



SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

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One Team, One Fight, One Year Later:

To our Airmen and Guardians, our civilian employees, and their families and loved ones,

One year into my tenure as the Secretary of the Air Force, I'd like to share with you some thoughts about what we have achieved in the last year and what I hope we can accomplish going forward. I want to begin by thanking all of you for everything you do to make our Nation's Air and Space Forces capable, professional, and ready. You all work to keep our nation safe every day. There is no more fulfilling or important mission, and you perform it amazingly. I'm proud and humbled to have the opportunity to lead the Department of the Air Force.

One year ago, I introduced the mantra *One Team, One Fight* as a guiding principle. The best teams, in any endeavor, are successful when everyone does his or her job and commits themselves fully to the overall success of the whole team. We are all on the American national security team, and we must all be focused on making that team successful in any fight we are called upon to win. Most of all, we must be ready to deal with our pacing challenge, which of course is China. At the same time we have to perform all of our other missions, including deterring acute threats like Russia, or other potentially hostile states, and dealing with violent extremist groups. To do all this successfully, we have to recognize our roles in contributing to the larger overall national security effort. None of this is about us individually whether we are in the Active, Guard or Reserve Component, or even about our immediate unit or organization; it's about something bigger than any of us, and a much bigger team of which we are all just one contributing part.

As a Military Department that includes two Services we provide combat and combat support capabilities to a Joint or Combined Force that must fight as an integrated team to win. The military team we are part of depends completely on the Total Force making up Air and Space Forces for operational success; we must do our part to support each other and the overall team. Our American defense strategy calls for integrated deterrence in which whole of government and international partners are united in our "one fight". We live in an increasingly dangerous world, and we cannot afford to let parochial interests get in the way of performing our broader mission as essential members of the American national security team. One year later, this principle must still guide us.

The threat is increasing, and it will continue to do so. For decades now, China has endeavored to field forces designed to deter or defeat the United States, especially the power projection capability of the Air Force and the Space Force. In my first year with the Department, we have seen public evidence that China is expanding their nuclear forces, testing novel orbital weapons, continuing an unabated conventional force modernization program, and increasing the aggressiveness of their behavior in the Western Pacific, all while also expanding their reach globally.

In the last year, we've made a lot of progress in determining how we can stay ahead of our pacing challenge. We've focused our work on seven "operational imperatives," areas where there are current or emerging gaps in capability. For several months, expert teams have worked to define the best concepts and investments to close these gaps. Their work will be reflected in next year's budget request, but in many cases, we have already started efforts to move both the Air and Space Force in the right direction. I have also appreciated the hard work that has gone into roughly a dozen specific management initiatives, our efforts to identify opportunities to improve the management of the headquarters and the enterprise

overall. As a result, we have been able to make a significant down payment to improve our IT and cyber posture – in other words, to fix our computers.

So far Congress has been receptive to our approach, but we will need continued support as we transition to new capabilities. My goal now is to obtain the resources we need to put militarily meaningful new capability into the hands of our Airman and Guardians as soon as possible. As we move into the next year, the Department's senior leadership, myself, the Under Secretary, the Service Chiefs and Vices, and the Service Senior Enlisted Leaders will do everything we can to achieve this goal. Your senior leadership team knows that its first responsibility is to give all of you the tools and training you need to do your jobs, now and into the foreseeable future.

We have made good progress in making our "one team" as ready and capable as possible, but we know that more work is needed. We have focused on assessing areas where we can improve. The disparity reviews conducted last year and the Independent Review Commission (IRC) on Sexual Assault have informed our efforts to build a more inclusive force where diversity is valued and where everyone is respected and has the opportunity to make their fullest contribution to the team. We have made meaningful policy changes intended to improve the quality of life of the Air and Space Force family in areas like caregiver leave, dress and personal appearance standards, and how we handle reports of sexual assault. The Department of the Air Force strengthened the discharge process for sexual offenders, and we are in the process of implementing a pilot to co-locate support services for survivors of sexual assault. This is in direct response to our report on interpersonal violence, published last year, as well as the IRC recommendations. For each of these initiatives, and in many others, we have formulated plans and put policies in place designed to make the Department of the Air Force more effective, welcoming, diverse, and supportive. Over the next year, we will be tracking our progress and taking additional steps to improve our support to the team.

We had a challenging year and you have performed amazingly. Your entire senior leadership team couldn't be more proud of what you have accomplished. You've met and defeated a pandemic, conducted the largest ever non-combatant aerial evacuation, assisted thousands of Afghan people transition to life in the United States, supported the people of Ukraine in their struggle against aggression, and deterred potential threats, of all types, around the world. A year ago, I told you I was humbled and honored to be your new Secretary of the Air Force. This year I'm also extremely proud to be a part of the Department of the Air Force family and a member of this team. *One Team, One Fight!*



Frank Kendall  
Secretary of the Air Force