DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: THE FUTURE OF THE MILITARY SERVICES AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF SEQUESTRATION

STATEMENT OF: GENERAL JAMES F. AMOS
COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

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In an increasingly dangerous and uncertain world, the Marine Corps continues to provide capabilities our Nation needs to retain its status as the only credible remaining super power. As we face inevitable difficult resource decisions, we must also consider how we can best mitigate the inherent risk of a reduced defense capacity. Like an affordable insurance policy, the Marine Corps and the Navy's amphibious forces represent a very efficient and effective hedge against the Nation's most likely risks.

1. The current fight. We will continue to provide the best trained and equipped Marine units to Afghanistan. This will not change. This will remain the top priority for as long as we have Marines in harm's way. We have made great progress in Afghanistan; our fellow citizens expect no less of us for the duration of the war. We remain committed to achieving success. We will ensure that we draw down in Afghanistan in a way that responsibly transfers authority to our Afghan partners, and maintains pressure on the enemy. Our forward-deployed Marines have all that they need with regard to training, equipment, and leadership to accomplish the mission. The cost of ensuring that they have all that they need has been felt by those units back at home station. This fact impacts our ability to deal with another large scale contingency.

2. Future Security Environment. Our Nation and world face an uncertain future; we cannot predict where and when events may occur that might require us to respond on short notice to protect our citizens and our interests. In the past, there have always been times when events have compelled the United States to become involved, even when such involvement wasn't desired; there is no doubt that we will have do this again as we face an uncertain future. As we look ahead, we see a world of increasing instability and conflict, characterized by poverty, competition for resources, urbanization, overpopulation and extremism. Failed states, or those that cannot adequately govern their own territory can become safe havens for terrorist, insurgent and criminal groups that threaten the U.S. and our allies.

Already pressurized by a lack of education and job opportunities, the marked increase of young men in underdeveloped countries are swelling the ranks of disaffected groups, providing a more pronounced distinction between the "haves" and "have-nots." Over the last year we watched as the momentum of the Arab Spring toppled long-established governments, and re-shaped the political and military dynamics of an already troubled region.

Increasing competition for scarce natural resources like fossil fuels, food and clean water continue to lead to tension, crisis and conflict. The rise of new powers and shifting geopolitical relationships will create greater potential for competition and friction. The rapid proliferation of new technologies, cyber warfare and advanced precision weaponry will amplify the risks, thus empowering state and non-state actors as never before. These trends will exert a significant influence on the future security environment and, in turn, the ever-changing character of warfare. In the words of one of our former general officers, "two parallel worlds exist on this planet- a stable progressively growing, developing world and an unstable, disintegrating chaotic world. The two worlds are colliding." This is the world in which your Marine Corps must

operate. If we are to do our part to forestall future wars and conflicts we must remain engaged and involved.

3. Crisis response. Like it or not, America must maintain the ability to respond to crises- especially in unexpected places at unexpected times. History has shown that crises usually come with little or no warning, and often in conditions of uncertainty, complexity, and chaos. A full understanding of what is occurring, and what the best response should be, takes time. There remains an imperative for a force that can respond to crisis situations immediately and create options and decision space for our Nation's leaders. An on-scene force that can respond immediately reduces the risk that a situation will spin out of control as our nation's leaders attempt to determine a way ahead. America's ability to respond in the manner required is increasingly complicated by the fact that since the 1990s our nation has significantly reduced the number and size of our bases and stations around the world.

Crisis response must sometimes be measured in hours, if not minutes. When Marine forces rescued the downed Air Force F-15 pilot in Libya earlier this year, they did so from amphibious shipping in the Mediterranean, arriving and completing the rescue within 90 minutes of notification. Imagine how the dynamic in Libya might have changed if Quadafi had captured a US air crew. Within 20 hours of notification forward deployed Marine forces arrived in tsunami-devastated Japan and began to conduct search and rescue and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions- at times within the radioactive plume. Crisis response can't be done from the United States. It takes too much time to get there. Even if adequate infrastructure is available near the crisis site to support deployment of a crisis response force by air, maintaining and sustaining such a force by air is extraordinarily difficult.

It is imperative that our Nation retain a credible means of mitigating risk while we draw down both the capabilities and capacities of our forces. This is best done by forward deployed and positioned forces, trained to a high state of readiness, and on the scene. The Marine Corps was specifically directed by the 82nd Congress as the force intended to be "the most ready when the Nation is least ready." This expectation exists because of the costly lessons our nation learned during the Korean War when a lack of preparedness in the beginning stages of the conflict very nearly resulted in defeat. Because our Nation cannot afford to hold the entire joint force at such a high state of readiness, it has chosen to keep the Marines ready, and has often used them to plug the gaps during international crises, to respond when no other options were available.

4. Forward presence. Although the world is continuing to change and budgets continue to fluctuate, America's requirement to maintain a forward based force-in-readiness remains. Physical presence matters. It shows our economic and our military commitment to a particular region. It deters potential adversaries. It assures our friends. It permits response in a timely manner to crises.

Our nation has already significantly reduced the number and size of our force presence, our bases and stations around the world. U.S. Forces based in the continental

United States are challenged to respond quickly due to the tyranny of distance. The national blessing of being located between two great oceans bears the expense of having to traverse those oceans in order to respond to crisis in other parts of the world. If we are to maintain our status as a global power, we have a responsibility to respond to crises quickly.

Speed enables swift and certain projection of power and influence. When we respond from a forward posture, our response time is almost immediate—often before an adversary can position its forces optimally, or accomplish his objectives. Only when we are positioned forward can we provide the backing to diplomatic efforts that give our nation's leaders time to develop options and build coalitions. Often, U.S. citizens in other lands are put at risk if we are slow to respond or to evacuate them.

Maintaining a presence-helps provide stability to areas of strategic importance. We can build partner capacity through direct contact; increase our own awareness of dynamic developments and potential response options; control key objectives like ports, airfields, and chokepoints to ensure their safe and continued use should they become threatened; demonstrate resolve; assure our allies and partners; and provide relief and assistance quickly in the case of natural or man-made disasters.

Your Marine Corps remains forward deployed- particularly in the critical Pacific region. It is widely acknowledged that the Pacific is the future of our country from both an economic and a military perspective. We also recognize that for many years to come we will have security challenges in the Central Command area of operations. But even as we agree on the importance of these two critical regions, we can't ignore the rest of the world. History has shown that crises, conflicts, and challenges never occur where we want them to. . . we're not very good at predicting the future. Right now, Marines are engaged in multiple regions around the world such as Eastern Europe, Latin and South America, Africa and the Pacific Rim, conducting theater security cooperation activities and building partner capacity with our allies and partners. The goal of our engagement activities is to minimize the conditions for conflict and enable host nation forces to effectively address instability as it occurs. Engagement activities also provide our Nation with a stance for crisis response and quick footing for action when the need arises. As we look ahead to times of reduced manning and restricted access to overseas basing, Marines must be forward deployed and engaged on a day-to-day basis, working closely with our joint and allied partners. When crises arise, these same Marines will respond — locally, regionally or globally — to accomplish whatever mission our Nation asks of us.

5. Our maritime role and amphibious and expeditionary operations. As we consider the future, we do so with the sure knowledge that America is first and foremost a maritime nation. Like so much of the world, we rely on the maritime commons for the exchange of commerce and ideas. The sea dominates the surface of our globe (70% of earth's surface). 95% of the world's commerce travels by ship. 49% of the world's oil travels through six major choke points; on any given day 23,000 ships are underway around the world.

Many depend on us to maintain freedom of movement on those commons; we continue to take that responsibility seriously. The world's littoral regions—where the land and sea (and air) meet—are equally critical when securing freedom of movement. The littorals are where seaborne trade originates and enters its markets. The littorals include straits, most of the world's population centers, and the areas of maximum growth.

The Navy and Marine Corps team remain the solution set to fulfilling our global maritime responsibilities in these critical areas. Naval forces are not reliant on host nation support or permission; in the conduct of operations, they step lightly on our allies and host countries. With the increasing concentration of the world's population in littoral areas, the ability to operate simultaneously on the sea, ashore, in the air, and to move seamlessly between these three domains is critical. The Marine Corps' requirement to deploy and respond globally, engage regionally, and train locally necessitates that we leverage every form of strategic mobility- a combination of amphibious ships, high speed vessels, maritime preposition shipping, organic tactical aviation and strategic airlift.

Amphibious forces, a combination of Marine air ground task forces and Navy amphibious ships, remain a uniquely critical and capable component of both crisis response and meeting our maritime responsibilities. Operating as a team, amphibious forces provide operational reach and agility, they "buy time" and decision space for our national leaders in time of crisis. They bolster diplomatic initiatives by means of their credible forward presence. Amphibious forces also provide the Nation with assured access for the joint force in a major contingency operation. That same force can quickly be reinforced to assure access anywhere in the world in the event of a major contingency; it can be dialed up or down like a rheostat to be relevant across the range of military operations. *No other force possesses the flexibility to provide these capabilities and yet sustain itself logistically for significant periods of time, at a time and place of its choosing.* There is a reason why every Combatant Commander wants the presence of forward deployed amphibious forces on a routine basis, and each of them ask for that. They know that such forces mitigate risk, and give them the capability to deal with the unknown.

The inherent usefulness, capability, and flexibility of amphibious forces is not widely understood, as evidenced by the frequent, and incorrect, assumption that forcible entry capabilities alone define the requirement for amphibious forces. The same capabilities that allow an amphibious task force to deliver and support a landing force on a hostile shore enable it to support forward engagement and crisis response. *In fact, the most frequent employment of amphibious forces is for engagement and crisis response.* The geographic Combatant Commanders have increased their demand for forward-postured amphibious forces capable of conducting security cooperation, regional deterrence and crisis response. In an era of declining access, this trend will likely markedly increase. Over the past year, amphibious forces have conducted humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts in Pakistan, they have supported combat operations in Afghanistan with ground forces and fixed wing aviation, they have responded to the piracy crisis on M.V. Magellan Star, they have supported operations in Libya, and assisted our allies in the Philippines and Japan. Modern amphibious assaults, when necessary, seek to avoid enemy strengths by exploiting gaps and weaknesses. An

example is the TF-58 assault that seized key terrain south of Kandahar 450 miles inland in 2001 shortly after the 9/11 attacks.

The Marine Corps defines itself as an "expeditionary" force. "Expeditionary" means that we're capable of operating in austere environments. When we deploy we bring the water, the fuel, the supplies that our Marines and sailors need to accomplish the mission. "Expeditionary" is not a bumper sticker to us, or a concept, it is a state of conditioning that Marines work hard to maintain.

6. Right-sizing in the face of new fiscal realities. The Marine Corps is fully aware of the fiscal challenges facing our Nation, and stands ready to further critically examine and streamline its force needs for the future. *We continually strive to be good stewards of the public trust by maintaining the very best financial management practices.* The Marine Corps remains the first and only military service whose financial statements have been deemed audit-ready. We are proud of our reputation for frugality, and we remain one of the best values for the defense dollar. During these times of constrained resources, we remain committed to refining operations, identifying efficiencies, and reinvesting savings to conserve scarce public funds. When the Nation pays the 'sticker price' for its Marines, it buys the ability to remain forward deployed and forward engaged, to assure our partners, reinforce alliances, and build partner capacity. For 7.8% of the total DoD budget, our Nation gains the ability to respond to unexpected crises, from humanitarian disaster relief efforts, to non-combatant evacuation operations, to conduct counter-piracy operations, or full scale combat.

As Congress, and this Committee, work hard to account for every dollar, the Marine Corps is working to make sure that every dollar is well spent. In the end we know we're going to have to make cuts. As we provide our input we need to address three critical considerations -- strategy, balance, and keeping faith.

In an effort to ensure the Marine Corps was best organized for a challenging and dangerous future security environment, last fall we conducted a comprehensive and detailed force structure review to identify all dimensions of rebalance and posture for the future. The results of this effort have been shared with this Committee in the past. This effort incorporated the lessons learned from ten years of combat. We affirm the results of that strategy-driven initial effort, but we have also begun to readjust certain parameters of it based on the realities of spending cuts outlined in the Budget Control Act of 2011.

When we went through the force structure review effort, we built a force that can respond to only one major contingency at a time. It has been opined that one effect of sequestration might be to put a Marine Corps below the end strength level that's necessary to support even one major contingency. At the potential end strength level resulting from the sequestration, we're going to have to make some tough decisions and assume significantly more risk. We will not be able to do the things the Nation needs us to do to mitigate risk, or to meet the requirements of the Combatant Commanders. We won't be there to reassure our potential friends, or to assure our allies. And we certainly won't be there to contain small crises before they become major conflagrations. A

Marine Corps end strength level that could result from the sequestration presents significant risk institutionally and for the Nation. Responsiveness to Combatant Commander requirements such as contingencies and crisis response will be significantly degraded.

With regard to strategy, the Marine Corps is participating in the ongoing rewrite of national security strategy. Once this effort is concluded, we'll evaluate the resources available against the mission, then build the most capable force possible. We'll use what we learned during the force structure review effort as our point of departure, and make recommendations on how to best reshape the Marine Corps.

We cannot make cuts in a manner that would "hollow" the force. We have learned this lesson before during previous draw downs. The term "hollow force" refers primarily to the lack of readiness of U.S. forces to accomplish their missions. Readiness is the aggregate of the investment in personnel, training, and equipment to ensure that units that are prepared to perform missions at any given time. The Services have varying approaches to readiness. In order to manage investment and O&M costs, some Services judiciously reduce the readiness status of selected units during interim periods between scheduled deployments. This concept is referred to as "tiered readiness." In this concept, resources are limited and non-deployed units pay the costs to ensure that deployed and next-to-deploy units have sufficient personnel, equipment, and training. Over time, non-deploying, or rarely-deploying units, may be held at reduced readiness levels for indeterminate periods of time. Given our mission to be America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, a tiered readiness concept is not compatible with the Marine Corps' missions because its non-deployed units are often called upon to respond to unanticipated and varied crises on a moment's notice.

The Marine Corps strives to maintain a high state of unit readiness and logistical self-sustainment capability. Even when not deployed, Marine units maintain higher levels of readiness, so they can deploy on short notice. This readiness posture allows the Corps to:

- maintain most of its operating force ready to respond quickly to crises and contingencies
- cycle battalions, squadrons and other units through rotations rapidly
- routinely build and deploy coherent, effective task forces without extensive work-ups
- maintain significant amounts of equipment in theater vice rotating most of it with each unit, thus reducing the costs of doing our Nation's bidding.

Organic logistics capabilities are vital to this practice. Too often, service logistics units fall prey to cuts that forfeit their ability to respond to crises. Naval forces—in particular, amphibious ships—are also essential to readiness. We must continue to invest in this highly utilized capability.

Finally, lower budget levels, end strength, and investment accounts will significantly affect contingency plans over time. Many of these plans depend on concurrent and/or sequential operations. Less capacity removes the capability for such operations. Operational plans, will necessarily be adjusted to accommodate the longer

timelines required to achieve desired objectives. Longer time to accomplish objectives in war can easily translate into increased loss of personnel and materiel, and ultimately places mission accomplishment at risk.

My promise to this Committee is that at the end of the day, we will build "the best Marine Corps" that our Nation is willing to afford. I intend to "keep faith" with our people. This term has deep meaning to the leadership of the Marine Corps. We expect much from those we recruit, and we remind them constantly of their obligations of honorable and faithful service. In return we must be faithful to the obligations we make to those who serve honorably. We must not break the chain of trust that exists. Precipitous personnel reductions are among the worst measures that can be employed to save money. Our all-volunteer system is built upon a reasonable opportunity for retention and advancement; wholesale cuts undermine the faith and confidence in service leadership and create long-term experience deficits with negative operational impacts. Such an approach cannot be quickly recovered from.

7. Redundancy. In the interest of austerity, there are many who try to argue that the Marines provide capabilities that are redundant when compared with other Services. This is not the case. "Redundant" means that no replacement is required if something is discarded. This is not true of the Marine Corps capabilities sets or of the way we have adapted to the future security environment and modern warfare. If the Nation lost its amphibious capability, it would have to pay for another Service to provide it. In short order the Nation would require a sustainable air-ground force able to operate from the sea- to respond to crisis's and contingencies. A force that comes from the sea requires specialized equipment and training. No savings would be gained because there is no redundancy. The nation would have to pay- and likely pay a higher price-to gain back what had been given away.

In any future defense strategy, the Marine Corps will fill a unique lane in the capability range of America's armed forces. A *Middleweight* Force, we are lighter than the Army, and heavier than SOF. The Corps is not a second land army. The Army is purpose-built for land campaigns and carries a heavier punch when it arrives, whereas the Marine Corps is an expeditionary force focused on coming from the sea with integrated aviation and logistics capabilities. The Marine Corps maintains the ability to contribute to land campaigns by leveraging or rapidly aggregating its capabilities and capacities. Similarly, Marine Corps and SOF roles are complementary, rather than redundant. Special Operation Forces contribute to the counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism efforts of the Combatant Commanders in numerous and specialized ways, but they are not a substitute for conventional forces with a broader range of capability and sustainability.

Marine air is similarly not redundant. The US Air Force cannot come from the sea; nor are most of its aircraft suitable for expeditionary missions. The Navy currently does not invest in sufficient capability to operate their aircraft ashore once deployed—a requirement that has risen often in the past in support of both naval and land campaigns. If Navy aviation were to buy the capability to deploy effectively to austere ashore bases

from their ships, they would find it would cost as much, or more, than it costs them currently to do so on behalf of the Marine Corps.

8. Reset and modernization. Reset is distinguishable from modernization. There will be a cost when the Marine Corps comes out of Afghanistan. It is necessary to reset the force by addressing equipment shortfalls, and to refresh equipment worn out or degraded by years of combat. We currently estimate that bill to be about $3 billion. A few years ago that bill was in excess of $15 billion. With the help of Congress we have been able to reset the force for some years now, even as we continued to support operations both in Iraq, and Afghanistan. As we look to the future, we must address our deficiencies and replace the equipment that is worn out from operations in Afghanistan. Secondly, we must continue to modernize to keep pace with the evolving world.

The Marine Corps is currently undertaking several initiatives to modernize the Total Force. The programmatic priority for our ground forces is the seamless transition of Marines from the sea to conduct sustained operations ashore whether for training, humanitarian assistance, or for combat. Our ground combat and tactical vehicle strategy is focused on the right mix of assets, balancing performance, payload, survivability, fuel efficiency, transportability and cost. In particular, the Amphibious Combat Vehicle is important to our ability to conduct surface littoral maneuver and seamlessly project Marine units from sea to land in permissive, uncertain and hostile environments. We remain firmly partnered with the U.S. Army in fielding a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle that lives up to its name while also being affordable.

Marine Corps Aviation, which is on the cusp of its centennial of service to our Nation, continues its modernization that began over a decade ago. The continued development and fielding of the short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) F-35B Joint Strike Fighter remains the centerpiece of this effort. The capability inherent in a STOVL jet allows the Marine Corps to operate in harsh conditions and from remote locations where there often are few airfields available for conventional aircraft. It is also specifically designed to operate from amphibious ships — a capability that no other tactical aircraft possesses. The ability to employ a fifth-generation aircraft from amphibious shipping doubles the number of "carrier" platforms from which the United States can employ fixed wing aviation. Once fully fielded, the F-35B replaces three legacy aircraft — F/A-18, EA-6B and AV-8B — saving the DoD approximately $1 billion per year in operations and maintenance costs.

This program has been performing notably since January with more than 260 vertical landings completed and 98% of its key performance parameters met. It is ahead of schedule in most areas. The F-35B also recently completed a highly successful three-week, sea trial period aboard the amphibious assault warship USS Wasp (LHD-1). DoD has already purchased 32 of these aircraft. Delivery is on track, and we look forward to receiving them at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma just ten months from now.

The MV-22B Osprey continues to be a success story for the Marine Corps and the Joint Force. To date, this revolutionary tilt-rotor aircraft has changed the way Marines operate on the battlefield, giving American and Coalition forces the maneuver advantage

and operational reach unmatched by any other tactical aircraft. Over the past four years since achieving Initial Operational Capability, the MV-22B has flown more than 18,000 hours in combat, carried more than 129,000 personnel, and 5.7 million pounds of cargo. The MV-22B has made multiple deployments to Iraq, four with MEUs at sea, and it is currently on its fourth deployment to Afghanistan. The unprecedented operational reach of an MV-22B, embarked aboard amphibious shipping in the Mediterranean, was the sole reason for the rescue of a downed American aviator in Libya. Our squadron fielding plan is well under way as we continue to replace our 44 year old, Vietnam-era CH-46 helicopters. We must procure all required quantities of the MV-22B in accordance with the program of record. Calls by some to reduce MV-22B procurement as a DoD cost savings measure are puzzling. Their arguments are ill-informed and rooted in anachronisms when measured against the proven record of performance and safety this force multiplier brings to today's battlefields in support of Marines and the Joint Force.

9. Conclusions. The American people continue to believe that when a crisis emerges Marines will be present and "invariably turn in a performance that is dramatically and decisively successful - not most of the time, but always." They possess a heart-felt belief that the Marine Corps is good for the young men and women of our country. In their view, the Marines are extraordinarily adept at converting "un-oriented youths into proud, self-reliant stable citizens - citizens into whose hands the nation's affairs may be safely entrusted." An investment in the Marine Corps continues to be an investment in the character of the young people of our country.

The Marine Corps will only ask for what it needs, not what it wants. As Congress and DoD move forward with tough decisions on the future of our Armed Forces relative to the Budget Control Act of 2011, the crisis response capabilities the Marine Corps affords our Nation must serve as the compass in determining its ultimate end strength, equipping and training needs. Through it all, the Marine Corps will make the hard decisions and redouble its commitment to its traditional culture of frugality.

The Marine Corps has evolved over many years, many conflicts, and at a significant price in terms of both blood and treasure; we have served the Nation well time and time again. For a comparably small investment, the Marine Corps continues to provide the protection our Nation needs in an increasingly dangerous and uncertain world, and to preserve our Nation's ability to do what we must as the world's only credible remaining super power.