



*Joint Vision*

**2020**



*Joint Vision*  
**2010**



## CJCS Vision...

*Dedicated individuals and innovative organizations transforming the joint force for the 21st Century to achieve full spectrum dominance:*

- Persuasive in Peace*
- Decisive in War*
- Preeminent in Any Form of Conflict*

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# Joint Vision 2020

America's Military: Preparing for Tomorrow

The US military today is a force of superbly trained men and women who are ready to deliver victory for our Nation. In support of the objectives of our National Security Strategy, it is routinely employed to shape the international security environment and stands ready to respond across the full range of potential military operations. But the focus of this document is the third element of our strategic approach – the need to prepare now for an uncertain future.

**Joint Vision 2020** builds upon and extends the conceptual template established by *Joint Vision 2010* to guide the continuing transformation of America's Armed Forces. The primary purpose of those forces has been and will be to fight and win the Nation's wars. The overall goal of the transformation described in this document is the creation of a force that is dominant across the full spectrum of military operations – persuasive in peace, decisive in

war, preeminent in any form of conflict.

In 2020, the nation will face a wide range of interests, opportunities, and challenges and will require a military that can both win wars and contribute to peace. The global interests and responsibilities of the United States will endure, and there is no indication that threats to those interests and responsibilities or to our allies, will disappear. The strategic concepts of decisive force, power projection, overseas presence, and strategic agility will continue to govern our efforts to fulfill those responsibilities and meet the challenges of the future. This document describes the operational concepts necessary to do so.

If our Armed Forces are to be faster, more lethal, and more precise in 2020 than they are today, we must continue to invest in and develop new military capabilities. This vision describes the ongoing transformation to those new capabilities. As first explained in *JV 2010*,

and dependent upon realizing the potential of the information revolution, today's capabilities for maneuver, strike, logistics, and protection will become dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics, and full dimensional protection.

The joint force, because of its flexibility and responsiveness, will remain the key to operational success in the future. The integration of core competencies provided by the individual Services is essential to the joint team, and the employment of the capabilities of the Total Force (active, reserve, guard, and civilian members) increases the options for the

commander and complicates the choices of our opponents. To build the most effective force for 2020, we must be fully joint: intellectually, operationally, organizationally, doctrinally, and technically.

This vision is centered on the joint force in 2020. The date defines a general analytical focus rather than serving as a definitive estimate or deadline. The document does not describe counters to specific threats, nor does it enumerate weapon, communication, or other systems we will develop or purchase. Rather, its purpose is to describe in broad terms the human talent – the professional, well-trained,





and ready force – and operational capabilities that will be required for the joint force to succeed across the full range of military operations and accomplish its mission in 2020 and beyond. In describing those capabilities, the vision provides a vector for the wide-ranging program of exercises and experimentation being conducted by the Services and combatant commands and the continuing evolution of the joint force. Based on the joint vision implementation program, many capabilities will be operational well before 2020, while others will continue to be explored and developed through exercises and experimentation.

The overarching focus of this vision is full spectrum dominance – achieved through the interdependent application of dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics, and full dimensional protection.

Attaining that goal requires the steady infusion of new technology and modernization and replacement of equipment. However, material superiority alone is not sufficient. Of greater importance is the development of doctrine, organizations, training and education, leaders, and people that effectively take advantage of the technology.

The evolution of these elements over the next two decades will be strongly influenced by two factors. First, the continued development and proliferation of information technologies will substantially change the

conduct of military operations. These changes in the information environment make information superiority a key enabler of the transformation of the operational capabilities of the joint force and the evolution of joint command and control. Second, the US Armed Forces will continue to rely on a capacity for intellectual and technical innovation. The pace of technological change, especially as it fuels changes in the strategic environment, will place a premium on our ability to foster innovation in our people and organizations across the entire range of joint operations. The overall vision of the capabilities we will require in 2020, as introduced above, rests on our assessment of the strategic context in which our forces will operate.

# Strategic Context

Three aspects of the world of 2020 have significant implications for the US Armed Forces. First, the United States will continue to have global interests and be engaged with a variety of regional actors. Transportation, communications, and information technology will continue to evolve and foster expanded economic ties and awareness of international events. Our security and economic interests, as well as our political values, will provide the impetus for engagement with international partners. The joint force of 2020 must be prepared to “win” across the full range of military operations in any part of the world, to operate with multinational forces, and to coordinate military operations, as necessary, with government agencies and international organizations.

Second, potential adversaries will have access to the global commercial industrial base and much of the same technology as the US military. We will not necessarily sustain a wide technological advantage over our adversaries in all areas. Increased availability of commercial satellites, digital communications, and the public internet all give adversaries new

capabilities at a relatively low cost. We should not expect opponents in 2020 to fight with strictly “industrial age” tools. Our advantage must, therefore, come from leaders, people, doctrine, organizations, and training that enable us to take advantage of technology to achieve superior warfighting effectiveness.

Third, we should expect potential adversaries to adapt as our capabilities evolve. We have superior conventional warfighting capabilities and effective nuclear deterrence today, but this favorable military balance is not static. In the face of such strong capabilities, the appeal of asymmetric approaches and the focus on the development of niche capabilities will increase. By developing and using approaches that avoid US strengths and exploit potential vulnerabilities using significantly





different methods of operation, adversaries will attempt to create conditions that effectively delay, deter, or counter the application of US military capabilities.

The potential of such asymmetric approaches is perhaps the most serious danger the United States faces in the immediate future – and this danger includes long-range ballistic missiles and other direct threats to US citizens and territory. The asymmetric methods and objectives of an adversary are often far more important than the relative technological imbalance, and the psychological impact of an attack might far outweigh the actual physical damage inflicted. An adversary may pursue an asymmetric advantage on the tactical,

operational, or strategic level by identifying key vulnerabilities and devising asymmetric concepts and capabilities to strike or exploit them. To complicate matters, our adversaries may pursue a combination of asymmetries, or the United States may face a number of adversaries who, in combination, create an asymmetric threat. These asymmetric threats are dynamic and subject to change, and the US Armed Forces must maintain the capabilities necessary to deter, defend against, and defeat any adversary who chooses such an approach. To meet the challenges of the strategic environment in 2020, the joint force must be able to achieve full spectrum dominance.

# Full Spectrum Dominance

The ultimate goal of our military force is to accomplish the objectives directed by the National Command Authorities. For the joint force of the future, this goal will be achieved through full spectrum dominance – the ability of US forces, operating unilaterally or in combination with multinational and interagency partners, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the full range of military operations.

The full range of operations includes maintaining a posture of strategic deterrence. It includes theater engagement and presence activities. It includes conflict involving employment of strategic forces and weapons of mass destruction, major theater wars, regional conflicts, and smaller-scale contingencies. It also includes those ambiguous situations residing between peace and war, such as peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, as well as noncombat humanitarian relief operations and support to domestic authorities.

The label full spectrum dominance implies that US forces are able to conduct prompt, sustained, and synchronized operations with combinations of forces tailored to specific situations and with access to and freedom to operate in all domains – space, sea, land, air, and information. Additionally, given the global nature of our interests and obligations, the

United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to rapidly project power worldwide in order to achieve full spectrum dominance.

Achieving full spectrum dominance means the joint force will fulfill its primary purpose – victory in war, as well as achieving success across the full range of operations, but it does not mean that we will win without cost or difficulty. Conflict results in casualties despite our best efforts to minimize them, and will continue to do so when the force has achieved full spectrum dominance. Additionally, friction is inherent in military operations. The joint force of 2020 will seek to create a “frictional imbalance” in its favor by using the capabilities envisioned in this document, but the fundamental sources of friction cannot be eliminated. We will win – but we should not expect war in the future to be either easy or bloodless.

The requirement for global operations, the ability to counter adversaries who possess

## Sources of Friction

- Effects of danger and exertion
- Existence of uncertainty and chance
- Unpredictable actions of other actors
- Frailties of machines and information
- Humans



weapons of mass destruction, and the need to shape ambiguous situations at the low end of the range of operations will present special challenges en route to achieving full spectrum dominance. Therefore, the process of creating the joint force of the future must be flexible – to react to changes in the strategic environment and the adaptations of potential enemies, to take advantage of new technologies, and to account for variations in the pace of change.

The source of that flexibility is the synergy of the core competencies of the individual Services, integrated into the joint team. These challenges will require a Total Force composed of well-educated, motivated, and competent people who can adapt to the many demands of future joint missions. The transformation of the joint force to reach full spectrum dominance rests upon information superiority as a key enabler and our capacity for innovation.



**RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS**

Military Operations		General US Goals	Examples
<b>COMBAT</b>	War	Fight & Win	Large Scale Combat Operations Attack / Defend / Blockade
	NONCOMBAT Military Operations Other Than War	Deter War & Resolve Conflict	Peace Enforcement Counterterrorism Show of Force / Raid / Strike Peacekeeping / NEO Nation Assistance Counterinsurgency
		Promote Peace & Support US Civil Authorities	Freedom of Navigation Counterdrug Humanitarian Assistance Protection of Shipping US Civil Support

## INFORMATION SUPERIORITY

Information, information processing, and communications networks are at the core of every military activity. Throughout history, military leaders have regarded information superiority as a key enabler of victory. However, the ongoing “information revolution” is creating not only a quantitative, but a qualitative change in the information environment that by 2020 will result in profound changes in the conduct of military operations. In fact, advances in information capabilities are proceeding so rapidly that there is a risk of outstripping our ability to capture ideas, formulate operational concepts, and develop the capacity to assess results. While the goal of achieving information superiority will not change, the nature, scope, and “rules” of the quest are changing radically.

The qualitative change in the information environment extends the conceptual underpinnings of information superiority beyond the mere accumulation of more, or even better, information. The word “superiority” implies a state or condition of imbalance in one’s favor. Information superiority is transitory in nature and must be created and sustained by the joint force through the conduct of information operations. However, the creation of information superiority is not an end in itself.

Information superiority provides the joint force a competitive advantage only when it is

**Information Superiority** – the capability to collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while exploiting or denying an adversary’s ability to do the same. (JP1-02) Information superiority is achieved in a noncombat situation or one in which there are no clearly defined adversaries when friendly forces have the information necessary to achieve operational objectives.

**Information Environment** – the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, or disseminate information, including the information itself. (JP1-02)

effectively translated into superior knowledge and decisions. The joint force must be able to take advantage of superior information converted to superior knowledge to achieve “decision superiority” – better decisions arrived at and implemented faster than an opponent can react, or in a noncombat situation, at a tempo that allows the force to shape the situation or react to changes and accomplish its mission. Decision superiority does not automatically result from information superiority. Organizational and doctrinal adaptation, relevant training and experience, and the proper command and control mechanisms and tools are equally necessary.

The evolution of information technology will increasingly permit us to integrate the traditional forms of information operations with sophisticated all-source intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance in a fully synchronized information campaign. The development of a concept labeled the global information grid will provide the network-centric environment required to achieve this goal. The grid will be the globally interconnected, end-to-end set of information capabilities, associated processes, and people to manage and provide information on demand to warfighters, policy

makers, and support personnel. It will enhance combat power and contribute to the success of noncombat military operations as well. Realization of the full potential of these changes requires not only technological improvements, but the continued evolution of organizations and doctrine and the development of relevant training to sustain a comparative advantage in the information environment.

We must also remember that information superiority neither equates to perfect information, nor does it mean the elimination of the fog of war. Information



systems, processes, and operations add their own sources of friction and fog to the operational environment. Information superiority is fundamental to the transformation of the operational capabilities of the joint force. The joint force of 2020 will use superior information and knowledge to achieve decision superiority, to support advanced command and control capabilities, and to reach the full potential of dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full dimensional protection, and focused logistics. The breadth and pace of this evolution demands flexibility and a readiness to innovate.

## INNOVATION

*Joint Vision 2010* identified technological innovation as a vital component of the transformation of the joint force. Throughout the industrial age, the United States has relied upon its capacity for technological innovation to succeed in military operations, and the need to do so will continue. It is important, however, to broaden our focus beyond technology and capture the importance of organizational and conceptual innovation as well.

Innovation, in its simplest form, is the combination of new “things” with new “ways” to carry out tasks. In reality, it may result from fielding completely new things, or the imaginative recombination of old things in new ways, or something in between. The ideas in *JV 2010* as carried forward in *JV 2020* are,

indeed, innovative and form a vision for integrating doctrine, tactics, training, supporting activities, and technology into new operational capabilities. The innovations that determine joint and Service capabilities will result from a general understanding of what future conflict and military operations will be like, and a view of what the combatant commands and Services must do in order to accomplish assigned missions.

An effective innovation process requires continuous learning – a means of interaction and exchange that evaluates goals, operational lessons, exercises, experiments, and simulations – and that must include feedback mechanisms. The Services and combatant commands must allow our highly trained and skilled professionals the opportunity to create new concepts and ideas that may lead to future breakthroughs. We must foster the innovations necessary to create the joint force of the future – not only with decisions regarding future versus present force structure and budgets, but also with a reasonable tolerance for errors and failures in the experimentation process. We must be concerned with efficient use of time and resources and create a process that gives us confidence that our results will produce battlefield success. However, an experimentation process with a low tolerance for error makes it unlikely that the force will identify and nurture the most relevant and productive aspects of new concepts, capabilities, and



technology. All individuals and organizations charged with experimentation in support of the evolution of our combat forces must ensure that our natural concern for husbanding resources and ultimately delivering successful results does not prevent us from pursuing innovations with dramatic if uncertain potential.

There is, of course, a high degree of uncertainty inherent in the pursuit of innovation. The key to coping with that uncertainty is bold leadership supported by as much information as possible. Leaders must assess the efficacy of new ideas, the potential drawbacks to new concepts, the capabilities of potential adversaries, the costs versus benefits of new technologies, and the organizational implications of new capabilities. They must make these assessments in the context of an evolving analysis of the economic, political, and technological factors of the anticipated security environment. Each of these assessments will have uncertainty associated with them. But the best innovations have often come from people who made decisions and achieved success despite uncertainties and limited information.

By creating innovation, the combatant commands and Services also create their best opportunities for coping with the increasing pace of change in the overall environment in which they function. Although changing technology is a primary driver of environmental change, it is not the only one. The search for innovation must encompass the entire context

of joint operations – which means the Armed Forces must explore changes in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities as well as technology. Ultimately, the goal is to develop reasonable approaches with enough flexibility to recover from errors and unforeseen circumstances.