

SEC. 12 84. REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ROLE IN SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL LEGAL OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the head of other relevant Federal departments or agencies, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the role of the Department of Defense in supporting whole-of-government efforts to conduct international legal operations and to counter hostile international legal operations by foreign adversaries and strategic competitors of the United States.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A definition of the term “international legal operations” and a description of the scope of application and usefulness of international legal operations in all phases of military conflict.

(2) An assessment of the threats posed to the United States and its allies and partners by hostile, gray-zone, or sub-conflict international legal operations waged by United States strategic competitors and foreign adversaries of the United States.

(3) An assessment of, and a description of lessons learned from, the international legal operations (or similar strategies or doctrines) and related coordinating offices and entities of—

(A) strategic competitors and foreign adversaries of the United States;

(B) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and

(C) allies and partners of the United States.

(4) A summary of current Department of Defense activities to support interdepartmental or interagency initiatives of the United States Government applicable to international legal operations, the costs and benefits of such initiatives, and recommendations for their enhancement.

(5) An assessment of each public affairs officer program of the Armed Forces relating to engaging in and defending against international legal operations, including an assessment as to whether such program is—

(A) being effectively used to counter adversary legal claims;

(B) coordinating effectively with the Department of State to coordinate and amplify relevant United States public messaging efforts; and

(C) coordinating with judge advocates of the Armed Forces on public messaging relating to the performance of their duties.

(6) Recommendations for improving coordination between the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies, U.S. allies and partners, and other relevant organizations and experts, on the use of legal tools to achieve national strategic objectives. Such recommendations shall take into consideration how best to identify and expose hostile international legal operations, and areas of law in which it may be advisable to develop standard practices for the Department of Defense to support national security-sensitive litigation, particularly in the maritime domain.

(7) Recommendations on the manner in which the Secretary of Defense may best support whole-of- government efforts to counter hostile international legal operations and conduct international legal operations, including through public messaging and enhanced cooperation with U.S. allies, partners, and relevant outside organizations and experts.

(c) **FORMAT.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(d) **Definitions**

(1) **Foreign Adversaries of the United States—**

In this section, the term “foreign adversaries of the United States” means—

(A) the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea;

(B) the People's Republic of China;

(C) the Russian Federation;

(D) the Islamic Republic of Iran;

(E) designated foreign terrorist organizations and specially designated global terrorists; and

(F) any foreign government or foreign nongovernment entity, engaged in a long-term pattern of serious instances of conduct significantly adverse to the national security of the United States or security and safety of United States persons.

(2) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.