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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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INTRODUCTION

Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member McKeon, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today. United States Strategic Command was closely consulted throughout the development of the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and during negotiations on the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), and I look forward to discussing them with you today. I would like to note at the outset how proud I am of the extraordinary work the Command performed in support of these efforts. We have an amazing team, and their diligence, expertise, and tireless work continue to ensure our ability to deliver global security for America.

NPR

The NPR reflects a current assessment of the global security environment, one which is markedly, but not entirely, different than the one we faced in the Cold War. It recognizes the need to confront global threats, including nuclear dangers, through the twin prongs of deterrence and non-proliferation. The NPR includes several key recommendations that will serve to both sustain and strengthen USSTRATCOM's ability to conduct our deterrence mission

Specifically, the NPR recommends moving forward with a number of nuclear enterprise sustainment projects, including strengthening our nuclear command and control structure; continuing development and deployment of our triad of delivery systems; maintaining a safe, secure, and effective stockpile; and revitalizing the National Nuclear Security Administration's aging infrastructure. America's triad of diverse and complementary delivery systems provides unique synergies that make our deterrent highly credible and resilient in the face of a variety of potential technological and geopolitical developments. The NPR endorses DoD efforts to

explore future triad systems, specifically to extend the Minuteman III ICBM through 2030 and conduct studies now to inform decisions on a follow-on ICBM; to replace the Ohio-class SSBN at the existing ships' end of life; and to study future long-range bomber capabilities. It also supports moving forward with full-rate production for the W76-1 warhead for our submarine leg of the triad; full-scope (nuclear and non-nuclear) life extension of the B61 bomb to sustain its strategic deterrence and extended deterrence roles; and initiating studies to develop life extension options for the W78 ICBM warhead, including the possibility of also adapting the resulting warhead for sea launched ballistic missiles and thereby reducing the number of warhead types.

Additionally, the NPR and the President's Budget recognize the need to improve the Nation's nuclear infrastructure and address the challenges of human capital recruitment, development, and sustainment. These investments are required in order to confidently reduce the overall U.S. stockpile while sustaining the credibility of our nuclear stockpile, which is fundamental to effective deterrence. Investments that revitalize NNSA's aging infrastructure and intellectual capital strengthen our security with the facilities and people needed to address technological surprises, geopolitical change, and a range of cutting-edge national security challenges. The Administration's request for a 13% increase in NNSA funding for Fiscal Year 2011 is an important first step in this process.

New START

The nuclear enterprise remains, today and for the foreseeable future, the foundation of U.S. deterrence strategy and defense posture. As the combatant command responsible for executing strategic deterrence operations, planning for nuclear operations, and advocating for

nuclear capabilities, we are keenly aware of how force posture and readiness changes can affect deterrence, assurance, and overall strategic stability. The New START agreement, in my view, retains the military flexibility necessary to ensure each of these for the period of the treaty.

In support of the New START negotiation effort, U.S. Strategic Command analyzed the required nuclear weapons and delivery vehicle force structure and posture to meet current guidance, and provided options for consideration by the Department. This rigorous approach, rooted in both deterrence strategy and assessment of potential adversary capabilities, supports both the agreed-upon reductions in New START and recommendations in the NPR.

ASSESSMENT

In Prague last year, President Obama emphasized that, "As long as these weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure, and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defense to our allies..." Meeting these demanding goals means that a strong and enduring deterrence enterprise remains indispensable to U.S. and international security.

Accordingly, U.S. Strategic Command's contributions to both the NPR and New START focused on ensuring America's ability to continue to deter potential adversaries, assure our allies, and sustain strategic stability for as long as nuclear weapons exist. Based on our analysis and through continued discussions with DoD leadership, my view is that these documents and associated budgetary investments continue to support these deterrence requirements, and that the New START agreement warhead and platform numbers provide appropriate military flexibility.

Finally, to ensure all necessary elements of a safe, secure, and reliable deterrence enterprise, including weapons, delivery systems, warning and communications capabilities, and their supporting human capital and technological infrastructures, we must make sustained

investments to adequately preserve our capabilities for the foreseeable future. In order to sustain the deterrent and implement the NPR, we must make long-term investments that begin with several increases outlined in the President's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget. These investments are not only important—they are essential.

CLOSING

Every day, US Strategic Command remains focused on providing the President and future presidents with the options and flexibility needed to deter and respond to threats to our Nation and its allies. Today, our deterrent is safe, secure, and effective; our forces are trained and ready; and the Command is faithfully and fully carrying out its mission each and every day. I am confident that the NPR and New START outline an approach that continues to enable the men and women of U.S. Strategic Command to deliver global security for America today and in the future. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before this committee.