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PRESENTATION TO THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
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UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: Status of Air Force Nuclear and Strategic Systems

STATEMENT OF: Lieutenant General Stephen W. Wilson, Commander
Air Force Global Strike Command

Mar 5, 2014

Introduction

Chairman Udall, Ranking Member Sessions, and distinguished Members of the Committee; thank you for allowing me to represent the over 25,000 Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) Airmen and civilians, and to appear before you as their Commander for the first time. I will use this opportunity to update you on our mission, the status of our forces, and the challenges we will face over the next few years.

Air Force Global Strike Command Mission

Air Force Global Strike Command will mark its fifth anniversary this year. Our command was created in 2009 to provide a singular focus on the stewardship and safe, secure and effective operation of two legs of our Nation's nuclear Triad. The Triad is an enduring construct that is just as relevant today as it was at its inception. Advancements and modernization taking place in the nuclear arsenals of other nations are a serious concern and indicate AFGSC's Nuclear Deterrence Operations mission is not losing relevance, but has actually become even more critical. In order for us to participate in every spectrum of conflict from humanitarian operations to nuclear engagement, we must be ready and effective at every point along that continuum, and we can never fail in nuclear operations. Our Nation has successfully avoided the unthinkable by having a credible deterrent for over 50 years. Continuing in the proud heritage of Strategic Air Command tailored for the 21st Century, AFGSC's mission is to: "Develop and provide combat-ready forces for nuclear deterrence and global strike operations -- Safe, Secure and Effective -- to support the President of the United States and Combatant Commanders."

AFGSC Nuclear Mission

At the core of our mission statement are three reinforcing, key attributes: "Safe – Secure – Effective." These were outlined in President Obama's 2009 Prague speech where he said: "Make no mistake: as long as these weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defense to our allies." The attributes of "safe, secure, effective" serve to underpin every nuclear-related activity in AFGSC, from the discipline adhered to in the smallest task, to how we prioritize our planning and programming for the Future Years Defense Program. The effects of our nuclear force, as outlined in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, are to ensure strategic stability, to support the regional deterrence architecture, and to assure our allies and partners.

AFGSC Conventional Mission

Our conventional bomber forces defend our national interests by deterring or, should deterrence fail, defeating an adversary. Two capabilities are fundamental to the success of our bomber forces: first is our ability to hold heavily defended targets at risk, and second is our ability to apply relentless and persistent combat power across the spectrum of conflict anywhere on the globe at any time. The United States' fleet of penetrating and stand-off heavy bombers is second to none, capable of long-range and long-endurance missions. These bombers carry our latest high-tech munitions in vast quantities to ensure the USAF can meet our Nation's global responsibilities, and remain in high-demand by the regional Combatant Commanders.

Air Force Global Strike Command Forces

The two Numbered Air Forces under AFGSC, Eighth Air Force and Twentieth Air Force, serve critical national security roles as Component Numbered Air Forces to United States Strategic Command and as Task Forces for on-alert nuclear forces.

Twentieth Air Force (20 AF)

Twentieth Air Force is responsible for the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force and our UH-1N helicopter force. The 450 dispersed and hardened missile silos maintain strategic stability by presenting any potential adversary a near insurmountable obstacle should they consider a disarming attack on the United States. No potential adversary can credibly destroy this force without depleting their own arsenal. Every day a force of over 1,100 Airmen is deployed to our three missile fields, executing effective deterrence operations. 20 AF maintains a 24-hour per day, 7-day per week, 365 day per year no-fail mission. Accomplishing this mission demands we focus on sustaining our current systems while modernizing for the future. How we will accomplish this is outlined in the paragraphs below.

Minuteman III

We continue efforts to sustain the Minuteman III ICBM (MM III). This includes upgrading the command, control and communications systems, and support equipment.

The ICBM Cryptography Upgrade (ICU), Code System Media (CSM), and the Strategic Targeting and Application Computer System (STACS) programs are fully funded, providing for hardware and software upgrades to allow the secure transmission of critical codes and targeting data via modern media. These upgrades will enhance security while reducing the number of operations, maintenance, and security forces man-hours required for the annual cryptographic

code change at our Launch Facilities (LFs) and Launch Control Centers (LCCs). We project fielding the new CSM in 2014, new STACS in 2015 and the new ICU in 2019.

We are also equipping ICBM LCCs with modernized communications systems that will upgrade or replace other aging and obsolescent systems. Beginning in 2015, we will start replacing Voice Control Panels and Ultra-High Frequency radio receivers, accomplishing recurring Higher Authority Communications/Rapid Message Processing Element life extensions, and upgrading extremely high frequency (EHF) communications, which provide connectivity through the National Military Command System (NMCS). Furthermore, we advanced the Minuteman Minimum Essential Emergency Communications Network Program, which upgrades, modernizes and secures the Emergency Action Message network, with operational fielding scheduled for March 2015.

We conducted four MM III flight tests in Fiscal Year 2013, the first time we've accomplished four flight tests in one year since 2006. This, along with two successful Simulated Electronic Launch tests in the operational environment, demonstrates the operational credibility of the nuclear deterrent force and the Command's commitment to sustaining that capability. Operational testing is currently funded through the Fiscal Year 2015 Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), with four operational test launches funded per year to satisfy test requirements outlined by United States Strategic Command and the National Nuclear Security Administration.

We continue to examine emerging technologies to ensure the MM III weapon system remains reliable and ready through 2030. Additionally, we are looking into how investments in these technologies can transfer to and provide savings for the future Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) program.

Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD)

The Minuteman missile system, currently on its third model, has been on continuous alert since the 1960's, over 50 years ago, and has proven its value in deterrence well beyond the platform's intended 10-year lifespan. The GBSD program is intended to replace or evolve the MM III. All parts of the Triad are complementary; the ICBM provides the responsive portion of that balance. Initial ICBM capability gaps were identified, validated by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), and approved in August 2012 by the Air Force Chief of Staff, resulting in an Analysis of Alternatives (AoA). The AoA commenced in September 2013, and will identify an affordable, viable, flexible concept for the next generation ground based strategic

deterrent force. This analysis is critical to inform near-term MM III sustainment programs to ensure technologies and components can be utilized in GBSA acquisition. Our United States Navy partners are fully engaged with our GBSA team, investigating the benefits and risks of commonality, with the objective to reduce future design, development, and manufacturing costs for their strategic systems. Our GBSA AoA results are due to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) in June 2014. I ask for your support of GBSA as we move forward, ensuring it will lead to a viable replacement for the MM III ICBM.

UH-1N

AFGSC is the lead command for the Air Force's fleet of 62 UH-1N helicopters. The vast majority of these aircraft support two critical national missions: Nuclear Security in support of the ICBM force, and the Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government mission in the National Capital Region.

Although the UH-1Ns are 45 years old, we currently plan to fly them for at least another decade. We must sustain the helicopter's current capabilities, while selectively upgrading them to reduce existing capability shortfalls and avoid increased sustainment costs due to obsolescence. Safety improvements currently underway include the installation of crashworthy aircrew seats across the fleet by 2015 and night vision goggle-compatible cockpits that will be fully integrated by 2016. In addition, the command has begun fielding the Helicopter Terrain Avoidance and Warning System and Traffic Collision Avoidance System to improve aircraft situational awareness and survivability. Finally, Air Force Global Strike Command is currently in the process of arming our UH-1Ns in order to meet OSD and STRATCOM-mandated security requirements for the missile fields. We have completed training our initial helicopter aircrew cadre, and initiated the development of tactics, techniques, and procedures for integrated operations with Security Forces personnel. We anticipate initial operational capability by the end of March 2015.

While we can to some extent mitigate the UH-1N's deficiencies in range, speed, and payload, no amount of modification will close these critical gaps entirely. This can only be accomplished by fielding a replacement aircraft that meets validated mission requirements. The Air Force cancelled the planned UH-1N replacement program, the Common Vertical Lift Support Platform, in 2013. However, we continue to explore replacement options, including acquiring aircraft currently possessed within the Department of Defense through the Excess

Defense Articles program. At my predecessor's request, RAND recently completed a Business Case Analysis of the costs and mission effectiveness of sustaining the UH-1N as well as 19 other military and commercial replacement options. We will continue to pursue affordable replacement options while safely flying the UH-1N.

Eighth Air Force (8 AF)

Eighth Air Force is responsible for the B-2A Spirit (B-2) and B-52H Stratofortress (B-52) bomber forces. This includes maintaining the operational readiness of both the bombers' nuclear and conventional missions. The B-2 gives the United States the ability to attack heavily defended targets while the B-52 serves as the nation's premier stand-off weapon delivery platform. The B-52 may be the most universally recognized symbol of American airpower...its contributions to our national security through the Cold War, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Allied Force, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom are remarkable. Our flexible dual-capable bomber fleet is the most visible leg of the nuclear Triad, allowing decision makers the ability to demonstrate resolve through generation, dispersal or deployment, which includes the ability to quickly place bomber sorties on alert ensuring their continued survivability to meet commander requirements.

B-52H

Our Airmen have worked tirelessly to keep the venerable B-52 in the air. The B-52 is able to deliver a wide variety of stand-off, direct attack, nuclear and conventional weapons in the Air Force. This past year, we maintained 100 percent coverage of our Nuclear Deterrence Operations requirements while supporting overseas Continuous Bomber Presence (CBP) commitments, despite a 26 percent reduction in B-52 flying hours. Although we were able to balance aircrew readiness to meet United States Strategic Command requirements during these reductions, we only recently returned to pre-sequestration readiness levels to meet all combatant commander mission requirements.

AFGSC continues work toward completing the Combat Network Communications Technology (CONNECT) upgrade. This upgrade resolves sustainability issues with aging cockpit displays and communications while also providing a "digital backbone" enabling integration into the complex battlespace of the future. CONNECT replaces aging displays, adds a radio, provides beyond-line-of-sight communications and situational awareness, and adds machine-to-machine retargeting. The CONNECT program is currently funded to field the upgrade across the entire

B-52 fleet. The first B-52 CONECT installation will complete in April 2014, and the second B-52 is scheduled to begin conversion in July 2014.

We are working on an upgrade 1760 internal weapons bay upgrade to the B-52's bomb bay that greatly improves flexibility and precision weapon capacity for all smart weapons. Configuring the aircraft to internally carry these smart weapons and the pathway for integration of the Joint Air to Surface Stand-Off Missile-Extended Range (JASSM-ER) will give the warfighter an additional advantage over an adversary, and will provide increased capability to our joint force commanders.

Continuing to upgrade and modernize the B-52 will keep this platform relevant, viable and an integral part of AFGSC's contribution to the fight, providing vital long-range strike and massive firepower until the Air Force determines the requirement for a suitable B-52 replacement.

Last year, we successfully executed six Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) flight test evaluations, meeting USSTRATCOM ALCM test requirements for the third straight year. The ALCM, employed only on the B-52, remains a strong and capable stand-off nuclear weapon, but some critical components are nearing the end of their service life. To ensure the B-52 remains a credible part of the Triad, we have initiated an ALCM Service Life Extension Program. The ALCM will remain viable through 2030, when the Long Range Stand-off Missile (LRSO) is scheduled to reach its initial operational capability.

Minot Air Force Base (AFB), ND, has one of the oldest runways in the USAF and has been deteriorating for years. We developed a multi-phased plan to completely replace the runway and widen the existing taxiway. The \$70.5 million plan also includes the repair and upgrade of airfield lighting. To date, we have replaced both ends of the runway and widened the taxiway. Starting on 1 April 2014, we will close the runway and begin replacing the center section which is slated to be complete by 1 October 2014. During this 5 month runway closure, we will utilize the improved taxiway to meet USSTRATCOM requirements. For day-to-day training, we will relocate a portion of our B-52 force to Ellsworth AFB, SD. The end state will be a new runway capable of supporting strategic operations through 2050. This multi-year construction plan has been an operational challenge. However with the outstanding performance by our Airmen, proper oversight, and risk management, we are ensuring both safe operations and combat capability. For your continued support of this vital construction project, we thank you.

B-2

The B-2 continues to deter and assure. We saw a vivid demonstration of this on 28 March 13 when we flew two B-2s from Whiteman AFB, MO on a 75 hour, 6,500 mile combined training mission to South Korea. This high-visibility B-2 mission sent a strong and timely message of assurance to our South Korean, Japanese and Australian allies.

We emphasized 2013 as the “Year of the B-2” by celebrating the 20th anniversary of the first delivery of the B-2 Spirit bomber to Whiteman AFB, MO. For 20 years, the B-2 has defended America as a visible strategic deterrent. In each of our nation’s last four armed conflicts, the B-2 has led the way in combat. This is a direct result of the outstanding Airmen who keep the aircraft flying. The B-2 with its long-range and stealth capability is able to penetrate heavily defended enemy defenses and deliver a wide variety of nuclear and conventional weapons in the Air Force inventory.

We will preserve and improve the B-2’s capability to penetrate hostile airspace and hold any target at risk without subjecting the crew and aircraft to undetected threats. To do this, we secured JROC validation of the Defensive Management System-Modernization (DMS-M) Capabilities Development Document, allowing the program to enter into the engineering and manufacturing design phase of the acquisition process. This upgrade provides the B-2 aircrew with improved threat situational awareness and increased survivability by replacing the current DMS Threat Emitter Locator System and display system with modernized and sustainable systems capable of addressing modern threats. In sum, this program will keep the B-2 viable in future anti-access environments.

AFGSC continues to evolve B-2 conventional combat capability by fielding vital programs such as the Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP). Our Nation’s ability to hold hardened, deeply buried targets at risk was bolstered by successful fielding of the 30,000-pound MOP. Additionally, MOP dolly and rail system prototype functional testing was successful. The dolly and rail system will increase storage capacity and create more efficient handling of the MOP. We would like to thank Congress for your support on this critical program.

We continue striving to maintain the proper balance of fleet sustainment efforts, testing, aircrew training, and combat readiness. The dynamics of a small fleet continue to challenge our sustainment efforts primarily due to vanishing vendors and diminishing sources of supply. Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) is working to ensure timely parts availability; however, many

manufacturers do not see a strong business case in supplying parts for a small aircraft fleet. Problems with a single part can have a significant readiness impact on a small fleet that lacks the flexibility of a large force to absorb parts shortages and logistics delays.

Fleet-wide Bomber Initiatives

CBP increases regional stability and supports allies in the United States Pacific Command area of responsibility. In 2014 we celebrate the 10th consecutive year of conducting CBP operations. CBP is an enduring requirement and we have taken steps to reduce the cost of squadron rotations. Specifically, over the past year we worked closely with Pacific Air Forces to reduce the logistics footprint of these rotations by standardizing and positioning a permanent maintenance equipment package at Andersen Air Force Base.

Additionally, we coordinated Jet A fuel conversion from JP-8 at all AFGSC bases to ensure this seamless fuel transition without any mission impacts. This effort aligns AFGSC with the USAF initiative to reduce aviation energy costs. AFGSC plans to completely transition to Jet A by Mid-2014. Once complete, AFGSC projects \$6 million in annual savings.

Long Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B)

The combat edge our B-2 provides will be challenged by next generation air defenses and the proliferation of these advanced systems. The LRS-B program works to extend American air dominance against advanced air defense environments. We continue to work closely with Air Combat Command to develop the LRS-B and field a fleet of new dual-capable bombers. This new bomber, scheduled to become operational in the mid-2020s, will hold any target on the globe at risk. We request your support for this essential program to ensure we maintain the ability to penetrate the most advanced integrated air defense systems.

Long Range Stand-Off Missile (LRSO)

The LRSO is the replacement for the aging ALCM. In a similar manner to LRS-B, the LRSO is necessary to ensure we maintain a credible deterrent in the future. We need LRSO to maintain the safety of our aircrew and protect our aircraft, while maintaining the ability to strike at targets from outside contested airspaces in anti-access and area denial environments. The LRSO will be compatible with the B-52, B-2, and LRS-B platforms. The LRSO AoA is complete and JROC approved while the Draft Capabilities Development Document has completed staffing through the AFROC Process. In December 2013 the office of the Secretary of Defense deferred program funding due to concerns over the National Nuclear Security

Administration (NNSA) funding profile for the associated warhead as well as other nuclear enterprise priority bills such as the B61 Tail Kit Assembly. We are working closely with NNSA and AFMC to develop a new acquisition and funding strategy that will maintain LRSO's ability to replace ALCM in a timely manner. Recent Congressional NDAA language directed us to sustain the Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile (CALCM) until we retire both the ALCM and CALCM concurrently. Sustaining the CALCM, slated for retirement in FY15, would drive a significant bill. Currently, the USAF plans to replace CALCM with the modern Joint Air to Surface Stand-off Missile – Extended Range (JASSM-ER) until the future conventional version of LRSO is available.

B61

The B61-12 Life Extension Program (LEP) will result in a smaller stockpile, less special nuclear material in the inventory, and B61 surety. AFGSC is the lead command for the B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly program, which is required to meet USSTRATCOM requirements with the B61-12. The B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly program is in the Engineering and Manufacturing Development Phase 1 and is synchronized with NNSA efforts. The design and production processes are on schedule and within budget to meet the planned Fiscal Year 2020 First Production Unit date for the B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly, and support the lead time required for the March 2020 B61-12 all-up round. This joint AFGSC/NNSA endeavor allows for continued attainment of our strategic requirements and regional commitments.

Security

Nuclear surety and security are at the forefront of the Command's mission. We partnered with DOE, NNSA and the United States Navy (USN) using the Joint Integrated Lifecycle Surety methodology to assess the relative vulnerabilities of the nuclear enterprise. Additionally, our Command-level Strategic Security Plan (SSP) integrates multiple security initiatives and projects across AFGSC, allowing me to make decisions that improve overall security performance.

A major AFGSC initiative continues to be designing new Weapon Storage Facilities (WSFs) to consolidate nuclear maintenance, inspection, and storage. We have put forward a \$1.3 billion program to replace all deficient and worn buildings across our aging 1960's-era Weapon Storage Areas with single modern and secure facilities at each location. This initiative eliminates security, design, and safety deficiencies and improves our maintenance processes. The project will undergo validation by external agencies to include the Defense Threat

Reduction Agency, Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, Air Force Safety Center, and Air Force Security Center. We are also seeking DOE and USN input to explore ways to standardize across all organizations. We will attain thirty five percent design completion for the first facility at Francis E. Warren AFB, WY by April 2014. Our goal is to include the MILCON for this new weapon storage facility in Fiscal Year 2016, with the MILCON for the remaining facilities in future years. In sum, these facilities are needed to meet requirements for a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal.

We continue to work within the Air Force to complete the \$337 million LF secondary door modifications that provides rapid closure and security for all LFs. As of January 2014, 390 of 450 sites are complete. We would like to thank Congress for your support during the life of this program.

Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3)

Assured communications connectivity continues to be the linchpin to credible, secure strategic deterrence. The ability to receive Presidential orders and convert those orders into action for the required weapon system is critical to performing the nuclear mission. As the NC3 Chief Architect, AFGSC plays a pivotal role in providing reliable and survivable NC3 systems to support national objectives. In addition to the ICBM sustainment and modernization actions previously discussed, we are addressing water intrusion issues at LCCs across the missile fields of Minot AFB, ND and Malmstrom AFB, MT, averting communication failures, and ensuring uninterrupted ability to transmit and receive command and control message traffic. Additionally, cryptographic modernization upgrades allowed Air Force nuclear operations to transition to more secure equipment and satellite communications networks. These transitioned networks greatly improved security of sensitive nuclear command and control message traffic. We are also working multiple modernization efforts to replace legacy equipment on the Strategic Automated Command and Control System (SACCS). Finally, we are partnered with Air Combat Command and USSTRATCOM in relocating the SACCS Operations Center in preparation for the demolition of the current USSTRATCOM headquarters building.

Global Aircrew Strategic Network Terminal (ASNT)

The Global ASNT program will provide a fixed and transportable system of survivable NC3 Command Posts. These Command Posts support nuclear-tasked bomber, tanker, National Airborne Operations Center (NAOC), Take Charge and Move Out aircraft (TACAMO), reconnaissance forces, and nuclear reconstitution teams. Global ASNT is one part of the ground element of the larger Minimum Essential Emergency Communications Network. Global ASNT replaces degraded legacy NC3 systems in AFGSC, Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command, United States Air Forces Europe, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command providing redundant strategic communications paths in executing USSTRATCOM war plans.

New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (NST) Progress

The Russian Federation was notified in February 2014 that the last of 50 Peacekeeper LFs near Francis E. Warren AFB, WY (formerly the 400th Missile Squadron) have been removed from NST accountability. The process involves removing and burying the 110-ton launcher closure door and filling the launch tube and associated underground structures with gravel. Following the completion of elimination actions for the remaining 50 non-operational LFs at Malmstrom AFB, MT (formerly the 564th Missile Squadron) and 3 test LFs at Vandenberg AFB, CA, the demolition contractor will return to the sites and accomplish remediation actions necessary to prep the sites for disposition. The original landowners will have the first option to purchase the sites. The completion of these actions marks a key milestone in U.S. efforts to reduce the number of non-deployed launchers accountable under NST. The LF elimination in Montana began in February 2014. 40 of the 50 LFs are on contract using Fiscal Year 13 funding with completion expected in July 2014.

Nuclear Deterrence Operations Core Function

We continue to improve and strengthen the nuclear enterprise through our long-range planning efforts. To this end, we conducted an AFGSC-wide review to ensure a coherent 20-year comprehensive investment strategy for the Air Force Nuclear Deterrence Operations (NDO) Core Function. This plan will bolster our ability to provide the President and Combatant Commanders vital warfighting capabilities by prioritizing modernization, sustainment, and

acquisition efforts for our bomber, ICBM, and helicopter weapon systems and the nuclear command, control, and communications systems that underpin these systems.

One of the methods we use to inform our NDO long-range planning and investment strategy efforts is wargaming. Our first wargame, Strategic Vigilance, was conducted in December 2013 as an analytic tool to explore new concepts and capabilities, study and refine emerging operational concepts, prevent technological, strategic and operational surprise, and evaluate the Air Force Strategic Plan & Vision. Moreover, Strategic Vigilance explored the ability to conduct combat operations across the spectrum of conflict. The results from this and future wargames will provide us insight into the employment of global strike assets that will allow us to better organize, train and equip AFGSC for years ahead.

2014 Focus Areas (Our Priorities)

Deter and Assure with a Safe, Secure and Effective Nuclear Force. Nuclear weapons demand a culture where safety, security and effectiveness permeate all aspects of this critical National mission to include our people who embody this special trust and responsibility through all aspects of their life. The greatest Air Force in the world will only remain dominant through their professionalism, dedication, and commitment to service -- and living our Air Force core values. Although we will continue to be challenged with sustaining aging weapon systems, we will leverage the innovation of our great Airmen to get the most out of our resources.

Win the Fight. Whether that fight is in overseas contingencies where we have nearly 1,000 Airmen deployed, or with our over 1,100 nuclear deterrent forces deployed to the missile fields conducting the mission today and every day, we will forge ahead to keep both our nuclear and conventional forces combat ready.

Strengthen and Empower the Team. We will continue to improve the quality of life for our Airmen and their families, aware of the unique demands of our mission and our locations. We will continue to foster resiliency and strength within a wingman culture, and we will aggressively continue focused education and development at all levels. Furthermore, we will continue to strengthen, broaden, and deepen our culture around our command values of:

- Individual responsibility for mission success
- Critical self-assessment of our performance
- Uncompromising adherence to all directives
- Superior technical and weapon system expertise

Persistent innovation at all levels
Pride in our nuclear heritage and our mission
Respect for the worth and dignity of every Airman
Safety in all things large...and small

Shape the Future. We will stay focused on our human development and our weapon system modernization initiatives. Our responsive and resilient MM III, providing the foundation for strategic stability, must be sustained to 2030 and we will advocate for a follow-on system based on our Ground Based Strategic Deterrent work. The B-52 will remain the stand-off platform of choice well past 2040, and will prove a versatile platform with unmatched battlefield persistence in lower threat environments. The B-2 will be our strategic penetrating platform denying safe haven to any adversary. The Long Range Strike Bomber will ensure we can continue to hold any target on the globe at risk. As our Air Launched Cruise Missile becomes obsolete and unsupportable, we will field a credible and flexible deterrent with the stealthy Long Range Stand-Off missile.

Uphold the Standard. We understand the importance of ensuring compliance at all levels, and we uphold our standards through inspections. We recently implemented the new Air Force Inspection System. The foundation of this new system, the Commander's Inspection Program (CCIP), is being executed by our wing Inspectors General (IG) for organizations below the wing level. The CCIP is monitored virtually by our command IG and validated by a Unit Effectiveness Inspection (UEI) Capstone event every two years. The first formal UEI Capstone event is scheduled for the 2nd Bomb Wing in April 2014. Additionally, we conducted Initial Nuclear Surety Inspections at the 307th Bomb Wing in March 2013 and 131st Bomb Wing from July through August 2013, resulting in the first Air Reserve Component and Air National Guard units certified to employ nuclear munitions. Going forward, we will continue to utilize our rigorous inspection process to ensure the highest of standards and determine areas of the mission that require improvement. All three ICBM wings will undergo NSIs in 2014--the 91st Missile Wing just passed this inspection in January 2014.

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued support of Air Force Global Strike Command and the nuclear deterrent and global strike missions. Our enduring challenges in AFGSC are: First, to instill a culture where every Airman understands the special trust and responsibility of nuclear

weapons; second, to maintain excellence in our conventional forces; third, to sustain the current force while modernizing for the future; fourth, to solidify and sustain a culture where our Airmen are proud to serve in and embrace the great importance of the deterrent mission.

Fiscal constraints, while posing planning challenges, do not alter the national security landscape or the intent of competitors and adversaries, nor do they diminish the enduring value of long range, strategic forces to our Nation. Although we account for less than one percent of the DoD budget, AFGSC nuclear forces represent two-thirds of the Nation's nuclear Triad, providing the ultimate guarantee of national sovereignty, while AFGSC conventional forces provide joint commanders rapid global combat airpower.

It is my absolute privilege to lead this elite team empowered with special trust and responsibility, and I can assure you that we at Air Force Global Strike Command will meet our challenges head-on in order to provide our Nation with ready forces for nuclear deterrence and global strike operations -- *safe, secure, and effective.*