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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE STRATEGIC SUBCOMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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COMMANDER
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BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC SUBCOMMITTEE

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the outstanding men and women of Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. Our airmen and civilians are a key part of the world's greatest integrated air and space force, and we are proud to be a part of our Nation's defense. From the missile fields in the Great Plains to remote locations around the globe, in-place or deployed as part of an Air and Space Expeditionary Force, the commitment of our men and women to the Nation's security has been exceptional. I would also like to thank all of you for your continuing support.

Our command has three important roles. The first is to organize, train and equip our space and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) forces--our role as an Air Force Major Command. The second is to present those ready forces and their capabilities in our role as a component to US Strategic Command. Finally, we support the Air Force in its role as DoD Executive Agent for Space. I appreciate this opportunity to tell you about the things our Command is doing in these areas, and I would like to frame my remarks in terms of the Air Force's recently refined core competencies: developing airmen, bringing technology to warfighting, and integrating operations.

Developing Airmen: The Heart of Combat Capability

Our highest priority is our people. In-place or deployed, people are our most important asset and the key to mission success. Because of this, we have a continuing need to recruit, retain, equip and train our entire force.

We appreciate the role the members of this Committee have played to improve their quality of life. The FY03 National Defense Authorization Act reflects the country's confidence in and concern for the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces. We are grateful for the many important quality of life improvements such as pay raises, health benefits and greater educational

opportunities this year's Act provides. All of these are key to helping us retain and recruit the quality force our Nation needs.

As our Nation's dependence on space continues to grow, the Air Force must meet the challenge of developing the right people to acquire, operate and employ military space capabilities. A strong, proactive Space Professional development program is essential to safeguarding our nation's leadership position in space and our way of developing airmen. The Space Commission's recommendations and subsequent Secretary of Defense direction provided an opportunity to more deliberately focus our space professional development, and we have done just that.

We have developed the Air Force's Space Professional Strategy that describes a structured approach for developing space professionals. Our strategy is comprehensive and provides a blueprint for better addressing the training, education, and experience needs of our space professionals. At the same time, it recognizes the unique roles these officers, enlisted members and DoD civilian employees play in the National Security Space arena. Additionally, this strategy addresses the varied disciplines required of the space professional team--a team that accomplishes the complex functions required to take ICBM and space systems from concept to employment.

We have been actively refining this strategy since I took command. In FY03, we have begun the harder task of implementing the initiatives identified in the strategy--initiatives that center on the force's education, training and experience needs. Given the importance and complexity of professional development, we recognize this is a long-term commitment but it's the right thing to do--for our mission and for our country. We have the best space and missile operators and acquirers in the world and we will continue to improve on that standard of excellence.

Technology-to-Warfighting: The Tools of Combat Capability

Today, our space systems engaged in current operations are excellent examples of bringing technology to the warfighter--our second core competency. For instance, AFSPC communications experts deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to establish satellite data links for the Air Force Predator system that reduced the "sensor to shooter" time to single-digit minutes. Today, we have over 1000 personnel deployed, and our people, in-place or deployed, work to deliver combat effects. Our missile and space capabilities are global in their reach and provide the asymmetric advantage we enjoy today.

One result of implementing the Space Commission recommendations is the integration of the Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC) in Los Angeles into AFSPC. This has had profound effects on the way our command brings technology to warfighting. We are now responsible for both the acquisition and operation of our space and missile capabilities. For example, we recently set up the Space Superiority Program Office at SMC to acquire the counterspace systems that Under Secretary Teets mentioned. With acquirers and operators in a single command, we have identified a mission need, generated requirements, begun the acquisition process and will eventually deploy, operate and sustain these systems.

Mr. Teets has talked about our priority programs. AFSPC will work to ensure that these acquisition programs stay on track, that our requirements for new systems are stable and that we look hard at new ways to put technology to use. In addition to the Global Positioning System, Space Based Infrared System High, Space Based Radar, Transformational Communications Architecture, assured access and space control programs, we will ensure that this Nation maintains a credible force of safe, secure and ready ICBMs. Our ICBMs underpin our deterrent posture, and we thank you for your continuing support in our efforts to modernize them. While the Nuclear Posture Review requires us to maintain the current fleet of Minuteman IIIs until 2020 it

also directs the Air Force to plan for a follow-on system. This fall we will start an analysis of alternatives to determine the best course for that effort. This is even more important as we begin the second year of our three-year program to deactivate the Peacekeeper system this October.

Technology is advancing rapidly, and it is clear that we have must continue to develop and field the systems that provide our warfighters the combat capabilities they need.

Integrating Operations: Maximizing Combat Capabilities

Our space capabilities are an integral part of all our combat and humanitarian operations, and they are essential for success in the fast-paced environment of the 21st century. Today, we operate as a Joint force and, in addition to our expertise in space and missiles, we must be well versed in air, land and sea operations. That way, we can ensure we provide forces and capabilities combatant commanders need in an integrated manner to generate effects when and where they need them.

As you know, there were significant changes to the Unified Command Plan last fall. With missions additional to those of US Space Command (USSPACECOM) and the previous US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), USSTRATCOM is a new command with global focus and strategic reach. They are now responsible for military space operations, computer network operations, information operations, strategic warning and intelligence assessments as well as global strategic planning. The space capabilities AFSPC provided to USSPACECOM 24/7/365 remain the same; the component relationship is different. Today, we are their Air Force component for both space and ICBM operations. To that end, we have recently activated a command center in our headquarters to manage the flow of orders from STRATCOM to our Numbered Air Forces. Through this component relationship, we provide our capabilities to joint warfighters from all commands, around the globe.

Conclusion

We believe AFSPC missions will continue to grow in importance as the Nation responds to current and emerging threats. Through our core competencies, AFSPC will help build the foundation necessary to fulfill our National Security Strategy goals of assuring our allies and friends, dissuading future military competition, deterring threats against our interests, allies and friends, and decisively defeating any adversary if deterrence fails. We will serve a central role as the space capabilities that are both an economic and military center of gravity to our Nation become ever more important.

We continue finding new ways to improve our unique capabilities and integrate them into our military missions. As we develop more advanced systems, we must invest the necessary resources, energy and intellectual capital to protect our vital interests and sustain the asymmetric advantage that allows us the freedom to operate in the medium of space. We appreciate Congress' continued support of our people as well as your support to maintain our high state of readiness. With your help, we will ensure our space and ICBM forces continue to play a key role in our Nation's defense.

Again, I am honored to appear before you and look forward to your questions.