. Work will be performed in Leonardo DRS facilities in Johnstown, Pennsylvania; Burnsville, Minnesota; Germantown, Maryland; Largo, Florida; and Chesapeake, Virginia. Work is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

USS Wasp Departs 7th Fleet Area of Operations

Wasp leads its expeditionary strike group last April. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Richard L.J. Gourley
OKINAWA,

Japan – The amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) departed U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations as part of a scheduled homeport shift on Sept. 4, the ship's public affairs office said in a release.

Wasp, which replaced USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in January 2018, operated with U.S. Marine Corps forces from the III Marine Expeditionary Force and helped expand the relationships the U.S. military maintains with allies and partners in the region.

"The performance by the Wasp crew has quite simply been superb," said Rear Adm. Fred Kacher, who is commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 7.

"Over the last two years, no ship in the Navy has been asked to do more than USS Wasp, and the ship delivered in every way. The officers and crew rose to every challenge, and we could not have asked for a better flagship to operate in the most important and dynamic area in the world."

As part of the U.S. 7th Fleet's forward deployed naval forces in Japan, Wasp made history as the first U.S. Navy ship to deploy with the the F-35B Lightning II strike fighter, which began operating onboard with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in March 2018.

"It has

been a profound honor for Wasp and her crew to serve 7th Fleet and its ancillary commands during this time," said Wasp's commanding officer, Capt. Gregory Baker. "Our Sailors have embraced the experiences and opportunities available in this part of the world and are more operationally prepared to continue supporting and executing the missions we are presented with. I couldn't have asked for a more dedicated or capable crew."

President Trump visited the ship and crew during his tour of Japan, becoming the first U.S. president to visit the ship, and he extended accolades to the crew for their accomplishments. Wasp participated in exercise Balikatan with the Philippine military and exercise Talisman Sabre with the Australian Defence Force and additional forces from Japan, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The ship also engaged in partnership missions designed to enhance interoperability with numerous partners and allies supporting security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

"What our Wasp Sailors have accomplished here over almost two years, given the operational tempo, and the nature of our multipronged mission, is overwhelming, and it's difficult not to constantly shine with pride," said Wasp Command Master Chief Kevin Guy, who also noted that more than half the

ship’s company
had been geo-bachelors during the ship’s tenure in Japan.

“When you
consider that we have a large number of Sailors thousands of miles away from
their families and friends – their level of dedication under these
circumstances truly exemplifies the Navy core values of honor, courage and commitment.”

The Navy announced earlier this year that Wasp will be replaced by the amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6), which will be accompanied by dock landing ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18). USS America is scheduled to become part of the U.S. 7th Fleet forward-deployed naval forces in Sasebo, Japan, later this year.

The 7th Fleet spans more than 124 million square kilometers, stretching from the international date line to the India/Pakistan border, and form the Kuril Islands in the north to the Antarctic in the south. Encompassing 36 maritime countries, about 50 percent of the world’s population also falls within its area of responsibility.

Naval Expeditionary Creates Five ‘Tech Bridges’ to Spread Workforce Agility

James F. Geurts (center), assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, announced on Sept. 3 a

plan to rapidly expand collaboration capabilities through the creation of “tech bridges.” U.S. Navy/Bobby Cummings

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — In its effort to spread innovation and procurement agility across the workforce, the U.S. Navy has created regional “tech bridges” in five areas of the country that will serve as “combustion chambers” of ideas and encourage collaboration among stakeholders.

The tech bridges, with support from the Office of Naval Research and the Navy’s Systems Commands, will partner with start-ups, academia, nonprofits, government entities, small businesses and large corporations to share ideas, experiences and best practices that can make the Navy and U.S. Marine Corps faster and more agile at developing and acquiring problem-solving technologies, according to the Naval Expeditions (NavalX) agility office.

NavalX was created last February by Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition James Geurts. The central idea was to create a workforce “super-connector” that could link people with ideas to individuals and organizations with needs, across all the sea, air and space domains. Successes, lessons-learned and subject-matter expertise could be shared servicewide and eventually across the Defense Department.

“Everything from Marines learning how to 3-D print to writing software to getting folks who don’t normally interact with the military

to learn from each other," Geurts told reporters during a media roundtable
Sept. 3 at the NavalX's temporary offices in Virginia.

The first five tech bridges (more are planned) are in Newport, Rhode Island; Keyport, Washington; San Diego; Orlando; and Crane, Ind. All the
bridges must have a local Navy Department sponsor willing to dedicate funding,
personnel or programming. For example, Newport is home to the Navy War College
as well as a Naval Undersea Warfare Center, said Navy Cmdr. Sam Gray, the tech bridge
director at NavalX. Additionally, the regional bridges must have non-Navy local
or regional partners providing funding or in-kind services and a sustainable
business plan independent of NavalX support after 12 months.

The tech bridges will operate on a "franchise" model, allowing each region to develop their own way to connect to their unique innovation ecosystem. Geurts stressed that the tech bridges will not create platforms or systems. "This is not the place to invent things, this is the place to share knowledge, so others can invent," he added.

The idea of tech bridges is to create "a gathering spot, kind of a combustion chamber" for innovative ideas that "close that distance" between the end-user, developer and acquiring agency, Geurts said.

Germany to Equip New Coastal Patrol Vessels with BAE Deck Guns

This BAE Systems 57 mm naval gun will go on new offshore patrol vessels of the German federal police force. BAE Systems Inc.

KARLSKOGA, Sweden – BAE Systems has been selected by the vessel contractor to provide the German federal police force, Bundespolizei, with three 57 mm naval guns for its three new 86-meter offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) built by Fassmer shipyard.

The gun systems, known as the Bofors 57 Mk3, will support the maritime arm of the Bundespolizei that monitors the country's North Sea and Baltic coastlines.

The 57 Mk3 is a versatile gun system designed to react quickly for close-to-shore operations.

"The Bofors 57 Mk3 is a versatile naval gun with firepower and range that exceeds expectations when compared with similar, medium-caliber naval gun systems. That's how our 57 mm system has earned its reputation as the deck gun of choice for ships operating in coastal environments," said Ulf Einefors, director of marketing and sales for BAE's weapons business in Sweden.

"This contract expands the number of European nations deploying the 57 Mk3 and reflects the growing interest we're seeing in the region, where we look forward

to supporting new opportunities in the near future.”

The 57 Mk3 naval gun is also in use with the allied navies and coast guards of eight nations, including Canada, Finland, Mexico and Sweden as well as the United States, where it is known as the Mk110 naval gun.

This contract also includes accompanying fire control systems as well as systems integration support. Work is expected to begin immediately and will be performed at the BAE facility in Karlskoga, Sweden. The first unit is scheduled for delivery in 2020.

Coast Guard Repatriates 12 Dominican Migrants Following Interdiction

The Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez, which repatriated 12 migrants from the Dominican Republic on Sept. 1. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Mark Barney

SAN JUAN,
Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez (WPC-1114) repatriated
12 migrants to the Dominican Republic Navy patrol boat Proción (GC-103) Sept. 1
near Samaná, Dominican Republic, following the interdiction of an illegal
migrant voyage in Mona Passage waters near Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th
District said in a release.

The interdiction is the result of ongoing efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve, Operation Caribbean Guard and the Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG).

Coast Guard watchstanders at the Sector San Juan Command Center received a report at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 31 from the aircrew of a Coast Guard Air Station Miami HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft on a routine patrol of the Mona Passage. The aircrew reported sighting what appeared to be an illegal migrant vessel transiting eastbound, about 51 nautical miles north of Mona Island, Puerto Rico.

Coast Guard watchstanders diverted the cutter Heriberto Hernandez to the scene. Once on scene, the cutter's crew stopped the 18-foot makeshift boat and safely embarked, for safety of life at sea concerns, the nine men and three women who were aboard. The interdicted migrants claimed to be of Dominican nationality.

"I'm proud of all our Coast Guard crews who quickly returned in full force to protect the coasts and our citizens in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands following the passing of Hurricane Dorian through the Eastern Caribbean," said Capt. Eric King, commander of Sector San Juan. "Their efforts prevented this illegal migrant voyage from reaching our shores and saving 12 lives

from a highly
dangerous situation, since migrant voyages often take place aboard grossly
overloaded and unseaworthy vessels with little or on no lifesaving equipment
onboard.”

Once
aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and
basic medical attention.

The Caribbean Border Interagency Group unifies efforts between U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Puerto Rico and Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action.

These agencies share a common goal of securing the maritime border of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands against illegal migrant and drug smuggling threats. The Heriberto Hernandez is a 154-foot fast response cutter homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Huntington Ingalls Completes Initial Sea Trials of Virginia-Class Sub Delaware

The submarine Delaware returns to Newport News Shipbuilding following its first set of sea trials. Ashley Cowan/Huntington Ingalls Industries

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division successfully completed the initial sea trials on the newest Virginia-class submarine, Delaware (SSN 791), the company said in a release.

The submarine, in the final stages of construction, spent three days at sea proving all systems, components and compartments. Delaware submerged for the first time and performed high-speed maneuvers on the surface and underwater.

"Delaware performed well during sea trials, which is a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of the incredible team of shipbuilders who are working to uphold our high standards of quality," said Dave Bolcar, Newport News' vice president of submarine construction. "We look forward to continuing our testing program to deliver the submarine to the U.S. Navy later this year."

The submarine is scheduled to undergo a round of acceptance trials before it is delivered. More than 10,000 shipbuilders from Newport News and teaming partner General Dynamics Electric Boat and thousands of companies across 48 states have participated in Delaware's construction since the work began in September 2013.

Army Awards Hypersonic Weapon

System Contracts

The concept art for the U.S. Army’s Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon. The Army awarded two contracts this week for their prototype hypersonic weapon, the service said in an Aug. 30 release.

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. – The U.S. Army awarded two contracts this week as it advances the fielding of a prototype hypersonic weapon by fiscal 2023, the U.S. Army said in an Aug. 30 release.

The Army Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW) will introduce a new class of ultrafast, maneuverable, long-range missiles that will launch from mobile ground platforms.

“Delivering hypersonics to a unit of action will provide a critical combat capability for the Army in support of the National Defense Strategy,” said LTG L. Neil Thurgood, director of Hypersonics, Directed Energy, Space and Rapid Acquisition. “With a collaborative effort by our partners in industry and the Department of Defense, we will advance this strategic weapon system and fulfill a critical mission for our nation.”

Hypersonic weapons are capable of flying at five times the speed of sound and operate at varying altitudes, making them unique from other missiles with a ballistic trajectory.

In March 2019, the secretary and chief of staff of the Army directed the accelerated delivery of a prototype ground-launched hypersonic weapon with residual combat capability by fiscal 2023. To execute

this strategy, the Army Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office (RCCTO) has selected two prime contractors to build and integrate components of the LRHW prototype.

On August 29, the Army awarded an Other Transaction Authority (OTA) agreement to Dynetics in the amount of $351.6 million to produce the first commercially manufactured set of prototype Common-Hypersonic Glide Body (C-HGB) systems.

Also on August 29, the Army awarded a second OTA agreement to Lockheed Martin in the amount of $347.0 million as the LRHW prototype system integrator.

The Army RCCTO is responsible for delivering the prototype LRHW battery, consisting of four trucks with launchers, hypersonic missile rounds and a command and control system. The OTA awards support the design, integration and production work that enables a series of flight tests beginning next year, leading to fielding in fiscal 2023.

In developing the LRHW, the Army is working in close collaboration with the other services through a Joint Service Memorandum of Agreement on hypersonics design, development, testing and production. As part of the agreement, the Army will execute production of the C-HGB for all services, while the Navy will lead the glide body design beginning in fiscal 2020. This joint cooperation allows the services to leverage technologies, while tailoring them to meet specific air, land and sea requirements.

The two contract awards mark an important step in transitioning the development of Army hypersonic capabilities out of the government laboratories and into commercial production. Initially, Dynetics will work with Sandia National Laboratories to learn building of the glide body.

Additional future awards are expected in order to increase production of the C-HGB and to establish an industrial base for hypersonics within the United States. Vendors selected for these subsequent awards would also work with Sandia National Laboratories to learn production of the C-HGB.

“Hypersonics is not a new technology – it’s a new application of technology, with a new sense of urgency,” said Bob Strider, deputy director of the Army Hypersonic Project Office, part of the RCCTO. “This prototyping effort will leverage the great work of the government science and technology community to take these systems to the next level and create an industrial base going forward.”

The Army RCCTO, headquartered at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., is chartered to develop rapid prototypes and field residual combat capabilities.