



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MAY 01 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: National Defense Strategy

This memorandum provides my guidance to develop the National Defense Strategy (NDS).

The NDS is the single most important document to ensure the Department is operating in accordance with the President's and my intent. In order to drive urgent action on President Trump's imperatives to put America First and achieve Peace Through Strength, the NDS process will commence immediately, using the 2025 Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance as its basis and framework.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will lead the NDS process, with review and feedback from across the Department's Components at the principal level. The NDS drafting team will be led by Policy with a Joint Staff deputy. In addition, each of the Services will provide a strategist at the O-6/GS-15 level to the NDS drafting team.

All DoD Components should be maximally responsive to the NDS drafting team throughout the process. In order to rapidly drive change toward an America First defense strategy, I have directed that a final draft of the NDS be provided to me no later than August 31, 2025.

This is a time of great danger, but we will meet it. DoD will deliver on the President's charge to achieve Peace Through Strength. There is no time to lose.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P.B.J.", is located in the lower right quadrant of the page.



OSD070437-25/CMD005909-25