

The United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region





THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301

The Department of Defense has found that periodic reports outlining U.S. strategy in the Asia-Pacific region are important both within the U.S. government and as a model for other countries.

The three years since release of the last East Asia Strategy Report have produced important developments in the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, in the years before the last East Asia Strategy Report in 1995, some questioned U.S. determination to remain an Asia-Pacific power. Today, no Asia-Pacific nation can doubt U.S. commitment and intentions to remain engaged.

The preparation of a new strategy report, therefore, does not suggest change in our Asia-Pacific security strategy. This report should provide a sense of U.S. continuity and stability in the midst of regional change and transition. While we remain creative in addressing new security challenges, our strategy and commitment are long-term and will continue even after the period of change and transition is complete.

The 1998 EASR outlines a multifaceted regional security strategy, including:

- maintenance of comprehensive U.S. engagement, including not only the presence of approximately 100,000 U.S. military personnel in Asia but also a variety of other public and private interaction with the region;
- continued enhancement of our alliance relationships with Japan, Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines;
- comprehensive engagement with China to build the foundation for a long-term relationship based on cooperation and mutual interest;
- broadening of cooperation with the nations of Southeast Asia on security and confidence building;
- expansion of our regional cooperation with Russia;
- support for the development of security pluralism, including expansion of multilateral, unilateral and bilateral dialogue in the region;
- promotion of democracy;
- stemming and countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); and
- increased attention to terrorism, environmental degradation, emerging infectious diseases, drug trafficking and other transnational challenges as critical elements of “comprehensive security.”

The United States cannot long sustain its commitments without public support. Close consultation with Congress is important in this effort. This report is designed not only for countries in the Asia-Pacific region, but for the American people, whose support—in conjunction with our allies and friends in the region—will determine the success of our strategy.

We welcome your attention to this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William A. Perry".

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“Underpinning [our security] vision is the essential requirement that America remain engaged in world affairs, to influence the actions of others—friends and foes—who can affect our national well-being. Today, there are some who would have us pull back from the world, forgetting the central lesson of this century: that when America neglects the problems of the world, the world often brings its problems to America’s doorstep.”

—Secretary of Defense William Cohen,
during a speech to the Commonwealth Club of California,
July 21, 1997

Introduction

The story of U.S. engagement in the Asia-Pacific region is one of continuity, but within that larger context there is change and reaffirmation. The Department of Defense issued its first and second East Asian Strategy Reports (EASR) in 1990 and 1992,

respectively, to outline the changes we would make in our strategy and force structure in response to the end of the Cold War. In 1995, DOD issued a third report, this time noting that continuing areas of uncertainty and tension require a reaffirmation of our security commitments to the region. Where the 1990 and 1992 reports anticipated reductions in our forward deployed forces, the 1995 report confirmed our intention to maintain approximately 100,000 troops in the region for the foreseeable future, while increasing our efforts to share security respon-

sibilities with our friends and allies, and to broaden bilateral and multilateral engagement.

Based on this approach, we have taken a series of strategic steps over the past three years to reduce areas of uncertainty and



Japanese Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma and Japanese Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi join hands with Secretary of Defense Cohen and Secretary of State Albright at the release of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation in New York, September 23, 1997.

to reinforce the region's progress toward economic prosperity and political cooperation:

- Through the Quadrennial Defense Review, we have confirmed our ability and intention to maintain a robust overseas military presence of approximately 100,000 in the region, while harnessing new technology to retain our lead in capabilities;

- We have strengthened our alliance with Japan through the April 1996 Joint Security Declaration and the September 1997 revised Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation, working within the framework of our alliance relationship to enhance security cooperation and readiness with Japan;

- We have expanded our security cooperation and military access in Southeast Asia, while working with ASEAN states to enhance region-wide dialogue and confidence-building through the ASEAN Regional Forum;

- We are working with South Korea and China to engage North Korea through the Four Party Talks on a formula for reducing tensions and making the transition from armistice to lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula;

- We reaffirmed our security alliance with Australia through the 1996 Joint Security Declaration (Sydney Statement) pledging mutual cooperation on regional and global security concerns;

- We continue to build the foundation for a long-term relationship with China based on comprehensive engagement, as reflected in the 1997 and 1998 Clinton-Jiang Summits and as typified by a range of military exchanges and security dialogues;

- We have worked with our friends and allies in the region to initiate new mechanisms for transparency and confidence building, including trilateral and multilateral meetings; defense forums; and combined education at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Hawaii; and

- We have focused attention on the threat from weapons of mass destruction, addressing potential proliferation through the Agreed Framework and missile nonproliferation talks with North Korea, and improving our capabilities for counterproliferation through various means, including research and development of theater missile defense.

These steps are credible and sustainable because they are clearly in the interests of the United States, our allies and partners. Countries in the region watch our level of commitment as a key determinant of regional peace and stability. The dispatch of USS *Nimitz* and USS *Independence* during the March 1996 crisis, for instance, reaffirmed to Asia-Pacific nations U.S. commitment to peace and stability in the region. Consistent with our global security strategy, U.S. engagement in Asia provides an opportunity to help shape the region's future, prevent conflict and provide the

stability and access that allows us to conduct approximately \$500 billion a year in trans-Pacific trade.

While our policies since the 1995 EASR have confirmed U.S. commitment to the region and strengthened bilateral relationships, areas of uncertainty remain and new challenges have emerged. North Korea's August 1998 missile launch and uncertainty over its commitment and adherence to the Agreed Framework threaten to set back the prospect for renewed South-North dialogue and progress in Four Party Talks to reduce tensions on the Peninsula and achieve a peace treaty. The Asian financial crisis has shaken the region's assumptions about uninterrupted economic development and is testing regional economic cooperation, globalization, and the livelihood of two billion Asians. The nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998 also add new complications not only for South Asia but also for security calculations of Asia-Pacific nations.

Indonesia's economic and political difficulties will pose challenges to the established order both internally and in the region. In Cambodia and Burma, domestic crises threaten the region's progress toward stable political cooperation. Historical mistrust and territorial disputes, including those in the South China Sea and elsewhere, remain unresolved, providing potential flashpoints over issues of sovereignty and nationalism. Crises outside the region, particularly in the Arabian Gulf, increasingly affect regional security, as Asia becomes more dependent on Gulf oil supplies for economic growth.

In spite of these challenges, however, we still see a region mostly at peace, where interests converge and the reservoir of political will to deal with new challenges runs deep. The intention of

the United States is to help dampen the sources of instability by maintaining a policy of robust engagement, overseas presence and strengthened alliances, while searching for new opportunities to increase confidence and a spirit of common security. Where our strategy

Our task is to dampen the sources of instability by maintaining a policy of robust forward engagement and military presence, while searching for new opportunities to increase confidence and a spirit of common security.

during the Cold War was primarily one of worldwide strategic deterrence, today we must deter actions in critical localized areas such as the Korean Peninsula while maintaining our capability to respond to crises should they emerge anywhere around the world.

In time of peace, our responsibility also extends to taking actions that shape the strategic environment to sustain the peace and prevent conflict over time.

In this way, U.S. security strategy in the Asia-Pacific region reflects and supports our global security strategy. DOD's 1997 Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) presented the three integrated concepts of Shape, Respond, and Prepare: the United States will remain globally engaged to **shape** the international environment; **respond** to the full spectrum of crises; and **prepare** now for an uncertain future.

The United States aims to promote a stable, secure, prosperous and peaceful Asia-Pacific community in which the United States is an active player, partner and beneficiary. This fourth East Asia Strategy Report is not being issued because of a change in our security strategy. Our priorities remain constant, but as always, we remain ready to promote fresh approaches to security in response to changes in the regional environment.

Finally, the EASR process itself represents a fundamental U.S. interest to promote openness and transparency of force structure, defense strategy and military doctrine throughout the region. Transparency fosters understanding, and enhances trust and confidence among nations. Other nations may choose to challenge elements of this report, but they cannot claim ignorance of American intentions, approach and status in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. welcomes honest dialogue concerning this report as constructive for mutual understanding and trust, and we encourage the continued development of similar public documents throughout the region to promote these ends.

in Asia demonstrates firm determination to defend U.S., allied and friendly interests in this critical region.

In addition to its deterrent function, U.S. military presence in Asia serves to shape the security environment to prevent challenges from developing at all. U.S. force presence mitigates the impact of historical regional tensions and allows the United States to anticipate problems, manage potential threats and encourage peaceful resolution of disputes. Only through active engagement can the United States contribute to constructive political, economic and military development within Asia's diverse environment. Forward presence allows the United States to continue playing a role in broadening regional confidence, promoting democratic values and enhancing common security.

Overseas military presence also provides political leaders and commanders the ability to respond rapidly to crises with a flexible array of options. Such missions may include regional and extra-regional contingencies, from humanitarian relief, non-combatant evacuation and peacekeeping operations to meeting active threats as in the Arabian Gulf. During the Arabian Gulf crisis in early 1998, for example, USS *Independence* deployed to the Gulf and was an important element of our deterrent force posture that alleviated the crisis. Military presence also enhances coalition operations by promoting joint, bilateral and combined training, and encouraging responsibility sharing on the part of friends and allies.

1.1 Force Structure

The 1995 East Asia Strategy Report stated that the United States will maintain approximately 100,000 U.S. military personnel in the Asia-Pacific region. This report reaffirms that commitment. We will sustain our presence with contributions from all military ser-

vices, ensuring that we have maximum operational flexibility in the event of a crisis.

This force level in the region [approximately 100,000 U.S. military personnel] is based on our analysis of the strategic environment for now and in the future, and the military capabilities needed to achieve our goals.

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of the strategic environment for now and in the future, and the military capabilities needed to achieve our goals. The presence of 100,000 U.S. military personnel is not arbitrary—it represents the formidable capabilities of the U.S. Eighth Army and Seventh Air

Force in Korea, III Marine Expeditionary Force and Fifth Air Force in Japan, and the U.S. Seventh Fleet, all focused on shaping, responding and preparing as necessary to achieve security and stability in the region.

Important actions have been undertaken to enhance the ability of these forces. These range from updated bilateral defense arrangements such as the Defense Guidelines with Japan, to increasingly sophisticated exercises and training with countries in the region, to the technological revolution that our militaries are now undergoing. All these additions enhance our presence in the region.

1.2 U.S. Military Presence: Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, Australia

U.S. bases in Japan and Korea remain the critical component of U.S. deterrent and rapid response strategy in Asia. U.S. military presence in the region also enables the United States to respond more rapidly and flexibly in other areas.

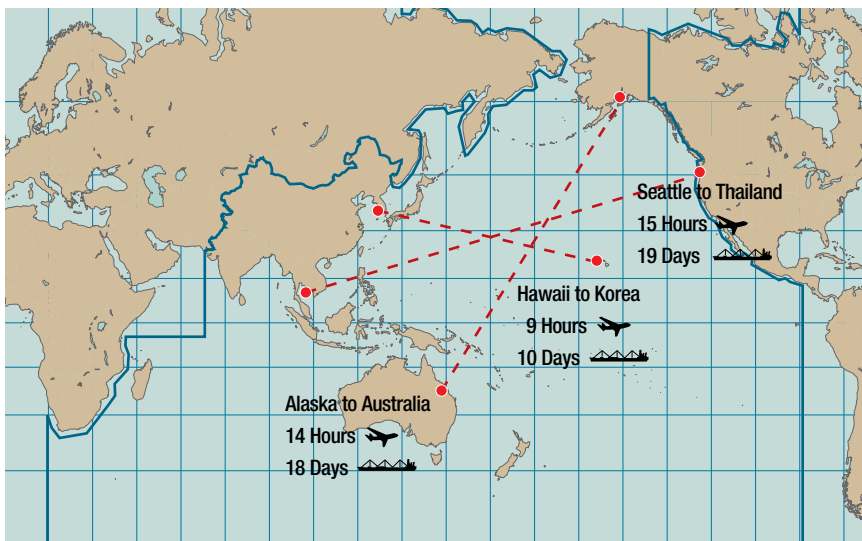
The basic outlines of U.S. force presence in Japan and Korea will remain constant. Japanese peacetime host nation support

(HNS) remains the most generous of any of America's allies around the world, averaging about \$5 billion each year. Despite its severe financial crisis, Korea too provides substantial support for maintenance of U.S. troops, recognizing like Japan that HNS is a critical strategic factor in the alliance.

Both nations continue to modernize their forces and have procured substantial amounts of U.S. equipment, services and weapons systems to enhance interoperability and cooperation between alliance

forces. In fact, the U.S. has more equipment in common with Japan than any other ally.

The Tyranny of Distance



“The fact that U.S. Forces, Japan exists today is a testimony to two great nations who have become friends and allies through the years. The primary bond that we have . . . is the love of peace, and all the values that go with free, democratic societies.”

—Lt. Gen Hall, speech commemorating the 40th anniversary of USFJ, July 24, 1997

Korea hosts the U.S. 7th Air Force, including the 8th and 51st Fighter Wings, and the 8th Army, including the 2nd Infantry Division. Japanese bases maintain the U.S. 5th Air Force, including 18th Wing, 35th Fighter Wing and 374th Airlift Wing; Navy 7th Fleet, including USS *Kitty Hawk* Car-

rier Battle Group and USS *Belleau Wood* Amphibious Ready Group; III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF); 9th Theater Area Army Command (TAACOM); and 1st USA Special Forces Battalion. The diversity, flexibility and complementarity of our force structure in the region provide credible and practical contributions to regional stability and security.

The maintenance of a diverse and flexible force presence in Asia remains of fundamental strategic importance to the United States. In addition to providing U.S. commanders great flexibility in tailoring forces to meet national objectives, a strategic mix is essential to a credible deterrent posture because it presents an enemy with an overwhelming array of capabilities against which to defend.

“You are the key element as far as shaping the environment in ways that are friendly to the United States and its allies. You are what we call the steel in the Sword of Freedom. And you are the very tip of that sword.” Secretary Cohen addresses the officers and crew of the USS *Independence* at Japan’s Yokosuka Naval Base, January 21, 1998.



Southeast Asia and Australia

After the closure of our bases in the Philippines in 1992, the United States has benefited from a series of access agreements and other arrangements with Southeast Asian partners that have supported continued U.S. military engagement. These arrangements, including port calls, repair facilities, training ranges and logistics support, have become increasingly important to our overseas presence.

For example, Singapore announced in early 1998 that its Changi Naval Station, which will be operational in the year 2000, will be available to U.S. naval combatants and include a pier which can accommodate American aircraft carriers. In January 1998, the United States and the Philippines negotiated a Visiting Forces Agreement that, when ratified, will permit routine combined exercises and training, and ship visits. Thailand remains an important refueling and transit point for possible operations to neighboring trouble spots, including the Arabian Gulf. Australia has long provided key access to facilities for U.S. unilateral and combined exercises in order to ensure readiness and coordinated responses to

regional contingencies. The existence of such arrangements throughout the region underscores the increasing importance of Southeast Asia and Australia to regional security, and their commitment to a credible and potent U.S. overseas presence as a cornerstone of their security interests.

Additionally, U.S. port calls to Hong Kong have continued uninterrupted since the reversion of Hong Kong to PRC sovereignty. These port calls also contribute constructively to U.S. military presence in the region, allowing for minor maintenance and repair of transiting ships.

Good Neighbors

Although our overseas presence in Asia serves both regional and U.S. security interests, the impact on local communities in host countries can be great. The United States understands and appreciates the sacrifices of the citizens who live near training

areas or bases, and who sometimes endure noise and other inconveniences. U.S. forces work to mitigate these effects and coordinate closely with officials at both the national and local levels, and local citizens groups to reach mutually satisfactory arrangements.

In Japan, for instance, U.S. forces have relocated artillery training, and when possible, carrier landing practice to alleviate the inconvenience to local residents. The United States has also worked with Japan to establish quiet hours to minimize the impact of routine air operations on local communities. In both Japan and Korea, there has been a continuing

effort to address environmental issues associated with its base presence. The United States has pledged to work closely with Japanese and Korean authorities to ensure U.S. military operations are carried out with due regard for the environment and public safety.

The U.S. has also made progress to return base and training-related land, to alter operational procedures in host countries in an effort to respond to local concerns, and to be better neighbors



Approximately 140,000 Japanese citizens visited the USS *Independence* (CV-62) during its first visit to a Japanese port, Otaru, Japan, September 6-7, 1997.

Basketball is just one of many community activities in which U.S. forces are engaged on Okinawa as “good neighbors”.



while maintaining operational capabilities. For instance, the United States and Japan established the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) process in 1995 to consider ways to reduce the impact of the activities of U.S. forces on Okinawa with the aim of alleviating the burden on the Okinawan people. The result was the SACO Final Report, released in December 1996. The report outlined 27 measures to reduce, realign and consolidate U.S. facilities and areas on Okinawa, adjust operational procedures and improve implementation of the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement, such as timely notification of all major accidents.

The SACO report presented a plan under which the United States would return 11 pieces of land, encompassing 21 percent of the total area used by the United States on Okinawa. The centerpiece of the land return program is the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from the crowded southern portion of Okinawa. The replacement facility will maintain the airfield’s critical military functions and capabilities. The United States and Japan remain strongly committed to implementation of the SACO Final Report.

In Korea, the United States and the Republic of Korea also completed negotiations in December 1997 to return about 5,000 acres of U.S. Forces, Korea (USFK) training areas to the ROK government. In exchange, U.S. forces in Korea secured access to ROK Army training areas. In this way, the United States and ROK responded both to the needs of the people of Korea and the mission requirements of USFK.

In addition, U.S. personnel have reemphasized the importance of being good guests who make constructive contributions to the communities in which they live. U.S. forces and their spouses in Japan and Korea, for instance, sponsor cultural and social events, contribute to environmental clean-up activities, maintain local parks, provide assistance to charitable institutions and contribute in a variety of other ways to improving their communities.

1.3 Exercises, Training and Military Sales

U.S. strategy emphasizes the importance of active bilateral and multilateral exercise programs between the United States services and the armed forces of friendly and allied nations. Significant joint, combined and other smaller military-to-military exercises

Examples of U.S. Multi-National Military Exercises In Asia-Pacific Region

EXERCISE	PARTICIPANTS
Arctic Sarex	Russia, Canada
Balikatan	Philippines
Cobra Gold	Thailand
Commando Sling	Singapore
Cope North	Japan
Cope Tiger	Australia, Singapore, Thailand
Foal Eagle	Republic of Korea
Freedom Banner	Thailand
Frequent Storm	Thailand
Keen Edge	Japan
RIMPAC	Australia, Japan, Korea, Canada, Chile. <i>Observers:</i> China, Indonesia, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru
RSO&I	Republic of Korea
Ulchi Focus Lens	Republic of Korea

take place annually with our allies in Japan, Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines.

Exercises serve as a visible demonstration of U.S. commitment to the region, improve interoperability and readiness, and demonstrate our ability to form and lead effective coalitions. Exercises promote burden-sharing on the part of friends and allies and facilitate regional integration. They exhibit our capabilities and resolve, and provide realistic conditions for working with the technologies, systems and operational procedures that will be crucial in times of crisis. International exercises also provide geographic familiarity and foster an understanding of cultures, values and habits of other societies.

The United States also participates in a variety of combined training activities. These include Mobile Training Teams (MTT), Joint and Combined Exchange Training (JCET), Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE) and Observer Training. The International Military Education and Training (IMET) and its component E-IMET (Expanded IMET) programs, which focus on promoting responsible military values and lasting ties between U.S. and regional military leaders, are also essential elements of U.S. regional strategy. Section 4 addresses the benefits of IMET and E-IMET in greater detail.

U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) programs also play a key role in supporting our regional engagement strategy. FMS ensures critical interoperability with allies and friends that facilitates coalition operations. FMF programs enable key friends and allies to improve their de-

fense capabilities by financing acquisition of U.S. military articles, services and training. While only two countries—Cambodia and Laos—received FMF grants in FY97 (for demining operations), FMF may serve as an effective tool in the future to assist our Asia-Pacific allies and friends as they weather the current financial crisis.



“Year 2000” Problem

Even as Asia-Pacific nations work to base their societies increasingly on advanced, computer-based technologies, we must remain aware of, and indeed anticipate, potential complications such modern and intricate systems may engender. The “Year 2000” (Y2K) computer problem, for instance, threatens to affect major public and private operating systems around the world, with potentially substantial impact on economic, social and military security in the Asia-Pacific region.

The “Y2K problem” is the term used to describe the potential failure of information technology prior to, on or after January 1, 2000. The potential exists because of the widespread practice of using two digits, not four, to represent the year in computer databases, software applications and hardware chips. Difficulties will arise in the year 2000 when that year is 00 and information technology will be unable to differentiate it from the year 1900.

DOD is taking the Y2K problem seriously and has generated cross-service work groups to address the issue. Likewise, the United States encourages all nations in the region to redouble their attention to the problem, and work together to anticipate and manage this potential security challenge.

1.4 Technological Revolution

The Department of Defense recognizes that even as we maintain the ready, versatile forces necessary to meet the challenges of shaping and responding in the near term, we must at the same time be transforming our forces, capabilities, and support structures to be able to shape and respond effectively in the future. This transformation involves more than the acquisition of new military systems. It means harnessing new technologies, operational concepts and organizational structures to give U.S. forces greater mobility, flexibility and military capabilities so they can dominate any future battlefield. In 1997, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff released *Joint Vision 2010* to address the impact of advances in technology and information systems on U.S. military strategies, force structure and operations around the world.

The “Revolution in Military Affairs” (RMA) that embodies this transformation in U.S. military capabilities is already being felt in Asia. Advances in command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance will combine with the introduction of new weapons systems to revolutionize U.S. ability to respond rapidly to any conflict and dominate any battlefield situation.

The United States will continue to ensure that we maintain interoperability with forces of allied and partner nations. This can be achieved through joint research and development, combined doctrine development and training, and a focus on the compatibility of systems.

The impact of the technological revolution on U.S. forces in Asia will be substantial, supplementing our forward deployed personnel to enhance dramatically our operational capabilities in the region. However, the full promise of RMA remains in the future. The improvements in military hardware and support systems are not yet at the stage of fundamentally altering our strategic perceptions or force structure in the region, or elsewhere around the world.

1.5 Comprehensive Engagement

U.S. engagement in the Asia-Pacific Region to promote mutual security extends beyond military bases and access to encompass a

The March of Technology: Enhanced Capabilities for a New Century

F-15

★ Introduced in 1976 ★ Advanced avionics revolutionary for its time ★ Flying range of more than 2700 miles ★ Designed primarily for air-to-air attack



F-22

★ Operational in 2004 ★ Stealth technology minimizes radar detection ★ Superior avionics provides unprecedented knowledge of enemy forces ★ First plane capable of flying at supersonic speeds for extended period of time ★ Precision munitions enable air-to-air and air-to-ground attack



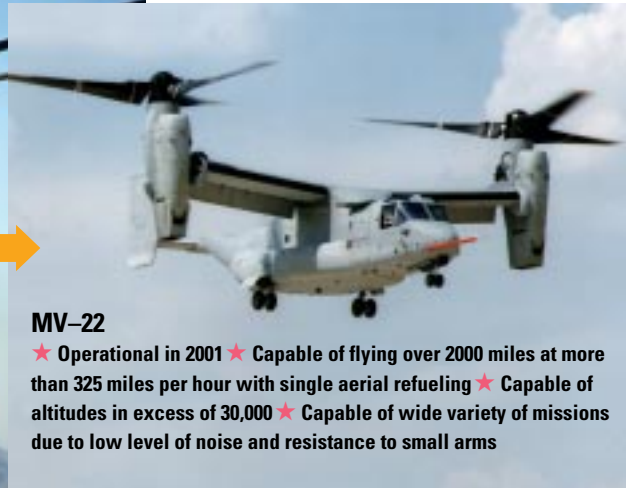
CH-46E

★ Introduced in 1964 ★ Capable of transporting troops and equipment over 130 miles at speeds in excess of 165 miles per hour ★ Capable of altitudes up to 10,000 feet ★ Designed for transport of troops and equipment in combat and peacetime



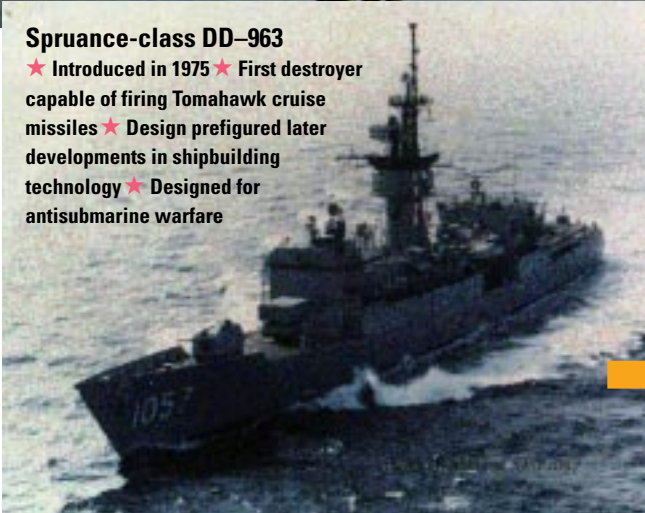
MV-22

★ Operational in 2001 ★ Capable of flying over 2000 miles at more than 325 miles per hour with single aerial refueling ★ Capable of altitudes in excess of 30,000 ★ Capable of wide variety of missions due to low level of noise and resistance to small arms



Spruance-class DD-963

★ Introduced in 1975 ★ First destroyer capable of firing Tomahawk cruise missiles ★ Design prefigured later developments in shipbuilding technology ★ Designed for antisubmarine warfare



Arleigh Burke-class DDG-51

★ Introduced in 1985 ★ Armed with wide range of weaponry, including Tomahawk and Harpoon cruise missiles ★ First destroyer to incorporate Stealth technology ★ Incorporates AEGIS air defense system to protect against missile threats ★ Designed for anti-aircraft, antisubmarine, antisurface and strike warfare



broad range of vehicles for promoting our interests and influence. Our diplomatic missions serve at the forefront as the engine of U.S. overall engagement with the region. U.S. trade and investment, cultural, social and religious exchanges, foreign study and tourism all contribute markedly to comprehensive and constructive U.S. overseas engagement in Asia. Approximately 400,000 U.S. citizens, excluding military personnel and dependents, live, work and study in the region. Thousands more travel to the region as tourists each year, serving as unofficial ambassadors of U.S. values and friendship. U.S. businesses conduct more than \$500 billion in trade and have invested more than \$150 billion throughout the region, serving in the process as exemplars of the benefits of market capitalism.

The presence of U.S. military personnel in the region multiplies our diplomatic impact through engagement with counterparts and the demonstration of professional military ethics and conduct in a democratic society. The combination of U.S. political, military, diplomatic, economic and social engagement that this activity in the region represents reassures friendly nations and encourages pursuit of policies in U.S. and regional interests. In this way, the full range and diversity of U.S. engagement in the Asia-Pacific region must not be overlooked when considering the value of U.S. overseas presence to security.