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**STATEMENT OF  
GENERAL GREGORY M. GUILLOT, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
COMMANDER  
UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND  
AND  
NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND**



**BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
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Chairman DesJarlais, Ranking Member Moulton, and distinguished members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear today and to represent the men and women of United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

Homeland defense remains the fundamental mission for both USNORTHCOM and NORAD. Every operation, activity, and investment executed or supported by the Commands is part of a coordinated strategic effort to safeguard North America against multiple all-domain threats that grow more complex and diverse by the day as adversarial nations, malign actors, and transnational criminal organizations generate ubiquitous challenges to our nations' citizens, institutions, and vital interests. Defending against multiple advanced emerging threats in a rapidly changing world requires a flexible and proactive approach and USNORTHCOM and NORAD have fundamentally transformed both commands by taking responsibility for several new missions and roles that reflect the demands of the modern strategic environment. NORAD and USNORTHCOM are postured to meet those threats and, with the assistance of the Department of War and Congress, are adapting to ensure the commands remain ahead of adversaries.

USNORTHCOM is the geographic combatant command responsible for homeland defense, defense support of civil authorities, and theater security cooperation with regional allies and partners. Over the last 15 months, the scope and scale of those missions have increased as the Command has been tasked with ensuring the Territorial Integrity of the United States, expanding the Command's Area of Responsibility (AOR) to include Greenland, synchronizing defense against small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS) in the USNORTHCOM AOR, standing up a Joint Interagency Task Force focused on countering cartels, and addressing the threat of

international narco-terrorist organizations emanating from Mexico. Finally, as the supported combatant command for Golden Dome for America (GDA), USNORTHCOM drives the development of operational requirements for the layered system of systems that is integrating land-, space-, and sea-based sensors and interceptors to counter ballistic missiles, hypersonic weapons, aircraft, UAS, and advanced cruise missiles.

NORAD has stood as the world's only bi-national command for more than 68 years as American and Canadian personnel serve side by side in the defense of North America. Tasked with aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning – as well as providing integrated tactical warning and attack assessment to the governments of the U.S. and Canada – NORAD remains essential to continental defense and represents a unique and highly-effective defense collaboration that is constantly evolving to stay ahead of new and emerging threats.

### **THREATS TO NORTH AMERICA**

North American defense faces a pivotal moment. Threats to the homeland are immediate and complex, originating from a spectrum of state adversaries, narco-terrorists, and malign actors who are actively challenging our security across every domain. Undeterred, the dedicated NORAD and USNORTHCOM teams are organized, trained, and ready to match the scope and scale of these challenges.

Threats to North America continue to expand as America's adversaries develop new multi-domain capabilities. Potential adversaries believe that fielding advanced long-range weapons will deter a U.S. strategic attack and constrain our options in a crisis. Flashpoints throughout the globe have the potential to escalate to strategic conflicts. Meanwhile, foreign terrorist-designated drug cartels – while hampered in their efforts to traffic narcotics and illegal

aliens across the U.S. southern border – are adapting to the increased security presence and could choose to threaten our deployed forces.

**China's** capability to threaten North America is advancing at an alarming pace. At the strategic level, China has rapidly expanded its nuclear arsenal to more than 600 warheads, most deployed on weapons with sufficient range to reach targets inside the United States. Beijing's modernization program aims to field a variety of novel weapons, including Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) equipped with hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs) and missiles designed to fly fractional orbital bombardment system (FOBS) trajectories that challenge missile defenses and complicate actionable warning. Seeking deterrence and retaliatory options below the nuclear threshold, China is honing its offensive cyber capabilities and has begun to field a conventionally armed and HGV-equipped ICBM that has sufficient range to strike Alaska. In the coming years, Chinese military leaders will also have the option to strike with conventionally armed sea- and air-launched cruise missiles, employing increasingly capable launch platforms like the new Shang III class of guided missile submarines. Finally, China remains committed to expanding its presence in the Arctic, deploying a record five research vessels to the region in 2025, likely in part to support future military deployments.

**Russia** remains the adversary with the greatest capability and capacity to threaten North America today. At the strategic level, Moscow has fielded a force of ICBMs equipped with the Avangard HGV while continuing to test the Sarmat heavy ICBM. Russian President Vladimir Putin has also announced that Sarmat will feature a FOBS capability that will enable it to approach the homeland via a southern trajectory, hoping to evade our legacy early warning radars. Meanwhile, Russia is increasing its non-nuclear capabilities, including conventionally armed cruise missiles that Russian doctrine envisions using to strike North American critical

infrastructure in an attempt to degrade political will, disrupt force flows, and terminate a conflict on terms acceptable to Russia. Throughout 2025, Russia continued to deploy cruise missile launch platforms in the approaches to North America, including multiple heavy bomber patrols near the Alaskan coast and lengthy deployments of Severodvinsk-class submarines in both the Atlantic and the Pacific.

**North Korea's** autocratic leader, Kim Jong Un, continues to pursue strategic capabilities that he likely hopes will not only deter a U.S. attack, but also provide latitude for military provocations below the nuclear threshold. Between 2022 and 2024, North Korea conducted more than a dozen ICBM flight tests, providing substantial opportunities for its engineers to refine their missile designs and advance Pyongyang's ability to pose a credible threat to the United States. During a military parade last October, North Korea unveiled a new and more powerful ICBM, the solid-fueled Hwasong-20. While this new weapon has yet to be proven through flight testing, its size suggests it can deliver a nuclear payload anywhere in the United States, and its blunt payload section suggests it may be designed to carry multiple reentry vehicles in an effort to complicate U.S. missile defense.

**Iran's** military capability has been severely degraded by the strikes executed during Operations MIDNIGHT HAMMER and EPIC FURY. Tehran's most viable pathway for developing a homeland-threatening ICBM has likely been eliminated through the destruction of its space-launch program. Nonetheless, Iran's surviving leadership seems to retain some capacity to direct reprisal attacks on the homeland through asymmetric means, like the recent cyberattacks on a U.S. medical tech company by an Iran-linked hacker group. Given its diminished capabilities, Iran's most viable threat vector toward the homeland remains homegrown violent extremists inspired to conduct attacks on Tehran's behalf.

**Foreign terrorist organizations** (FTOs) are determined to attack the United States and have exploited the Israel-Hamas conflict to produce propaganda encouraging attacks in our homeland. Homegrown violent extremists who employ simple tactics and easily acquired weapons remain the most likely and least predictable threat, as demonstrated by the 2025 New Year's Day attack in New Orleans.

Meanwhile, FTO-designated cartels based in Mexico retain their intent to flood the United States with illegal drugs and facilitate illegal migration across our border. While the increased U.S. military and law enforcement presence along our southern approaches has severely curtailed these illicit flows over the last year, these criminals continue to seek alternate routes to move their products into the United States. Escalating inter- and intra-cartel violence remains a concern as rival groups fight for control of territory and trafficking routes. While these cartels likely seek to avoid direct engagement with U.S. military forces, they have increased their harassment of U.S. personnel along the southern border over the last year. As U.S. military and law enforcement operations increase the strain on these organizations, their leaders may grow more willing to engage U.S. forces.

**Unmanned aircraft systems** (UAS) continue to proliferate and have been observed near U.S. military installations and other sensitive sites. Small UAS are inexpensive, easily obtained, highly mobile, and difficult to detect and mitigate. Determining ownership of the UAS is difficult and complicates the operational assessment. Still, state and non-state actors in multiple theaters have exploited these attributes to conduct surveillance, illicit trafficking, or attacks on critical military or civilian infrastructure while obscuring attribution to delay a timely and effective response.

Finally, in the last year, we have observed increased **alignment among U.S. adversaries**, a long-term trend that has accelerated since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Despite decades of mutual mistrust, China and Russia are advancing their strategic partnership to counter the United States and its allies. Signs of growing cooperation between these powers include combined air and maritime operations in the Arctic, an area where Moscow has historically resisted Chinese expansion. While none of the relationships among our principal adversaries constitutes a formal military alliance, their shared perception of the United States as a threat to their core security interests could form the foundation of a wartime partnership, complicating U.S. military planning and advancing each adversary's ability to threaten the homeland.

## **HOMELAND DEFENSE**

USNORTHCOM and NORAD's defense of the homeland is both a singular responsibility and a shared challenge that requires seamless integration with the Joint Force, the interagency community, and a wide network of trusted international allies and partners. While USNORTHCOM and NORAD are each charged with unique responsibilities, neither Command acts alone. American and Canadian personnel work side by side to execute USNORTHCOM and NORAD's homeland defense missions, while both commands receive world-class support from dozens of interagency and international partners and each of the military services. As the most significant threats to North America will likely originate from overseas adversaries, daily collaboration and a shared commitment to seamless operations with each of the other combatant commands is essential to the success of the Commands.

USNORTHCOM also receives steadfast support from each of the military Services, to include the Reserve component and National Guard. These well-established relationships with

each of the Commands' partners enable the rapid, effective, and professional responses required to defend our nations and our citizens. In return, USNORTHCOM and NORAD strive for both efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of every assigned task to provide as much flexibility as possible for supporting elements to maintain unit readiness.

In addition to the unique U.S. – Canadian relationship through NORAD, USNORTHCOM also benefits from its outstanding relationships with the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), Mexican military partners, the Royal Bahamian Defense Force, and, with the inclusion of Greenland in the USNORTHCOM AOR, the Danish armed forces.

### **Defending Against Air Domain Threats**

USNORTHCOM and NORAD remain postured and ready to defend against advanced air domain threats in the approaches to North America. Outpacing increasingly capable competitor capabilities – to include highly advanced submarines, bombers, and long-range missiles – requires a flexible, responsive approach to homeland defense that builds on decades of experience and lessons learned while acting quickly to discard outdated systems and structures in favor of tactics, structures, and technologies that meet the demands of a constantly shifting strategic environment.

Advanced ballistic and cruise missiles, hypersonic weapons, and FOBS – along with increasingly capable air and maritime delivery platforms – attempt to challenge homeland defense from multiple approaches and domains, making USNORTHCOM and NORAD's work to accelerate the fielding and employment of advanced missile tracking sensors and defeat mechanisms more critical than ever. Continued investment in emerging defensive technologies is critical, while previously established command priorities such as Over-the-Horizon Radar (OTHR), the Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS), Airborne Early Warning (AEW)

capabilities, and Airborne Moving Target Indicators (AMTI) will be integrated with advanced effectors as part of a layered, all-domain approach that will provide critical domain awareness and defeat capabilities against an array of advanced adversary capabilities.

### **Operation Noble Eagle (ONE)**

NORAD's longstanding mission to maintain aerospace awareness and control remains vital to defending North America against increasingly complex and potentially dangerous air-domain threats. Operation Noble Eagle is the comprehensive NORAD mission to defend U.S. and Canadian airspace with roots in the legacy NORAD mission to shoot down Soviet bombers before they could drop nuclear weapons on targets deep inside the United States and Canada. The mission shifted to protect against civil aircraft weaponized by violent extremist organizations following the attacks of September 11th, 2001, and today ONE aggressively defends North American skies from airborne threats while protecting the National Capital Region and enforcing temporary flight restrictions protecting national leaders. NORAD fighters executed 77 scrambles and 136 commits from airborne patrols in 2025 to identify and escort unauthorized aircraft away from the National Capital Region and temporary restricted areas.

Current adversary capabilities are far more advanced than the slow-flying bombers and gravity bombs of the 1960s, and two decades of counterterrorism operations and increased security have mitigated much of the violent extremist threat to commercial aircraft; however, the core of the ONE mission remains dedicated to detecting, tracking, and defeating air and missile threats to the homeland. As Russian and Chinese long-range strike capability and capacity have steadily advanced, so have NORAD's, and ONE remains a crucial and highly capable element of homeland defense -- and a daily reminder of the enormous value of the bi-national NORAD relationship.

NORAD's closely coordinated, seamless integration of North American defense capabilities provides an advantage over competitors and generates a visible deterrent effect against potential aggression as the number of Russian ADIZ incursions rise above historical norms and China's long-range aviation and maritime fleets conduct increasingly routine out-of-area deployments. In 2025, U.S. and Canadian NORAD aircraft conducted 16 disciplined and professional intercepts of long-range Russian aircraft inside the U.S. and Canadian Air Defense Identification Zones (ADIZ) and have already conducted four this year. In August 2025, NORAD's planners and crews demonstrated their skill and professionalism in planning, coordinating, and flawlessly executing airborne patrols and escort missions on short notice in support of Russian President Putin's summit with President Trump in Alaska.

Deterring and defeating advanced cruise missile threats to North America requires expanded domain awareness and improved defeat mechanisms, making U.S. and Canadian investment in NORAD modernization – and in capabilities that directly and indirectly support NORAD missions – critical to continental defense.

### **Ballistic Missile Defense**

USNORTHCOM's no-fail Ballistic Missile Defense mission remains a critical command priority. As competitor missile capability and capacity rapidly expand, Army National Guard crews assigned to USNORTHCOM are responsible for operating the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system and stand ready to defend the United States against attack. Through a well-executed service life extension program, the current fleet of interceptors is ready and capable to defend against current threats, while the on-time fielding of the Next-Generation Interceptor (NGI) will ensure the United States remains capable of defending against highly advanced, complex missile threats – including multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles

(MIRVs) and countermeasures. NGI will be a key component of a layered missile defense strategy with improved reliability, increased discrimination capability, and greater capacity that will represent a technological leap forward for homeland missile defense. USNORTHCOM will continue its close integration with the Missile Defense Agency and industry partners to bring that capability online as scheduled.

As the supported Combatant Command for GDA, USNORTHCOM is setting the conditions now to ensure the ability to rapidly establish defensive capabilities as soon as they are fielded. As a key part of that effort, USNORTHCOM activated Joint Task Force – Gold (JTF-G) in January 2026 to serve as the operational arm of USNORTHCOM’s integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) enterprise. JTF-G reports directly to USNORTHCOM and interacts closely with the GDA Program Management team to align all-domain defensive capabilities with validated Command requirements while providing the personnel, testing, and logistics necessary to field GDA capabilities as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **Countering Unmanned Aerial Systems**

As demonstrated in overseas conflicts and domestic incidents, the proliferation of sUAS poses a significant challenge for U.S. installations and missions. USNORTHCOM is fully committed to the whole-of-government effort to mitigate sUAS threats to Department of War (DoW) installations in the continental United States and Alaska, personnel, and operations. Even as the military Services retain primary responsibility for defending DoW installations, USNORTHCOM has an active role in ensuring Service partners have rapid access to counter-sUAS (C-sUAS) capabilities in the event of an ongoing incursion over military installations and facilities. As the DoW synchronizer, integrator, and coordinator of C-sUAS activities within the continental United States and Alaska, USNORTHCOM acquired a C-sUAS Flyaway Kit (FAK),

with more due in late Spring 2026, that can be rapidly deployed anywhere in the USNORTHCOM AOR to detect, track, and mitigate sUAS threats when DoW installations lack the capability and/or capacity to defeat the threats.

In September 2025, USNORTHCOM executed FALCON PEAK 25.2, a large-scale C-sUAS demonstration and experiment to detect, identify, track, and mitigate sUAS incursions. Thanks to outstanding support from across the Department, industry, and the interagency community, the event built on lessons learned from previous exercises and real-world observations to expand the focus on Low Collateral Defeat capabilities, enhance collaboration with mission partners, and provide developers with immediate feedback that will accelerate the development of innovative C-sUAS technologies.

In alignment with direction from the FY25 National Defense Authorization Act, FALCON PEAK 25.2 also included a larger slate of vendors, participants, and systems than the preceding iteration and served to educate the force on the threat posed by sUAS. The experiment further demonstrated the need for vigilance and continued investment in C-sUAS capabilities, while simultaneously helping to advance the already strong synchronization efforts between industry, interagency, and DoW partners in the C-sUAS fight. FALCON PEAK 25.2 also received outstanding support from Joint Interagency Task Force - 401 (JIATF-401), the Department's lead for centralizing and accelerating C-sUAS initiatives.

In October 2025, USNORTHCOM's C-sUAS FAK team deployed to Minot AFB, ND to participate in a weeklong C-sUAS exercise that was part of U.S. Strategic Command's Exercise GLOBAL THUNDER. The exercise validated the ability to rapidly deploy the FAK and its operators in support of an installation experiencing drone incursions and resulted in the

certification of the FAK, operators, and processes to effectively detect, track, deter and defeat sUAS.

These combined efforts – and the support provided by this committee to counter the sUAS threat – are already improving the safety and security of installations and servicemembers in the United States. In the early hours of Operation EPIC FURY last month, a deployed FAK successfully detected and defeated sUAS operating over a strategic U.S. installation. Soldiers and Marines assigned to Joint Task Force – Southern Border (JTF-SB) have also utilized C-sUAS authorities and equipment over the last year to mitigate more than 100 sUAS that routinely track and monitor JTF-SB patrols and activities. The rapid development and deployment of effective C-sUAS capabilities in cooperation with JIATF-401 will remain a critical USNORTHCOM and NORAD priority as unmanned systems proliferate and malign actors continue to develop advanced tactics and technologies for use against U.S. forces.

### **Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States (TITUS)**

Pursuant to Executive Order 14167, "Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States," and Executive Order 10886, "Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border of the United States," the President tasked the DoW, through USNORTHCOM, with both executing the military mission of sealing the border to maintain the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security of the United States and with assisting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in its mission to secure the U.S. southern border and stopping the flow of illegal drugs, human trafficking, and other criminal activities. To execute these missions, USNORTHCOM established JTF-SB to synchronize all Department efforts to secure the border while conducting full-scale, agile, and all-domain operations. JTF-SB, currently led by the headquarters element of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division (Air

Assault), includes military personnel from the active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve components to deliver mission-enhancing support to DHS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

Employing unique, all-domain military capabilities, JTF-SB quickly improved detection and monitoring, facilitated engineering and barrier emplacement, and provided rapid logistics and transportation support along the entire southern border. As an essential contributor to the interagency mission, JTF-SB personnel operate in constant coordination with CBP agents while conducting a steadily growing number of parallel cross-border patrols with Mexican military partners. JTF-SB employs innovative tactics, techniques, and procedures while planning and executing unit-level patrols and multi-domain named operations that have contributed to a drastic reduction in illicit border crossings over the last year. JTF-SB incorporates lessons learned from previous overseas deployments and applies an innovative approach to every assigned task, increasing efficiency and mission effectiveness while helping to sustain unit readiness.

To enhance operational control of the U.S. border, DoW also established National Defense Areas (NDAs) in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. USNORTHCOM is tasked with operational control and security of the NDAs. While it is important to note that military personnel do not participate directly in civilian law enforcement activities inside or outside the NDAs, military personnel are authorized to control access to the NDAs and temporarily detain trespassers until they can be transferred to law enforcement. Enhanced authorities for the employment of C-UAS systems over covered defense installations have also allowed servicemembers operating in the NDAs to protect themselves from small cartel drones that routinely follow and track personnel performing their missions along the border.

In addition to JTF-SB's track record of success, the southern border mission also includes a significant maritime component, as U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard assets conduct maritime interdiction operations to stop the flow of illegal drugs and other illicit activities. These all-domain, year-round efforts have generated impressive improvements in border security, fostered readiness, and facilitated tight-knit collaboration with USNORTHCOM's interagency and international partners. Finally, thanks to the high quality of JTF-SB's leadership and the opportunity to apply unique skills and technology in an operational environment, retention and re-enlistment rates for personnel assigned to the border mission remain higher than the Service average.

#### **JIATF-CC**

At the direction of the White House, USNORTHCOM activated Joint Interagency Task Force – Counter Cartel (JIATF-CC) in January 2026 to coordinate all USG intelligence resources to identify, disrupt, and dismantle cartel networks. JIATF-CC accomplishes this through three lines of effort that include fusing intelligence, developing cartel targets for action by USNORTHCOM's partners, and providing direct support to law enforcement. JIATF-CC is a DoW led, but whole-of-government owned, headquarters that generates unity of effort against narcoterrorist cartels by integrating over 20 interagency partners tasked with countering cartel activities. Under USNORTHCOM's command and control, JIATF-CC works directly with the Homeland Security Task Force National Coordination Center and the National Counterterrorism Center's Intelligence Fusion Cell to coordinate and deconflict intelligence activities and law enforcement operations. As a single command designed, manned, and equipped to synchronize actions across multiple agencies, JIATF-CC will absorb the operational elements of USNORTHCOM's Joint Task Force – North (JTF-N) and Joint Intelligence Task Force –

Southern Border (JITF-SB). The JIATF operates a primary headquarters element in Tucson, Arizona co-located with its interagency partners, while most JIATF-CC staff and support provided by JTF-N will remain in place at Fort Bliss, TX. This committed enterprise is purpose-built to enable the defeat of FTO networks south of border and provide actionable intelligence to the Government of Mexico and federal law enforcement counterparts acting domestically based on leads developed from foreign intelligence operations.

### **Arctic Defense**

The ability of the Joint Force to conduct all-domain operations in the Arctic approaches to North America remains a strategic necessity as military and economic competition in the region steadily expands. The addition of Greenland to the USNORTHCOM AOR allows both NORAD and USNORTHCOM to execute seamless defensive operations throughout the North American Arctic in close cooperation with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. European Command, and with key military partners in the Kingdom of Denmark and Canada.

As a necessary element of sustained joint operations in the Arctic, USNORTHCOM and NORAD remain focused on infrastructure improvements in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland that will enhance the operational flexibility and capability necessary to train, fight, and win in the High North. Expanded presence and forward operating locations along the northern approaches will provide commanders at every level with greater operational flexibility, efficiency, and effectiveness while improving deterrence and survivability.

To ensure the ability of the Joint Force to meet the demands of operating in an Arctic environment, USNORTHCOM and NORAD routinely conduct operations and exercises in the north that stress warfighters, equipment, logistics, and planners. In August 2025, USNORTHCOM conducted Exercise ARCTIC EDGE in Alaska to demonstrate critical

capabilities and enhance Allied and Joint Force interoperability in the Arctic. Participation by each of USNORTHCOM's service components, Alaska Command, allies from the United Kingdom and Denmark, and multiple interagency partners and local communities contributed to a highly successful exercise that enhanced readiness while validating the need for designated Arctic-capable units that are specifically trained and equipped to live and fight in the high north. Notably, this was the first time USNORTHCOM's Exercise ARCTIC EDGE and USINDOPACOM's Exercise NORTHERN EDGE were combined in Alaska to ensure there is no seam between USNORTHCOM and USINDOPACOM as they conduct their operational missions. Just this month, NORAD and USNORTHCOM completed another successful ARCTIC EDGE, which was intentionally moved to the winter months to exercise operating in harsh weather and ensure our forces are ready and able to defend the High North anytime and under any conditions.

NORAD's Operation NOBLE DEFENDER, conducted most recently in February 2026, provides NORAD and allies with the unique opportunity to support planned NORAD activities from Pituffik Space Force Base in Greenland while building on the longstanding defense cooperation between the United States, Canada, and the Kingdom of Denmark. Executing sustained, real-world winter operations coordinated between multiple Combatant Commands across the entire span of the northern approaches to North America – from Alaska to Iceland – tested planners, equipment, logistics trains, and aircrews from all three NORAD regions, and the invaluable lessons learned during this key event will help ensure future success in the Arctic.

## SECURITY COOPERATION

USNORTHCOM's defense missions are augmented by close, trusted relationships with outstanding security partners in the Command's area of operations. Canada, Mexico, and The Bahamas have been key partners in regional defense for decades, while the addition of Greenland to the USNORTHCOM AOR has already fostered remarkable cooperation and integration with military partners from the Kingdom of Denmark and Greenland. This summer, the strong military relationships among the U.S., Canada, and Mexico will be on full display as our forces work together to ensure a safe World Cup.

The USNORTHCOM relationship with Mexican military partners stands strong and pays lasting dividends for the security of both the United States and Mexico. USNORTHCOM maintains its longstanding relationships with the Mexican Department of the Navy (Marina) and Department of National Defense (Defensa) and addresses shared security challenges by, with, and through our Mexican partners. The year-round partnership with Defensa and Marina has generated significant benefits for U.S. homeland defense while enhancing the capability of Mexican partners to defend their nation against Russian and Chinese influence as well as taking the fight to the violent transnational criminal organizations that have plagued both nations. In 2025, Mexican military personnel trained alongside counterparts from the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division at the Joint Readiness Training Center, participated in mirrored patrols along the U.S. – Mexico border in close coordination with JTF-SB, embarked Marina observers on U.S. Navy vessels supporting the TITUS mission, and began participating in the State Partnership Program with the California National Guard.

The inclusion of Greenland in the USNORTHCOM AOR added the Kingdom of Denmark and Greenland to the Command's formal security cooperation partners, and that

relationship has already generated measurable benefits for North American defense. Danish special operations forces participated in Exercise ARCTIC EDGE and provided valuable lessons learned and integration with Special Operations Command – North, while Danish aircraft contributed to Operation NOBLE DEFENDER and the shared defense of Greenland. USNORTHCOM and NORAD have also benefitted from the integration of a full-time Danish military liaison officer into the command's headquarters.

Defense cooperation between USNORTHCOM and the Canadian Armed Forces remains a cornerstone of continental defense. The Government of Canada's commitment to modernization efforts that will directly benefit NORAD missions, coupled with outstanding collaboration between USNORTHCOM and the command's counterparts in the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) plays a key role in multi-national operations to detect and monitor potential threats to the homeland, and the partnership between CJOC and USNORTHCOM is vital to deterring and defending against all-domain threats to North America.

Finally, but critically, The Royal Bahamian Defence Force (RBDF) remains a valued USNORTHCOM partner in regional defense. The RBDF's contributions to maritime security and counternarcotics efforts in the approaches to the homeland have been critical to shared success, and in January 2025, USNORTHCOM was proud to join The Bahamas and the Rhode Island National Guard in celebrating 20 years of collaboration through the State Partnership Program.

## **DEFENSE SUPPORT OF CIVIL AUTHORITIES**

USNORTHCOM emphasizes the importance of the Command's mission to deliver rapid assistance in the aftermath of natural and man-caused disasters. Providing Defense Support of Civil Authorities is a significant and publicly visible component of the command's

responsibilities in support of a lead federal agency – typically the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for most domestic incidents, but also other agencies as required.

In June 2025, the President directed the mobilization of National Guard forces into Title 10 status to protect federal functions and personnel performing law enforcement in California. In response, Secretary Hegseth – in coordination with USNORTHCOM – activated U.S. Marines and Army National Guard soldiers to protect federal personnel and federal property in the greater Los Angeles area. As the federal protection mission evolved and expanded into Oregon and Illinois, USNORTHCOM and its National Guard partners executed the protection mission with trained and ready military professionals while adhering to applicable laws, rulings, and policies related to the domestic employment of active-duty servicemembers.

USNORTHCOM also supported multiple requests for assistance from the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) throughout a lengthy and severe 2025 wildfire season in the western United States. Beginning in early January of last year, USNORTHCOM rapidly activated and deployed C-130 aircraft equipped with the Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) to deploy fire retardant chemicals in support of wildland fire crews in Southern California. USNORTHCOM also supported local and state agencies in the aftermath of those fires by deploying specialized teams under the command and control of Joint Task Force – Civil Support to safely remove and dispose of hazardous lithium-ion vehicle batteries in the disaster area. In July 2025, at the request of the State of California, USNORTHCOM also quickly released California Army National Guard personnel trained for wildland firefighting from the Federal Protection Mission in Los Angeles to augment the interagency response to a separate outbreak of catastrophic fires. Additional MAFFS deployments also continued into the summer,

and as fire seasons continue to lengthen, USNORTHCOM will ensure firefighting assets are ready and postured to support NIFC wherever and whenever they are needed.

Fortunately, 2025 was the first year in a decade in which a hurricane did not make landfall in the Continental United States. However, USNORTHCOM retained an active posture throughout the season and stood ready to deliver timely and effective support to state and federal partners at a moment's notice. Looking forward, the Command is already well into the coordination and planning necessary to ensure effective and efficient responses to whatever challenges might be in store for our nation and fellow citizens in the year ahead.

## CONCLUSION

Over the last year, USNORTHCOM and NORAD have transformed the commands and how they operate, taking on critical new missions, standing-up new functional units (JTF-SB, JITF-SB, JIATF-CC, and JTF-Gold), welcoming new components (U.S. Space Forces-Northern), and embracing advanced capabilities to meet these dynamic challenges head-on. The men and women of USNORTHCOM and NORAD remain vigilant and unwavering in their no-fail mission: *disciplined defense of our homelands in all domains, from all avenues of approach, against all those who intend us harm.* We appreciate the longstanding support of this Committee as we continue to outpace our adversaries. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today, and I look forward to your questions.

*We Have the Watch*