**Written Statement of Dr. John Plumb**
**Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy**
**Senate Armed Services Committee**
**Strategic Forces Subcommittee**
**Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for**
**Missile Defeat and Defense Programs**
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## Introduction

Chairman King, Ranking Member Fischer, and distinguished members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for missile defeat and defense programs on behalf of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. I am honored to join General Glen VanHerck, Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and United States Northern Command; Vice Admiral Jon Hill, Director of the Missile Defense Agency; and Lieutenant General Daniel Karbler, Commanding General of the Army's Space and Missile Defense Command.

Integrated air and missile defense has never been more relevant to U.S. defense strategy, plans, and posture. The increasing development and use of advanced missiles—including ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic—as well as Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) has become a defining feature of modern warfare.

Today, I will review how air and missile threats have evolved over the last year, provide a policy update on the Department's response, and explain how the Department's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 budget request of $29.8 billion for missile defeat and missile defense programs supports this response.

**Advanced Air and Missile Threats**

As Secretary Austin has said since his first days in office, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is the Department's pacing challenge, while Russia remains an acute threat. Our competitors are rapidly developing, fielding, and integrating advanced offensive air and missile capabilities into their strategies to favorably shape the course of a potential crisis or conflict.

*People's Republic of China*

The PRC has accelerated its efforts to develop, test, and field advanced missile systems of all classes and ranges, including ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic glide vehicles. The PRC is also rapidly expanding its ability to deliver nuclear payloads through the development of new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and the construction of new ICBM missile fields. In August 2022, the PRC launched ballistic missiles over and around Taiwan in an unsuccessful attempt to intimidate and demonstrate it capability to forcefully unify with Taiwan.

*Russia*

In its illegal war of aggression in Ukraine, Russia has employed thousands of air and missile platforms of all types ranging from hypersonic missiles to short range UAS. Russia's use of missiles, often against non-military targets, is designed to terrorize the Ukrainian people while degrading Ukraine's warfighting capability. Russia is trying also to diminish Ukraine's will to fight through the destruction of infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and the energy grid. Russia has even converted thousands of surface-to-air missiles to surface-to-surface mode and launched hundreds of Iranian UAS systems in attacks against Ukrainian critical infrastructure targets. Russia also continues to invest in long-range cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, and

hypersonic glide vehicles – capabilities that place the United States homeland at risk.

*Iran*

Over the last several years, Iran has launched missile attacks into neighboring states while providing ballistic missiles and UAS to non-state actors, who in turn used them to target U.S. forces and partners in the Middle East. Iran has become the world's leading proliferator of missiles and UAS as demonstrated through its UAS transfers to Russia as well as its provision of these systems to armed groups throughout the Middle East. Iran continues to invest in space-launch vehicles that could shorten the pathway to a future long-range missile capability.

*The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)***:**

The DPRK continues to test and demonstrate a growing number of developmental ballistic and cruise missiles, including test launches of missiles that have directly over-flown and landed near the sovereign territory of regional neighbors. This year alone, DPRK has showcased a vast array of missile systems, including 11 Hwasong-17 ICBM missiles and associated launchers, in an extensive military parade celebrating the 75$^{th}$ anniversary of the DPRK army; conducted two ICBM tests and more than a dozen shorter range missiles tests; and unveiled a new, purported nuclear warhead dubbed the Hwasan-31.

*Non-State Actors*

Non-state actors pose an increasing danger to U.S. regional interests, particularly in the Middle East and Africa. This is evidenced by the attack against U.S. forces in Syria in late March. These armed groups – operating autonomously or as proxy forces – are employing more

complex UAS, rocket, and missile capabilities and continue to benefit from the proliferation of dual-use commercial air, UAS, and missile systems and technology.

**U.S. Missile Defense Policy**

As outlined in the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), the Department is focused on a strategy of integrated deterrence, which incorporates our efforts to prevent and, if necessary, defeat air and missile threats to the United States homeland, our allies and partners, and regionally deployed forces. Integrated deterrence weaves together all instruments of national power – with the diplomacy in the forefront – to work seamlessly across warfighting domains, theaters, the spectrum of conflict, and our network of alliance and partners.

Nested within the NDS, the 2022 Missile Defense Review (MDR) describes how missile defense contributes to integrated deterrence as a deterrence-by-denial component against competitors that seek to use missiles as a means to project conventional and nuclear military power. Missile defense undermines adversary confidence in offensive missile use by introducing doubt and uncertainty into attack planning; by raising the threshold for conflict by reducing the incentive to conduct small-scale coercive attacks; by reinforcing U.S. diplomatic and security posture; and by reassuring allies and partners that the United States will not be deterred from fulfilling its global security commitments. Missile defenses expand the decision space for our military and civilian leaders and preserve our forces' freedom to maneuver.

The Department's top priority is to defend the U.S. homeland, including U.S. territories. As the scale and complexity of North Korean missile threats to the homeland increase, we are staying ahead of the threat through improvements to the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system as part of a comprehensive missile defeat approach, complemented by the

credible threat of direct cost imposition through nuclear and non-nuclear means. A key component of the GMD system will be the Next Generation Interceptor (NGI), which is scheduled for delivery beginning in 2028. The NGI will greatly enhance our ability to defend the country against North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile threats.

The 2022 MDR states clearly that Guam, along with all U.S. territories, is part of the U.S. homeland and will be protected against any and all provocations and attacks. The Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) architecture for the defense of Guam, for example, will simultaneously protect U.S. forces and our ability to project power in the region. Similarly, we are investing in efforts to strengthen our protection of Hawaii, Alaska, and the continental United States.

Broadly speaking, different adversary capabilities – from ballistic to cruise to hypersonic threats – present unique missile defense challenges depending on the technology and the theater in which they are employed. We are taking steps to ensure we can defeat these threats now and into the future.

The conflict in Ukraine illustrates the importance of air and missile defense. Russia's ruthless barrage of attacks in Ukraine have been a wake-up call to the power and destructiveness of missiles and the extent to which they have become a defining feature of modern warfare, especially in the absence of air superiority. Ukrainian sovereignty endures today in large part because Ukrainian forces have made air defense a top priority. The United States has provided Ukraine with over 1,600 stinger missiles, a Patriot battery, two National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile (NASAM) systems, and 12 Avenger air defense systems. In addition, we are providing equipment to integrate Western air defense launchers, missiles, and radars with

Ukraine's current inventory of air defense systems. Our allies and partners have also stepped forward to provide vital advanced air and missile defense systems to Ukraine.

**Investments**

The $29.8 billion budget request for missile defeat and defense provides $10.9 billion of Missile Defense Agency (MDA) programs, as well as another $18.9 billion for investments across all Services that contribute to our total missile defeat and missile defense capability. These investments are tied to the strategic objectives of the national defense strategy.

*Homeland Missile Defense*

As stated previously, the Department's top priority is to defend the homeland and deter attacks against the United States. To achieve this strategic objective, the President's budget requests $3.3 billion to improve the reliability, capability, and cyber resiliency of GMD. This request includes $2.2 billion for the continued development of the NGI, which will improve the reliability and performance of our system against advancing ICBM threats from North Korea and against potential future ICBM threats from Iran.

As an element of homeland defense and regional defense, the Department is committed to strengthening the defense of Guam through a layered IAMD architecture. As such, the Department is requesting $1.5 billion in FY2024 to strengthen missile defense of the island, which is a critical operational hub in the Indo-Pacific region. The Department is also in the process of designating, as required by statute, a single senior official to manage the missile defense effort on Guam.

The Department is requesting $64 million to improve the defense of Hawaii through investments in upgrades to its air surveillance radar capabilities, which will enhance air domain awareness and support defense against cruise missiles and a variety of other emerging air and missile threats. Hawaii is already defended from North Korean long-range attacks by the GMD system, comparable to the other 49 states and the District of Columbia.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense designated the Department of the Air Force as the acquisition authority for air and cruise missile defense of the homeland in July 2022. To that end, the Department is requesting $428.7 million in FY2024 for the continued fielding of four new over-the-horizon radars. These radars will provide long-range sensor coverage of likely air and cruise missile threats to North America, as well as capability against hypersonic threats, and maritime surface vessels.

We are also investing in the modernization of space sensor capabilities that are crucial to missile warning, missile tracking, and missile defense and that support the protection of our homeland and the missions of our forces globally. This includes $4.8 billion in FY2024 to develop new proliferated resilient missile warning/missile tracking architectures and the Next-Gen Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) space and ground architecture. We are optimizing existing missile defense radars and other sensors in support of our broader all-domain awareness objectives.

*Regional Missile Defense*

The Department is strengthening our regional missile defenses to counter all missile threats – including hypersonic threats – regardless of origin. The United States must continue to develop defenses against regional missile threats, to include building a persistent and resilient

sensor network to characterize, track, and improve attribution while also developing and delivering capabilities to enable engagement of all missile threat types, including hypersonic missiles. The President's budget request makes substantial investments in regional ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missile defense capabilities to accomplish these objectives, including:

- $259 million for regional hypersonic and ballistic missile defense space sensors and development of the Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI);
- $1.024 billion for Aegis Standard Missile-3 and Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) interceptors; and
- $1.2 billion for additional PAC-3 interceptors.

U.S. deployed forces, allies, and partners also face a proliferation of lower-tier threats, such as rockets and armed UAS. Our adversaries will continue to seek ways to use these relatively inexpensive, flexible, and expendable systems to achieve their purposes. The Department is working to field technical and integrated counter-UAS solutions to ensure we can collectively meet the range of threats and appropriately hedge against future advancements. We are requesting nearly $1.5 billion in FY2024 to support this effort.

Today directed energy plays an increasingly important role in countering UAS. In the future, directed energy could complement our current programs to defeat more complex air and missile attacks. The Department is requesting $308 million this year to continue work in this area.

**Strengthening International Cooperation with Allies and Partners**

Air and missile defense cooperation with our allies and partners continues to expand. Not only do allied and partner missile defense capabilities offer important value during

peacetime, but they also allow our alliances and coalitions to plan collectively and to counter missile threats together in crisis and conflict and in ways that reduce the potential for escalation. The United States does not face international threats on its own; we need a unified, collective presence of integrated allied and partner missile defense capabilities to deter and defeat growing missile threats.

The United States also continues to work with our allies and partners to improve our ability to share sensing and tracking data in real time and support each other in air and missile defense engagements to maximize our collective capabilities. Multilateral air and missile defense exercises, such as Formidable Shield and Pacific Dragon, and bilateral test activities such as Japanese Aegis destroyers launching SM-3 Block IIAs to intercept ballistic missiles at U.S. test ranges, give us opportunities to work together to accomplish these goals.

In Europe, initial acceptance testing is ongoing at the Aegis Ashore site in Poland, which will become operational in 2024 after completion of all testing and receiving additional software upgrades. The Aegis Ashore site in Poland will complete the European Phased Adaptive Approach – the U.S. voluntary contribution to NATO Ballistic Missile Defense – as it joins the Aegis Ashore site in Romania, the BMD capable ships homeported in Spain, and the AN/TPY-2 radar in Turkey. We also recently deployed two Patriot batteries to Poland and one Patriot battery to Slovakia in support of NATO's defense. Overall, our Patriot and THAAD forces are deployed world-wide, including throughout the Middle East and Indo-Pacific regions, where they defend U.S. forward-deployed forces and other national security interests in concert with our allies and partners.

The United States is increasing our ally and partner capabilities through Foreign Military Sales of equipment as well as through training, co-development, and co-production programs.

We are also exploring joint opportunities to invest in the cooperative development of complementary IAMD technologies and capabilities such as hypersonic defenses. In particular, the Department welcomes Japan's interest in pursuing cooperation on the GPI program.

We engage regularly throughout the year with key allies and partners through a series of bilateral and multilateral dialogues to enhance our collective regional missile defense efforts in Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific region. Our missile defense cooperation strengthens our common protection, enhances deterrence, and provides assurance that bolsters the cohesion of our alliances.

**Conclusion**

The commitment of adversaries to the use of offensive missile systems as a central component of their military strategies and tactics has never been more evident. As a result, missile defeat and integrated air and missile defenses can no longer be viewed as peripheral capabilities. These capabilities must be foundational elements of integrated deterrence and modern defense in U.S. national security. The United States remains committed to improving our homeland and regional missile defeat and defense capabilities as we work to deter conflict, and to prevail in battle if deterrence fails. The Department's FY 2024 budget request supports this approach.

I look forward to working with the Congress to advance this shared goal. Thank you.