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STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON

THE NUCLEAR POSTURE REVIEW

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Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, Distinguished Members of the Committee. . .

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to testify on the Nuclear Posture Review. As you know this is my first appearance before this committee since my confirmation hearing last September. I am honored to be invited to participate in this hearing on a major report, the conclusions of which will reshape and revitalize, respectively, our strategic policy and capabilities.

As Congress recognized in the Fiscal Year 2001 National Defense Authorization Act, a periodic comprehensive review of our nation's strategic posture is appropriate as the national security environment changes. The last Nuclear Posture Review was conducted eight years ago to address how to effectively draw down our strategic forces in the post-Cold War world. For a number of reasons, including a rapidly changing international environment and complex new national security challenges, the time is right to again assess our strategic direction. This Nuclear Posture Review provides that assessment and, indeed, moves beyond assessment to provide the initial details of a new direction, proposing a comprehensive approach that builds on the Quadrennial Defense Review's strategic foundation of assure, dissuade, deter, defend and defeat.

As you know, the Nuclear Posture Review was conducted by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. US Strategic Command participated in the review as did the Joint Staff and the Services, particularly the Air Force and the Navy. We were consulted on many issues and provided our expertise as well as our frank opinions on the report's findings as they were developed. I am pleased with the Nuclear Posture Review's balance and focus and look forward to working with Congress, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Services as we work to implement these findings in the months ahead.

Many of the details and key issues involving the Nuclear Posture Review are familiar to you and have been addressed by others, but I would, however,

like to discuss some of the key findings from my perspective as the combatant commander of our Nation's strategic forces.

Modernization and Sustainment

The first finding I'd like to highlight is the recognition of a pressing need for investment across the full range of our strategic capabilities. As we work to reduce deployed strategic nuclear warheads, this investment is needed to sustain and improve our aging operating forces, to recapitalize our infrastructure which has atrophied over the last ten years, and to refine and enhance current systems. Reductions of operationally deployed nuclear warheads to the lowest numbers consistent with national security, as the President directed, will require that remaining systems be reliable, sustainable and, therefore, fully credible.

As you know, our current operating forces, our intercontinental ballistic missiles, our bombers, and our strategic ballistic missile submarines, and their weapons, will remain the backbone of our strategic strike forces for at least the next twenty years. These platforms and their weapon systems are projected to remain in service well beyond their original design lives and require significant sustained investment to monitor and, if necessary, to replace aging and obsolete components in addition to more comprehensive overhauls or life extension programs. The NPR fully recognizes this.

Our operating forces could not be effective without robust complementary capabilities including command, control and communications systems as well as effective intelligence and planning support. Increased strategic flexibility and adaptability will require an equally robust but much more capable nuclear command and control system. The Nuclear Posture Review identifies advances in speed and capabilities in these areas as critical to improving the capabilities of our strike forces. General Myers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has similarly identified improvement in command and control capabilities as a vital component of our military's transformation. I fully

support this renewed focus on improving these military capabilities. Investments in these areas are critical enablers to not only strategic forces but our overall military capability.

As the Secretary of Defense stated in his testimony last June, our military has been forced to make increasingly difficult choices between equally necessary procurement, readiness, and research and development needs over the last ten years. Strategic forces have not been excluded from this trend. The Nuclear Posture Review recognizes this and recommends renewed investment in existing and future operating forces, supporting capabilities and strategic infrastructure. I fully support those recommendations. Thank-you for the positive steps you've already taken in this committee to provide much needed funding to improve these capabilities and for your continued support in this vital area.

Nuclear Warhead Reductions

A second key finding of the Nuclear Posture Review is the need for a measured approach to operationally deployed nuclear warhead reductions. This approach meets the President's direction and establishes as a goal the lowest number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads consistent with the Nation's national security needs. I fully support it.

The Nuclear Posture Review directs periodic assessments to evaluate the strategic environment and our progress in developing new capabilities for our strategic forces. These assessments allow us to respond appropriately to any emerging threat, dissuade any potential adversary and provide assurance to our allies of our resolve.

Broader Definition of Strategic Forces

The third key finding of the Nuclear Posture Review is the recognition that our strategic capabilities should not be limited to nuclear weapons alone. The inclusion of non-nuclear, and, potentially, non-kinetic capabilities into our strategic options provides a number of benefits. First, it helps to raise the nuclear threshold by providing the President with

strategic options in a crisis or conflict that do not rely solely on nuclear weapons, yet still convey the Nation's resolve and determination. Second, integrating non-nuclear capabilities into strategic forces strengthens our joint approach to developing and operating military forces. In the past, there have often been unique requirements for nuclear forces beyond those of conventional forces. Now, with technological advances, we have the potential to seamlessly integrate existing or projected enhancements to non-nuclear capabilities such as communications, intelligence flow and precision strike to improve our strategic capabilities. The integration of what had previously been considered conventional capabilities into national strategic plans allows for the development of responsive, adaptive, and interoperable joint forces that can be employed in a wider range of contingencies. There are certainly challenges associated with incorporating non-nuclear capabilities into our strategic forces, however, the benefits far outweigh the concerns.

Operational Flexibility

The final finding of the Nuclear Posture Review is the need for more flexible and adaptive planning in support of our strategic forces. US Strategic Command is in the process of developing a more flexible and adaptive planning system that retains the rigor and expertise developed over the last forty years, yet employs modern computing techniques and streamlined processes to significantly improve our planning capability for rapid, flexible crisis response in the face of new national security challenges. This new approach to planning will require significantly more collaboration with the regional combatant commanders as we continue to better integrate our military capabilities across the spectrum of conflict.

Conclusion

There are many positive results that will accrue from the Nuclear Posture Review process. A comprehensive and focused assessment of our strategic posture has provided new concepts that can both allow us to reduce our deployed nuclear weapons inventory and strengthen our national security to

meet this era's new challenges. This bold change in direction will allow us to begin shifting our focus from the number of launchers and weapon platforms stipulated by previous treaties and based on latent mistrust of former adversaries. Instead, we will move toward significantly lower numbers of operationally deployed nuclear weapons reflecting our new relationship with Russia and technologically transform our strategic posture from a purely nuclear focus to the broader capabilities of the New Triad.

The New Triad, when development is complete, will include improved strategic strike forces, active and passive defenses, and a responsive infrastructure all supported by improved command and control as well as robust intelligence and planning capabilities. Over the next decade two of the legs of the NPR's New Triad, defenses and a responsive infrastructure, will be combined with a modernized strategic strike force including nuclear and non-nuclear options. This New Triad can broaden the definition of strategic forces, enhance deterrence concepts against a wider range of threats and offer dramatic improvements in the speed, accuracy and agility of the full range of our nation's military response.

I look forward to reporting in the future on our progress in implementing the findings of the Nuclear Posture Review as we, together, reshape our strategic capabilities to meet the challenges of this new era.

Thank you very much. I welcome your questions.