# October Message to the DoD Team

Team,

As we close out October, Cybersecurity Awareness Month, please take a moment to expand your awareness of the vital role cyber plays in our warfighting capabilities, the threat we face, and what you can do to help defend our Nation. As the National Defense Strategy makes clear, we live in an era of great power competition—and that competition increasingly takes place in cyber. Adversaries deterred from challenging the United States directly, attack us in cyberspace—stealing our technology, threatening our critical infrastructure, challenging our democratic processes, and disrupting our government and economy. Instead of admiring the problem, we are taking action to defend ourselves.

This fall, we released a Cyber Strategy which implements National Defense Strategy priorities in and through cyberspace. First, we will expand our military cyber capabilities and doctrine; secure our networks; collect intelligence; halt malicious cyber activity at its source; and prepare cyber forces to operate alongside air, land, sea, and space forces in the event of war. Second, we will work with allies and partners to strengthen our combined cyber capacity and increase information sharing while reinforcing norms of responsible behavior. Third, we will reform the Department to modernize our IT networks; increase cyber fluency; and recruit, retain, and develop cyber talent.

With our strategy in place, we are driving relentlessly to implement it. We conducted a Cyber Posture Review and are rapidly closing identified gaps, launched a new Cyber Excepted Service, and elevated USCYBERCOM to a full combatant command. In addition, twice a month I participate alongside senior leadership in a Cyber Working Group to accelerate and integrate implementation efforts across the Department. Together, these leaders—from General Nakasone and Vice Admiral Norton to our CIO Dana Deasy and our Undersecretary for Acquisition and Sustainment Ellen Lord—are modernizing our systems, taking defensive measures to protect our military and other critical systems, and developing the other cyber capabilities identified in our strategy.

We are working hand-in-hand with industry—from traditional defense to banking, energy, and technologies companies—to protect critical data, technology, and infrastructure. Our military superiority and security—in cyber as in other areas—depends on their strength and security. Together, we are raising the bar on cybersecurity and enhancing our coordination through DoD-Industry partnerships such as the Enduring Security Framework and the Defense Industrial Base Cybersecurity Program.

The days of analyzing this problem are over. We are taking action, and we will deliver results. As we charge forward, we must keep pace with the threat, get our warfighters the tools they need, and stay closely coordinated. Cybersecurity is not an IT problem—computers are central to everything we do and keeping these systems secure is everybody's job. You are on the front lines of this fight—so, please, take these simple steps to improve your cyber hygiene, and do your part to turn back the enemy.

As always, thank you for your relentless efforts to defend our Nation. I am proud to serve alongside you.

-Pat