

**Opening Statement of VCJS and USDP
SASC hearing on European Missile Defense
September 24, 2009**

Thank you, Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Administration's new approach to missile defense in Europe, and to set the record straight that the Obama Administration is committed to deploying timely, cost-effective, and responsive missile defenses to protect the United States, our deployed forces, as well as our allies and friends against ballistic missiles of all ranges.

We are confident that our new approach represents a dramatic improvement over the program of record. Under the old plan, we were not going to be able to deploy a European missile defense system capable of protecting against Iranian missiles until at least 2017. Under our new plan, we'll be able to protect vulnerable parts of Europe and the tens of thousands of US troops stationed there by the end of 2011. And we'll also be creating a far more flexible missile defense system, one that can be adapted to provide better protection against emerging threats.

Before going into details, I would like to place this decision about European missile defense in context. As you know, we are in the midst of several major defense reviews, one of which is a congressionally-mandated review of our approach to ballistic missile defense. DOD is leading that review, with active participation from the intelligence community and a number of other agencies. That review is comprehensive and ongoing; it examines our strategic and operational approach to missile defense not just in Europe but around the world.

The review is moving forward based on four key principles:

- 1) We must ensure that US missile defenses are responsive to the threats we face today and are likely to face in the future, that the technologies we use are proven and effective, and that our defenses are cost effective;
- 2) We must maintain and improve defenses for the US and our allies against potential missile attacks from countries such as Iran and North Korea;
- 3) We must renew our emphasis on protecting US deployed forces and their dependents in theater, as well as US allies and friends against regional threats; and
- 4) We must continue to make missile defense an important feature of our international cooperation efforts.

The results of the Ballistic Missile Defense Review are not due back to Congress until January, but as we began our in-depth analysis, it became clear very early that circumstances had changed fundamentally with regard to missile defense in Europe, so that we would need to make some significant adjustments to the previous administration's plan.

In early 2007, the previous administration decided to seek deployment of ground-based interceptors in Poland, a European Mid-Course Radar (EMR) in the Czech Republic, and an AN/TPY-2 radar elsewhere in the region. The decision to move forward with that particular configuration was made nearly three years ago, and had been considered for several years prior to that, based on the threat information and the technologies available at that time.

Circumstances have changed significantly since early 2007. First, we now have a rather different intelligence picture than we had three years ago, particularly with regard to Iranian capabilities. And second, we have made major strides in missile defense technologies and capabilities in just the last few years. We are now in a position to put an effective missile defense system in place far more rapidly than we were a few years ago, one that will be far more flexible, adaptable, and capable.

The intelligence community now assesses that the threat from Iran's short- and medium-range ballistic missiles is developing more rapidly than previously projected, while the threat of potential Iranian intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capabilities has been slower to develop than previously estimated. In the near-term, the greatest missile threats from Iran will be to U.S. Allies and partners, as well as to U.S. deployed personnel – military and civilian –and their accompanying families in the Middle East and in Europe.

Iran already possesses hundreds of ballistic missiles capable of reaching neighbors in the Middle East, Turkey and the Caucasus, and is actively developing and testing missiles that can reach further into Europe. Our intelligence assessments indicate that the continued production and deployment of these more capable medium-range missiles has become one of Iran's highest missile priorities.

In the near-to mid-term, this means that the primary threat posed by Iranian missiles will be to US allies, our 80,000 deployed forces in Europe, our civilian personnel and their families. And needless to say, this concern is all the more urgent in light of Iran's continued uranium enrichment program. Iran continues to defy international obligations, and there continues to be reason to fear that Iran is seeking a nuclear weapons option. We hope that won't come to pass. But obviously it increases the urgency of developing a

truly effective missile defense system in Europe for the protection of NATO territory and populations and the U.S. homeland.

As the Secretary of Defense has noted, we understand that the intelligence projections can be wrong, which makes it all the more important for us to have a flexible and adaptable missile defense system that can evolve with the threat. So we remain very concerned about Iran's potential to develop ICBMs, and part of our new approach in the later phases is to provide a more effective addition to our already existing ground-based interceptors based in Ft. Greely and Vandenberg Air Force Base, which we will address in detail in a minute.

Let us turn now to the opportunities for improved capabilities.

Technological developments over the past several years have led to new capabilities, demonstrated in multiple tests. Improved interceptor capabilities now offer us more flexible and capable missile defense architecture, and we have also significantly improved our sensor technologies. That means we now have a variety of better options to detect and track enemy missiles and guide the interceptor in-flight to enable a successful engagement. As a result, we now have new and proven missile defense options that were not previously available.

The previous plan, approved in early 2007, relied on two large, fixed missile-defense sites, with 10 ground-based interceptors in Poland and the EMR in the Czech Republic. It was designed to identify and destroy up to about five to ten long-range missiles, and as noted, the radar and interceptors called for under the old plan would not have been in place until at least 2017.

Our new approach, which the President adopted on the unanimous recommendation of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will rely on a distributed network of sensors and SM-3 interceptors. The SM-3 IA is a proven capability with eight successful tests since 2007, and it is more than capable of dealing with current threats from even multiple short and medium-range missiles. It and future variants also have many advantages over a Ground Based Interceptor (GBI). The SM-3 is much smaller, weighing only about 1 ton compared to the GBI's 25 tons. Because it is smaller and fits inside a vertical launch canister, it can be fired from Aegis capable ships. Starting with the SM-3 Block IB, it will also be able to be fired from land.

The capability of having a missile defense system that can integrate interceptor sites located both at sea and on land offers us geographic flexibility that was unavailable under the previous plan. Furthermore, the resulting distributed network is more survivable in

the case of an attack than the single large radar and single missile field of the previous plan. The SM-3 IA and IB, at around \$10 million per interceptor, are also much cheaper than a GBI, which costs around \$70 million per interceptor. This means that we can deploy scores of SM-3 interceptors, again enhancing our defensive capabilities. Since Iran already possesses hundreds of short and medium range ballistic missiles, this is critical.

The SM-3 will be upgraded over time. Each upgrade will provide more capability for countering Iranian threats, meaning each upgrade will be able to defend an increasingly larger area.

Our planned European missile defense architecture includes both sea- and land-based missile defense systems, encompassing both interceptors and a range of sensors. As our capabilities and technologies continue to improve, the architecture will evolve and become ever more capable.

Now to describe our phased adaptive approach. Phase 1 is essentially underway; the SM-3 Block IA is already deployed in the fleet. In the first phase of our plan, we can provide SM-3 Block IA capable warships when necessary for the protection of parts of southern Europe. To enhance protection in Phase 1, we will need a forward based sensor, probably a TPY-2 radar.

By including the forward based sensor, we are retaining one of the most significant contributions to the defense of the United States from the previously proposed architecture. The forward based sensor contributes to the defense of the United States by providing early and precise track data to our GBI's in Alaska and California. We expect that full Phase I missile defense capability will be possible in 2011.

In Phase 2, to be completed by 2015, we intend to use a more advanced version of the SM-3 interceptor, the SM-3 Block IB, which is already under development. We will deploy this at sea and on land. By adding the land-based sites, we will significantly increase coverage of NATO against ballistic missiles from Iran without having to increase the number of Aegis BMD ships – a much more cost effective approach.

In Phase 3, we will introduce a new, more capable version of the SM-3, the Block IIA. This interceptor is currently under development. The SM-3 Block IIA will provide full coverage of NATO against short, medium, and intermediate range ballistic missiles. We expect to deploy the SM-3 Block IIA by 2018.

In the final phase, Phase 4, we expect to field an even more-improved SM-3 missile that has anti-ICBM capabilities. This ascent-phase intercept capability will further augment the defense of the US homeland from potential Iranian ICBM threats. This phase is planned for 2020.

It is important to note that the SM-3 based defense against any Iranian ICBMs will be additive to the GBI-based defense we already have deployed in the United States, at Fort Greely and Vandenberg AFB. As noted previously, these U.S.-based defenses will be made more effective by the forward-basing of a TPY-2 radar – which we plan by 2011. We currently have the ability to defend the United States, including the East Coast, against any Iranian ICBM, and with the TPY-2 deployment planned in Phase 1 and continued improvement of the GBIs, this defense will grow even stronger in the next several years. While we expect the SM-3 based approach to ICBM defense to work, we also will continue to improve our existing GBI-based system here in the United States and conduct tests of the 2-stage GBI in the near-term.

The SM-3's ascent-phased intercept capability in Phase 4 would mean that, unlike the previous administration's GBI-based system, Iranian missiles would have to defeat not one, but two very different kinds of missile defenses.

Over time, we plan on one land-based site in southern Europe and one somewhere in northern Europe. Given the flexibility of the architecture, there are a number of options for land-based sites that would provide the same capability, including in Poland. The mix of sea-and land-based systems makes our new approach far more capable and adaptable; we can move sensors and interceptors from region to region as needed. This approach allows us to scale up our defenses, if necessary, by deploying additional SM-3 interceptors much faster and at lower costs than adding the much heavier Ground Based Interceptors, and their associated silos. In times of crisis, the system can “flex” by surging Aegis capable ships to the area for more protection and to serve as a visible deterrent. This approach also allows us to deal with a wider range of potential missile tactics, such as salvo launches. The previous GBI architecture could intercept about five to ten missiles at most; the new plan's distributed network will be able to cope far more effectively should an adversary fire many missiles simultaneously.

Similarly, replacing the fixed radar site with a mix of sensors that are airborne, seaborne and ground-based will allow us to gather much more accurate data, and will offer better early warning and tracking options combined with a stronger networking capacity. Finally, because it relies on a distributed network of sensors and interceptors, the new

approach is more survivable— less vulnerable to destruction or disruption--than the previous plan, which relied on a single large radar and a single interceptor field.

It should be crystal clear that those who say we are “scrapping” missile defense in Europe are, as Secretary Gates has said, “either misinformed or misrepresenting the reality of what we are doing.” In fact, we are replacing the previous plan with a phased approach that delivers more effective and more robust capability sooner.

To sum up: the Phased Adaptive Approach offers many advantages over the previous plan for European missile defense. We will now be able to defend the most vulnerable parts of Europe 6-7 years earlier than the previous plan. Our new approach will be also able to cover all NATO territory and populations, rather than leaving some allies exposed to short- and medium-range threats. And we will move toward a new additive approach to defending the United States against any future Iranian ICBM – while continuing to enhance our existing GBI-based defenses. Overall, our new approach allows us to better respond to existing threats now—and to better prepare for future threats as they emerge.

Those who assert that the new plan doesn’t uphold U.S. security commitments to friends and allies, particularly Poland and the Czech Republic, are far off the mark. This is a better defense for Europe as well as for the United States. All of our missile defense efforts will be complementary of and interoperable with those being developed by NATO, and the new architecture we are creating provides many opportunities for alliance-building and burden-sharing between the United States and our NATO partners. NATO Secretary General Rasmussen has hailed our decision as "a positive step"; Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said it offers a real “chance to strengthen Europe’s security.”

We remain firmly committed to strong bilateral relationships with both Poland and the Czech Republic and have already begun discussions with both nations about their potential roles in the new missile defense architecture. In the coming weeks, we will have numerous strategic discussions with the Poles on missile defense and our security arrangements. It is prudent that we continue to seek Polish ratification of the missile defense basing agreement and supplemental Status of Forces Agreement.

We are also in discussions with the Czech Republic to ensure that they continue to play a leadership role on missile defense within the Alliance. We have several joint projects already underway with our Czech partners, and are discussing several more.

Last week, in addition to visiting Warsaw and Prague to discuss the Phased, Adaptive Approach, Under Secretary Flournoy briefed the North Atlantic Council on our new

approach and emphasized that we will pursue missile defense in a NATO context. The response was very positive, as evidenced by the NATO Secretary General's comments last week that "It is my clear impression that the American plan on missile defense will involve NATO to a higher degree in the future...This is a positive step in the direction of an inclusive and transparent process, which I also think is in the interest of ... the NATO alliance."

This phased adaptive approach better meets our security needs, and our security commitments to our European allies and partners. Russia's positive response to date is a useful collateral benefit, though we are not sure whether and how it will affect their perspective on missile defenses. We welcome Russian interest in our new approach as well as potential cooperation in sharing data from their radars. But Russian reactions notwithstanding, we will continue to do whatever it takes to ensure our security and that of our European partners and allies.

In closing, it is important to note that the strategic thinking behind our new approach to European missile defense will also be valuable as we continue to address missile defense issues in other regions.

Because the type of system we are planning in Europe can be easily adapted to different geographic constraints, it can be applied in various regions around the globe, if necessary. In fact, a scaled-down version of this approach is already being used for the defense of Japan against North Korean missile threats, and for the defense of Israel against an Iranian missile attack. Because the assets of this system are either mobile or transportable, the new approach provides future flexibility to reposition interceptors and sensors if the geopolitical environment changes. And because the systems will be upgraded over time, the new approach provides a natural evolution to match the threat.

As the President said, "our new missile defense architecture in Europe will provide a stronger, smarter, and swifter defense of American forces, and America's allies. It is more comprehensive than our previous program. It deploys capabilities that are proven and cost-effective. And it sustains and builds upon our commitment to protect the U.S. homeland against long-range ballistic missile threats. And it ensures and enhances the protection of all of our NATO allies."

Thank you for your time. We will continue to work with you as we move forward on the Ballistic Missile Defense Review, and we look forward to your questions.