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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES
2 NOVEMBER 2011

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Chairman Turner, Ranking Member Sanchez, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to join you today to share my views, as the commander of U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), on several issues important to America's national security and that of our allies and partners. I appreciate this opportunity to join Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher, Administrator Tom D'Agostino of the National Nuclear Security Administration, and Dr. Jim Miller, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, to discuss strategic nuclear deterrence. I look forward to discussing USSTRATCOM's nuclear deterrence responsibilities, our roles in Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) implementation (including the follow-on study called for in the 2010 NPR), New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) implementation, and nuclear deterrent force requirements.

U.S. Strategic Command's Nuclear Responsibilities

In executing the nation's nuclear strategy, USSTRATCOM is assigned combatant command responsibility for the nation's Triad of strategic nuclear deterrent forces: ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs); intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs); and nuclear-capable heavy bombers, along with supporting strategic warning; command, control, communications (C3); and planning capabilities. USSTRATCOM operates these responsive, flexible, and capable strategic forces twenty four hours a day, three hundred sixty five days a year as directed by the President's strategic guidance. While the international security environment has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War, the purpose of the nuclear deterrent force remains clear: to deter attacks on the U.S. and our allies and if deterrence fails, to respond according to Presidential direction. In this and many other mission areas, the men and women assigned to USSTRATCOM perform an essential service for the nation—a service few Americans think

about but from which we all benefit. Along with their partners throughout the Departments of Defense, Energy, and State, these men and women underwrite the security of the United States and our partners and allies.

USSTRATCOM is also responsible for building the nation's nuclear employment plans. These plans bolster deterrence by providing the President with executable nuclear employment options to achieve national objectives should deterrence fail. All nuclear employment planning is performed in strict accordance with planning guidance transmitted to USSTRATCOM in three forms: guidance from the President, guidance from the Secretary of Defense, and guidance from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Each level articulates the President's intent in more detail. Once USSTRATCOM receives this guidance, we conduct extensive mission analyses to determine the best means to achieve the assigned objectives. The resulting plans provide the President with an array of executable nuclear employment options. We also maintain a robust, adaptive planning capability, should circumstances develop for which the President requires options not provided in established plans.

As the USSTRATCOM Commander, I am assigned responsibilities in the broader nuclear enterprise as well. I am a member of the Nuclear Weapons Council, and I lead the combatant command responsible for nuclear capability advocacy. Furthermore, I am responsible for annually certifying to the President the surety of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile. Finally, I provide professional military advice to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on nuclear strategy, operations, and weapons issues. Given the magnitude of these responsibilities and the continuing importance of nuclear weapons in our national security posture, USSTRATCOM's number one priority remains to ensure we have a

safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent force and to operate that force to deter attack on the U.S. and our allies.

Of course, the nation's deterrence toolkit is not limited to our nuclear forces. An adversary contemplating an attack on the U.S. or our allies and partners must account for the full array of military capabilities at the President's disposal. Particularly important are our ongoing efforts to enhance our deterrent by deploying ballistic missile defenses, developing advanced conventional precision strike capabilities, responding to new challenges in space, building cyberspace capability and capacity, improving abilities to counter weapons of mass destruction, and ensuring the intelligence capabilities necessary for today's dynamic operating environment. USSTRATCOM plays important roles in all of these areas, and we are fully engaged in assisting with the integration of these capabilities in our deterrence strategy and posture.

U.S. Strategic Command's Role in NPR Implementation: Follow-on Study

As directed by the Nuclear Posture Review, the Department of Defense is participating in a follow-on study to update our assessment of deterrence requirements and inform Administration thinking about nuclear employment guidance and potential future nuclear force reductions below the levels in New START. USSTRATCOM is a full participant in this effort.

In all such processes, I believe a fundamental principle of national security planning is that strategy should drive force sizing, and not vice versa. Stated slightly differently, the "ends" and "ways" of our strategy should determine the required "means" our forces must provide. The New START negotiating position was developed using this principle, and the follow-on study is based on the same concept: first define the strategy and then determine the force requirements to implement it.

Based on this principle, USSTRATCOM is supporting the follow-on study in two ways. First, I am providing my best military advice regarding potential changes in employment guidance consistent with the principles stated in the Nuclear Posture Review. Second, as the command responsible for conducting strategic nuclear planning and operations, USSTRATCOM is providing analysis and advice on the force structure and force posture that best meets our deterrence requirements.

U.S. Strategic Command's Role in New START Implementation

USSTRATCOM played an important role by providing analysis and advice to the team that developed the U.S. New START negotiating position, supporting the U.S. delegation throughout the talks, and offering analysis and advice to the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

New START has been in force for nearly nine months, and the U.S. has until February 2018--a little more than six years--to bring our nuclear force structure into compliance with the Treaty's aggregate limits. That may seem like a long time, but there is much work to be done. USSTRATCOM has a leadership role for implementation planning, and we are working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Services to determine how we will implement specific provisions of the Treaty efficiently and without undue impact on ongoing operations, what resources are required to execute that implementation plan, and how we will phase and synchronize the implementation steps across the joint force.

Let me make two final points about New START implementation. First, the Treaty allows us the operational flexibility to adjust our force structure under its limits to address planned and unexpected events. For example, when combined with a smaller, sustainable weapon stockpile, we can adjust Triad warhead loading to meet both near-term needs and

potential unforeseen circumstances. This operational flexibility is important for our technical and geopolitical hedging strategy. Second, it is critically important to proceed with the planned investments in force sustainment, force modernization, warhead life extension, Stockpile Management Program, and the Department of Energy's nuclear enterprise.

Nuclear Deterrent Force Requirements

The NPR validated the continued importance of the Triad and the need to sustain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal for as long as nuclear weapons exist, and it supported investments to sustain and modernize necessary capabilities while providing for an effective nuclear industrial enterprise in the long term. Decisions to align our force structure with the NPR, New START, and "Section 1251 Report" have yet to be made, but I expect those decisions to be made soon and look forward to partnering with Congress to ensure an effective and sufficiently funded nuclear deterrent force. Furthermore, a highly specialized industrial enterprise underpins our nuclear deterrent today, ensuring our ability to extend the lives of nuclear weapons, eliminate excess stockpile weapons, and scientifically verify the safety, security, and effectiveness of today's weapons without a return to underground testing.

Continued funding support is essential to the long-term safety, security, and effectiveness of our nation's nuclear deterrent force. Specifically, funding is vital for the sustainment and modernization of delivery systems (development of OHIO-class SSBN replacement and requirements scoping for both the next generation bomber and follow-on ICBM), weapon life extensions (W76-1, B61, W78), infrastructure recapitalization (Uranium Processing Facility, Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement-Nuclear Facility), crucial naval reactor design activities for the OHIO-class SSBN replacement, and C3 assets, including the USSTRATCOM Headquarters command and control complex.

The U.S. nuclear enterprise faces a substantive, multi-decade recapitalization challenge at the very time we simultaneously face stark fiscal realities that demand difficult choices and the most careful and effective stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Our challenge is great, and the choices we make today will affect our long-term confidence in the nuclear deterrent force.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Sanchez, and members of the Subcommittee, USSTRATCOM is moving forward to implement New START and the NPR effectively. We continue to be a key partner in nuclear studies, and we are forever focused on providing the nation a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent force for as long as nuclear weapons exist. Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to your questions.