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THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

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Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. It is a pleasure to join Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, General Kevin Chilton, National Nuclear Security Administrator Thomas D'Agostino, and Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher in discussing U.S. nuclear policy and capabilities. I will focus my remarks on the recently completed Congressionally-mandated Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR.

The 2010 NPR provides a roadmap for implementing the President's Prague agenda of reducing the role and numbers of nuclear weapons, with the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Because this goal will not be reached quickly, perhaps not in our lifetimes, the NPR outlines the specific steps needed to sustain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist. The fiscal year 2011 budget requests from the Departments of Defense and Energy demonstrate our commitment to this essential effort.

The 2010 NPR identifies the most urgent nuclear dangers today as proliferation and the potential for nuclear terrorism, and outlines a comprehensive approach to cope with these challenges that includes policy initiatives and increased investment in a number of areas. More broadly, the NPR identifies five key objectives for U.S. nuclear policy and posture:

1. Preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism;
2. Reducing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy;
3. Maintaining strategic deterrence and stability at reduced nuclear force levels;
4. Strengthening regional deterrence and reassuring U.S. allies and partners; and
5. Sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal.

Given that the committee has received the NPR report, I will not summarize all of its conclusions. I will focus my remarks on preventing proliferation and nuclear terrorism, declaratory policy, and force structure issues.

Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Nuclear Terrorism

The 2010 NPR places the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism at the top of the Administration's policy agenda. The recent Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC, the upcoming Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York, and our continued efforts to reverse the nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran are critical to this effort and to U.S. national security. The Administration has proposed significantly increased funding in fiscal year 2011 to reduce proliferation risks, and to improve our capabilities to detect and interdict smuggled nuclear materials or weapons. Examples include:

- Expanding funding for the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, including an increase of \$75 million in fiscal year 2011 to address nuclear security efforts worldwide;
- Increasing funding in fiscal year 2011 for the National Nuclear Security Administration's nuclear non-proliferation programs to \$2.7 billion, an increase of more than 25 percent;
- Enhancing U.S. Special Operations Command's ability to conduct counter-WMD operations by increasing funding by \$60 million in fiscal year 2011; and
- Improving capabilities for national technical nuclear forensics technologies and the fielding of new capabilities for ground and air collection. This includes increased funding requests for DoD and DOE.

U.S. Declaratory Policy

The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review makes clear the benefits to other states of complying with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) – and the potential consequences of not doing so. It strengthens the U.S. “negative security assurance” associated with the NPT, by stating that:

The United States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states that are party to the NPT and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

The United States first offered a “negative security assurance” associated with the NPT in 1978, which was reiterated by subsequent administrations in 1995 and 2002. This NPR provides a critical change. The previous U.S. negative security assurance had a caveat focused on the Warsaw Pact, stipulating that the assurance would not apply to non-nuclear weapons states allied with a nuclear weapons state.¹ With the Warsaw Pact long gone, this caveat is no longer needed. In its place, the revised assurance provided in the NPR stipulates that a state must not only be a party to the NPT, but also that it must be in *compliance* with its nuclear non-proliferation obligations – a determination that will be made by the United States. This new policy makes clear that signing the NPT is necessary but not sufficient: states that do not meet their non-proliferation obligations, such as North Korea and Iran today, are not covered by the U.S. negative security assurance.

Recognizing that effective deterrence is based on both credibility and capability, the NPR makes clear that any use of chemical and biological weapons (CBW) by non-nuclear weapons states in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations face a highly credible and extremely capable U.S. conventional response. It affirms that:

... any state eligible for the assurance that uses chemical or biological weapons against the United States or its allies and partners would face the prospect of a devastating conventional military response – and that any individuals responsible for the attack, whether national leaders or military commanders, would be held fully accountable.

¹ In 1978, at the first UN special session on disarmament, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance stated: “The United States will not use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT or any comparable internationally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear explosive devices, except in the case of an attack on the United States, its territories or armed forces, or its allies, by such a state allied to a nuclear weapon state, or associated with a nuclear-weapon state in carrying out or sustaining the attack.” Similar public statements were made by subsequent U.S. Administrations in 1995 and 2002.

This pledge is backed by the most formidable military in the world, and the Administration is committed to not only sustaining but strengthening our conventional military power. In addition to ongoing investments, DoD is currently studying potential additional improvements to long-range strike capabilities, with specific proposals planned in the fiscal year 2012 budget request.

Given the catastrophic potential of biological weapons and the rapid pace of bio-technology development, the NPR notes that the United States reserves the right to make any future adjustment in declaratory policy that may be warranted by the evolution and proliferation of the biological weapons threat and U.S. capacities to counter that threat.

For nuclear weapons states, and states not in compliance with their non-proliferation obligations, the NPR makes clear that U.S. nuclear weapons still play a role in deterring not only nuclear attack, but also conventional or CBW attack against the United States or its allies and partners. As Secretary of Gates noted recently, for states such as North Korea and Iran, “all options are on the table.”

Finally, to address the potential nexus of terrorists and weapons of mass destruction, the NPR renews the U.S. commitment:

...to hold fully accountable any state, terrorist group, or other non-state actor that supports or enables terrorist efforts to obtain or use weapons of mass destruction, whether by facilitating, financing, or providing expertise or safe haven for such efforts.

Nuclear weapons have not been used in conflict since 1945, and it is strongly in the interests of the United States that this nearly 65-year record of nuclear non-use continue forever. This NPR acknowledges the reality that the United States would use nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances to protect our vital interests or those of our allies and partners.

These changes in U.S. declaratory policy reinforce our non-proliferation efforts at a critical juncture, while simultaneously maintaining and indeed strengthening deterrence of attacks on ourselves or our allies and partners.

Strategic Force Structure

One of the first tasks of the NPR, which continued throughout the review, was to define positions for the New START negotiations. The DoD-led NPR team reached the following conclusions about U.S. strategic nuclear force structure:

- The United States should retain a nuclear Triad of ICBMs, SLBMs, and dual-capable heavy bombers under New START, in order to preserve strategic stability and hedge against any unexpected technical problems or operational vulnerabilities in one leg of the Triad. The fiscal year 2011 budget request includes funding for each leg of the triad.
- All U.S. ICBMs should be “deMIRVed” to a single warhead each, in order to reinforce strategic stability.
- An ability to “upload” non-deployed nuclear weapons on delivery vehicles should be retained as a hedge against technical or geopolitical surprise. Preference will be given to upload capacity for bombers and strategic submarines.

The Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Chilton supported New START reductions in deployed warheads, and limits on deployed as well as non-deployed strategic delivery vehicles (SDVs). New START limits were validated by rigorous analysis in the NPR.

The Administration intends to provide additional details for strategic forces under New START in the report required by Sec. 1251 of the 2010 National Defense Authorization Act. This report will include a ten-year estimate of budgetary requirements for sustaining delivery platforms, the nuclear weapons stockpile, and the nuclear weapons complex.

Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons

The NPR concluded that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States should retain the capability to “extend” nuclear deterrence to allies and security partners. Its recommendations:

- Retain the capability to forward-deploy U.S. nuclear weapons on tactical fighter-bombers and dual-capable heavy bombers.
- Proceed with full scope life extension study and follow-on activities for the B-61 bomb to ensure first production begins in fiscal year 2017.
- Retire the nuclear sea-launched cruise missile (TLAM-N), as a redundant capability.
- Continue and expand consultations with allies and partners to address how to ensure the credibility and effectiveness of the U.S. extended deterrent.
- Decisions about the future of NATO nuclear weapons should be made through NATO processes, and not unilateral decisions.

Non-Nuclear Long-Range Strike Capabilities

The Administration is currently examining the appropriate mix of non-nuclear long-range strike capabilities over the long-term. Today, these capabilities include conventional-only and dual-capable heavy bombers, and both sea-launched and air-launched conventional cruise missiles. Of these systems, only dual-capable bombers are accountable under New START. NPR analysis concluded the U.S. should develop non-nuclear prompt global strike capabilities, which are allowed under the New START Treaty – and should focus such capabilities on regional threats while not undermining strategic stability with Russia or China.

Toward a Sustainable Long-Term Approach

A key premise of the 2010 NPR was that an effective national strategy for reducing nuclear dangers and sustaining the U.S. nuclear deterrent are long-term challenges that will require support from a long succession of U.S. Administrations and Congresses. Laying the groundwork for a sustainable bipartisan consensus is a central purpose of this NPR.

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