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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Statement of

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Strategic Capabilities

for

The Senate Armed Services Committee
Strategic Forces Subcommittee Hearing

Regarding

Global Strike Issues

28 March 2007

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Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Capabilities
before
The Senate Armed Services Committee
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces**

March 28, 2007

I. Opening Remarks

Chairman Nelson, Senator Sessions and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

I welcome the opportunity to describe our progress in transforming the nation's strategic capabilities to meet 21st Century security challenges. You understand the importance of this undertaking, and recognize the need to field a New Triad better suited to the new security environment. I want to thank the members of the committee for their support. Successful transformation of our capabilities will require a sustained partnership between the Department of Defense and the Congress.

II. The Nuclear Posture Review and the Role of Nuclear Weapons

The Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) of 2001 put in motion a major change in the role of nuclear forces in our deterrent strategy. The NPR emphasized the need for a broader range of deterrent options and capabilities and established a New Triad composed of offensive strike systems (nuclear, non-nuclear, and non-kinetic); defenses (both active and passive); and a revitalized defense infrastructure—all supported by adaptive planning, command and control, and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capabilities. The New Triad is intended to reduce our dependence on nuclear weapons and improve our ability to deter attack in the face of proliferating weapons of mass destruction.

The rationale behind the NPR's findings remain valid: the Cold War Triad of nuclear strike systems is not adequate to support the full range of potential challenges and threats in the new security environment. An array of capabilities, including prompt conventional Global Strike, is ultimately necessary to address the new security risks the United States faces.

That said, nuclear capabilities possess unique properties and provide credible military options to deter a wide range of threats, including WMD use. Nuclear weapons will continue to play a vital role in assuring allies of U.S. security commitments, deterring WMD threats, and holding at risk adversary assets and capabilities that cannot be countered through non-nuclear means. The U.S. will continue to honor its extended deterrence commitments to allies—a critical part of our national security and an important tool in our non-proliferation efforts. Extended deterrence, in turn, requires long-term confidence in the reliability and safety of the U.S. nuclear stockpile, and the Reliable Replacement Warhead program is essential to achieving that end. In short, the United States will retain a credible nuclear deterrent at the lowest level of weapons consistent with U.S. and allied security. In transitioning to a New Triad, however, these weapons must be integrated with new non-nuclear strategic capabilities to provide an appropriate range of options.

III. Implementing The Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)

We have made some progress in implementing the NPR over the past five years:

1. We have deployed an initial missile defense capability to protect our nation, deployed forces, friends and allies, and are expanding that capability through evolutionary development and international cooperation.
2. We are on schedule to reduce U.S. nuclear forces to 1,700-2,200 operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads by 2012. In addition, we have retired the last Peacekeeper ICBM, and DoD plans to retire 50 of the 500 deployed Minuteman III ICBMs and 38 of the 94 B-52 bombers. We will use the savings to provide for a robust Minuteman III test program as well as to help sustain and modernize the remaining bomber fleet.

The remaining Minuteman III ICBM force is being sustained through a life-extension program. The program will keep this element of the New Triad's offensive leg operational and effective into the foreseeable future. DoD is also examining future approaches to a follow-on land-based long-range nuclear strike capability.

3. We have selected a lead National Lab to conduct the engineering and design work on a Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) to replace a portion of our sea-based deterrent. The RRW program is vital to assuring long-term confidence in our nuclear deterrent and improving our responsive infrastructure.
4. We are also making improvements to our intelligence and planning capabilities.

IV: Global Strike

Our progress, however, has been uneven. We have not provided the broader range of conventional strike options that both the NPR and the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) called for in order to engage high-value or fleeting enemy targets located in access-denied areas; nor have we closed the gap in *prompt*, long-range conventional (non-nuclear) strike capabilities that the QDR identified.

The 2006 QDR considered the new security environment and underscored the need for prompt Global Strike capabilities to address a range of challenges. The QDR identified the following objectives for Global Strike's operational and enabling capabilities:

- Provide the President and the warfighter with a broader range of conventional response options to deter aggression or coercion;
- Attack fleeting enemy targets rapidly;
- Fuse intelligence and operations to exploit time-sensitive intelligence;
- Find and precisely target enemy capabilities in denied areas;
- Deter, defend against and respond in an overwhelming manner to WMD attacks; and
- Shape and defend cyberspace.

DoD has strengthened its conventional strike capabilities with the introduction of the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) and the Tactical Tomahawk (TACTOM) cruise missile. These missiles offer stealthy (in the case of JASSM), standoff capabilities that can be employed in substantial numbers to destroy high-value, well-defended, and/or relocatable targets. Testing has begun on the JASSM Extended Range (JASSM-ER), which will possess more than double the range of the JASSM

(over 500 nm, vice 200 nm). JASSM-ER also will be able to loiter and transmit in-flight imagery to planners. TACTOM possesses many of the same traits as JASSM-ER but also can also be re-targeted in flight.

In addition, the DoD has nearly completed reconfiguring four strategic nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) into guided-missile submarines (SSGNs). The first three SSGNs have completed their conversion with the final conversion to be completed in late FY07. Two of the SSGNs will become operational in FY07 and two more in FY08. Each SSGN can carry up to 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles and deliver special operations teams.

However, analysis conducted during the 2006 QDR also highlighted an important gap in *prompt*, long-range conventional (non-nuclear) strike capabilities. Specifically, the QDR found that existing conventional forces, such as fighter and bomber aircraft and surface ships, could take hours to days to deploy and strike a target. The new Tactical Tomahawk (TACTOM) and Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM), although valuable additions to conventional forces, do not fully address this gap. Today, only nuclear-armed ballistic missiles are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to engage distant, fleeting targets promptly (within about an hour from the time of an execution decision). Without a portfolio of *prompt* conventional Global Strike capabilities—able to generate timely effects, anywhere, anytime—America's adversaries will retain substantial freedom of action and potential safe havens from which to operate.

Prompt Global Strike capabilities may be needed for time-sensitive operations such as interdicting the transfer of WMD from rogue states to terrorists, preventing a rogue state from launching a ballistic missile armed with a WMD payload, or disrupting or delaying such actions before other U.S. forces arrive on scene. In addition, prompt conventional Global Strike capabilities have the potential to suppress follow-on launches of ballistic missiles against the United States, its forces and allies, and this capability can work effectively in concert with ballistic missile defenses to help mitigate the growing long-range missile threats the United States will face in the future. In order to hold these types of targets at risk, the 2006 QDR called for a portfolio of prompt Global Strike capabilities.

V: Conventional Trident Modification (CTM)

The 2006 QDR determined that a program designated Conventional Trident Modification (CTM) was the best low-cost, low-risk, near-term solution to begin closing the current gap in prompt conventional global strike capabilities. In Fiscal Year 2007, DoD requested funding to modify two Trident II D5 missiles on each of the 12 deployed strategic ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), and replace their nuclear warheads with non-nuclear warheads. CTM would provide a unique conventional capability to respond to fleeting, time-sensitive, high-value targets virtually anywhere in the world. The President's budget for Fiscal Year 2008 seeks \$175M for this initial Prompt Global Strike system.

Although DoD determined CTM to be the best near-term option for conventional prompt Global Strike, the Department is considering other, longer-term solutions, both sea- and land-based, to broaden the portfolio of prompt, non-nuclear capabilities. The additional concepts include sea- and land-based conventional ballistic missiles and advanced technologies, such as hypersonic glide vehicles, employing precision guidance, advanced conventional weapons, and propulsion. While these concepts promise to provide expanded Global Strike capabilities, for the most part they generally lack the technological maturity to achieve full operational status before 2015.

VI: Congressional Concerns

Congress raised concerns about CTM last year, and directed that DoD provide a Report to Congress in consultation with the Department of State. A classified report, signed by both Secretary Gates and Secretary Rice, was transmitted earlier this month. I commend the report to you; it addresses the critical need for Conventional Trident and the concerns. While the concerns raised were posed in terms of CTM they apply to many of the other prompt Global Strike capabilities that may be available in the mid-to-long term.

The most frequently cited concern is that a CTM launch could be misinterpreted as a nuclear attack, prompting Russian retaliation. The CTM report states that the risk is extremely low and can be managed effectively. Few states have the sophisticated technology required to detect and track a ballistic missile launch. However, the Russian Federation has these detection and tracking systems and is generally able to evaluate quickly a ballistic missile's flight path and determine within tens of miles the missile's

aimpoint. In that respect, if Russian sensors detected and tracked a CTM launch, the Russian command would quickly identify it as non-threatening. Moreover, the Russian command would readily distinguish between a CTM launch and a massive nuclear first strike.

Historically, the Russian Federation has not over-reacted to an un-notified or unannounced U.S. or Chinese missile launch. Furthermore, the United States and the Russian Federation now have a more cooperative and less adversarial relationship than during the Cold War, and this new relationship provides a much-changed context in which any launch of a ballistic missile would be understood.

Nevertheless, the United States takes the possibility of misinterpretation seriously. While the risk is extremely low, DoD has developed a comprehensive assurance strategy consisting of confidence-building and operational measures, promoting a high degree of transparency into CTM operations. Engagement of Russia at senior levels is ongoing.

Another concern is that prompt Global Strike, and CTM in particular, may not be well-supported by intelligence capabilities. As with all military operations, CTM operations would require actionable intelligence that is both accurate and timely and provides a high level of situational awareness. Existing intelligence assets can support planning and operations of prompt Global Strike systems like CTM, DoD continues to improve its global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities. Indeed, current efforts to achieve more persistent collection capabilities against both legacy and emerging threats would be maturing as the Conventional Trident Modification becomes operational. They would be available to support key decision-makers and planners

involved with employment of future prompt Global Strike capabilities. During time-sensitive crises the speed and range attributes of prompt Global Strike systems, like CTM, actually would provide increased time for senior decision-makers to evaluate and refine intelligence before making a decision to employ force.

There is also some concern for CTM's status under existing arms control treaties. CTM is fully compliant with all U.S. treaty obligations. A complete analysis of this issue is available in the Report to Congress on Conventional Trident Modification. In summary:

START:

- CTM is not a new type of SLBM or new kind of Strategic Offensive Arm.
- CTM will remain accountable and subject to START's many provisions for as long as START remains in force. These provisions include:
 - Data updates
 - Re-Entry Vehicle On-Site Inspections
 - Transit notifications
 - Launch notifications
 - Telemetry exchange for test launches
- CTM will have the same number of warheads attributed to it as to the nuclear-armed Trident D5 (8 warheads).

Ballistic Missile Launch Notification Agreement:

- Notification of CTM flight test launches will continue to be provided; and

Moscow Treaty:

- CTM's conventional warheads will not count against the 1,700-2,200 limit on operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads.

VII: Conclusion

DoD strongly believes that conventional prompt Global Strike is critical to meeting evolving U.S. security needs in the 21st Century. The joint DoD-State Department Report to Congress presents a compelling assessment of the need for CTM and a clear strategy for mitigating the already low risks associated with its use. In the report, Secretary Gates and Secretary Rice agreed:

- There is a critical need for CTM to respond promptly to potentially grave dangers with conventional means—including high-value or fleeting targets such as terrorists or rogue states armed with WMD that may be in hard-to-reach or highly defended areas;
- CTM is the best and only near-term, low-cost, low-risk option to fill an existing capability gap;
- The risk of misinterpretation is extremely low and can be readily managed;
- Development and deployment of a Conventional Trident is needed to achieve a near-term prompt conventional global strike capability; and
- The substantial benefits of CTM far outweigh any risks.

A sustained partnership between the Department of Defense and the Congress will be needed if we are to succeed in transforming our nation's strategic capabilities to meet the uncertainties and challenges ahead. In particular, we need to continue the progress on missile defense, revitalize the nuclear infrastructure with the RRW programs, and address the need for conventional prompt Global Strike. The Conventional Trident is the near-term solution, with advanced technologies to expand the range of effects in the longer term. The Department will require your continued support to replace the legacy Cold War force posture with a New Triad that is better suited to the new security environment.