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SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

STATEMENT OF  
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BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
4 MAY 2011

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Thank you Senator Nelson, Senator Sessions, and members of the Subcommittee for inviting me to join you today to share my views, as the commander of U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM), on several issues that I believe are important to the security of our nation, our allies and partners, and the world. I appreciate this opportunity to join Dr. James N. Miller, Principle Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), in discussing the implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). I look forward to describing STRATCOM's role in the implementation of these efforts, to include the follow-on analysis called for in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review and mentioned by National Security Advisor to the President, Thomas E. Donilon, in formal remarks delivered to the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference on March 29, 2011.

### **U.S. Strategic Command's Nuclear Responsibilities**

Before addressing STRATCOM's role in NPR and New START implementation, I would like to describe the roles and responsibilities that STRATCOM is assigned in the execution of the nation's nuclear strategy.

STRATCOM is assigned combatant command responsibility for the nation's Triad of strategic nuclear deterrent forces: our ballistic missile submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), and nuclear-capable heavy bombers, along with the supporting strategic warning, command, control, communications, and planning capabilities. STRATCOM operates these responsive, flexible, and capable strategic forces twenty four hours per day, three hundred sixty five days per 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 nuclear attack, to assure our allies and friends, and to respond appropriately if deterrence fails. The men and women assigned to STRATCOM

perform an essential, and mostly uncelebrated, service to the nation. It is a service that few Americans think about but all benefit from. As Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates has said, these men and women and their partners throughout the Departments of Defense and Energy, including the national labs, underwrite the security of the United States as well as our partners and allies.

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

As the STRATCOM commander, I am assigned important roles in the broader nuclear enterprise as well. I am a member of the Nuclear Weapons Council. I am responsible for annually certifying to the President the surety of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile. I am also responsible for advocating for nuclear force capabilities within the Defense Department. And lastly, 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 nuclear responsibilities and the continuing importance of nuclear weapons in our national security posture, STRATCOM's number one priority remains to ensure a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent force.

Of course, the nation's deterrence toolkit is not limited to our nuclear forces. A potential adversary contemplating a military attack on the U.S. or our allies and partners needs to take into account the full array of military capabilities at the President's disposal. Particularly important are our ongoing efforts to enhance our regional deterrence architectures through deployment of ballistic missile defenses, advanced conventional precision strike capabilities, and improved abilities to counter weapons of mass destruction. STRATCOM plays important roles in all three 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 New START Implementation**

Let me turn now to the STRATCOM role in implementing New START. As you know, STRATCOM played an important and integral role in providing analysis and advice to the team that developed the U.S. negotiating positions. STRATCOM also supported the U.S. delegation when requested throughout the talks and provided advice to both the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. STRATCOM's expertise in nuclear strategy, planning, and operations is a unique and invaluable resource.

New START has now entered into force, and the U.S. has until February 2018--a little less than seven years--to bring our nuclear force structure into compliance with treaty limits. That may seem like a long time, but much work must be done, and STRATCOM has a leadership role for implementation planning. 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, and how we will phase and synchronize the implementation steps. The planning is in its initial stages, pending important force structure decisions, consistent with the NPR and 1251 Report, that have strategic, operational, and funding implications. I expect those decisions to be made soon.

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 weapons complex.

#### **U.S. Strategic Command's Role in NPR Implementation: Follow-on Analysis**

As called for in the Nuclear Posture Review, the Department of Defense will conduct follow-on analysis to update our assessment of deterrence requirements and inform Administration thinking about potential future nuclear reductions below the levels in New START. The President will soon direct a strategic force analysis that will develop options for further reductions in our current nuclear stockpile. While STRATCOM has not yet received any formal tasking, I would like to make several points on how I believe our nuclear force requirements should be determined.

I believe a fundamental principle of national security planning is that strategy should drive force requirements, and not vice versa. Stated slightly differently, the "ends" and "ways"

of our strategy should determine the required “means” that our forces must provide. The New START negotiating position was based on this fundamental principle. I expect that the follow-on analysis will be based on the same concept: first define the strategy, and then we can determine the force requirements to implement it.

Based on this principle, STRATCOM will have, in my view, two proper roles in the strategic requirements analysis. First, I will provide my best military advice for shaping potential changes in targeting requirements consistent with the principles stated in the Nuclear Posture Review. Second, as the command responsible for conducting strategic nuclear planning and operations, STRATCOM will provide advice on the force structure and force posture required to meet our deterrence requirements.

It is important to note that the nation’s nuclear strategy is broader than just our employment strategy and the force-employment requirements derived from that strategy. Our nuclear forces have always played important strategic functions beyond the classic military role of holding potential adversary target sets at risk. For example, as we consider further negotiated reductions with Russia in our strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons, including non-deployed nuclear weapons, our strategy for hedging against technical and geopolitical surprise must inform our negotiating position. My point is that this is a complex endeavor that will require a multidisciplinary approach.

### **U.S. Strategic Command’s Role in Advocating for Nuclear Enterprise Sustainment and Modernization**

The NPR validated the role of the nuclear weapon complex and the Triad and supported investments to modernize these capabilities. The nation faces a substantive recapitalization challenge that will be a multi-decade effort. While the platforms and systems in service today

will remain throughout the life of New START, we must not delay our modernization efforts. Delivery system, warhead, and command and control actions must be completed on schedule to address age-related and performance concerns before operational forces are impacted. The length of our acquisition processes means we must now consider the requirements and develop the options for maintaining confidence in our nuclear deterrent capabilities. As we move to lower numbers, we must continue to make adequate investments in flexible force structure, weapons maintenance, and infrastructure sustainment programs.

The substantial support Congress provided for the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 funding request and continued support of the President's FY2012 funding request are key for the long-term safety, security, and effectiveness of our nation's nuclear deterrent. These programs are essential for the sustainment and modernization of delivery systems (development of OHIO-class SSBN replacement, requirements scoping for follow-on bomber and ICBM), stockpile maintenance life extensions (W76-1, B61, W78), infrastructure recapitalization (Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement-Nuclear Facility, Uranium Processing Facility), crucial naval reactor design activities for the OHIO-class SSBN replacement, and command and control architectures including the USSTRATCOM Headquarters command and control complex.

### **Conclusion**

Mr. Chairman, Senator Sessions, and members of the Subcommittee, STRATCOM is moving forward to implement New START and the NPR efficiently and effectively, and we stand ready to appropriately and fully participate in the strategic force analysis. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to your questions.