EMBARGOED PRIOR TO DELIVERY

Prepared Remarks

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Hearing: The Future Nuclear Posture of the United States

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I greatly appreciate the honor of participating in today's hearing.

I would like to start by noting that there has been a near-overwhelming bipartisan consensus on US nuclear policies over the past five decades. Despite the occasional flare ups, our nuclear debates typically have *not* been over fundamentals.

For example, there is a long-standing agreement that two primary roles for US nuclear weapons are to deter enemies and to help assure our allies of their security.

From the broad agreement on these two goals follow many points of consensus regarding what we should do and say about our nuclear capabilities. For example, because a variety of plausible nuclear attacks must be deterred, and no one knows the minimum US capabilities necessary and credible to deter them, there is a long-standing bipartisan consensus in support of *hedging, flexibility, diversity and overlapping US deterrence capabilities.*

Every Republican and Democratic administration for five decades, including the Obama administration, ultimately has understood the value of these attributes and ultimately rejected a minimalist deterrence as inadequate and incredible. From this consensus has followed our long-standing consensus in favor of sustaining a diverse nuclear triad of bombers, land-based and sea-based missiles.

Similarly, from the fundamental nuclear policy goal of assuring allies follows the continuing consensus behind sustaining some US nuclear forces that are forward deployed, such as our DCA in Europe, or forward-deployable—depending on local conditions and history.

These points of fundamental consensus remain with us today.

There are, nevertheless, some recent and unprecedented developments that justify a contemporary DOD review of US deterrence policy and requirements.

For example, we need to recognize that the optimistic post-Cold War expectations about Russia that dominated earlier thinking do not reflect contemporary reality, and review US policies accordingly: to be specific, the Putin regime's strategic vision for Russia is highly revisionist and destabilizing. It includes the reestablishment of Russian dominance of the near abroad via "Russification" and the use of force if needed. Most disturbing in this regard is that Moscow seeks to prevent any significant *collective* Western military opposition to its offensive military operations by threatening local nuclear first use. The underlying Russian presumption appears to be the expectation that the US and NATO will concede territory rather than face the possibility of

Russian nuclear first use. This Russian strategy is not the Cold War notion of a mutual balance of terror: it is a fundamentally new, coercive use of nuclear weapons and threats.

Russian military officials speak openly of the preemptive employment of nuclear weapons in a conventional war. And according to open Russian sources, Russia has pursued specialized, low-yield nuclear weapons to make its first-use threats credible and its weapons locally employable.

If Russian planning now follows this apparent policy (and I have no reason to believe it does not), it tells me that US and NATO deterrence policy is now failing in a fundamental way, and the consequences of that failure could be catastrophic.

Consequently, the unprecedented question to be considered in a new review is how the alliance can effectively deter this combined arms threat to our allies and partners: What deterrence concepts may be applicable? And, what are the corresponding metrics for Western conventional and nuclear force adequacy? What are the gaps perceived by Moscow in US will and capabilities, and how might those gaps be filled? Does the United States need "new" nuclear capabilities for deterrence and assurance, or are the existing options in the stockpile adequate? In addition, according to numerous reports, the US nuclear infrastructure no longer is able to respond in a timely way to the possibility of new requirements for deterrence and assurance. That capability has been lost. If true, what level of readiness should be deemed adequate and what needs to be done to achieve that goal?

We also need to reconsider the prioritization of our nuclear policy goals. The 2010 NPR explicitly placed nonproliferation as the top policy goal, and stated that reducing the number of and reliance on US nuclear weapons was a key to realizing that top goal. The "take away" from that position is that the US must further reduce its nuclear arsenal to serve its highest nuclear policy goal. This point is repeated often by critics of the administration's nuclear modernization programs.

Yet, at this point, the goal of nonproliferation should no longer be used as the policy rationale to further hammer US nuclear deterrence capabilities. After two decades of reducing our nuclear deterrent and focusing elsewhere, and the emergence of unprecedented nuclear threats to us and our allies, the deterrence rationale for reviewing our nuclear policy priorities and the adequacy of our nuclear deterrence forces is overwhelming.

Finally, since the end of the Cold War, the study of Russia and the Russian language has declined dramatically in our educational system in general, and the U.S. intelligence community reportedly has largely divested itself of the capacity to understand Russian nuclear-weapons policy, programs, and war planning. This is a dangerous inadequacy: deterrence strategies depend fundamentally on our understanding of an adversary's thinking and planning. If we hope to deter effectively, we must review the intellectual resources necessary to perform this vital task, and begin it again.

There are many additional points that could be made on this subject, but in deference to the time, I will stop here.