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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2023

HEARINGS

BEFORE A

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

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DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2023

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022.

IMPACT OF CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND SERVICES

WITNESSES

MIKE MCCORD, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)
GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER, COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
ADMIRAL MICHAEL GILDAY, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES NAVY
GENERAL JOHN W. RAYMOND, CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE
GENERAL CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR., CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
GENERAL JOSEPH M. MARTIN, VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

Ms. MCCOLLUM. This hearing is virtual, and as usual, we will go over a couple of housekeeping matters.

For today's meeting the chair or the staff designated by the chair may mute participants' microphones when they are not under recognition for purpose of eliminating background noise.

Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves. If I notice you have not unmuted yourself, I will ask you if you would like the staff to unmute you. If you indicate by nodding for approval, the staff will unmute you.

I remind all members and witnesses that the 5-minute clock still applies. If there is a technology issue, we will move to the next member until the issue is resolved, and you will retain the balance of your time.

You will notice a clock on your screen, and that is showing how much time is remaining. At one minute the clock will turn yellow. At 30 seconds remaining, I will gently tap the gavel to remind members that their time has almost expired. And when your time has expired, the clock will turn red, and I will begin to recognize the next member.

In terms of speaking order, we will follow the order set forward in the House rules, beginning with the chair and the ranking member. Members present at the time when the hearing is called to order will be recognized in their order of seniority, and, finally, members not present at the time the hearing is called to order.

Finally, House rules require me to remind you that we have set up an email address to which members can send anything they

wish to submit in writing at any of our hearing markups. The email address has been provided in advance to your staff.

Members, the subcommittee will fully come to order, now that we took care of the housekeeping. First and foremost, I wish you all a good new year, and hope that your families are doing well, and that they are safe from COVID.

What we are going to do this morning is we are going to receive testimony on the impact of the continuing resolution of the Department of Defense and services. And we are joined by Mike McCord, Under Secretary of Defense; General David H. Berger, commander of the United States Marine Corps; Admiral Michael Gilday of—chief of naval operations of the United States Navy; General Raymond—excuse me, General John W. Raymond, chief of space operations for the United States Space Force; and General Charles Q. Brown, chief of staff for the United States Air Force; and General Joseph M. Martin, vice chief of staff for the United States Army.

I want to thank you all for attending, and I would like to mention that Chief Army Staff General McConville is not with us today because he is attending General Odierno's internment today. General Odierno was a remarkable leader.

And General Martin, I want to thank you for appearing on behalf of the Army today.

It has been the case far too often in recent years that the government once again is operating under a continuing resolution. Today's hearing will explore the impacts of CRs on our national security, particularly the problem that would be created by a year-long CR for fiscal year 2022.

When our subcommittee writes a full-year bill, even the year-over-year total remains the same, we increase and decrease funding for hundreds of specific activities that are essential to our national security. Under a CR, none of this occurs. We do not cut spending in areas where it is no longer needed, like sunsetting legacy platforms or inefficient programs that are no longer survivable in a high-end fight.

Simply put, CRs are bad for our national security, they increase inefficiency, they waste taxpayers' money. They also signal to our troops and the millions of workers in the defense industry that their needs are just not a priority. At a time when Putin is threatening to invade Ukraine, China continues to be a pacing threat, we do not have time to waste. Our national security cannot afford more CRs.

Now, among the members of this committee I want to be perfectly clear. I know each and every one of you all wants a new fiscal year 2022 defense bill. But I have to tell you, it is frustrating to read quotes from one House Republican published in December, and I am going to quote directly: "Republicans should be in favor of a CR until Biden is out of office. It would be the proper Republican thing to do, and everybody saying otherwise is foolish." Well, that type of thinking, that is what is foolish, and I believe it is dangerous.

I have heard similar comments from other Republicans in recent months. The least we can do is to get funding bills done. And I thank Chair DeLauro for trying to do just that for months now.

I urge my Republican colleagues to continue to come with us to the negotiating table, so we can fund the entire government. But because America's national security is more than just about dollars that we provide the Pentagon—it is part of the reason why we are having this hearing—we also need to make the necessary investments in diplomacy, development abroad, and, most importantly, education, health, and America's economy here at home. They all impact our national security.

So today I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about how a full-year CR could affect modernization, slow our ability to retire ineffective programs, and how it would be an inefficient use of taxpayers' dollars by directing billions of dollars to purposes that are out of date, such as a war in Afghanistan, which we are no longer fighting.

We have a lot to cover. And so now I will turn to the gentleman from California, the ranking member, Mr. Calvert, for his opening remarks.

Mr. Calvert.

OPENING REMARKS OF MR. CALVERT

Mr. CALVERT. Well, thank you, Madam Chairman, and happy new year.

And I also want to recognize General Odierno. Not only was he a great patriot, a good friend of this committee, and we certainly thank him and his family for his lifetime of service.

I want to thank all the witnesses for being here today. While I look forward to hearing from the senior leaders here today, I am disappointed there is a need to have this hearing. Since I have joined this subcommittee, I have been very vocal about the damage done by our inability to pass defense appropriation bills on time.

When we are able to carry out the most—when we are able—unable to carry out the most fundamental constitutional responsibility to—we create self-inflicted wounds that are difficult to recover from.

Typically, as appropriators, we are able to negotiate in good faith, reach a bipartisan deal. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle have decided they are more committed to the progressive wing of their party than to the responsible governance in this country.

We have offered to start negotiations, as long as we work under the same terms, negotiations that we have worked for in the past two years. They are simply no poison pills, and retain all legacy riders.

We have also made clear that, in order for us to support these bills, domestic spending must come down and defense spending must go up.

It should be noted that the HAS, the SAS, and the Senate Appropriations all have agreed to a higher defense number. This committee is the lone holdout. It is disappointing to watch the majority try to blame Republicans, who are the minority party in both chambers, for being at this unfortunate place, especially when it is their leadership that has failed them. May I remind people that Democrats were unable to pass their version of the fiscal year 2022 defense appropriation bills on the House floor?

And today, under the guise of caring for our men and women in uniform, they are attempting to use the Department of Defense as a means to an end, with the hopes of passing radical, irresponsible policies that will harm the American people. It is disingenuous at best, and it breaks a longstanding tradition of bipartisan cooperation that has made this committee, and especially this subcommittee, specifically so effective.

Excessive spending on the domestic bills is irresponsible, and will dangerously add to our national debt, which former chairman of the joint chiefs, Admiral Mullen, called the top threat to our national security.

These increases are also in addition to the massive spending spree that the Biden Administration and this Congress have been on, which has directly led to massive inflation. As a matter of fact, the number came out this morning: 7 percent inflation this year, the highest number in almost 40 years, which is harming American families, and certainly harming the Department of Defense.

I will remind everyone that inflation is drastically harming DoD's own buying power. When your account for COVID spending—when you account for COVID spending on national security, and national—on our national security, our entire spending on national security is 10 percent of all federal outlays, 10 percent. The overwhelming majority of our spending goes towards domestic programs.

As the ranking member of this subcommittee, I have remained firm in my resolve that we will fight to ensure proper funding for the Department of Defense. It is encouraging to hear reports that the majority is now considering supporting additional funds above the President's misguided request for fiscal year 2022.

It is my hope we can avoid the devastating impacts of a CR. We will hear about this today. Committees—this committee's storied reputation of bipartisan, common-sense governing, I hope, will continue.

Thank you for your service, and I look forward to your testimony.

And with that, I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Calvert. And I certainly know that the words that you said were heartfelt, but I don't think you meant to imply that any of us on this committee from the other side of the aisle are disingenuous.

I would now recognize Chair DeLauro.

OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIR DELAURO

The CHAIR. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I want to thank you and the ranking member for holding this important hearing on the impact of continuing resolutions, and what they have—the kind of impact they have on the Department of Defense.

I first want to just say a thank you. And Secretary of Defense Austin is not here this morning. But on December 6th he issued a statement about the contents of what we are speaking about today, and what the—how—what he described—fiscally unsound way of funding the Department of Defense, and government as a whole. So please convey my thanks to him.

I want to say a thank you to all of our witnesses today. It was amazing to me, reading through the testimony of—the consistency

of message here about what, in fact, occurs when we engage in continuing resolutions.

If I might—and I don't mean to slight the others, but General Brown, thank you for your authorship of the book, "Accelerate Change or Lose," that we must change so that we do not go backward. The time for us has come. We need to go faster, and the time is now for us to be able to do that.

And I appreciate the witnesses and their distinguished leaders of the military coming to explain the consequences of what are, quite frankly, Congress's failures.

Madam Chair, you and I have worked closely for months to enact a defense appropriations bill for fiscal year 2022. But while—and I too would agree with you that the members of this subcommittee are committed to a—moving forward on a defense appropriations bill.

But while the Democrats are ready to negotiate and complete our work, a number of our Republican colleagues have—they have not even—leadership hasn't even offered a proposal of their own. And just—I have to say this, I wasn't going to, but just to clarify the record—the fact of the matter is, in the history of appropriations bills, the issues on—whether you call them policy riders, or poison pills, or legacy riders, whatever you want to call them, that has been debated at the end of the process, that there has been the willingness on the part of Democrats and Republicans to come together and say, "Let us talk about the top line, let us move programmatically," because, in order to achieve a bicameral, bipartisan piece of legislation, those issues will be—will have to be resolved.

So the fact that who is—it is not a question of pointing fingers, but the Democratic proposals are out there. To date there has not been one single document that outlines where our Republican colleagues want to go.

President Kennedy once said there are risks and costs to action, but they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction. We need action on full-year funding bills now. The longer our colleagues get comfortable in their inaction, the greater the long-range risks will be for our nation.

And as you are, Madam Chair, I am particularly alarmed by the suggestion of some that they would prefer to fund the government under a full-year continuing resolution. This would harm our military, stalling modernization efforts, readiness, capacity, recruitment, operation, and maintenance, impacting pay for our troops, and wasting billions in taxpayers' dollars on capabilities we no longer need.

After 20 years of war in Afghanistan have ended, we need to prepare for the security challenges of the future by modernizing weapons systems such as strengthening our hypersonic weapons and artificial intelligence capabilities. A continuing resolution would severely curtail the transition to these modern, high-quality tools.

Readiness is essential to the strength of our military. But as the testimony from our witnesses affirm, extended CRs, full-year CR, would greatly impact our troops, their quality of life, their health care. Under a continuing resolution, services would have to significantly curtail other personnel expenses, including potentially slash-

ing the number of new recruits to provide a statutorily authorized pay raise.

The witnesses, in their testimony, they lay out, as I mentioned earlier, a consistent message that asserts that already there are serious consequences to the four-month delay of a budget agreement.

A full-year continuing resolution would keep platforms and systems that are no longer necessary in service, while blocking the start of new projects. It would reduce the buying power of the Defense Department, lock the Pentagon into last year's spending, such as for a war in Afghanistan we are no longer fighting. There are few dollars—more egregious ways to waste the Americans—people's hard-earned tax dollars.

Finally, I am deeply concerned about the impact of a full-year CR on the millions of jobs the defense industry sustains across the United States, and I ask unanimous consent to insert into the record a letter from 11 defense trade associations which puts the harmful consequences of a full-year CR in stark terms, and I quote: "Defense industry workforces are subject to seemingly endless stop-and-start contract cycles, creating inefficiency and disruption that ripples through the defense supply chain with disproportionate effects on smaller companies." The consequences of a full-year CR are simply unthinkable.

To protect our national security, sustain American strength vis-a-vis China and Russia, and further American leadership around the world, we need a government funding agreement. We need it now. And it is time for our Republican colleagues to join us, negotiate a bipartisan, bicameral funding agreement.

I thank you, Madam Chair, for holding this hearing, and I thank our witnesses once again, and I won't deal with the quote now, because I have already gone over my time. But I am hopeful that Assistant Defense Secretary McCord will speak about this issue. He has a great quote in his testimony about our competition with Russia and China, and what they do in terms of being competitive, and what we do not do. I say thank you, thank you to my colleagues for being here this morning, and I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Chair DeLauro. You had, you said, 11 letters to enter for the record?

The CHAIR. No, one letter that has been signed by 11 heads of the—trades association: Aerospace, Air Force——

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I just wanted to make sure I said the amount of letters correctly.

The CHAIR. That is correct.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. So without objection, we will be entering that letter into the record.

[The information follows:]

January 11, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Republican Leader McConnell, and Republican Leader McCarthy:

We the undersigned associations represent critical stakeholders in our national security enterprise. Our organizations believe that a strong, adequately funded defense posture is vital for our economic stability and our ability to both deter and, if necessary, engage threats to our nation and our allies. A strong diplomatic posture complements those capabilities and is fundamental for our ability to build and maintain key relationships around the world that protect U. S. interests and provide stability in many volatile regions.

We write today because all of these bedrock missions of our government are now threatened by the prospects of a long-term continuing resolution (CR) extending well into 2022. We wholeheartedly agree with Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III's comments that a yearlong CR is "an unprecedented move that would cause enormous, if not irreparable, damage for a wide range of bipartisan priorities – from defense readiness and modernization, to research and development, to public health."

Like all federal agencies and government missions, the Department of Defense is harmed in several ways by CRs. First, it is forced to defer any new start programs or projects, and suspend production rate increases for weapons, platforms, and other equipment that are needed to meet our security requirements. Second, funds are misaligned between military services and programs, as activities naturally fluctuate year to year and CRs do not accommodate those changes. Third, military services are forced to reduce necessary readiness activities to pay for cost-of-living and pay and benefits increases without funds being provided specifically for those purposes. Finally, defense industry workforces are subject to seemingly endless stop-and-start contract cycles, creating inefficiency and disruption that ripples through the defense supply chain with disproportionate effects on smaller companies.

FY22 is the first year in a decade where discretionary spending levels were not fixed in statute by the Budget Control Act. We have long maintained that Congress should instead set these levels in the annual budget and appropriations process after careful review of agency needs in

real-time. In fact, this is a bedrock principle of federal fiscal and budget policy going back decades if not centuries. It would be a devastating signal to send to our warfighters, their families, our allies and partners, and the dedicated industries that support them, if Congress cannot provide adequate funding for FY22 in a timely fashion.

Again, we urge you in the strongest possible terms to expeditiously finalize all 12 full-year appropriations bills for fiscal year 2022 prior to the expiration of the current CR on February 18, 2022. We appreciate your time and attention to this request and look forward to working with you to reduce the harmful impacts of continuing resolutions on federal agencies and the contractors who support agency missions.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)
Air Force Association (AFA)
Association of the United States Army (AUSA)
Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)
Global Special Operations Forces Foundation (Global SOF)
Marine Corps League (MCL)
National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA)
National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS)
Professional Services Council (PSC)
Reserve Organization of America (ROA)

OPENING REMARKS OF MS. GRANGER

The CHAIR. Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Now I turn to Ranking Member Granger from Texas for her opening remarks.

Ms. Granger.

Ms. GRANGER. Thank you, Chairwoman McCollum. As a longtime member and a former chair of this subcommittee, I have been proud of its history of bipartisanship. The members of this subcommittee care deeply about our national security, and have been able to put partisan politics aside in order to ensure we provide the funding needed to protect our great nation.

Unfortunately, the defense appropriation bill has fallen victim to partisan politics. I think we would all agree that no one here wants a continuing resolution, no one. That is not our goal. However, Republicans will not allow the majority to ram through irresponsible spending and harmful policies in other parts of the government by using the Department of Defense as a political weapon.

My position should not come as a surprise to anyone. During full committee and subcommittee markups, I made it clear that House Republicans would not support any bills unless the majority removed poison pills, reinstated longstanding riders, and addressed the disparity between defense and non-defense spending. Those two—three issues have been, for the past two years, a part of this.

But instead of working across the aisle to get our work done, the majority drafted unrealistic, irresponsible appropriations bills, many of which contain the most partisan policies I have seen since I have been in Congress. For example, the fiscal year 2022 labor, health, and human services bill includes a staggering 36 percent increase over current levels. The majority also removed longstanding, bipartisan pro-life protections that have been included for decades. The list goes on and on.

As appropriators, we know it takes bipartisan cooperation to craft spending bills that will be signed into law. Counter to what the majority has said, Republicans are ready and willing to negotiate. We simply ask that the majority agree to the same terms that have allowed us to complete our work quickly in the past, drop controversial language, and restore longstanding provisions. If the majority would agree to these terms, I will clear my schedule, and I am happy to begin negotiations immediately following this hearing.

Madam Chair, I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. The bottom line is people need to get to the table and talk to each other, and that is leadership in both the House and the Senate.

So I am going to turn to our witnesses now, and I—we don't pick favorites. I don't pick favorites, especially—on my side of the family, when my father was Army Air Corps, I never picked a favorite between the two of them. So we are going to start with the service chiefs. We are going to go in alphabetical order, then followed by the vice chief Martin and McCord.

Your full statements are going to be entered into the record. So I ask you to limit your remarks to no more than five minutes.

Under Secretary McCord, you are first.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF MR. MCCORD

Mr. MCCORD. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and also Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger, thank you, and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today, along with our leaders from the services, on the importance of getting full-year appropriations, rather than seeing continued extensions of the current continuing resolution, or CR.

In particular, I want to express our concerns about the potential for a full-year CR, which is something the Department has never been forced to operate under.

Our military leaders are going to speak in more detail about specific impacts on their services and their people, but let me begin with some points that are of concern across the Department, to amplify the point Secretary Austin made in his statement of December 6, 2021, which I would ask the chair that you allow to be inserted in the record of this hearing, also.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III on the Impact of a Full-Year Continuing Resolution

DEC. 6, 2021

The Department of Defense once again faces the threat of a continuing resolution to fund our programs and operations into the new year. While the short-term CR passed by Congress was a necessary measure to keep the government open and provide additional time to reach agreement on full-year appropriations bills, some have even suggested a CR could last an entire year, an unprecedented move that would cause enormous, if not irreparable, damage for a wide range of bipartisan priorities – from defense readiness and modernization, to research and development, to public health.

A full-year CR would be a fiscally unsound way of funding the Department of Defense and government as a whole. It would misalign billions of dollars in resources in a manner inconsistent with evolving threats and the national security landscape, which would erode the U.S. military advantage relative to China, impede our ability to innovate and modernize, degrade readiness, and hurt our people and their families. And it would offer comfort to our enemies, disquiet to our allies, and unnecessary stress to our workforce.

Essentially, in terms of real dollars, a CR would represent a budget cut – and a significant one at that.

I urge Congress to reach a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on FY 2022 appropriations, and avoid a full-year CR, in the coming weeks.

First and most importantly, failure to reach an agreement would put our military and their families under additional and needless stress. It would mean that providing the 2.7 percent pay increase the President proposed and they so richly deserve -- as well as housing allowances and other new benefits -- would come at the expense of suspending many of their change-of-station moves and force us to limit the numbers of new recruits we bring in. And it would result in over five billion dollars in cuts to our operating accounts, too, hurting the readiness of our troops and curtailing our ability to cover the health-care needs of military families.

More than 100 military construction projects -- many of which directly impact the quality of life of our people -- would also be delayed if Congress maintains current funding levels under a full-year CR. And make no mistake about it, the impacts of those delays would be felt not only across the Department, but

also in local communities around the country as job opportunities are lost and revenue for local businesses diminishes.

Of course, failing to reach an agreement on appropriations would also significantly impact the programs, the technologies and the initiatives we are trying to undertake to ensure we remain the most capable military in the world. The Department's efforts to address innovation priorities such as cyber, artificial intelligence and hypersonics programs would be slowed.

At a time when our adversaries are advancing their concepts and capabilities to erode our strategic advantages ... and as we begin to knit together a truly groundbreaking vision of integrated deterrence ... our hands will be tied. We will be forced to spend money on things we don't need and stop spending money on investments we desperately do need.

And I'd note that as important as full-year appropriations are for the Department of Defense, investments at the State Department, in research and development at the major research agencies, and in infrastructure and public health are equally critical to our national security.

Again, I strongly urge Congress to seize this opportunity to sustain American competitiveness, advance American leadership, and enable our forces by immediately reaching a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on full-year 2022 appropriations. It's not only the right thing to do, it's the best thing they can do for our nation's defense.

Mr. MCCORD. Thank you.

A full-year CR, Chair and members, would move us in the wrong direction, and leave us stuck in the wrong place.

First, if you want us to be more competitive with our adversaries, it is going to make us less so. If you want us to be more agile, a CR has the opposite effect. It would undermine our—your support of our men and women in uniform and their families.

Finally, Congress, in passing the recently-enacted fiscal year 2022 defense authorization bill, was voting, in part, to increase DoD funding. If that is what Congress wants, enacting a full-year CR would send our top line down, not up.

Let me now briefly expand on a few of these concerns.

First, as I believe you are all aware, a full-year CR would reduce our funding level below what we requested to what we believe we need. On the surface, at the Department level as a whole, the reduction to our accounts would appear to be about $8 billion below our request, which would be significant, even if that was the only impact. The actual reduction in practice will be much greater, because we would have significant funding that is misaligned, trapped, or frozen in the wrong places, and unusable because we don't have the tools or flexibility to realign funds on anything like the scale we would need to fix all the problems that the chiefs are going to describe.

To cite one major example, although it is a different subcommittee, I know all of you are very familiar with the fact that virtually all military construction projects in each year's budget, including the fiscal year 2022 budget, are new starts that cannot be executed under a CR. In this specific case, that is over 100 projects and over $5 billion in funding that would be unusable. So that is one example of—on top of the eight billion that it looks like at the gross level when you get down in the details.

If you add the impacts of this unusable funding to the straight loss of purchasing power under a CR, the real impacts on our operations both double or triple the impact of the cuts as we go into the procurement and the research and development accounts to calculate all the funding tied to individual program rate increases or new starts that we would not be able to execute, leaving those funds stranded.

Not every acquisition program would be restricted, and impacts would be very uneven. Some programs, such as the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, would be delayed significantly by the cuts imposed by a CR, while others, such as the procurement of two Virginia-class submarines, might be relatively unaffected.

The most damaging impacts would be on those who deserve it least: our service members and their families. The biggest tolls would be in our military personnel accounts and our training and readiness accounts. Our military personnel accounts will be funded $5 billion below our requested level under a CR.

Yet inside those flat funding levels, as several members have noted, we would have to absorb the cost of a well-deserved pay raise, and other statutory housing and subsistence increases for the troops. This means that, within a flat number absorbing a pay raise, we will be forced to take action such as delaying and suspending permanent change-of-station moves for our people, and de-

laying accessions of new troops, which would disrupt our training pipeline.

In the operating accounts, where a CR would leave us another $5.3 billion below our requested levels, we would almost certainly have to defer training and readiness, and take greater risk in our facilities maintenance, especially if we endeavor to avoid any furloughs of our civilian workforce, because civilian pay is a very large part of the operating accounts.

We also have an issue with military health care. This account would be short by over $1 billion, compared to our request, yet we have no ability to control the demand for health care by our beneficiaries, nor would we wish to, especially during a pandemic. So people show up to the doctor, we have to pay that bill.

Some might ask, "Well, can't we address these issues by reprogramming funds to solve our biggest problems?"

First, the committees have never approved a reprogramming during a continuing resolution. If we get past that issue, as we would need to under a year-long CR, just to fix one high-impact problem, such as the billion-dollar shortfall in the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program, would consume 25 percent of the $4 billion in transfer authority available to me for the entire Department for the entire year. And yet I would still have dozens of other CR-imposed problems to address.

The idea that being under a continuing resolution into January or February is not unusual, and that a full-year CR is now considered a serious possibility did not come from nowhere. And I believe it is important just to take a moment to step back from this current situation and look at the broader context. We have been slowly boiling this frog for a number of years, and we may not fully appreciate what has been happening.

For the 20 years that followed the end of the Cold War, from fiscal years 1991 through 2010, the date of enactment of the defense appropriations bill averaged 24 days into the fiscal year, or less than a month late. But since the enactment of the Budget Control Act in fiscal year 2011, the 10 years of the BCA that then followed that enactment, and now this first year after the BCA, that average has ballooned to 118 days late over the last 12 years, assuming that we can land this plane on February 18th this year.

The 6 longest CRs in the history of the Defense Department have all occurred in this last 12-year period. We have turned a 12-month fiscal year into an 8-month fiscal year, in terms of our ability to initiate new starts and enter contracts. This should be unacceptable, and not the new normal.

It is hard to see this full impact because—or the inefficiency from looking from outside, because the organization has, of course, adapted to its circumstances, just as organisms do. Nobody plans to enter into contracts in the first quarter of a fiscal year now, because the odds that we would actually be able to do so are so low. Therefore, we, in turn, have no significant contract delays to report to you when we are under a CR.

In addition to the direct consequences of a CR, including the inefficiency of disruption to our people and our operations, and reduction in the resources that I have described, we should not forget that inflation is also eating into our funding, while our funding re-

mains on hold, as Mr. Calvert noted. For example, I have had to improve—approve two increases in our fuel prices this year already, first on October 1st, and a second one on January 1st, in order to keep our working capital fund solvent. So this has created a bill of a billion-and-a-half dollars to the services for fiscal year 2022, in addition to the reductions that we already have described.

And finally, to be clear, the Department is not alone in this regard. We recognize that. In fact, we have been treated better over the years than some other agencies. The Department of Health and Human Services is on the front lines against the COVID–19 pandemic. We have a tax on our critical infrastructure, and natural disasters that we expect the Department of Homeland Security to respond to. We have to ensure our children get the quality education they need to become the trained and capable workforce of tomorrow. So we can't afford to run the Federal Government, any agency, on a long-year—on a year-long CR.

Our competitors, China and Russia in particular, use all the pieces on the chessboard to compete with us, not just their military assets. We are competing on the diplomatic front, the economic front, the military front, innovation and technology. If we take this competition seriously, as we should and as our adversaries do, then we cannot afford to continue acting this way. Time is money, and year after year we are giving away time in these lengthy CRs. We do not have such an insurmountable edge on our competitors that we can afford to keep doing this.

Let me close, Chair, and turn it over to our military leaders for more specifics, by quoting what Secretary Austin said last month: "I strongly urge Congress to seize this opportunity to sustain American competitiveness, advance American leadership, and enable our forces by immediately reaching a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on a full-year fiscal year 2022 appropriations. It is not only the right thing to do, but it is the best thing that they can do for our nation's defense."

With that, I look forward to your questions, once all the witnesses have concluded their statements. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

Testimony of Michael McCord

Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Chief Financial Officer

House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense

Full-Year Funding vs. Continuing Resolution Funding

January 12, 2022

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the committee/subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, along with our Military leaders, to discuss the importance of getting full-year appropriations rather than seeing any further extensions of the current continuing resolution, or CR. In particular, I want to express our concerns about the potential for a full-year CR in lieu of full-year appropriations for the Department of Defense, which is something the Department has never been forced to operate under.

Our Military leaders will speak in more detail about the specific impacts on their services and their people. Let me begin with some points that are of concern across the Department, in support of and to amplify the points Secretary Austin made in his statement of December 6, 2021, which I ask the Chair to allow to be inserted in the record of this hearing.

A full year CR would move us in the wrong direction and leave us stuck in the wrong place on multiple fronts.

Congress, in passing the recently enacted FY 2022 defense authorization act, was voting in part for a funding level higher than the Department requested. If that is what Congress wants, enacting a full-year CR would send our topline in the opposite direction.

- If you want us to be more competitive with our adversaries, it would make us less so.
- If you want us to be more agile, a CR is counter-productive.
- If you support our men and women in uniform and our families, a full-year CR will undermine that support.

Let me briefly expand on a few of these concerns.

First, as I believe you are all aware, a full-year CR would reduce our funding below what we requested and believe we need. On the surface, at the Department level, the reduction would appear to be about $8 billion below the request. The actual reduction in practice will be significantly greater.

One reason is that some funds that would appear to be legally available under the CR are actually not useable. For example, there was $3.0 billion appropriated in FY 2021 for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund known as ASFF. After the collapse of the Afghan government , there is now no legal way to execute that funding even if the funds are technically available for obligation under the CR. So that is an additional $3 billion impact.

To cite a second major example, although it is a different subcommittee, I expect all of you are very familiar with the fact that virtually all specified military construction projects in each year's budget, including the FY 2022 budget, are "new starts" that cannot be executed under the CR. In this specific case, that is over 100 projects and over $5 billion in funding that would be unusable.

Under such a full-year CR scenario, our Guard and Reserve components would have no military construction projects this year, and our active duty components would only be able to continue a handful of incrementally-funded projects.

If you add that $5 billion in unusable military construction funding to the $3 billion in unusable ASFF funding, now our $8 billion reduction has doubled to $16 billion in lost purchasing power. Then we can start going into the procurement and research and development (R&D) accounts to calculate all funding tied into the individual program rate increases or new starts that we would be unable to execute, leaving those funds stranded.

I am not asserting that every acquisition program would be restricted. Some, such as the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program, would be delayed with CR levels of funding, while others, such as the procurement of two Virginia-class submarines, would be relatively unaffected.

The most damaging impacts would be to those who deserve it least – our service members and their families. The biggest holes would be in our military personnel accounts and our training and readiness accounts.

Our military personnel accounts would be funded $5.0 billion below our requested level, yet inside those flat funding levels we would have to absorb the cost of a well-deserved pay raise and statutory housing and subsistence increases for the troops. This means that our services would be forced to take actions such as delaying and suspending permanent change of station moves for our people, and delaying accessions, which will disrupt our training pipelines.

In the operating accounts, where a CR would leave us another $5.3 billion below our requested levels, we would almost certainly have to defer training and readiness and take greater risk in our facilities maintenance, especially if we try to avoid any furloughs of our civilian workforce.

Section 112 of the current CR encourages us to avoid furloughs, which is something we all wish to avoid. We understand the intent of that provision in the context of a temporary CR, so as to avoid that kind of harm to our workforce while we are waiting for the final answer. But if the CR is extended and becomes the final answer for FY 2022, furloughs may be necessary. None of us

want to see hard-working employees furloughed, but if those are off the table we still have the math problem of insufficient resources in our operation and maintenance accounts, and the pressure on us to curtail direct readiness activities such as flying hours and steaming days will then increase.

We also have an issue with military health care. This account would be short by over $1 billion compared to the requested level, yet we have no ability to control the demand for health care by our beneficiaries, nor would we wish to do that, especially during a pandemic.

Some might say well you can address these issues by reprogramming funds to solve your biggest problems. However, our committees have never approved a prior approval reprogramming during a continuing resolution, and it is not clear our four committees agree that general transfer authority exists during a CR. And even if we get past that issue, as we would need to, just to fix one high-impact problem, the billion-dollar shortfall in the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent program, would consume 25% of the $4 billion in general transfer authority available to me for the entire Department for the year, and yet I would still have dozens of other CR-imposed funding shortfalls to address.

Although a long-term or even a full-year CR is preferable to the absolute worst-case of an extended lapse of appropriations commonly known as a shutdown, that does not make it desirable or the right thing to do.

The idea that being under a continuing resolution into January and February is not unusual, and that a full-year CR is even considered a serious possibility, did not come from nowhere, and I believe it is important to put this current situation into a broader context. We have been slowly boiling the frog for a number of years, and we may not understand the damage.

For 20 years following the end of the Cold War, from fiscal years 1991-2010, the date of enactment of the Defense Appropriations bill averaged 29 days into the fiscal year, or about 9/10 of a month late. But since enactment of the Budget Control Act in FY2011, the ten years of the Budget Control Act that followed, and now this first post-BCA year, that average has ballooned to 118 days or four months late over the past dozen years.

We have turned a 12-month fiscal year into an 8-month fiscal year, in terms of our ability to initiate new starts and enter contracts. This should be unacceptable, not the new normal. You don't necessarily notice the full impact or inefficiency of this process from the outside, because the organization has adapted to its circumstances. Nobody plans to enter into contracts in the first quarter of the fiscal year these days, because the odds that we will have new funding in place and be in a position to execute new contracts is so low. Therefore, we have no significant contract delays to report from a two- or three-month CR.

In this past dozen years, CRs extending well into the second quarter are not unusual. Imagine if, a few years from now, the Department has further adapted by no longer planning to award new

contracts in the first half of the fiscal year, not just the first quarter. We cannot be the dynamic, competitive enterprise that we want to be and you want us to be under those conditions.

In addition to the direct consequences of an extended CR, starting with the inefficiency, disruption to our people and operations, and reduction in available resources that I have described, we should not forget that inflation is also eating into our resources as our funding remains on hold. For example, I have had to approve two increases in our FY 2022 fuel prices – a first increase on October 1, 2021 and a second on January 1, 2022 – to keep our working capital fund solvent in response to higher fuel prices. This has created a bill of $1.5 billion for the services in FY 2022, in addition to the O&M reductions that flow directly from the CR.

And to be clear, the Defense Department is not alone in this regard, and in fact we have been treated better than some agencies. In a world where the Department of Health and Human Services is on the front lines against the COVID-19 pandemic; where we have attacks on our critical infrastructure and natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes) that the Department of Homeland Security must address; where we have to ensure our children get the quality education and training they need to become the world-class workforce of tomorrow, we cannot afford to run the federal government on a year-long CR.

One of the central insights for me, when serving on the Commission on the National Defense Strategy for the United States, is that our competitors, China and Russia in particular, use all the pieces on the chessboard against us, not just their military assets. We are competing on the diplomatic front, the economic front, the military front, the cultural front, the innovation and technology front. If we take this competition seriously, as we should, as our adversaries do, then we cannot afford the inefficiencies that this pattern demonstrates and enables. Time is money, and year after year we give away time in lengthy CRs. We do not have such an insurmountable edge that we can afford to fritter away one third of our time, year after year, while our competitors move as fast as they can.

Let me close, and turn to our Military leaders for more specifics, by quoting what Secretary Austin said last month:

> "Again, I strongly urge Congress to seize this opportunity to sustain American competitiveness, advance American leadership, and enable our forces by immediately reaching a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on full-year 2022 appropriations. It's not only the right thing to do, it's the best thing they can do for our nation's defense."

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF GENERAL BERGER

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you very much, and thank you for the accessibility our office and, I know, other offices that serve on this committee have had for questions, especially during the seriousness of the Afghan refugees. Thank you very much for your work and your professionalism.

General Berger, you are next.

General BERGER. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger, and the other distinguished members of the subcommittee, thanks for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Last spring, at the fiscal year 2022 posture hearing, I updated this committee on the force design effort the Marine Corps began at 2019. We are now two-and-a-half years into that major effort. Force design 2030 is how your Marine Corps is adjusting for the future in order to match the operating environment and to stay in front of our adversaries.

With that in mind, I would offer three ways that a year-long continuing resolution, which, as noted, we have never had before, would have a much greater adverse impact than previous year continuing resolutions.

And I will start with people, your Marines and their families. Now, if we were a conscript force, we wouldn't worry much about an impact of an extended CR. An all-volunteer force, on the other hand, relies on volunteers: volunteers to enlist; volunteers to stay in service. CRs eat away at the trust those Marines and their families have in their government.

With no appropriations, I will have to delay and cancel some transfer orders, incentive pays and bonuses reduced. Families won't know whether to renew their housing leases, spouses won't know whether to accept the job offer they got last week, all due to uncertainty. The impacts on recruiting and retention will last, I am confident, well beyond 2022, because you cannot rebuild trust in a week, or a month, or a year, not in an all-volunteer force.

Second, for the Marine Corps, impacts on modernization and the industrial base were especially acute, as a result of force design decisions I have taken over the past years. We have already divested of old, and begun to reinvest in new, which was a prudent plan that this committee recommended, and each of you has fully supported to date. Continuing resolutions, however, look in one direction: backward. They execute last year's budget against this year's priorities.

CRs effectively prevent modernization at speed, the speed required for us to keep up the pace that our adversaries have set and sustained. And here is the thing about that. We actually stand to be outpaced by China, not because of their speed, but because of our failure to comply with our own budgetary processes.

Time is the one critical resource, as the Under Secretary pointed out. We need to affect real change, and no amount of resources in the future can buy back lost time. Under a full-year CR we will delay acquisition of critical Marine Corps force design programs. MQ–9 A procurement won't happen. Production increases for F–35Bs, KC–130Js, CH–CH–53K aircraft, the amphibious combat ve-

hicle won't happen. Workers in Southern California; New York; Pennsylvania; Dallas-Fort Worth, Camden, Arkansas; Tucson, Arizona; Stratford, Connecticut; and a dozen other locations will be affected. Those workers need predictability.

Actually, there is one predictable outcome of a year-long CR, and that is that those workers will go elsewhere, because they have families to support.

Third, we face the prospect of losing the trust and confidence of our allies and partners, because commanders will have to scale back the scheduled exercises they have for this year. And in some cases they will need to cancel. Well, that is only relevant if your national security strategy depends on allies and partners. Ours does. Trust is a big part of what keeps the door open with our partners. Once that door closes, it is really hard to recover from the damage done to the military relationships. We should anticipate that some of them will begin to look elsewhere for a more reliable, dependable partner.

One final point. Sadly, as pointed out, as a military, we have become accustomed to a process that fails to deliver a budget on time. And over the past decade of CRs we have learned how to adjust our operating and contracting practices for the continuing resolution that we just assume is going to happen.

General BERGER. If the past 10 cycles are prolonged, we will be meeting here again next year to talk about the same things. During that time the Chinese will launch more than a dozen new surface combatants, they will launch patrol craft carriers, capable of carrying long-range, anti-ship cruise missiles. They will field additional squadrons of fifth-generation aircraft. We can't afford to have that meeting here next year.

Service chiefs need sufficient, stable, predictable funding to stay in front of our facing threat, to deter our adversaries, and, if need be, to fight and win. We haven't taken any of these extreme actions, not yet. This train wreck in front of us is entirely preventable.

Again, thanks for the opportunity to appear here this morning. I look forward to your questions.

[The information follows:]

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL DAVID H. BERGER
COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

ON THE IMPACT OF CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS
ON THE MARINE CORPS

BEFORE THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

JANUARY 12, 2022

Introduction

Chairwoman McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to explain the adverse impacts of Continuing Resolutions (CRs) on the Marine Corps. As I discussed during the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Posture Hearing, your Marine Corps is now two years into a major undertaking to adjust our force structure and operational concepts – all based on renewed strategic competition and the rise of peer adversaries. A CR delays and degrades the Marine Corps' Force Design effort and increases our risk in strategic competition. It cedes the initiative to our challengers and adversaries, and prohibits those of us with Title 10 responsibilities from generating the ready forces our Combatant Commanders need to maintain tactical and operational advantage. I remain committed to overcoming each these obstacles so that we can close the gap with the pacing threat, but I simply cannot do so with a Continuing Resolution.

Return to Budget Uncertainty

Continuing Resolutions are backward looking, destabilizing and decelerating. For the past 30 months, I have attempted to accelerate change in support of our approach to the Nation's pacing challenges, while concurrently generating the ready forces that create advantage. I have asked Marines to continue to look forward and modernize, resisting the temptation to look backward. A CR is the last thing a force seeking to accelerate modernization needs. It represents a return to the budget uncertainty that has plagued the Department for more than a decade. It is a return to the "normalization of deviance." Over the past ten budget cycles, the Marine Corps began the fiscal year with an enacted defense appropriation bill only once (in FY19). As you are well aware, we are currently operating under the second FY22 CR through February 18th. Today, as we open this Hearing, no one knows if appropriations will be passed or if we might be forced to operate under a full-year CR. CRs prevent program new starts, production increases, or increased rates of operations beyond last year's levels – which will negatively impact efforts to accelerate fielding of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV) and Navy/Marine Corps Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS). It might also slow the production increase of the CH53K, negating HAC-D's earlier efforts to bring down the cost. Furthermore, delays in the commencement of military or family housing construction would directly impact the lives of Marines, sailors, and families we work so hard to retain in our ranks. Their confidence in our military and in our government to maintain a budget is eroding, which makes retention even more challenging.

Impacting Marine Corps Modernization and Readiness

Unfortunately, we have become all too accustomed to operating under CRs each year. In fact, we have normalized fiscal behavior that is both inefficient and wasteful. Every year, leaders now typically plan to delay Program execution and contracts until later in the fiscal year in order to minimize the impacts of an anticipated CR. A simple example: a contract that should be managed on a yearlong timeline is now shoe-horned into 2nd quarter or even later in the FY. We have burned time, and we have introduced a compromised decision-making process, upping the risk ante in pursuit of forward-looking priorities. ***Because we have been conditioned to operate without an enacted budget, we have become good at behaving badly***. What is perhaps more insidious is that we don't even recognize this deviation—it just "is." Longer duration CRs dramatically increase this risk in an already strained fiscal environment, disrupting our ability to anticipate, properly plan, and execute an annual budget. A five-year plan is out of the question; it's simply not practical.

CRs require me to execute at FY21 funding levels while attempting to execute FY22 priorities. This is a mismatch I cannot reconcile. Our FY22 budget request reflects significant changes in priorities of our investments in future capabilities and increased readiness in support of Force Design. As CRs persist through the fiscal year, they severely constrain my ability to balance operational readiness with building a more ready, lethal force to compete with and prevail over the pacing threat. For the Marine Corps, the misalignment of funding is nearly $4.2 billion, or 9% of our $47.9 billion FY22 request included in the President's Budget. This will negatively impact the readiness of the force as well as our ability to execute multi-lateral exercise and partnership requirements in support of Combatant Commanders. Specifically, the persistence of a CR will force the reduction or risk elimination of Exercises COBRA GOLD 22, BALIKATAN 22, FREEDOM BANNER 22, VALIANT SHIELD 22, and IRON FIST 22 within INDOPACOM. This will negatively affect relationships and interoperability with Japan, Thailand, South Korea, and the Philippines. So, then what is at stake? A deleterious, cumulative impact on our strategy and deterrence. The negative impacts of the CR are not confined only to INDOPACOM; they also extend to CENTCOM and will inhibit our support to Exercise Native Fury. A lack of participation in crucial exercises not only degrades our unit readiness, but we also lose an opportunity to counter efforts by the PRC to influence the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The CR will also result in a less capable Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). Over the previous year, I made a decision to terminate use and operations with the legacy AAV fleet. I did so with the assumption that funding for the ACVs was both stable and predictable. This made the AAV decision a no-risk

decision. Under the CR, that no-risk decision has become a high-risk decision, and will result in MEUs of the future deploying with no organic self-deploying amphibious ground connector. This is not what I want, and not what the Combatant Commanders need.

Stretching the Force

Unstable fiscal environments prevent the deliberately planned, sustained effort needed to increase readiness in the current force and modernize the future force. Decisions pending in the FY22 President's Budget request will affect the FY23 budget and our Future Years Defense Program. While previous CRs have always resulted in appropriations at some point during the fiscal year, this process has done little to provide the fiscal certainty needed to plan for the future. Previous Commandants have testified over the last several years to the risk and damaging impact of constraints imposed by CRs on military readiness, modernization, and the welfare of our Marines and their families, yet ***a CR now would be more destructive than in prior years***. I agree with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force who said we must "accelerate change or lose." Having completed a year-long process to align our Marine Corps budget request to strategic change and our new strategy, I am now forced to adapt to a process where the CR drives the strategy and strategic choices. If the budget is not a strategy-driven budget, the range of options we have to address current and future threats erodes and we will be unable to compete successfully or potentially prevail against the pacing threat.

As the committee knows, CRs artificially slow acquisition programs and do not allow for new starts in research and development efforts or procurement programs or production increases. CRs impact our strategic industry partners who need steady, predictable funding for those platforms and capabilities so critical to Force Design 2030. With budget uncertainty, production lines and workforces may be reduced, endangering key development and manufacturing capabilities; disproportionately so in Arkansas, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Additionally, fluctuations in funding will likely force us to reduce purchase quantities, driving up unit and overall program costs while delaying fielding.

Personnel

If forced to operate under a full year CR, the biggest impacts will be at two different levels: the Service Headquarters and the individual. At the Headquarters level, our military personnel accounts would likely be insufficient to meet our projected recruiting costs, retention incentives, and Permanent Change of

Station (PCS) movements. Living within constrained funding levels would entail slowing both accessions and PCS moves - to include those associated with 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment in Hawaii. Disruptions in PCS moves would affect our ability to meet staffing goals for unit readiness worldwide, creating billet gaps and misalignment across the Marine Corps. Bonuses and reenlistment incentive pays would also be curtailed, at a time when competition in the job market makes retention hard enough in a "normal" year. The downstream effects of disruption to our recruiting and retention will have immediate and lasting impacts on our Talent Management reform efforts.

The Marine Corps is somewhat unique in how we operationalize our reserves, as part of our total force. Under a full year CR, insufficient funding would constrain my ability to mobilize Reserve Component forces, thereby causing unscheduled employment of Active Component forces in their place.

An extended CR would hurt the most – and be the hardest to recover from – at the individual Marine and family level. A Marine sergeant or captain who is married with kids has to decide whether to renew a lease on the house they rent, but the family isn't sure if the Marine Corps can afford to relocate them next summer, as planned. If they don't move as planned – will that impact promotion opportunities? The Marine's spouse doesn't know whether to accept a new job offer or try and hold onto the one they have today. Will there be a bonus if they reenlist? Marines in critically short specialties typically receive incentive pays – will that be cut off? Marines need predictability, some assurance that the government will take care of them and their family. Fearless warriors in combat, they take far fewer chances with their family. The viability of an all-volunteer force depends in part upon the ability of government to meet the basic requirements – to provide for the common defense. Failure to pass a budget results in a loss of trust, a belief that government let them down. We cannot go down that path.

Procurement

New Start and Production Rate Increase prohibitions under a full year CR will delay a host of programs impacting both modernization and readiness, including a delay to critical USMC warfighting capabilities such as the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (limited to 72 vs. 92); MQ-9A (limited to 0 vs. 6); KC-130J (limited to 5 vs. 6); F-35B (limited to 10 vs. 17); Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile (limited to 16 vs. 54); Joint Air Ground Missile (limited to 150 vs. 164); and Hellfire (limited to 95 vs. 120). The CR will prevent planned funding increases to multiple programs supporting critical Force Design investments, including Ground/Aviation Task Oriented Radar (G/ATOR), Organic Precision Fires (OPF), MAGTF Electronic Warfare Ground Family of Systems (MEGFoS), Networking on the Move (NOTM),

Next Generation Enterprise Network (NGEN), and Wargaming Capability. These delays will clearly have a direct negative downstream effect on our industry partners and their production facilities in Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin; as well as, an adverse indirect effect on their chains of smaller suppliers across the country. These delays directly impact the Marine Corps' ability to divest of aging, expensive to maintain legacy systems and invest in the capabilities provided by these critical programs. Additionally, it negatively impacts our munitions accounts by preventing the 46% increase in funding from FY21 to FY22 to artillery and direct support munitions, infantry weapons ammunition, and mortars, critically needed to meet training and operational total munitions requirements (TMR). Due to misalignment of funding, a year-long CR would present an effective shortfall to our Ground and Aviation Procurement Accounts of over $1.7 billion or 14% of the FY22 request.

Operation and Maintenance

The $1.1 billion shortfall in Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding, nearly 8% of the FY22 budget request, has immediate impact across all Marine Corps commands. CR impacts exacerbate and collide with annual execution timelines as we are forced to manage contracts inefficiently using incremental financial management and contracting practices to piecemeal funds due to limited resources. Contract award dates slip later into the year, reducing efficacy, delaying capability, and increasing cost. To account for the O&M shortfall, the Marine Corps would have to make significant reductions to its installation and equipment readiness and maintenance accounts, aviation flying hours, and unit training exercise plans in support of Combatant Commander requirements. The concessions made to account for a full-year CR will cause a downward trend of aviation readiness metrics, thus erasing the gains realized over the past three years as a result of billions in appropriations. A lack of regular appropriations will also impact aviation readiness by not allowing your Marine Corps to invest in long-term maintenance and repair parts, which is the number one degrader to our MV-22s, F/A-18s, and F-35s. Without timely appropriations, our primary suppliers will most certainly increase costs as we are unable to put planned contracts in place.

Research and Development

A full year CR will slow down R&D programs slated for increased investment to support critical Force Design capabilities, including Ground Based Anti-Ship Missile (GBASM), Long Range Fires (LRF), Organic Precision Fires (OPF), F-35B Continuous Capability Development and Delivery (C2D2), Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Electronic Warfare Ground Family of Systems (MEGFoS), and

Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV). These decreased investments will most negatively impact the workforce of our industry partners in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas. It would also jeopardize our R&D workforce. Due to funding shortfalls, the scientific and technological communities that conduct the research, development, test, and evaluation for our capability improvements may go unused and will look for work elsewhere. A year-long CR would present an effective shortfall to the Marine Corps of over $0.2 billion or 8% of the FY22 request.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure sustainment is a key enabler to our current and future readiness. Investment in real property and base infrastructure to support the missions and readiness of the Fleet Marine Force and other tenant commands is critical to providing the capacity and capability needed to build, train, and launch combat ready forces. A full year CR would prevent 11 new military construction projects in North Carolina, Michigan, Virginia and Guam. Only the four projects authorized and incrementally funded in FY21 will be able to utilize CR funding, thus delaying new starts in Hawaii, North Carolina, Michigan, Virginia, and Okinawa. ***Delays in the awarding of contracts for the new F-35 hangar at Cherry Point will further delay the arrival of F-35 aircraft in FY24/25***. Half of all FY22 major construction projects for the Marine Corps supports funding on Guam. Delays in Guam construction investment will delay the movement of Marines from Okinawa and slow the rebalancing effort in the Pacific. We would also not be able to start any projects needed to support new platform investment and recapitalization and replacement of inadequate facilities. If no new major construction is permitted, a full year CR would significantly impact the vast majority of the FY2022 Marine Corps military construction.

Conclusion

As the Marine Corps invests in new warfighting capabilities in support of Force Design efforts and in support of Combatant Commander requirements, continued budget uncertainty negatively impacts my ability to modernize and build a force that is manned, trained and equipped for either the current of the future operating environment. An extended CR would effectively erase the gains in readiness made over the previous three years. A CR will prevent the Marine Corps from implementing Commandant Commander plans to counter the pacing threat, and could further create uncertainty with critical partners and allies such as Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Australia, and South Korea. As we seek to counter coercive acts of maritime gray zone operations across the Indo-Pacific, a CR prevents us from doing so. Future budget certainty – adequate, stable and predictable funding – is the single most effective way to maintain critical strategic momentum as we compete with the pacing threat and enables investment in the force design and modernization required to prevent or prevail in future conflicts.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL GILDAY

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, sir.

Admiral Gilday, you are up next, please.

Admiral GILDAY. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and other distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify with my fellow service chiefs this morning. And Mr. McCord, as well.

The peace dividend has long passed. We are now in a relentless race with a peer competitor. Every day matters in this critical decade. In the face of a rising China, Navy's top line—in other words, our buying power—has been relatively flat for more than a decade. A year-long CR will cost us time that can't be recovered, and have irreversible impact to some of our most important programs. This is exacerbated during a time when we are still fighting the pandemic, as well as—as Ranking Member Calvert mentioned—a 7 percent inflation rate on a budget 60 percent of which already rises above the rate of inflation.

I would like to briefly summarize what I see as the major impacts in three areas.

The first is strategically. The impacts of a year-long CR will further erode our ability to credibly deter our adversary. A year-long CR will yield a smaller, less ready, less capable, and less lethal United States Navy. It will have significant impacts to readiness, modernization, and shipbuilding. The work that we are pursuing, the once-in-a-century work on our public shipyards will come to a stop. The work that we are doing to invest in a new SSBN, the most survivable leg of our strategic triad, will be put at risk. The submarines and the water conducting that mission——

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Sir, you have lost your audio, if you can hear me.

Admiral GILDAY. Can you hear me now?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I can hear you now. Thank you.

Admiral GILDAY. Yes, I mentioned the impacts on the Columbia program, our SSBN, the most survivable leg of the triad, and the fact that that program has no margin, as it replaces submarines that have been in the water for four decades.

And lastly, importantly, game-changing investments that we are making in hypersonics and laser weapons will also be impacted.

The second area the commandant covered, and I will briefly cover it as well, and that is people. We will reduce the sections by almost 75 percent, and we will delay or cancel change-of-station moves by more than 50 percent. As the commandant mentioned, families have already been planning for that. Spouses have already been accepting jobs, or planning to relocate.

We will withhold reenlistment bonuses and special incentive bonuses that keep our best sailors and their families in the United States Navy.

And importantly, we will exacerbate a say-do gap that risks breaking trust, that further risks breaking trust with sailors and their families.

And the last area that I think it is important to highlight, at least for the Navy, is the impact on the defense industrial base.

The impact of COVID and inflation, as I have already mentioned, will be magnified by a year-long CR. It will hurt shipbuilders. It will hurt aircraft manufacturers and small, innovative, high-tech companies in all of your districts that have made significant investments on their own in both infrastructure and their workforce to make us a stronger, more capable military.

As others have stated, we are well accustomed to adjusting to short-term CRs, as much as they are inefficient and costly. But we have become good at it. A year-long CR is completely new territory that we have not dealt with before that will have significant impacts across our military.

Our Navy is grateful for the subcommittee's support, and I look forward to fielding your questions. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

STATEMENT OF

ADMIRAL MICHAEL M. GILDAY,
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

ON THE IMPACT OF CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES NAVY

BEFORE THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

JANUARY 12, 2022

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

Chairwoman McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the impact Continuing Resolutions (CRs) have on the United States Navy.

This is a critical time for our country. The People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia are using all elements of their national power to undermine U.S. interests in the global commons, especially at sea. Both nations routinely subvert the rules-based international order, intimidate their neighbors, and attempt to enforce unlawful claims with the threat of force. They are rapidly mobilizing their militaries, extending their ability to project power across the globe, and embracing the use of "gray zone" activities to turn incremental gains into long-term strategic advantages. And China, in particular, is building all-domain capabilities that rival our own.

Over the past two decades, the PRC has built a comprehensive Anti-Access/Area-Denial system of sophisticated sensors and long-range precision weapons. Backed by a robust industrial base and the largest shipbuilding infrastructure in the world, they have also extensively modernized their navy and tripled its size. In October of last year, China tested a nuclear-capable hypersonic vehicle that partially circumnavigated the globe. They are also building next-generation strategic missile submarines and erecting hundreds of new missile silos. Without a doubt, their aggressive military modernization effort is aimed at displacing the U.S. in the First Island Chain and achieving sea control in the Western Pacific.

Back here, there is little evidence that we have grasped the reality that our security and way of life are being threatened, as we come before you four months into another CR to plead for steady, predictable funding. The peace dividend has long passed. It is time to move decisively and arrest the erosion of our military advantage. The U.S. Navy – in concert with the Joint Force and our interagency partners – must be able to protect the homeland, defend American interests, and preserve the rules-based order. Our nation cannot afford the Navy to pull back at a time of rising tensions and growing challenges to freedom of the seas, nor can it afford the Navy to lose combat credibility against the PRC – our long-term, primary challenger. Both problems are equally pressing.

Our ability to operate forward and be relevant, now and in the future, requires adequate, stable, and predictable funding. Without it, we lose our momentum in delivering the most ready, most lethal, and most capable fleet we can for the American people. The Navy's margins are already razor thin. As I emphasized during my testimony last spring, our topline has been flat relative to inflation for over a decade. We currently face the simultaneous challenges of recapitalizing our strategic nuclear deterrent, making a once-in-a-century investment in our public shipyards, and delivering the platforms, weapons, and systems that we need to remain combat credible.

Meanwhile, the price of Fleet readiness is going up. Manpower, operations, and maintenance costs – which make up almost 60 percent of our budget – continue to grow above the rate of inflation. Making matters worse, inflation rose and remains at 6-8 percent, well above the historical average. This will likely exacerbate all of our readiness costs. Under the current CR, the Navy has to operate, maintain, and modernize the Fleet at last year's enacted funding level, which falls short of historical inflation and immensely short of current inflation, and is significantly less than the funding level Congress is contemplating for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY-22).

Every day and every dollar matters. CRs remove predictable funding levels that allow us to spend taxpayer dollars as efficiently as possible and deprive us of executing program line-items and new starts. They disrupt operational readiness, slow development of critical new capabilities, impede acquisition schedules, delay construction projects, and create business process inefficiencies up and down the Navy.

We are doing what we can to mitigate the impacts of the current CR. Eleven years of consecutive CRs – apart from FY-19 – have taught us to anticipate them. Rather than execute appropriated funds as efficiently as would be possible with predictable funding, we plan towards inefficiency and postpone new starts until later in the fiscal year. These measures force us to expend precious time and manpower on managing cash flow, determining which programs to prioritize and which to let languish, and segmenting contract actions into multiple transactions that could otherwise be done once. These incremental approaches create a cascading effect. We cannot receive the best contract prices, we often pay multiple times for contract fees, and then lose time and skilled labor for redundant tasks. The consequences of these added burdens are real and can never be recovered.

Impacts from a CR become more severe if they are extended over a full year. Such an extension would be an unprecedented measure with dire consequences. A full-year CR changes the impact from delaying programs to completely eliminating them in FY-22. For the Department of the Navy, under a full-year CR, the net shortfall between the CR funded level and the FY-22 request is $4.4 billion. However, when adjusted for CR funding restrictions on new starts, production rate increases, and appropriation rate increases, a full-year CR would misalign $14.0 billion in resources. 24 new starts and 15 production rate increases to critical programs would go unexecuted. End strength would be reduced, maintenance and training events cancelled, and fleet and family services curtailed. The impacts would ripple down to the industrial base, with programs falling below minimum sustaining rates, resulting in possible shutdowns or furloughs of smaller suppliers and loss of experienced workers.

As our competitors aggressively modernize their forces, a full-year CR cedes ground we cannot afford to yield. CRs further erode our deterrence posture against China.

Ultimately, my request is simple: prevent a full-year CR and enact FY-22 appropriations. The competition is on, and it is heating up. If the CR continues past February, or worse, remains in effect through the end of the fiscal year, we inject unnecessary risk to our national security and concede advantages to our adversaries; we make our sailors' mission even more difficult; we signal doubt to allies and partners; and we waste American taxpayer dollars. All of which can be prevented.

The Navy is making hard choices to arrest the erosion of deterrence and improve our competitive advantage. These choices were reflected in the President's FY-22 Budget Request (PB-22). Our budget submission balances investments across readiness, capabilities modernization, and capacity at an affordable rate. It supports the recapitalization of our nation's most survivable leg of the nuclear triad, the *Columbia*-class submarine. It prioritizes readiness through sustained investment and performance improvement. It accelerates next-generation platforms and systems that close critical Joint capability gaps. And it funds key resources for the most vital source of America's naval power: our Sailors, Civilians, and their families.

The current FY-22 CR is already negatively affecting our priorities, and its impacts will only grow in severity if the CR is extended. Below are some key concerns.

***Columbia*-class Submarine and Strategic Nuclear Deterrence.** Since the shipbuilding account is uniquely line-item appropriated, the CR provides insufficient funding for SSBN 826, our first *Columbia*-class ballistic missile submarine and number one modernization priority. Advanced procurement funding for the follow-on submarines (SSBN 827-830) are also affected. If the CR is extended over the full year, we expect construction delays to the *Columbia*-class program and costs to grow, increasing delivery risk to this critical system and threatening our ability to meet U.S. Strategic Command requirements. This is a program with zero margin for delays.

Also significant to strategic nuclear deterrence, the CR delays the TRIDENT II D5 Life Extension 2 (D5LE2). This program extends the service life of the strategic weapons system to align with the service life of *Columbia*-class SSBNs, which provides America a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.

Readiness. The current CR is creating a shortfall of more than $1 billion in Navy Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding. To mitigate these effects on the fleet, we are reducing levels of effort for critical programs, including ship operations and maintenance, flight operations, fleet air training, base support, and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) support. We've delayed major O&M contracts until later in the year with the expectation that a full appropriation can be enacted by then. However, this results in delayed training and sustainment requirements for the Fleet, as well as disrupts schedules for our organic industrial base.

A full-year CR would create an O&M shortfall exceeding $2 billion, imperiling the readiness of the United States Navy. Specifically, this includes:

- Ship operation reductions puts training certification for one Carrier Strike Group and two Expeditionary Strike Group work ups at high risk, impacting FY-23 deployments.
- Ship Maintenance impacts would ripple through the public ship yards and the private industrial base for future fiscal years. Five attack-submarines (SSN) and two aircraft carriers (CVN) maintenance availabilities would be cancelled or delayed, adversely impacting the industrial base, increasing idle time, and delaying the return of these assets to operational status.
- Shutdown of non-deployed carrier air wings, expeditionary squadrons, Fleet Replacement Squadrons, and Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) squadrons.
- Cancelled procurement of aircraft repair parts and ship, submarine, and aircraft carrier spare parts.
- Cancelled support for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Cyber, and Intelligence (C5I).
- Cancelled training range support.
- Because utilities and transportation costs must be funded, other shore efforts will be reduced or cancelled. These include air and port operations, fleet and family services, facilities management, and environmental compliance.

For military construction, under a year-long CR, six Navy projects would be impacted due to new start restrictions including a dry-dock saltwater system for CVN 78 at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (VA), a submarine pier in Norfolk (VA), X-Ray wharf berth in Guam, a directed energy weapons test facility in Ventura (CA), a Joint Reserve Intelligence Center in Minneapolis (MN), and a ship handling and combat training facility in Yokosuka, Japan.

Modernization and Capabilities. New Start procurement and R&D programs cannot be executed under the current CR, costing us valuable time every day. If the CR is extended over the full year, R&D new starts would be cancelled. These include:

- Advanced Nuclear Power Systems: Next Generation Fast Attack Nuclear Propulsion Development.
- Digital Warfare: Common Weapon Datalink Radio.
- Small/Medium Unmanned Undersea Vehicles.
- Precision Strike Weapons Development: Advanced Aerial Refueling Store and Sea Launched Cruise Missile Nuclear.
- Offensive Anti-Surface Warfare (OASuW) Weapons Development: Increment II and Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM).
- Warfare Support System: Expeditionary Small Unmanned Aircraft System Development.
- Ship Self Defense: Long Endurance Electronic Decoy (LEED).
- Intelligence Mission Data: Acquisition Intelligence Requirements.

Shortfalls in procurement, R&D funding, and restrictions on production rate increases under a full-year CR would also delay critical capabilities to the fleet and result in increased costs per program. Weapons procurement production rate increases that would be restricted include Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile-Extended Range (AARGM-ER), Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile (ESSM), Naval Strike Missile (NSM), Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM), and Hellfire.

Based on the threat we are facing, we need to maintain combat credibility in contested seas. For many of our major development programs, the schedule pressure to meet an Initial Operational Capability in a timeframe driven by the threat would be significantly challenged, eroding our military advantage and combat credibility. Disruption to these tightly coupled development and testing programs would most likely be unrecoverable within the required timeframe.

One of the programs driving the increase in FY22 from FY21 is the Conventional Prompt Strike (CPS) program. The CPS missile, being developed and produced jointly with the U.S. Army, will provide Navy ships including *Zumwalt*-class destroyers and Block V *Virginia*-class submarines with a hypersonic weapon capability that is critical in our ability as a nation to deter China from conflict in the Western Pacific. Funding this program increase under a full-year CR would require diverting funding from other important R&D programs.

Capacity. The risk in capacity is exacerbated to unacceptable levels under a full-year CR. Because shipbuilding funding cannot be shifted to higher priority programs, the CR impacts are widespread, affecting *Ford*-class aircraft carriers, aircraft carrier refueling overhauls, *Constellation*-class guided missile frigates, *John Lewis*-class T-AO fleet oilers, and used sealift auxiliary vessels. We need these ships in the fleet as soon as possible. A full-year CR would drive significant schedule delays and increase the cost of all of these programs.

The impact to the industrial base also needs to be considered. Private industry is already challenged in recruiting, training, and retaining a skilled labor force. The supply chain is already stressed from COVID-19. A full-year CR generates enormous disruption to construction, production, maintenance, and repair schedules, increasing the risk of loss of skilled artisans and highly specialized workers. This loss of our skilled workforce will drive up costs, increase production time, and reduce quality of the end products beyond FY-22. Industry will lose confidence in government partnerships and may begin to factor CR uncertainty into the prices they charge the government.

In addition, delayed production ramps will leave industry capacity unused at a time when we are trying to maintain the fleet we have and build affordable capacity. Industry needs a clear and consistent commitment from the United States Government in order to make the necessary long-term investments in capital expenditures and workforce growth. A full-year CR would quash these capacity expansion efforts, perhaps beyond recovery.

Sailors. The fiscal uncertainty created by CRs takes a real toll on those we need the most to keep pace with rising adversaries: our Sailors, civilians, and their families. Uncertain funding adds unnecessary anxiety that distracts Sailors from executing their missions far from home. CRs limit military personnel funding to last year's levels, which means funding the 2.7 percent pay raise and increased housing and subsistence allowances authorized in the FY-22 National Defense Authorization Act requires offsetting reductions in other military personnel programs. For the Navy, this results in slower accessions, deferred Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves, and reduction of family and base support services. These impacts have ripple down effects that are deeply felt, but difficult to measure. Military families are accustomed to changing jobs, homes, and schools, which are in themselves enormous challenges. But deferring PCS moves and reducing services to families adds even more strain to an already stressful time for so many of our Sailors.

Additionally, if the CR is extended for a full year, then end strength will have to be reduced – in the active account by 23,000 of the 31,500 planned accessions beginning in January. A full-year CR would mean immediately stopping initial Special and Incentive Pays and Selected Re-enlistment Bonus contracts. At a time when we are in competition for talent, recruitment and retention may decline as people pursue other opportunities or choose careers with more stability. The disruptions to training events and exercises will significantly impact military and civilian recruitment, retention, and professional development. We are breaking faith with our Sailors. Pilots who don't fly, mariners that don't sail, maintainers that don't maintain, will not stay with us. The combined impact of a year-long CR on our world-class workforce would be yet another erosion of our military advantage over China.

Our Navy remains the finest maritime fighting force in the world and our Sailors – active and reserve, uniformed and civilian – are committed to keeping it that way. But we need your help. I urge you and your colleagues to pass a FY-22 appropriation to renew our enduring advantages at sea so that we can meet today's challenges from a position of strength.

The Navy is operating in a period of rapid transformation in the strategic environment. Our competitors are increasing their naval power every day, and their malign behavior and growing presence across the world places an enormous demand on our forces. Sustaining our readiness has never been more vital to our nation's future. Meanwhile, our force design – necessary to retain combat credibility against evolving threats – requires a relentless focus on modernization to keep our platforms relevant.

Extending the current CR will impair our ability to protect America and its interests, both today and in the future. We cannot afford to forfeit our edge – too much is at stake.

On behalf of more than 600,000 active and reserve Sailors and Navy Civilians, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today. I am grateful to this committee, and to all your colleagues in Congress, for your commitment to the Navy.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF GENERAL RAYMOND

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you very much for your testimony.

General Raymond, please.

General RAYMOND. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify virtually with Mr. McCord and my fellow service chiefs.

I also want to thank this committee for your continued leadership and support of the guardians who I am privileged to serve alongside with.

The primary focus of the Space Force is to deliver capabilities that give our forces the freedom to maneuver in the time, place, and domain of our choosing. That includes land, sea, air, cyber, and space. We were working to do this at speed, focusing on our core missions, and working closely with this committee as we stand up this force.

As you know, space is a contested domain. Threats are increasing, and adversaries are challenging our dominance. China recently launched a hypersonic glide vehicle and a fractional—in a fractional orbit, likely capable of delivering weapons. If we can't track it, we can't defeat it. Russia's recent anti-satellite test, which shattered a defunct Russian satellite into thousands of pieces of debris, also threatened the freedom of our forces to operate in the time and place of our choosing.

Our adversaries are accelerating. This is not the time to be slowing the development and fielding of modernized capabilities for our forces. Please allow me to detail how a long-term CR will hurt our ability to address these and other threats.

A year-long, CR would reduce the Space Force's top line budget by $2 billion, slowing modernization, decreasing readiness, and impacting our ability to compete and deter with China and Russia.

It would decrease research and development for resilient missile warning and missile tracking. It would—and for space domain awareness, protected satellite communications, and precision navigation and timing, all of which are critical capabilities that the Joint Force needs to operate effectively.

It would slow our ability to manage risk and inform future force designs, delaying our ability to modernize to resilient and more mission-capable architectures in the face of growing threats.

It would cut the procurement of two of five planned national security space launch missions, delaying our ability to place previously acquired capability on orbit, and putting at risk the cost savings of the National Space Launch Program.

It would cut—excuse me—it would cut 800 million intended for development of classified operational systems designed to deter China and Russia and respond if deterrence fails. And I can fully describe these capabilities in a closed session.

And lastly, most important, it would break trust with our guardians and their families. Because we were established as a lean, mission-focused force, we continue to rely on the Air Force's airmen and family programs to support our guardians. General Brown will describe negative impacts to pay, recruiting, retention, airman pro-

grams, all of which would have long-term, lasting effects on our guardians, as—and their families, as well.

A continuing resolution would undoubtedly have negative impacts across the entirety of the Joint Force, but the effects of the Space Force are particularly acute as we stand up. It would seriously compromise our ability to enhance unity of effort and efficiency, generate mission-ready forces, and deliver the new capabilities that Joint Force needs to deter and prevail.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

[The information follows:]

United States Space Force

Presentation

Before the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense

Continuing Resolution Impacts Hearing

Witness Statement of

General John W. "Jay" Raymond
Chief of Space Operations

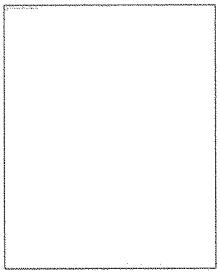
January 12, 2022

Not for publication until released by the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense

BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

John W. "Jay" Raymond



Gen. John W. "Jay" Raymond is the Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Space Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of all organic and assigned space forces serving in the United States and overseas. Gen. Raymond was commissioned through the ROTC program at Clemson University in 1984. He has commanded at squadron, group, wing, numbered air force, Major Command and Combatant Command levels. Notable staff assignments include serving in the Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense; the Director of Plans, Programs and Analyses at Air Force Space Command; the Director of Plans and Policy (J5), U.S. Strategic Command; and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force. Gen. Raymond deployed to Southwest Asia as Director of Space Forces in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Prior to leading establishment of the U.S. Space Force and serving as the first Chief of Space Operations, Gen. Raymond led the re-establishment of U.S. Space Command as the eleventh U.S. combatant command.

EDUCATION

1984 Bachelor of Science, Administrative Management, Clemson University, Clemson, S.C.
1990 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
1990 Master of Science, Administrative Management, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant
1997 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2003 Master of Arts, National Security and Strategic Studies, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
2007 Joint Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va.
2011 Combined Force Air Component Commander Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2012 Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. 1985–1989, Minuteman Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Crew Commander; Alternate Command Post; Flight Commander and Instructor Crew Commander; and Missile Procedures Trainer Operator, 321st Strategic Missile Wing, Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D.
2. 1989–1993, Operations Center Officer Controller, 1st Strategic Aerospace Division, and Executive Officer, 30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
3. 1993–1996, Chief, Commercial Space Lift Operations, Assistant Chief, Current Operations Branch, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
4. 1996–1996, Deputy Director, Commander in Chief's Action Group, Headquarters AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo.
5. 1996–1997, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
6. 1997–1998, Space and Missile Force Programmer, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
7. 1998–2000, Chief, Expeditionary Aerospace Force Space and Program Integration, Expeditionary Aerospace Force Implementation Division, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
8. 2000–2001, Commander, 5th Space Surveillance Squadron, RAF Feltwell, United Kingdom
9. 2001–2002, Deputy Commander, 21st Operations Group, Peterson AFB, Colo.

10. 2002–2003, Student, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
11. 2003–2005, Transformation Strategist, Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
12. 2005–2007, Commander, 30th Operations Group, Vandenberg AFB, Calif. (September 2006– January 2007, Director of Space Forces, Combined Air Operations Center, Southwest Asia)
13. 2007–2009, Commander, 21st Space Wing, Peterson AFB, Colo.
14. 2009–2010, Director of Plans, Programs and Analyses, Headquarters AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo.
15. 2010–2012, Vice Commander, Fifth Air Force, and Deputy Commander, 13th Air Force, Yokota Air Base, Japan
16. 2012–2014, Director of Plans and Policy (J5), U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.
17. 2014–2015, Commander, Fourteenth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), AFSPC, and Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Space, U.S. Strategic Command, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
18. 2015–2016, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
19. 2016–2019, Commander, AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo.
20. 2017–2019, Commander, Joint Force Space Component Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
21. 2019–2020, Commander, U.S. Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
22. 2019–present, Chief of Space Operations, U.S. Space Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

1. 2003–2005, Transformation Strategist, Office of Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Arlington, Va., as a colonel
2. 2012–2014, Director of Plans and Policy (J5), U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., as a major general
3. 2017–2019, Commander, Joint Force Space Component Command, Peterson AFB, Colo., as a general
4. 2019–2020, Commander, U.S. Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo., as a general

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Distinguished Service Medal
Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters
Air Force Commendation Medal
French Order of Merit

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

2007 General Jerome F. O'Malley Distinguished Space Leadership Award, Air Force Association
2015 Thomas D. White Space Award, Air Force Association
2016 Peter B. Teets Government Award, National Defense Industrial Association
2017 James V. Hartinger Award, National Defense Industrial Association

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Lieutenant July 20, 1984
First Lieutenant July 20, 1986
Captain July 20, 1988
Major July 1, 1996
Lieutenant Colonel July 1, 1999
Colonel July 1, 2004
Brigadier General Aug. 1, 2009
Major General May 4, 2012
Lieutenant General Jan. 31, 2014
General Oct. 25, 2016

In the two short years since we established the Space Force as an independent service, our Nation's Guardians have been hard at work to deliver new warfighting capabilities that will deter adversaries, defend our interests, and ensure advantage for the joint force and our allies in conflict. Recent events such as the Russian anti-satellite weapon test, which generated thousands of pieces of long-lasting debris, and China's demonstration of a hypersonic glide vehicle on a fractional orbital trajectory highlight the urgency and criticality of our task. Competitors know well that our nation depends on space to enhance all instruments of power in peace or war. They are rapidly building space capabilities for their own advantage, while expanding their ability to attack our space-based capabilities that underpin deterrence and act as a force multiplier for joint and coalition warfighters.

To ensure our advantage in space now and in the future, we are delivering new, resilient force designs that bolster deterrence and provide the joint force a decisive advantage should deterrence fail. The Space Force is uniquely dependent on increasing appropriations because we must rapidly field new warfighting capabilities and functions that did not exist when space was treated as a benign domain. We are in a competition with China and Russia, where the stakes are access to, freedom of action in, and stability and security of a domain that every American depends on daily and every warfighter relies on to successfully accomplish their mission; we cannot afford risks imposed by a yearlong continuing resolution (CR). For the Space Force, those risks fall into three categories: establishment of organize, train, and equip functions; mission readiness; and modernizing for resilience.

Unique Impact to Establishment of Vital Organize, Train, and Equip Functions

Enhancing unity of effort, reducing bureaucracy and redundancy, and fielding new capabilities were central to the rationale for creating the Space Force. A yearlong CR would

delay our ability to unify and consolidate space missions from other Services by delaying the transfer of the Army's 53rd Signals Battalion and the Navy's Narrowband Satellite Operations Center into the Space Force, negatively impacting readiness gains that will be achieved by consolidation.

As a new service, the Space Force would be particularly impacted by limits on new starts imposed by a yearlong CR. Such action would eliminate $37M in Research, Development, Test, and Engineering (RDT&E) funding needed to design resilient architectures in multiple mission areas, including space data transport; missile warning and tracking; communications; and tactical ISR. It would eliminate $23M for the Commercial Satellite Communications (SATCOM) Office that allows the Space Force to update and consolidate Department of Defense acquisition of commercial SATCOM services and leverage innovative services available from that sector. Finally, it would delay the transfer of resources needed for space intelligence activity to support both acquisition and operations.

Mission Readiness Impacts

The Space Force relies on the Air Force for many programs to take care of Guardians and their families, in order to minimize duplication and maximize efficient use of resources. A yearlong CR would withhold funding for Department of the Air Force programs, including those that address violence and self-harm prevention, as well as programs that provide diversity training and scholarships. A yearlong CR would reduce our ability to access the talent and impact programs designed to enhance resilience of Guardians, as well as their families.

A yearlong CR would have a significant negative impact on our ability to generate ready Guardians. We would be forced to curtail or delay planned large-scale training exercises, with significant negative effects on mission readiness against our greatest threats. A yearlong CR

would slow the establishment of new capabilities such as the National Space Test and Training Complex, which will support operational test, tactics development, and tactics validation against threat-representative aggressors. We would also delay or cancel planned throughput enhancements at advanced training and contractor-provided training, and delay development of new Space Fundamentals and Guardian Orientation course curricula, negatively affecting the integration of inter-service transfers and accessions.

While FY21 appropriations levels met 85% of weapons systems sustainment requirements, introduction of new systems means that a yearlong CR would reduce our FY22 weapons systems sustainment to just 75% of requirements. This would force inefficient incremental funding for mission-critical requirements and defer obsolescence solutions, software maintenance, and cybersecurity updates.

Finally, a yearlong CR would prohibit the transfer of facility sustainment, restoration, and maintenance funds for 14 Space Force installations from the Air Force, delaying normalization of oversight and accountability for key space operations facilities to the Space Force.

Modernizing for Resilience

Under a yearlong CR, the Space Force would see impacts across our efforts to modernize our capabilities. The largest impact in the procurement account would be in the National Security Space Launch program, which ensures access to space, promotes competition, and eliminates reliance on Russian-made rocket engines. Under the CR, we would be limited to the same number of launch services from FY21—three—when we are planning to procure five. A yearlong CR would delay these launches by one year, slowing our ability to place previously acquired systems on orbit as well as deferring our ability to realize the benefit and cost-savings of NSSL Phase 2 launch services agreements.

As our adversaries are accelerating, a shortfall of $700M to planned investment in RDT&E would slow numerous programs designed to field more resilient and defensible architectures; protect the joint force from adversary use of space capabilities in conflict; and build a lean, agile, and combat-effective digital service. Specifically, a yearlong CR would affect resilient missile warning and missile tracking; space domain awareness to enable effective protect-and-defend architecture; protected satellite communications; and precision, navigation, and timing systems that meet Joint warfighter needs in contested environments.

In the missile warning and missile tracking mission areas, a yearlong CR would result in a shortfall of $130M in RDT&E for the Next Generation OPIR program. This would delay replacement of the legacy systems for missile warning that are increasingly challenged to detect modern missile and hypersonic threats.

Additionally, in our space domain awareness portfolio, a yearlong CR would significantly slow development of the Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability that is vital to tracking potential space-based threats and protecting our high-value assets on orbit.

Our satellite communications modernization efforts would also slow. A yearlong CR would result in a 20% shortfall for Protected Tactical SATCOM and new-start restrictions on the Protected Tactical Enterprise System, delaying our ability to provide the warfighter secure wideband communications solutions in contested environments by at least a year. In the narrowband mission area, a yearlong CR would prohibit the transfer of the Multi User Objective System from the Navy to the Space Force and delay our efforts to begin a service life extension program of two additional satellites. In addition to deferring enhancements for tactical SATCOM systems, a yearlong CR would impact RDT&E enhancements that will delay Evolved Strategic

SATCOM and follow-on narrowband strategic communications solutions that ensure advantage into the next decade.

In the position, navigation, and timing mission area, impacts occur across the entire GPS enterprise. A yearlong CR would drive delays to fielding GPS III and GPS IIIF satellites; delivering the Next Generation Operational Control System for enhanced command and control; and integrating new Military GPS User Equipment. The result would be a reduction in our overall resilience, leaving warfighters more vulnerable to GPS-degraded environments.

In addition to impacts outlined above, a yearlong CR would reduce over $800M in RDT&E funds for classified operational systems, details of which could be discussed in a separate forum.

Conclusion

An extended continuing resolution would undoubtedly have negative impacts across the entirety of the joint force, but the effects on the Space Force are particularly acute. We have been charged to not only establish a new service, but to ensure our Nation has enduring advantage and security in a new warfighting domain. A yearlong continuing resolution would seriously compromise the Space Force's ability to enhance unity of effort and efficiency; generate mission ready forces; and deliver the resilient architectures we need in the space domain.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF GENERAL BROWN

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you very much. We will now turn to General Brown.

General Brown, please.

General BROWN. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify with Mr. McCord and my fellow service chiefs, and to testify on behalf of the 689,000 total force airmen of your United States Air Force.

As the Nation's 22nd Air Force chief of staff, I am humbled to uphold my responsibility to ensure our airmen and our Air Force remain the greatest in the world, both today and tomorrow.

As I assumed my position, I wrote "Accelerate Change or Lose." Over the last 17 months I have made collaboration a priority to enable acceleration. Back since August 2020, I have engaged with Congress, Members and staffers, nearly 200 times, because I believe we must work together on our Air Force's future and our nation's security.

I am pleased that the fiscal year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act made significant progress. But, as you understand, the goals of this important policy would be unrealized absent the dedicated service of this committee and their counterparts to pass an appropriation bill.

Unfortunately, a year-long continuing resolution would stall progress towards today's readiness and tomorrow's modernization. The bottom line: it would have devastating impacts on the Air Force's ability to retain quality airmen, maintain our readiness, and modernize for tomorrow.

Specifically, we would lose $3.5 billion in purchasing power if held to fiscal year 2021 budget levels. As much as this affects the Air Force fiscally, the impact it has on our way to change is more shattering. Time is irrecoverable, and when you are working to keep pace against well-resourced and focused competitors, time matters.

A year-long continuing resolution would hinder our airmen's readiness, resilience, and retention. If held to fiscal year 2021 funding, the Air Force's military personnel account could lose up to $1 billion.

Critical annual and professional military training will be curtailed or cancelled.

Vital funding for airmen and guardian programs, programs addressing sexual assault and harassment, suicide prevention, diversity inclusion could also be eliminated at a time when they are most needed.

Additionally, you could eliminate central incentive and retention bonuses, eroding airmen's trust across current and future eligible year groups.

The year-long CR could force reductions in our flying program; weapon system sustainment; and facility sustainment, restoration, and modernization accounts.

It can also slow down and/or freeze hiring of civilians, all impacting Air Force capability, capacity, and readiness.

A year-long CR could impact billions of dollars in worldwide military construction, 78 new start programs for active guard and reserve components for programs such as the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, B–21, KC–46, F–35, F–16, and the C–130.

Further, it will affect vital mission growth at the Air Force bases in four states and international guard locations across nine states.

Four areas of modernization I want to highlight are the nuclear enterprise, advanced weapons, aerodynamics platforms enterprise, information technology and structure. A year-long CR could irreversibly delay Ground Based Strategic Deterrent initial operating capability past 2029; long-range standoff weapon by over a year; and the conventional initial operational capability and nuclear certification of the B–21 up to a year.

Additionally, the advancement of our two conventional hypersonic weapons could be prevented.

I would like to point out that our pacing challenges have either modernized our nuclear enterprise and/or our fielding hypersonic systems. Meanwhile, we are still in the beginning phases of both. Funding for next generation air dominance, our sixth generation aircraft system enabling future air superiority, could be reduced.

Finally, vital funding to enterprise information technology modernization could be eliminated, increasing network vulnerability and impacting our contribution to joint all-domain command and control infrastructure.

Although a year-long CR would decrease our funding, the greater loss would be time, time that we could have spent exploring today's readiness and tomorrow's modernization. Meanwhile, our competitors' rate of change is enabling them to approach parity with many of our warfighting capabilities and concepts.

A year-long CR would further erode our advantage, and impede the Air Force's acceleration towards the force of tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The information follows:]

Department of the Air Force

Presentation

Before the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense

Continuing Resolution Impacts Hearing

Witness Statement of

General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.
Chief of Staff of the Air Force

January 12, 2022

Not for publication until released by the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense

BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

GENERAL CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.



Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr. is the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 689,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.

Gen. Brown was commissioned in 1984 as a distinguished graduate of the ROTC program at Texas Tech University. He has served in a variety of positions at the squadron and wing levels, including an assignment to the U.S. Air Force Weapons School as an F-16 Fighting Falcon Instructor. His notable staff tours include Aide-de-Camp to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; Director, Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff Executive Action Group; and Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command. He also served as a National Defense Fellow at the Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, Virginia.

Gen. Brown has commanded a fighter squadron, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, two fighter wings and U.S. Air Forces Central Command. Prior to serving as the Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Brown was the commander of Pacific Air Forces, Air Component Commander for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

Gen. Brown is a command pilot with more than 2,900 flying hours, including 130 combat hours.

EDUCATION

1984 Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, Texas Tech University, Lubbock
1991 U.S. Air Force Fighter Weapons School, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.
1992 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
1994 Master of Aeronautical Science, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Fla.
1997 Distinguished graduate, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2000 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2004 National Defense Fellow, Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, Va.
2008 Air Force Senior Leadership Course, Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, N.C.
2012 Joint Force Air Component Commander Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2014 Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2015 Pinnacle Course, National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
2017 Leadership at the Peak, Center for Creative Leadership, Colorado Springs, Colo.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. May 1985 - April 1986, Student, undergraduate Pilot training, 82nd Student Squadron, Williams Air Force Base, Ariz.
2. May 1986 - July 1986, Student, lead-in fighter training, 434th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Holloman AFB, N.M.
3. August 1986 - March 1987, Student, F-16 training, 62nd Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, MacDill AFB, Fla.
4. April 1987 - October 1988, F-16 Pilot, 35th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea

5. November 1988 - April 1991, F-16 Instructor Pilot, wing electronic combat officer, and wing standardization and evaluation flight examiner, 307th and 308th Tactical Fighter Squadrons, Homestead AFB, Fla.
6. April 1991 - August 1991, Student, U.S. Air Force Fighter Weapons Instructor Course, Nellis AFB, Nev.
7. August 1991 - August 1992, F-16 Squadron Weapons Officer and Flight Commander, 307th Fighter Squadron, Homestead AFB, Fla.
8. September 1992 - October 1994, Weapons School Instructor, and standardization and evaluation flight examiner, F-16 Division, U.S. Air Force Weapons School, Nellis AFB, Nev.
9. October 1994 - July 1996, Aide-de-Camp to the Chief of Staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Arlington, Va.
10. August 1996 - June 1997, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
11. June 1997 - September 1997, Student, Armed Forces Staff College, National Defense University, Norfolk, Va.
12. September 1997 - November 1999, Air Operations Officer, Current Operations Division, Operations Directorate, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla.
13. November 1999 - June 2003, F-16CJ Instructor Pilot and assistant operations officer, 79th Fighter Squadron; Weapons and Training Flight Commander, 20th Operations Support Squadron; Operations Officer, 55th Fighter Squadron; and Commander, 78th Fighter Squadron, Shaw AFB, S.C.
14. July 2003 - June 2004, National Defense Fellow, Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, Va.
15. June 2004 - June 2005, Deputy Chief, Program Integration Division, Directorate of Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Arlington, Va.
16. July 2005 - May 2007, Commandant, U.S. Air Force Weapons School, 57th Wing, Nellis AFB, Nev.
17. May 2007 - May 2008, Commander, 8th Fighter Wing, Kunsan AB, South Korea
18. June 2008 - May 2009, Director, Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff Executive Action Group, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Arlington, Va.
19. June 2009 - April 2011, Commander, 31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy
20. May 2011 - May 2013, Deputy Director, Operations Directorate, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla.
21. May 2013 - February 2014, Deputy Commander, U.S. Air Forces Central Command; Deputy, Combined Force Air Component Commander, U.S. Central Command, Southwest Asia
22. March 2014 - June 2015, Director, Operations, Strategic Deterrence, and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters U.S. Air Forces in Europe - Air Forces Africa, Ramstein AB, Germany
23. June 2015 - July 2016, Commander, U.S. Air Forces Central Command, Air Combat Command, Southwest Asia
24. July 2016 - July 2018, Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla.
25. July 2018 – July 2020, Commander, Pacific Air Forces; Air Component Commander for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; and Executive Director, Pacific Air Combat Operations Staff, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii
26. August 2020—present, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS
1. September 1997 - November 1999, Air Operations Officer, Current Operations Division, Operations Directorate, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., as a major
2. May 2011 - May 2013, Deputy Director, Operations Directorate, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., as a brigadier general
3. July 2016 - July 2018, Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., as a lieutenant general

FLIGHT INFORMATION
Rating: command pilot
Flight hours: more than 2,900, including 130 combat hours
Aircraft flown: F-16A/B/C/D and 15 additional fixed and rotary-wing aircraft

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
Defense Distinguished Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster
Distinguished Service Medal
Defense Superior Service Medal
Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters
Bronze Star Medal
Defense Meritorious Service Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Aerial Achievement Medal

Joint Service Commendation Medal
Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Combat Readiness Medal
National Defense Service Medal with bronze star
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
Korea Defense Service Medal
Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal
NATO Medal
Republic of Korea Order of National Security Merit (Samil Medal)

PUBLICATIONS
"Developing Doctrine for the Future Joint Force: Creating Synergy and Minimizing Seams," Air University Press, September 2005
"No Longer the Outlier: Updating the Air Component Structure" Air University Press, Spring 2016

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION
Second Lieutenant Feb. 28, 1985
First Lieutenant Feb. 28, 1987
Captain Feb. 28, 1989
Major Aug. 1, 1996
Lieutenant Colonel July 1, 1999
Colonel June 1, 2005
Brigadier General Nov. 20, 2009
Major General July 3, 2013
Lieutenant General June 29, 2015
General July 26, 2018

(Current as of August 2020)

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the 689,000 Total Force Airmen who comprise your United States Air Force. I am humbled to serve as our Nation's 22nd Air Force Chief of Staff and I have a responsibility to ensure our Airmen and Air Force remain the greatest in the world, both today and tomorrow. In order to maintain the Air Force's competitive edge, our pace of modernization and transition to the future cannot occur at its current pace. This is why I wrote *Accelerate Change or Lose*—because the mix of capabilities that our Air Force has now, that were good enough yesterday, and are good enough today, will fail tomorrow against our pacing challenges. Bottom line, we must change and we must do so faster. Time is of the essence.

Over the last seventeen months, I have made it a priority to collaborate with key stakeholders, to include the Congress, to help the Air Force accelerate change. The Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act made significant strides in transitioning from the force of today to the force of tomorrow. However, the benefit of this important policy will be unrealized absent the dedicated service of this committee and their counterparts to pass an appropriation bill. It is imperative that we continue these initial steps of acceleration if our United States Air Force is going to continue to fly, fight, and win… anytime, anywhere. Unfortunately, a year-long Continuing Resolution would stall much of the progress we are making towards today's readiness and tomorrow's modernization. A year-long Continuing Resolution would have devastating impacts on the Air Force in lost time, readiness, and fiscal opportunity. Specifically, the Air Force could lose up to 3.5 billion dollars in purchasing power if held to Fiscal Year 2021 budget levels. In fact, the consequences are similar to the impacts levied by the Fiscal Year 2013 sequestration, where the Air Force had to stand down squadrons

and furlough civilian employees. We should note that the Air Force took over half a decade to recover from the negative impacts to readiness caused by the 2013 sequestration. As much as a year-long Continuing Resolution affects our Air Force fiscally, the impact it has to our rate of change is more shattering. All the money in the world cannot buy more time; time is irrecoverable, and when you are working to keep pace against well-resourced and focused competitors, time matters.

Impacts to Personnel and Readiness

Airmen are our most precious resource, and a year-long Continuing Resolution would hinder our Airmen's readiness and resiliency, as well as our ability to retain top talent. If held to Fiscal Year 2021 funding, the Military Personnel account could lose up to one billion dollars. It could also affect as many as 98,000 permanent change of station moves as well as 4,200 work-years for Guard and Reserve. We should note that our Guard and Reserve Airmen have already been highly engaged through augmentation serving their states and Nation over the past two years. Moreover, it could drive a 127 million dollar shortfall in Active, Guard, and Reserve military personnel requirements that would curtail or cancel critical annual training and professional military education courses. It could also eliminate vital Operations and Maintenance funding for resiliency programs such as, 5.2 million dollars intended for sexual assault and sexual harassment programs, and 900,000 dollars to enhance suicide prevention programs. Additionally, it could cut 94 million dollars for education and training programs, 6 million dollars in diversity and inclusion training and scholarships, and 7.7 million dollars for violence and self-harm prevention programs. These are vital Department of the Air Force programs that help both Airmen and Guardians. Furthermore, it could eliminate up to 167 million dollars in vital incentive and retention bonuses, which would erode Airmen's trust across current and future eligible year groups.

For the Operations and Maintenance appropriation, being held to Fiscal Year 2021 funding levels could create up to a 2.3 billion dollar loss. This is catastrophic to readiness and day-to-day operations of our Air Force. Like the sequestration in 2013, a loss of this magnitude, six months into the fiscal year, would force the Air Force to execute a flying hour program well below what is required to maintain high levels of proficiency and exacerbate declining readiness. Shutting down flying squadrons would again be likely. Within the Weapon System Sustainment portfolio, the Air Force would have to take additional risk in maintaining platforms, adversely impacting depot manpower, capability, capacity, and our ability to respond to the readiness demands of today and tomorrow. In addition, it could force an "emergency-only" situation in Facility Sustainment, and Restoration Modernization increasing the likelihood of failure within the 1,500 Air Force facilities. Finally, it could slow-down and/or freeze the hiring of up to 2,600 civilians across the Air Force with impacts to the Air Force's increase in civilian end strength, and the standup of new organizations like the Spectrum Warfare Wing and the United States Air Force's support to United States Space Command.

Impacts to Modernization

A year-long Continuing Resolution would impede our ability to modernize. It could impact 1.1 billion dollars in worldwide military construction projects and 1.3 billion dollars for 78 new starts in fifteen states. Specifically, it could impact 56 construction projects for Active, Guard, and Reserve components that include 13 INDOPACOM projects and 18 new weapon-system bed-down locations for our Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, B-21, KC-46, F-35, F-16, and C-130. Moreover, it could reduce installation resilience and modernizations, further delaying critical facility maintenance which would lead to long-term facility impacts and failures. Further, it will affect vital mission growth at Air Force bases in California, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Arizona, and

Air National Guard bases across nine states—South Carolina, Florida, Minnesota, New York, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. Finally, it would reduce Basic Military Training capacity by delaying two new dormitory complexes, impairing our ability to produce quality Airmen and Guardians.

The year-long Continuing Resolution would slow climate resiliency efforts by cutting up to 23 million dollars from the climate assessment, energy upgrades, and electric vehicles. Specifically, it could delay the zero emission vehicle pilot program that includes charging stations and utility upgrades. Furthermore, it could cut funding from energy-as-a-service pilot program delaying better solutions for resilient energy.

Four areas of modernization I want to specifically highlight are the modernization of our nuclear enterprise, advanced weapons, air dominance platforms, and Enterprise Information Technology structure. A yearlong Continuing Resolution would irreversibly delay the modernization of the nuclear enterprise and impact our deterrence posture. It could delay operational capability of Ground Based Strategic Deterrent by reducing funding by 1.1 billion dollars and delays initial operating capability past 2029. It could delay initial operating capability of the Long-Range Standoff Weapon by over a year. It could delay both conventional initial operating capability and nuclear certification of the B-21 Raider bomber by up to one year. These are unacceptable delays to fundamental nuclear capabilities. It could also prevent the procurement of conventional advanced weapons such as twelve Air-launched Rapid Response Weapons and the development of Hypersonic Attack Cruise Missiles. I would like to point out that our pacing challenges have either modernized their nuclear enterprise and/or are fielding hypersonic systems; we are still in the beginning phases of both. Moreover, it could limit the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile – Extend Range program by reducing the funding by 211 million dollars and

procurement by 125 missiles. It could also reduce Next Generation Air Dominance, our sixth-generation tactical aircraft system, funding by as much as 600 million dollars. This would delay our ability to achieve air superiority in the future. Finally, the year-long Continuing Resolution could eliminate 383 million dollars in needed enterprise information technology structure modernization and capability improvements, which would handicap new initiatives to support cyber and information technology modernizations to deter or defeat the Nation's pacing challenges. It could put the Air Force a year behind in creating its contribution to a resilient Joint All Domain Command and Control infrastructure and increase the Air Force's network vulnerability for 180 installations.

Conclusion

Benjamin Franklin was known to say that time is money, but I would argue that time is more valuable than money in today's geostrategic environment. Although a year-long Continuing Resolution would decrease our funding, the greater loss would be the missed opportunities of time that could have been spent accelerating today's readiness and tomorrow's modernization. We do not have time to spare. Our competitors' rate of change is enabling them to approach parity with many of our warfighting capabilities and concepts. A year-long Continuing Resolution would further erode our advantage and progress supported by the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act impeding the Air Force's acceleration towards the force of tomorrow.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF GENERAL MARTIN

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you so much, General Brown. And now we will hear from General Martin.

Please, sir, the time is yours.

General MARTIN. Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, on the behalf of the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Christine Wormuth, and the chief of staff of the Army, General James McConville, thank you for inviting me here today to testify and discuss the impact of continuing resolutions under Department of the Army.

And I also want to especially thank you for recognizing the service of General Odierno. It is a huge loss.

The Army, by doctrine, is the Nation's initial response force to emergent threats. Last year the Army contributed over 50 percent of the Joint Forces provided to combatant commanders, and 66 percent of the composite directed readiness table supporting operational planning requirements. This included responding to and providing continued support through the COVID–19 pandemic, civil unrest, natural disasters, supported our southern border, and security of the national capital.

Total joint emergent costs to the fiscal year 2021 Global Forest Management Allocation Plan were $2.8 billion, of which the Army contributed $1.6 billion, or 56 percent of the total emergent costs. The Army responded to these unforeseen requirements, all while continuing to deter aggression abroad, strengthen relationships with allies and partners, conduct counterterrorism operations around the world, and maintain the readiness of our soldiers and our DAC civilians in preparation for the next mission, whatever that may be.

Simultaneously, to keep pace with any potential adversaries, we are currently undergoing the most significant transformation effort in the past 40 years to provide the Joint Force with the most capable and lethal land army in the world.

The ability of the Army to accomplish these diverse tasks wouldn't be possible without the support from Congress. And we sincerely thank you for that. However, readiness is fragile, and I can't emphasize enough how important, timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained funding is to keeping the Army at the highest state of readiness possible—because who knows what tomorrow will bring?

Over the past 10 years, the Department of Defense has started all but one fiscal year under a CR. Although we have adapted our business practices to maneuver through this fiscal uncertainty and the effects of the short-duration CRs, a full-year CR would adversely affect our soldiers, our readiness, our modernization program, and our infrastructure improvement efforts.

Monetarily, we assess the total impact of the Army under a year-long CR could be as high as $12.9 billion. The impact is even larger when considering the effects of inflation. Included in this number are misaligned funds, as well as a funding spread across military pay, research and acquisition programs, military construction projects, and family housing initiatives.

A few impacts to readiness include pilot readiness, due to reduced aviation flying hours, also to base operations support, and a decreased ability to send soldiers to professional military education, and properly maintain proficiency in our formations, and maintain the readiness of the equipment that they use.

A full-year CR would severely impact our ability to modernize to meet tomorrow's challenges. The combined effect of delays in procurement and prototype advancement on top of a disruption in timelines for development and construction of critical Army and joint technologies may very well create a cumulative impact to our modernization initiatives that would be difficult to overcome. This includes potential impacts to modernization of our organic industrial base.

In summary, a year-long CR would cause severe impacts to the Army's ability to care for our soldiers and our families, to our readiness and capability to respond to emerging operational requirements, and to our ability to make the necessary funding decisions required to modernize our force. The Army strongly urges Congress to pass all fiscal 2022 appropriation bills to avoid the complex and undesirable effects of a year-long CR.

Again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The information follows:]

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

GENERAL JOSEPH M. MARTIN
VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SECOND SESSION, 117TH CONGRESS

ON IMPACT OF CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND SERVICES

JANUARY 12, 2022

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to discuss the current Continuing Resolution (CR), and the impacts of a potential future year-long CR on the Army. While the Services have historically provided Congress with the impacts of CRs when they occur, this year has the potential to be different with the growing prospect of a prolonged or even a full year-long CR. As a result, I am compelled to describe the adverse effects such a measure would have on Army Soldiers, Readiness, and Modernization.

Let me begin with background and context. Since fiscal year (FY) 2010, the Department of Defense (DoD) has started all but one fiscal year under a CR, with the shortest CR period lasting approximately three months, and the longest lasting seven months. The Army has adapted its business practices to maneuver through this fiscal uncertainty and the effects of a short-duration CR, but these modified practices were always done under the assumption that an appropriation would eventually be passed at some time in the fiscal year. Historically, this has been a safe assumption, but as we can see from the need for this hearing, this year may prove to be different, and what has become normal Army practice to help alleviate short-term effects will not adequately address the impacts of a full-year CR to our organization and people from the lost time, lost funding and lost opportunities.

The total impact to the Army under a year-long CR scenario could be as high as $12.9 billion. This number is a combination of the total of misaligned funds at $9.2 billion, as well as up to $3.7 billion spread across military pay, research & acquisition, and military construction/family housing programs. This includes up to $1.1 billion of military pay challenges across the Active and Reserve components, $2.6 billion in impacts across 147 programs and projects, to include signature modernization efforts and priorities, and military construction and family housing projects worldwide.

Taken individually, the impacts of a full-year CR might possibly be mitigated. But, when you combine the delays in procurement and prototype advancement on top of the disruption in timelines for construction and development of critical Army and Joint technologies, there is a compounding effect which will likely disrupt the Army's ability to

sustain readiness and achieve its modernization goals. Making matters worse are the requirements to modify training as a result of the CR while continuing to respond to emerging, unfinanced missions such as COVID-19 and support of the National Capitol, all while navigating challenges to military pay and benefits. Taken together, these factors create a cumulative impact that will be difficult to overcome.

The challenge of a year-long CR would jeopardize the Army's ability to meet emerging national and defense policy imperatives. Secretary Austin is currently orienting the DoD toward achieving integrated deterrence. One aspect of integration is employing the contributions of all the Services, as well as other government departments outside of the DoD, to achieve a deterrent effect greater than the sum of its parts. The Joint Force cannot yet achieve the desired level of integration, but we are diligently working toward this goal with the Army's modernization priorities and experimentation efforts such as the Army's Project Convergence.

To build systemic advantage in relation to our competitors requires the DoD to not just develop new capabilities but also to integrate them into the operational force faster than our strategic competitors. Yet integrated deterrence is not only an imperative for the future. As recent events demonstrate, the Army, as part of the Joint Force, must continue to actively campaign to maintain deterrence in the present. In practical terms, this entails maintaining adequate presence to promote stable environments in priority regions and readiness to ensure credible response capability to deter aggression.

In today's dynamic strategic environment, the Army must have the ability to realign funding as conditions change to maintain ready ground forces. Thus, in both the near- and long-term, integrated deterrence requires timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained funding. Our strategic competitors are watching us closely, measuring whether our resourcing allows us to both respond in the present as well as to keep pace well into the future.

Taking all these factors into account, the true cost to the Army of CRs is the combination of military pay impacts, delayed programs and construction projects (to include impacts to

organic industrial base modernization), constrained production rate increases, dollar amount shortfalls, and the vital aspect of lost time.

In order to provide a competitive and ready Army, timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained funding is of paramount importance. Appropriating an FY 2022 Budget is essential to make prudent investment decisions, comply with congressional intent for industrial modernization, and provide the flexibility necessary to man, train, and equip the Army in support of its critical role in defending the Nation.

In sum, a year-long CR would cause severe impacts to the Army's ability to take care of our Soldiers and their families, to be ready to respond to emerging operational requirements, and to make necessary funding alignments and adjustments needed to support readiness and to modernize our Army. The Army strongly urges Congress to pass all of the FY 2022 Appropriation bills (i.e.—FY 2022 Defense and Military Construction Appropriation bills) and avoid the complex, undesirable, and unnecessary impacts of a full-year CR.

Again, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you so much, General Martin, and thank you for stepping in.

Once again, I just want to reiterate, I truly believe it is the wish, the desire, the commitment from our entire committee, both sides of the aisle, not to have a year-long CR, and to get our job done.

Before we turn to other member questions, I want to enter into the record Secretary Austin's statement from December; as well as a letter from several defense trade groups; a statement from the Aerospace Industry Association; a letter from the National Defense Industrial Association on the harmful impacts a full-year CR would have on our national security.

So, without objection, those letters will be entered.

[The information follows:]



Statement for the Record
Eric Fanning, President and CEO of the Aerospace Industries Association

A healthy and resilient Defense Industrial Base (DIB) is essential to America's national security. The DIB responds best to clear, consistent, and predictable demand signals, which means a stable and sustained budget is vital. Stopgap funding measures, or Continuing Resolutions (CRs), undermine that certainty and are far too common. Under the current agreement that ends on February 18, DoD will operate under a CR for almost 40% of this fiscal year—which is the third year of a global pandemic and when threats are not receding.

Members of Congress from both parties recognizes these risks. Yet, we find ourselves operating under another CR even in the face of extraordinary bipartisan support for increased defense funding. Congress overwhelming passed—and President Biden signed—a National Defense Authorization Act that includes a 5% increase in the topline. The current CR represents $36 billion less than what the NDAA now states is the law of the land. Appropriations can—and should—provide the defense funding level, which includes the increase, endorsed by Congress and the Commander-in-Chief as soon as possible.

Economic conditions and the length and severity of the pandemic are adding pressure to the budget, affecting the cost of personnel, goods, and services. Without an increase to funding, DOD would be forced to absorb inflationary increases in the products and services it buys. With latest estimates predicting consumer price inflation of 5-7% for the coming year – the highest level in approximately 30 years – the Pentagon's purchasing power would be hit especially hard in FY22.

Defense is uniquely harmed by CRs. These measures imperil industry's ability to deliver to the customer, which in turn, compromises the capabilities and services delivered to the warfighter.

The dysfunction unleashed by CRs lengthens project timetables, places stress on our workforce and military personnel, and undermines the success of our security, our industry, and our country. The effects are well-documented by Congress, the Pentagon, and government agencies including the Congressional Research Service and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) which all agree that CRs cause a number of inefficiencies ranging from delayed hiring to unnecessary and repetitive contract modifications. In DoD's case, CRs typically include a "no new starts" rule that prohibits it from signing contracts for new programs or increased quantities of ordnance or weapon systems for the life of the CR.

According to the GAO, because CRs restrict spending, they can also lead to a "boom or bust" cycle, with catch-up spending in the last two quarters of the year. In FY18, for example, when DOD was under CRs until March, the third and fourth quarter spending for the procurement accounts was about 50 percent higher in than the following year when there was no CR. A high level of year-end spending can lead to inefficiencies.

AIA AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

CRs are also incredibly wasteful for troops and taxpayers. Recent estimates cite a $40 billion additional cost to DOD should a CR extend from February through the end of the fiscal year. A GAO report pointed to FY 2020 estimates for the cost of a full-year Continuing Resolution for each military department, noting a $20.6 billion loss for the Navy, an $11.8 billion loss for the Air Force, and an $8.8 billion loss for the Army. This additional money must be found within existing budgets, including funds allocated to readiness and modernization.

What's most disappointing is the process and the position in which we once again find ourselves. While countless events in the world are uncertain and unforeseeable, funding our government and its safety and security priorities is completely within our control – and it's particularly vital to helping overcome the current pandemic and managing or mitigating its effects. Congress must put political disagreements aside and work together to move us beyond government-by-CR.

Eric Fanning
President and CEO
Aerospace Industries Association

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January 10, 2022

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on
Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Calvert,

On behalf of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) and its membership across all sectors and sizes of the defense industrial base, I am this letter for the record in support of your 12 January 2022 hearing on the impact of continuing resolutions (CR) on defense. We wish to express grave concern about a potential full year CR and delineate some of the impacts that would result. The analysis below comes from a draft NDIA white paper on the impacts of a full year CR; we will incorporate into it the findings of your hearing before the paper's release next week and will ensure your staff receives it.

As Secretary of Defense Austin stated, a full year CR would be "an unprecedented move that would cause enormous, if not irreparable, damage to a wide range of bipartisan priorities—from defense readiness and modernization, to research and development, to public health." The timing of a full year CR could not be worse as our country navigates a near-perfect storm of a worsening strategic environment, urgent catch-up defense modernization, surging inflation eroding defense buying power, and a defense industrial base in the midst of COVID, supply chain, and workforce disruptions.

For two decades, as the U.S. focused on counterterrorism, China and Russia invested in technological and capability advances to gain an advantage over us. With this growing strength, they are now increasingly aggressive. The U.S. is in a race against time to invest in the capabilities, force structure, and posture needed to deter further aggression and prevent escalation to a major conflict. A full year CR would stop key investments for a year; some of these delays may be unrecoverable. Congress has authorized significant increases to the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, the European Deterrence Initiative, and the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative. Stopping this funding in the face of a Russian build-up on the Ukrainian border while China is taking increasingly aggressive acts towards Taiwan risks signaling a lack of seriousness and competence to counter their actions—we risk further emboldening their aggression.

A full year CR would cut $36 billion in Congressionally intended growth from the Department of Defense (DoD), stop new programs from starting, prevent increased procurement, and leave resources misaligned to needs. Critical investments a full year CR would delay include space capabilities, hypersonic weapons, artificial intelligence and autonomy, and nuclear force modernization. We

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estimate over 300 new starts would be cancelled in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) by a full year CR in RDT&E, Procurement, and Military Construction accounts. Funding misalignments include lack of funding for the military and civilian pay raises, causing these must-pay bills to come at the expense of change-of-station moves; incentive and special pays; flying hours and readiness training; facility maintenance and modernization. A long-term CR will cancel key Congressional priorities for FY22 essential to deterring aggression, such as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI).

This potential reduction in planned funding level is being made worse by rising inflation. When the FY22 President's Budget (PB) was developed, inflation was expected to be around two percent. The planned growth in funding top-line in the PB submission, along with offsets from the Middle East, would nearly cover this inflationary cost growth, leaving DoD with an almost neutral budget in real (inflation-adjusted) buying power terms. But inflation has risen significantly since that time. The December 10, 2021, Consumer Price Index (CPI) report found 6.8 percent overall inflation in the U.S. economy. When applied to DoD spending categories, this amounts to over $40 billion in inflationary cost growth DoD will experience in FY22. In other words, even the NDAA enacted funding level of $740 billion would not fully cover inflation and result in a decline in real buying power. When the $36 billion top-line reduction of a full year CR is combined with the dramatic increase in inflation, DoD would take the equivalent of an over $75 billion buying power cut compared to what Congress originally intended when establishing the NDAA funding level of $740 billion.

There would also be significant impacts on the defense industrial base, a sector that has seen thousands of companies depart in the last decade and, according to NDIA's annual Vital Signs Report, fewer and fewer new entrants to the defense market. The previous two years have been especially difficult. COVID has disrupted production lines, development programs, and the defense industry workforce. Supply chain disruptions and workforce disruptions are now adding further complications—this turmoil has taken a toll. According to the Wall Street Journal, defense industry stocks are at their lowest valuation in eight years. An unprecedented full year CR would add another burden on an already heavily burdened sector. The most obvious impact is lost revenue. This effect will be spread out over several years because DoD takes time to first obligate and then outlay funding. This loss of revenue translates to reduced economic activity across the country. For example, we estimate that the prevention of 78 RDT&E and Procurement new starts for the AF will have an impact in at least 15 states, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Florida, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

The long-term impacts could be particularly damaging in the technology sector. In many crucial areas of capability development, such as space and AI, the commercial sector is the primary driver of technological advancement, and DoD's race against time includes improving incentives for this sector to focus on national security challenges. But these companies already find the government hard to work with and a questionable investment. Time is running out to seriously bring the technology sector into the national security space and a full year CR would burn another year we can't afford to waste.

There are other, less direct impacts on the defense industrial base beyond these effects. For example, when there is uncertainty about if and when a program will start, companies may be forced to delay key internal investments in plant, equipment, and workforce training. Once funding does arrive, these

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deferred investments may have to be done in a hurry, or production may have to begin without these cost-saving investments reducing efficiency and raising costs to the taxpayer for the required military capability. This can be particularly pronounced in Multi-Year Procurements (MYPs).

Ultimately, it is our defense industrial base—the best and most innovative in the world—that provides the products, services, and capabilities that keep our warfighters advantaged against any foe. Damaging it now will necessarily be felt by our warfighters in the future.

NDIA and our members appreciate the subcommittee holding this critical hearing and hope the testimony and information shared will lead Congress to pass full year funding and negate the worst impacts of a full year CR.

Very respectfully,

Herbert J. Carlisle
General, USAF (Ret)
President and CEO
National Defense Industrial Association

LOSS OF FUNDING UNDER A CR

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Now I am going to turn to questions. And, as has been the custom and usage, the ranking member and I sometimes go a little over five minutes, so we haven't had a timer on, but I do have the timer running on my iPhone, so I don't abuse the opportunity that our other committee members have given Mr. Calvert and I. And I am going to extend that same courtesy to the full committee chair and to the full committee ranking member when we start with questions.

I am going to start first.

And the top line of a full CR would technically stay the same, as has been pointed out. But things like pay raises, and inflation, along with funds that simply could not be spent in 2022, such as $3 billion for Afghan security forces, mean that DoD and the services would actually face substantial cuts from 2021 to 2022. And you have had that in your testimony, but I just want to reiterate it. A full, year-long CR is a cut, and none of us on this subcommittee want that to happen in such a callous way.

Additionally, the Department would lose out on the substantial increase that would be negotiated by a full-year omnibus bill.

I believe we would have a bill that we would all be proud of, and would serve the service, as well.

Under Secretary McCord, I would like to ask you, does the Department have an estimate as to how much funding would essentially be lost under a full-year CR, due to cost increases and funds that would not be spent?

Mr. MCCORD. We would estimate that the lost purchasing power is more on the order of triple the $8 billion account level only, for the reasons that you cite: the military construction, the Afghanistan, other funds that some of the witnesses have included in their testimony that are estimated to be misaligned. It is very difficult to get a precise number because you have to go down to a program level all across the Department. But at the more general level, about triple the $8 billion.

IMPACT ON MODERNIZATION

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

Generals and Admiral, in some of your testimony you mentioned how this would really affect modernization and our capabilities, vis a vis Russia and China, as well as our inability to reduce funding for weapon systems that you would prefer to ramp down spending on in 2022. Would any of you like to take another minute to either re-emphasize or add to your testimony on that?

General MARTIN. This is General Martin, vice chief of staff of the Army. I will be happy to.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Please, sir.

General MARTIN. Specifically as it pertains to modernization, a year-long CR would delay modernization to counter Russia, China, persistent threats, and impact our industry partners and delay modernizing our industrial facilities. There is second-, third-order effects when you talk about supply chains and everything else.

But for new starts, we have 71 programs that will be affected by a year-long CR. For procurement delays, we have 29. And in devel-

opmental-based, procurement delays—those are equipment that we planned on procuring—and then developmental delays, research and development activities associated with programs, there is 32 of them.

Additionally, there is an impact to the Army-owned industrial facilities where we had planned on modernizing our organic industrial base as part of a 15-year plan. And those activities for this year would not be able to happen and would subsequently be delayed, and so that would be deferred work.

But I tell you, it is a compounding effect because, Chair, we also would have to next year reprioritize those projects, which means that they could potentially bump another project. So it is almost a double effect on the industrial base, and for that matter, all those programs that I described.

Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. Is there anyone else who briefly would like to add something? We do have your full testimony, or you can submit something for the record later.

General BROWN. Chair McCollum, General Brown. We have so many new starts for the Air Force, but I would highlight particularly in our nuclear portfolio each of the key aspects, GBSD, LRSO, B–21, will be delayed anywhere from a year up to 24 months. I would also add our next generation endowments were delayed by about 2 years. It also impacted F–35 by a year.

And so it has a compounding impact just as General Martin described, not just to us but also when you think about what our adversary is doing and how they are pacing out, it is important that we stay on track.

PAY INCREASE FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. And as Mr. McCord pointed out, all of these delays will end up making things cost more, and it is an inefficient use of taxpayer's dollars.

I am going to move on to the President's Pay Proposal, the 2.7 percent for all military personnel that went into effect on January 1. The cost of the pay increase across the services is more than $2 billion in 2022, and the military pay raise is an—automatically went into effect at the start of the calendar year.

Under a full continuing resolution, it is not budgeted for. But for the record, both Democrats and Republicans on this subcommittee fully support, and we have in my bill the cost covered for the bill for the pay raise.

Could you speak briefly to what the military pay raise—by doing that, how that is going to really impact you under a full year? Because not only—some of you mentioned that they are going to get the raise, but the other things that go along with the job that they are looking forward to are going to be delayed because of the CR, and how that would affect recruitment and retention, which as was pointed out by General Berger is very important to an all-voluntary Army.

Mr. MCCORD. Chair, let me just make a brief comment that because this problem is pretty consistent across the services, before I ask them to comment any other detail, exactly as you state, by

definition under a CR the amount in the personnel accounts is flat, and so the pay raise costs have to be absorbed.

The accounts themselves are flexible, but that doesn't mean that we have good choices within that flexibility. We are going to have to look at accessions, as have been mentioned, and PCS moves for our troops is probably the first and least disruptive things we could do.

And then, as some of the chiefs have mentioned, there is other things that might be the next things that we would have to do that are more distasteful—the bonuses. But, again, within a flat account, we have to do something within the personnel accounts to absorb costs and find some other way to save money, and that is going to have to be impacting our troops in another way.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. If any of you other gentlemen would like to add something, that is fine, on that. Yes? Does somebody wish to be recognized?

General RAYMOND. Chair McCollum, this is General Raymond.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. General Raymond, you are recognized.

General RAYMOND. One of the biggest benefits that we have realized after establishing the Space Force is our ability to attract incredible talent. This talent is highly technical, it is highly educated, and it is sought after. And they have other options.

And if we enter into this delay and have to do reduced accessions and put hiring freezes in place to help pay for the much-needed and deserved pay raise, they are going to go to other places, and those are people that we will not be able to get back.

So to do that, we are going to have to come up with ways, as discussed, putting hiring freezes in place potentially, reducing accessions, cutting PCS travel. It is going to impact not just guardians but also their families.

Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. And I think you all did a great job of mentioning that.

With that, I am going to turn it over to Ranking Member Calvert with the notion that I had—I was 6 minutes and—well, I am going to round up. I was about 7 minutes, so that is going to be the max for the next three questioners. Mr. Calvert.

CHINA AND TAIWAN

Mr. CALVERT. Thank you, Madam Chair. And for the record, I would like to simply say that BCA was certainly a disaster for the Department of Defense. And, two, no one wants to see—and I know you don't, I don't, most responsible people don't—and we all want to get this done by February 18. I think that is—I think that is the very latest we need to get this done.

So I am going to emphasize again lets strip these poison pills. Lets put the legacy riders back in, and lets just talk about numbers, higher defense number, lower non-defense discretionary account.

Let me define "pay raise" as we talk about that. Obviously, the pay raise that we are anticipating is really a down payment on inflation, because let's face it, we are not keeping pace with inflation with a 7 percent inflation rate and rising. We may end up with 8

to 10 percent inflation in the next—in the next year according to some economists.

So let me get to what is happening to Department of Defense spending. It is no secret this hearing is, obviously, on an unclassified level. It is broadcast on the internet. There is no doubt that our enemies are watching at the present time. While we are frozen, unable to properly provide for our Nation's defense, our adversaries are planning to react accordingly.

Admiral Gilday, please give this committee your assessment of probable Chinese activity regarding Taiwan over the next year, and what an invasion of the island would mean for America and its allies.

Admiral GILDAY. Ranking Member Calvert, thank you. I mentioned up front in my comments that what the CR does—what the CR yields for the Nation is a smaller, less ready, less capable, less lethal Navy. We need to be forward to matter. We need to be in the way to matter. That means we need to be in the Western Pacific, and we need to be there in numbers.

And so, being able to sustain the numbers that the INDOPACOM commander needs on a day-to-day basis, both Navy and Marine forces, as well as the other services, is going to be challenged by cuts to our operation—operations and maintenance accounts.

I would also say that there is some risk there when we talk about—for example, one of the chiefs talked about cuts to flying hours. With that usually comes an increase in mishap rate. So, the less you train, the more likely you are to make mistakes. And so, there is compounding problems here that we are going to have to deal with.

But I think—you know, I also talked about the fact that this makes us a less credible—or presents the less credible deterrent to any type of opportunistic behavior by Russia and China. And it is not just China in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, but we just have to look east right now to what is going on on the Russia-Ukrainian border and the potential for significant activity there as well.

READINESS OF THE U.S. ARMY

Mr. CALVERT. Yes. I was—I am glad you brought that up, Admiral. I was going to ask General Martin to give the committee his assessment on probable Russian activity regarding Ukraine over the next few months and what further invasion into the country would mean, again, for America and its allies, especially the first ground war since the end of World War II.

General MARTIN. Congressman, thank you. What I will tell you is we are in the business of making sure that never happens. And so, to do that, we need predictable, adequate, timely, and sustained funding over time. And in order to do that, we have got to have soldiers who are ready today for tomorrows challenges.

Who knew that we would be conducting the NEO operation out of Afghanistan last year? Who knew that we would be in Ethiopia this year? Who knew that we would be doing Operation Allies Welcome? Those are all expressions of the Army's ability to provide ready forces to respond to things that happened in the world. As

it pertains to securing this Nation's interests, we need a ready Army. And so, we need that consistent, predictable funding in order to be able to do that.

For our readiness accounts, we have asked for more money in 2022 in many of the sub-activity groups that we did in 2021. We won't be able to use that money to do that, and so our units as we speak, in month 4 of a 12-year budget, are executing their training, but it is not at the level that we planned on doing because we don't have all of the funding that we should have gotten with the 2022 budget. Even right now, if we stop the CR today, there has been a 4-month impact in the United States Army.

There is also the supply chain that provides parts to our forces that is impacted by this, because they expected to execute so many—so much operational activity this year. And with that decrease, there is an impact on our ability to forecast sales within the working capital fund and make contracts between that entity and contractors and suppliers across this country.

And so it is a huge impact when we can't predict accurately exactly how much money we are going to have and we change what we are planning to do, because we are all about building readiness of the United States Army, Congressman.

ADAPTING TO CURRENT THREAT ENVIRONMENT

Mr. CALVERT. Thank you. Lastly, General Brown, as Patton famous referred to Rommel, I read the book, and I read, in the process of reading your book, "Accelerate Change or Lose." We are clearly not accelerating, so what is stake? And how our adversaries are taking advantage of our inability to adapt to the current threat environment, especially in space?

General BROWN. Well, I will actually probably have to defer to General Raymond on space. But I will just tell you from an Air Force perspective, the thing I do think about, Ranking Member Calvert, is the aspect of how our adversaries are increasing their capability puts us at a disadvantage. And by slowing down our pace of acquiring capability, maintaining our readiness, taking care of our airmen and families, has an impact to be able to—be able to deter, so we don't get in the situation that General Martin just described vis-a-vis Russia and Ukraine.

I will just—if you don't mind, I will turn to General Raymond on space.

General RAYMOND. On the space capability, so we remain the best in the world in space. We have got incredible, exquisite capabilities, but they were built for a different domain. They are built for a benign domain without a threat. The domain that we see today is threatened, from a full spectrum of threats, everything from reversible jamming to kinetic destruction, as demonstrated by Russia. We have to modernize. We have to make that shift, and we are losing time.

That is why this—not having a CR is so critical to us. We have to move out and modernize, a more resilient, defendable architecture that can meet the demands of a contested domain.

Mr. MCCORD. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Mr. CALVERT. I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. And, Mr. Calvert, you and I were right in the sweet spot with the same amount of time.

Now I will turn to full chair of the Appropriations Committee, Ms. DeLauro.

RECRUITMENT AND RETAINMENT

The CHAIR. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I wanted to make a comment first before my questions. The debate over riders is going to occur. And as far as I know about negotiating, an ultimatum is not—is not negotiating. As has happened in the past, there will be a very robust debate around policy issues and riders.

And, you know, the fact is, I may not get everything that I want, and you might not get everything that you want. But that is about a negotiation, and that means that you need to come to the table to have that conversation.

And as I said, to date, there has not been a single piece of paper outlining what it is that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like. There has to be a discussion, especially—and looking at why would we jeopardize our national security. There has already been a 4-month delay, and as has been described, causing serious consequences and our adversaries gaining an advantage.

And with that, let me ask those who have not really addressed the issue of the importance of recruiting and retraining, and in order to recruit and to retain the best fighting force, when we talk about military readiness—and each of the services faces a unique challenge on the military personnel side, whether you have got a pilot shortage or appropriately manning shifts.

So how would—and I want to ask those who have not answered this year—how would a full year CR impact the services, your services ability to recruit and to retain the force you need to meet the challenges that our Nation is facing?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I am glad you are being respectful of one another. So whoever would like to go first.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. That is right. Don't be shy.

General BERGER. Ma'am, this is General Berger.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Yes.

General BERGER. I think probably for us it is no different than the other services. If you have a fixed bank account and you have the force that you have, and inflation has gone up and you have a pay raise, then you are going to slow down recruiting. And what does that mean? That means that the recruiter in Iowa or Colorado or Pennsylvania is going to have to tell the people that they are working with, "I can't bring you onto—I can't bring you onto active duty. I can't recruit you now. Can you please wait 8, 10, 12 months, and then we can bring you on."

And as my peers mentioned, of course they can't wait. They are going to—if they need jobs, they are going to go look for work elsewhere. So they are very—the war for talent, that is the world today. They are not going to wait, just as General Raymond said.

So I think the recruiter—at the recruiter level, at the bottom level, they are going to try to hold on to their pool and tell them to wait, wait, wait, and those—the high school graduates, the college graduates, are not going to be able to wait.

So a year from now, in other words, when we do have appropriations and we can afford to start recruiting in the numbers we need, the quality won't be there. So the recruiters will have to look in a different direction to fill the ranks, the holes that we have.

Retention I think will be the same way. If we have to go the route of bonuses, if we start to affect retention, then the same war for talent exists for those who have 6, 7, 10 years of experience. They will leave. They will leave because they have to support their families, and they need some confidence that their employer has their back and is going to compete in that market. If that is not the case, they will leave.

And I will turn it over to my other peers.

Admiral GILDAY. Ma'am, this is Admiral Gilday. If I can just also tie together accessions and retention real quick. As Secretary McCord mentioned, the way we are going to pay for that 2.7 percent pay raise is through cutting accessions, cutting reenlistment bonuses, incentive bonuses, and also by reducing permanent change of station moves.

So for the Navy, we have got about 145,000 sailors at sea. Over the past year—a year ago, we had 10,000 of those billets that were gap. We have been able to cut that down by more than half, so about 3 percent of our billets at sea right now are gap and we adjusted to make up for that.

If we cut our accessions by 75 percent—that is 23,000 sailors—we are again going to exacerbate that gap at sea in a place where we need it least. At the same time, we are trying to entice sailors—our best sailors—to stay in the Navy, but we are cutting those—and their families. We are not just retaining sailors; we are retaining families. We are going to have to cut reenlistment bonuses, incentive bonuses, to keep the best in. That is also going to exacerbate those gaps at sea, again, where we need those people the most at the tip of the spear.

And then, with respect to PCS moves, so we are going to reduce those by we think around 37,000, which is about half of our moves the next year. Those are families—as the Commandant so eloquently articulated earlier in his comments, there are people that have already taken jobs, spouses that have already planned on taking jobs, school plans that have been made that are going to have to be—that are going to have to be curtailed, and then we, again, risk breaking faith with our sailors and their families.

Thanks for the opportunity, ma'am.

ROTC AND TRAINING

General MARTIN. Chair, may I say a couple things, too?

The CHAIR. Please, yes. Thank you, General.

General MARTIN. So I agree with everything that General Berger and Admiral Gilday said. These are measures that we may have to do in the United States Army, but I can tell you that there is a couple of things I know for sure that are going to happen as a result of this. And, once again, we have got 8 months left in the year. We have got to watch things very closely, prioritize, but God forbid if we have to do it.

But we are going to bring in a full cohort of our second lieutenants out of ROTC and West Point. But as it pertains to ROTC,

about 25 percent of them are not going to start their initial entry training as officers until the beginning of the fiscal year because we won't have enough MTSA funding—this is funding used to travel to professional military education—available.

Additionally, one of those sub-activity groups I talked about with the misaligned OMA resources is one that pertains to funding basic training. And so we have got a $10.2 million reduction that is going to lead to a degradation of the quality of our basic training, and we see that as significant because of how important initial entry training is.

But those are the two additions I wanted to make to the previous statements from my other fellow colleagues.

The CHAIR. Thank you.

LONG TERM IMPACT ON AIR FORCE

General BROWN. And, Chair DeLauro, I will just make one additional comment. I think the thing that—we talked about some of the near-term impacts. But when we—for the Air Force, it will be about 50 percent of our accessions, but you will see that it is not just the near term, it is the long term, because you will have a bathtub of airmen who will not be here who had a 20-year career. And that is something we have got to pay attention to as well anytime we have these types of delays and accessions.

Thank you.

The CHAIR. Is there anyone that we missed in terms of asking that—answering that question?

If not, thank you, Madam Chair, and I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I am looking at the layout here to see if maybe she is just muted here. Ms. Granger, it is your time for questions. We cannot hear you, however.

CHINA AND A LONG-TERM CR

Ms. GRANGER. Okay. We are fixing that.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. It is good now. You magically fixed it.

Ms. GRANGER. One thing that I want to start out with is I think there is a misunderstanding about where have been. We are not saying we want a continuing resolution. We are saying, how do we get this done?

But it concerns me we gave you an offer. Just because you didn't like the offer it doesn't mean that we didn't give an offer. We did. And then it has just stopped. And so a way forward is to get back together and say, "All right. How do we work this out?" But I am concerned that there is a misunderstanding about the offer that we had and a way forward.

The CHAIR. Madam Chair, in fact there has not been an offer, so I have to correct the record.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. There has not been an offer of money on the table. That is correct.

Ms. Granger, do you have a question?

Ms. GRANGER. My first question—every member of this subcommittee is greatly concerned about China's rapid military modernization. Could each of the services share how a long-term CR would inhibit our ability to compete with adversaries like China? Are they still available?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. They are still available. I haven't been calling on them. They have been kind of volunteering on their own. Does someone—I am a former substitute high school teacher. I can start calling on you, gentlemen, if—or Ms.——

General MARTIN. I will go first, Chair, if you would like.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Certainly. Good to see you, Mr. Martin.

General MARTIN. Okay. As it pertains to China, it is the same as Russia. It is the same for any adversary that is threatening the security of this Nation. A long-term CR will impact our ability to provide ready forces today, make sure that we can take care of our soldiers and their family members, and our civilians, and the infrastructure and the ecosystem that surrounds them.

It will impact our ability to modernize. For the Army, it is 71 new start programs, 29 procurement delays, 32 developmental delays, and several items in the organic industrial base that we will not be able to modernize.

It impacts our ability to compete today and compete tomorrow. And so a long-term CR has a significant impact on the United States Army.

Thank you.

Ms. GRANGER. Thank you.

General BROWN. Ranking Member Granger, General Brown from the Air Force. I would highlight that, you know, when I think about particularly the PRC and what we have seen them do over the course of the past several months in relation to their nuclear portfolio, this has an impact on—a year-long CR impacts our nuclear portfolio by delaying GBSD by a year, LRSO by 18 to 24 months, B–21 by about a year, and the modernization of the B–52 by a year as well.

I would also add to that the—it will slow down the F–35 by about a year, which will be very important to any type of deterrence and/or capability. I would say the same thing within GAT. It would delay it for at least 2 years.

And so, what you see is a series of capabilities that would actually provide us the advantage, ensure we maintain at least, you know, advantage, if not parity, in certain key warfighting capabilities and concepts, and a year-long CR actually allows our adversary just to continue their acceleration while we are, I would say, stuck in neutral.

Thank you.

General RAYMOND. I would—this is General Raymond from the Space Force. I would add, as it relates to China, China has gone from 0 to 60 in space. They are moving at incredible speeds, and doing two things: one, building space capabilities for their own use, to have that same advantage that we currently enjoy; and, two, developing capabilities to deny us our access.

As I mentioned in my opening comment, we view our ability to provide space capabilities and the advantage that they provide to our joint forces a sacred duty. And you can't take that for granted anymore. A continuing resolution is going to impact our ability to modernize our forces to be—to be there. And the face of a growing threat will reduce our readiness and will hinder long-term impacts to our guardians and their families.

Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Anyone else wishing to comment?

General BERGER. Just perhaps one or two things building on what my peers have stated. We are going to treat—we are going to treat it like probably a surgeon would treat a patient—in other words, triage. You have to put the forces forward to handle a crisis of the moment. You are going to take risk in areas that this budget—the increase of research and development, things like that—your peers are going to—your peers are going to go ahead—the competition is going to make that investment; you are not.

So in terms of relative pace, they are going to move forward quickly because they are stealing our technology, plus they are investing fully in research and development. We will be at—we will be flat, and we cannot make that up. That research and development time lost, you can't make that up with money a year from now. That is time lost, cannot catch up, because the laboratories, research and development, you just can't accelerate it but so much.

I think we approached it like you would a patient. We will have the least ready when the Nation—the most ready when the Nation is least ready. We will put that forward. We will hold the door best we can, and we will fall farther behind in areas where we should be at least at parity and should be—and actually should be in front. That is where we will pay a price. We can't—we will not be able to catch up.

Admiral GILDAY. Ma'am, this is Admiral Gilday. Adding on to the—to what the other chiefs have said, they are accelerating; we are decelerating, right? So in areas where we want to—we want to close on known gaps with China—as an example, hypersonics would be a really good example of that, right? The Army wants to field a system in 2023. The Navy wants to follow along with that same system, shipboard-based, in 2025. We are going to slow that program down if we can't move money around to keep it alive.

Another area—another area where we want to—where we have overmatch right now and we want to maintain that overmatch would be in the undersea, right? And so, we want to keep on building submarines, and the submarines that we have we want to be able to continue to maintain them, to sustain them.

Based on the year-long CR, we will delay doing maintenance on 10 percent of our submarine force. That is five submarines. We are not going to do maintenance on them. We are going to move it. We are going to push that down the road. We know what the cost has been to that in the past, and we are going to do it again.

We are going to do the same thing with two aircraft carriers. We need those carriers in the water, and we need them forward, and we need them fully maintained. But we are going to stop that.

In areas where we have gaps we are trying to catch up, another good example would be weapons with range and speed. That is where we are putting money, but we are going to slow that down, in important areas where those gaps are going to be exacerbated as the Chinese continue, as General Berger said, to do their R&D and increase their production lines.

And I will pause there.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you. Thank you all very much.

Next we have up Mr. Ryan, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Cuellar, and Mr. Cole. Mr. Ryan?

M1 ABRAMS PRODUCTION

Mr. RYAN. Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. And the 5-minute clock will start.

Mr. RYAN. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity.

Just a quick comment. You know, all of the discussions around the budget and the appropriations in the context of us trying to compete and outcompete China, to me it is very, very clear that these conversations we are having around defense technology are critically important, but there is no way you outcompete China when our kids are going to McDonald's to download their homework because they don't have access to quality internet. There is no way we are going to be able to outcompete them if they are producing 600,000 STEM graduates per year, and we are producing 60, and that is why the investments that we are trying to make here are critical for us to be able to out-compete them.

We are just not going to out-compete China by cutting taxes for the top one percent and hoping that somehow some way we are going to have 330 million people healthy, educated, skilled, and innovative to take them on. It is just not going to happen. We tried it for 30 or 40 years.

So to me there has got to be a whole-of-government approach, and I think it is important for us to keep that in mind.

I have got a couple questions that are local to Ohio that I would love to get answers to. One of them is the procurement of additional M1A2 SEPV 3 systems. The M1 Abrams tank provides the lethality and sophistication necessary to counter Russia and the Chinese Communist Party. Their third-generation platforms enhance readiness to our military, while providing economic stability to the State of Ohio.

And the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio, provides nearly 1,000 jobs within the local community, generates millions of dollars in economic growth, and involves over 700 different Ohio-based suppliers in the manufacturing process.

And the provisions of the FY 2022 Defense bill would procure 70 additional tanks and variants and strengthen our ability to counter near peer adversaries. So this is a critical thing that I am really worried about with the CR.

I would like to ask General Martin what role does this funding instability and unpredictability play in your resourcing decisions on programs like the Abrams upgrade.

What are the strategic implications of delaying manufacturing as the result of the CR?

And additionally, I know Poland announced plans for FMS procurement of 250 tanks to counter Russia aggression within the region. Can you provide an update for the status of that request?

General MARTIN. Thank you for the question, Congressman.

What I can tell you comparing 2021 and 2022, there will be no significant impact to our plan to produce the Abrams SEPV 3 vehicles, A2 SEPV 3 vehicles at JSMC.

I can also tell you that we are not anticipating any CR related impact to the workforce.

There is an impact that I would like to discuss that I think is worthy of your awareness, and that is we had two organic industry-based improvement projects planned for 2022 that would start in 2022. They are new starts, and so they will have to be delayed by a year and then compete against other demands across the board.

But it was to modernize some of the infrastructure, to support not only tank but also Stryker production, but also to improve the heating and cooling system, the HVAC system. So those will have to be delayed.

As it pertains to Poland, we are in the process of talking to Poland, and we are looking how we can best meet their needs.

Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. RYAN. I am sorry. You are breaking up there, General. What was that you said at the end about Poland?

General MARTIN. We are in the process, and we are discussing this with them. We are considering the best way to meet their needs. That is where we are at right now, Congressman.

YOUNGSTOWN AIR RESERVE STATION

Mr. RYAN. Okay. Thank you.

A couple of question that are very local in nature at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station for our friends in the Air Force. We had $8.7 million to expand the Air Reserve Station assault strip, which provides infrastructure to support C–17 and C–130 aircraft, which is critical to maintaining readiness, as you know.

How would the CR impact the viability of the Air Station and its operational capabilities should the infrastructure project be delayed further?

And then also, the issue with the C–130J platform integration. We have been talking about this for years, and as you know, the C–130J platform provides additive capabilities, enhancing the system's aerial capabilities in support of its global mission.

The 2021 Defense bill provided two C–130J platforms and secure four additional platforms. How does any further delay in that procurement of C–130J aircraft affect the specialized mission of the 910th Airlift Wing and their aerial spray mission and the longevity of YARS as a combat multiplier?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Sir, you have about a minute to answer that great question from Mr. Ryan.

General BROWN. Sure. The assault runway project, it does impact the training not just for Youngstown but really for a number of training units around the Northeast. The challenged area is we will not gain net savings as far as fuel and time distance for training.

At the same time it would increase construction cost that will be an issue. It will just be more expensive in the long run.

On the second question here, with the continuing resolution, what happens if you do not have enough C–130s to actually start another basing action, whether it is there at Youngstown with the great mission they do or anyplace else just based on the CR not having enough C–130s to actually start a basing action going forward.

Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

Mr. RYAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Certainly. Mr. Rogers, you are now recognized, and after Mr. Rogers it will be Mr. Cuellar, Mr. Cole, and then Mrs. Bustos.

Mr. Rogers, you are recognized as the former chair of this subcommittee.

REMARKS OF MR. ROGERS

Mr. ROGERS. Well, I thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks for holding the hearing.

Let me apologize to the witnesses who this hearing required them to spend valuable hours doing research. We all know what the answer is. I mean, as appropriators, especially members of this Defense Subcommittee, we know that the CR is not good for the military, Exhibit A.

It comes as no surprise that their testimony will say that CRs are not good for the country, bad for our service members. They are bad for our readiness, for research, development, for the procurement of new systems, for our industrial base, and everything in between.

CRs hurt our national security. We all know that. So why have a hearing on something that we all know should be admitted.

So this hearing was called to score political points, try to bring pressure on the Republican side of the aisle that this would harm the military.

Well, surely it does, but it is the Democrats who are in charge and causing it, including taking all of this valuable time from very important people to tell us what we already know.

It is surprising and, honestly, it is disappointing. So I apologize to all of you in the Pentagon who are being used as pawns in these budget negotiations, and I can certainly think of better uses of your time and ours.

So thank you for all your lifetimes of service. Rest assured that we share the same goal, preventing another CR.

Let's be clear, Madam Chair, that the framework for success in this business we are in has always been no poison pills in these bills and restore legacy riders.

I have been at this a long time. So let's not have any revisionist history. This is what we have always done. You are not doing so far on this bill. This is about decreasing domestic spending and increasing defense spending.

So, Madam Chair, that is all I have, and I yield back.

REMARKS OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

And you know how much I do respect you, but this was not my effort to take political shots. This was my effort to quash those who are talking about yearlong CRs. No one, no one on the Appropriations Committee is. Yet you see things in the news, and unfortunately, sir, it is usually from your side of the aisle.

And I will quote again, and it is a December 1st quote, and I can get you the person who said it. "Republicans should be in favor of a CR until Biden is out of office." So they are not even talking

about a one-year CR. "That would be the proper Republican thing to do, and anybody saying otherwise is deeply foolish."

I know, you and I, sir, do not agree with that sentiment, and my goal here is to educate other members who do not understand the appropriations process as well as you and I and many other of our colleagues that we serve alongside with.

So I understand your frustration, but I want to be clear what my intent was, and I wanted that on the record.

Mr. Cuellar.

SERVICES STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE EFFECTS OF A CR

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And to all our witnesses, thank you for being here with us.

You know, we do not like CRs. We do not want to see a CR. We want to make sure that we, as appropriators, I think both sides want to make sure that we do our work and ask the money.

But the military has operated under CRs in the past, short-term CRs, but it is operated under CRs. Are there any strategies that any of the services plan to implement to minimize the effects of the CRs on our ability to maintain the readiness of our troops?

You know, we learned some lessons. We do not want to see another CR. I think none of us here want to see another CR, definitely not a yearlong CR, but are there any lessons learned that we have taken from past CRs?

Mr. MCCORD. Congressman, let me just open with saying we have, as a number of members have stated, we have a lot of experience sadly now with CRs. So we certainly have some lessons learned.

But in general, there is no strategy to combat math, right? If you do not have enough money, you cannot operate the way you need to. You cannot pay the troops more pay rates with the same amount of money and not have an impact come out some other way.

So, yes, we have adapted on the contracting side, and we are thinking about prioritization. You have heard some of the Chiefs mention, "I would probably have to do A and do B and do C," but again, this is fundamentally a math problem.

IMPACT ON ENLISTED PERSONNEL

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. Let me ask this question. So we are looking at the CR from our perspective, high level perspective. Tell me from your experience—and this applies to General Martin or anybody—tell me how that affects an enlisted person on a day-to-day basis under a CR.

General MARTIN. Congressman, thank you.

So let's talk about someone that is at Fort Bliss, Texas, and they had planned to execute multi-echelon training and were unable to execute multi-echelon training because the resources were not there. We had to take the training, and we had to take it a level or two down from where it was.

So where they were going to gain a certain amount of proficiency doing their military occupational specialty under the conditions of a multi-echelon training environment, they are not going to have that opportunity to do that.

In the Army, we are not going to turn off the Combat Training Center rotation because of the CR, but we are going to have to take a hard look at what multi-echelon training we are doing at home station, places where we build readiness each and every day.

And of course, as it pertains to that soldier, take that soldier 18 months from now. Because of the impact of the metered funding and the less than anticipated funding going into our supply chain, there is going to be an impact on our ability to provide that soldier a part on his vehicle 18 months from now that we would have been able to today if we had predictable funding because of the lagged effect it will have on the industry base and its ability to produce those parts for our soldiers of the future.

REPROGRAMMING AFGHANISTAN FUNDS

Mr. CUELLAR. General, thank you so much. I appreciate that impact on the enlisted soldier down there, whether it is Fort Bliss or Joint Base San Antonio, wherever it might be, or somewhere close to Carter, John Carter's areas, Fort Hood also.

Let me before I close because I have got a little over a minute, you know, I lost one of my constituents, Lance Corporal David Lee Espinosa in Afghanistan in a part of the 13 soldiers who got killed at the very end.

The fiscal year appropriations had certain funds toward Afghanistan operations, and maybe you all have answered this, but if you do not mind repeating this again. What are those funds going to be used for now?

What is the reprogramming of those funds?

What are the priorities that we are looking at if there is a yearlong CR?

Mr. MCCORD. Congressman, the funding to support the Afghan military, the so-called ASFF training, those funds are basically not usable now because there are no, you know, Afghan forces that meet the legal standards. So that money would basically be something that if your committee writes a full year bill, I would anticipate you would take all of that money and redistribute it to other needs. But we are unable to do that for you or with you under a CR.

Of course, there are reductions in other areas because we have less presence ourselves within the Army's account in particular, but those things focused specifically on Afghanistan are just that money is sort of sitting there frozen and not useful because we do not have enough transfer authority to move all of that to other needs.

Mr. CUELLAR. All right. Thank you.

Madam Chair, thank you so very much. Thank you to the witnesses.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

We are going to have Mr. Cole go next. After him, Mrs. Bustos, Mr. Womack, and then Mrs. Kirkpatrick.

I recognize my friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma, Mr. Cole.

REMARKS OF MR. COLE

Mr. COLE. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

And I want to begin by associating myself with the comments of Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Calvert in terms of their concerns. I think Representative Calvert put it pretty well when he said, look, the outline of the deal here is pretty obvious. The defense number has got to go up. The domestic number has got to come down to some degree. The poison bill has got to go out. Hyde has to go back in. And I think we all know that.

And I want to commend the Chairwoman of the full committee because nobody has worked harder to try and get everybody around the table with our chairwoman, and nobody has been more aggressive about trying to be tough on date lines than our chairwoman, you know, trying to restrict the time, trying to make sure that we got this done in a timely fashion so that the folks at the Pentagon and every other agency of government could plan and use the resources we give them wisely.

So I have got very little criticism for this subcommittee, none for the subcommittee, frankly, very little for our full committee.

I will say this as a suggestion before I get to my questions. This well may be beyond us, Madam Chair. We may need, number one, the leadership of both parties to sit down and engage with both the House and the Senate.

I know they have got a lot of different responsibilities, but I think their big one is funding the government, and I would say the same thing, with all due respect, and I mean this respectfully, for the President and the administration.

The President has been a pretty busy guy. He got some things done, the COVID relief bill, the infrastructure bill. He is working on things now he is not having as much success on, you know, changing the filibuster, voting legislation, Build Back Better bill.

Maybe he needs to focus on funding the government that he has, and maybe we need a White House convention here because some of these decisions transcend this committee. This subcommittee has very little to do with Hyde, you know, but Hyde certainly is going to impact our ability to get our job done.

So we are going to have to get some people above our level engaged in the process, and the President at the end of the day is the Commander in Chief, is responsible for the military, and we need some focus here, not on some of these other agendas that, frankly, are stalling out right now.

MAINTENANCE OF AGING AIR FLEET

Now, in terms of this specific hearing, let me ask a couple of questions. I want to go first to General Brown, if I may.

I am fortunate enough to have Tinker Air Force Base in my district, and I know how important logistics are and just the maintenance of what you have. So I would like to ask you what a CR would do.

Number 1, we are expanding capabilities down there for the KC–46 and for other potential missions looking ahead we might pick up.

And then, No. 2, just the day-to-day maintenance of what is frankly an aging air fleet, you know, what will a CR do in terms of your ability to take care of those kinds of problems?

General BROWN. Thank you, Representative Cole.

And specifically, very broadly, the CR will have a number of challenges for a number of our depots and really reference system sustainment accounts which will also be impacted.

When you think really about Tinker, one of the things when I had a chance to visit there was the site for the KC–46 aspects for the depot. That will be one of those that will not get done if we had a yearlong CR, and that will get delayed, which would impact our being able to sustain that particular platform.

I think the other aspect when you look at WSS and our depots, you have this aging fleet that we do have. It does also impact the workforce. If you do not have the funding there to balance that workforce to actually go against the platforms we are trying to work through, in addition to the parts and the spares and supply chain.

All of those things kind of come together to have an impact, and then the other part of a CR also offers the investment not only with the Air Force, but also with the industry partners and the small businesses and vendors that help support us.

They do not have a predictable funding flow, and so you do not bring on the workforce. You do not bring on the parts, and it just slows everything down for us. It will have a huge impact on our readiness across the Air Force.

And then a lot of that will end up going on the backs of our airmen, and we do not want that because then it becomes a retention issue. So there are compounding impacts with the yearlong CR.

Thank you.

IMPACT ON MODERNIZATION OF TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

Mr. COLE. I appreciate that very much.

Madam Chair, I may be out of time. If not, I have got a quick question for General Martin, which he partly covered earlier.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thirty seconds. Go for it.

Mr. COLE. Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I also am privileged to have Fort Sill in my district and a couple of the modernization missions that have been laid out by the Army are based there.

General Martin, from a modernization standpoint, and I know we are in a very serious contest with near peer adversaries, what would a CR do in terms of setting back your efforts to have the force ready to deal with, God forbid, you know, the kinds of adversaries that we have not fought in a long time, that have armor, that have air forces, that have comparable technical capabilities to what the United States military has?

General MARTIN. Congressman, it is good seeing you again and thank you for the question.

I will try to put this as simply as I could. You know, our Chief of Staff of the Army, General McConville, stated previously that we have got 24 of our 31 plus for-signature programs that are going to be in some form or fashion in the hands of soldiers, whether it is in an operational testing environment, a soldier touch point, or actually fielding it.

Twenty-four of those programs will be out there by 2023. Well, without the funding that would be associated with the restraint to

the CR, 19 of those 24 programs will be impacted. The timing of those programs will be impacted.

So, that is a huge impact, and once again, as my colleagues have all said so aptly, you cannot get back time, but it is also the resources that we could have spent this year we are going to have to spend next year, which means it is twice the cost.

And so it is a huge impact on our modernization and maintaining our ability to compete in the future.

Thank you.

Mr. COLE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mrs. Bustos, Mr. Womack, then Mrs. Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Carter.

And I have to step out for a minute. So Mr. Cuellar has the gavel.

Mrs. Bustos.

[Mr. Cuellar presiding.]

ARMY ACQUISITIONS AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Mrs. BUSTOS. Yes, thank you very much, Madam Chair.

And I also want to thank you and the ranking member for having this hearing today.

I want to thank our witnesses as well for your service and your leadership and certainly during these uncertain times.

Obviously, whether we are Democrats or Republicans, we can all agree that national security is critical to all of us, and funding the Department of Defense reliably and on time is something that I think we all know is desirable.

Let me start if I could please with General Martin.

I would like to ask you a question about modernization efforts at the Army.

In the congressional district that I serve in Illinois, we are home to the Rock Island Arsenal, and as you know, that sits on an island in the middle of the Mississippi River between the States of Iowa and Illinois.

And the arsenal is home to the Army's Center of Excellence for additives and advanced manufacturing. And right now the Center of Excellence is working on really just some amazing new research into the next generation combat vehicle, and it will soon be home to the world's largest metal 3D printer that is actually being manufactured in the northern part of our congressional district out of Rockford.

So that will go from Rockford being manufactured and then come down to the Quad Cities.

But this program is critical to the future of the arsenal and we believe also to the future of the Army.

So, General Martin, if you could, share your thoughts about how a yearlong continuing resolution would impact major acquisitions and research programs within the Army and any thoughts that you have specific to the Rock Island Arsenal as well.

General MARTIN. Congresswoman, I am not tracking any direct impact to Rock Island Arsenal, but what I will tell you is it is a great example of the need and our executing a long-term organic

industrial-based modernization program so that we can meet the needs of the future.

That being said, there are other organic industrial-based modernization efforts that we are planning on doing this year, but will not be able to do it because we will not be able to use the 2022 funds for a new start.

But across the modernization program for the Army, new starts, 71 programs affected. Where Rock Island Arsenal indirectly supports those programs I do not know, but I will bet there is an impact. I do not want to speculate though.

Procurement delays, 29, and developmental delays, research and development activity, 32 programs delayed. So there is a huge impact across the Army there and arsenals like the Rock Island Arsenal are a key component to our holistic organic industrial base not only for today's needs but also for the future.

So it is very important that we continue to modernize them, and we do not want to wait till next year to do what we planned to do this year.

Thank you.

C–130 MODERNIZATION

Mrs. BUSTOS. Thank you, General Martin. I appreciate that.

Just one more question and I will be brief here. But, General Brown, it is great to see you, even though it is virtual. We so appreciate it out of Peoria, Illinois that you came to the 182nd Airlift Wing this past summer, and we always welcome you back.

And I know that Congressman Ryan already talked with you a little bit about the C–130s. You know, if you could drill maybe a little bit deeper on that.

Obviously, as we have this discussion about a yearlong CR and how that would affect Air Force acquisition and modernization efforts, you know, for the Air National Guard, you know, we have talked about providing upgraded technologies for the C–130Hs like the ones that are flown in Peoria.

But any additional thoughts, General Brown, especially specific to Peoria, Illinois?

General BROWN. Well, what I tell you is not just for Peoria and the work that they do, and I appreciate the opportunity to go visit, but when you look across the Guard, because of the funding and the way that we will have to dip into some of other accounts, then it will curtail some of their training.

So, you know, just for their day-to-day readiness as a C–130 unit, that will be impacted.

And then there is also the individual training. So the professional component for those particular airmen that will continue to build up on their skill sets, that will also be impacted.

I would also tell you it has ripple effects. So if you do not get the full training when you deserve it and you are supposed to be training someone behind you, then it just kind of, you know, slides downhill and it becomes a little bit of a slippery slope that we have to dig ourselves out of.

And so I have a concern not just for Peoria, but I really look across, you know, the Guard as a whole, the impact of curtailing or canceling training. We may miss those opportunities for those

airmen. It is tough to make up because you do not get that time back.

And so it is important that we want quality airmen. We want to make sure they have quality equipment to work with, and that is why it is important not to have a yearlong CR.

Thank you.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Very good. Thank you so much, General Brown.

And, Chairwoman McCollum, I will yield back. Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM [presiding]. Thank you.

And Mr. Cuellar, thank you for being there.

Mr. Womack, then Mrs. Kirkpatrick and Mr. Cartner.

FUNDING LEVELS

Mr. WOMACK. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

And my thanks to the witnesses that are here today. I am going to be very brief.

And first of all, I would apologize to all of the witnesses today that we are now two hours into this hearing, and I think we could have saved a lot of time on the part of these very busy gentlemen and ourselves for that matter by just being honest with ourselves and recognizing that a yearlong CR is bad.

And you can define bad a lot of ways, and we have seen and heard a lot of those definitions of what bad looks like. It is just bad.

But not only is it bad. It is embarrassing. It is embarrassing that we, the adults in the room here on the Appropriations Committee, cannot get out of our own way.

A couple of data points. One, we did not get the President's budget until May 28th. Now, that is not a dig on President Biden. It is a new administration. I realize it takes some time.

But we got the budget on May 28th, and the budget was for $753 billion, thereabouts, which figured in about a 1.6 percent increase over the CR of about 740 billion, woefully short and unacceptable, and it was known to be unacceptable when it was printed.

So here we are looking at the prospect of having to deal with a full year CR in the 740 range, but we have a bipartisan bicameral agreement on the NDAA of $768 billion. So a lot of good bipartisan bicameral work has already been done, and the number is pretty acceptable, I would say.

I am not going to ask all the service chiefs to comment on it, but 740, 768, I do not think there would be any doubt where everybody would fall on that particular number, which kind of leaves us, I think, to the legacy riders, legacy riders that have been in these bills for decades that have always had bipartisan bicameral support.

So, frankly, I am embarrassed as a Defense appropriator and as an appropriator in general that we have allowed that discussion to keep us from doing what our constitutional duty is, and that is provide for the common defense.

So it is a bad, bad situation that we are in right now, and we have got to overcome it and the sooner the better.

I think we could get to work on it tomorrow if we could just get some agreement that things that have been in these bills for dec-

ades deserve to be back in those bills, and that is the only way we are going to get a passage on something other than a full year CR.

BIENNIAL BUDGET

My only question I am going to direct to the Under Secretary. Back in 2018, another member of this subcommittee, Derek Kilmer on the other side, and myself participated in the Joint Select Committee on Budget Process Reform, and we spent the better part of the entire year of 2018 looking at the budget process, which is, in fact, part of the problem right now.

And we came up with a few ideas, and we got to the finish line, and even though our threshold for passing anything was pretty high, five members on each side of the aisle to come to agreement, and we did not get there, but that does not mean that the work was for naught.

So my question for the Under Secretary is simply this. One of the reforms that we advocated in that process reform and never got a chance to take to the floors of the House and the Senate was a biennial budget. So my question for you is this.

Would changing the process and at least getting us to a point where we could do a two-year budget with, say, annual appropriations, even annual reconciliation, but a biennial budget, how would that help us get past what we are doing here today?

Mr. MCCORD. Thank you, Congressman.

I do remember your service on that committee, and I recall Defense per se was not a big player because it was more focused on some of the bigger movers on the entitlements side, but I do recall your work on that, and I thank you for it.

Biennial budgeting was looked at, I know, early in my career on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate. In the 1980s, we tried doing biennial authorizations once or twice, had limited sort of consensus with the Appropriations Committees at that time between the appropriators and authorizers, and it kind of petered out, honestly.

It does offer potential. I would love to see us master the art of annual budgeting first because biennial budgeting is a little harder, you know, but I recognize that many States do it and it can be done.

We would certainly be open to looking at that. I know that there is a commission that is being created by the new authorization bill, newly enacted authorization bill on PPB reform, which is a subset sort of focused on the internal Pentagon part of the process, a little different than what you are saying but related.

I think, ironically, we will not be able to support the stand-up of that commission under CR until this issue is resolved, but there is some movement afoot, I think, on that front, and that commission may well want to expand its purview a little bit beyond the internal Pentagon part of the budget process to take on the very idea that you are mentioning. It might be good work for that commission to take a fresh look at also.

Mr. WOMACK. Well, we would like to continue to elevate that discussion because anything is better than where we are today, and hopefully, we will eventually get there.

Anyway, my thanks to the panelists today.

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity. I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. You are so welcome.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Mr. Carter, and then Mr. Kilner.

HYPERSONICS

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Thank you, Madam Chair and ranking member, for having this hearing.

And thank you to all the witnesses who have taken the time to appear before the committee. I appreciate your testimony. I appreciate the time that you have spent with us.

As you know, this is a really important hearing in terms of my district. Admiral Gilday touched on hypersonics, and I understand that the Army expects its hypersonic weapons to be ready by fiscal year 2023 and is investing significant resources to make that a reality.

Important research and development activities for hypersonic weapons are conducted in my district, and our committee appreciates how critical these programs are for our national security.

General McConville or General Martin, either one of you, the entire department has focused on increasing resources on hypersonic weapons in recent years. I know you are on an aggressive track to field the first system by fiscal year 2023.

So can you please describe to us what a delay in appropriations does to your schedule?

General MARTIN. Congresswoman, thank you.

As it pertains to the first battery, the first battery field in 2023, no impact. However, $111 million shortfall in 2022 resulting from the CR will delay the initial operating capability of our second battery from 2025 to 2026.

In addition, the Army will not have the necessary funds to produce this year as we planned the training rounds so that the units can use those rounds to train on in preparation for executing their jobs in a live environment. And so there would be a delay on that as well.

But those are the two significant delays to the hypersonic program, in addition to what Admiral Gilday described previously in his testimony pertaining to the technical delays.

NEXT GENERATION INTERCEPTOR PROGRAM

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Now I just want to shift gears just a little bit to the next generation interceptor. The Next Generation Interceptor Program is required to provide the United States homeland coverage from incoming intercontinental ballistic missile attacks in the 2030 time frame. These are ground based.

So, Under Secretary McCord, in the case of a yearlong CR, how would programs like NGI have to pivot and adjust?

And then my second question for you is give us an understanding of how contracts might need to be modified to reflect less funding and what impact that would have on the bottom line of these programs.

Mr. MCCORD. Thank you. Thank you.

On the next generation interceptor, since that program is in a somewhat earlier stage, it has got the flexibility that R&D has if there is not a new start involved, and I will get a response to you

for the record as to whether there is a new start issue specific to that program.

With respect to the contracting, probably the most common thing that people do is either delay a contract award until if there is a new start issue they have no choice but to delay a contract award or to shorten a period of performance.

There are ways that basically it's part of the hidden inefficiency of the CR process. It is the work-around, you know. The job will get done in a less efficient way and possibly more costly way, but there are contracting modifications.

Contracting and budgeting, of course, are in our process a little bit two separate things, and there are multiple ways that one can contract for something depending on, you know, the circumstance. But the lack of funding is something that no contracting mechanism can by itself overcome.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Okay. Thank you.

And can you address a little bit how this is going to affect the bottom line of these programs?

Mr. MCCORD. Well, both with respect to hypersonics and, I think, General Raymond also made some great points in his opening statement about the Space Force generally, is the areas where you are trying to go the fastest, where you have the most change is what is impacted the most by the requirement that you do what you did last year at the rate that you did it last year, at the funding level that you did it last year.

Hypersonics is a great example across several of the services, and I think several of the chiefs could probably respond to this with respect to their own program where the fact that we are trying to make more progress, that is where we are hurt the most.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Thank you very much.

And, Madam Chair, I yield back.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

Next, we go to Mr. Carter. Mr. Carter and then Mr. Kilmer and then to close up, it will be Mr. Diaz-Balart and Mr. Aderholt.

Mr. Carter.

IMPACT ON THE ARMY PROGRAMS

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

You know, we have got some members of Congress who do not know comeback from Sikkim about the appropriations process. They make stupid comments about what would be good for this country.

That may be the purpose of educating them this particular year. Everyone on the Appropriations Committee does not like CRs. We do not want long or short-term CRs. We like to finish our work on time and put together our product for the benefit of the country.

I think what somebody said that this place should not be driving at all.

But I want to thank all of you for being here. General Martin, I want to thank you for telling everybody about the importance of training. Training keeps those alive. The inability to train makes a soldier not as prepared, and that is very important.

You know, we are trying to read the modernization of the United States Army. The things we are looking into, the Big Six Power,

these are long-range projects, next generation combat vehicles, future vertical lift, network air and missile defense.

Tell me. Realizing that nobody wants a CR, what would a CR do for that? General Martin.

General MARTIN. Thank you, Congressman. It is good to see you as always.

There are 24 programs that we are supposed to have in the hands in one form, fashion, or another in 2023. Nineteen of those 24 programs, the timeline for those activities to land those in formations would be affected. So it is a huge effect to our modernization effort.

You know, you are from the State of Texas, and you know all about Army Futures Command, and you understand what they have done with project convergence. In 2021, we have got a lot of momentum going with that, with the Joint Force, and next year we are to focus on multinational partners.

Our effort would be severely impacted with a CR because there is funding that we have asked for in 2022 that will help us set conditions to execute project convergence 2022 that we will not be able to put our hands on.

And so, all of the progress we have made over time for the past two years will be slowed, at best, and could be potentially stopped.

And as my colleagues have said multiple times, our adversaries are not having the same problem with consistent, predictable, timely funding for these various programs.

And so, project convergence is huge for the United States Army, and we have got to have the funding to be able to do that. And without any anomaly and the ability to reprogram, it will be virtually impossible to do that.

And so, I sincerely urge Congress to move forward with appropriating the fiscal year 2022 budget.

Thank you.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

Mr. Kilmer——

Mr. CARTER. Can you hear me?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. You have got a minute left. I thought you said you——

Mr. CARTER. Okay. I accidentally hit the wrong button.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Oh, okay. I can hear you now.

MR. CARTER REMARKS

Mr. CARTER. I just wanted to say to the Odierno family you are in our thoughts and prayers. The family has given an awful lot to the United States and an awful lot to the United States Army, and we all ought to be thinking about the sacrifices that the entire Odierno family has given for our Nation. I am proud to call them my friends.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I reflect those words. Well said, Mr. Carter, and thank you so much for saying them. I appreciate it.

Mr. Kilmer.

SHIPYARD INFRASTRUCTURE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

Mr. KILMER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thanks to all the witnesses for being with us.

I had two questions, and they are both for Admiral Gilday.

First of all, I know I do not need to emphasize to you the importance of the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, or SIOP, the Navy's 20-year $21 billion effort to upgrade and modernize our public shipyards. I very much appreciate your past statements in support of this program.

I applaud the Navy for appointing Rear Admiral McClelland as the head of the SIOP Program Office. I was lucky enough to meet with him earlier this week. He provided some valuable insights into the program, and I am glad to see the Navy showing its commitment to the SIOP with his appointment.

I think it is a big deal as we look to restore and reinvest in our public shipyards, including Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in my neck of the woods.

And knowing the importance of the SIOP and also reading all of your testimony about the impact and the potential impact of a CR not just on operations, but on military construction as well, I worry that any CR related impacts to the program could lead to a situation in which maintenance drives operations instead of maintenance supporting operations.

So, with that in mind, can you just share what impact a full year CR would have on the SIOP?

Admiral GILDAY. Yes, sir. There are a few areas we are going to see impact.

The first would be in the ongoing project at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard up in New Hampshire and Maine. And so in my own funding request I requested $225 million for a base project up there for a drydock that needs to be revitalized because there are actually single digit days a year we can bring a ship in and out of drydock there.

Our drydocks, the 18 of them across our four shipyards, the average age is 97 years old. We have not touched them in a century. This is once in a century work.

The new *Virginia*-class submarines that we are building, they are longer. They have a payload section in them that brings considerable lethality to the fight, and so because they are bigger, they are too large for the drydocks.

For that particular drydock up there in Portsmouth, we need to finish that project in time for 2028 to get the first Virginia class on the East Coast in maintenance, and that will be delayed. And we are not sure how specifically we would be able to mitigate that delay.

Secondly, we are in the process of identifying and hiring 42 subject matter experts who are coming from industry, real patriots to join this effort, and the hiring of those individuals will be delayed. We will do the best we can to try to encourage them to stay with us, but I think it is going to be difficult.

As you are aware, besides the drydock work, we are also trying to accelerate infrastructure work. So, these shipyards, because they are over 100 years old, are like Frankenstein in a way that we just

added buildings, and so they are very inefficient with respect to workflow of pump work, valve work that flows through these yards.

And so, we are taking a look at through modeling how we can best recapitalize this infrastructure in a way that accelerates and gives the best efficiencies, the best optimization.

And it will delay that work that we are trying to do for infrastructure. So this is MILCON and also projects that fall below the MILCON level that would allow us to reinvest in critical infrastructure. It will delay that as well, probably one to two years.

And I will pause there.

SHIPYARD MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITIES

Mr. KILMER. Let me if I could. Admiral, in your written testimony, you also mention the impacts of the CR on the operations of our public and private shipyards, and specifically reference some of the potential delays or cancellations of maintenance availabilities for five attack subs, two carriers, and just the cascading impact that will have on our shipyard maintenance availabilities well into the future.

I hope you can just expand on some of those written comments and provide the committee some additional insight into those future delays to maintenance availabilities under a potential yearlong CR.

How will these maintenance availability delays and cancellations impact our capability to compete with China and other near peer competitors?

Admiral GILDAY. Sir, you said it very accurately when you said it would increase the situation where you have maintenance leading operations, which is not where you want to be.

And so, our availabilities or maintenance availabilities for those nuclear-powered vessels are really planned toe to heel. As soon as we are done with one, we are bringing in the next. That is the way the production line works. That is how we are most efficient.

And this is going to cause a perturbation, and we saw this during sequestration, and we are still catching up a decade later. We cannot afford to do that based on where we are now with China for all of the reasons my contemporaries and Secretary McCord stated earlier.

And so, this going to cause a perturbation that we are still unraveling in terms of operational schedules. It keeps carrier strike groups and amphibious ready groups on point in the Western Pacific and beyond.

I will pause there.

Mr. KILMER. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I yield back.

CHAIR MCCOLLUM REMARKS

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

I was looking on the screen to see Mr. Diaz-Balart. Mr. Diaz-Balart, are you present to ask a question?

Sometimes people turn their cameras off. I will give him another minute.

Now, Mr. Aderholt, if you are there, you can certainly go.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. It appears, Mr. Calvert, that those members are not there. Do you concur with that?

Mr. CALVERT. Apparently not. So Madam Chair.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. So, if you would like to make a closing summary statement, I will make mine, sir.

MR. CALVERT CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. CALVERT. Sure. Thank you.

I appreciate the witnesses being here today.

We have had a lot of difficulties of late in trying to get these appropriation bills complete, and that is unfortunate. And while we are doing that, we have seen our adversaries become bolder because weakness is provocative.

Certainly our hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan was a signal to the world that this administration will abandon our allies, risk the lives of U.S. service members, and even leave U.S. citizens behind. That was a very unfortunate situation.

And now we are facing an unfortunate situation both in Europe and in Taiwan. As I think our friend Mr. Churchill said many years ago, the worst two words in the English language are too late. So we have a responsibility to get this bill done.

I know we all want to get it done, and the people say there are not any offers on the table. Well, let me reiterate what the former chairman of this committee said about revisionist history.

We all know that the framework has always been that these legacy riders remain and these poison pills go out. That is what happened last year, the year before that, and the year before that.

And so, I would hope that with that understanding we can get to the table and negotiate this bill, bring the defense numbers up, the non-defense discretionary down, and let's get this done by at least February 18th for the men and women who are serving in the United States military.

With that, Madam Chair, I yield back.

CHAIR MCCOLLUM CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you.

And I am not in the position to disagree with everything that has happened and every appropriation committee in the history of humankind here in the United States Capitol, but on the conference committees I have been involved in, the riders were left to the end.

We had our budget agreement for what our new target was between the House and the Senate that we had to spend up to, and so you know, everybody has had different experiences up here, and I just have to say that those have been my experiences.

Another point I would like to bring out, and, yes, President Biden's budget came out on May 28th. That was his first budget, first year as President. President Trump's budget came out on May 23rd. That is a five-day difference, but President Biden was dealing with an assault on our Capitol on January 6th, as well as COVID in preparing his budget.

I just wanted to make sure that everybody understood that all Presidents' first year budgets come out a little late.

Today was an opportunity not only to recommit ourselves as appropriators on this subcommittee but on the full committee which we all serve to get our job done on time, and now to really push leadership to make sure that we finish this appropriations process by the February date that we have agreed to.

I want to also say that this was an opportunity, I believe, to educate our colleagues, those who do not understand the work that we do, the impacts that CRs have, and as many of my colleagues on the other side said, CRs are just not a good idea. We are all in agreement with that.

Gentlemen, I want to thank you all for being here today. I want to thank you for your testimony.

I also would like you to pass on our thanks to those who serve in uniform and the civilians who serve alongside of you. Your work is very much appreciated, and we know that the work you do keeps us safe here at home and keeps democracy's beacon abroad lit well.

This concludes today's proceeding, and as I said, once again, from all of us, thank you to all of our witnesses and members for an enlightening discussion, and let's get the bills for appropriations passed this February.

Thank you very much, and with that the hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

[Answers to submitted questions for the record follow:]

The Honorable Tom Cole
House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee for Defense
Impacts of a Continuing Resolution, 12 January 2022
Questions for the Record

Question One: Impact of CRs on critical Air Force maintenance depot activities: General Brown, thank you for your testimony today, it is a pleasure to see you again. My first question is about the impact of CRs on our Air Force depots, such as the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex, and on the Air Force Sustainment Center at Tinker Air Force Base in my district. Obviously, all the services have maintenance depot facilities around the country which are crucial to military readiness. These facilities maintain and overhaul major weapon systems and efficiently return safe and upgraded platforms to the warfighter. These are very complicated operations, requiring detailed, advanced logistical planning and organized, efficient supply chains. The longer these platforms are grounded, the greater the impact on military readiness. The challenges, restrictions, and lack of certainty that even short-term continuing resolutions exact on these particular processes are very detrimental. Can you please outline some of the impacts of successive short term CRs and long term CRs on depot maintenance processes, aircraft safety, readiness, costs, schedule, and so forth? In what ways is a long-term CR different, worse, or better than successive short ones?

Answer: A Continuing Resolution (CR) of three months or more poses numerous challenges and impacts to modernization and depot readiness, for example:

- Inability to start new programs or MILCON projects like Tinker's KC-46A maintenance hangar
- Inability to absorb workload increases versus planned programmed depot maintenance for Tankers, Bombers and E-3 aircraft (i.e., no flex to absorb any increases to O&M-funded customer requests)
- Decreased flight time – reduced Flying Hour Program execution has negative impact on Working Capital Fund rates
- Inability to finalize contracts and negotiations

Our greatest resource at Air Force depots is people. Long term CRs can cause civilian hiring freezes and hinder our ability to attract, recruit, and retain the highly skilled workforce of mechanics, machinists, and engineers at our depots.

Fewer industry partners are willing to bid on contracts when budgets are unpredictable which means less competition and increased costs. This lack of competition also leads to fewer parts and services suppliers. The Air Force is already faced with dwindling sources of supply to support legacy systems; budget uncertainty only worsens these challenges.

Suppliers become increasingly hesitant to take risk or do business with the Air Force when a CR is imminent, even for short periods of time. When they do, we find suppliers mitigate their risk through increased pricing, which is already prevalent and significantly increasing as a result of budget reductions and COVID-19 supply chain disruptions.

Our force is better able to execute when we operate with stable and predictable budgets. A Continuing Resolution, regardless of length, drives uncertainty and inefficient execution, threatening the readiness of our force and our ability to keep pace with our adversaries.

Question Two: General Martin, as a strong advocate for our national defense and as the Representative for the Lawton / Fort Sill community, I am a strong supporter of most of the Army's primary modernization priorities. These programs are critical for maintaining readiness for defense against near-peer threats and for achieving improved, joint, multi-domain operations. Can you please speak to the impacts of successive short term CRs and also on potential impacts of any potential year-long freeze on the Army's "31 + 4" signature modernization priorities? This list, of course, includes the Extended Range Cannon Artillery (ERCA) program, the Precision Strike Missile, and many other key programs. I also want to add a mention of the Paladin Integrated Management (PIM) program, which is a major priority of mine for this year.

Answer: While the Army has adapted its business practices to maneuver through fiscal uncertainty and the effects of short-duration continuing resolutions (CRs), I am deeply concerned that a year-long CR would adversely affect our Soldiers, and Readiness and Modernization Efforts. A year-long CR would cause moderate to severe impacts in the Army's ability to respond to emerging operational requirements, make necessary funding realignments, avoid surge spending, and process financial transactions in a timely and accurate manner.

The combined effect of delays in procurement and prototype advancement, on top of a disruption in timelines for development and construction of critical Army and Joint technologies, may very well create a cumulative impact to our modernization initiatives that will be difficult to overcome.

For example, a full-year CR would limit a planned procurement increase in the Precision Strike Missile (PrSM) program by locking in funding at the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21)-level of $50 million (M), far below the Department's FY22 request of $166M. This would limit the Army to procure only 28 of the 110 planned missiles and would result in a significant increase in unit price due to quantity reduction.

The Army is fortunate that there are currently no anticipated short or long-term continuing resolution impacts to either the Paladin Integrated Management (PIM) or Extended Range Cannon Artillery (ERCA) programs (armament portion). In the case of both programs, funding requirements for FY22 are lower than the prior fiscal year. However, under a full-year CR there would be impacts to the ERCA ammunition portfolio managed by Picatinny Arsenal because of the restriction on new starts. The ERCA Operational Assessment (OA) would be degraded without the ability to range to 70km due to the lack of long range munitions and propelling charges that were scheduled for procurement in FY22.

Question Three: Mr. McCord, unfortunately the Department of Defense and its modernization and maintenance priorities are not facing the challenges of continuing resolutions alone. The

nation also continues to face generally-disrupted supply chains for a broad range of goods as well as lasting impacts of COVID. These factors, combined with acute workforce shortages caused by economic forces, by COVID, and in some places compounded by effects of vaccine requirements, create a perfect storm of major and costly disruption. The effects of all of these issues together could take many years to recover from and certainly present concerning consequences for national security as our worldwide threats rapidly increase. Can you please speak to the impact of the combined challenges of workforce disruptions, COVID, the supply chain crisis, and the persistent continuing resolutions and their impacts on readiness, on high-priority modernization programs, and on maintenance depot operations?

Answer: The first-wave of the pandemic, including travel restrictions, sheltering-in-place and lock downs in the United States and around the world, disrupted several activities in the DoD Industrial Base sector. The second, third wave, and beyond increased the combined effects of workforce disruptions, compliance with workplace vaccination requirements and unprecedented supply chain disruptions resulting in financial and operational consequences. Continuing resolutions impact our ability to show steady demand and cause uncertainty throughout our supply chain, especially among lower tier suppliers. Further, those small and/or specialized suppliers do not have the resources to weather delays in contract or delivery order awards in the same manner that the Primary suppliers do.

Many businesses and organizations in the commercial sector and in the government-owned/contractor-operated and government-owned/government-operated facilities that support defense-based products and services have had to implement new safety measures, compliance standards, and prevention policies to help protect the workforce and mitigate delays in production output. Protocols such as physical distancing, vaccine requirements, and personal protective equipment have helped to keep the virus transmission lower but have caused decreased production throughput. Mounting absences among COVID-infected workers continue to cause challenges with getting enough workers to fill production orders.

There are also lingering concerns with suppliers sustaining their production rates to ensure the DoD receives what it needs to meet mission readiness. The Department is exploring alternatives to ensure a better and more resilient supplier base. We're carefully looking at businesses that supply critical components and materials because the timing for receiving those items could result in long-term delays and problems for the Defense Industrial Base (DIB).

The DIB is already concentrated in a handful of major Prime contractors and their subcontractors. Many specialized vendors or small business suppliers are choosing to support other business sectors rather than defense. If this trend continues, the DIB may struggle to meet the Department's requirements in the future.

For high priority programs, like the Columbia class, on-boarding and retaining skilled workforce at pace needed was a challenge prior to the pandemic, and remains a challenge. Like the rest of the Defense Industrial Base, depots are in competition for the shrinking labor pool. Further, shortages prior to the pandemic have negatively impacted the depot mission. Those conditions remain during COVID. COVID and COVID restrictions still continue to cause challenges with having enough workforce to fill orders.

While the COVID-19 pandemic created a supply chain shock of unparalleled global scope and scale, supply chain disruptions have become more frequent and severe overall. Companies must now plan to address the consequences of everything from wildfires and power outages to cyberattacks and acute workforce dissatisfaction. U.S. armed forces rely on the commercial sector to design and produce many necessary capabilities and subcomponents, so these disruptions could pose significant risks to national security.

The risks of disruption have grown with the increasing complexity of U.S. defense supply chains. The average American aerospace company now relies on roughly 200 Tier 1 suppliers. The second and third tiers can have more than 12,000 companies. With the globalization of supply chains, these suppliers and their goods can come from a wide array of places. Some foundational industrial supply chain sectors, like optical instruments, mechanical gears, welding equipment, and printed circuit boards source the best part of their components from outside North America.

Commodity pricing is also an issue. Supply chain issues have caused commodity prices to increase. Contractors on fixed-price contracts can end up feeling the squeeze. Economic price adjustments (EPAs) are allowed under the FAR, but they only go so far, and using EPAs on a large number of contracts is untenable.

While the Department is prepared to meet immediate requirements, the destabilizing impacts of continuing resolutions degrade our capabilities, inhibiting our ability to modernize and achieve strategic objectives across threats and time horizons. Without stable, predictable funding, we will struggle to realize a ready Joint Force that can modernize and outpace our competitors.

To date, the Department's system of record for tracking unit readiness, the Defense Readiness Reporting System – Strategic, reflects few examples of decreased readiness due to COVID. Since the rapid transmission on the USS Theodore Roosevelt there have been few examples of tangible readiness impacts from COVID due to mitigation actions taken by the Department, including vaccines mandates.

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt
House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee for Defense
Impacts of a Continuing Resolution, 12 January 2022
Questions for the Record

Question One: I would like to know if the work on the new engine for hypersonics weapons is on pace to maintain the planned fielding date of the Army hypersonic weapon. Also, is the Administration resolute on fielding that weapon, regardless of geopolitical pressure from Russia or others?

Answer: Yes, the development of the 34.5-inch missile body, consisting of two solid propellant rocket motors, being utilized by both the Navy and the Army for hypersonic capabilities is on track to meet the Army's fielding in fiscal year 2023. As part of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Services, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Missile Defense Agency, the Navy is leading the development and production of the missile body. The joint Army/Navy team has had several successful static fire tests on the solid rocket motor, with the latest occurring in October 2021. The Army remains on track to field the Long Range Hypersonic Weapon in FY23, as planned.

Question Two: In the 2021 annual report on Chinese military power the DoD raised concerns with the pacing challenge presented by China's increasingly capable military and global ambitions. Is the DoD multi-year strategy to create and maintain a superior technological advantage over China when it comes to weapons or has the focus shifted to a certain number of weapons?

Answer: The Department is focused on developing a Joint Force that has the capacity and capability to adequately deter or defeat aggression from strategic competitors, and China is the Department's pacing challenge. These efforts seek to balance the costs associated with modernization and the requirements for mass in the most pressing force planning scenarios. Additionally, the Department is investing in the industrial base to ensure U.S. production capacity can respond in the event of crisis.

Question Three: In recent years, North Korea has advanced its rocketry faster than what our analysts expected 10 to 15 years ago. Given North Korea's obvious intent to continue tests, what do you hope to see in the FY23 budget request in terms of outfitting Aegis ships to be able to counter any possible attack by North Korea?

Answer: The Navy seeks to continue expanding capability and capacity to the surface fleet while leveraging ongoing Aegis modernization and new construction efforts to field Integrated Air & Missile Defense combat systems improvements and weapons delivered by the Missile Defense Agency to support Combatant Commander tasking.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022.

U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND

WITNESS

GENERAL TOD D. WOLTERS, COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND, AND NATO SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE (SACEUR)

UNITED STATES HOUSE

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DEFENSE

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL TOD D. WOLTERS, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COMMANDER

UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND

9 March, 2022

UNITED STATES HOUSE

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DEFENSE

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the House Appropriations Committee on Defense, on behalf of the dedicated men, women, and their families preserving peace in the European theater, it is an honor to testify before you today for a final time a U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) Commander. It has been a privilege to continue to serve alongside our dedicated patriots in a mission essential to our national security. Their selfless service and determined commitment is an inspiration. Together, with Allies and Partners, our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen, and civilians work tirelessly to deliver peace and secure the United States' interests.

For the last eight decades, European nations have been key Allies and Partners for the United States, and today, they collectively serve as exporters of global peace and security. The Interim National Security Strategy articulates how a free and prosperous Europe, defended by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Alliance, remains foundational to our security in a competitive geopolitical environment. USEUCOM aligns operations, activities, and investments to meet the challenges of Strategic Competition with the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. Through our strategy, we compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare with our Allies and Partners to respond decisively. Standing alongside our teammates, USEUCOM remains ready, should deterrence fail, to fight and win. We value collaboration across the Joint Force to implement U.S. and Allied strategic direction, and express gratitude for your continued Congressional interest and support.

In Europe, malign activity and direct military aggression, energy competition, and forced migration stress the rules-based international order and strain the resources of states. Strategic competitors use all instruments of national power to exploit these conditions to gain advantage and create instability. This nexus challenges governments and institutions like NATO and the European Union (EU) to develop coordinated and complementary policies to counter malign activity. To address these issues, USEUCOM's strategy prioritizes supporting NATO's

deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area, countering malign influence, strengthening strategic relationships, and enabling U.S. global operations. We have seen NATO, EU, and global partners unite to collectively push back against Russia's invasion of Ukraine and efforts to undermine the rules-based international order.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES IN THE USEUCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (AOR)

USEUCOM's geographic region encompasses 50 countries and territories. It contains a vast maritime domain, encompassing a large part of the Arctic region, the North and central Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea, and multiple strategic chokepoints. We work diligently across the Euro-Atlantic to secure our common interests and to deter and respond to aggression.

Russian Federation

Russia's nuclear arsenal and strike capability remains an enduring, existential threat to the United States, democracy, and our peaceful Allies and Partners. A central concern is Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons stockpile and the Kremlin's potential to use these weapons in crisis or conflict.

Russia pursues malign activities, including military aggression, aimed at undermining democracy, the rules-based international order, and has a willingness to use force to achieve its aims. Russia pursues these activities despite widespread international condemnation and economic sanctions. President Putin leverages coercive and aggressive policies to counter Western influence and threaten peace and stability in Europe.

Russia employs grey area activities to maintain its purported sphere of influence, and attempts to coerce neighboring sovereign nations and form fractures between Allies at NATO. Russia meddles in European politics, abrogates its responsibilities under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, engaged in an unprovoked and unjustified armed attack against Ukraine, and retains a military presence on sovereign soil in Moldova and Georgia against the will of those nations. Russia maintains a large conventional force presence along NATO's borders and conducts snap exercises to increase instability. Russia employs

unconventional tools, ranging from disinformation campaigns, malicious cyber activities, and the manipulation of energy markets to support Moscow's efforts at political subversion and economic intimidation. These tools and others are intended to coerce, weaken, and divide our Allies and Partners in the European theater and beyond. Russian leadership habitually misinterprets warnings and has directly instigated armed conflict with Ukraine, while continuing to expand the space below the level of armed conflict in other Allied and Partner nations.

Beyond Ukraine, Russia continues its military modernization while displaying its destabilizing capabilities during operations in Syria, and Libya. As a result, the Russian government has growing confidence in its military leadership and menu of hybrid, conventional, strategic, and non-strategic nuclear capabilities needed to underwrite its 21st century security approach. Today, Russia underpins its military with Integrated Air Defense Systems (IADS), tactical undersea warfare capabilities, cyber and electromagnetic systems, anti-satellite weapons and counter-space capabilities, unmanned aerial and ground systems, and long-range hypersonic and precision fire capabilities.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

The PRC seeks to increase its access, presence, and influence in Europe and globally to achieve its objective of being socially-stable, economically prosperous, and militarily powerful by 2050. The PRC engages in aggressive and subversive economic and diplomatic activities in the USEUCOM AOR not only to find markets to strengthen the Chinese economy, but also to establish presence at key transportation nodes and increase its political influence. China's foreign direct investment, government-backed business ventures, and infrastructure deals not only secure the PRC's advantage in global trade, market access, and technological standards, but also provides Beijing an avenue to assert influence at the expense of enduring U.S., Allied, and Partner interests. The PRC primarily pursues bilateral deals, as well as engagements, through PRC-led forums such as the *16+1 Cooperation Framework* (Lithuania withdrew in 2021) with Central and Eastern European nations. European nations are growing increasingly

skeptical of these engagements and have identified the formats as divisive.

The PRC focuses on seizing the "high ground" in critical and emerging technology sectors with military application, including Artificial Intelligence, advanced robotics, quantum technologies, and hypersonic systems, and at the same time it seeks to export its national technology standards globally. The PRC's efforts to expand 5G networks throughout Europe via state-backed firms, such as Huawei and ZTE, pose significant security risks to the interests and military forces if the U.S., Allies, and Partners. These networks place intellectual property, sensitive information, technology, and private personal information at heightened risk of acquisition and exploitation by the Chinese government. PRC continues to invest significantly in European ports and transportation nodes, as well as other critical infrastructure in Europe.

USEUCOM works closely with our European defense counterparts to articulate risks and establish a shared understanding of the security environment. We also support the U.S. interagency in highlighting the shared values, interests, and equitable business practices that distinguish the current rules-based international order. European nations are becoming increasingly aware of, and concerned about, the strings attached to capital and investment from the PRC, and are recognizing that the PRC is a systemic rival. Together, we must hold the PRC accountable for its predatory and unfair practices and ensure that Western technologies do not facilitate the PRC's military buildup. Several countries have removed Huawei from their networks, imposed new investment screening mechanisms, and have decided not to choose Chinese investments particularly because of the threat this poses to European security. More than at any time in recent years, our European Allies and Partners recognize the risk PRC presents to European security.

Eastern Flank

NATO's Eastern Flank remains a strategic focal point. It remains at risk of Russian aggression and lies on the territorial periphery of Russia's invasion of peaceful Ukraine. The geopolitical alignment of the Bucharest 9 – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary,

Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia – reminds Russia of its limited sphere of control and NATO's appeal to regional states. These states have made significant contributions to assist Ukraine against Russia's aggression. Collectively, they have provided both lethal and non-lethal assistance, have opened their borders to Ukraine refugees, closed their air space, and supported economic sanctions against Russia.

In the Baltics, the Russian government actively targets ethnic Russian population with extensive propaganda and malign influence operations, while conducting cyber operations to weaken Alliance resolve. Russian forces along NATO's periphery in its Western Military District and Kaliningrad hold a geographic and numerical advantage over regional military and NATO enhanced Forward Presence forces. This imbalance emphasizes the importance of timely indications and warnings that enable the positioning of combat-capable forces to deter and respond if deterrence fails.

NATO Allies continue their commitment to collective defense. Enhanced Forward Presence bolsters NATO's posture in the east with four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia are all currently working on additional posture plans within a NATO context. In the face of Russia's aggression, the United States and our NATO Allies have committed additional forces demonstrating our collective resolve. NATO air and missile defense forces reinforce collective security and stability through Baltic air policing operations and air defense exercises. Each of these states contributes to their own defense and the three Baltic States have expanded their efforts to control the maritime domain in their littoral.

Poland continues to meet Alliance commitments through defense budget increases, infrastructure improvements, and logistical support via the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, and its modernization efforts include Abrams tanks, Patriot air defense, and F-35 weapon system acquisitions. Poland also hosts the U.S. Army's Fifth Corps forward headquarters in Poznan, providing a needed level of command and control to synchronize multi-

national tactical formations operating in Europe. Poland also demonstrates its commitment to collective security by hosting additional U.S. forces during the current crisis.

Black Sea Region

Russia continues to exert malign influence and demonstrate its willingness to use overt force in the Black Sea region to include use of its Black Sea fleet to attack Ukraine. The war in Ukraine, instigated solely by Russia, continues to destabilize Ukrainian security and the entire region. In addition to armed attack against Ukraine, Russia continues to subvert the Ukrainian government through malicious cyber activities and information operations, illegally recognizing Ukraine's eastern areas of Donetsk and Luhansk as sovereign states, and continuing to illegally occupy Crimea. Contrary to Russia's intent, these coercive actions reinforce Ukraine's aspirations of membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions. Russia's aggression also led to a deployment of U.S. forces in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

The Russian government exerts influence over South Caucasus countries by exploiting regional tensions and unresolved military conflicts, and employing economic levers and provocative information activities. Russia maintains leverage over Georgia by occupying the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, blocking free movement of people and goods within Georgia's territory, detaining and harassing civilians living in and near occupied areas, and undermining the NATO membership aspirations of Georgia and other partner nations. After brokering a ceasefire arrangement between Armenia and Azerbaijan in November 2020, Russia increased its military presence in the region by deploying 2,000 troops to Nagorno-Karabakh as "peacekeepers." Since the early 1990s, Russia has continued to occupy the Transnistria region of Moldova with 1,500 "peacekeepers" without host nation consent. Moldovan President Sandu has called for the withdrawal of Russian troops and we continue to support a peaceful resolution to the Transnistrian conflict and full reintegration of Transnistria with Moldova.

Atlantic and the Arctic Region

As part of the global ocean, the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans must remain open and free to facilitate commerce between Europe, North America, and other international markets. We ensure these vital sea lines of communication remain open by securing the Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom gap, enabling access between the Atlantic and Arctic. USEUCOM coordinates with U. S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in these regions ensuring a comprehensive approach between Euro-Atlantic and homeland security. Collaborating with our European defense counterparts, we work to enhance interoperability and proficiency, while demonstrating collective resolve to counter malign behavior.

In the Arctic, Russia continues to develop its Northern Sea Route and the PRC seeks increased access to expand its Polar Silk Road initiative. The Chinese government continues to invest in Russian energy and seeks economic footholds among Arctic nations to gain influence over regional governance. To ensure openness, USEUCOM joint forces maintain near persistent North Atlantic and Arctic presence while strengthening all-domain relationships with Allies and Partners. Alongside our UK, French, Norwegian, and Canadian counterparts, U.S. maritime forces continue to demonstrate maritime capability and credibility presence in the region.

The existing rules-based international order benefits all Arctic nations by facilitating sustainable economic development, fostering cooperation, and promoting a stable, conflict-free region. As a strategic corridor, a more open and active Arctic region will increasingly connect the U.S. Homeland, Europe, and the Indo-Pacific. In concert with other Arctic advocates, via a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM must continue to maintain a credible Arctic deterrence to ensure that growing competition in this dynamic region does not lead to conflict.

Western Balkans

The Western Balkans remains a strategically significant region as a nexus for strategic competition where Russia, and now PRC, use malign influence to roil existing ethnic tensions and seek to foster instability. Russia uses social and political pressures to impede these

countries' Euro-Atlantic alignment and integration. Since Russia's attack on Ukraine, Balkan NATO members and partners have joined efforts for assistance and support. PRC's emergence as an alternative patron for economic and defense cooperation, under suspect terms, further disrupts the region. With our four newest NATO Allies, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia, and Albania, we have expanded bilateral defense relations to the benefit of European collective security on NATO's southern flank.

Despite Kosovo declaring independence in 2008, Russia, the PRC, and some other states have failed to recognize its sovereignty. Kosovo and Serbia have to make more significant progress towards the normalization of relations. We support the EU-facilitated dialogue between the parties as it works for a peaceful, lasting solution. NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) retains a small but significant U.S. contribution that continues to bolster regional stability. KFOR enables the security conditions required for a safe and secure environment and conducive to reaching a political solution on normalizing of Serbia-Kosovo relations. The United States continues important work assisting the Kosovo Security Force's planned 10-year transition to a limited, territorial defense force.

Serbia has maintained its strategic goal of joining the EU, while seeking balance between East (Russia and the PRC) and West. However. Serbia recently joined 140 other nations of the United Nations General Assembly in condemning Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Serbia has a long road to its eventual EU accession, and its full alignment with EU foreign policy remains an important part of that. The United States and our Allies have improved bilateral defense ties with Serbia in recent years, with increasing cooperation in military exercises, training, and cooperation on international peacekeeping. Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to face political and ethnic instability. Fueled by Russian influence, obstructionists seek greater autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb-majority political entity, Republika Srpska, to weaken state authorities and frustrate further alignment with Western institutions. Nationalist politics and narratives of ethnic divisions between Bosniaks, Bosnian-Croats, and Bosnian-

Serbs challenge Bosnia and Herzegovina's ability to chart a path of lasting stability and eventual NATO membership. Nevertheless, the United States maintains robust ties with the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, assisting its progress toward NATO-standard capability targets.

PRC seeks to expand influence in this region primarily through economic means. PRC investments focus on large-scale transportation, energy, and information infrastructure. USEUCOM is concerned about PRC motives as these initiatives expose EU and NATO member states to coercion and adversely affect the security of critical infrastructure. Furthermore, the PRC continues to expand its defense and security ties with Serbia, particularly via high-level visits, arms sales, and exercises.

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO)

We continue to support U.S. interagency counter-VEO initiatives and those of our European counterparts. VEOs remain a transnational threat with decentralized command and control, finance, and facilitation networks spreading from conflict zones into Europe. In particular, VEOs threaten to attack the U.S. and European Allies, with the actions of lone actors presenting the primary terrorist threat to Europe. Extremists also exploit instability in Afghanistan, North Africa, Iraq, and Syria to prepare for possible attacks in Europe. Successful VEO-inspired and organized attacks in Europe complicate integration efforts, potentially isolating refugee and migrant communities and increasing the possibility for VEO recruitment. Despite diminished capabilities, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other VEOs desire to conduct external operations, requiring global vigilance to prevent a resurgence and preclude future attacks against the U.S. Homeland and the Euro-Atlantic area.

Climate Change

Climate change will exacerbate risks to security as the physical impacts increase and geopolitical tensions mount on how to respond. Increasing physical effects such as droughts, ice melts, sea level rise, and extreme weather events will strain national governance, budgets,

and stability in Europe. This year, we supported Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response efforts in Germany, providing war stock bridges following flash flooding, as well as air support in Turkey and Greece in response to widespread forest fires. For populations most vulnerable to climate change, migration can serve as a form of adaptation, further challenging international stability and governance. In the Arctic, melting sea ice increases maritime access to this resource-rich region for exploration and commerce while thawing permafrost increases vulnerabilities to existing infrastructure, including forward operating locations and military bases. Working across the region, USEUCOM will prioritize adaptation strategies that promote resilience to climate change effects. Additionally, we are integrating climate change considerations into strategy, plans, budgeting, and exercises to ensure we are able to train, fight, and win in an increasingly complex environment.

USEUCOM OPERATIONS, ACTIVITIES, INVESTMENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy Implementation

Along with Allies and Partners, USEUCOM confronts challenges by competing to secure long-term sustainable advantage, deterring aggressors, and preparing to respond decisively. As the coordinating authority for the Russia Problem Set, USEUCOM advises the Secretary of Defense on force structure, resources, and synchronization of Department of Defense activities to deter Russia and counter its global malign activities. We work tirelessly with our defense cohorts and the U.S. interagency to address the evolving challenges posed by our adversaries. We display vigilance in this complex security environment, and—should deterrence fail—we remain ready to respond with lethal and resilient force in all domains.

Congress provides critical support to the USEUCOM area of responsibility through the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) in our baseline appropriation. EDI enhances our posture to deter adversaries and compete in a contested logistics environment alongside our European defense counterparts. Increases in forward-stationed and rotational forces strengthen our contact, blunt, and surge layer capabilities, providing an ability to compete and win in a multi-

domain crisis or conflict. EDI investments improve theater infrastructure and prepositioned stocks. Funding for exercises, training, and building partner capacity strengthens the readiness, architecture, and interoperability across the Euro-Atlantic area. These advances enable our deterrence and defense efforts through rapid deployment and sustainment of forces.

Support NATO's Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area

USEUCOM's primary mission is to compete, deter, and prepare to respond to aggression with the full weight of the NATO Alliance. NATO adapts continuously to meet the challenges and complexities of our dynamic security environment. Together, we continue improving our posture, transparency, alignment, and speed of response. Through new strategic concepts, establishing new commands, investing in critical military capabilities, implementing enhanced readiness, and pursuing a robust array of operations, missions, and activities, we demonstrate our combined ability to deter and defend. The cohesion of these efforts has strengthened NATO, bolstered deterrence, and brought the Alliance even closer together.

In 2020, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) released the Concept for the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA). This concept guides the Alliance's approaches to competing with Russia and to countering international terror groups during peacetime and crisis, uniting national, regional, and theater-wide military efforts towards a common purpose. DDA outlines how NATO competes with Russia and directs the development of SACEUR's AOR-wide Strategic Plan (SASP). SASP provides the foundation for USEUCOM's efforts towards further contingency plans convergence. This architecture provide maximum military coherence at the operational and strategic levels, across all domains, in both everyday peacetime campaigning and if required, through periods of potential crisis and conflict.

NATO nations continue to invest in critical military capabilities, contributing to common defense and support of the Alliance. For the past seven years, Allies have increased their total defense spending, and future projections remain positive despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

NATO Allies and Partners are increasing interoperable combat power through major acquisitions to include cyber capabilities; M1 Abrams and Patriot Missiles in Poland; fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and Switzerland; and High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) capability in Romania and Poland. Within USEUCOM, integration of Fifth Corps' forward headquarters and the establishment of the 56th Field Artillery Command and the 2nd Multi-Domain Task Force increases U.S. and NATO capabilities across multiple domains. Also, the 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade's deployment to Georgia, Latvia, North Macedonia, Poland, and Romania strengthens Allied and Partner capabilities.

USEUCOM demonstrated joint capabilities during the U.S.-led exercises DEFENDER Europe and ASTRAL KNIGHT. In February, USEUCOM began exercising the ability of the United States and Allies to deploy into the Eastern Flank and conduct defensive operations during exercise SABER STRIKE, which will continue during the BALTOPS exercise with NATO and partner defense of the Danish Straits and Baltic Sea. This month, we will participate in the Norwegian-led multi-national and multi-domain cold weather exercise, COLD RESPONSE, focused on interoperability, the ability to fight in the Arctic, and demonstrating Allied resolve. These multi-domain exercises directly complement NATO-led exercises that maintain maritime air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime interdiction capabilities. Ongoing enhancements to multinational information sharing systems enable USEUCOM execution with NATO and our Partners. Ultimately, military exercises with our Allies remain an integral part of demonstrating Alliance readiness, interoperability, and capability.

USEUCOM participation in NATO activities further demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Alliance. Our soldiers serve in Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence mission in one of four battlegroups deterring Russian aggression in Poland and the Baltics. Allied nations will host Enhanced Vigilance Activity and battlegroups in Central and South-East Europe operating alongside host nation defense forces as a powerful statement of will and

Alliance cohesion. These Battle Groups will demonstrate improved readiness, military equilibrium, and posture coherence force. U.S. Air Forces in Europe support NATO Enhanced Air Policing and Icelandic Air Surveillance missions, safeguarding the sovereignty of Allied airspace against Russian incursions. We plan to support Standing NATO Maritime Group Two in 2022 with U.S. naval capability to counter maritime challenges in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea. Operation ATLANTIC SENTRY, conducted by U.S. Aegis destroyers based in Rota, Spain, and the Aegis Ashore system in Romania provides the foundation of NATO's ballistic missile defense capability.

We leverage Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) to demonstrate operational unpredictability to adversaries, improve deterrence, and support Allies. Recent DFE operations include posturing a guided missile destroyer to the High North, Bomber Task Force missions, and an F-35 deployment with Allies. Each force presence and operation demonstrates our ability to generate significant combat power across the AOR, while improving posture and warfighting readiness. This operational flexibility enhances cross-combatant command coordination and resource sharing, allowing for seamless transition and handover across Unified Command Plan boundaries to deploy forces for emerging requirements.

Rotational Army, Marine, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) maintain a presence across the theater. These forces work alongside Allies and Partners to deter aggression, counter malign activities, build host nation defense capability, and enhance interoperability. For example, in Eastern Europe, a rotational armored brigade combat team and combat aviation brigade participate in Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE to hone Alliance warfighting skills and increase NATO's deterrent posture. Additionally, deliberate deployments of Marine Forces in Norway reinforce NATO's Northern periphery while training in Arctic conditions with our Norwegian allies. Rotational forces are critical to our ability to deter Russia and assure Allies.

Counter Russian Activities and Malign Influence

Every day, USEUCOM and NATO work to deter the large and increasingly capable

military underwriting Russia's power. Simultaneously, we counter Russian malign activities that undermine the rules-based international order. Aside from USEUCOM's own capabilities, we leverage European defense initiatives and the unique attributes our U.S. interagency team brings to deterrence and defense.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO must remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO's nuclear capability preserves peace, prevents coercion, deters aggression, and instills confidence in the transatlantic bond. The United States continues to make available its strategic nuclear forces to the defense of NATO and they are the supreme guarantee of the security of our Allies. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and also contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. In addition to strategic forces, the United States continues to forward deploy nuclear weapons to Europe. These weapons combined with U.S. and Allied dual-capable aircraft and supporting infrastructure tangibly demonstrate Alliance cohesion and resolve through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens. NATO continues to adapt its nuclear posture to ensure these capabilities remain credible, resilient, and adaptable. USEUCOM fully supports modernization and recapitalization of our nuclear forces. Sustained Congressional funding for these programs demonstrates commitment to our operations and NATO solidarity.

In the ground domain, we expect to establish a U.S. division-sized capability through forward-stationed forces, rotational forces, and Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). Continued investment in APS equipment facilitates increased agility and lethality by enabling rapid integration of rotational combat units into USEUCOM and NATO operations. During Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 21, U.S. Army Europe and 26 participating nations demonstrated readiness to command and control large-scale operations by exercising at the battalion and brigade levels while building interoperability. In Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 24, we plan to assemble a divisional formation on NATO's eastern flank for the first time since the end of the

Cold War, conducting a multinational command post exercise with U.S. and multinational divisions and brigades operating under U.S. Army Europe leadership. These prepositioned stocks enabled us to respond swiftly in response to Russia's aggression in and around Ukraine.

In the maritime domain, we will execute integrated, all-domain naval operations and theater security cooperation alongside our Allies and Partners. Our operational maritime forces provide an essential capability in Strategic Competition. In addition to our forward deployed Naval Forces, we will continue to leverage Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Units to contribute to the maritime force. U.S. Sixth Fleet provides maritime command and control capability across the USEUCOM AOR while U.S. Second Fleet complements and contributes to reinforce NATO's western flank. In exercise NORTHERN VIKING, we will enhance our partner capabilities and further deter Russian aggression while sharpening our competitive edge. We are committed to a robust prepositioning program in coordination with our Allies, further building our agility and resilience in the maritime domain.

In the air domain, we are improving our assortment of sensors, fighter aircraft, and ground-based air defense systems to enhance Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD), support Allies' air defense efforts, and increase long-range strike capability for deterrence. During ASTRAL KNIGHT 22 in May, the U.S. Air Force will lead a joint and combined IAMD exercise with our Allies in Poland and the Baltics. This exercise will assess the execution of an enduring regional IAMD architecture and our ability to transfer authority to NATO during the follow-on, NATO-led IAMD exercise RAMSTEIN LEGACY. In recent Bomber Task Force missions, U.S. bombers launched from bases in the U.S. and Europe fly vast distances across the AOR while integrating with NATO and partner nation forces. Through Agile Combat Employment, we seek to enhance current posture, complicate adversary decision-making, and impose costs while assuring our NATO Allies. Agile operations, supported by Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control, and improved communications and domain awareness capabilities, will demonstrate a credible, networked combat deterrence from potential airfields

across the continent. This expansion of European contingency air operation and deployable air bases enhances the survivability of our forces.

In the space domain, we coordinate across the Department of Defense and NATO to protect U.S. and Allied interests. Maintaining assured access to space capabilities and stability within the space domain are vital to USEUCOM and NATO operations. We coordinate with U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) to leverage space capabilities that ensure our ability to execute multi-domain operations, and protect Allied space capabilities from malign actors. We synchronize our messaging on responsible behavior in space and seek to deter unsafe or provocative actions in space by our adversaries. Additionally, we work with the United States Space Force (USSF), along with USSPACECOM, and our Allies and Partners to expand space partnerships within our AOR and further integrate space capabilities into joint and combined operations and activities.

In the cyber domain, USEUCOM coordinates with Joint Forces Headquarters - Cyber and U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) to counter Russian malign cyber activities and enhance our Allied and Partner capabilities. USEUCOM synchronizes USCYBERCOM's persistent engagement activities with USEUCOM operations, activities and investments (OAIs) to enhance warning of adversary actions, enable defense, and build trust with Allies and Partners. In coordination with USCYBERCOM, USEUCOM identifies cyber options to compliment OAIs and support response actions should deterrence fail. Recognizing the worldwide cyberspace capabilities of Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, USEUCOM works with other combatant commands and interagency partners to enhance global cyber defenses and our ability to impose cost on malicious adversary behavior. USEUCOM has also invested in sharing information on foreign malign cyber activities with Allies and Partners to enhance collective cyber defenses.

In the information environment, USEUCOM conducts activities to promote both deterrence and assurance, contest Russian malign narratives, and build resilience among

foreign audiences to counter malign influence and disinformation. USEUCOM generates effects in the information environment through the Russian Influence Group (RIG), a State Department led interagency network focused on countering Russian malign influence. Congressional funding for unique cybersecurity and hybrid warfare programs (i.e., electromagnetic warfare, special operations, and operations in the information environment), particularly through the State Department's Countering Russian Influence Fund - Foreign Military Financing (CRIF-FMF), enables the RIG to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation. Congressional funding for these unique information operation capabilities enables USEUCOM to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation.

Our Special Operations forces (SOF) work with European Allies and Partners to build capacity, counter malign activity, and improve resilience. These unique capabilities enable USEUCOM to identify, attribute, and counter Russian malign influence. Furthermore, our Special Operations personnel provide invaluable contributions in sensing the operational environment, enhancing our ability to deter through indications and warnings. USEUCOM's Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC), Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), provides a persistent Special Operations presence throughout Europe. SOCEUR regularly leads and participates in bi-lateral and multilateral exercises to improve interoperability with Allies, build partner capacity, and strengthen deterrence messaging. SOCEUR is preparing to lead TROJAN FOOTPRINT 2022, a regional exercise focused on mission command for SOF that rotates between the Baltics and the Black Sea. Exercises like TROJAN FOOTPRINT set conditions for better integration between SOF and conventional forces during combined, joint, and multi-domain warfare.

As part of a whole-of-government approach, our Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center supports interagency efforts to combat Russian malign activities, primarily by assisting federal law enforcement activities. This initiative provides USEUCOM with additional areas for competition. Through these partnerships, USEUCOM leverages a range of interagency-driven

efforts, including criminal investigations, convictions, seizures, sanctions, and designations.

Lastly, our approach in competition considers escalation management and control to maximize deterrence and defense. We make use of authorized military-to-military channels with Russia to safely de-conflict activities, when necessary, in order to maintain strategic stability.

Advance and Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Allies and Partners bolster U.S. initiatives through their own national contributions and by providing critical host nation support to forward-stationed U.S. forces across the region. Since the start of Russia's invasion against Ukraine, we have seen Allies strengthening defense budgets to include Germany's announcement to increase military spending above 2 percent of gross domestic product. Allies and Partners contribute forces to ongoing NATO and U.S.-led coalition missions, advancing our common interests in Kosovo, Iraq, and Syria. Furthermore, Allies underwrite infrastructure investments and defray costs of U.S. military construction through the NATO Security Investment Program. Additionally, we expect improvements by individual European nations and the EU to enhance military mobility, increasing their responsiveness and combat capability. The EU, in consultation with NATO, projects it will invest 1.69 billion euros over the next seven years for civilian and military dual-use transportation infrastructure improvements across the continent.

Turkey remains a key, strategic U.S. and NATO Ally. We recognize Turkey's critical leadership role in hosting U.S. service members conducting a wide array of NATO, bilateral, and unilateral missions including radar and tanker support to ongoing operations, and strong bilateral cooperation on Afghanistan. Additionally, Turkey directly contributes forces to NATO missions in Iraq, Kosovo, Baltic Air Policing, and Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Mediterranean Sea. Turkey has supported U.S. Bomber Task Force missions in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean regions with tanker and fighter assets. Turkey's military capability and geographic location make it a key stakeholder in U.S. responses to regional events and within NATO. We must continue to execute and advocate for fundamental security cooperation

activities with Turkey such as Professional Military Education, exercises, and Foreign Military Sales. These actions will strengthen NATO interoperability and enable U.S. force projection..

Turkey possesses the second largest military in NATO, borders a volatile region, and retains a pivotal role in countering Russia. The Turkish and Russian government's relationship remains competitive and transactional, with Turkish engagement often aimed at constraining Russian behavior. Both nations view the Black Sea region within their natural spheres of influence, and each continues to oppose the other in Ukraine, Libya, and Syria. Turkey can best counter Russia through close cooperation with the U.S. and NATO. We laud Turkey's strong support to Ukraine up to and during Russia's invasion, and we will continue to find ways to increase our cooperation with Turkey bilaterally and within NATO.

In the South Caucasus, Georgia remains a steadfast partner in regional security and the effort to counter Russian malign influence. Georgia's status as the largest non-NATO contributor to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan demonstrated the enduring strength of our strategic partnership. In October 2021 in Tbilisi, Secretary Austin announced sunsetting the Georgia Defense Readiness Program (GDRP) and transforming into the Georgia Deterrence and Defense Enhancement Initiative. This initiative will build upon GDRP's success to further develop capabilities and capacities required for effective deterrence and territorial defense, and foster interoperability with NATO.

We strengthen our strategic relationships through security cooperation initiatives. U.S. National Guard forces maintain vibrant relationships and unique access with Allies and Partners through the State Partnership Program (SPP). USEUCOM now has 23 active programs with the addition of the Austria and Vermont partnership. The SPP conducts over 500 engagements annually in EUCOM's AOR, cultivating regional expertise and strengthening personal relationships to improve readiness and alignment across the AOR. Programs such as the Black Sea Maritime Domain Awareness Initiative and enhancing Baltic IAMD represent potent, regionally-focused components of a resilient theater posture.

Enable U.S. Global Operations

Europe and the United States remain the foundation for upholding a free and open international order. Our unique geographic location enables global operations, including U.S. interagency and multinational operations, through synchronization and agreements for access, basing, and overflight permissions within Europe. We work within a whole-of-government framework to maintain essential access and permissions under bilateral agreements and to resist Russian and Chinese strategic investments. Absent these agreements, the United States could not meet treaty obligations or effectively protect vital national interests. The shared ideals, values, trust, and longstanding relationships we have in Europe enable the U.S. to generate coalitions for worldwide operations in support of shared national interests.

Last year, Allies and Partners proved essential during Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome, the evacuation of at-risk civilians from Afghanistan to the continental United States. Germany, Italy, Spain, Kosovo, and Slovakia – among other Allies and Partners – collaborated with the United States both in the evacuations and by accepting refugees into their countries. Close coordination with Germany, Italy, and Spain enabled us to temporarily shelter and care for thousands of evacuees at U.S. airbases in these respective countries. Our close bonds with European Allies and Partners, forged over two decades of conflict in Afghanistan, facilitated the safe movement of over 42,000 evacuees through USEUCOM air bases to safe havens in Europe and the United States. We worked tirelessly with U.S. Central Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Northern Command to support the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security to enable this monumental U.S. global operation.

Conclusion

Maintaining a capable U.S. presence in Europe strengthens our national security by generating peace, unity, and cohesion among Europe's sovereign nations. Russia and China present formidable, enduring challenges to preserving a free and peaceful Europe. Nevertheless, the West is more united than it has been in years. NATO is stronger, not weaker, and we are ready to respond decisively. Our strategy addresses the dynamic security environment by ensuring we effectively compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively.

We appreciate Congressional interest in these challenges and your continued pledge to meet them through engagement, funding, and authorities. Your continued support for the European Deterrence Initiative and International Security Cooperation Programs remains critical to our overall strategy. These authorities and funding enhance U.S. and Alliance readiness and posture to respond in crisis or conflict. We stand in a strategically critical part of the world, and the dedicated men and women of USEUCOM are deeply humbled by the trust our nation places in us. Together with the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Guardians, and civilians of USEUCOM, your support demonstrates our Nation's continued commitment to defend the Homeland forward and protect the peace for the one billion people living in the Euro-Atlantic region.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022.

UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

WITNESS

GENERAL KENNETH MCKENZIE, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

Ms. MCCOLLUM. We welcome back our witness, General Kenneth McKenzie, Commander of U.S. Central Command.

General, while this is not your first time before the subcommittee, we understand that it will be your last as you plan to retire next month.

The subcommittee thanks you for your four decades of service to our country and congratulates you on a well-deserved retirement.

We look forward to your testimony today.

The purpose of today's hearing is to discuss the challenges in the CENTCOM area of responsibility ahead of the fiscal year 2023 budget request.

Much has changed since our last CENTCOM hearing nearly a year ago and I'd like to briefly cover some of the developments.

For the first time in two decades, we are no longer at war in Afghanistan.

We thank our service members for their selfless contributions while serving in Afghanistan for 20 years.

But we also know that the United States and the international community have much more work ahead of us as we try to mitigate the humanitarian crisis now unfolding in Afghanistan.

In Syria, we saw the largest ISIS attack in years with the attempted Hasakah prison break.

China's investments in the Middle East have grown dramatically, and we've seen press reports of a possible Chinese base being constructed in the U.A.E.

Russia's recent deployment of troops to Kazakhstan, and their invasion of Ukraine have brought into focus Russia's aspirations in the region.

Iranian malign influence has continued, though I want to note that we've also seen progress from the Biden administration on a possible nuclear deal.

Israel strengthened military ties with Arab countries, joining the U.S.-led, International Maritime Exercise for the first time.

Qatar was designated as a major non-NATO ally, which formalizes our strong security partnership, as they continue to be an important energy partner for our allies.

Unfortunately, the war in Yemen and the dire humanitarian situation continues to cause suffering for civilian populations.

We look forward to hearing how CENTCOM is postured and resourced to address these and other challenges, and to support the 50,000 U.S. personnel serving in your area of responsibility. With that, I want to thank everyone for participating in today's hearing and recognize our distinguished ranking member, Mr. Calvert for his opening remarks.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—Mr. Calvert's statement could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

POSTURE STATEMENT OF

GENERAL KENNETH F. MCKENZIE, JR.

COMMANDER, UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

16 MARCH 2022

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Introduction

For over twenty years, United States Central Command (CENTCOM) has demanded a greater share of the Department of Defense's resources and attention—and those of the United States as a whole—than it claimed in the first twenty years of its existence. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 brought terror to American shores on a scale unknown since 1941 and transfixed the nation. The United States subsequently reoriented its defense establishment to confront the exigent threat of violent extremism, which had metastasized from within the CENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR). In 2001, a "global war on terror" began in Afghanistan and expanded to Iraq in 2003 following a campaign to liberate that country. For a generation of Americans, the very name "CENTCOM" has been virtually synonymous with the military operations in these two countries. Indeed, with the recent withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan and conclusion of U.S. combat operations and the transition to an advise, assist, and enable mission in Iraq, many Americans may assume that CENTCOM's very reasons for being have drawn to a close. That could not be further from the truth.

In fact, the proximate causes for the establishment of CENTCOM nearly forty years ago were the ascendance of a destabilizing, virulently anti-American regime in Iran and naked Soviet military aggression in Afghanistan. More fundamentally, its establishment reflected a clear-eyed recognition by the Carter and Reagan administrations of the geostrategic importance of the broader Middle East. Spanning more than 4.6 million square miles and, with last year's addition of Israel, encompassing twenty-one countries, the CENTCOM AOR of today has for millennia been a geographic and geopolitical crossroads and site of cooperation, competition, and conflict. In the modern age, the sea lines of communication that pass through the Strait of Hormuz (SOH), Bab al Mandeb (BAM), and Suez Canal are more essential than ever for enabling global commerce, facilitating transportation of more than 20 percent of the world's and over 40 percent of China's energy supply.

Rich in cultural heritage but with unevenly distributed natural resources, the region is also beset by internal conflict and instability. It encompasses the geographic origins and spiritual centers for many of the world's largest religious populations, with active fault lines bisecting political and ethnic boundaries. Fabulous wealth in some resource-rich countries contrasts starkly with abject poverty and the absence of essential services in others. Inequity within societies gave wind to the 2011 "Arab Spring," which largely failed to address grievances that still fester. Ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen and the collapse of legitimate governance in Afghanistan have undermined stability

throughout and beyond the region and given rise to humanitarian, refugee, and potential environmental crises.

The conclusion of active combat operations in Afghanistan and transition to an advise, assist, and enable mission in Iraq provided an opportunity to reassess and adjust the United States' military posture in the region. Yet CENTCOM's core mission, to direct and enable military operations and activities with allies and partners to increase regional stability in support of enduring U.S. interests, remains virtually unchanged from the day of its establishment, and just as relevant now as then. The foundational challenges that CENTCOM was designed to confront—the destabilizing influence of Iran and strategic competition—are more salient now than ever. Meanwhile, a twenty-one-year campaign against violent extremist organizations (VEOs) has prevented further attacks on the American homeland but has not eradicated a potent threat that yet lurks in the un-governed and under-governed corners of the CENTCOM AOR. Within the Central Region, the United States faces four of the five named threats identified in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS): Iran, China, Russia, and VEOs. Among these are a potential antagonist in any interstate, Middle Eastern conflict—Iran—and the most immediate threat to the American homeland—VEOs. These remain, therefore, CENTCOM's first and second priorities, respectively. And while we might prefer otherwise, the fact remains that China and Russia have made the CENTCOM region a primary theater of strategic competition, fostering predatory economic ties while seeking regional influence and assured access. Competing in this arena constitutes CENTCOM's third strategic priority.

Despite these continuities, inevitable and appropriate adjustments to American posture in the region are prone to misinterpretation by American partners and adversaries alike. Suspecting that the United States is eager to put the last twenty-one years—and the region as a whole—behind it, partners are hedging, and competitors are exploiting the opportunity to gain influence. From its inception, CENTCOM has been responsible for the stability and security of an "economy of force" theater—one that offered valuable returns on modest, prudent investments designed to secure and stabilize a region with outsized influence on global commerce and energy supply, and in which VEOs have proliferated and expanded globally over the past generation. Even in the midst of global competition, the Interim National Security Guidance recognizes the importance of these investments, but the impulse to compensate for a perceived *over*investment in the region these past twenty-one years bears inherent risks. Most importantly, acting on this misperception threatens to undermine the confidence of partners in the region, compromising our ability to leverage longstanding relationships and wield influence as we have historically: with a light-yet-responsive touch and with a small

footprint that can rapidly expand as circumstances demand.

CENTCOM plays an integral role in reassuring these partners and allies of the U.S. commitment to regional stability and to advancing shared interests, including by participating in operations and exercises throughout the region. Israel's shift from the EUCOM to CENTCOM AOR opens the doors to numerous strategic opportunities—including by enabling CENTCOM to more closely align our regional partners against common threats, such as those posed by Tehran. The United States remains steadfast in its commitment to Israel's security and to supporting Israel's right to defend itself, and CENTCOM will continue to support the expansion of Israel's military ties with regional counterparts through training, joint exercises, and other defense cooperation efforts.

The normalization agreements between Israel and the Gulf are historic, and they follow in the footsteps of the peace treaties signed by Egypt in 1979 and Jordan fifteen years later. Both Egypt and Jordan remain strategic partners. Egypt maintains a strong defense relationship with the United States on counter-terrorism (CT) and maritime and border security efforts, and provides critical access, overflight, and Suez Canal transit for U.S. forces. Our decades-long partnership enables us to work with Egypt on areas of disagreement while continuing to address challenges throughout the Middle East and Africa together. Jordan is likewise one of our most committed partners in the Middle East, as well as being a key partner in the Defeat-ISIS coalition. The close partnership with Jordan is essential to U.S. operations across the region.

Maintaining our influence and safeguarding American interests requires a whole-of-government approach and the agile deployment of limited resources to blunt challenges and seize opportunities as they emerge. But it further demands a demonstrable commitment to regional partners, upon whom security in the CENTCOM AOR must ultimately depend.

Iran

The greatest single day-to-day threat to regional security and stability remains Iran, which challenges the United States and its allies by pursuing regional hegemony, breaching its Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) commitments, and posing a conventional threat to partner nations while facilitating and conducting coercive and malign activities. With the largest military in the Middle East, Iran has developed and amassed sophisticated ballistic missile forces and is at the cutting edge in the development of aerial and maritime unmanned systems. With their potent offensive capabilities, these weapon systems enable Iran to threaten its neighbors and menace the free flow of commerce throughout the region, negatively affecting global trade and the world's energy

supply. Over the past year, Iran used these weapons to attack and seize merchant vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, and northern Arabian Sea.

Iran views the United States as its greatest enduring threat and obstacle to regional hegemony; it continues a multi-faceted approach to remove U.S. forces from the region while avoiding escalation into a major conflict. Though it has not conducted direct attacks on U.S. forces since January 2020, Iran continues to threaten current and former U.S. officials and enable its proxies to conduct implausibly deniable attacks on deployed U.S. forces. The risk of miscalculation and escalation remains high because of Iran's strategic calculation that it can simultaneously and discretely engage in diplomacy *with* and a proxy campaign *against* the United States. Moreover, Iran's command and control of its proxy and affiliated militias has changed following the 2020 death of Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani, which may create challenges for Tehran's ability to govern the initiation and escalation of violence directed at U.S. and Coalition Forces. Iran continues to violate sanctions and embargos, proliferate weapons to its network of proxies and affiliates, terrorize mariners, and seize shipping in international waters. While Iran is not currently pursuing nuclear weapons, it has developed ballistic missiles that could be configured to deliver them and has conducted numerous launches to test those missile systems. These actions continue to demonstrate Iran's defiance and willingness to undermine international norms with threats against U.S. interests and those of our partners and allies.

Iranian Activities in Iraq

In Iraq, Iranian-Aligned Militia Groups (IAMG) increased attacks throughout the first half of 2021, targeting U.S. forces with unmanned aerial systems (UASs) for the first time. In early July, IAMGs paused such attacks in the hope that the U.S.-Iraq Strategic Dialogue and forthcoming Iraqi elections would eject American forces through political and diplomatic means. As it became clear that Iran-aligned Shia groups had performed poorly in the October election, IAMGs directed violence against fellow Iraqis, further undermining those groups' standing and influence. When the Strategic Dialogue yielded only the end of an American combat mission rather than a withdrawal, IAMG leaders threatened a resumption of attacks on any Americans remaining in Iraq beyond 2021. In early January 2022, IAMGs briefly surged attacks against U.S. targets in Iraq and Syria but have since largely restrained operations against U.S. forces—likely due to sensitivities related to the formation of the new Iraqi government. Coalition forces remained postured to respond should the IAMGs become more aggressive.

The danger posed by IAMGs has not passed. As a coalition government forms in Iraq, IAMGs continue to evaluate their options and marshal—with covert Iranian assistance—the means of resuming complex UAS and rocket attacks against their fellow Iraqis, as well as U.S. and Coalition forces. Regardless of who forms the government, IAMGs are likely to continue sectarian, criminal, and anti-U.S. activities that destabilize Iraq.

Iranian Activities in Syria and Lebanon

In Syria, Iran and its proxies have been less restrained in attacks against Combined Joint Task Force-Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (CJTF-OIR). Here, Iran supports the Assad regime with the aim of maintaining the "Axis of Resistance" alliance against Israel, a sworn enemy of Tehran's revolutionary government. Notwithstanding their common support for the Assad regime, Iran competes with Russia for economic opportunities and long-term influence in Syria. Ultimately, Iran desires a permanent presence in Syria, pursuing economic opportunities to recoup significant wartime investment, increased local militia influence to maintain security, and increased soft power to gain influence over the population. To this end, Iran seeks to expand its already well-established position along the Middle Euphrates River Valley by converting local Sunnis to Shi'ism, recruiting Sunni tribal members into IAMGs, and colonizing the area with Iranian irregular forces and their families.

Iran will continue to use Syrian (and likely Iraqi) territory as a critical hub and resupply route for maintaining its campaign against Israel. CENTCOM supports Israel's right to defend itself from threats posed by Iran and Iranian proxies. Iran will also remain focused on supporting Lebanese Hizballah, whose illegal weapons stockpiles exceed those of most legitimate partner militaries in the region. Hizballah has consistently undermined the legitimate Lebanese Armed Forces, a steadfast partner of the United States that acts in the interests of the Lebanese people, works to maintain Lebanese stability, and remains the most trusted government institution in Lebanon.

Iran likely has decreasing tolerance for continued U.S. presence in Syria, especially as pro-Assad regime forces gain more control over the country. Accordingly, Iran and its proxies and affiliates are increasing their capabilities and planning to target U.S. and partner interests, as evidenced by multiple indirect fire attacks against U.S.-associated bases with increasingly capable systems that have evolved from typical, commercial off-the-shelf UAS models to more advanced platforms resembling improvised cruise missiles with increased speed, range, accuracy, electronic warfare-hardening, and explosive payload capacity. More troubling, increased proliferation of this

advanced technology has enabled mass production of components that can be easily transported, assembled, and launched from remote locations with little to no support infrastructure. Such capabilities make it easier for non-state actors and proxy forces to acquire and employ this technology on a much larger scale at great stand-off ranges.

Iranian Activities in Yemen

The least restrained and most destabilizing of all of Iran's affiliates in the region are the Houthis of Yemen. Aside from being active combatants in that country's seven-year-old civil war, they are also engaged in a near-daily long-range fires conflict with Saudi Arabia. Wielding the most advanced UASs and ballistic and cruise missiles Iran can design, build, and smuggle into Yemen, the Houthis have targeted Saudi Arabia's largest cities and its critical oil infrastructure. Recently, the Houthis have raised the stakes further by using the same high-end Iranian weapons to target the United Arab Emirates, including the air base at Al Dhafra that U.S. forces share with our Emirati partners. Additional concerning indicators of Houthi contempt for international norms include the November 2021 breaching of the former U.S. embassy compound in Sana'a, the detention of local Yemeni staff of the U.S. embassy, and the escalating frequency of abductions, armed robberies, and carjackings in the parts of Yemen controlled by the Houthis.

Over the past year, Iran has continued to provide Houthi forces with advanced conventional weapons (UASs, theater ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and unmanned surface vehicles) and related technology. The proliferation of small and medium-sized UASs and sophisticated ballistic and cruise missiles to the Houthis presents the most complex and consequential threat to U.S., partner, and allied forces. In 2021, the Houthis conducted over 325 cross-border attacks with UASs and missiles. Since the start of 2022, the Houthis have conducted at least 45 cross-border attacks against Saudi Arabia and the UAE with attacks that simultaneously threaten U.S. personnel based in the region and international maritime interests in the Red Sea and Gulf of Oman. Over the past year, the Houthis made incremental advances toward the petroleum-rich city of Marib and reclaimed the areas surrounding the Port of Hudaydah following the withdrawal of Republic of Yemen Government-aligned forces. Likely emboldened by territorial gains in western and central Yemen, as well as perceived declining U.S. support to the Saudi-led Coalition, the Houthis accompanied their campaign to capture Marib with near-daily cross-border attacks against Saudi Arabia using UASs, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles.

In response to recent gains by the Emirati-sponsored Giants Brigades south of Marib, the

Houthis expanded their missile and UAS attacks to targets in the United Arab Emirates—including civilian targets, as well as military targets at Al Dhafra Air Base, home to a substantial contingent of U.S. forces. Air defense fires by both Emirati and American batteries—including the first successful combat Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) engagements in history—defeated this complex Houthi attack. It nevertheless demonstrated that the Houthis are prepared to further escalate this conflict using whatever means the Iranians put at their disposal, even at the risk of inflicting mass civilian casualties and threatening American forces.

The recent attacks on the UAE fit the broader pattern of Iran-enabled Houthi missile and UAS attacks on the Arabian Peninsula, targeting both military and civilian targets, endangering civilian life, and risking global economic disruption should the Houthis successfully strike major oil infrastructure or economic hubs. Although the United States provides information and defensive assistance to Saudi and Emirati armed forces, it does not provide offensive military support. CENTCOM continues to support diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in Yemen.

Countering the Iranian Threat

Deterring Iran and its threat network depends on capabilities that provide a credible threat of a robust and timely response to Iranian aggression paired with flexible deterrent and response options that impose high costs on Iran, thereby altering its decision calculus. Accordingly, current CENTCOM planning is based on clear and unambiguous signaling to Iran and its threat network. It also makes a virtue out of the necessity to disperse forces threatened by Iranian missiles and UASs. Distributing forces more broadly outside of the most significant Iranian threat ranges not only enhances survivability but also demonstrates an increased capability to rapidly mass combat effects using dynamic force employment (DFE), agile combat employment (ACE), and bomber task force (BTF) missions. A distributed approach lowers costs, improves defensive posture, and makes it more difficult for adversaries to mass effects against U.S. and coalition assets. In addition, this approach demonstrates the flexibility, global reach, and responsiveness of U.S. forces.

At the same time, the United States must demonstrate to our allies and partners that ours is a credible, dependable force in the region, and enable these allies and partners to contribute more effectively to their own defense. In this regard, the greatest threat to the region's security—Iran's missile force—is also a catalyst for increased cooperation in the form of Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD). While this requires a willingness on the part of regional partners to share intelligence more fully and quickly than they have to date, it does not require the introduction of

foreign forces onto the soil of neighboring nations. Similarly, greater cooperation in the air domain promises greater integration and deterrent effect without provoking friction that has historically worked against collective defense in the region. This is especially true in the case of Israel, which joined the CENTCOM AOR in 2021 and has already participated in a number of multilateral exercises and fora that would have been inconceivable before the normalization agreements signed between Israel and Gulf countries in 2020.

Aside from their obvious value to readiness and interoperability, regional exercises incorporating DFE, ACE, and BTF demonstrate allies' and partners' will and readiness to respond to Iranian aggression, thereby enhancing deterrence. Additionally, exercises provide platforms to inject strategic communications and highlight Iranian malign activities, engendering unity and signaling resolve among allies and partners. For the return on investment, such exercises are invaluable. Unfortunately, COVID and reduced budgets for exercises impinged upon CENTCOM and its components' ability to even maintain (let alone expand) existing exercises, despite a regional appetite to do so.

CENTCOM is also hindered in its ability to achieve effective, economical collective security by delays in foreign military sales (FMS) to allies and partners, which—combined with reductions in American capabilities across the region—contributes to the perception of a wavering United States commitment to the security and stability of the CENTCOM AOR and the individual countries therein. This has provided a false narrative and an opening for America's strategic competitors in the region and undermines deterrence of Iran. Countering this impression requires credible assurance and demonstrations of America's commitment to regional security and our partnerships. This commitment includes a recognition of the importance of our security assistance enterprise and our defense industry being capable of efficiently supporting our partners' defensive needs. Moreover, CENTCOM's posture, in terms of forces, footprints, agreements, authorities, and resources must allow us the flexibility to compete with our adversaries below the level of armed conflict, leaving no doubt that U.S. combat power can rapidly flow into the region when required and that Iran will suffer grave costs for their aggressive actions.

Countering Violent Extremist Organizations

While Iran remains the greatest threat to the security of the Central Region itself, ISIS, Al Qaeda (AQ), and other VEOs operating in the region will remain the most likely and proximate threat to the security of the United States and that of our citizens and interests at home and abroad.

ISIS and AQ are seeking to exploit a reduction of U.S. CT efforts in Afghanistan to reinvigorate their adherents and increase their ability to plot and direct external attacks. While CENTCOM and the Global Coalition to Defeat-ISIS have had extraordinary success against these VEOs, the underlying conditions that led to their growth—civil war, poor governance, a youth bulge, and scarce resources and opportunities—remain unchanged. If left unmonitored and unchecked, a resurgence of VEO capabilities could manifest with new attacks on the United States and the homelands of our allies. While VEOs have a presence in virtually every country in the AOR, CENTCOM's primary CT focus remains on those organizations with the ambition and varying capabilities to plot and conduct external operations against the United States and our allies. These VEOs principally reside in Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

Yemen

U.S. unilateral and partner-supported CT operations have disrupted and degraded Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), rendering it ineffective and unable to conduct operations outside of Yemen. However, the group maintains aspirations to attack the U.S. homeland, with AQAP senior leadership threatening attacks against the United States as recently as October 2021. ISIS-Yemen remains an active threat group as well, although with fewer capabilities and adherents compared with AQAP. The United States retains a small, tailorable CT footprint in Yemen, supported by a regional CT headquarters that enables regional partner CT forces to monitor and disrupt these VEOs.

Afghanistan

ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K) poses a moderate to high threat to the Taliban and civilians in Afghanistan, and this threat has the potential to grow in the coming months and years. As the economic situation and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan worsen, with food security continuing to deteriorate, vulnerable populations will potentially become increasingly susceptible to ISIS-K recruitment. ISIS-K continues targeting the Taliban, Shia populations, urban centers, and targets of opportunity and is attempting to expand from its historic eastern Afghanistan operating areas, as evidenced by its claims of high-profile attacks from Kunduz in the north to Kandahar in the south. ISIS-K likely will remain capable of conducting high-profile attacks throughout Afghanistan, seeking to increase recruitment, expand its operating area, and challenge the Taliban's control. Absent sustained CT pressure, ISIS-K may gain strength and be emboldened to expand its operations and target neighboring countries—as evidenced by recent attacks against Shia civilians in Pakistan. The Department of Defense assesses ISIS-K could establish an

external attack capability against the United States and our allies in twelve to eighteen months, but possibly sooner if the group experiences unanticipated gains in Afghanistan.

In the near-term, AQ will most likely continue to maintain a low-profile under pressure from the Taliban, which seeks international legitimacy. Given its long-standing ties with the Taliban and Haqqani Network, CENTCOM assesses some AQ elements have limited freedom of movement in Afghanistan. AQ likely still aspires to recruit and train, and if successful, restore an external attack capability against the United States and our allies in twelve to twenty-four months.

Following the August 2021 Taliban takeover of Kabul, on-the-ground CT efforts against Afghanistan-based VEOs fell largely to the Taliban. Since taking Kabul, the Taliban have prioritized internal security and begun taking steps to combat ISIS-K's ability to attack the regime in the near-term, and to reconstitute in the long-term. As 2022 unfolds, the Taliban's so-called "Ministry of Interior" (MOI) and "General Directorate of Intelligence" (GDI) likely will synchronize efforts to combat ISIS-K's urban attack cells, while focusing on developing intelligence networks to weaken ISIS-K's historic support zones in eastern Afghanistan. The Taliban's restraints and actions against other regional VEOs have been markedly less aggressive.

For the United States, conducting CT operations in Afghanistan from "over the horizon" remains difficult, but not impossible. The loss of collection following the withdrawal of U.S. forces has exacerbated gaps in our intelligence. This limits the intelligence community's ability to provide indications and warning of VEO threats from Afghanistan. Also limited is the United States' ability to fix and finish those threats we are able to find. The resultant reductions in consistent CT pressure potentially could enable VEO groups to pose increased threats to the United States and our allies, assuming the Taliban is unwilling or unable to do so itself. Presently, CENTCOM relies on the Operation ENDURING SENTINEL Over-the-Horizon Counter-Terrorism (OTH-CT) Task Force and a finite number of UAS sorties to develop and potentially strike terrorist targets in Afghanistan.

Additional opportunities for enhanced cooperation present themselves among the Central Asian States and Pakistan. Due to pressure from Russia (and, to a lesser extent, China), membership in its Collective Security Treaty Organization, and varied willingness to engage with the new Taliban government, the Central Asian States are measured in their support for counterterrorism cooperation in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, they remain concerned about the risk of extremist spillover from Afghanistan and will likely seek out a limited and measured

expansion in U.S. security cooperation engagements while continuing to strike a balance in regional dynamics with all partners. Already, partners in Central Asia value several U.S. security cooperation activities, including support for border security activities, basic peacekeeping skills development, and Foreign Military Sales/Foreign Military Financing. Moreover, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, which all border Afghanistan, hold military exercises and receive training from U.S. advisors. Working across the whole-of-government with our interagency partners, as well as international partners and allies, to mitigate the growing humanitarian and economic crises will also be a critical component of effectively countering the growth of VEOs in Afghanistan.

Iraq and Syria

The threat posed by ISIS has been severely degraded in Iraq and Syria. Nevertheless, its enduring defeat has not been completely achieved. Through the combined efforts of Coalition forces under the command of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) and our partners in the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), including the Kurdish Peshmerga, and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), ISIS has lost territorial control and operates mostly in under-governed areas or disputed areas such as the Syrian desert or along the Kurdish Coordination Line (KCL) in Iraq. Deliberate targeting of leaders and facilitation networks has reduced ISIS's capability to conduct large-scale attacks and compelled them to rely foremost on uncoordinated, small-scale hit-and-run engagements. Meanwhile, they seek to reconstitute forces and plan for more complex mass casualty-producing attacks, the most recent example being the January 2022 attack at the detention facility in Hasakah, Syria.

Iraq

Despite significant progress in the Defeat-ISIS campaign, ISIS-Iraq remains a credible threat to the stability of the Iraqi government, as well as to U.S. and Coalition forces and interests in the country. ISIS-Iraq maintains the limited ability to target bases housing U.S. and Coalition forces both in the Kurdistan region and Baghdad. ISIS-Iraq is also capable of targeting supply lines, as well as U.S. and Coalition forces while in transit during training and enabling operations across the country. Improved Iraqi security in Baghdad has diminished ISIS-Iraq's opportunities for high-profile attacks there, but it has demonstrated the intent to conduct small suicide and improvised explosive device (IED) operations against soft targets. Moreover, ISIS-Iraq continues its efforts to destabilize the ethno-sectarian environment, potentially embroiling our Iraqi partners and Coalition forces in a rapidly deteriorating security environment with little warning.

Consistent CT pressure likely resulted in key leader losses, reduced access to resources and materiel, and an inability to infiltrate urban areas. These challenges almost certainly contributed to an overall decline in attacks from 119 per month in 2020 to 97 per month in 2021. Nevertheless, ISIS-Iraq remains a credible threat. ISIS-Iraq uses complex attacks and subverts authority to grow its influence and expand its insurgency and ISIS-Iraq remains operationally active in Diyala, Kirkuk, and Salah ad Din—specifically along the KCL. ISIS-Iraq relies on rural safe havens to mitigate CT pressure, and as a staging point for operations against civilian and military targets. In late 2021, ISIS-Iraq initiated a series of seemingly coordinated attacks against Kurdish interests causing dozens of casualties in Irbil, Kirkuk, and Diyala provinces as ISIS-Iraq continues efforts to stoke sectarian and ethnic conflict.

In early December 2021, CJTF-OIR, in cooperation with the Government of Iraq, completed the transition to an advise, assist, and enable mission. Preceding this transition was the restructuring of the force to an irreducible minimum of requisite personnel and equipment, all residing on consolidated joint bases with Iraqi forces. Coalition Force advisors in the Military Advisory Group-Iraq (MAG-I) and Military Advisory Group-North (MAG-N) are working closely with their ISF and Kurdish Security Forces (KSF) counterparts in operational-level planning and battle tracking of unilateral Iraqi operations against ISIS. Special Operations Joint Task Force-Levant (SOJTF-L) contributes to this effort at the tactical, operational, and institutional levels by partnering with Iraq's Counter-Terrorism Services (CTS). Critical to this effort are the intelligence collection and fusion, logistics, and joint strike support that we provide to Iraqi-planned, led, and executed operations to defeat ISIS. Coalition Forces provide in-extremis assistance with ISR, and joint strike capabilities when required, at the request of the Government of Iraq. Finally, CJTF-OIR's Directorate of Military Assistance manages the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF), which divests materiel and financial support to the ISF and KSF. These efforts provide support to ISF and KSF counter-ISIS operations and serve as the basis for a future military-to-military relationship between the United States and Iraq. The ISF and KSF have conducted larger joint operations, demonstrating tangible progress, as well as a fundamental understanding of intelligence collection and joint fires to support more complex operations spanning multiple provinces.

CJTF-OIR is committed to its advise, assist, and enable mission, helping Iraqi forces develop operational structures and processes of sustainment, maintenance, and command/control mechanisms at echelon that are necessary for maintaining force structure and operational tempo. Essential to CJTF-OIR's advisory mission is the relationship with NATO Mission Iraq (NMI)—an important

initiative both for the contributions it is poised to make and for the signal it sends about our global allies' commitment to the long-term stability of Iraq. NMI provides advisory support to the ISF at the ministerial level, focusing on institutional advice in areas such as doctrine development, budgeting, sustainment processes, and personnel management. NMI's efforts are key to maintaining the operational capability of the ISF in the mid- to long-term. The NMI and OIR missions are separate but complementary, and there must continue to be a symbiotic relationship between the two as they progress. Work is ongoing to understand where gaps and crossovers exist between NMI and OIR so they can be addressed as these missions both continue to evolve.

Syria

ISIS remains a significant threat in Syria, despite the drop in the group's total claimed attacks since July 2021. The group continues to target the Assad Regime, the SDF, and local populations primarily in Homs and Dayr az Zawr provinces. These attacks are typically small-scale and rudimentary, employing small arms fire, IEDs, assassinations, and hit-and-run ambushes on security forces. A notable exception is ISIS's recent concerted effort to liberate detainees from the largest detention center in Hasakah. ISIS's ability to project power further has been degraded by persistent pressure from the SDF and CJTF-OIR, and was further reduced with the February 2022 death of the so-called "amir" of ISIS, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi. Nevertheless, increased conflict between the SDF and the Assad regime or Turkey—which views the SDF as inextricably linked to the YPG, a group Ankara considers a terrorist organization—would likely provide ISIS the respite it needs to recover from recent losses and expand its influence, and recent events at Hasakah demonstrate that its will is unbroken.

The SDF have continued to demonstrate the resolve and capability to maintain continuous pressure on ISIS in northern Syria. They have remained the only reliable and effective partner in Syria and continue to improve in their capability to prevent the resurgence of ISIS in the Eastern Syrian Security Area (ESSA). The nature of the operations executed in northeastern Syria are different than those conducted in Iraq. The SDF control an area of Syria in which they are opposed not only by ISIS but also by the Assad regime, the regime's Russian and Iranian backers, and Turkey or its proxies. Thus, despite the SDF's ability to conduct operations without direct oversight from Coalition Forces, they remain susceptible to external pressures and dependent upon SOJTF-Levant for ISR, fires, and intelligence support for complex missions.

Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund

Throughout 2022, our partner forces in Iraq and Syria will continue to benefit from a range of financial and materiel support provided through the CTEF, which provided $726.9 million of critical assistance in 2021. CTEF continues to play a vital role in Counter-ISIS operations within Iraq and Syria, resulting in tremendous operational success while minimizing U.S. presence in the AOR. CTEF is a critical tool by which the Coalition enables the ISF, KSF, and SDF to meet operational requirements necessary to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS and set conditions for continued stabilization of the region. Drawing on the lessons from the last twenty-one years, CJTF-OIR has, over the last six months, tailored ISF divestments to address ISF sustainment, maintenance, and communications requirements. In Syria, CTEF expenditures for partner forces remain focused on maintaining the necessary level of capability to target ISIS cells, keep ISIS fighters securely and humanely detained until they receive due process or are repatriated to their countries of origin, and sustain vetted partners in Syria at the level required to counter the ISIS threat and help maintain security and stability in the region.

For these reasons, any rapid reduction of CTEF appropriations risks a reversal of gains made in the security sector, the reemergence of ISIS and other VEOs, and the future stability of the region. Given the unique circumstances of Iraq and Syria, where our most reliable partners depend upon us for essential support in various capacities, CTEF provides a flexible, responsive mechanism for addressing emergent requirements and capitalizing on opportunities. As such, CTEF is essential to continued progress in the D-ISIS fight.

Detainees

The limited repatriation of ISIS detainees and displaced persons in northeast Syria remains the biggest impediment to ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS. While there has been modest progress on repatriating and resettling some of these displaced persons and some detained ISIS fighters, more needs to be done. Military force cannot resolve this festering problem, which, if not addressed by the international community, will eventually form the core of the next round of violent Islamic extremism in the region and beyond.

Presently, more than ten thousand ISIS fighters are detained in repurposed detention facilities throughout northeast Syria. These facilities are guarded by a force of makeshift SDF guards, mustered from the local population with limited training. The SDF guard force remains capable of responding to external threats against the facilities, but there remains a constant threat from internal riots and coordinated action with ISIS cells at large, as evidenced by recent events at the detention

center in Hasakah. Working with the SDF and Joint Operations Center-Iraq, CJTF-OIR has facilitated the transfer of hundreds of Iraqi nationals from SDF-controlled detention facilities to Iraq—but there is still more work to be done, as several thousand Iraqi ISIS fighters remain in makeshift detention facilities in Syria. CJTF-OIR has also leveraged CTEF funding to upgrade facilities and has worked to train and pay SDF guards to mitigate the threat posed by the detained ISIS fighters. Yet these measures serve only as a temporary solution until a more viable long-term one can be found.

Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees

Another challenge in the AOR is that of large-scale displacement as a result of protracted conflicts in the region. Of Syria's pre-war population of approximately 20 million, over 6 million are IDPs and more than 13 million throughout the country need humanitarian assistance. Another 6 million sought refuge inother countries. Russia and the Syrian regime have consistently limited efforts by the UN and other organizations to provide sufficient humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations in Syria, causing unnecessary suffering. The UN has identified Syria as a hotspot for acute food insecurity, with millions depending on humanitarian organizations to deliver essential aid to areas outside of regime control.

Especially challenging is the displaced persons camp at Al Hol in northeast Syria. Al Hol, which began as an Iraqi refugee camp in the early 1990s and originally hosted about ten thousand people, swelled to a population of over seventy thousand after the fall of Baghuz when ISIS lost its last remaining territory. The camp, which currently holds approximately fifty-seven thousand people, predominantly women and children, comprises a complex mix of Iraqis Syrians, and third-country nationals; both the victims of ISIS and families of ISIS live in relatively close proximity to one another. The camp remains a challenge to security forces and humanitarian providers alike due to recurring violence against camp residents, NGO workers, camp administrators, and suspected coalition collaborators. In March 2021, the SDF conducted a security operation in response to the uptick in assassinations within the camp. Assassinations decreased following this sweep but continued throughout 2021, underscoring ISIS's resilient influence and the ongoing challenge of properly managing security.

Some women living in Al Hol camp are perpetrators ofviolence, while many residents, including the tens of thousands of children, remain victims and extremely vulnerable. ISIS-affiliated women often act as *Hisba,* or religious police, keeping a keen eye on activities in the camp, while preying upon vulnerable camp residents through violence and intimidation. They often focus on radicalizing other residents, primarily children, through propaganda and fear to

ensure the second generation of the organization. Some of these children are being radicalized in the camp and are later smuggled out to be trained as future fighters and suicide bombers in ISIS camps in ungoverned locations in Syria.

In addition to providing humanitarian assistance inside camps like Al Hol, USAID and State Department-sponsored humanitarian aid and stabilization programs in Syrian communities have attempted to fulfill the need for basic services, maintain stability, and facilitate the peaceful return of displaced Syrians to their areas of origin. In the interim, extremist elements will continue efforts to exploit the lack of a viable, internationally-supported solution to the Syrian conflict to build popular support and contribute to the reconstitution of ISIS and affiliates. The only viable solution to Al Hol is a political one, whereby nations repatriate and reintegrate their citizens and relieve the burden on the SDF.

Other displaced persons in the AOR pose logistical and economic challenges. Following the largest airborne non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) in history, which delivered over 124,000 Americans, third-country nationals, and at-risk Afghans to safety, many Afghans have already begun new, promising lives in the United States. Others remain at transit facilities in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, awaiting onward resettlement. To aid in this effort, CENTCOM facilitated the establishment and support of several temporary safe havens and transportation "lily pad" sites utilizing $140 million of the emergency Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) funds provided by Congress in July 2021. Meanwhile, the United States continues to relocate Afghan allies, which will require at least two of these locations to be fully operational for the remainder of the fiscal year. Planning continues for expanded efforts at the Camp As Saliyah transit site in Qatar, and initial indications are that this effort could continue well past originally estimated end dates. Coordination with interagency partners for the hand-off of resourcing and contracting for this effort is challenged by gaps in various departments' and agencies' operational authorities and funding. For other countries that have hosted the region's refugees—among them Jordan, Lebanon, and Pakistan—the economic strain imposed on the host country systems can further exacerbate fiscal challenges and undermine stability.

A final crisis of displaced persons within the AOR is, unfortunately, largely beyond CENTCOM's ability to influence or alleviate. Over the past year, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen has remained severe, with over 16 million Yemenis subject to food insecurity and 4 million internally displaced by conflict. The World Health Organization reports only 50 percent

of Yemen's medical facilities remain functional, and those that are open lack sufficient medical staff, equipment, or basic medicines, leaving Yemenis vulnerable to COVID-19, cholera, diphtheria, malaria, and other diseases. Yemen will remain dependent on external aid to address these critical needs. The ongoing conflict raises additional difficulties for aid workers attempting to transit to and within the country, while the Houthis also tax and abscond with humanitarian aid supplies to support their war effort. The humanitarian crisis will remain a challenge in Yemen for years to come, even after any settlement of the internal conflict, and Yemen will remain reliant on external aid to address issues such as food insecurity and healthcare shortfalls. Additionally, a structural failure of the FSO *Safer,* a permanently-moored oil tanker off the coast of Ras Isa, could quickly compound many issues in Yemen, almost certainly disrupting maritime traffic transiting the Red Sea and potentially causing an environmental disaster.

Safeguarding Civilian Life

While CENTCOM strives daily to alleviate the suffering of those displaced or harmed by conflict in the region, we also recognize that combat operations can also inflict harm on civilian life and infrastructure. CENTCOM is absolutely committed to safeguarding civilian life throughout its area of operations, and across the range of military operations. Further, CENTCOM and each of its subordinate headquarters takes very seriously our legal, moral, and ethical obligations to abide by the law of armed conflict, and we recognize that respect for the sanctity and dignity of human life is inherent in our mission to ensure the security and stability of the region. Moreover, we recognize that the United States' legitimacy as the leader and guarantor of a liberal, rules-based international order depends on our demonstrated commitment to protecting innocent life.

As the Secretary of Defense has recently acknowledged, we can and must do better in minimizing and responding to harm to civilian populations resulting from our operations. We remain committed to reviewing and improving our tactics, techniques, and procedures and fully support the Secretary of Defense-directed development of an overarching Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMRAP). CENTCOM has already implemented preliminary changes to its method of tracking and reporting allegations of civilian casualties. Process improvements include the establishment of a civilian casualty working group, increased interagency coordination to improve deconfliction processes, and the resumption of publication of monthly CIVCAS reports by CJTF-OIR. This working group will provide additional oversight of the reporting and investigation chain that was previously conducted predominantly outside of the combatant command headquarters.

CENTCOM appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the CHMRAP and will swiftly implement and fully support the Secretary's direction.

Although CENTCOM is fully committed to the principles of the Law of Armed Conflict and U.S. policies that in many cases far exceed what international law requires, we cannot offer guarantees against the unintended loss of civilian life in the future. Our adversaries in the AOR do not merely lack our regard for innocent life—they deliberately abuse and jeopardize it with a goal of protecting themselves and using civilian casualties to conduct information operations against the United States. Moreover, U.S. forces, which often operate in complex, hostile environments, always retain the inherent right of self-defense. In the fog and friction of combat, individuals and their commanders must sometimes make difficult decisions—literally with life-or-death consequences—under intense pressure and with sometimes imperfect information. Hesitation can cost lives, as can well-intended action.

When an allegation of civilian casualties occurs, CENTCOM and its subordinate headquarters will report it to Defense Department leadership, acknowledge it, investigate it, and take whatever action is appropriate to ensure accountability and improve CIVCAS prevention and mitigation measures. CENTCOM did so in the wake of the MQ9 strike in Kabul on 29 August 2021. Our commitment to minimizing the risk to civilian life was further demonstrated in the recent raid that resulted in the death of ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi. Rather than target him with an airstrike, we accepted increased risk to U.S. forces by launching a raid, expressly planned to separate noncombatants in the objective area from the ISIS leader and his subordinates. Notwithstanding the regrettable loss of noncombatant lives when the terrorist or one of his wives detonated an explosive on the third floor of his residence, U.S. forces took extraordinary measures to clear the objective area of civilians, and in so doing protected no fewer than ten of them from harm. This is a standard of care for civilian life that is virtually unprecedented in the history of armed conflict, and it is one that CENTCOM will continue to uphold into the future.

Strategic Competition

As the historical and enduring crossroads for overland and maritime trade between Europe, Asia, and Africa and home to half of the world's proven oil reserves, the CENTCOM AOR constitutes geo-strategic "key terrain" and a potentially decisive theater for strategic competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia. Within the AOR, an

expansionist PRC and a resurgent Russia seek to shift alliances and gain influence, seeking leverage through tools such as state-sponsored investment, to achieve assured access and key resources to support their national objectives. The PRC and Russia have tailored their regional approaches to suit their specific goals and have expanded military cooperation with many regional countries through both arms sales and exercises. The PRC has expanded its presence through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), COVID-19 diplomacy, debt-trap infrastructure investments, and the proliferation of 5G technology that will provide opportunities for political coercion and military exploitation. Similarly, Russia has reinforced its enduring military and economic presence in Syria, expanded its economic presence in and defense relationship with Egypt, and seeks to increase influence over regional energy resources and transit routes. In Central Asia, proximity to the PRC and Russia and a relatively minor U.S. presence mean every interaction between the U.S. and Central Asian states holds significance for our regional CT and strategic competition policy priorities. Ultimately, the PRC and Russia seek to expand their influence and subvert the international rules-based order at the expense of U.S. interests and those of our allies and partners.

The PRC and Russia also engage Iran to further their own interests while working against those of the United States. Both the PRC and Russia hope to position themselves as key economic partners for Iran, anticipating sanctions relief and priority access to development contracts and markets. In October 2021, Iran announced it would sign a strategic partnership with Russia similar to the agreement Tehran signed with Beijing in March 2021. For the PRC, the agreement ensured a reliable energy supply, hedging against any U.S. attempts to block other sources of oil. Moscow, meanwhile, advocated for a reinstatement of the JCPOA while helping Iran develop military capabilities that enable its destabilizing regional activities. Ultimately, neither the PRC nor Russia will align itself so closely with Iran that it jeopardizes its ability to court other economic and military partners in the region, but both will continue to use Iran as a useful foil against the West, reaping economic benefits as they do so.

Yet the geography and political contours of the region do not overwhelmingly favor the PRC or Russia. To the contrary, the bisection of the Eurasian landmass by the Central Region provides key terrain and a dominant position for the United States to strategically compete with the PRC and Russia through a range of security cooperation ventures, including border security, counter-narcotics, CT, and defense institution building. Because of these relationships, the United States remains the "partner of choice" for most countries in the region in comparison to Russia or the PRC. While we must compete to retain this favorable position, it remains ours to lose. In Central Asia, where

proximity *does* afford Russia and the PRC certain advantages, many nations are interested in closer relations with the West and share CT concerns with the United States, presenting opportunities to find and cultivate common ground.

The People's Republic of China

The PRC, which is the world's largest importer of oil, currently imports roughly 46 percent of its crude oil and 36 percent of its natural gas from the CENTCOM AOR. It continues to cultivate trade relationships, infrastructure development projects (on which it depends to absorb its excess industrial capacity), economic investment, and comprehensive partnerships among the region's states. The PRC continues to expand influence in the Arabian Gulf and Northern Arabian Sea is supported through port developmentand investment programs such as those in in Gwadar, Pakistan, and with the United Arab Emirates, which are central to the PRC's regional strategy.

Throughout the past year, the PRC has engaged with nearly every country in the AOR, using trade, the BRI, COVID-19 diplomacy, and other humanitarian assistance to support its strategic objectives and expand its influence. The PRC particularly enhanced its cooperation and influence with Iran by securing a twenty-five-year economic agreement, dampening the effects of international sanctions and providing the Iranian regime an economic lifeline. The PRC also initiated the accession process for Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), while adding Egypt, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia as dialogue partners. Additionally, the PRC advanced its status as an arms supplier to the region, providing military equipment to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, and the UAE, at discount prices and without preconditions, attempting to supplant the U.S. as a "partner ofchoice."

Aside from foreign military sales that can displace our U.S. security assistance relationships, the PRC conducts multilateral military exercises in the region and is postured for further collaboration. The People's Liberation Army Navy maintains a constant presence and is active in the region, conducting a wide range of peacetime operations to protect the PRC's maritime trade, assets, and personnel. This presence includes the Naval Escort Task Force, which operates in the Gulf of Aden and uses Djibouti as a sustainment hub. From there, the PRC can quickly project naval power into the Red Sea, the Bab al Mandeb strait, and the Gulf of Aden.

Russia

Over the past year, Russia has sought to portray itself as a regional powerbroker and

reliable partner on the global stage while also attempting to undermine U.S. positions and relations in the CENTCOM AOR. Russia maintains a largely opportunistic approach to its engagement with countries in the Middle East while viewing its influence in the Central Asia region as vital to its national security interests. Moscow responded to the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan by pressuring Central Asian states to refuse support from the U.S. and reinforcing its own position as the area's primary security partner through military exercises and advocating for the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

Additionally, Russia has solidified its military presence in Syria, where it asserts its position in international fora to increase its influence in the region and pressure the United States to withdraw. Russia has demonstrated the ability to project forces, test weapon systems, and routinely interfere with Coalition D-ISIS operations. To date this has included the exploitation of the space environment, electronic warfare, GPS jamming, and the use of private military companies. Since 2015, Russian armed forces have conducted kinetic actions in Syria at the behest of the Assad regime.

Russia has further developed forces and footprints capable of sustaining extra-territorial military operations. One example is the Russian naval base in the Syrian port of Tartus, for which Russia recently signed a forty-nine-year lease and announced plans to invest $500 million in port development. This base allows up to eleven nuclear-powered Russian Black Sea warships to repair and replenish in the Mediterranean Sea without having to return to home port through the Turkish Dardanelles and Bosporus straits, and it has facilitated increased naval activity in the Red Sea. Russia also developed an airfield to accommodate Russian bombers and expand its operational capacity in the region. From its Syrian footprints, the Russians are ideally placed to disrupt NATO operations in the Middle East and present a potential hedge against NATO's southern flank.

To improve its economic situation, Russia leveraged its relationship with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC+) to gain favorable market conditions for oil and gas sales over the last year. Russia's interests in Iraq are primarily in the fuel and energy sector, including exploration and infrastructure development. Russia has several energy companies operating in Iraq, including Lukoil, Gazprom, Neft, and Bashneft, for investments worth over $10 billion. Russia also continues marketing its advanced weapons systems for export to CENTCOM AOR countries. This marketing occurs in an environment in which many of our partners are looking for systems that support their national security

requirements, including the threat posed by Iran. As with the PRC, the speed of Russian arms sales is appealing to partners—and does not come with American accountability demands for end-use monitoring and human rights assurances, such as Leahy vetting.

While it is too early to grasp the full consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine for the CENTCOM AOR, our partners there are already feeling the initial adverse effects. Challenging humanitarian conditions across the CENTCOM AOR have already led to sustained displacement, undermined trust between governance structures and communities, and created space for our adversaries to exploit the human suffering of vulnerable populations. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has the potential to exacerbate these dynamics due to disruptions in wheat exports to the Middle East, strain on financial institutions, and rising fuel prices with global implications. Russia is the world's largest exporter of wheat, and Ukraine is the world's fifth largest, together accounting for 28.9 percent of global wheat exports. Countries across the AOR depend on Russian and Ukrainian wheat to varying degrees, and reporting out of Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon indicates price hikes of staple food items ranging between 30 and 50 percent since the Russian invasion began. Governments are attempting to ease the negative impacts on their citizens by increasing domestic production or pursuing imports from alternative markets, but these efforts will not fully address growing food insecurity, especially in import-dependent and cash-strapped countries such as Lebanon and Yemen.

Competing Strategically

The PRC and Russia haveshown that they are willing to work together toward common regional objectives: mutually supporting Iran, vetoing United Nations Security Council resolutions against Syria, and offering limited humanitarian assistance where it furthers their interests. Due to the geostrategic importance of the Central Region, allies, partners, and competitors will attempt to increase their influence in the CENTCOM AOR, especially if they perceive a wavering U.S. commitment to the region. The global economic environment induces regional partners to seriously consider Chinese and Russian offers of capital, investment, technology, infrastructure, and equipment to realize their national long-term economic and defense goals. At the tactical level, security cooperation and building partner capacity will remain central tenets of our military instrument of national power. The PRC and Russia currently lack the capability and capacity to conduct robust security cooperation activities, despite their desire to do so—but we should not assume this will continue to be true over the longer term. When given a choice, our Middle Eastern partners have traditionally preferred

alternatives presented by the United States and our allies. These alternatives must be viable, substantive, and timely if they are to ward off our strategic competitors.

Meanwhile, the United States and our allies can capitalize on our unique ability to build and lead international coalitions of like-minded nations. Multilateral security organizations such as the Combined Maritime Forces, the International Maritime Security Construct, and the forthcoming Red Sea Maritime Security Initiative serve as bulwarks against Chinese and Russian grey-zone operations and a deterrent to aggression in the region. By demonstrating international resolve and solidarity, we at once instill confidence in the international rules-based order and reduce the burden of doing so with like-minded partners.

Yet as we seek to limit the day-to-day deployments of U.S. assets to the region, we must retain the flexibility to rapidly deploy forces and other resources throughout the depth of the AOR. Increasing port, airfield, and basing access expands our regional influence and enhances our partnerships while also building resiliency and survivability in the case of regional or global conflict. It also allows us to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief more quickly and effectively than our competitors, demonstrating the values, commitment, and capability that have made us the partner of choice in the region and beyond.

Taking Care of Our People

Command Values

Improving diversity and inclusion in our force is an operational imperative to meet the demands of strategic competition. We must take deliberate action to build a joint force of men and women of all ethnicities, races, backgrounds, and beliefs. CENTCOM established a Diversity and Inclusion office responsible for advising the command on all matters relating to discrimination and institutional biases, as well as barriers to diversity and inclusion across the CENTCOM portfolio. This office is currently working on our Human Capital and Talent Management strategy to meet the demands of strategic competition.

While diversity enhances and strengthens the command, sexual assault and extremism within the ranks erode the very bonds of trust that make CENTCOM and the broader Joint Force the most capable military organizations in the world. CENTCOM is fully committed to the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Over the past several years, we have improved our command climate and prevention efforts in each of these areas. The feedback we have received from several

command-wide surveys shows our efforts have increased trust, credibility, and awareness. Our command climate results show that both our military and civilian personnel feel comfortable not only coming forward and reporting any concerns, but also that they trust we will action it appropriately.

Extremist ideologies conflict directly with our obligations to our country and the American public. Every service member and DoD civilian took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. Extremism desecrates that solemn obligation and erodes the trust and confidence the American people have in the military as an institution. CENTCOM conducted virtual training modules featuring subject matter experts and presentations by our most senior leaders and facilitated small-group discussions to build awareness and help prevent actions associated with extremist behaviors that go against the fundamental principles of our profession. This dialogue with our servicemembers and DoD civilians will continue, as will CENTCOM's commitment to respecting the rights and dignity of the American citizens who embody our force and constitute our greatest strength. Operating in a command free of discrimination, hate, and harassment while accomplishing our mission is paramount to our success.

COVID-19

Across the AOR, CENTCOM rapidly responded to the COVID-19 threat, implementing both non-pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical interventions, obtaining and disseminating personal protective equipment, and adapting newly-developed treatment guidelines to an austere deployed environment. Despite the pandemic, military operations and medical support for combat and non-combat casualties remain fully mission capable. Extensive public health measures, host-nation partnerships, and robust medical support across the AOR resulted in zero COVID-19-related service member deaths.

As of 17 February 2022, over 15,773 cases of COVID-19 were identified, resulting in 297 personnel medically evacuated from theater. Over the past three months there has been a decline in active cases with an average active case count of thirty-five. While many events were cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19, partners successfully executed larger, multinational exercises such as BRIGHT STAR, IMX, and EAGER LION. Anticipatory public health measures and effective implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination program detailed below led to dramatic reductions in daily active cases and theater medical evacuation.

CENTCOM continues working closely with the Joint Staff, Defense Health Agency, and Defense Logistics Agency to identify requirements for COVID-19 vaccines and newly

developed medications. CENTCOM prioritized forward-deployed forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria for early vaccine delivery and voluntary inoculation efforts. In March 2021, CENTCOM significantly expanded vaccine distribution throughout the AOR with the intent to provide COVID-19 vaccines for all DOD personnel, dependents, and contractors willing to receive it to provide maximal force health protection. Following full licensure and OSD-directed mandatory vaccination, CENTCOM overcame ultra-cold storage and shipping challenges to provide the Pfizer vaccine more broadly across the AOR, achieving full vaccination rate of 97 percent among U.S. military personnel and civilians.

Refinement of theater deployment physical standards for all personnel helped reduce the impact to U.S., Coalition, and partner-nation civilians. Continued entry of COVID-19 infected personnel, finite quantities of on-hand testing consumables, limited quarantine and hospital capacity in theater, and irregular resupply obstacles were effectively mitigated, leading to outbreak prevention and containment. Individuals must now be fully vaccinated as a theater entry requirement, which will minimize COVID-19 mission impact moving forward. Booster shots are readily available and encouraged for all deployed personnel.

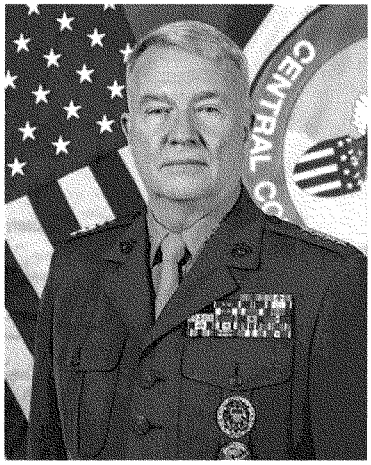
At the CENTCOM headquarters, relaxing restrictions on travel and movement in both the AOR and the United States renewed face-to-face key leader engagements and regular personnel rotations throughout much of 2021. CENTCOM was able to remove previously implemented teleworking procedures, with on-site staffing returning to 100 percent in June 2021. Effective public health measures and implementation of mandatory vaccination has provided long-term solutions to enable safe operations in the headquarters (both in Tampa and forward) and continuous support to forward-deployed formations.

Conclusion

CENTCOM will continue to play an important role in commanding and directing a multitude of operations, activities, and investments across the region that maintain freedom of navigation, bolster our allies and partners against coercion, share in the region's common defense, and strive for regional stability. Maintaining a sufficient and sustainable level of presence in the Central Region will enable us to deter Iranian aggression, while providing the capability to compete with the PRC and Russia and disrupt VEOs. It also will provide us the ability to influence and help secure three of the world's five most vital transit choke points, ensuring free flow of navigation, resources, and commerce.

Moving forward, how we establish our limited enduring presence will be closely watched by both our regional and global partners, with nations making their own decisions about our reliability in the long term. A tailored presence supported by an over-the-horizon capability will enable flexibility, responsiveness, and act as a strategic shock absorber and backstop to our allies and partners in times of crisis. It is vital to match aspirations with resources to ensure successful strategy execution in the Central Region. Ultimately, CENTCOM must operate forward, retain appropriate manning, and remain operationally ready in order to meet an uncertain, unstable future and support whatever policies our civilian leadership direct. The necessary oversight and deep support from Congress critically enable our continued success.

Commander, General Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr.



General Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr. is the Commander, United States Central Command.

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, upon graduation from The Citadel in 1979, Gen McKenzie was commissioned into the Marine Corps and trained as an infantry officer.

He has commanded at the platoon, company, battalion, Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), and component levels. As a LtCol, he commanded First Battalion, Sixth Marines. As the Commanding Officer of the 22d MEU (SOC), he led the MEU on combat deployments to Afghanistan in 2004 and Iraq in 2005-06. In 2006-07 he served as the Military Secretary to the 33rd and 34th Commandants of the Marine Corps.

In July 2007, upon promotion to BGen, he served on the Joint Staff as a Deputy Director of Operations within the National Military Command Center. In June 2008, he was selected by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be the Director of the Chairman's New Administration Transition Team (CNATT). In this capacity, he coordinated the efforts of the Joint Staff and the combatant commands in preparing for and executing a wartime transition of administrations.

In June 2009, he reported to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, Afghanistan to serve as the Deputy to the Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) for

Stability. Upon his return from Afghanistan, in July 2010 he was assigned as the Director, Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J-5) for the U.S. Central Command. In August 2012, he reported to Headquarters Marine Corps to serve as the Marine Corps Representative to the Quadrennial Defense Review. In June 2014, he was promoted to LtGen and assumed command of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command. In October 2015, he was assigned to the Joint Staff to serve as the Director, J-5, Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Staff. In July 2017, he was named the Director, Joint Staff. Gen McKenzie was promoted to his current rank and assumed command of U.S. Central Command in March 2019.

Gen McKenzie is an honors graduate of the Armor Officer Advanced Course, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, and the School of Advanced Warfighting. He was selected as a CMC Fellow in 1999, and served as a Senior Military Fellow within the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. He has a Masters in Teaching with a concentration in History.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022.

UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

WITNESS

GENERAL LAURA J. RICHARDSON, COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

Ms. MCCOLLUM. The Subcommittee on Defense will come to order.

This morning, we will receive testimony from U.S. Southern Command.

I would like to remind members to leave behind any classified materials for the staff to collect at the end of the hearing. We welcome our witness, General Laura Richardson, Commander of SOUTHCOM, to her first appearance before the Subcommittee. We look forward to your testimony today. The purpose of today's hearing is to discuss the challenges in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility ahead of the fiscal year 2023 budget request. There are many issues that I hope we can address today, and I will mention a handful that are shaping the region. First, there is the influence of China. China is now the largest investor and creditor in the SOUTHCOM region, which China also leverages in the political and security space. Second, there is the influence of Russia. While Russia's economic influence doesn't compare to China's, Russia's disinformation campaigns are widespread, and Russia's security cooperation with Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua is concerning. Third, there is the ongoing turmoil in Venezuela. The collapse of the Venezuelan economy has created an ongoing refugee crisis, and the lack of governed areas has become a haven for criminal organizations. Fourth, there is the economic and security situation in Central America. These conditions, particularly in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, continue to push migration towards the United States. And finally, there is the impact of climate change.

SOUTHCOM sees hundreds of natural disasters every year and these are made worse by climate change. Honduras in particular was hit by two hurricanes at the end of 2020 and is still yet to recover. Climate change will continue to impact the economic and security situation in these nations and will continue to drive migrants to our southern border.

We look forward to hearing how SOUTHCOM is postured and resourced to address these and other challenges, and to support the 5,000 U.S. personnel serving in this area of responsibility.

With that, I want to thank everyone for participating in today's hearing and I now recognize our distinguished ranking member, Mr. Calvert, for his opening remarks.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—Mr. Calvert's statement could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL LAURA J. RICHARDSON

COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

BEFORE THE 117TH CONGRESS

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

MARCH 17, 2022



Introduction

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the committee, it is my great honor to serve and lead the incredible team of patriots at U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). As current national strategic direction states: "Today, more than ever, America's fate is inextricably linked to events beyond our shores." Nowhere is this more evident than right here in the Western Hemisphere. This region—our shared neighborhood—is under assault from a host of cross-cutting, transboundary challenges that directly threaten our own homeland. Countering these threats requires greater U.S. attention, commitment, and investments to reverse the current disturbing trends.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are facing insecurity and instability exacerbated by COVID-19, the climate crisis and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The PRC continues its relentless march to expand its economic, diplomatic, technological, informational, and military influence in LAC and challenges U.S. influence in all these areas. Without continued modest investment, negative PRC influence in this region could soon resemble the self-serving, predatory influence it now holds in Africa.

Meanwhile, Russia intensifies instability through its ties with Venezuela, entrenchment in Cuba and Nicaragua, and extensive disinformation operations. Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), which operate nearly uncontested, and blaze a trail of corruption and violence that create conditions that allow the PRC and Russia to exploit, threaten citizen security, and undermine public confidence in government institutions. These threats, along with Iran, corruption, irregular migration, and climate change, all overwhelm the region's fragile state institutions, springing unrest and increasingly frustrated populations. This combination of factors pushes many political leaders to seek resources and support from all sources, including our adversaries who are very eager to undermine U.S. presence and public image.

USSOUTHCOM is putting integrated deterrence into action, using innovative methods to work seamlessly with other Combatant Commands (CCMDs), the Joint Force, allies and partner nations, Congress, the U.S. interagency (IA), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector to help build a shared neighborhood that is free, secure, and prosperous for our generation, and generations to come.

Security Environment

In USSOUTHCOM's area of responsibility (AOR), 28 of 31 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean are democracies that share our values such as the rule of law, human rights, and gender equality. We refer to this theater as our "neighborhood" because of physical proximity and interrelated familial, economic, and cultural ties. The region accounts for $740 billion in annual trade with the U.S.; contains 60% of the world's lithium and 31% of the world's fresh water; has the world's largest oil reserves; and is home to the environmentally crucial Amazon rainforest. However, transboundary threats facing our neighborhood erode peace and security, weaken fragile democratic institutions, hinder economic prosperity, and create "wedges" for malign actors to expand their influence in our own hemisphere.

The People's Republic of China (PRC): The PRC's ambition to fundamentally revise the world order to serve its authoritarian goals and expand its global influence has triggered a new era of strategic competition with the United States. Our AOR is another front of this strategic competition. Over the past year the PRC and its state-owned enterprises (SOEs) continued to target, recruit, and bribe officials at all levels in the AOR to expand their economic, political, and military influence throughout the region. PRC activities include investments in strategic infrastructure, systematic technology and intellectual property theft, disinformation and propaganda campaigns, and malicious cyber activity – all with the goal of expanding long-term access and influence in this hemisphere.

As in other regions of the world, the PRC uses its economic might to co-opt and coerce countries to fulfill its strategic goals. To date, 21 regional countries participate in the PRC's One Belt One Road (OBOR), which provides PRC-backed loans for key infrastructure such as ports, telecommunications, roads and bridges, agriculture cultivation, and mining projects to satisfy the PRC's own growing domestic demand and pursuit of a continued monopoly of critical minerals. But all too often, burdensome OBOR loans come with clauses hidden from the public that give SOEs undue advantages, such as requiring countries to use PRC construction companies and labor to build projects, agreements for the host nation to offer natural resources as collateral, and even the potential for the PRC company to take over the projects when the debtor nation cannot repay the loan.

In addition, several of these PRC-funded infrastructure projects lack due diligence, involve corruption, ignore indigenous rights, and completely disregard environmental protections. More importantly, these projects give the PRC access to sensitive sectors and critical infrastructure in ways that expose these countries to national security and data privacy threats.

Several LAC governments are beginning to realize the very real risks that engaging with PRC entities can bring. For instance, Ecuador sued a PRC company for a poorly constructed dam that is now causing erosion along a major river. The erosion resulted in the rupture of an oil pipeline, spilling over 15,000 gallons of crude, which polluted the waters, destroyed wildlife, and negatively impacted over 150,000 people.[1] The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is now working with Ecuador to mitigate the effects of the erosion. This is just one of several examples of how PRC firms often over promise and under deliver in this region, and where the U.S. leverages our strength and reliable relationships to provide immediate support and effectively compete.

As COVID-19 ravaged the region, the PRC sold millions of vaccines and provided medical assistance and loans to pay for vaccines to several LAC countries. However, the PRC also pressured partner nations to adopt PRC-made 5G technology or switch diplomatic recognition from Taiwan in exchange for those vaccines.[2] Of the 14 governments (including the Vatican) that currently recognize Taiwan, eight are in the USSOUTHCOM AOR. In December of 2021, Nicaragua switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the PRC – another clear sign of the PRC's growing influence in the region.

PRC SOEs are increasingly involved in developing facilities and other infrastructure near strategic maritime chokepoints such as the Panama Canal and the Strait of Magellan. In Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, the PRC has abused commercial agreements at host country ports for military functions[3]; our concern is that they are attempting to do the same right here in this region, close to our homeland. For example, in Panama, PRC-based companies are engaged in or bidding for several projects related to the Panama Canal, a global

[1] https://www.tearline.mil/public_page/china-bri-in-ecuador-hydropower/
[2] https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/world/americas/brazil-vaccine-china.html; https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56661303
[3] https://www.wsj.com/articles/us-china-uae-military-11637274224

strategic chokepoint, including port operations on both ends of the canal, water management, and a logistics park.

In Argentina, the PRC-run space research facility in Neuquén could track and target U.S. satellites.[4] A PRC SOE is securing rights to build installations near the port of Ushuaia, which would provide the PRC presence at the Strait of Magellan and improve access to Antarctica. In El Salvador, a Chinese investor with ties to the Chinese Communist Party is using bribes and corruption to expand and operate the La Union port, a $3 billion project encompassing 1,700 square miles, strategically located at the intersection of Salvadoran, Honduran, and Nicaraguan territory.[5] These are just some of the dozens of PRC-funded port projects throughout the region that could be leveraged for military purposes.

The PRC engages in an aggressive information operations campaign that attempts to depict the PRC as a more trustworthy partner than the U.S., amplifies its vaccine distribution and OBOR projects, and spreads disinformation about the U.S. in the region. More LAC countries are adopting Huawei's 5G technology, which could give the PRC a back door into sensitive information on our partner nations and even the U.S. Several LAC countries are using PRC-created Safe City programs, causing a potential counterintelligence threat to U.S. and allied personnel. PRC-linked space observation projects are ongoing in Brazil and Chile as well, increasing the PRC's situational awareness in space.

In the military sphere, the PRC increasingly pays for members of LAC security forces to travel to Beijing and receive Spanish and Portuguese-language military education modeled after U.S. professional military education programs. In addition, more partner nation military personnel are traveling to the PRC to receive training in Mandarin, cybersecurity, and PRC military doctrine. The PRC also "gifts" security supplies and telecommunications equipment to gain access and win favor with regional security forces, in addition to selling military vehicles and aircraft to LAC countries.

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[4] https://www.reuters.com/article/us-space-argentina-china-insight/chinas-military-run-space-station-in-argentina-is-a-black-box-idUSKCN1PP0I2

[5] https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/project-el-salvador-shows-how-china-exerting-growing-power-america-n1278464

PRC-based firms and individuals engage in illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing along the outer limits of South American Exclusive Economic Zones. Many of these fishing vessels are directly subsidized by the PRC central government. Each year, over 600 PRC-flagged vessels operate in international waters off the coast of South America.[6] They severely deplete fish stocks and leave plastics and other pollutants in the Galapagos Marine Reserve near Ecuador, costing the region almost $3 billion in lost annual revenue. Such illicit activities not only drain partner nations' already scarce natural resources, but they also destroy the environment, threaten marine life, and deprive local workers of their livelihood, driving some those workers to join TCOs to supplement lost income.

Russia: Russia continues to destabilize the region and undermine democracy by flooding the region with disinformation, to include hundreds of articles distorting U.S. security actions. In 2020, Russia Today (RT)'s Spanish-language media outlets more than doubled their social media followers from 7 million to over 18 million. These disinformation campaigns are just one part of Russia's broader efforts to influence national elections throughout the region this year. Russia's relationship with its key regional partners— Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua—allow Moscow to expand its air and sea access to project military power throughout the region. Agreements with Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Brazil allow Russian warships to make port calls on short notice. Russia doubled its naval deployments in this region, increasing from five (2008-2014), to 11 (2015-2020). Russia seeks inroads in the hemisphere by providing security training through $2.3 billion in weapons and military equipment sales in the last 10 years, to include direct sales to Venezuela

Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) and Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs): At the end of 2021, the Biden administration established the U.S. Council on Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC), an interagency mechanism charged with countering TCOs.[7] On December 15th, 2021, the Treasury Department issued new sanctions on 15 entities and 10 individuals involved in global illicit drug trade; this included two TCOs from our AOR: Primeiro Comando Da Capital in Brazil and Clan del Golfo in Colombia.[8]

[6] https://projects.voanews.com/fishing/galapagos/
[7] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/15/fact-sheet-the-biden-administration-launches-new-efforts-to-counter-transnational-criminal-organizations-and-illicit-drugs/
[8] https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0535

It was a clear acknowledgement of the very direct threat TCOs pose to the U.S. homeland. They are trafficking opioids, cocaine, and other deadly drugs into U.S. neighborhoods, fueling both the drug overdose epidemic and drug-related violence. Tragically, more than 100,000 Americans died from drug overdoses within a 12-month period, representing an almost 30% increase over the same period the previous year. The Central American corridor remains the primary vector for Colombia-based networks to supply Mexico-based cartels with cocaine destined for our nation's streets.

Beyond drugs, TCOs traffic in humans (some "coyotes" charge between $15,000 and $20,000 per person to get illegal migrants to the U.S.[9]), arms, illegal logging and mining, and other illicit products. Because of their murderous tactics, 43 of the world's 50 most violent cities are in our hemisphere, largely due to conflict between warring TCOs and gangs. This violence causes further irregular migration into the United States. Many TCOs have larger budgets and more personnel than the security forces trying to stop them. They generate more than $300 billion in profits that further degrade security in the region; that is 10 times the $30 billion annual budget of the region's militaries combined.

Regional VEOs such as The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – Segunda Marquetalia (FARC-SM), and the National Liberation Army (ELN) use Venezuela as a haven to conduct attacks and weaken political stability in Colombia. They also pose a severe threat to U.S. and partner nation military forces. In June 2021, the FARC-EP used a car bomb to attack a Colombian army base and claimed that the target of the attack were U.S. military personnel deployed there. The attack injured 36 Colombian military personnel and two U.S. service members.[10] This is one of three attacks on a base with collocated U.S. service members in the last 18 months, demonstrating the increasing threat to U.S. persons within Colombia. These VEOs attack security forces, carry out targeted assassinations against political advocates, and terrorize the civilian population. The lines between TCOs and

[9] https://www.telemundo20.com/noticias/frontera/pollero-se-gana-la-vida-cruzando-migrantes/2114697/
[10] https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/farc-dissidents-say-they-carried-out-colombia-bombing-target-was-us-advisors-2021-09-23/

VEOs are increasingly blurred as TCOs like Clan del Golfo use terrorist tactics and regional VEOs use illicit trafficking to fund their operations.

Both al-Qaida and ISIS have supporters across the region who could act as facilitators. Several foreign terrorist fighters who traveled from nations in our AOR to join ISIS remain detained in Syria. Several dozen family members who accompanied them remain in Syria as well, residing in displaced persons camps and are seeking to return to the region, challenging the region's security services who do not prioritize counterterrorism, and are now overstretched due to the pandemic.[11] We continue to support U.S. and partner nation law enforcement efforts to disrupt human smuggling networks involved in moving non-U.S. citizens from countries with pronounced violent extremist activity through Latin America who could pose a national security risk to the U.S. or its interests. Lebanese Hizballah (LH) leverages the region's Lebanese diaspora throughout Latin America and the Caribbean for fundraising, recruiting, and logistical support.[12]

Iran: In the past year, Iran expanded economic and security cooperation with Venezuela, Cuba, and Bolivia through fuel transfers, bartering, food staples, and military assistance, reducing the effects of U.S. sanctions. The Iranian regime purchased gold from illegal gold mines in Venezuela, allowing the Maduro regime to evade sanctions and finance its oppressive activities against its citizens. Last year, two Iranian warships were bound for Venezuela, potentially carrying weapons and missile attack boats.[13] In this instance, U.S. diplomatic efforts thwarted Iran's intentions, which would have directly threatened our homeland, allies, and partners. Tehran also leverages Iranian state-sponsored and non-state media outlets to generate empathy for Iran and Shia Islam and diminish Western influence in the hemisphere. Tehran continues to maintain a Spanish-language channel that reaches 17 countries in the region, spreading disinformation and attempting to sow mistrust of the U.S.

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[11] https://www.middleeasteye.net/fr/node/149336; https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/trinidad-woman-syria-refugee-camp-al-hol-writes-prime-minister; https://trinidadexpress.com/newsextra/70-trini-children-24-women-in-syrian-refugee-camp/article_91668618-a829-11eb-8ad2-b79061c61e5d.html

[12] https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/the-maduro-hezbollah-nexus-how-iran-backed-networks-prop-up-the-venezuelan-regime/

[13] https://edition.cnn.com/2021/06/03/politics/us-iran-ships-venezuela/index.html

Venezuela: Not long ago, Venezuela was a Latin American beacon of democracy, with democratic values and free-market principles and was the wealthiest nation in the region. Today, after the crushing authoritarian rules of Nicolas Maduro and Hugo Chavez before him, Venezuela has become one of the worst humanitarian crises this hemisphere has ever seen and poses a significant security threat to the region. As a result of the regime's rampant corruption and gross mismanagement, the Venezuelan people lack basic services like clean water, food, and health care. COVID-19, gas shortages, increasing levels of unemployment and inflation, and human rights violations are also adding to Venezuela's instability and insecurity. As of November 2021, more than six million Venezuelan refugees and migrants were displaced globally (more than 20% of the overall population). Venezuela has become the primary access point in the region for external state actors, and a refuge for TCOs and VEOs. The regime actively engages in narcotrafficking and harbors regional terrorist groups like the ELN, FARC-EP, and FARC-SM within its borders. The tragedy that has occurred in Venezuela serves as a dire warning of what can be expected when a partner nation backslides into authoritarianism.

Cuba: Cuba remains a regional corrosive influence, providing political, military, and intelligence support to prop up the illegitimate Maduro regime. In July 2021, thousands of people across Cuba participated in the largest protest since Fidel Castro took power in 1959, angered by the lack of food, basic products, medicine, and vaccines to combat COVID-19. In response, the Cuban regime cracked down hard, jailing protesters and cutting off internet access. PRC companies have played a key part in building Cuba's telecommunications infrastructure, a system the Cuban regime uses to control its people, just as the PRC does within its own borders.[14]

Nicaragua: President Daniel Ortega, a former Marxist guerilla leader, continues to strengthen his authoritarian grip in Nicaragua. More than 50 countries and regional institutions have denounced his regime and recent reelection, echoing Secretary of State Blinken's recent comments that Ortega and his wife, Vice President Rosario Murillo, were "preparing a sham election devoid of credibility, by silencing and arresting political opponents, and ultimately by attempting to establish an authoritarian dynasty unaccountable to the

[14] https://thediplomat.com/2021/08/how-china-helps-the-cuban-regime-stay-afloat-and-shut-down-protests/

Nicaraguan people."[15] As mentioned previously, Nicaragua continues to cozy up to and court the PRC, recently switching diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the PRC. Nicaragua also maintains close ties with Russia, whose security assistance to Nicaragua focuses on professional military education, donations, and the provision of humanitarian support in a strategy to increase its influence over the Nicaraguan government and counter U.S. regional goals. Over the past decade, Nicaragua has played host to a Russian-built joint counternarcotics training center where over 500 Latin American and Caribbean officers have been trained and welcomed multiple Russian maritime and air deployments.

COVID-19 and State Fragility: The impacts of COVID-19 continue to change the geopolitical landscape of the AOR. LAC countries are still reeling from the public health and economic fallout of the pandemic, rolling back much of the progress this region has experienced over the past several decades. The AOR and Mexico have just 8% of the world's population but approximately 30% of the world's COVID deaths.[16] The region's economy contracted 8% during the pandemic, plunging 22 million people into poverty.[17] More than half of the region's school-age children are out of school, making them vulnerable to TCO and gang recruitment and stunting their long-term development.[18] Our partner nation military and security forces have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 response in their countries, but their budgets are facing extreme pressure as governments use their limited resources to address the pandemic. Security forces are increasingly focused on the very near-term need for items such as vaccines, fuel, food, and personal protective equipment at the expense of security operations. While the PRC immediately capitalized on our partners' needs during the pandemic by selling or trading its vaccine, the U.S. Government has now surpassed the number of vaccines the PRC provided by donating over 122 million doses to the region, free of charge, and no strings attached – as good neighbors do. While more U.S. COVID-19 aid is planned, our partners remain concerned that the PRC and Russia will

[15] https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/blinken-accuses-nicaraguas-ortega-preparing-sham-election-2021-10-22/
[16] https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality
[17] https://www.cepal.org/en/pressreleases/growth-latin-america-and-caribbean-2021-will-not-manage-reverse-adverse-effects
[18] https://www.wsj.com/articles/latin-americas-long-school-shutdown-is-leading-to-crisis-11625396400

continue to use the pandemic to increase their influence. Consequently, this enables an environment where TCOs gain even more freedom of action as conditions for corruption and illicit activity grow.

Corruption corrodes fragile institutions, scares off much needed foreign investment, and creates conditions for all other threats in the region to weaken our allies and partners. In June 2021, President Biden stated that fighting corruption is a core U.S. national security interest.[19] It affects people in every aspect of their daily lives, draining resources from the state that could be dedicated to security, education, healthcare, and infrastructure. A recent study by Transparency International (TI) showed that 22 countries in the region have shown no statistically significant changes in their corruption levels over the past decade. In particular, Central America is at an all-time low on TI's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index, and Venezuela, Haiti, and Nicaragua scored the lowest in the region.[20] Coupled with accusations against local governments for COVID mismanagement, corruption has dampened citizen faith in democratic institutions; a recent opinion poll in 18 Latin American countries showed that just 49% of those surveyed believe in their democratic systems.[21] Such discontent has caused protests in several countries around the region, and will likely impact elections in key partner nations in 2022 and beyond. Corruption also allows malign state actors like the PRC and Russia, and non-state actors like TCOs and VEOs to expand their influence in the region.

Climate Change and Natural Disasters: Hurricanes, rising sea levels, flooding and drought are worsening economic and food security and contributing to irregular migration in the region. In August 2021, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, killing more than 2,000 people and damaging thousands of homes. Communities in Central America are still recovering from the Category 4 hurricanes Eta and Iota that made landfall in 2020, destroying thousands of homes, decimating livestock and essential crops like rice, corn, and beans, and displacing nearly 600,000 people in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.[22] About 8 million people suffer from food insecurity due to drought in the Dry Corridor—a 1,000-mile-long geographic zone that runs

[19] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/03/memorandum-on-establishing-the-fight-against-corruption-as-a-core-united-states-national-security-interest/
[20] https://www.transparency.org/en/news/cpi-2021-americas-a-region-in-crisis
[21] https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2021/10/08/latinobarometro-2021-uruguay-venezuela-apoyan-democracia-orix/
[22] https://www.cbsnews.com/news/climate-change-migration-central-america/

through Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.[23] Hurricanes and drought also further exacerbate an already difficult malnutrition context and food insecurity, with Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua having a combined 1.3 million children under 5 years old experiencing stunting which is a prevalence of 43, 20, and 14 percent, respectively, in each of those countries.[24] South America is suffering extreme drought not seen since the 1940s, hampering the flow of hydroelectric dams and river transport for Paraguay and Brazil.[25] In April 2021, a volcano erupted in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, displacing thousands. These natural disasters, along with the economic fallout of COVID-19, violence fueled by TCOs and VEOs, corruption, and a perceived change in U.S. immigration policy, have driven thousands of migrants to embark on long and dangerous journeys to the U.S. border.

Plan of Action—What We're Doing to Address the Threats

Over the past several years, U.S. Southern Command has used three lines of effort to address cross-cutting, transboundary challenges: strengthen partnerships, counter threats, and build our team. These lines of effort remain valid, but we must execute them more aggressively, understanding that we achieve our most enduring effects through integrated deterrence with fellow CCMDs, the Joint Force, our allies, and partners, the IA, NGOs, and private industry. While USSOUTHCOM is committed to using all possible "levers" at our disposal to build partner capacity to address those cross-cutting challenges, many of the programs and processes in place are not designed to move swiftly enough to outcompete the PRC – an adversary that has no concern for transparency, oversight, or the rule of law.

Strengthen Partnerships—Build Trust

Integrated Deterrence with Interagency, Allies, and Partners: In the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, President Biden stated: "when we strengthen our alliances, we amplify our power and our ability to disrupt threats before they can reach our shores." At USSOUTHCOM we're doing just that, putting

[23] https://www.actionagainsthunger.org/story/covid-19-and-climate-shocks-driving-dramatic-increase-hunger-latin-america-new-studies-find
[24] https://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/2021/en/
[25] https://www.wsj.com/articles/severe-drought-hits-south-america-11635240602

integrated deterrence into action. We have representatives from 15 U.S. government agencies and 11 allied and partner nations working in our headquarters and component commands, each bringing unique perspectives, capabilities, and authorities to help us accomplish our mission. USSOUTHCOM members participate in venues such as the Global Engagement Center, Venezuela Task Force, The Interdiction Committee, and the Joint Interagency Coordination Group to share best practices and align initiatives with IA counterparts on countering the PRC, Russia, TCOs, and other malign actors.

We continue to strengthen relationships with our NATO allies that have presence in the region through operations and exercises. We coordinate with the UK, Canada, France, and the Netherlands on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR). The recent response to the earthquake in Haiti is a shining example of the U.S.-NATO relationship in this AOR. The immediate response and our ability to seamlessly leverage each other's ships, aircraft, forces, and local contacts are lauded by our partners and unmatched by our adversaries. We will continue to welcome IA and NATO participation in our annual HA/DR exercises. We also plan to host an annual senior-level IA conference to ensure whole-of-government alignment on outcompeting the PRC and Russia, countering TCOs and VEOs, addressing corruption and responding to climate disasters.

USSOUTHCOM is also integrated with regional NGOs like Global Fishing Watch to better understand IUU fishing and share this information with our regional partners to counter this illegal activity. Through our strategic partnerships with private sector entities like the Business Executives for National Security and corporate members of the Council of the Americas, we're increasing public awareness of our adversaries' malign activities in a range of areas and amplifying success stories from the U.S. private sector. For instance, USSOUTHCOM continues to amplify the great work by the U.S. Development Finance Corporation that finances infrastructure projects in the areas of climate, health and global health security, digital connectivity, and gender equity and equality.

Professional Military Education (PME): Through the Department of State's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, USSOUTHCOM offers high-quality education that emphasizes professionalism and values like human rights, the rule of law, and gender equality. Our courses also stress the importance of a strong non-commissioned officer corps as a core element of legitimacy

and professionalism across militaries. Each year, approximately 800 foreign military students from 27 countries participate in the IMET program. To date, 17 Chiefs of Defense and six Ministers of Defense have attended IMET-funded courses at U.S institutions. USSOUTHCOM's portion of the State Department's IMET funding for the region has remained steady at approximate $11-12M per year, which is about 10% of the global IMET budget.

Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS): FMF is an important foreign policy tool funded by the State Department and carried out by DoD. Via Foreign Military Sales, FMF assists partner nation militaries in procuring U.S. defense articles such as vehicles, aircraft, arms, and equipment to bolster their defense capabilities. Each year, the Department of State obligates $75 million in FMF funding, with 40-50% allocated to Colombia, our closest regional military partner. FMF and FMS success stories can be found throughout the AOR: Caribbean partners have used FMF-funded refurbished Coast Guard vessels to better interdict drug traffickers; Panama has used its FMF-funded vessel and aircraft for maritime patrols and search and rescue missions; and the Costa Rican Coast Guard has used its FMF-funded Metal Shark boat to conduct joint drug interdiction operations with Colombia and Panama. The levers that USSOUTHCOM uses must be responsive enough to outcompete in our area of responsibility.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR): USSOUTHCOM's HA/DR projects show how we can leverage flexible, responsive funding to save lives. Since the start of the pandemic, USSOUTHCOM used CARES Act funding to make over 500 humanitarian assistance donations valued at over $74 million to 28 countries. These donations included field hospitals, personal protective equipment, ventilators, and medical supplies and immediately offset the delivery of substandard vaccines from the PRC and Russia. When a devastating earthquake struck Haiti last year, USSOUTHCOM supported the U.S. Agency for International Development's humanitarian response to save lives. After 21 days of around the clock teamwork with all our Component Commands, the National Security Council, the Department of State, NGOs, and Haitian authorities, our team assisted and rescued 477 people and delivered nearly 590,000 pounds of food, water, medical equipment, and other supplies. As we continue to provide HA/DR support, we will work more closely with regional emergency management organizations to coordinate our HA/DR responses

Medical-related Assistance: In 2021, Air Force - Southern (AFSOUTH) conducted Resolute Sentinel, where dozens of service members provided medical, surgical, dental, and veterinary care to thousands of people in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. This year, U.S. military medical personnel will deploy during the Health Engagement Assistance Response Team (HEART) surgical mission to Central America and the USNS COMFORT medical mission to improve their own medical skills and readiness, save lives, alleviate overburdened hospitals, and earn goodwill from our partners.

Climate Defense: USSOUTHCOM has been working with partners to help mitigate some of the effects of climate change. As mentioned previously, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continues to provide vital support to the USSOUTHCOM AOR, primarily through the Department of State's Foreign Military Sales Program. In addition to helping Ecuador assess and mitigate the erosion caused by the faulty PRC-built dam, USACE is also providing technical support to the Panama Canal Authority's multi-billion-dollar water management project; assisting Honduras with flood control; working on port and watershed development projects in the Dominican Republic and Brazil; and helping Colombia and Peru build critical military base infrastructure. These USACE projects are aligned with our theater strategy and directly support a range of our mission areas to include countering PRC efforts and illicit traffic as well as humanitarian assistance and security cooperation. Through these USACE projects, USSOUTHCOM is offering viable alternatives to PRC-funded infrastructure projects; and they represent the highest standards of transparency and anticorruption, financial sustainability, labor protections, and environmental preservation.

Women, Peace, and Security (WPS): At USSOUTHCOM, we are committed to integrating gender perspectives into all our activities, and we encourage our partners to create structural changes in their militaries to allow for the same through our WPS program. Our main objective is to maximize the talents of the force through recruitment, retention, training, and advancement. We consistently encourage our partner nation militaries to provide more opportunities for the women in their ranks, because doubling the talent pool will vastly improve that military's competitiveness and professionalism. No nation can afford to ignore half its population, especially given the crosscutting threats we're all facing. We must remain adaptable, innovative,

and human-centric. When we look at the factors that influence prosperity and stability, incorporating concepts of WPS in strategic design and operational employment across the region is paramount.

Human Rights Training: USSOUTHCOM is the only Combatant Command that has a Human Rights Office, commemorating 25 years this year, which actively promotes building stronger military human rights programs within partner nation militaries. Emphasizing respect for human rights is an integral component of military professionalism and a common value that unites military forces serving the democracies of the Western Hemisphere. Human rights are our guiding principle – our North Star – in all security cooperation with our partners. Several partner nation military personnel, especially those in Central America, attend the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies, where respect for rule of law and human rights feature prominently in the curriculum.

Counter Threats—Be Aggressive

In the same way that we rely on the IA, allies, and partners to strengthen partnerships in our AOR, we are using that same integrated deterrence approach to illuminate, disrupt, degrade, neutralize, and defeat our adversaries. Our number one pacing threat is the PRC, our secondary threats are Russia, TCOs, and Iran. USSOUTHCOM is also deploying innovative methods in cyber, space, information operations, artificial intelligence, and machine learning to counter these cross-cutting threats.

Understanding the Threat: Our senior defense officials, defense attaches, and security cooperation officials downrange must serve as the "scouts" and "sensors," feeding key information about malign activities in their countries up to our intelligence analysts and component commands. By developing a more effective, flatter means of communication, their insight and information enables senior leaders to maintain a common intelligence picture and drive operations with clear impact. As we gather intelligence and information about our adversaries' activities, we must also share it quickly and broadly with the IA, allies, partners, and other Combatant Commands. This will help us all expose our adversaries' malign practices, narrow any seams and gaps that our adversaries try to exploit, and glean key insights and trends about our adversaries' playbook throughout the AOR.

Competing in the Information Space: Our adversaries are aggressive in the information operation space, amplifying their assistance to partners in the region and spreading disinformation to diminish U.S. credibility. We must more effectively pierce the information space, using all the tools available to us—traditional media, radio, TV, social media, and podcasts—to amplify our own story, shape local perceptions, and expose malign actors and their disinformation. We must highlight the value of our neighborhood in defense of our homeland and the role it plays in the global campaign for integrated deterrence. USSOUTHCOM and our components execute activities to counter threats and compete against our adversaries in the information space bringing to the attention of foreign audiences our steadfast commitment, through Military Information Support Operations (MISO) and Operations, Activities, and Investments (OAIs) throughout the AOR. MISO and Information Operations are two of best tools in achieving our objectives and our support to USG efforts. Our Special Operations Command-South (SOCSOUTH) is currently carrying out MISO in Guyana and developing similar operations for Central and South America, and the Caribbean. We have a great story to tell: the U.S. is the region's trusted partner because of the values we share and the alignment of our activities to create mutual gains toward greater resilience, peace, and prosperity in the AOR. We tell the truth.

Cybersecurity: USSOUTHCOM helps prepare our partner nations to defend themselves against a variety of threats in the cyber domain including from malign state and non-state actors, hackers, criminal groups, and terrorist organizations. Our Joint Cyber Center continues to conduct security cooperation through our Joint Combatant Command Cyber Assistance Teams and Subject Matter Expert Exchanges to share expertise, best practices, and cyber threat indicators to assist partner nations with incident response to cyberattacks, and to further harden and secure their networks. Separately, the USSOUTHCOM Network Operations & Security Center (NOSC) monitors for malicious cyber activity in the AOR 24/7.

Space Cooperation: USSOUTHCOM is working with U.S. Space Command and the U.S. Space Force to expand military space engagement with LAC countries. Our partners in the AOR are quickly becoming space-faring nations and USSOUTHCOM is engaged to increase future opportunities for combined operations to counter regional threats. For instance, we've increased Space Domain Awareness data sharing partnerships with Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Chile. Air Forces-Southern (AFSOUTH), our air component, works with these

same partners throughout the year to advance combined space operations. In November 2021, USSOUTHCOM worked with Joint Task Force Space Defense (JTF-SD) and the Chilean Air Force on the U.S. – Chile Sprint Advanced Concept Training (SACT) Space Domain Awareness (SDA) experiment, the first of its kind in South America. The SACT connected the US Air Force Academy Falcon Telescope located at the University of La Serena in Chile with JTF-SD's commercial SDA operation at Catalyst Campus in Colorado Springs, to improve safety of orbital flight for all countries.

We are standing up a Space Component Command for USSOUTHCOM, with personnel focused on space cooperation, sharing open-source satellite data to help partners better track and target illegal activity happening within their borders, and signing more space cooperation agreements with partner nations.

Counternarcotics Successes: Our Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S) in Key West conducts our statutorily directed mission to detect and monitor illicit drugs, delivering a high return on modest investments. In 2021, JIATF-S enabled the disruption of a total of 364 illegal "events," including a total of 324,000 kilograms of cocaine and 118,000 pounds of marijuana with a combined U.S. wholesale value of over $8 billion. JIATF-S also enabled the detention of 1,017 persons through seizure operations conducted in maritime, land, and air operations; resulting in an estimated 3,200 American lives saved.

The Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) has enabled us to support our partners to counter threats and respond to natural disasters. Last year, the USS Sioux City, USS Wichita, and USS Billings all deployed to support counter-illicit drug missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. In the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, USSOUTHCOM used the LCS to deliver 113,200 lbs of aid to the Haitian people.

Partners in the TCO Fight: TCOs and VEOs wage war against our partner nations every day, which directly impacts Americans. Our regional partners are actively in the counter-TCO fight with us. Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Guatemala, El Salvador, and others have been involved in more than 60 percent of drug disruptions. Years of sustained security cooperation with our partners throughout our hemisphere is really paying dividends – we have helped build the capability of these nations to operate with us to disrupt drug shipments before those loads enter the homeland. In 2021, Colombia led Operation Orion, which encompassed two multi-national, all-domain, operations that disrupted 217 metric tons of cocaine and captured 7 aircraft, 106

vessels, and 8 low profile vessels. The U.S. provided maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) and analyst support to these operations. This is just one example of the large return on investment gained by combining a willing and able partner with a committed U.S. presence in the Western Hemisphere. Another example is Operation Kraken, conducted in coordination with Colombia, Panama, SOCSOUTH, and interagency partners. Due to this joint and combined effort, the U.S. and partners seized 65 metric tons of cocaine, 22,000 pounds of marijuana, and 43 illegal vessels; destroyed 42 cocaine labs; and detained 129 drug traffickers.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR): One of the core ways we support our partners in their fight against TCOs is by providing ISR, a mix of traditional platforms, purpose-built sensors, and increasingly non-standard collection methods. USSOUTHCOM employs less than 2% of DoD ISR resources to counter malign state and nonstate actors. To meet the mission, we are pushing the envelope with innovative techniques, integrating publicly available information, advanced analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning, and open collaboration with allies and partners to disrupt threats. These advanced ISR tools offer persistent, AOR-wide coverage without risk to personnel at a relatively low cost and puts us in a position to better compete against adversaries. Our Technical Network Analysis Cell (TNAC) at JIATF-S has demonstrated tremendous return on investment; at a cost of $1.4 million, the TNAC denied TCOs of $921.7 million in revenue by providing actionable intelligence to IA and partner nations, leading to numerous disruptions. SOCSOUTH is supporting law enforcement and partner nation efforts to counter TCOs and PRC malign activities by very quickly gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information to the interagency and partner nations for action. We also work with academic institutions like Florida International University and University of Miami as force multipliers, that can gather open-source information that can be quickly and easily shared with partners for action.

Last year, USSOUTHCOM used P-8 multi-mission maritime aircraft to detect and monitor illicit drug flows. They were the only DoD assets with sufficient range and dwell time to conduct detection and monitoring (D&M) in the far reaches of the Eastern Pacific, detecting low-profile go-fast and self-propelled fully or semi-submersible ("drug sub") vessels. These drug subs are becoming more prevalent and, when interdicted, yield higher payloads of cocaine. Since April 2020, the P-8s assisted in the disruption of nearly 115 metric tons of

cocaine (23% of our overall disruptions) worth $2.85 billion. During the Haiti earthquake, the P-8s gathered real time video, and damage and threat assessments for disaster relief planning and distribution.

Maintaining the Innovative Edge: As these P-8s are now being deployed to address higher priority missions in other CCMDs, USSOUTHCOM will continue to find other innovative ways to gather actionable intelligence and information. We currently use three contractor-owned/contractor-operated (COCO) aircraft for aircraft overland ISR, one COCO for D&M, and four government-owned/contractor-operated (GOCO) aircraft also for D&M. These aircraft target TCOs and VEOs and provide mapping for mission planning. These tools help us support our IA colleagues and partner nations to counter the TCO/VEO threat.

USSOUTHCOM serves as an innovative test bed for DoD, interagency, private industry, and academia to develop new technologies to maintain our innovative edge over the PRC, Russia, and other adversaries. The Western Hemisphere is a permissive environment with a higher tolerance for technology failure, and a diverse climate, geography, and topology. USSOUTHCOM leverages over $150 million worth of technology prototypes, most of which are green energy compatible, ranging from the development of the first unmanned persistent solar powered aircraft with a 300-pound payload to an expeditionary 3D concrete printer that significantly reduces the carbon footprint. USSOUTHCOM is leaning forward when it comes to operationalizing resilient, energy efficient platforms that reduce emissions and enhance the mission through the innovative use of high-altitude balloons, stratosphere platforms, hydrogen fuel cells, and solar powered technology. We have submitted a Rapid Defense Experiment Reserve (RDER) joint proposal with the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command that will run operational tests to counter the PRC's capabilities.

USSOUTHCOM also leverages a Data-Driven Decision-Making (D3M) Cell to produce baseline analyses on malign actors, TCOs, partner nation security force risk, and Women, Peace, and Security measures. The D3M equips military leadership with trends, comparative analyses, and effects models to maximize efforts across the AOR. Further, this data will be aggregated and consolidated into a database to serve as a foundation for future artificial intelligence and machine learning integration.

Annual Exercises: Our exercises such as PANAMAX (defense of the Panama Canal), UNITAS (maritime security), and TRADEWINDS (Caribbean disaster response) build readiness and enhance our

partners' capabilities, interoperability, and domain awareness. This is a vital component of our strategy to improve our collective ability to secure the region. USSOUTHCOM personnel also frequently participate in our partner nations' annual exercises, including Salitre in Chile, Angel de los Andes in Colombia, and CRUZEX in Brazil.

Security Cooperation: Our security cooperation program focuses on building our partners' capacity to conduct ground and maritime interdiction, defend their cyber networks, secure their borders and sovereignty, and maintain domain awareness. The Near Coastal Patrol Vessel (NCPV) program is a USSOUTHCOM initiative to address selected Caribbean and Central American partners' requirements for a maritime patrol vessel with the capacity to conduct sustained Maritime Interdiction Operations. To date, we have fielded an NCPV in the Dominican Republic, Panama, El Salvador, and Honduras to increase interoperability and counter regional threats. Panama deployed its NCPV in December and in one month used it to conduct two successful search and rescue operations near the Gulf of Panama. We are also working closely with partners in Guatemala to strengthen their professional military intelligence capabilities, and Colombia to help them establish a secure communication network that is interoperable with the DoD.

USSOUTHCOM also offers partner nation militaries specialized riverine and littoral training through the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS). In the Amazon Basin, rivers allow our partner nation military and security forces to extend their operational reach, provide security for their population against emerging threats, and stop narcotraffickers who pollute the rivers with precursor chemicals. Rivers are also a source of fresh water for our partners and crucial for the region's environmental health, particularly in the Amazon, the lungs of the earth. Brazilian, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Peruvian military personnel have all received training from NAVSCIATTS Mobile Training Teams (MTTs), and they're producing clear results. For example, the Colombian Marines, which maintain five Riverine Brigades and 16 Riverine Battalions covering over 15,000 km of navigable rivers, depends on NAVSCIATTS MTTs to receive instruction in doctrine, exercises, material maintenance, logistics, and other specialized training. NAVSCIATTS MTTs train large groups of students at once, and the instruction is in Spanish, which dramatically increases the number of eligible students.

USSOUTHCOM has partnered with U.S. Africa Command and Brazil to develop a multi-nation maritime task force including South American and African partner nations, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard and allies. This initiative will seek to counter IUU fishing, piracy, and other malign influence from state actors and TCOs operating in the South Atlantic and the Gulf of Guinea.

U.S. Coast Guard: U.S. Coast Guard assets provide USSOUTHCOM with unique capabilities and authorities which, when used in conjunction with the U.S. Navy and Allied platforms, maximize the effectiveness of USSOUTHCOM missions. The Coast Guard is in the midst of executing its largest fleet recapitalization since World War II and deployments of the Service's National Security Cutters and Fast Response Cutters continue to provide the bulk of USSOUTHCOM's counter drug forces. The continued recapitalization effort will provide capabilities that support USSOUTHCOM's strategic initiatives to include enhancing Theater Security Cooperation (TSC), countering IUU Fishing, and combating TCOs. Additionally, the Coast Guard provides valuable humanitarian mission support across the region. Within just a few hours of the Haiti earthquake, USCG rescue helicopters were at the forefront of USSOUTHCOM's humanitarian effort, saving lives and delivering much needed aid.

Counterterrorism (CT) and DoD Rewards Program: SOCSOUTH maintains persistent presence in several countries in the region, working and training with partner militaries. Our focus is on improving partner nation CT response capabilities, interoperability, and information sharing through training and exercises. In December 2021, the Treasury Department designated three individuals of a Brazil-based network affiliated with al-Qaida and their companies as Specially Designated Global Terrorists for supporting the terrorist group.[26] SOCSOUTH has continually monitored the al-Qaida threat in Brazil and provided actionable intelligence for our partners at Treasury to utilize their authorities to act against this threat.[27]

The DoD Rewards Program has again provided tremendous return on investment in the fight against terrorism. In FY21, USSOUTHCOM paid $1.3M in rewards to 54 informants that provided information resulting in 63 partner nation operations that neutralized 209 individuals who were terrorist or force protection

[26] https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0546
[27] https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0546

threats, an increase of 100% compared to 2020. Although DoD Rewards is a counterterror and force protection program, it yields significant counternarcotic effects that included the seizure of over 10 tons of cocaine valued at $239.2M; 5.5 tons or marijuana valued at $11.1M; $1.04M in bulk cash; and explosives and weapons valued at $1.2M. The program also led to the destruction of four drug labs with a monthly production output of 3400kg of cocaine valued at $88.4M per month or about $1.06B per year.

Counter-Threat Finance: We also continue to focus efforts on assessing the financial underpinnings of national security threats in the region and have deepened our counter-threat finance related collaboration with the U.S. Treasury Department, interagency, and international partners. This includes providing direct analytic support to law enforcement agencies to deny, degrade, or disrupt the illicit financial networks that malign state and nonstate actors use to launder money, traffic drugs and people, and co-opt government officials in the region. An area requiring more emphasis is TCO network mapping, exploitation, and holistic interagency, allied, and partner nation efforts to dismantle key TCO centers of gravity such as logistics and finances.

Total Force: Our National Guard and Reserve Component personnel and resources provide a low cost, high-return force multiplier to outcompete threats in this hemisphere. The Reserve Components are embedded in all our major exercises, and through a combination of part-time and full-time support, provide 30% of our headquarters staff, 20% of our Security Cooperation mission, 63% of our Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay (JTF-GTMO), 25% of JTF-Bravo, and 25% of SOCSOUTH.

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) has helped us build relationships with Caribbean and Central and South America nations since 1996. We have Guardsmen from 18 U.S. states, as well as Puerto Rico and DC, working with 24 partner nations—more than any other Combatant Command. Last year in Brazil, the New York National Guard exchanged counterterrorism lessons from 9/11 and took part in the Brazilian-led exercise TAPIO. In September 2021, South Carolina National Guard medical personnel, working with its state partner, Colombia, provided care to remote villagers in Tamana, and deployed F-16s to participate in the Colombian-led exercise Angel de los Andes. This past August, following the Haiti earthquake, the Puerto Rico NG flew aid to those in the most affected areas.

Our Coronet Oak mission is the longest airlift mission in the history of the National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command where we have active component, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve C-130s providing critical intra/inter airlift support to our theater for all missions. Additionally, we greatly appreciate the mutually beneficial cost savings when Guard and Reserve C-5 & C17s provide inter theater airlift support to our Counter Drug and Denton Humanitarian Assistance missions.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay (JTF-GTMO). JTF-GTMO continues to conduct safe, legal, and humane detention operations. To do so in a more efficient manner, the JTF has taken steps to right-size its force and consolidate operations. To date, we have safely reduced military personnel by over 30 percent. This is part of an ongoing effort to continually assess all USSOUTHCOM operations to ensure we are maximizing use of resources.

Build our Team—Don't Settle

People First: People are our #1 resource, and we cannot successfully strengthen partnerships, counter threats, or outcompete our adversaries without the best team. However, we must never settle in providing our people with the tools and training they need to get the mission done. We are fostering a climate in which individuals have sufficient time for self-development and preparation. We will continue to look for ways to improve our own processes and efficiency while eliminating silos within our Command. This begins with looking at our own structure, roles, and responsibilities to ensure we retain the flexibility to maneuver physically and intellectually in response to emergent operations, opportunities, and challenges.

Expanding the Definition of "Team:" The broad nature of threats in this AOR, ranging from military, to diplomatic, to economic, and law enforcement problem sets, requires that we truly put integrated deterrence into action. USSOUTHCOM must ensure we are in lock step with the intelligence community, the State Department, law enforcement, and the rest of the interagency. We work in each other's command centers, we share information and intelligence, and we bring our unique authorities and resources to bear on these challenges. We will continue to deepen this integration. That means including the Cyberspace Operations Planning Element, the Joint Integrated Space Team, the Joint Military Information Support Operations Center,

and other similar entities into USSOUTHCOM battle rhythm events. This ensures the whole USSOUTHCOM team has a better understanding of what resources we have available and what our expanded teammates across DoD and the IA can contribute. This is what integrated deterrence looks like.

Ultimately, we want our partners to continue to associate USSOUTHCOM with professionalism, competence, and high standards worth emulating. As with any large organization, there are areas for improvement, and we will constantly look for unity of effort and alignment in everything we do.

Quality of Life. Our families are our strength and foundation, and we must take family members' concerns into account. While having our headquarters and two component commands in South Florida offers a great synergy with our AOR, it is also a very expensive place to live. The housing market is so competitive and volatile that personnel are faced with limited inventory of homes and extremely high up-front costs, with landlords requiring up to $10,000 to secure a rental unit. Some USSOUTHCOM families were also forced to make sudden moves as landlords raised rents or broke leases. We are working with the supportive local community to find immediate relief options for our service members and civilians on housing. We are also working with the Department of the Army and OSD to secure a permanent housing solution in Miami-Dade County that would allow the Army to divest of high-cost leases, reliably house junior enlisted Service Members, and meet documented family housing requirements.

Congressional Support: We appreciate the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)'s recognition that our AOR matters and is critical to the security of our homeland. The challenges posed by the PRC, Russia, and TCOs are global, and we look forward to working closely with Congress to ensure adequate attention and resourcing in this region, specifically through your continued support of our Budget requests. We also appreciate your support of our security cooperation program in the USSOUTHCOM AOR as a continued recognition of the importance of these programs in our hemisphere. We have very willing partners, who with our commitment and some equipment and training, multiply our efforts to keep this region secure.

I often say we must be on the field to compete, and our ability to be on the field is hindered when we are forced to operate under continuing resolutions. Budget uncertainty is disruptive to our operations and to the lives of our people. Our inability to plan and execute programs and operations on time also impact our partner

nations, who also end up having to delay or cancel engagements with us. I ask for congressional support in passing a budget this year. To be on the field, it is also critical to have confirmed Chiefs of Mission to employ the full spectrum of U.S. capabilities, particularly given the many security challenges we face in our region.

ISR is critical to our ability to defend against threats in our neighborhood before they impact the homeland. With the loss of the ISR Transfer Fund in FY21, which the Congress had appropriated to meet CCMD ISR unfunded requirements, we lost almost half of our ISR funding. To mitigate some of this loss, we are exploring enhanced ISR solutions coupled with advanced analytics and commercially available data to help us generate more threat targeting at reduced costs. Such tools are essential for our partners to counter TCOs and VEOs, and thwart malign actor interference in domestic elections. As mentioned previously, our P-8 aircraft have been crucial in gathering ISR to disrupt TCOs' illicit activities; without them, we will be unable to detect or monitor threats in the far reaches of the Eastern Pacific, the area through which 80% of drugs destined for the United States flow. Continued Congressional support to USSOUTHCOM's ISR program will allow us to mitigate for the loss of these aircraft and increase our domain awareness and ability to stop threats bound for our homeland.

Finally, we appreciate that the NDAA provides a temporary authority that will enable Colombia to continue its role as a security exporter through the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan.

Conclusion

The safety of our homeland is directly linked to resilience, stability, and security of our Latin American and Caribbean partners. The U.S. and our regional partners are on the frontline of strategic competition, and we share crosscutting threats that we must confront together. As Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin stated, "our allies and partners are a force multiplier and one of the greatest strategic assets we have in protecting our nation…we will act together…making us stronger as a team than the sum of our individual parts." We at USSOUTHCOM believe this wholeheartedly, and we are committed to work shoulder to shoulder with our partners, maximizing our efforts where their priorities align with our own national interests. To meet these challenges, we are putting integrated deterrence into action, using all available levers—assets, resources, and

authorities—across the DoD, interagency, allies, partners, NGOs, and private industry to fulfill our *Enduring Promise* to be the region's trusted partner—today, tomorrow, and always.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2022.

U.S. STRATEGIC COMMAND

WITNESS

ADMIRAL CHARLES RICHARD, COMMANDER, U.S. STRATEGIC COMMAND

STATEMENT OF

CHARLES A. RICHARD

COMMANDER

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC COMMAND

BEFORE THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

5 APRIL 2022

INTRODUCTION

United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) is the global combatant command (CCMD) responsible for Strategic Deterrence, Nuclear Operations, Global Strike, Joint Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations, Analysis and Targeting, and Missile Threat Assessment. In addition, the January 2021 Unified Campaign Plan (UCP) designated the Commander, USSTRATCOM (CDRUSSTRATCOM) as the Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) Enterprise Operations lead. It takes a team of dedicated individuals to execute our mission set, and I am honored and privileged to lead the 150,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, and Civilians dedicated to the DoD's highest priority mission.

I want to thank Secretary Austin and Chairman Milley for their leadership and continued support to the strategic defense of this Nation. USSTRATCOM is committed to Secretary Austin's integrated deterrence initiative and remains dedicated to his priorities of defending the Nation, taking care of our people, and succeeding through teamwork. I also want to thank Congress for your continued support to ensure USSTRATCOM is equipped with the resources necessary to maintain strategic deterrence on behalf of the Nation, our Allies, and our partners.

Since my last testimony, there should be no doubt we are contending with a rapidly changing and dynamic strategic security environment where potential adversary actions challenge us in ways we have not experienced in over 30 years. ***In September 2021, I formally declared the strategic breakout of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the Secretary of Defense. A strategic breakout denotes the rapid qualitative and quantitative expansion of military capabilities that enables a shift in strategy and requires the DoD to make immediate and significant planning and/or capability shifts.*** The PRC continues the breathtaking expansion of its strategic and nuclear forces with opaque intentions as to their use. The recent test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-launched hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV)

with fractional orbital bombardment (FOB) is just one example of these growing capabilities. Meanwhile, Russia conducted the invasion of Ukraine backing its actions with the coercive potential of the world's largest nuclear arsenal. ***The strategic security environment is now a three-party nuclear-peer reality, where the PRC and Russia are stressing and undermining international law, rules-based order, and norms in every domain. Never before has this Nation simultaneously faced two nuclear-capable near-peers, who must be deterred differently.***

I applaud Secretary Austin for his vision of integrated deterrence across the Joint Force, our Allies and partners as the foundation of the National Defense Strategy. ***Every operational plan in the DoD, and every other capability we have, rests on the assumption that strategic deterrence, and in particular nuclear deterrence, will hold. If strategic or nuclear deterrence fails, integrated deterrence and no other plan or capability in the DoD will work as designed. The Nation's nuclear forces underpin integrated deterrence and enable the U.S., our Allies and partners to prevent and, if necessary, confront aggression around the globe using all instruments of national power.***

Our operational requirements exist to execute Presidential directives and decisions we make today will have lasting strategic impacts on our ability to do so. Maintaining and strengthening deterrence for the long-term requires a modern infrastructure and industrial base able to develop credible capabilities necessary for a more challenging security environment. While the command is ready to execute its mission today, we must make threat-informed decisions regarding our nuclear capabilities to provide strategic deterrence well into the future.

STRATEGIC THREAT ENVIRONMENT

Chairman Milley rightly stated that we are experiencing one of the largest shifts in global geostrategic power the world has ever witnessed. ***Today, both the PRC and Russia have the***

capability to unilaterally escalate a conflict to any level of violence, in any domain, worldwide, with any instrument of national power, and at any time. USSTRATCOM measures the risk of strategic deterrence failure every day considering this reality. The DoD can no longer have the luxury of assuming the risk is always low, particularly during a crisis. Potential adversaries, as they have for years, have the capability to threaten to inflict catastrophic effects on the U.S. homeland, and on our Allies and partners to achieve their national objectives.

Our potential adversaries continue to rapidly advance the capability to conduct these attacks. Their growing capabilities will pose a danger to U.S. They will continue to expand and diversify their nuclear forces over the next decade and the PRC, in particular, will increase the role of nuclear weapons in its defense strategies. The range of their new systems complement growing nuclear stockpiles, and includes the development and modernization of survivable nuclear triads, counter-intervention, and power projection capabilities intended to deter and deny our regional influence.

The Nation faces significant risk as our potential adversaries develop and deploy emerging technologies, such as anti-satellite, hypersonic, and FOB capabilities. They are also pursuing leadership in key technologies with significant military potential including, artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous systems, advanced computing, quantum information sciences, biotechnology, and advanced materials and manufacturing. USSTRATCOM supports Secretary Austin's call for measures to protect critical U.S. capabilities, technologies, and operations as the Nation also faces risks from the threat of foreign theft of U.S. technology, penetration of U.S. information and weapons systems, supply chain disruptions, and cyberespionage campaigns designed to erase U.S. advantages. Cyber threats from the PRC, Russia, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) are determined and unrelenting. Even now, Russia threatens cyberattacks against the U.S. as tensions over Ukraine increase. To that end,

USSTRATCOM implemented a new construct to operationally harden NC3 systems against cyber threats to improve force readiness during competition and crisis. We must mitigate these threats for future programs to field new uncompromised capabilities.

People's Republic of China

We should carefully consider the PRC's actions rather than their rhetoric. The breathtaking expansion of land-, sea-, and air-based nuclear delivery platforms, command and control survivability, novel and asymmetric weapons, and supporting infrastructure is inconsistent with a minimum deterrent posture. When I testified last year, I warned that the PRC was capable of executing any plausible nuclear strategy. ***I am fully convinced the recent strategic breakout points towards an emboldened PRC that possesses the capability to employ any coercive nuclear strategy today***.

Just three months after my April 2021 testimony, commercial satellite imagery revealed three new nuclear missile fields in western China, each with approximately 120 missile silos. With this discovery, it is clear the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF) will soon achieve a robust ICBM capability. The new silos can be equipped with the solid-fueled, road-mobile CSS-10 Mod 2 capable of reaching the continental United States (CONUS). This is in addition to the fixed ICBM arsenal of CSS-4 Mod 2 and multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) equipped CSS-4 Mod 3 ICBMs. While only a developmental concept in 2019, the PRC has already fielded the road-mobile, MIRV-capable, CSS-20 with launch options including silo or rail-mobile basing. Counting both conventional and nuclear-armed missiles, the PLARF employs over 900 theater-range intermediate and medium-range ballistic missiles (IRBM / MRBM), some of which are capable of doing catastrophic damage to United States, Allied, and partner forces in the region. Combined, this formidable arsenal is cause for concern.

Further advancements in the last year include ground-based, large phased array radars and at least one geostationary satellite capable of detecting ballistic missile launches. These capabilities, plus a rapidly expanding silo-based ICBM force, indicate the PRC increased the peacetime readiness of its nuclear forces and seeking a Launch-on-Warning posture, all while the PLARF now rotates it's nuclear and conventional brigades to "high alert duty" posture for unspecified periods. Enhancing the survivability of its sea-based deterrent, the third generation JL-3 submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) allows the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) now six JIN-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) to target CONUS from a protected bastion within the South China Sea.

The PRC's pursuit of an ICBM delivered HGV with FOB capability is a technological achievement with serious implications for strategic stability. On 27 July 2021, the PRC's first HGV FOB test resulted in 40,000 kilometers distance flown and over 100 minutes of flight time—the greatest distance and longest flight time of any land attack weapon system of any nation to date. The PRC is investing heavily in HGV and directed energy weapons technology for global strike and defeat of missile-defense systems, anti-satellite, anti-missile, and anti-unmanned aircraft system capabilities.

The PRC is increasing its capacity to produce and enrich plutonium by constructing fast breeder reactors and reprocessing facilities, which may be used to support a growth in China's nuclear weapons stockpile. While the PRC may use a portion of this infrastructure for civilian nuclear technology programs, it is highly likely some infrastructure will support their expanding nuclear weapons program. This accelerated nuclear expansion may enable the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to field over 700 nuclear warheads by 2027. The PRC likely intends to have at least 1,000 warheads by 2030, greatly exceeding previous DoD estimates. Unlike the U.S., The growth of the PRC's nuclear arsenal is not constrained by any treaty limits.

Finally, the PLA continues to develop and field precision strike nuclear delivery systems. The dual-capable DF-26 IRBM can range critically important ports, airfields and bases in the western Pacific with conventional and nuclear payloads. Survivable road-mobile transporter erector launchers can deliver the DF-31A ICBM at ranges in excess of 11,000 kilometers. The PLA's H-6N air-to-air refueling-capable bomber, which can carry the nuclear air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM), is entering its second year of operational service. The 2020 Annual Report to Congress, released in November 2021, surmises that the PRC may be building a new conventional- and nuclear-capable stealth strategic bomber with global reach in addition to medium and long-range stealth bombers. These nuclear-related advancements are additive to the PRC's ongoing conventional modernization and expansion efforts, where they already have a substantive overmatch in regional- and theater-class weapons and capabilities.

Russia

Russia is in its second decade of investing substantial resources to expand their strategic and non-strategic nuclear capabilities. In a recent statement, President Vladimir Putin recounted that in 2000 Russian nuclear deterrent forces were only 12% modernized. By late 2020, President Putin stated that 86% of Russia's nuclear forces had been modernized, including components from all legs of their strategic nuclear triad, and promised to increase modernization to 89% by the end of 2021. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of Russia's national security strategy and Moscow appears to utilize them to demonstrate political stake, deter outside actors, and support resolutions acceptable to Russia. In June 2020, Russia publicly revealed its official nuclear deterrence strategy for the first time, describing threats and conditions for the use of nuclear weapons. Within this strategy, Russia acknowledges it could use nuclear weapons first, including in response to conventional attacks that threaten the "existence of the state."

Russia made extensive efforts to update their ICBM force with single and multiple warhead missiles, including the developmental silo-based SS-X-29 Sarmat heavy ICBM with the capacity to carry ten or more warheads on each missile; the deployed, more capable silo-based variant of the SS-27; and the silo-based or road-mobile "KEDR" ICBM to be fielded by 2030. To support the expansion and modernization of the sea-leg of its triad, Russia plans to complete the production of ten DOLGORUKIY-class SSBNs and deploy them equally across the Northern and Pacific Fleets by 2028. These SSBNs will carry the new SS-N-32 Bulava SLBM, enhancing Russia's strategic reach while retiring the older Delta IV SSBNs.

Russia also continues to invest in strategic air capabilities, fitting its heavy bombers with a new advanced nuclear cruise missile. On 12 January 2021, Russia accepted delivery of the first of ten brand-new Tu-160M strategic bombers with updated NV-70M radar and NK-32-02 engines. An accomplishment not seen since the Cold War, restarting the Tu-160M production line required cooperative efforts between the Kremlin and the Russian industrial base. The opening of new manufacturing and production lines further illustrates Russia's ability to rapidly increase its industrial production capacity to support its strategic forces.

In my last testimony, I highlighted Russia's novel and advanced weapon delivery systems, many of which are capable of hypersonic speeds and flight path adjustments designed to avoid U.S. missile defense systems. They pursue these capabilities despite the United States clearly relying on its strategic nuclear forces to deter any large attack by Russian nuclear weapons. The Avangard HGV, Tsirkon hypersonic anti-ship and land-attack missile, and Kinzahl ALBM are operationally fielded now. Meanwhile work continues on the Skyfall nuclear-powered intercontinental cruise missile and the nuclear-armed Poseidon autonomous underwater vehicle. All provide Russia with an even more diverse and flexible nuclear force while posing a challenge for us. Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu asserted that hypersonic

weapons will make up the core of Russia's non-nuclear deterrence capability in the future. Russia is not limiting itself to these new systems and claims to have already completed serious research and technological groundwork on pieces of equipment that have no counterpart in the world. They continue to develop additional strategic systems with new hypersonic warheads to expand the range of threats against the U.S., our Allies and partners.

Russia's stockpile of approximately 1,000 to 2,000 non-treaty accountable nuclear weapons is anticipated to grow. These weapons fall entirely outside of the U.S.-Russia New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and provide Russia with a diverse stockpile of theater and tactical weapons systems employable by naval, air, and ground forces. In a conventional conflict, if Russia perceives an irreparable imbalance of forces, it may escalate to non-treaty accountable nuclear weapons use.

In October 2019, Russia conducted their largest strategic nuclear exercise since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The exercise was notable for the size and scope of the nuclear forces involved and strategic messaging. President Putin participates in these exercises, indicating a high-level of readiness across Russia's strategic nuclear forces and intending to serve as a visible message to the U.S. and NATO. These major strategic exercises include command and control operations with participation of the entire nuclear triad; an ICBM combat training launch; and long-range aviation cruise missile launches. More importantly, Russia rescheduled and completed the strategic exercise to coincide with the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

DPRK

The DPRK remains a strategic security challenge as it continues to conduct activities that threaten regional stability and defy international norms. The DPRK previously tested ICBM-class missiles designed to reach the U.S., and they have a large arsenal of theater-class missiles.

The recent missile launches demonstrate their ongoing desire to develop a credible missile threat. USSTRATCOM supports the Department's efforts with regional partners to reduce military tensions and encourages diplomatic efforts to pursue the DPRK's denuclearization. At the same time, USSTRATCOM will continue to contribute to the extended deterrence commitments of the Republic of Korea and Japan.

INTEGRATED DETERRENCE

While deterrence is not a new concept, the emerging security environment necessitates integrated deterrence to leverage all elements of national power, while enabling the Joint Force to synchronize actions across domains and time on an unprecedented scope and scale. ***Yet, the foundation of the Nation's strategic deterrent is unchanged: a powerful and ready nuclear force, a survivable NC3 system, and a responsive nuclear weapons infrastructure. Absent this foundation, the credibility of integrated deterrence will not work.***

Sustaining and strengthening our Nation's deterrence is imperative. Our potential adversaries employ coercion or threat of force as a means to challenge U.S. security commitments and undermine the existing international order. To confront aggressive and coercive behaviors of nuclear-capable near-peers, the Nation must leverage all elements of national power with our nuclear enterprise at its foundation. Integrated deterrence orients the DoD toward stability and cooperation, and clearly communicates the folly and cost of aggression and that diplomacy is always the best option.

Alliances and partnerships remain our greatest strength and are enabled by our credible extended assurance and deterrence. Our policies and postures must enable our Allies to contribute to collective defenses even in the face of adversary nuclear coercion. We share with our Allies and partners a collective of like-minded states who believe a free and open world should be the foundation of the international order. ***Our alliances are only as strong as the***

guarantee of extended deterrence and assurance backed by credible U.S. nuclear forces, which are essential to integrated deterrence.

WHAT WE NEED TO DO OUR MISSION

Fundamentally, strategic deterrence relies on credible capabilities backed by a safe, secure, reliable, and effective nuclear enterprise. We no longer face a singular operational problem set but must consider two nuclear-capable near-peers simultaneously. The attributes provided by all three legs of the triad, forward-deployed regional capabilities, a robust NC3, and a weapons complex able to adapt to future threats offers the President flexible options and enhances the credibility of deterrence. Our strategic capability and capacity must evolve with the threat to achieve our National strategy. USSTRATCOM encourages Congress, the Department, and the Services to continue their decades-long support for these vital national security capabilities.

LAND-BASED TRIAD COMPONENT

The Minuteman III (MM III) ICBM force has stood on continuous alert every hour of every day for the past 50 years, ready to deliver a responsive and highly reliable strategic deterrent capability—and our potential adversaries know it. MM III represents half of the Nation's day-to-day available deterrent and its geographic dispersion presents an intractable targeting challenge. I previously testified that without the Nation's ICBMs the PRC becomes a strategic nuclear peer. ***The discovery of three new ICBM missile fields in the last year demonstrates the value the PRC places on land-based forces. If we choose not to continue investing in the land-based leg of our triad, the PRC will soon have a superior, modernized nuclear force with elevated day-to-day readiness.***

Requirement for MM III Sustainment

The MM III is well beyond its intended 10-year design life, yet still provides a high availability rate, testifying to its robust design, past modernization efforts, and the dedication of the Airmen of the U.S. Air Force. Exhaustive Air Force analysis decisively demonstrated that another MM III life extension is more costly than recapitalization, and the debate has moved well beyond funding. We cannot continue to rely on an aging ICBM force with end-of-life challenges and the inability to pace the threat. We must complete Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) recapitalization on time and avoid the "sunset mentality" prevalent when replacing old systems.

Requirement for Ground Based Strategic Deterrent

GBSD is the program of record to recapitalize the ICBM force and is critical for maintaining a strong deterrent posture. GBSD will be able to pace the threat and is integral to our strategy to navigate the three-party nuclear-capable peer reality. Its development, procurement, and deployment are the best approach to ensure the land-based leg of the triad remains effective and affordable. GBSD preserves the MM III's key attributes while improving operational effectiveness against a rapidly developing threat. USSTRATCOM encourages continued Congressional support for the Air Force's ongoing GBSD strategy – pursue mature, low-risk technologies; design modularity; advanced cyber security; open system architecture; and state-of-the-art model-based systems engineering.

SEA-BASED TRIAD COMPONENT

The Navy's OHIO-class SSBN fleet, paired with the Trident II D5 Strategic Weapon System (SWS), combines a highly effective, survivable, worldwide launch capability with continuous and virtually undetectable strategic deterrent patrols. Since their first deployment,

early in the Cold War, we have relied on our SSBN fleet for a resilient, reliable, and survivable deterrent.

Requirement for Trident Sustainment and Modernization

No single Navy submarine has served longer than 37 years, yet the entire OHIO-class SSBN fleet has been life extended to an unprecedented 42 years. USSTRATCOM requires OHIO-class sustainment and modernization until completely replaced in 2042 by the COLUMBIA-class SSBN. OHIO-class sustainment is critical to ensure operational availability of the submarine force to minimize significant transition risk throughout the COLUMBIA-class deployment timeline. The COLUMBIA-class SSBN remains a high priority strategic deterrent program for USSTRATCOM. The program of record delivers twelve SSBNs, the absolute minimum required to meet at-sea requirements, especially during triad recapitalization and future intensive fleet maintenance periods. Continued Congressional support for the COLUMBIA program is vital to strategic deterrence. It must deliver on time to avoid a triad capability gap.

To guarantee uninterrupted SSBN capability, we must continue investing in our SSBN SWS programs. The Navy previously life extended the Trident II D5 weapon system (D5LE) to outfit the OHIO-class through retirement and deployment of the first eight COLUMBIA-class SSBNs. A second D5 life extension (D5LE2) is required to ensure a viable SSBN deterrent through the 2080s. D5LE2 will continue reliable, high performing D5LE design elements and components in order to mitigate cost and technical risk. Additionally, D5LE2 meets current D5 demonstrated performance while offering added flexibility to support future missions and payloads in response to advancing threat environments.

Anti-Submarine Warfare

Anti-submarine warfare threats continue to evolve rapidly as potential adversaries continuously look for new and innovative ways to gain an advantage in the undersea domain.

The Navy's Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS) provides vital information concerning submarine and surface ship operations, and acoustic characteristics of interest. It allows U.S. forces to maintain favorable tactical and strategic positions while supporting deterrent patrol operations. Surveillance performed by IUSS directly contributes to the theater anti-submarine warfare commander's maritime defense of the homeland. Advances in Russian submarine stealth and detectability makes IUSS recapitalization a national imperative.

While our submarines are formidable weapon systems, we must address potential adversary's undersea security advances to ensure our current and future SSBN fleet remains effective and viable well into the future. Evolving submarine quieting, acoustic arrays, and processing capabilities challenge our acoustic superiority and subsequently, SSBN survivability. Advanced modifications of large vertical arrays, advanced materials science and coatings, and other efforts within the Acoustic Superiority Program are vital. Funding for these emerging passive long-range detection/wide area search programs secure our SSBN fleet advantages through the OHIO to COLUMBIA transition.

AIR-BASED TRIAD COMPONENT

The bomber fleet is our most flexible and visible leg of the triad. We are the only nation with the capability to provide bombers in support of our Allies and partners, enabling the U.S. to signal our resolve while providing a flexible option to de-escalate a conflict or crisis. Bombers support both strategic deterrent and conventional employment options, and execute global strike, nuclear, and conventional deterrent mission sets around the globe to achieve National objectives. USSTRATCOM executed 127 Bomber Task Force (BTF) missions over the past year. BTFs remain the iconic example of dynamic force employment across the entire Joint Force and potential adversaries watch these missions closely. We strongly encourage continued Congressional support for full funding of the bomber fleet.

B-52H Sustainment

The B-52H is a 60-year-old platform with plans to remain in service for another 30 years. Achieving this unparalleled milestone carries maintenance and operational challenges, which require dedicated technical and funding resources. Critical B-52 modernization upgrades include the Commercial Engine Replacement Program (CERP), Radar Modernization Plan (RMP), and survivable NC3. These improvements are necessary to keep the B-52 flying and able to pace the evolving threat. The Air Force recently selected Rolls-Royce to execute CERP to replace the B-52's 1960s-era TF-33 engines, enabling longer unrefueled range with lower emissions while solving supply chain issues afflicting the current engines. The B-52's very low frequency (VLF) and extremely high frequency (EHF) modernization programs will provide mission critical, beyond-line-of-sight strategic connectivity, and must field on time to meet USSTRATCOM's operational requirements.

B-2 Sustainment

The B-2 fleet remains the world's only low-observable bomber, able to penetrate denied environments while employing a wide variety of munitions against high-value strategic targets. The DoD must protect this unique operational advantage as the Air Force transitions from the B-2 to the B-21. The Air Force can only achieve a successful transition with full funding for the B-2 sustainment and modernization programs until the B-21 completes development and certification, both conventional and nuclear missions. A carefully synchronized transition is necessary to mitigate operational risk associated with executing the triad-wide multi-platform recapitalization.

Requirement for B-21

The B-21 Raider will support the nuclear triad with a visible deterrent capability and provide strategic and operational flexibility across a wide range of military objectives. The

program is on track to meet USSTRATCOM operational requirements, with five test aircraft currently in development and the first operational aircraft scheduled for delivery in the mid-2020s. USSTRATCOM supports fully funding the Air Force's B-21 strategy to prevent operational shortfalls in the bomber force.

Air-Delivered Weapons / Long Range Standoff

The air-delivered weapons portfolio consists of the Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM), the B83 gravity bomb, and the B61 family of weapons providing the right mix of standoff and direct attack munitions to meet near-term operational requirements. The long range standoff (LRSO) weapon will replace the ALCM as our Nation's only air-delivered standoff nuclear capability. It will provide the President with flexible and scalable options, and is capable of penetrating and surviving against advanced air defenses – a key attribute and critical component in all USSTRATCOM operational plans. Without LRSO, B-2 and B-21 bombers will have no option but to fly directly over targets to drop gravity-delivered weapons unnecessarily increasing risk to the mission and the lives of Air Force bomber aircrews.

The LRSO complements the ICBM and SSBN programs as they transition from legacy to modernized weapon systems. The LRSO on-time delivery is important to sustaining strategic stability, as potential adversaries will exploit gaps resulting from technical problems or production delays. Finally, fielding LRSO is cost-effective. Using gravity weapons to deliver similar effects would require ten-times the current bomber allocation and four times the current tanker allocation, with more gravity weapons, or employment of additional triad elements. LRSO full funding is absolutely imperative to reduce operational risks we face during triad recapitalization.

Tanker Support

A robust tanker fleet is essential to sustaining global reach for all USSTRATCOM mission sets. While the KC-135 and KC-10 force has done the yeoman's work for decades, the Air Force's effort to revitalize the tanker fleet is timely. The likelihood of future concurrent mission sets between strategic, theater, and homeland defense is high, requiring continued tanker modernization and expansion efforts. USSTRATCOM fully endorses and supports the Air Force's effort to modernize and sustain the tanker fleet.

NUCLEAR COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

NC3 provides the critical assured communications link between the President and our nuclear forces. On-going NC3 Enterprise Center (NEC) modernization efforts bridge the gap between legacy and future systems to ensure this critical link does not fail. While aging capabilities provide the nuclear triad with sufficient viable assured strategic communications; today, sustainment issues increasingly compromise the reliability of these stalwart systems. Modernizing our NC3 systems is key to ensuring the nuclear capability of the Nation remains fully positioned to provide an assured response if called upon. Our NEC Next Generation capabilities must pace adversary emerging and future technological developments.

NC3 Next Generation / Modernization

Potential adversaries continue to rapidly research, develop, and field emerging technologies and weapon systems. We are at a point where end-of-life limitations and the cumulative effects of underinvestment in our nuclear deterrent and supporting infrastructure leave us with no operational margin. The Nation simply cannot attempt to indefinitely life-extend leftover Cold War weapon systems and successfully support our National strategy. Pacing the threat requires dedicated and sustained funding for the entire nuclear enterprise and NC3 Next Generation modernization must be a priority.

The DoD operates, maintains, and defends the current NC3 enterprise every single day from cyber threats. In coordination with the Services, USSTRATCOM led an enterprise-wide approach to harden the current architecture until complete fielding of the NC3 Next Generation. As an example, the Air Force is leading the effort to modernize the NC3 data pathways for the Strategic Automated Command and Control System (SACCS), replacing legacy telephony to sustainable and secure modern technology with upgraded at-risk cryptographic devices.

The NEC and DoD stakeholders fielded the NC3 Next Generation Increment 1 capabilities, including the Family of Advanced Beyond Line of Sight Terminals (FAB-T) to replace antiquated survivable satellite communications equipment. The NEC, the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Services also began replacing outdated encryption equipment with newer, upgraded capabilities. The NC3 Enterprise continues segment upgrades to legacy telecommunications capability from analog to digital working closely with the Defense Information Systems Agency. This conversion is the first step to standardize our enterprise-wide terrestrial communications highway. Additionally, the NEC collaborated with U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) to execute a cybersecurity pilot program to provide real-time, persistent monitoring across various NC3 networks to detect, characterize, and mitigate adversary network actions.

The NEC, Navy, and Air Force completed the first step in a digital high frequency (HF) demonstration to enable advanced beyond line-of-sight communication between our command centers and operational forces. USSTRATCOM developed, installed, and deployed a mobile communications suite providing an alternative communications capability supporting continuity of operations and force direction. This new capability will enable USSTRATCOM to rapidly create requirements and field systems in the future.

The NEC is undertaking several efforts to more rapidly develop and deliver NC3 enterprise capabilities. The NEC established a digital modeling and engineering environment (DMEE), a collaborative platform in the standard development of and test engineering specifications for the NC3 enterprise. The NEC and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, through a Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA), established the Nebraska Defense Research Corporation (NDRC). The PIA fosters collaboration between commercial entities, defense industry, academia, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), and other government agencies. The NDRC is already prototyping of future NC3 Next Generation Incremental capabilities. All of these efforts are currently ongoing and will posture delivery of NC3 Next Generation Increments and provide increased operational margin within our NC3 Enterprise.

NC3 Cybersecurity, Technological Improvements, and AI / Machine Learning (ML)

USSTRATCOM continues to realize the benefits from the investment in our world class Command and Control Facility, the DoD's newest NC3 command center. Confidence in our ability to protect, defend, and execute the nuclear deterrent mission in the face of advanced cyber threats remain high. The relative isolation and the redundancies of the systems comprising the Nuclear Command and Control System (NCCS), combined with ongoing cybersecurity enhancements, ensure our ability to respond under adverse cyber conditions. To preserve our critical information and command and control advantages, USSTRATCOM is investing in cybersecurity protections that exceeds the DoD baseline standard while looking for opportunities to improve that posture.

Near-term efforts to enhance cybersecurity of the NC3 enterprise include: the establishment of quarterly cybersecurity reporting for all NC3 information technology (IT) systems; ongoing efforts with USSTRATCOM system program managers to correct

cybersecurity shortfalls; piloting of a persistent cyber sensing and monitoring capability for NC3 IT systems; and the development and execution of Defensive Cyber Operations (DCO) Internal Defensive Measures (IDM) to harden and defend the NC3 cyber terrain. As the threat evolves; however, the DoD must continue to fund and rapidly implement required cybersecurity capabilities. CyberSecurity Service Provider (persistent cyber defense); persistent sensing and monitoring across the NC3 enterprise; and cryptographic modernization will ensure the confidentiality of our information and decision making capabilities. A responsive cyber Command and Control construct will enable the rapid dissemination of defensive cyber operations orders, facilitate action, and enable follow-up reporting. These efforts will ensure continued readiness of the nuclear deterrent mission and set conditions for the success of our conventional forces.

Deep learning and advanced data management concepts are also fueling new demands for infrastructure that can scale to capacity on demand. Acting on the guidance of the Deputy Secretary of Defense and recommendations from the National Security Commission on AI, USSTRATCOM implemented the Command Data and AI Center (CDAI) to solve the command's most intractable problems through the application of advanced AI/ML methods. The command is recruiting a highly skilled workforce to build and maintain a resilient and scalable cloud and on-premise infrastructure to provide the capabilities to maintain information advantage over our potential adversaries.

We will do this in ways consistent with the DoD Ethical Principles for Artificial Intelligence, while continuing to lead in developing best practices for the development and application of AI and ML technologies to ensure their use is safe, secure, reliable, and consistent with our values. In an effort to "go faster," USSTRATCOM completed a 90-day pilot to assess opportunities to leverage commercial industry and use of non-traditional unclassified data

sources to solve some of our most challenging problems. I strongly endorse Deputy Secretary of Defense Hicks's AI and ML initiatives in this critical focus area.

USSTRATCOM continues to collaborate with USCYBERCOM, the Services, and agencies to leverage technologies in development, security, and operations (DevSecOps), code delivery, cloud computing, and data analytics to accelerate the development and delivery of new capabilities. Initiatives in these areas will jumpstart development of frameworks and governance necessary to pace the threat. Likewise, these new areas require stable, consistent, and on-time funding.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

The Nation faces a confluence where triad delivery platforms, weapons, and infrastructure must modernize simultaneously. As with DoD programs, the Department of Energy (DoE) and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) fill a vital role providing the weapons and components required to maintain the Nation's strategic deterrent mission. The NNSA's programs of record must be prioritized and executed on schedule to ensure the DoD retains a credible and modern triad. The NNSA's ability to sustain the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile is underpinned by a resilient and responsive production infrastructure and robust science and technology programs. All of these elements are critical to maintaining a safe, secure, and effective deterrent force. The objective is to restore the weapons complex to a resilient, responsive and modern condition; capable of sustaining the health of the Nation's stockpile and keeping pace with the evolving threat environment.

Nuclear Weapons and Stockpile Challenges

While today's stockpile is safe, secure and militarily effective, I am increasingly concerned with reliability and performance degradations in the majority of our systems. We must execute stockpile modernization programs on time to reverse this trend. In compliance

with national policy, the NNSA has done an excellent job reducing the weapons stockpile. As we shift focus beyond life extension to modernizing our remaining weapons, we must overcome obstacles that delay program execution. Failure to do so results in accumulation of operational risk from continued deferral of necessary modernization programs and aging weapons in the stockpile decades longer than intended. For example, both the B61 life extension and W88 alteration programs were delayed 24-months and are now late-to-need. The W80-4 program is a just-in-time modernization for airborne standoff capability, and any program delay incurs operational impacts.

Stockpile modernization programs take 10-15 years to execute. Without a concerted effort to reduce these timelines, today's issues will continue to manifest as the Nation undertakes more complex ballistic missile modernization programs. Specifically, W87-1 is the "pathfinder" weapons program for modernizing our land- and sea-based ballistic missile systems and will develop the infrastructure and technology processes needed in the future. Any W87-1 program delays will cascade through each follow-on program, beginning with the W93/Mk7. W93/Mk7 must deploy on time to reduce our over-reliance on a single SSBN warhead type, avoid future simultaneous SLBM modernization and support the United Kingdom's modernization to its deterrent force.

Weapons Complex Infrastructure

The DoE, NNSA, and DoD work closely to ensure the nuclear weapons infrastructure complex is postured to ensure the stockpile remains safe, secure, and militarily effective. However, today's Manhattan Project-era infrastructure is in poor condition, challenging NNSA's ability to successfully meet basic sustainment needs. Long-term deferred infrastructure investments have significant impacts, and there are heightened concerns with every major site providing critical stockpile capabilities to include uranium, tritium, high explosives, lithium,

radiation-hardened electronics, testing, experimentation, and weapon assembly/disassembly. Infrastructure modernization must be accomplished to prevent delays in fielding required capabilities. Prioritizing crucial NNSA infrastructure modernization programs is the best and only option to pace projected threats and sustain strategic deterrence.

In 2021, it became clear the production complex would not meet the Nation's plutonium pit production requirements, necessitating pursuit of less optimal approaches to meet stockpile modernization programs in the 2030s. Pit production shortfall is a leading indicator of how our current infrastructure is unable to execute the needed and planned stockpile modernization strategy. The atrophied condition of the infrastructure, coupled with delays in fielding necessary state of the art capabilities, significantly increases operational risk in sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.

Science, Technology, and Engineering Base

The science, technology and engineering (ST&E) base is essential for nuclear weapon and production complex modernization. Our ability to attract and retain the best and brightest scientists, engineers, program managers and technicians to work in the strategic deterrence mission set rests on ST&E efforts. In 2021, ST&E programs continued to advance our understanding of nuclear weapons. For example, the National Ignition Facility (NIF) at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) made a major technological advance, to expand the range of experiments directly relevant to stockpile modernization. This achievement will enable high fidelity testing to address challenging nuclear survivability requirements in the future.

The ability of NNSA to backstop an aging stockpile and infrastructure with advanced science and technology programs has enabled the Nation to sustain the deterrent well beyond projected lifetimes. As our potential adversaries rapidly advance their nuclear programs;

however, this edge in science and technology is beginning to erode. The Nation must aggressively sustain and advance these critical resources to improve our understanding of nuclear weapons performance and mature technologies to allow us to confidently move forward with stockpile and production modernization programs. I have formally reported this to the Secretary of Defense.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS SECURITY / FORCE PROTECTION

Nuclear weapons security remains a top USSTRATCOM priority and I am encouraged by the Department's continuing efforts to enhance and improve our security posture and capabilities. The security systems that protect our nuclear weapons must evolve as potential adversaries seek to exploit vulnerabilities. We must remain committed to protecting the investments in and fielding of the capabilities required to maintain the high security standards this mission demands and continue to adapt as the threat evolves.

MH-139A Grey Wolf Replacement Helicopter

The Air Force continues to make progress toward replacing the aging UH-1N helicopter fleet with the MH-139A Grey Wolf. The Grey Wolf will close our UH-1N limitations in speed, range, endurance, payload and survivability, and provide a rapid lethal response to address security vulnerabilities. We look forward to the Air Force completing Grey Wolf FAA certifications and getting aircraft "on the ramp" as we move toward full operational capability across all three ICBM wings in FY28.

Countering Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems

USSTRATCOM requires an effective integrated set of Countering Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-sUAS) capabilities to defend strategic locations and assets across the threat spectrum in a rapidly advancing and technically challenging environment. As technology advances, so must our access and authorization to use both kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities in

C-sUAS engagements to protect our nuclear assets. I strongly support the Services' efforts to develop and field effective protection systems and encourage continuing Congressional support as we deploy C-sUAS capabilities to reduce the threat.

Countering Underwater Unmanned Vehicles

USSTRATCOM requires an integrated Counter-Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (C-UUV) capability for protection of strategic naval assets. The underwater environment has become an uncontested entry point for UUV systems, threatening our strategic assets. The effectiveness of traditional undersea detection and protection methods must be enhanced and new capabilities developed to ensure we retain strategic advantage in response to this emerging threat. It is imperative we seek and employ non-traditional layered protection measures to maintain the safety and security of our waterfronts and strategic assets.

Weapons Generation Facilities

The future Weapons Generation Facilities (WGF) are a DoD program priority and will consolidate weapon maintenance and storage functions to support ICBM and bomber missions. These functions reside in 1960s and 1970s era Weapons Storage Areas (WSA) that exceed their intended service lives. Emerging threats expose WSA vulnerabilities, driving the need for a cost effective approach to restore weapon security and storage; however, the uncertainty of consistent stable funding, supply chain concerns, and pandemic repercussions affect overall confidence in construction schedules.

CONVENTIONAL HYPERSONIC WEAPONS

Hypersonic weapons development remains a top USSTRATCOM priority. Hypersonic weapons will provide a highly responsive, non-nuclear global strike capability against distant, defended, and/or time-critical threats when other forces are unavailable, denied access, or not preferred. Conventional hypersonic weapons will enhance our overall strategic deterrence

posture by providing the President additional strike options to rapidly project power and hold high-value targets at risk without crossing the nuclear threshold. USSTRATCOM will be ready to command and control hypersonic weapons the day they are fielded, as these weapons directly contributes to the Command's Strategic Deterrence and Global Strike missions. We appreciate and encourage continued Congressional funding as we quickly develop, procure, and field this enhancement to our strategic deterrence portfolio.

JOINT ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM OPERATIONS (JEMSO)

USSTRATCOM and the Joint Force are critically dependent on the EMS. Across the competition continuum, the Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS) will be congested, contested, and constrained. Potential adversaries are pursuing technology to deny our ability to use the EMS successfully across our range of missions and operations, to include targeting critical NC3 architecture. To ensure freedom of maneuver in the EMS, we must continue to develop and integrate EMSO across the DoD and with select allies.

USSTRATCOM is implementing operational aspects of the DoD EMS Superiority Strategy (EMSSS) I-Plan Goal 5, Establishing Effective EMS Governance, in coordination with DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO), OUSD, Joint Staff, Combat Support Agencies, CCMDs, and Services. To support this goal, USSTRATCOM will establish a 2-Star Direct Report Organization called the Joint EMS Operations Center (JEC). The JEC will enable execution of proposed amended UCP responsibilities for JEMSO operational lead reporting directly to CDRUSSTRATCOM and we intend to achieve IOC this year.

USSTRATCOM is leading the development of JEMSO Cells (JEMSOC) across the Joint Force to support joint planning, coordination, and control of the EMS. The USSTRATCOM JEMSO staff in lockstep with DoD CIO, is driving the requirements for a JEMSOC Electromagnetic Battle Management (EMBM) system to achieve EMS superiority.

USSTRATCOM's Joint Electromagnetic Warfare Center (JEWC) established the first-ever Joint EMS Information Analysis and Fusion capability to provide spectrum-specific data for electromagnetic battle management and CCMD JEMSO cells. Our task is to raise the aggregate readiness of the Joint Force to prevail in a complex EMS that has become key terrain in nearly every military action we undertake.

MISSILE DEFENSE

Missile defense (MD) remains an essential element of our strategic deterrence approach, raising the stakes of rogue actors and regional adversaries and denying the benefit of attack against our protected assets as part of an integrated deterrence framework, both for the homeland and for the regional CCMDs. The active missile defense mission begins with launch detection, attribution, warning, and tracking, all of which face significant challenges as potential adversaries develop and deploy hypersonic systems, increase ballistic, cruise missile availability, and lethality. Technology developments continue at an unrelenting pace and employment techniques - operating at lower altitudes, higher speeds, and with greater maneuverability - continue to challenge our missile defense systems. We must develop and deploy additional missile defense systems with advanced capabilities into the existing architecture to address the rapidly changing threat environment. USSTRATCOM is engaging with CCMDs, the Services, and agencies to advocate for and deliver global integrated missile defense capabilities and capacity in an operationally relevant timeframe.

As we move beyond legacy interceptor-based "hit-to-kill" technologies, we must expand our approach to active defenses and appreciate the funding of such critical sensors as the Hypersonic and Ballistic Missile Space Tracking Sensor (HBTSS) and the Space Development Agency's Tranche 1 MD Tracking Layer. As the Department develops capabilities that complement our existing Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI) systems and regionally-focused

systems such as, Aegis, Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), and Patriot, we must examine novel, cost effective options to adapt and overcome emerging threats. Finally, we should consider modifications to existing systems to defend against emerging threats, while remaining fiscally responsible – for example, fully integrating existing space- and terrestrial-based sensors in an attempt to identify and track ballistic, maneuvering, hypersonic, and cruise missile threats, as well as unmanned aerial systems.

USSTRATCOM continues to work with our Allies and partners to further integrate our capabilities to meet common threats. Led by the Joint Force Component Command-Integrated Missile Defense, the 24-nation missile defense policy campaign, NIMBLE TITAN 20, culminated with a senior leader event in Amsterdam in November 2021and was successfully completed despite the limitations of the on-going pandemic. We have begun planning our next campaign, NIMBLE TITAN 23, to deepen the exchange of MD policy views and insights and collectively explore operational concepts in this challenging environment.

OUR PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

It has been thirty years since this Nation has had to seriously consider the implications of competition through crisis and possible conflict with a nuclear-armed opponent let alone two nuclear-capable near-peers. USSTRATCOM holds the bulk of the last remaining strategic and operational deterrence expertise in the DoD. Thus, our people and partnerships are a vital element to the national strategic deterrence mission. Even against the challenges of the continuing pandemic, the personnel of USSTRATCOM remain operationally resilient. Because of our people, we continued the mission during this unforeseen crisis.

People

The Command remains committed to improving our workforce and our competitive advantage. We are growing our intellectual and deterrence theory capital through industry and

academic partnerships such as USSTRATCOM's Strategic Fellows and Deterrence Education Programs. We continue to pursue Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in line with DoD guidance through Human Capital initiatives. The Command emphasizes and distributes Service and agency focused resources to provide greater visibility to individuals within the Command. We offer opportunities for our military and civilian workforce to pursue additional diversity leadership training and certificates, opportunities to participate in Heritage Councils to help celebrate DoD-recognized special observances, and Directorate-level diversity councils to promote healthy culture and provide direct feedback on workforce and personnel guidance and processes. Additionally, we provide and monitor active feedback mechanisms to report on health and culture within the Command and provide tools to address diversity issues.

Academic Endeavors

This Nation faces an intellectual challenge, requiring us to leverage the intellectual capacity of the U.S., our Allies and partners. USSTRATCOM is making a concerted effort to reinvigorate research in strategic deterrence. Since the establishment of the Academic Alliance in 2014, over 70 academic institutions and industry partners have focused on USSTRATCOM's challenging mission set while building the next generation of national security professionals. Although the Alliance is currently developing the deterrence-focused curricula, it is only a fraction of what is needed to reinvigorate research and analysis for deterrence concepts. In August 2021, I further challenged the Academic Alliance, FFRDCs, and think tanks to provide new ideas on strategic deterrence in the 21st century by establishing USSTRATCOM's first ever analytic agenda. The response from these institutions is so promising that I am integrating some of the concepts and ideas into USSTRATCOM plans and operations.

While this is a good start to understanding deterrence in the 21st century, good will, and the Academic Alliance will only take the Department and our Nation's capacity to think through

deterrence challenges so far. USSTRATCOM collaborates with the National Strategic Research Institute (NSRI) and the University of Nebraska to research key topics in my analytic agenda. This initiative only scratches the surface to truly understand the implications of strategic deterrence in the 21st century and requires additional engagement with our academic partners.

Wargames

Exercises, wargames, tabletop exercises (TTX), and rehearsals of concept continue to refine how we demonstrate joint capacity, capability, and interoperability across the globe. Last year, USSSTRATCOM conducted over 360 nuclear command, control, and communications-focused exercises and wargame events focused on coordination with other CCMDs and the interagency, integrating advanced weapons, and improving processes and procedures to leverage every advantage from our nuclear enterprise.

CONCLUSION

Potential adversary actions are challenging us in ways we have not experienced in over 30 years. USSTRATCOM will continue to deter strategic attack and employ forces as directed by the President to guarantee the security of the Nation, our Allies, and our partners. We must remember deterrence is not a static concept – it evolves – and the current evolution of the world's strategic security environment will result in three nuclear-capable near-peers. ***The PRC and Russia actively seek to change the international rules-based order, while the U.S., with our Allies and partners, seek to defend it.*** Our military can contribute to an integrated whole-of-government approach only if we make clear-eyed and threat-informed decisions regarding the capabilities needed to protect and defend the Nation. The Nation's nuclear force is the backstop of integrated deterrence. Today, we stand ready to execute our assigned missions. Failure to pace the threat from potential adversary technological advances today may inhibit our ability to do so in the future. To execute a National strategy resistant to adversarial coercion, we need

modern, effective, and reliable capabilities. ***Above all else, USSTRATCOM will continue to provide strategic deterrence, underwriting every U.S. military operation around the world and deterring great power conflict. Peace is our Profession...***

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2022.

U.S. AFRICA COMMAND

WITNESS

GENERAL STEPHEN J. TOWNSEND, COMMANDER, U.S. AFRICA COMMAND

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

Ms. MCCOLLUM. This morning, the Subcommittee will hold a hearing on the posture of U.S. Africa Command.

I would like to remind members any material placed in front of you marked classified should be left at your chair at the conclusion of the hearing. Today, we will receive testimony today from our witness, AFRICOM Commander Stephen Townsend.

General, welcome back to the Subcommittee and we look forward to your testimony. The Biden administration has released their new National Defense Strategy which continues to emphasize competition between great powers, with a particular emphasis on China. But we also know that Chinese diplomatic, economic, and military activities are not contained to the Pacific theater. Over the past two decades, China has significantly deepened its reach in Africa. They have fostered extensive diplomatic engagement through 52 embassies, more than the United States has on the continent. They have financed large infrastructure projects in Africa, made significant investments in African rare earth material extraction, and they have opened a military base in Djibouti.

In the midst of war returning to Europe after so many decades, we must also be wary of Russia's increased presence elsewhere in the world. And Africa is no stranger to Russian activities. Russia is heavily invested in the African oil and gas industry, and they are ramping up trade with African nations as U.S. and European sanctions impact their economy. Russia is also the top arms dealer in Africa, and Russia funds thousands of private security or mercenary soldiers throughout the region. Russian mercenaries have deployed to Mali, Libya, Sudan, Mozambique and Madagascar in recent years, and have been a profoundly destabilizing presence.

The United States cannot view China and Russia as though their activities are contained to Europe and Asia. They will continue to expand their influence in Africa, and we must make sure that the United States is there with a whole of government approach to meet this growing challenge.

We must continue to work with partner agencies like the Department of State and USAID to ensure that our diplomatic, development and economic bridges on the continent are strengthened. This is particularly true when it comes to our efforts with the African Union to resolve the conflict in Ethiopia, which has led to thousands of deaths and approximately two million refugees. I have

said this before, but I will say it again, we must provide more resources to whole of government activities in Africa, and we must be more engaged on the continent, not less.

General, I know you are prepared to discuss the threats China and Russia pose on the African continent, as well as how we must continue to be mindful of the threats the United States and faces from terrorism and violent extremism. I hope we can have a robust discussion on these important topics, and we look forward to hearing your testimony.

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL STEPHEN J. TOWNSEND, UNITED STATES ARMY

COMMANDER, UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

6 APRIL 2022

INVESTING IN AMERICA'S SECURITY IN AFRICA:

A CONTINENT OF GROWING STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

INTRODUCTION:

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, distinguished subcommittee members, I am once again honored to testify before you on behalf of over 10,000 service members and civilians of United States Africa Command (AFRICOM). As I enter the final months of my command, there has been no greater honor than serving alongside the men and women of AFRICOM who work so hard, even going in harm's way, to defend our nation and way of life. Since I last addressed this subcommittee, AFRICOM underwent its third DoD-directed review in as many years—the "Global Posture Review"— ensuring our campaign plan aligned with the new National Defense Strategy (NDS) and bolstered the nation's deterrence to better safeguard vital U.S. interests. Throughout these reviews, AFRICOM has remained focused on our mission of protecting and advancing U.S. interests—including maintaining a free, open, and stable international order—on the African continent. During my three years at AFRICOM, Africa's geostrategic importance has gained increasing global recognition, driving our strategic rivals to successfully leverage both soft and hard investments into political influence, sometimes malign, and hard military advantage. As my tenure at AFRICOM winds down, I am certain of two things—first, access to a stable and prosperous African continent will be increasingly important to the United States, politically, economically, and militarily and will become even more so in the future; and second, America will increasingly rely on her modest investment in U.S. AFRICOM to protect her interests and advance her objectives in this dynamic and important region of the world.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Potential vs. Obstacles… Opportunities vs. Challenges

Africa lies at a global crossroads. This enormous continent's environment is complex—ripe with opportunity but burdened with challenges. It holds tremendous geo-strategic significance while being shaped by the competing forces of prosperity and poverty, peace and conflict, plenty and famine, good governance and corruption and democratic backsliding. These tensions are evident throughout Africa—a continent whose socio-economic importance to the future cannot be ignored.

Africa sits astride six strategic chokepoints and sea lines of communication[1], enables a third of the world's shipping[2], and holds vast mineral resources. When access through these strategic chokepoints is blocked, global markets suffer. Last March, the grounded container ship *Ever Given* blocked the Suez Canal and froze 12 percent of global shipping for 6 days[3]. This same type of dilemma could limit the flow of U.S. forces as well. Beyond its geostrategic location, Africa possesses vast untapped energy deposits, including one third of the world's mineral reserves and

rare earth metals. These resources are the key supplies that America relies on to produce 21st century technologies[4] and transition to clean energy, including mobile phones, jet engines, electric-hybrid vehicles, and missile guidance systems. The winners and losers of the 21st century global economy may be determined by whether these resources are available in an open and transparent marketplace or are inaccessible due to predatory practices of competitors.

African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is a global leader averaging 4.9 percent per year since 2000, outpacing global GDP growth by 2 percent over the same period[5]. This growth makes the continent a powerful part of the global economy—for both supply and demand. *The Economist* projects this impact will only increase when a quarter of world population will live in Africa by 2050—a billion of whom will be under 18 and entering the labor force[6]. How those acting on this continent—including Africans, allies, partners and competitors—mitigate or exacerbate the drivers of fragility, like climate change and violent extremism, will determine whether this human potential serves as a catalyst for growth or a contributor to global crises.

Climate Crisis: Exacerbating Fragility, Undermining Resilience

Climate change serves as a risk accelerant especially when coupled with other persistent fragility factors. Climate change compounds the challenges African nations face, raising new obstacles to overcome with respect to population, migration, and urbanization. Creeping ramifications of climate change include increased water shortages in the Sahel, storm surges in southern Africa, and lower crop yields in the Horn of Africa[7]. All of these issues will have profound negative repercussions on the security environment my successor, and those who follow, will undoubtedly face. Sub-Saharan Africa could see as many as 86 million internal climate migrants by 2050[8]. While the majority of migrants will likely remain within Africa, some 11 million are projected to cross the Mediterranean into Europe[9].

The demands of population displacement and forced migration reaffirm the need for a whole-of-government approach bolstered by the right authorities and timely funding to tackle these challenges. The impact of climate change in Africa can best be addressed by strategic investments in adaptation and resilience, focusing on land and water resources, sustainable and clean power, empowering local leaders to advance community-based approaches to climate adaptation, and other areas where our development partners so expertly lead. Success with climate resilient development and climate mitigation reduces the need for America and our partners to engage in the defense sector.

Geo-Strategic Significance Drives Strategic Competition

Africa's global impact drives global influence. Africans are increasingly influential in the United Nations (UN) and other international fora. Currently, Africa holds 28 percent of UN General Assembly votes[10] and three of 15 UN Security Council (UNSC) seats[11]. Our African partners face choices to strengthen the U.S. and allied-led open, rules-based international order or succumb to the raw power transactional pressure campaigns of global competitors. How African governments choose partners may determine the future of U.S. values-based influence in international political fora.

Strategic rivals, China and Russia, have long recognized Africa's importance. Both nations leverage opportunities to erode U.S. influence with African nations. Both nations are gaining ground on the continent. Both nations successfully convert soft and hard power investments into new partnerships. Both nations exert political influence at U.S. expense.

China continues to focus on the long game as its dominant position in African markets has allowed it to buttress autocracies and influence global political norms, technological standards, and commercial practices while offering an entry point for their military. China's heavy investment in Africa as its "second continent", and heavy handed pursuit of its "One Belt, One Road" initiative is fueling Chinese economic growth, outpacing the U.S.,[12] and allowing it to exploit opportunities to their benefit. This year, China significantly expanded the capabilities of its Doraleh Naval Base in Djibouti—Beijing's only permanent overseas military base—by adding a large and capable pier while advancing plans to establish a second location along West Africa's Atlantic Coast. By 2030, Chinese military facilities and technical collection sites in Africa will allow Beijing to project power eastward into the Middle East and Indo-Pacific Theaters and west into the Atlantic[13]. A permanent Chinese naval presence in West Africa would almost certainly require the Department to consider shifts to U.S. naval force posture and pose increased risk to freedom of navigation and U.S. ability to act.

Russia continues to undermine rule of law by exploiting insecurity and diplomatic disputes to expand its presence in Africa, primarily through its use of Kremlin-backed Wagner Group. Wagner has malignly inserted itself in several African countries— namely Libya, Sudan, Mozambique, Central African Republic (CAR), Mali—including instances where their mercenaries have been linked to horrific violence against civilians and other human rights abuses[14]. Where Wagner goes, instability follows. For example, Wagner forces in the Central African Republic (CAR) have reportedly massacred dozens of civilians during missions that ostensibly protect the government

while advancing Moscow's economic and political interests[15]. Russia's Wagner uses its designation of as a PMC for Moscow in an attempt to deny, however implausibly, these abuses. Similarly, President Putin insists Wagner is a private company employed by Mali's transitional authorities—the same Malian authorities who claim that only official Russian Ministry of Defense personnel are conducting operations in their country. Further, Moscow remains Africa's largest arms supplier having increased exports by 23 percent over the last four years[16]. The Kremlin's willingness to sell weapons to authoritarian leaders and combatants without end-user agreements fuels militarization and escalates conflict and instability across Africa.

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO), a Persistent and Growing Threat

According to the Global Terrorism Index, seven of the ten countries with the largest increase in terrorism in 2020 were in Sub Saharan Africa, with Burkina Faso suffering a 590 percent increase. Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qaida-aligned VEOs remain a potent and growing threat across much of Africa. In East Africa, al-Qaida's al-Shabaab remains the greatest threat to U.S. persons and interests in the region as well as the homeland, while undermining peace, security, and political progress in Somalia. The largest, wealthiest and most lethal Al Qaeda affiliate in the world today, al Shabbab is now working to re-establish supporting ties with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). It is my judgement that due to a lack of effective governance and counter-terrorism pressure, al Shabaab has only grown stronger and bolder over the past year as seen in recent coordinated, multi-target attacks in Mogadishu.

Sustained U.S., African, and allied counter-terrorism pressure has significantly weakened VEOs in North Africa but the problem has shifted southward to Sub-Saharan areas. In the Sahel, what started in the mid-2000s as a small, largely isolated, al-Qaida offshoot in northern Mali, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslmin or JNIM, has metastasized into a powerful, sprawling terrorist network now threatening Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and littoral West Africa. In addition, ISIS's exploitation of ungoverned spaces, including recognition and creation of new branches elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, has increased these groups' ability to destabilize local governments, exploit fragility and instability factors, and drive radicalism. Increased collaboration among ISIS groups in central Africa is a concerning trend that is expanding the terrorist threat to Mozambique, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is my judgement that greater and more coordinated efforts are necessary by our African and international partners, with continued U.S. support, if we are to check the pervasive spread of violent extremism—especially in East and West Africa.

U.S. AFRICOM's APPROACH

AFRICOM actively campaigns towards four enduring objectives[17]. First, maintain America's strategic access and influence on the continent. Failure to achieve this objective means failure everywhere else. Second, counter threats to U.S. persons, facilities, and interests, whether they be from violent extremists or other malign actors. Third, prevent and respond to crises that can range from disaster relief to threats against our embassies. Finally, we do all this with a lean, purpose-built combatant command and a coordinated, Diplomacy-Defense-Development effort that teams with allies and partners to achieve shared security objectives, and advance shared principles. This deliberate, coordinated, low-cost campaign approach requires resources to protect previous and future gains—especially as our strategic competitors increase their investments.

Maintain America's Strategic Access and Influence

Gaining and maintaining access and influence underpins all U.S. government efforts in Africa and is the cornerstone of our campaign. Without it, we cannot ensure U.S. ability to act, assure allies and partners, deny adversary objectives, respond to crisis, deter major war, or posture to successfully transition from deterrence to conflict. AFRICOM primarily achieves access and influence in priority locations through focused activities such as senior leader engagements; security force assistance and cooperation; and multi-national exercises. We effectively leverage our resources through this range of effective, low-cost opportunities that contest malign influence, impose costs, and exert pressure with minimal escalatory risk.

Activities such as delivery of COVID aid, bilateral security cooperation, and assistance programs focus on African partner nations' priorities, such as existential VEO threats; while exercises such as AFRICAN LION, FLINTLOCK, and CUTLASS EXPRESS expand interoperability that bolsters partner capabilities. AFRICOM's Joint Exercise Program saw cuts from 2020 resulting in the cancellation of three exercises in 2022. The Joint Exercise Program is key to fostering relationships and has the added benefit of enhancing partner effectiveness, deterring malign actor access and influence, and helping prevent exploitation of African nations.

At the end of the day, our engagements, our access, and our influence in Africa matter. Even with our limited physical presence on the continent, we are still considered the "partner of choice" by most African nations. This position of advantage is ours to lose.

Countering Threats to U.S. Persons and Interests

AFRICOM is the only combatant command with basing that neighbors a Chinese military installation, and one of only two combatant commands with active counter-terrorism operations.

Africa is a center for VEO confrontations. I have fought Al Qaeda and ISIS in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria; and in my judgment, VEOs have shifted their weight of effort to Africa. For a variety of reasons, U.S. and partner efforts to disrupt and degrade the most dangerous VEOs have not achieved the success we need. To advance America's security, we are revising and renewing our own efforts. Al-Qaida's al-Shabaab retains the intent and capability to threaten U.S. persons and interests from its safe haven in Somalia, making it a top-tier VEO threat for the U.S. Government and the top counter-VEO priority for AFRICOM[18]. While the metastasis of Al-Qaida and ISIS in West Africa does not pose an immediate threat to the U.S. homeland, they are a clear danger to U.S. persons and interests in West Africa as well as our African and international partners there. Our continued support to multi-national partners in the Sahel, bilateral relationships with affected African partners, and continued support to cooperative efforts remain critical to suppressing the VEO threat. These efforts are essential to early warning to prevent future attacks.

As VEOs remain the number one concern for many African countries, U.S. counterterrorism support is also a key avenue by which we compete strategically on the continent. In Africa, helping partners tackle shared security goals to address VEO challenges is an effective way America wins influence over strategic competitors.

Preventing and Responding to Crises to Protect U.S. Interests

Always ready, regardless the threat, AFRICOM safeguards U.S. personnel, facilities, and other critical interests in Africa's uncertain and volatile operating environment. In 2021 AFRICOM maintained a ready-response posture. In one brief period, we simultaneously tracked violence in Chad, prepared for concurrent Non-combatant Evacuation Operations in Ethiopia and Sudan, shepherded diplomatic engagements in Libya, monitored multiple irregular transitions of power, and conducted periodic engagements in Somalia. With crisis frequency in Africa managed in hours and days, not weeks and months, AFRICOM selected capabilities to provide the crisis response the American people expect.

Africa contains 16 of the 31 diplomatic posts designated by the Department of State (DoS) as High Threat or High Risk worldwide[19]. U.S. diplomats and service members operate across the continent at the extreme fringes of our operational reach. AFRICOM shares its crisis response forces, located in four widely dispersed locations, with three other combatant commands. These shared resources maximize the savings and readiness for the Department of Defense. Personnel Recovery/MEDEVAC, ISR and vertical lift are the most important capabilities our troops need to accomplish their missions in harm's way with acceptable risk.

Teaming with Allies & Partners to Achieve Shared Security Objectives

AFRICOM pursues our campaign objectives in close cooperation with allies and partners. Our relationships enable us to coordinate actions, enhance interoperability and share costs and risk to achieve mutual security goals. These relationships not only lead to stronger access and influence, but also showcase democratic principles, strengthen compliance with the rule of law, and highlight nefarious intentions of our competitors.

Strong bilateral relationships with allies and partners are also fostered through AFRICOM's active participation in multi-national efforts. This participation reinforces our message that the U.S. will stand side-by-side with our partners to work toward a more stable and prosperous Africa. Furthermore, our presence, engagement, and security cooperation efforts with partners not only improve their capability to address internal security concerns, but also degrades our competitors' ability to exploit relationship gaps. The National Defense Strategy places great importance on partnering. However, DoD distribution of security cooperation funding steadily declined for AFRICOM in previous years. This is an area of concern to me, as I assess it opens the door for China or Russia to usurp the U.S. as the partner of choice. Security cooperation, multi-national exercises, and the National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP) provide AFRICOM with relatively low-cost tools to strengthen relationships, sustain our long-term strategic alliances, and address future challenges.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS & OBJECTIVES:

East Africa

Somalia's slow but continued steps towards stability stalled over the past year. Al-Shabaab exploited political infighting and decreased security pressure from Somalia, African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the U.S., to expand its territorial control, revitalize attacks in Mogadishu, and plan terrorist attacks that threaten American persons and interests. The persistent threat al-Shabaab poses to U.S. persons and interests, coupled with the pressing need to disrupt ISIS-Somalia's funds distribution, as well as stay postured for crisis operations in Ethiopia and Sudan, reinforces the importance of retaining our small force footprint in the Horn of Africa.

Both Djibouti and Kenya remain strong partners in this increasingly vital but volatile region. I believe the U.S. must continue our efforts to support these partners, lead Somali and AMISOM partners to pursue our common fight against al-Shabaab and degrade their ability to threaten the homeland. As al-Qaida's largest and wealthiest global affiliate[20], if left unchecked al-Shabaab will soon expand beyond Somalia's borders and become an even greater threat to regional stability and

American interests. ISIS-Somalia's ability to connect, direct and fund ISIS elements elsewhere in Africa makes them a group of unique concern.

The Sahel, Littoral West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea

The rapid expansion of Sahel-based VEOs outside of Mali and Burkina Faso calls for stronger international action. During the past year, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslmin (JNIM) made inroads into littoral West Africa, adding a new destabilizing threat to strategically important countries on the Atlantic. Compounding the escalating security situation, JNIM's regional rival, ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), has embarked on a campaign targeting civilian populations with mass casualty attacks, taxation, and recruitment thus driving regional instability.

AFRICOM's approach in West Africa aims to *limit* VEO destabilization of the Sahel and *prevent* further VEO expansion in Niger and the littoral states. Our three-pronged approach is strengthening U.S. assistance to international partners, bolstering partner effectiveness to deal with VEO advances, and increasing the effectiveness of existing multi-lateral security constructs in the region. We enable the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development to capitalize on these lines of effort, addressing drivers of instability and contributing to sustainable solutions. Otherwise, competitors will affiliate and partner where the U.S. government does not—Mali's outreach to Russia's Wagner Group is a prime example[21].

Nigeria is the largest purchaser of U.S. military equipment in West Africa and is an important security partner on the front lines against ISIS's largest global affiliate, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA). ISIS-WA has consolidated control over the Lake Chad Basin and increased cross-border attacks into Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Abuja's domestic security concerns, and those it shares with its littoral West African neighbors, have strategic implications beyond national borders. Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a devastating economic and food-scarcity challenge for the region. Chinese fishing fleets are the primary IUU offender, even as Beijing offers West African countries maritime security cooperation as pretext to expand a security or military basing foothold it could use to threaten the United States. There is no clear delineation between military, economic, and diplomatic investments by China, therefore the line between pro-Africa and anti-U.S. activity can be difficult to discern.

U.S. maritime engagement, especially in West Africa, is critical. A single unique asset, our new expeditionary staging base vessel, USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (HWW), provides enormous return on investment. Assigned to AFRICOM in August 2020, the HWW conducted more Sub-Saharan maritime engagements in less than two years than this command was able to conduct in the

previous five years. In four locations, she was America's first port call in over a decade. Regular presence of a vessel like HWW demonstrates U.S. commitment and improves interoperability with our African partners in ways that had been absent for years[22]. Our Ambassadors praise the powerful impact of our maritime engagement to advance an array of U.S. security objectives in Africa.

North Africa

Countering the encroachment of Russia and China along NATO's southern flank remains a top focus for AFRICOM, followed by monitoring and disrupting signs of VEO resurgence in Libya and Tunisia, and supporting State Department efforts to consider reestablishment of a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Tripoli. Senior DoS and AFRICOM engagements this past year helped Libya defuse its long-standing civil war, advanced progress to a unified government, and disrupted longstanding Russian aspirations to establish a permanent security foothold in the country. Conversely, Tunisia's economic and democratic uncertainty made it increasingly vulnerable to Chinese influence, threatening Tunisia's strategic importance as a major non-NATO U.S. ally, as Tunis signed new financial and technical agreements with Beijing. Future Chinese overtures could further expand Beijing's leverage in Tunisia, including potential port development[23].

Maintaining strong partnerships remains critical to U.S. access, influence and interests in the region. Last summer 31 partner nations joined AFRICOM for exercise AFRICAN LION, our premier annual exercise combining air, ground, and maritime components to enhance readiness of U.S. forces and strengthen African security capabilities. AFRICOM's ability to exercise with Major Non-NATO Allies, like long-standing co-host Morocco, is key to bolstering U.S. credibility on the continent and supporting a lead security partner.

Central and Southern Africa

Thwarting the rise of ISIS in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda is a key regional objective in Central and Southern Africa, where we are witnessing accelerated trends of VEO mergers, cohesion, and expansion. This year, security forces from eight countries of the Southern African Development Community joined Rwandan troops in northern Mozambique to stabilize Cabo Delgado and push ISIS back into the bush. AFRICOM training and partnership enables this regional solution to regional instability. Despite this underappreciated success of regional cooperation, other central and southern African countries—unaffected by VEO violence three years ago—remain threatened by ISIS expansion today. AFRICOM maintains small, unmanned contingency locations in Africa to provide platforms for crisis response. We have these on-call "lily pads" across the continent with the exception of southern Africa, a region larger than the continental U.S.

CONCLUSION

A more stable and prosperous Africa will enhance America's security. AFRICOM is committed to our work to improve security and stability, to doing our part in whole of U.S. government efforts to lessen the sources of extremist recruitment, to create stable political environments, to improve governance and to promote democracy and the rule of law.

With our partners, the men and women of USAFRICOM work hard every day to maintain U.S. access and influence in Africa, to counter threats that might emanate from Africa, and to rapidly and effectively respond to crises that threaten U.S. interests or are humanitarian in nature. To be effective in these tasks, our troops require critical capabilities—PR/MEDEVAC; contracted airborne ISR platforms, both manned and unmanned; security cooperation programs like the International Security Cooperation Program; and exercise programs that help our partner nations in countering VEO activities while also enhancing their own security. These capabilities allow our troops as well as partners and allies to succeed in not only defeating our enemies, but also allowing our partners to continue to build their own capabilities and capacity.

Despite AFRICOM's forward leaning stance, we know one of our main roles it to enable diplomacy and development—our tools of *first* resort. For that reason, AFRICOM requests Congress consider measures to ensure we have confirmed Ambassadors to lead our diplomatic missions in Africa. Currently five nominees are pending confirmation, including Chad, Kenya, South Africa, South Sudan, and Sudan. At the same time, I believe the USAID would greatly benefit from increased flexibility to address emerging requirements. Due to earmark constraints in annual appropriations, the USAID Administrator has limited discretion to direct resources within Africa.

I believe it is imperative that America sustain a predictable, though modest, investment in AFRICOM to protect U.S. interests and advance U.S. objectives in this dynamic and important region of the world. A sustained and coordinated U.S. government approach, bolstered by strategic vision and appropriate resourcing, can serve to strengthen relationships with partners in Africa, preserve U.S. interests, and further our objective for increased security, stability and prosperity.

Thank you for your diligence and commitment to invest in AFRICOM—its joint force and its future. Together with your support, AFRICOM will continue to implement smart investments and partner with this region of growing strategic importance to advance America's interests.

[1] (U.S. Africa Command Strategy, Engagement and Plans Directorate, 2021)
[2] (World Shipping Coucil, 2021)
[3] (Russon, 2021)
[4] (United Nations Environment Program, 2022)
[5] (International Monetary Fund, 2022; Trade, 2021)
[6] (The Economist, 2020)
[7] (Serdeczny, et al., 2016)
[8] (Voegele, 2021)
[9] (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021)
[10] (de Carvalho & Forti, 2020)
[11] (Charbonneau & Nantulya, 2021)
[12] (Runde, 2021)
[13] (Nakamura, Moriyasu, & Hadano, 2021)
[14] (Harding & Burke, 2021)
[15] (GlobalSecurity.org, 2022)
[16] (Parachini & Bauer, 2021)
[17] (Townsend, 2021)
[18] (Williams, 2021)
[19] (U.S. Department of State, 2021)
[20] (USAFRICOM Intelligence Directorate and U.S. Intelligence Community, 2021)
[21] (News Wires, 2022)
[22] (U.S. Navy Europe-Africa, 2021)
[23] (The World Bank, 2022)

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to the classification of the material discussed.]

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY AND U.S. CYBER COMMAND

WITNESS

GENERAL PAUL M. NAKASONE, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY AND COMMANDER U.S. CYBER COMMAND

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to classification of the material discussed.]

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022.

UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS

WITNESSES

GENERAL RICHARD D. CLARKE, COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

HON. CHRISTOPHER MAIER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIR MCCOLLUM

MS. MCCOLLUM. This morning the Subcommittee will receive testimony on the posture and budget request for U.S. Special Operations Command.

Our witnesses today are: The Honorable Christopher Maier, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict; and General Richard Clarke, Commanding General, U.S. Special Operations Command.

I would like to remind members any material placed in front of you marked classified should be left at your chair at the conclusion of the hearing. This is Secretary Maier's first appearance before the Defense Subcommittee. We welcome you to the Subcommittee and look forward to future engagements.

General Clarke, I understand you are due to retire later this year, and this will likely be your last hearing before the Subcommittee. Let me say congratulations and thank you for your service to the nation. SOCOM and the Army have been extremely well served by you and the Subcommittee very much appreciates your partnership with Congress over the past three years. It's more than a cliché to say that the Department and SOCOM are at an inflection point.

After 20 years of direct-action missions largely countering violent extremist organizations, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and China's ongoing military modernization highlights how the joint force, and special operations forces, will need to operate in non-traditional and highly contested environments. Russia's use of information warfare to set the stage for their invasion should be a wakeup call to the Department and the interagency of the importance of gray zone activities.

Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict and SOCOM are uniquely positioned to lead and help set the terms of any future engagement. You both must also ensure that requirements for future programs match the challenges special operations forces will face on the battlefield. Equally important is the need to care for your operators and oversee a culture that is professional and accountable.

We look forward hearing from you both how SOCOM and the special forces community is building and shaping the force of the

future that upholds your ideals and reflects the diversity of the rest of the armed forces.

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL RICHARD D. CLARKE, USA

COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

BEFORE THE 117th CONGRESS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

APRIL 7, 2022

INTRODUCTION

Chairwoman McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank you for providing this opportunity to discuss the posture of the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). I am proud to testify alongside the Honorable Christopher Maier, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)).

ASD(SO/LIC)'s oversight, policy guidance, and advocacy within the Department of Defense (DoD) are essential for the modernization, readiness, and wellbeing of special operations forces (SOF) and their families. We have continued to deepen our longstanding partnership through our co-authored SOF Vision and Strategy documents which provide an enduring foundation to guide future SOF activities and investments. This collaboration continues as we refine our Future Operating Concept and assess force design considerations over the coming months.

The steadfast support of Congress ensures our nation's SOF are the world's most capable and credible. Your support underpins our efforts to bolster deterrence, ensure our enduring advantage through innovation and modernization, and strengthen our force and their families. Your SOF remain vigilant, ready to respond in crisis, and committed to defending the nation against all threats from state and non-state adversaries.

Today, I am honored to present an account of USSOCOM's priorities, activities, and investments to ensure our SOF remain unmatched and prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

The strategic environment of 2022 is dynamic, but its complexities are not new. Nation-states and non-state actors, including violent extremist organizations, compete for influence and advantage, acting both across domains and transregionally.

In Ukraine, Russia's unprovoked, unjustified, and premeditated invasion reminds us of continued challenges to the rules-based international order. Since 2014, following Russia's previous aggression in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, SOF supported multinational training efforts with Ukrainian SOF forces and provided Military Information Support Operations (MISO) assistance to illuminate and counter Russian disinformation. Russia's destabilizing activities reinforce the importance of USSOCOM's decades-long commitment to enhancing interoperability with Allied SOF throughout Europe – a critical asset in providing options for the United States and our Allies.

To preserve and advance our vital interests and those of our Allies and partners, the United States must maintain its overmatch in strategic deterrence, conventional military force, and space and cyberspace capabilities – complemented by credible irregular warfare capabilities. Given this overmatch, competitors will prefer asymmetric means to attack, erode, or undermine our nation's advantages and interests – particularly our network of Alliances and partnerships. Strategic rivals continue to seek advantage through activities in the "gray zone" below the threshold of a credible military response. Disinformation continues to be employed at unimaginable speed and scale without regard for geopolitical boundaries. The destabilizing impacts of climate change, diminished influence of international institutions, and political turmoil aggravated by the global pandemic have provided opportunities for non-state actors and nation-state competitors alike.

SOF create strategic, asymmetric advantages for the nation across the spectrum of conflict. Our formations provide options to the Joint Force to deter, deescalate, or decisively prevail if war is unavoidable. SOF are problem-solvers. Their enduring value resides in their ability to adapt and to combat asymmetric threats, including in the "gray zone"; employ precision and surprise to achieve strategic effects in conflict or crisis; build access, placement, and influence through sustained partnership with foreign forces; and support Allies' and partners' resilience and resistance efforts – all providing discrete options when conventional action is impractical or not desired.

To address current and future strategic challenges, SOF are aligned with the DoD's strategic priorities. USSOCOM's institutional and operational efforts span three broad areas: bolstering deterrence through campaigning, innovating for advantage, and strengthening our force and family.

BOLSTERING DETERRENCE

After two decades of combat, our SOF today are more integrated, credible, and capable than at any point in our nation's history. USSOCOM's dedicated men and women have degraded violent extremist organizations (VEOs) and disrupted innumerable plots to attack Americans and our interests since 9/11 – while remaining vigilant and ready today. Their courage and commitment are and have been remarkable. Notably, twelve SOF servicemembers have been awarded the Medal of Honor for actions since 9/11, and three of those recipients are still serving on active duty within our SOF formations today.

SOF are bolstering deterrence globally as part of the DoD's integrated deterrence approach. Operations over the past twenty years have necessitated operating transregionally alongside capable Allies and partners, leveraging the unique capabilities of our interagency community, and integrating with the Joint Force across domains – the foundation for effective integrated deterrence.

We have rebalanced our activities to prioritize campaigning for strategic advantage – comprising nearly one third of our deployed forces in fiscal year 2022 (FY22) – while maintaining sustainable counter-VEO (C-VEO) operations. Our command is committed to defending the nation and our interests globally, advancing our partnerships, and actively campaigning to strengthen deterrence, including in the "gray zone."

Defending the Nation

USSOCOM has honed our capabilities to defend Americans, our homeland, and our valued Allies and partners through our operations since 2001. We currently have over five thousand SOF deployed to over 80 countries. Our National Guard SOF supported wide-ranging operations globally in over 30 countries while also deploying stateside to 18 states last year, providing essential Defense Support of Civil Authorities, COVID-19 response, inauguration security support, and natural disaster relief.

SOF represent a critical strategic hedge for the nation to respond in crisis. Exquisite, tailored capabilities enable SOF to execute no-fail hostage rescue missions and to counter an adversary's efforts to produce or deploy weapons of mass destruction. Repeatedly during 2021, SOF provided crucial forces and command and control for crises requiring rapid deployment,

complex problem-solving, and synchronized effects – whether responding to manmade and natural disasters or safeguarding Americans globally.

Alongside the ever-increasing capabilities of near-peer rivals, the threats posed by select non-state actors will endure. Violent extremists will continue to use terrorism as a tactic to achieve their objectives. Drivers of extremist violence exist in deep, multigenerational ideological divisions that cannot be overcome quickly or with military force. Violent extremism and terrorism will persist in the decades to come, representing an enduring threat to the United States, our Allies, and our partners.

USSOCOM continues to pursue a sustainable approach to our C-VEO operations by prioritizing threats, working closely with international and interagency partners, and leveraging expanded options to degrade VEO capabilities. During operations to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) over the past decade, SOF have played a critical role in mobilizing international partners, disrupting illicit financing, interdicting foreign fighters, illuminating propaganda, and defeating large-scale territorial expansion, when necessary.

USSOCOM continues to prioritize our role as the DoD's Coordinating Authority for C-VEO through our Department-wide campaign planning, assessments, and recommendations. Our semi-annual VEO threat assessment highlights our transregional approach involving multiple Geographic Combatant Commands.

After sustained global pressure since 2001, the threat to the U.S. homeland posed by VEOs based in the Middle East and Africa has diminished. Nevertheless, the threat to U.S. interests overseas remains. The continued availability of safe havens coupled with local security shortfalls perpetuates the risks of VEOs' external attacks. In East Africa, al-Shabaab continues to focus its operations within Somalia and presents an ongoing risk to U.S. interests in the region. In Afghanistan, ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K) has prioritized local and regional operations but presents an enduring external threat to the U.S. homeland and interests abroad. Senior al-Qaeda leaders also remain committed to attacking the U.S. homeland and continue to encourage attacks by their affiliates. In Yemen, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula presents a continued threat of conducting or directing attacks externally. In Iraq and Syria, ISIS senior leaders demonstrate the intent and capability to target American interests despite the losses of key operatives and personnel since 2019.

Violent extremists continue to incorporate new technologies and adapt their tactics, posing an ongoing risk to counterterrorism (CT) efforts globally. Adversary unmanned aerial systems (UAS) pose a pressing challenge, exhibiting a rapid evolution in employment and lethality exceeding improvised explosive devices over the past two decades. While the evolving UAS threat from VEOs is troubling, capable state adversaries and their aligned paramilitary forces have also successfully employed UAS to target American and Allied forces – recently in Iraq in early 2022.

SOF Campaigning

SOF's full range of core activities, tailored capabilities, and enduring partnerships provide critical options for campaigning to bolster deterrence. Our combat-credible forces can undermine adversary confidence that aggression will succeed, shaping a rival's decision calculus. The access, placement, and influence generated by SOF's long-term commitments to building partner capacity and improving Ally interoperability provide expanded, low-cost options to gain awareness, shape the operating environment, or present an adversary with multiple dilemmas, if necessary. Additionally, SOF remain ideally suited to identify an adversary's challenges in the "gray zone" and counter those malign activities with firmness while managing escalation.

USSOCOM continues to prioritize its operations, activities, and investments in the Indo-Pacific and Europe while maintaining a sustainable posture to counter threats from the Middle East, Africa, and other regions. Over the past three years, our campaigning activities to counter and deter near-peer rivals have more than doubled – comprising over 30% of our deployed forces in FY22 and continuing to grow to nearly 50% in FY23. Our command also provides specialized expertise from our stateside forces to support Combatant Command priorities globally through Continental U.S.-Based Operational Support (CBOS) – a disciplined approach to provide tailored, low-density capabilities to support specific operational needs. We continue to optimize our global posture to counter violent extremists and other non-state actors while sustaining the ability to respond to crises worldwide.

Focused, deliberate campaigning in Eastern Europe over several years has supported whole-of-nation resilience efforts among critical Allies and enhanced their resistance capabilities if threatened with territorial aggression. Our continued focus on honing the core maritime capabilities of our Naval Special Warfare and Marine Raider formations complemented by exploring creative options to extend SOF's operational reach has also improved our ability to act credibly throughout the Indo-Pacific.

USSOCOM has invested heavily to expose and counter adversary propaganda and disinformation to better compete in the cognitive domain. Competitors, like China and Russia, continue to act assertively in the information "gray zone" to manipulate populations worldwide. As DoD's Joint Proponent for Military Information Support Operations (MISO) and the Coordinating Authority for Internet-based MISO, our command is adapting our psychological operations forces for the evolving information landscape. As part of our ongoing rebalancing efforts, our MISO activities to counter strategic competitors have also more than doubled over the past three years – comprising over 40% of our MISO activities worldwide in FY21. The Joint MISO WebOps Center (JMWC) continues to coordinate our MISO conducted via the internet and actively engage foreign audiences to illuminate and counter hostile propaganda and disinformation online. Since 2021, we have incorporated our first foreign partners and interagency liaisons within the JMWC.

Lastly, the critical authorities granted by Congress continue to allow SOF to campaign effectively against state and non-state actors alike, achieving an outsized impact across multiple mission sets. Operations supported by FY18 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) § 1202 (Irregular Warfare) have proven essential for applying SOF capabilities to expose and impose cost on malign actors, and the recent extension of this authority in the FY22 NDAA will continue enabling these critical SOF activities. Operations supported by 10 USC § 127e (CT)

provide flexible options to apply CT pressure in otherwise inaccessible or contested areas – increasingly important as we optimize our C-VEO capabilities. Recent authorities under 10 USC § 127f (Clandestine Operational Preparation of the Environment) and FY20 NDAA § 1057 (Intelligence / Counterintelligence) also support SOF activities with greater clarity and transparency.

Advancing Partnerships

USSOCOM benefits from unparalleled integration with our Allies and international partners, the interagency community, and the Joint Force strengthened over the past two decades of operations. While shared interests in countering violent extremism and terrorism prompted unprecedented levels of integration since 2001, these mutually beneficial relationships have extended to the full range of SOF operations globally.

Our network of valued Allies and international partners is our nation's greatest strategic advantage. We cannot surge trust in crisis. USSOCOM maintains a global network of liaison officers and exchange officers with Allied and international SOF. At our headquarters alone, we host exchange officers and foreign liaison officers from 28 Allied and partnered nations, offering an unrivaled ability to provide options to understand and act worldwide. Through persistent engagement over decades, our SOF have fostered extensive interoperability with Allied and partner SOF, often intensified by operating shoulder-to-shoulder during combat operations for over two decades. Authorities under 10 USC § 333 (Building Partner Capacity) and 10 USC § 322 (SOF Training) – the latter of which enables the Joint Combined Exchange Training program – are essential to further enhancing collaboration and promoting interoperability.

SOF's integration with the U.S. interagency community is equally important to leverage the nation's full capabilities to enhance awareness and provide expanded options to act. Our extensive interagency liaison network facilitates information sharing, speeds decision-making, and enhances synchronization for effective whole-of-government responses. Routine collaboration with interagency partners, such as the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) and Department of State's Global Engagement Center (GEC), has enhanced USSOCOM's response to a range of threats over the past year, including violent extremism, adversary misinformation, and near-peer malign activities.

The ongoing success of Operation Gallant Phoenix (OGP) – a multinational C-VEO initiative launched by USSOCOM in 2014 – has enabled international and interagency partners to share information and prosecute violent extremists. While focused upon degrading VEO networks, the lessons learned are applicable to future efforts to counter adversary actions in the "gray zone" and deter aggression. Coupled with USSOCOM's Counter Threat Finance authorities and expertise, information-sharing operations, like OGP, provide expanded options to disrupt illicit financing or deter malign activities.

Additionally, USSOCOM maintains collaborative, mutually supporting relationships across the Joint Force to ensure the most effective application of military power. Close coordination with Geographic Combatant Commands enables SOF to operate transregionally – particularly important as strategic rivals, like China and Russia, pursue advantage worldwide. Operating transregionally has proven critical for C-VEO efforts and is necessary to counter adversary "gray zone" activities. Equally strong collaboration with Functional Combatant Commands ensures synchronization across critical warfighting domains. Our recent efforts to enhance SOF-Cyber-Space capabilities leveraged trilateral coordination among USSOCOM,

USCYBERCOM, and USSPACECOM in addition to other interagency partners. Lastly, our ongoing efforts to promote opportunities for experimentation between our components and their respective Services have deepened ties, resulted in operational breakthroughs, and improved warfighting effectiveness.

Our role as DoD's Coordinating Authority for Counter-Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) draws upon USSOCOM's full suite of international, interagency, and joint relationships to counter WMD proliferation and deter aggressive actions by state and non-state actors. Our recent design and execution of a transregional chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) senior leader forum advanced comprehensive partner understanding of the threat and informed the development of integrated actions to deter, defend against, and respond to WMD use.

INNOVATING FOR ADVANTAGE

USSOCOM is innovating and modernizing our approaches, tactics, and technologies to build enduring advantage. We continue to invest in promising data-driven technologies while also developing a workforce well-prepared for our data-driven age. Our command is also accelerating our wide-ranging modernization efforts and fully leveraging our important acquisition authorities that enable us to capitalize on our nation's innovation advantage – with an emphasis on four key acquisition programs: modernized maritime platforms, counter-UAS, Next-Generation ISR, and Armed Overwatch. Focused modernization also requires a complementary emphasis on divesting dated or obsolete platforms that are no longer operationally relevant or effective in the current and future environments.

Investing in a Data-Driven Future

USSOCOM continues to serve as pathfinder within DoD for integrating data-driven technologies, leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) powered by machine learning, deep learning, neural networks, and similar cutting-edge technologies. Our early work with DoD's Project Maven expanded our understanding of data collection and algorithm development, leading to successive Service-led initiatives. We are modernizing into a data-enabled command employing cloud, data, and AI technologies throughout our operations from the tactical edge to strategic decision-making.

Over the past year, we have maximized DoD-wide initiatives, led by the DoD Chief Data Officer and the Joint AI Center, to further identify opportunities to implement data-driven technologies. Our command was one of the first to welcome teams as part of the Deputy Secretary of Defense's Accelerating Data and AI Initiative in early FY22. We look forward to continuing these important efforts overseen by the DoD Chief Digital and AI Officer. We are closely aligned with DoD-wide initiatives to promote responsible and explainable AI to mitigate algorithmic risks, ensure traceability, and guard against unethical, illegal, or immoral outcomes.

Valuable partnerships with academia, national laboratories, and industry are central to this effort. In late 2021, we launched an initiative with Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Labs to enable SOF information dominance. We continue to invest in promising AI and data fusion capabilities to streamline ISR processing, exploitation, and dissemination (PED); identify online disinformation; enhance mission command; improve predictive maintenance; and leverage robotic process automation to enhance a variety of resource-intensive, often error-prone

processes. Additionally, our network of liaison officers in key innovation hubs across the country – including Silicon Valley, Boston, Austin, and Washington, DC – enhances our partnerships with academia and industry and supports our command-wide modernization efforts.

Harnessing the full capacity of AI requires sustained investments in our talented workforce. Our AI-Ready Workforce initiatives have made steady progress since their inception in FY20, and we are codifying lessons learned in our new SOF AI Education Strategy. Partnering with leading universities – such as Carnegie Mellon University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology – to educate hundreds of senior and midgrade SOF leaders on AI principles and ethics has accelerated USSOCOM's progress in implementing AI across a spectrum of operational problems.

Several enterprise-wide initiatives further support USSOCOM's data transformation, especially with respect to mission command, intelligence fusion, and business activities. Equipping our workforce with a modern cloud-computing environment is equally critical to developing and deploying AI enterprise-wide. Additionally, our recent Data Strategy Implementation Plan outlines the ways and means for SOF to harness the power of data across our activities globally. Our enterprise-wide data steward pilot enables our SOF formations to execute their tailored data missions while preserving flexibility. Finally, USSOCOM's efforts to accelerate the adoption of Advancing Analytics (known as Advana) enable real-time, data-driven decision-making throughout our command – including supporting efforts to integrate a variety of personnel and readiness systems as well as our financial systems.

Accelerating Modernization

USSOCOM is rapidly modernizing its materiel and systems and incorporating emerging technologies to build enduring advantage. Our command leverages its unique acquisition authority to modernize special operations capabilities in five focus areas: Next-Generation ISR, Next-Generation Mobility, Data and Networks, Precision Effects, and Hyper-Enabling the Operator/Biotechnologies.

We have coordinated closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) as well as the Services to collaborate on and experiment in each of these focus areas. USSOCOM's unique attributes of being inherently globally deployed, partnered, and joint while also possessing acquisition authorities positions us to contribute to the overall modernization of the Joint Force. Specifically, we are well-positioned to be the partner of choice supporting three of USD(R&E)'s technology priorities: within cyber, focusing on MISO capabilities; within directed energy, focusing on electronic warfare/electronic attack at the tactical edge; and biotechnologies.

Next-Generation ISR enables finding and fixing a target in a contested environment and consists of three components: cyber-based ISR, space-based ISR payloads, and small tactical unmanned systems. In the cyber domain, we will continue supporting DoD's Project Maven to automate the PED process while also collaborating with USCYBERCOM on the ability to find and fix adversaries in cyberspace at the tactical edge. Our efforts in the cyber domain also include capabilities to better leverage the full range of open-source data. To better harness advances in space, we have established a collaborative arrangement with the Space Force and the Space Development Agency to experiment with payloads that will provide our forces with space-based capabilities at the tactical edge. Finally, we are aggressively pursuing collaborative

autonomy through our AI for small unit maneuver efforts across our portfolio of ground, air and maritime unmanned and unattended sensors.

As part of our Next-Generation Mobility efforts, we continue to modernize our platforms to prevail in contested environments while working closely with the Services. We are equipping our existing aviation platforms with advanced infiltration and penetration capabilities – such as our Silent Knight terrain-following/terrain-avoidance radar for our rotary- and fixed-wing fleets and radio-frequency countermeasures for our MC-130s and AC-130s. For the MC-130s, we are also exploring an amphibious take-off and landing capability to provide expanded options in maritime-focused environments, like the Indo-Pacific. We have partnered with both the Air Force for development of high-speed, vertical take-off and landing platforms and the Army for their Future Vertical Lift program. Finally, we are investing in modernized surface and undersea maritime platforms in partnership with the Navy. Our efforts in developing, testing, and fielding a range of maritime capabilities will strengthen deterrence in the Indo-Pacific and across the globe.

The Armed Overwatch program remains central to our Precision Effects modernization efforts – as we advance to a production award later this fiscal year. Armed Overwatch will provide responsive and available situational awareness, protection, and fires to our ground forces executing C-VEO missions in permissive environments.

Precision Effects are not limited to kinetic fires as we modernize our electronic warfare/electronic attack capabilities – best exemplified by our counter-UAS (C-UAS) efforts. While our command hones capabilities to defeat UAS prior to launch, we are also closely teamed with the Army's Joint Counter-UAS Office to detect and defeat UAS that pose a threat to deployed SOF and our partners. Through our System Integration Partner contract, we have taken an innovative approach to C-UAS which will enable us to effectively counter the evolving threat. We are pursuing a system-of-systems, open architecture approach to C-UAS that will allow for the rapid integration of both emerging and proven technologies.

Within the Data and Networks modernization area, we are advancing technologies across three broad capabilities: operations and intelligence fusion for our tactical commanders, protection of our operators from ubiquitous technical surveillance, and influence operations in the cyber domain. Our Mission Command System/Common Operating Picture deployed after only one year of development by embracing agile software development techniques and is USSOCOM's gateway to DoD's Joint All-Domain Command and Control. As our forces operate in increasingly contested environments alongside partners, we must provide identity management capabilities to protect them, their partners, and their families. Finally, we will continue to modernize our JMWC and other MISO efforts with automation and AI-enabled capabilities to operate more effectively in the cognitive domain.

Our final modernization focus area – Hyper-Enabling the Operator/Biotechnologies – focuses largely on developing emerging technologies, enabling us to rapidly deploy promising capabilities. Hyper-Enabling the Operator pursues technologies to provide decision advantages by optimizing information for individuals and teams conducting partnered operations – with the goal of enhancing effectiveness. Our biotechnology efforts are closely aligned with our Preservation of the Force and Family program to address the physical and cognitive wellbeing of our SOF. Our ongoing brain health efforts remain a critical component of this effort –

combining best-in-market, leading-edge data and AI industry partners with nutrition and health partnerships while leveraging state-of-science commercial and academic labs.

STRENGTHENING OUR FORCE AND FAMILIES

Our people are the underlying source of strength within our SOF formations. The creativity and commitment of these men and women is crucial to adapting our tactics and technologies for tomorrow's challenges. We believe unreservedly that our first SOF Truth endures: "Humans are more important than hardware." USSOCOM continues to focus on sustaining trust by implementing our Comprehensive Review findings, enhancing the readiness and resilience of our teammates and their families, and unlocking the potential of our nation's deep and diverse pools of talent.

Sustaining Trust

Our commitment to high ethical standards, engaged leadership, and maintaining accountability within SOF is critical to sustaining the trust earned over decades. USSOCOM continues to make sustained progress in implementing the recommendations from the 2019 Comprehensive Review, as detailed in the forthcoming biannual report to Congress from our command and ASD(SO/LIC). Our Comprehensive Review Implementation Team has diligently overseen the continued efforts to codify institutional adjustments. Our components have taken active roles in refining their processes to select key leaders, enhancing ethical training throughout the force, and ensuring accountability for lapses that erode trust.

Over the past two years, USSOCOM has made marked improvements in achieving sustainable force employment – one of several underlying concerns identified in the Comprehensive Review. Through a rigorous review of requirements, we have ensured key tactical leaders are best postured to provide present and engaged leadership while minimizing risk to our missions overseas. Our formations have attained DoD's directed 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio for nearly all SOF – while steadily approaching the 1:3 deployment-to-dwell goal – by exercising strategic discipline through our force employment processes.

We are unequivocal that sexual assault and extremism have no place in our formations. We will continue aggressively investigating allegations of misconduct and holding personnel accountable, as appropriate. USSOCOM actively supports DoD and Service policies, including ongoing implementation of the Independent Review Commission recommendations, regarding sexual assault and harassment that have improved reporting processes, victim advocacy, and prevention. Our command also remains fully engaged in DoD's efforts to remove behaviors that promote discrimination, hate, or harassment and that are inconsistent with our oaths to defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.

Enhancing Readiness and Resilience

The Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF) and the Warrior Care Programs (WCP) remain central to enhancing readiness and resilience for SOF and their families. The POTFF program has evolved to foster a holistic, multifaceted approach to human performance, resilience, and rehabilitation. Over 60% of POTFF manpower now supports the psychological and cognitive aspects of performance. The increased focus on brain health and cognitive performance – including funding authorized for related research in the FY22 NDAA – is

necessary to prepare SOF to operate in an increasingly complex, information-rich battlespace. SOF commanders overwhelmingly recognize the POTFF program as promoting career longevity, improving retention, and enhancing quality of life within our formations.

Caring for our wounded, injured, and ill teammates is a sacred duty, especially after two decades of sustained combat. Our WCP, commonly referred to as the Care Coalition, has led this critical effort since 2005. Thanks to the WCP's tireless efforts, we have retained over 70% of wounded SOF in military service – with nearly 60% of these highly trained, skilled, and experienced warriors returning to duty within their original occupational specialty. Congress' continued support for these programs has enabled these remarkable results.

Our formations also maintain a persistent focus on suicide among SOF. Leaders are increasingly attentive to underlying risk factors through enhanced training and education. Through persistent efforts to destigmatize seeking care, the number of servicemembers seeking mental health resources through POTFF has increased. While we witnessed a modest reduction in suicides in 2021 when compared with the previous two years, any loss of life through suicide is tragic and unacceptable. We continue to fully support all efforts in this critical arena.

Lastly, as the COVID-19 pandemic enters its third year, its impact on SOF readiness has been moderate, resulting from cancelled or postponed events and decreased interaction with Allies and partners. USSOCOM's uniformed, civilian, and contractor populations have been largely protected through compliance with DoD-wide and installation-specific risk mitigation measures, including vaccination requirements.

Unlocking the Potential of our Nation's Talent

The strength of our nation lies in its boundless and diverse reservoirs of talented individuals. Maintaining the world's finest SOF in the decades to come requires accessing the nation's deep and diverse pools of talent. Building a diverse force is therefore both an operational imperative and a strategic necessity.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and accompanying Implementation Action Plan continue to guide our efforts with our initial report to Congress forthcoming. Our SOF Executive Committee on Diversity and Inclusion – chaired by ASD(SO/LIC) and USSOCOM – provides senior leader oversight and fosters accountability for sustained progress in implementation. USSOCOM is committed to welcoming all men and women capable of meeting the high standards required of SOF professionals, ensuring these servicemembers are part of inclusive teams, and overseeing their equitable careerlong advancement.

We continue to make incremental, but critical, progress in removing barriers to women's and minority participation and advancement within SOF. Women and minority servicemembers now serve in key leadership roles throughout all four SOF components and within our headquarters – in several cases for the first time in USSOCOM's history. Women have also continued to successfully enter SOF-specific career fields that had previously been closed. While these milestones are important and notable, they are not sufficient. Sustained focus in fostering diverse and inclusive organizations is still required.

CONCLUSION

USSOCOM is committed to creating strategic, asymmetric advantage for the nation. SOF are bolstering deterrence by campaigning in line with the DoD's strategic priorities while providing critical options in the "gray zone." Our force stands ready to respond in crisis and defend the nation from state and non-state threats. Further, our wide-ranging modernization initiatives build enduring advantage and prepare our force to prevail in the future. Doing so necessitates our continued prioritization of our people – our most cherished resource. Our efforts sustain hard-earned trust, build resilience within our force, maintain quality of life for families, and ensure inclusive and diverse teams to succeed on tomorrow's battlefield.

We will meet the challenges of tomorrow with clear thinking and resolve. Our nation demands it. SOF have proven their innovative spirit and determination on countless battlefields over many decades. With the continued support of Congress, USSOCOM will demonstrate the strategic advantage of maintaining the most credible and capable SOF in the world.

Statement for the Record



The Honorable Christopher P. Maier

Assistant Secretary of Defense

for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict

Before the

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Defense

U.S. House of Representatives

April 7, 2022

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for providing this opportunity to testify on the global posture of our nation's Special Operations Forces (SOF) enterprise. I welcome the opportunity to testify with General Richard Clarke, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), one of our nation's most dedicated military professionals and outstanding leaders.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Congress for the SOF enterprise. Your support and commitment to civilian oversight, both within the Department of Defense (DoD) and here in Congress, ensure we have the world's most capable SOF. Your support enables the men and women of the SOF enterprise to tackle some of the Nation's most challenging problems in austere, chaotic, and dangerous environments.

Today's strategic environment is complex and diverse, with threats across the spectrum of competition, crisis, and conflict compounded by instability resulting from transboundary challenges like pandemics, climate change, and economic stressors. All require SOF, and the entire U.S. national security establishment, to be more adaptive, innovative, and agile than ever before. We are at an inflection point where the SOF enterprise will be called upon to contribute more to counter the challenges of China and Russia, while maintaining enduring capabilities to counter violent extremist organizations (C-VEO) and conduct crisis response to protect Americans and America's interests.

In alignment with the National Defense Strategy and Secretary Austin's priorities, SOF will build enduring advantages, lead and support integrated deterrence operations, and actively campaign with partners. We will do so by continuing to focus on our people, by providing tailored and unique capabilities, and deepening our relationships with Allies and partners. As this and prior Congresses have made clear, our best chance of success lies in a mature civilian-military partnership that is led effectively to be far greater than the sum of its parts.

Civilian Oversight as Key to an Optimized SOF Enterprise

During his confirmation hearing last year, Secretary Austin testified that "the safety and security of our democracy demands competent civilian control of our armed forces" and pledged to empower his civilian staff accordingly. The Secretary actively supports institutionalizing the role of ASD (SO/LIC) in the administrative chain-of-command for USSOCOM as Congress directed. Last May, the Department revised the DoD Directive that explains and validates the ASD (SO/LIC) responsibilities and roles, further strengthening my office's ability to provide civilian leadership, management, and oversight of the organization, training, and equipping of SOF.

Secretary Austin also reaffirmed that the ASD (SO/LIC) will continue to report directly to him as the Secretary of Defense in exercising authority, direction, and control of special operations-peculiar administrative matters, and reiterated his commitment to ensuring that the ASD (SO/LIC) has a seat at the table alongside the Secretaries of the Military Departments in key decision forums, such as his regular Service Secretary meetings, the Deputy's Management

Action Group, and the Joint Requirements Oversight Council. In doing so, SO/LIC is positioned to provide effective and enduring civilian representation of SOF equities and competencies to Department and national leadership.

As you have seen in our monthly Section 926 updates, our Secretariat for Special Operations has made progress building the manpower and expertise necessary to conduct meaningful oversight and provide civilian leadership to the SOF enterprise. Though we have made headway, our development remains a work in progress. The Secretariat has increased its expertise and integration with the Department's processes across all of the special operations-peculiar administrative matters. We will reach full potential when we have adequate amount of staff, leadership, and expertise in place to embed in all relevant processes at the required levels of seniority, and adequate facilities and communications to execute our mission. I appreciate your continued support as we institutionalize these reforms.

Additionally, General Clarke and I have worked together to achieve a new level of transparency and collaboration between our organizations. On at least a weekly basis, we review key issues of importance to the SOF enterprise. Further, the SO/LIC leadership team collaborates closely with senior executives and general and flag officers on the USSOCOM staff. This partnership allows SO/LIC to more effectively understand and represent unique SOF requirements, challenges, and capabilities. Perhaps as importantly, it enables us to innovate on the best ways to employ and structure SOF today and for the future.

Our collaboration extends to jointly creating a new SOF Vision and Strategy earlier this year that represents a shared leadership outlook for the SOF enterprise. We are also working on a longer-term vision as we closely collaborate to execute a *SOF Force Design 2040.* In December of 2021, SO/LIC and USSOCOM initiated the *SOF Force Design 2040* to ensure SOF's future force is constructed to address the future threat environment. Through this effort, we will also publish a *SOF Operating Concept 2040*, conduct a capability gap assessment, and develop a SOF future force structure to implement the operating concept.

Looking toward an optimized force for the challenges of 2040 forces us to think beyond the pressures of immediate operations and also consider what developments might not yet be captured in current strategies. It focuses our exercise and experimentation work so that we continue to innovate where it is beneficial, while sustaining capabilities of enduring value. With this new strategic tool, we will be better positioned to analyze the SOF enterprise, continue to refine the operational vision for future joint SOF, and articulate SOF's ability to deliver global, scalable, and tailorable strategic options that enable U.S. national leaders to manage risk over the near, medium, and long-term. We expect this force design effort to lay the foundation for the long-term direction of SOF, and become the basis for a repeatable and sustainable cycle of reviewing, testing, and experimenting SOF concepts, force structure, and modernization efforts.

SO/LIC's dual role in shaping the Department's policy, in combination with our administrative oversight and leadership and management responsibilities reinforce SOF's role in and contributions to the Department's strategic priorities. With our unique twin roles, we are positioned to ensure key SOF-led capabilities are integrated into strategic concepts, and

simultaneously ensure appropriate investments—in areas such as irregular warfare, information operations, and undersea capabilities. SO/LIC will ensure SOF concepts and capabilities inform and supports the Department's regional and functional goals. We will also continue to develop the Special Operations Policy Oversight Council to ensure that SOF is able to meet the Joint Force's requirements and clearly identifies the support it needs from the Services.

Building Enduring Advantages by Focusing on Our People

SO/LIC is also partnering closely with USSOCOM to protect and preserve our greatest asset – our people. SOF has always recognized that the foundation of its success lies in its people and the Secretary of Defense established taking care of people as one of his top three priorities. We believe at our core that our single most important enduring advantage against potential adversaries is personnel who are highly trained and motivated to excel in combat arms and in problem solving with partners. Continuing to recruit and retain the most diverse and talented Americans for SOF is essential. Over the last decades we have asked much of these warriors and their families. We are motivated by our enduring commitment to the well-being of SOF personnel and families who have repeatedly faced the strains of combat and repeated deployments while facing some of the Nation's most challenging operational problems. We also recognize that the future operational and strategic environment will not be the same as the past and we must prepare the force for those challenges.

Together with senior leadership from USSOCOM, I regularly review the health and readiness of our special operations workforce. With Office of the Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, we ensure SOF are integrated into efforts to better quantitatively model the impacts of force management decisions on readiness and consider their cross-cutting strategic impacts.

We continue to invest in the resiliency of SOF by taking a holistic, whole-person approach to the well-being of personnel and their families. With the strong support of Congress, SOCOM is strengthening the Preservation of the Force and Families (POTFF) program to address SOF-unique challenges and to optimize physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and spiritual performance. POTFF, through a combination of USSOCOM, Service, and Department resources, ensures we are able to meet the unique needs in individual SOF components and units. The POTFF's embedded service providers have broken the stigmas historically associated with those seeking psychological health support and have provided preventative care to avert potential suicides during the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate Congress' support through Section 561 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2022 to enable the SOF enterprise to extend the POTFF family support program to our Gold Star families and embrace surviving families as important members of the SOF community.

USSOCOM's Warrior Care program also continues to provide members who have sustained physical or psychological trauma and their families with much needed support throughout the process of recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration, and transition. We have no greater responsibility than to care for our personnel who sacrificed their mental and physical well-being to defend the Nation and to provide them with a path to return to service and/or to transition to civilian careers following their years of service.

It has been two years since the release of the Comprehensive Review, an internal review directed by Commander, USSOCOM and ASD (SO/LIC) to address concerns about force employment, leadership, and accountability across SOF formations. The implementation of the recommended actions from the Review is beginning to have a measurable and positive impact on SOF culture and ethics. USSOCOM is working to refine data collection so that progress, trends, and risks can be identified and so that mitigations can be evaluated for their effectiveness. Across the SOF enterprise, there has been commitment to ensuring present and engaged leaders at all levels to ensure alignment with SOF values. Our work will not stop here; SO/LIC and USSOCOM are committed to going beyond the Review to create institutional mechanisms that will continue to promote cultural changes that benefit the force and its mission execution.

We remain committed to taking further steps to combat sexual assault and extremism activities within our community and support such efforts across the Department. USSOCOM created the Health of SOF Cell to orchestrate efforts in organizational culture and climate, diversity and inclusion, and countering extremism within the SOF enterprise. We fully support this comprehensive approach and work closely with the Cell to promote the healthy organizational climate and culture of SOF. Over the next year, we will improve our data tracking and metrics to identify areas requiring additional attention, to examine the efficacy of our efforts, and to steer our strategy and resources to where they are needed and most effective. As we consider the future operating environment, we recognize that SOF is not fully taking advantage of the nation's talent pool. SOF's unique capabilities to communicate, coordinate and collaborate with Allies, partners, and other foreign groups with different backgrounds and perspectives are a critical requirement for the future operational success. I endorse General Clarke's view that, "building a diverse force is therefore both an operational imperative and a strategic necessity."

The SOF Executive Council for Diversity and Inclusion was created two years ago in response to our requirement to take advantage of the nation's talent to more effectively operate in a diverse global environment. This forum provides executive level attention to advancing diversity and inclusion in the SOF enterprise. SOF Service components are increasing their outreach to groups that previously may not have considered a career in SOF and working with their parent Services to develop more targeted and effective recruiting initiatives. We do not need to change our core standards, but we do need to carefully examine how we bring in personnel and the process and sequencing of how we test the ability to meet the standards.

Providing Targeted and Unique Capabilities for Integrated Deterrence

To meet the challenges of integrated deterrence, we must equip SOF with innovative, modern, and reliable capabilities that can out-perform our competitors in all areas. We continue to invest in technologies and capabilities to empower our personnel to operate in denied areas and to conduct high-risk air, land, and sea operations in remote and austere environments, with a focus on the near-peer threat environment.

SO/LIC-USSOCOM collaboration on strategy is mirrored in resourcing. General Clarke and I now co-sign the yearly Capabilities and Programming Guidance used to develop

USSOCOM's 5-year Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and the President's Budget request. This past year was the first in which SO/LIC was able to formally exercise oversight responsibility and submit the USSOCOM POM for the Secretary's ultimate review and approval. In addition, this is the first year in which we also formally designated Armed Overwatch and Undersea Programs as "special interest" acquisition programs ensuring more comprehensive oversight so that any problems or issues may be identified early and rapidly remedied.

As the Department's advanced strike and surveillance aircraft focus on nation-state threats, SOF deployed to remote locations continue to require close air support, precision strike capability, and airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities to safely execute missions in support of integrated deterrence and building enduring advantages. The investment into the Armed Overwatch program will ensure that this dedicated capability exists, allowing high-end fighter aircraft to orient towards other critical needs. The Armed Overwatch platform will deliver a capability that ensures our SOF can continue to operate wherever we need them, whenever they are needed.

In our SOF Undersea Programs, we are investing in advancing USSOCOM's manned and unmanned undersea systems capability with a focus on enhancing joint force lethality. We are working with the Department of the Navy to ensure the integration of modernized SOF operational concepts and investments intended to facilitate access in denied areas and greater range for longer periods of time with less risk to the operator.

Campaigning and Maximizing our Work with Allies and Partners

In today's security environment, China is our pacing challenge, Russia is an immediate threat to our Allies and partners, Iran's and Iranian-supported destabilizing behavior continues in the Middle East, North Korean maintains a threatening posture on the peninsula, and multiple violent extremist organizations continue to pose a threat to the U.S. and our Allies and partners. We also see adversaries operating in the "gray zone," or level below armed conflict, where they hope to avoid provoking a conventional military response from the United States. We see adversaries expanding their capabilities in multiple domains (e.g., space, cyber, information) and with unique or modified tactics and weapons such as small unmanned aerial systems. Our adversaries are also leveraging criminal organizations, fragile nations, and poor governance to influence global politics, destabilize our Allies and partners, seize natural resources, and fund other malign activities. Within the SOF enterprise, there are actions, activities, and investments to assist the Joint Force and the Nation to address all of these challenges.

SOF's unique training authorities such as the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) program maintains our readiness in diverse global environments. These small-unit engagements prepare our teams to conduct persistent small-footprint irregular warfare and expand and strengthen our purpose-built network of Allies and partners. As COVID-19 restrictions continue to be lifted, we are on pace to almost double the number of these training deployments conducted this year compared to 2021. These persistent and habitual partnership exercises enable critical region access, geographic and cultural familiarity, and operational interoperability in support of combatant commander requirements for high-priority Allies and partners.

Based on training, capabilities, and mission sets, SOF are ideally positioned to support the interagency, Allies, and partners as they develop a wide range of low-visibility options for the purposes of strategic competition and campaigning in the gray zone. Drawing on decades of counterterrorism experience, SOF has the "muscle memory" to integrate activities against a number of diverse state-based threats, especially in pre-conflict environments.

Unique authorities provided by Congress, such as that provided under Section 1202 of the NDAA for FY 2018, enable SOF to assure our Allies and partners of U.S. support during competition, crisis, and conflict; and provides key access and placement. Section 1202 is an example of an authority which enables SOF's transition to increased focus on campaigning to gain advantages against competitors' coercive actions.

We continue to execute a sustainable approach to combatting terrorism that carefully balances risk and resources. SOF will continue to prioritize the Defeat-ISIS campaign and to disrupt and degrade other violent extremist organization's threats to our U.S. national security interests. SOF will also continue to build the capacity of partner forces to address and monitor these threats.

The SOF enterprise now is at a pivot point where we must build enduring advantages, lead and support integrated deterrence operations, and actively campaign with partners in to provide to our national leaders unique and vital capabilities and options in a more complex security environment. For the past 20 years, SOF capabilities and force structure were optimized for C-VEO operations. SOF is now adapting its concepts, force structure, and capabilities to gain an advantage during strategic competition, to help drive integrated deterrence, and to support the joint force in conflict should deterrence fail.

Conclusion

Madame Chair, I would like to conclude by thanking the Committee again for its strong support for our special operations personnel, who work diligently every day to safeguard our national security. Our partnership with Congress is vital to our ability to successfully fulfill our mission, and your support of the men and women of the SOF enterprise is appreciated.

I thank the Committee again for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The complete hearing transcript could not be printed due to classification of the material discussed.]

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