

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

**Hearing to review to Review the FY2017 Budget Request & Budget Justification
for the U.S. Department of Defense**

April 27, 2016

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations of the United States Senate will please come to order. We want to welcome:

- The Honorable Ashton B. Carter, Secretary of Defense; and
- General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This is our first review of the fiscal year 2017 defense budget request with these witnesses. The Subcommittee understands the challenges we face in developing the content of the budget for the Department of Defense.

We look forward to our panel of witnesses and thank them for their distinguished service to the U.S. military and our country.

I am pleased to recognize General Joseph Dunford in his first appearance before the defense subcommittee as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Dunford, we are grateful for your leadership and appreciate your appearance before our subcommittee.

I also are pleased to have Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, who is person we have gotten to know pretty well over time during his distinguished service. Mr. Secretary, we ask you to proceed to make any opening statements that you think will be help to the committee's review of the Department's budget request.

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