Notes:

Below are informal notes taken by a JHU/APL staff member at the Seminar.

Under Secretary of Defense Michèle Flournoy began by noting that the focus of tonight’s seminar, *DoD in the Future Security Environment*, was a very broad topic that could take days to cover adequately. Recent events have shown that the future security environment will be busy for DoD. In particular Ms Flournoy noted current responsibilities for US military including:

- The war in Afghanistan which is also linked to the worldwide war against terrorists
- The drawdown in Iraq
- Assistance to the NATO’s efforts in Libya
- Maintaining a watch on the turmoil in the Mid East

For the evening’s Seminar Ms Flournoy chose to focus primarily on Asia and DoD’s future in its security environment.

**Asia Will Be Central**

- Asia has been rising as the central geopolitical focus for the future
- Asia’s influence will continue to grow in many fields
- Asia is already showing its growing strengths, for example:
  - 3 of the 4 largest economies are in Asia – China, Japan, and India follow the US in GDP
  - 10 of the 15 fastest growing economies are in Asia
- China’s importance to the US has been growing in the last few years
  - In 1979 there was a $2billion trade relationship – now it is $459B a year
  - China is the #2 trading partner for the US
- China’s importance to the economy of its own region is also increasing
  - China’s share of the Asian economy has gone up three-fold in recent years
  - China is the central engine for the enormous Asian regional economy
  - By 2030 Asia’s regional economy will outstrip that of the US and Europe

To ensure this continuing level of growth China now also recognizes the connection between prosperity and stability in the region

- An important element is the security of the openness of the commons
- There is also a recognition that a lot of what underlies the current openness and stability comes from decades of US commitment to the region
- Although there is the promise of a great future, there are uncertainties
Asia at the Crossroads for Many Challenges:
- Climate change issues
- Cyber security issues
- Terrorism, especially in the region of Afghanistan and Pakistan

Given these challenges, the US must carefully determine how to engage Asia by looking at:
1. Strengthening and making more adaptable its bi-lateral relationships
2. Strengthening and expanding its multi-lateral relationships
3. Transforming US posture and force structure in the region
4. Seeking to engage China and India as they rise to help them develop a stable environment

Bi-lateral Relationships
- Will remain at the center of US foreign policy in Asia
- Japan continues to be very important to the US especially during this time of internal crisis
  o Recognize that Japan has great challenges ahead
  o Be confident that things will get better for Japan
- Republic of Korea (ROK) – US will continue to bolster the alliance
  o DoD has been working closely with ROK for decades
  o The relationship does need to be modernized
  o The US-ROK Strategic Alliance 2015 was just released
    ▪ Highlighted increased US interoperability with ROK forces
    ▪ Efforts are aimed at preserving the stability of the Korean Peninsula
- Australia’s geopolitical position is growing in importance as that of SE Asia grows
  o Working Group established in 2010 to design a combined military force structure
  o Largest non-NATO contributor to the war in Afghanistan
  o Helps in many other fields including space
- Other traditional allies – Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines – remain important
  o Philippines had serious concerns about Al Qaeda a few years ago but quiet joint efforts since 2001 have reduced that problem
  o USAID work in the Philippines was an important part of the effort
- Congress needs to recognize the importance of the diplomatic and USAID work in the Philippines and elsewhere that have helped build stability along with military efforts
- Newer regional relations are growing in success and value to the US
  o Indonesia and Vietnam in particular
  o US is developing important security cooperation arrangements
- Throughout the region
  o Humanitarian and disaster relief relations are important since the area is so prone to so many natural disasters
  o Natural disaster problems can lead to economic and political stability issues that can easily spill over borders

Multi-Lateral Relationships
- US involvement in Asian regional organizations is increasing
  o President Obama will go to the ASEAN East Asia Summit meeting for the first time
  o US will take part in other regional defense minister meetings this year
- US is building on many new habits of cooperation that have been developing
● US needs to explore even more ways to work with organizations in the region

**Force Posture and Structure**

● US needs to better align its forces with the new situations in the region
● As stated by SECDEF Gates, the US military in Asia must be:
  o operationally resilient
  o geographically distributed
  o politically sustainable
● US operational resilience must be maintained to enhance partner confidence
● US capabilities, basing, etc. in the region must be designed to allow the military to operate wherever it is challenged
  o This may require investing in new capabilities
  o Must take the long range view
  o The Air/Sea Battle Concept will be part of the new look
    ▪ Will involve cooperation and integration of air/maritime capabilities
    ▪ Not limited by focusing on any one system or any one adversary
● US capabilities must be more geographically distributed to reflect new situations
  o US has it about right in NE Asia
  o SE Asia may need more efforts
  o Force posture must address potential challenges throughout the whole region
  o This does not necessarily mean bringing in more permanent bases
  o It does mean more operations with allies
● Anything that the US does must be politically sustainable for both sides
  o Must be able to explain to the peoples of both sides what we are doing and why
  o Part of Pentagon’s mission is to explain what it is doing
  o Anything that is done must be sustainable for the local people, too

**New Ways to Engage**

**China**

● China put out a new White Paper last month stating it wants a win-win future
● US is encouraging China to be more transparent
● China has been increasingly assertive in the South China Sea
  o Worries China’s neighbors
● China is developing weapons systems designed for anti-access
  o Such development is not good for the concept of open access to the commons
● There is no reason to believe that the US and China are destined for a conflict
● US and China do need a healthy, sustaining military-to-military relationship
● Taiwan – US wants improved relationship between China and Taiwan
  o The One-China policy will remain in effect for the US
  o US will not mediate between China and Taiwan nor pressure Taiwan
  o US is working for an atmosphere that would be conducive to improved relations
India
- Growing importance in world and regional affairs
- Many of its interests parallel those of the US
  - Upholds democratic values and an open market economy
- In the past India’s foreign policy was based on the concept of non-alignment
  - Now may be more willing to take part in alliances and cooperative efforts
  - Involved in issues with China and working with others about piracy
- India is also expanding its trading throughout the world

Asian Views of the US
- US may appear too focused on Afghanistan and other wars to take proper notice of Asia
- But US is not giving Asia short shrift
- US has shown recently how committed it is to Asia
- No one in Asia needs to ask whether the US will show up when needed because it has and will
  - US helped the Philippines successfully control an Al Qaeda threat
  - US immediately came to the aid of Japan in its latest crisis
- US has used action and presence to show its interests in Asia

Conclusion
- Pentagon is focused on planning and engineering to generate stability
- US wants to continue its Asian strategic partnerships to maintain freedom and prosperity throughout the region
- US is a Pacific nation, too
- US will continue to be involved in Asia to help it move toward increased stability

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

On-going Posture Review
- Will never be completed on a set date with a written report ready for a GAO review
  - Will be done on a rolling basis
- Changes for Europe have already been announced
  - Will be getting to Asia shortly
- DoD is trying to be smarter about how it does its job
  - For naval assets there may be ways to provide the same level of presence with only one-quarter to one-third the cost if forward stationing replaces full rotation plans
  - Doing more with cooperating partners would also cut down some of the costs
- Overall a move to balance more toward Asia should be expected

Russia
- There have been conversations with the Russians about Asia
- Hard to judge how helpful Russia is likely to be – has its own ideas about the region
- Russia has been more assertive about economic rather than military matters recently
- US and Russia can talk about common interests
Russia has been more cooperative over time in some areas such as Central Asia when they see advantages in helping with the situation in Afghanistan.

**Posture Review Will Be Strategy Driven**
- As outlined by SECDEF Gates
- Must also look at the new resource picture to help with a triage of what needs to be done
  - Need to determine where the emphasis should be
  - Need to identify where the military can manage or accept greater risks
- Strategic decisions, force structure, and capital investment are in the discretionary budget
  - DoD needs to look at the non-discretionary parts of the budget, too
  - Just as the government needs to look at the country’s non-discretionary expenses
    - Recognized that these are the most political of topics
    - All of this must be done with bi-partisan efforts between Congress and the White House

**Communicating with China**
- DoD has talked military-to-military about ways to improve communications especially for crises
- Having a “hot-line” is one possibility

**Smarter Savings**
- There are ways to have more impact with little money
- Building capabilities of partners would help
  - May involve carefully placing a few essential advisors
  - Example: the Philippines used just a few Special Forces personnel to significantly improve the terrorist threat situation the government faced there

**Jointness**
- Cannot look at the future service by service
- Must start with critical missions:
  - Prevail in current wars in Afghanistan and to defeat Al Qaeda
  - Protect the Homeland
  - Ensure credibility
- Jointness has developed a great deal in the last decade
- Expect challenges will continue from weak/failing states which might touch on vital national interests
  - Would be good to be able to put more money toward prevention
  - Additional preventative attention must also involve diplomatic and other aid, too
- Cannot forget potential challenges from nation-states
- Result – the US military must have maximum versatility against the broadest possible range of potential challenges
• Ways to spend smarter exist through Jointness improvements in areas such as reducing overhead

**Multi-lateral versus Bi-lateral Relationships**

• US has used its existing bi-lateral relations to support growing multi-lateral relationships
• DoD is doing more and more with tri-lateral cooperative efforts and working with other small groups of states
• Bi- and multi-lateral relationships are not in competition with each other – they support and enrich each other

**Upcoming DoD Budget Cuts of $400B**

• Lots of issues will be considered in the on-going review
  o Last round of cuts showed that there were more savings to be gained
• Many of the cost drivers are actually in non-discretionary areas of the budget
  o As is the case throughout the government budget
  o Congress must be willing to consider these areas for deficit reductions
• Budgets and planning for the future will still be strategy driven
  o Must decide where to accept greater risks
• The foundation of US national power is a healthy economy
  o Necessary adjustments will take the will of the whole government and the people

**Interagency Reform**

(Ms Flournoy stated that this would be her personal view since there is not yet one from DoD, but she has had a good deal of experience with the topic prior to coming to her current job)

• No new national security act would be helpful at this time
• The Washington answer is all too often – Let’s reorganize
  o Would not be right in this instance
• More important to do some other things before going to a reorganization
  o Must build incentive structures to ensure that any reorganized structure would work
    • Turn basic concepts on their heads
    • Can look to Goldwater-Nichols experience in DoD for methods
      • Went from being a career-killer to work outside own service
      • Went to having requirements for joint service for career advancement
  o Need to determine the balance of interests
    • Must have a strong, robust defense budget
    • Must also have larger diplomatic and development budget
  o Then need greater integration of missions

**Navy / Air Force and the Air/Sea Battle CONOPS**

• Services are working well together
• What results from that work will be part of the overall defense strategy
Not designed to look at only one enemy
This is a work in progress and will be for many years

Changes in Force Posture in Asia
Still in proposal development and analysis stage
Cannot identify timelines at this time

Working with the State Department and USAID
They did their own reviews of a similar nature when DoD was working on its latest QDR
Representatives of the other groups were at table for discussions on each other’s reviews
  - This helped develop buy-in for the senior people involved
  - Result: SECDEF asked Congress for more funding for diplomatic and AID efforts
    - Most recently, GEN Petraeus also called for increased funding for their efforts
The more integrated a strategy is, the more integrated the funding must be, too

Pakistan
Very important because of its geographic position and its terrorist problems
A great deal of senior officials’ time has been invested in Pakistan in the last few years
  - For both military and other forms of development
  - Can see real progress in the last couple of years
  - Especially in the ungoverned territories
Pakistan has had its share of sacrifice in recent years
  - 30,000 civilian casualties
  - 10,000 military casualties
DoD wants to expand its relation with Pakistan but that is complicated
  - US sees Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in this area as part of a loose network with groups supporting or helping each other
  - Pakistan sees the groups as individual efforts that need to be handled individually
US is trying to work with Pakistan to solve the problems in Afghanistan
  - Pakistan must be shown that if the terrorist problem there is gone, their own stability will be much improved

Use of the Reserves in the Future
Does not fall into the responsibilities of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
There is increased emphasis on maintaining and retaining language and area expertise to a greater extent in order to be better prepared to help build partner capacity
Japan
- Getting ready for the Two-Plus-Two talks with both countries’ foreign affairs and defense leadership
  - US wants to hear from Japan about how they believe things have changed given their most recent crises
  - Japan’s outlook may have changed given the recent natural and nuclear disasters
  - There is an implementation plan for changes to US posture in Japan but this is not the time to talk about it
- US policy has not changed and plans for force structure changes are proceeding
  - However, there are always adjustments being made to such plans

Unified Command Plan (UCP) Revision
- Although several combat commanders’ responsibilities appear to come together in the Indian Ocean, there would always be seams to consider when the UCP is revised
- The military is getting good at working across those seams
- UCP is a living document so can expect that there will be change
- Working with these seams has become routine and is not a particularly big problem

Latin American
- Brazil – growing in importance and engagement internationally
  - US working more with Brazil in defense and other spheres
- Columbia – because of US investment in its war on narcotics traffickers Columbia has become an exporter of security by helping out in the region and further abroad
- Diverse region with many challenges:
  - Counter-narcotics
  - Rise of some non-democratic governments
  - Developing economies and the challenges they bring
- Often gets too little attention in discussions of strategy and other topics