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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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STATEMENT OF

VADM ARTHUR K. CEBROWSKI USN (RET)
DIRECTOR OF FORCE TRANSFORMATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

UNITED STATES SENATE

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Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, Members of the Committee,

I'm honored and grateful for the opportunity to appear before you. By virtue of the fact that you've called this hearing you recognize the significance of transformation in the Department's plans, and I look forward to a very robust dialogue on this matter of vital importance to the future of our nation.

There are many perspectives on transformation – many lenses through which we can view the issues before us. However, first and foremost, the President and the Secretary have elevated transformation to the level of strategy, and that is probably the most important lens through which we should look at transformation. Strategy is about how one selects a competitive space and determines the attributes within that space which will lead to advantage. Strategy answers the fundamental questions of how one controls the scope, pace and intensity of a competition. So we begin our work with strategy and the elements of the strategic environment that create opportunity and drive the compelling need for transformation.

The current and future strategic environment has been described in terms of “chaos,” “revolution”, or simply "change." Because social, cultural, economic and technological change

is an indelible part of the world in which we live, transformation naturally flows from the profound changes happening around us. Impetus for our current transformation lies at the confluence of three broad trends. The first, and most important is the transition of our society from the Industrial Age to the Information Age. This is a transformation we are all living, so we should not expect our military to be immune from its effects. The second trend is the appearance of an expanded array of threats in a more uncertain context, and the third is the vast technological opportunities available to friend and foe alike. Individually, these trends provide a host of relevant issues to consider as we examine a potentially transformed U.S. military. Taken together they provide the starting points for discussion of the strategic, threat, and technological issues that drive the compelling need for transformation. The barriers to competitive entry are falling. Ours is the team against which everyone measures themselves, and to the extent we do not transform we provide would-be adversaries a fixed target. The success or failure of this transformation will determine the degree to which we and our allies are positioned to meet the security challenges of the 21st century.

While many within the DoD acknowledge the need for transformation, it clearly means different things to different people. For some, it is synonymous with modernization and focused on material acquisition. Others more appropriately see transformation going beyond modernization to embrace innovation and fundamental changes in our theory of war. Specifically, Network Centric Warfare (NCW) is such an innovation. Last year, in the conclusions of the report to the Congress, the Department of Defense said that NCW should be the cornerstone of DoD's strategic plan for the transformation of forces. To date we have barely scratched the surface of what is possible. However, early experimentation by Joint Forces Command and the Services

has provided significant justification for continued investment in NCW as the foundation of future force capabilities. NCW will provide increasing return on investment by providing our most important resource – our people – the high quality shared awareness necessary to speed mission accomplishment. NCW capabilities will accelerate our ability to know, to decide and to act. The benefits of NCW are not dependent upon a particular geopolitical future or set of scenarios. NCW is at the heart of military adaptivity – the ability to respond to uncertainty in dynamic situations, day-to-day, at every level of warfare, and across the range of potential military operations. Both experimentation and practice show that a given level of warfighting effectiveness can be obtained with fewer resources when the transformation resident in network centric concepts and capabilities is embraced.

How do we implement transformation? Transformation is not just about technology and “things.” Rather, it is more about culture, behavior, and the creation and exploitation of promising concepts to provide new sources of military power. Creative concept development, combined with wide-ranging experimentation of various types is an essential element of the transformation process. A military bureaucracy does not squelch innovation by modernizing its forces; innovation is undermined when experimentation and prototyping of new ideas is prevented, and when newly developed and fielded systems are subordinated to outdated operational concepts. Effective concept development must yield new ways to accomplish critical operations, missions or tasks. Real experimentation must be at and beyond the margins of the doable. That may mean money spent on failures without remorse because there is often more knowledge gained in failure than in well-orchestrated demonstrations of success. Well choreographed, well-rehearsed experiments and exercises are excellent venues to demonstrate

promising new capabilities, but true experimentation must seriously push the envelope of military operations -- often involving attempts to implement completely new ways to accomplish new missions and tasks. The experimentation process must foster innovation involving real risk of failure if it is to produce new concepts of operations that will drive military transformation.

To maintain competitive advantage in the information age, transformation must achieve a cultural change. Researchers note that culture is the last thing to change in an organization. Consequently, the work on cultural change must begin first. There are some tools for that. The schoolhouse is one starting place, but that tends to take a very long time. However, education is a long-term investment we will make. There are other examples that go much faster.

Experimental articles provide military personnel the opportunity to work directly with new physical prototypes while developing new concepts. The key leverage in the use experimental articles is that they help people see the range of possibilities for performing operations in new ways that abstract discourses on innovative ideas cannot. This is crucial if the culture of change is to be widely adopted. When we introduce an operational prototype -- when we put something in the hands of young operators -- they have little trouble visualizing the potential of the system. They rapidly extrapolate from that experience to innovative ways to use a system or capability. That can be very powerful, and there are several examples of that happening right now. The lease of high-speed transport ships for experimentation with the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard and the Special Operations Forces is one such example. Though these ships have been in the hands of operators for only a short period of time, creative minds are already projecting greater potential for these platforms. Another example is the Predator -- exploration of its potential really began as an operational prototype. Recent experience in

Afghanistan has demonstrated how far the idea has progressed since it was first used several years ago in the Balkans.

What we are attempting is incredibly difficult. Historically we have recognized transformation only in retrospect. Some people don't understand how incredibly messy, contentious, and filled with uncertainty previous transformations have been. Military history is rife with examples of cultural and institutional impediments to transformational change. But what makes that history relevant is that many present-day impediments were also evident in previous efforts to transform military institutions, culture and capabilities. Many of these impediments have metastasized in the core processes that shaped the forces that won the Cold War. While they remain functional for their intended purposes, many believe that these processes are incapable of delivering the transformational change that the strategic environment now indicates. Much of our operating doctrine and our sense of military power springs from a vanishing, industrial age, and now inappropriate, threat-based approach. Until we rebalance and revalue for the information age, we remain at risk.

In summary, the barriers to competitive entry are falling as a result of new technologies made possible in the age of information. The goal of transformation is not to establish a new end-state for U.S. military power. Rather, it is to create a continuous process that if vigorously pursued, can provide a solid foundation for sustaining the long-term competitive advantage of U.S. forces. The critics of transformation will cite various risks – operational, technical, organizational, and political. However, it is precisely for these reasons that a multifaceted transformation effort throughout the Department of Defense must be accelerated. The lessons of history regarding the

maintenance of military primacy clearly demonstrate that should we rest on our laurels, time will not be on our side. We live in a competitive world, and to the extent we do not transform we area at risk strategically.

The President and the Secretary of Defense are committed to transformation, and I am committed to helping them make transformation a reality for our forces. I look forward to a continuing discussion with you on this vital subject.