

United States Central Command



Command Narrative

29 August 2016

Our USCENTCOM Culture *Persistent Excellence*

United States Central Command is recognized as a premier warfighting Combatant Command. We respond, we fight, we persist and we always conduct ourselves in accordance with our Service and American values. We strive to understand and help others to comprehend, with granularity and clarity, the complexities of our region. We recognize that trust cannot be surged in time of crisis and that every day, at every level, we must build confidence and reliance with all our partners. We inherently know that we must be alert, responsive and receptive to the challenges of the region and the interests of our Nation, Allies and partners. Our commitment to excellence reflects the efforts of the many dedicated military and civilian professionals – to include our coalition partners – directed towards improving security and stability in the 20-country Central Region.

Our Vision and Mission for the USCENTCOM Region *Stability ~ Security ~ Cooperation*

We envision a more stable and prosperous region with increasingly effective governance, improved security, and trans-regional cooperation to counter state and non-state actors posing a threat to U.S. interests. To this end – our USCENTCOM mission is to direct and enable military operations and activities with allies and partners to increase regional security and stability in support of enduring U.S. interests.

Our Strategic Approach *Prepare ~ Pursue ~ Prevail*

Our strategic approach is focused on protecting our national interests and those of our partners. It is designed to reflect our values, align our behaviors, and support the National Military Strategy. It is proactive in nature and endeavors to set in motion tangible actions in a purposeful, consistent and continuous manner. Each aspect of our approach — ***Prepare – Pursue – Prevail*** — enables the next and collectively contributes to the successful achievement of our goals, objectives and our overall mission.

Prepare the Environment *Readiness in Advance of Crisis*

The volatile nature of the Central Region, often characterized by civil wars, insurgencies, terrorism, failed states, and humanitarian suffering requires that we be well-postured to protect our enduring national interests. “Well-postured” means that we are ready to execute military tasks; are physically and virtually present in the AOR; integrated in all our actions; responsive to the needs of our partners; and able to provide options for our leadership. Proper preparation in advance of crises creates decision space for leaders and allows for responsible and effective employment of available resources and forces. Well-prepared and motivated personnel with

shared values provide a comparative advantage over our adversaries and competitors. Preparation of the environment – including agreements for assured access, basing and overflight, and the ability to adapt our expeditionary and long-term footprint – ultimately ensures a high level of readiness, increased responsiveness and strong and productive relationships with partners and Allies, all of which serve to enable our success. As we prepare, we will be collaborative and inclusive and we will always know that what happens in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility often reverberates across the globe.

Pursue Opportunities ***Seize the Initiative***

In a region beset by myriad challenges we must always be on the look-out for opportunities to seize the initiative to support our objectives and goals. Pursuing opportunities means that we are proactive – we don't wait for problems to be presented; we look for ways to get ahead of them. It also means that we have to become comfortable with transparency and flat communication – our ability to understand our area better than anyone else gives us the advantage of knowing where opportunity lies. Pursuing opportunities also means we have to take risk – by delegating authority and responsibility to the right level; by trusting our partners, and by being willing to trust our best instincts and move faster than our adversaries.

Prevail in Conflict ***Win the Current Fight and Plan to Win the Next One***

There are no easy victories or quick wins in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility – ours is an area of protracted struggles and conflicts. Our overriding objective, despite these challenges, is to prevail. Prevailing means winning – coming out on top of our adversaries. We prevail when our national interests and objectives are preserved; when we maintain decision-space for our leaders, and, when we maintain and sustain our access, posture and relationships with our vital partners. We choose to prevail “by, with, and through” our partners. Prevailing in this AOR requires resolve and resiliency – and it requires continued momentum. While we prevail over near-term challenges and win the current fight, we also need to prepare for the next set of challenges and conduct planning to win the next fight.

Our USCENTCOM Priorities

Ensure an Effective Posture

An effective posture with trained and ready forward stationed forces and equipment demonstrates our tremendous capability and enduring commitment to our partners and Allies in the region. It reassures them; it enables access and influence; and, it positions us to secure our enduring national interests. An effective posture also optimizes freedom of movement, deters state aggressors, and provides decision space and flexible response options for national-level decision makers.

Strengthen Allies and Partnerships

A coalition approach – at home and abroad – expands our ability to operate on multiple fronts. Strong relationships based upon shared values serve to create greater cohesion and enhances the effectiveness of available resources and capabilities. Integration with partners, within the region and beyond, enhances the benefit of our presence, mitigates resource constraints, and expands the reach of the force. By building the capacity of regional partner nations, we enable them to assume a larger share of the responsibility for securing their sovereign spaces.

Deter and Counter State Aggressors

Effectively posturing to maintain freedom of movement, freedom of action, and freedom of navigation is essential to securing our enduring national interests and the interests of our partners and Allies. We must also actively counter malign influence, and be prepared to confront aggressors, while reducing the freedom of action of surrogates and proxies operating in the region.

Disrupt and Counter Violent Extremist Organizations and their Networks

We must protect our homelands from terrorist threats that emanate from the Central Region. We will accomplish this by degrading and defeating violent extremist organizations and their networks, including Da'esh and al-Qaeda and their associated movements, and by preventing the further spread of sectarian-fueled conflict and violent extremist organizations.

What Our Nation Expects
Our Commitment

Our nation expects us to be experts on the security issues that exist and persist today in the Middle East and Central and South Asia. They expect we will be ready before crises emerge and that once we engage – *we will win*. I am confident that with the support of our coalition and other partners we will be well-prepared, we will identify and pursue opportunities, and that we will prevail in the extraordinarily complex environment that is the USCENTCOM area of responsibility.


JOSEPH L. VOTEL
General, U.S. Army
Commanding