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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
MR. PETER VERGA
PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR
HOMELAND DEFENSE AND GLOBAL SECURITY
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE
MARCH 23, 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Chairman Stefanik, Ranking Member Langevin, and Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to testify today about the Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to counter chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats. Over the past year, the CBRN threat environment has continued to evolve and increase in complexity in several ways. First, we have observed both State and non-state actors demonstrate interest in developing, acquiring, or using CBRN materials and programs. In Syria, for example, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism has found that chemicals have been used as weapons by both the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the Syrian regime. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) also has continued its dangerous and provocative activities with both nuclear and missile tests. Second, continued advances in technologies such as synthetic biology, additive manufacturing, and unmanned aerial systems present great promise and opportunity for new defensive capabilities, but may also enable State and non-state actors to develop new CBRN threats at a pace never before seen. We must stay at the cutting edge of these technologies, so as to benefit from and defend against them, while also seeking new and creative approaches to supplement traditional tradecraft and nonproliferation tools to deter and prevent acquisition and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Third, stresses and tensions in the geopolitical security environment are also creating additional pressures on international nonproliferation regimes.

The office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security oversees the DoD's policies and guidance to protect our armed forces and other U.S. interests from a CBRN attack or any type of destabilizing CBRN-related event, such as the spread of a dangerous pathogen including pandemic influenza. We also represent DoD's interests on counterproliferation and non-proliferation policy issues. Our organization contributes as well to international efforts such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Global Health Security Agenda (GHS). We also support the Department of State (DoS) in implementation of commitments under the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), and the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Finally, we provide policy oversight for execution of Homeland Defense and, in close coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other interagency partners, provision of Defense Support to Civil Authorities, particularly ensuring that the CBRN threats that exist outside our borders never threaten the Homeland while simultaneously preparing to provide DoD support to the Federal response to such an attack or incident.

DoD is well postured to confront the myriad of CBRN-related challenges we face. Last year, USSOCOM assumed responsibility for leading the department's synchronization of Countering-WMD (CWMD)-related planning. We are working closely with the Joint Staff and USSOCOM to ensure that USSOCOM has the necessary resources and guidance for this mission. Internationally, the community of nations has demonstrated renewed focus through reaffirmation

of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, a vital catalyst to the global effort to prevent WMD or WMD-related materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. Although CBRN threats continue to evolve, we continue to adapt and improve our institutions to ensure that we are prepared for the CBRN challenges of the future.

STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR COUNTERING TODAY’S CBRN CHALLENGES

The DoD Strategy for Countering WMD provides three Lines of Effort to address WMD threats. First, *prevent acquisition* of WMD by adversaries and potential adversaries. Second, *contain and reduce* threats by improving our ability and that of our partners to identify, locate, secure, and mitigate threats from WMD and WMD-related materials. Third, maintain the necessary posture, capabilities, and authorities to *respond* to emergent WMD crises.

PREVENT ACQUISITION

Preventing State and non-state actors from acquiring CBRN materials is a critical component of DoD’s strategy. Due to the diffusion of dual-use WMD-related technology, it has never been more difficult to prevent bad actors from acquiring the materials or knowledge necessary to develop WMD or to use CBRN materials in intentional attacks. However, targeted investments to prevent these materials from falling into the wrong hands are far more cost-effective than potentially responding to the use of WMD.

The DoD Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program remains one of the most flexible U.S. Government tools for preventing acquisition of WMD and WMD-related materials. Secretary James Mattis has recently described the DoD CTR Program as DoD’s “most comprehensive and effective tool for working cooperatively with international and interagency partners to mitigate WMD-related threats.” For more than 25 years, the DoD CTR Program has worked with foreign partners to destroy existing WMD stockpiles successfully; to make nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons more difficult to acquire; and to detect and interdict dangerous WMD components and materials.

In line with DoD’s strategy, the DoD CTR Program has evolved in recent years in response to the changing threat environment. From an early emphasis on securing sources of WMD material in the former Soviet Union to a focus in more recent years on eliminating State-based chemical weapons (CW) programs outside the former Soviet Union in Syria and Libya, the DoD CTR Program builds the capacity of partners to counter WMD proliferation threats posed by non-state or State actors, and from the potential emergence of diseases of security concern, such as by supporting the DoD response to the Ebola crisis last year.

The use of a nuclear weapon by another State or a non-state actor is one of the most dangerous potential threats to the security of the United States. The DoD CTR Program’s Global Nuclear Security (GNS) program and Proliferation Prevention Program (PPP) focus on keeping nuclear

and related materials out of the hands of malevolent actors, and enable DoD to build capacity to enhance the security and prevent the proliferation of nuclear materials, thereby supporting broader U.S. Government nuclear security objectives. As one example of the PPP's bilateral engagement, the Program continues to secure vulnerable Soviet-era radiological materials at the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in Kazakhstan.

Recognizing that biological threats are ubiquitous, often endemic, and that potential adversaries can acquire pathogens of security concern from unsecure laboratory stores required for public health, the DoD CTR Program allocates significant resources to the Cooperative Biological Engagement Program (CBEP) to mitigate these complex and evolving threats. The CBEP continues to stop threats successfully "at the source" by preparing partners to detect and report disease outbreaks of security concern, irrespective of whether those outbreaks were intentionally or naturally occurring. The CBEP supports bilateral, regional, and global U.S. Government efforts to promote biological security. An example of one of the CBEP's bilateral efforts is the ongoing work in Kenya, a key security partner, to upgrade the safety and security of five human and animal laboratories to prevent potential acquisition and use of their stores of highly dangerous pathogens by non-state actors.

Preventing non-state actors in Iraq from acquiring the materials necessary to develop chemical or biological weapons is of the utmost importance to DoD, as such weapons could potentially be used against our Iraqi partners or even against U.S. forces in theater. The DoD CTR Program's Chemical Weapons Destruction (CWD) and CBEP programs continue to explore efforts to improve chemical and biological safety and security in Iraq, in close coordination with U.S. Embassy Baghdad. Through the relationships formed during biorisk management training provided to Iraqi government personnel, the CBEP worked with the Government of Iraq to facilitate the formation of the Iraq National Biorisk Management Committee (NBMC), which works to reduce biological threats in compliance with relevant nonproliferation conventions and treaties through regulatory frameworks in Iraq. We continue to support the NBMC in its efforts to improve the security of pathogens of concern in Iraq.

DoD's efforts to reduce biological threats overseas, including through the CBEP, directly support the goals of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), which includes a commitment to work with at least 30 partner countries to deepen their commitment to health security using a whole-of-government approach. In an increasingly interconnected world, it is imperative to promote cooperation among health, agriculture, security, development, and other sectors to tackle biological threats and ensure that dangerous pathogens are not accessible to terrorists. Strengthening the bridge between the public health and national security communities at home and abroad is essential to reduce the threats posed by the intentional, accidental, or natural spread of pathogens and diseases of security concern, and potential terrorist acquisition and use of biological weapons. DoD remains focused on reducing biological threats to U.S. forces and the U.S. homeland, working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Agency for International Development

(USAID), along with other domestic and international partners, to ensure assistance is provided in the most holistic, effective, and efficient manner.

DoD also continues to work to raise the barriers to acquiring WMD material through the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Over the 13 years since its inception, the PSI has brought together 105 nations to build political will to stop the trafficking of WMD, delivery systems, and related materials. By supporting and participating in numerous bilateral and multilateral exercises, and through leadership in the PSI's Operational Experts Group, DoD works alongside DoS and experts from other departments and agencies to engage with partners to address all aspects of the proliferation threat from rapid, national-level decision-making, to operational tactics and procedures. Last year, 70 of the 105 PSI-endorsing States met here in Washington, DC, at the PSI's Mid-Level Political Meeting to reaffirm the importance of using the PSI and all other cooperative means to prevent the transfer of WMD technology to State and non-state actors of concern.

DoD also participated in Asia Exercise Deep Sabre 2016, the third in a series of annual Asia-Pacific exercises hosted by a rotating group of critical PSI partners. The 2017 Asia-Pacific exercise will be hosted by Australia, then Japan in 2018, and the Republic of Korea in 2019. To keep pace with proliferators who continually adapt, the PSI itself is evolving, from an activity focused heavily on preparing for at-sea interdictions, to one that highlights the critical role that customs, treasury, and diplomatic tools play in detecting and preventing WMD proliferation. In an era of evolving WMD-related threats, PSI engagements underscore that interdiction is a whole-of-government effort that requires both strong institutional capacity and political will.

International treaties that bring together like-minded nations and promote essential norms are foundational elements of the U.S. Government's efforts to prevent the development and proliferation of WMD. For example, the NPT, the BWC, and the CWC remain essential foundations for the pursuit of nonproliferation and disarmament goals. In close partnership with DOS, we depend on these and related regimes as essential and evolving tools in countering CBRN threats.

CONTAIN AND REDUCE THREATS

The use of chemical weapons by ISIS in Iraq and Syria and by the Syrian regime in Syria over recent years has reinforced the importance of containing and reducing CBRN threats. We work with partners to contain and reduce threats should malevolent actors around the globe obtain CBRN-related materials, and ensure that partners are able to detect, interdict, and mitigate such threats at and within their borders.

In addition to our vital partnership with the Government of Iraq, our bilateral relationships with Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia are crucial to containing and reducing CBRN threats in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In particular, the DoD CTR Program has continued to

advance the capabilities of these partners to detect and interdict WMD material. In Jordan, the centerpiece of this effort is the Jordan Border Security Program (JBSP) – an integrated surveillance, WMD detection, and interdiction system that the PPP has developed in partnership with the Jordanians along Jordan’s borders with Syria and Iraq. In Lebanon, which shares many of the same proliferation threats as Jordan along its border with Syria, the PPP is developing, in close partnership with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), a Lebanon Border Security Program (LBSP) integrated command and control and surveillance system to defend the most vulnerable section of Lebanon’s border with Syria. This effort is being fully coordinated with assistance provided to the LAF by the United Kingdom as well as other DoD assistance along Lebanon’s border, and it will complement CBRN-response assistance provided by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency’s CBRN Preparedness Program (CP2). In early 2016, the DoD CTR Program also initiated a proliferation-prevention cooperation with the Government of Tunisia along parts of its border with Libya in order to counter the proliferation risks resulting from the presence of ISIS affiliates and the potential transfer of knowledge and materials between ISIS affiliates. The PPP continues to work with the Tunisian government to establish a border-surveillance system along the most vulnerable section of that border.

Our organization also plays a leading role for DoD in the development and maintenance of important relationships with international partners and allies to address proliferation and CBRN issues cooperatively. A good example is our relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy serves as the permanent co-chair of NATO’s Committee on Proliferation in Defence Format (CP-D), which is the senior advisory body to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and CBRN defense. Serving alongside a rotating European co-chair (currently Germany, with Poland assuming the role in June), and working closely with NATO’s WMD Center, we have enhanced NATO’s CBRN preparedness through cooperation with other NATO bodies and coordinated the development, adoption, and implementation of a comprehensive policy for preventing, protecting against, and responding to CBRN threats. These efforts have significantly increased the Alliance capacity to address critical CBRN-related security challenges.

RESPOND TO CRISES

This element of the CWMD Strategy focuses on activities and operations to manage and resolve complex WMD crises. It includes strategic and diplomatic efforts to respond to WMD-related crises, kinetic action against hostile non-state actors who acquire CBRN materials of concern, efforts to train and equip our partners to defend against and respond to the use of CBRN weapons, and efforts to improve DoD capabilities continually to respond to CBRN threats against the Homeland or our interests overseas.

There is no more important partner to support in responding to a CBRN weapons use than the Government of Iraq. Using the Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF) authority, DoD has provided

our Iraqi and Kurdish partners with critical training and equipment to enable them to protect themselves and respond to chemical and biological weapons attacks.

DoD will continue to support interagency diplomatic efforts aimed at WMD crisis management and response in light of the DPRK's efforts to advance its WMD programs significantly. Our approach to the DPRK spans multiple aspects of our strategy, from efforts to "prevent acquisition" of WMD-related materials by supporting interagency efforts to enforce relevant UN Security Council resolutions, to "preparing to respond to crises." The DPRK's recent nuclear and missile tests underscore the importance of a well-coordinated international response. Supported by other departments and agencies, we work closely with U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), U.S. Forces Korea (USFK), and our Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japanese counterparts to ensure that our regional alliances remain postured to respond to WMD contingencies on, or emanating from, the Korean Peninsula. This includes the conduct of semi-annual CWMD-focused bilateral engagements, support to regional exercises, and providing policy guidance to enable effective CWMD operations.

The CBRN Preparedness Program, which works with partner nations to respond to and mitigate the effects of a CBRN incident, complements the threat reduction efforts of the DoD CTR Program. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 authorized DoD, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to implement a whole-of-government approach to build partner nation capacity by providing CBRN incident-response training and equipment to assist partner nations in developing the capabilities of its military and civilian first-responder community. Building partner nation response capabilities promotes regional security cooperation and bilateral and multilateral interoperability, and reduces the potential for a large U.S. Government requirement to provide assistance to international CBRN incident-response operations.

DoD first exercised this authority in FY 2014 to provide WMD preparedness and response training to the military and civilian first responders in the Middle East, and in 2015 expanded to other key allies and partners. Although the training focused on CBRN incident preparedness and response, it also emphasized a whole-of-government approach to execute WMD incident operations effectively. In the current fiscal year, DoD will continue to improve the WMD-preparedness and response capability of key partners, identified collaboratively with the Combatant Commanders and DoS.

10 U.S.C 333, as recently provided in the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2017, consolidates the training and equipping of foreign security forces, including activities conducted by the CBRN Preparedness Program, under a single authority. We anticipate that this new authorization will provide DoD with greater flexibility to assist our partner nations in developing their capabilities to respond to incidents involving WMD, which in turn may reduce the need for U.S. emergency assistance during an international CBRN incident.

While enhancing the CBRN-response capabilities of our allies and partners, DoD must also be prepared to respond to a CBRN attack against U.S. personnel or our broader interests overseas. The U.S. Army's 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Command continues to develop and refine the extensive capabilities and technical expertise necessary to deploy rapidly in support of U.S. forces around the world and conducts regular training exercises to operate in highly challenging realistic operational environments. Our organization also provides policy guidance to the Chemical and Biological Defense Program, which develops and acquires capabilities that allow the Joint Force to deter, prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from CBRN threats and effects within a layered and integrated defense. DoD also continues to work in close coordination with DoS to support allies and partners in the event of a CBRN crisis abroad, if necessary.

Ensuring that DoD is poised to respond and support civil authorities in the event of a CBRN attack against the Homeland is of the utmost importance. The NDAA for FY 2017, Section 1086, requires that DoD, DHS, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) jointly develop a national biodefense strategy and associated implementation plan, which shall include a review and assessment of biodefense policies, practices, programs, and initiatives. This work is underway and DoD is reviewing existing policies to identify relevance and gaps and to determine which updates and additions are required to address current and emerging threats posed by biological agents.

DoD recognizes the need to be prepared to support the Federal response to a domestic CBRN events at home. The DoD CBRN Response Enterprise (CRE) provides both Federal and State controlled capabilities to respond at the lowest level to natural or manmade CBRN events. In addition, we assist with the development of protocols and concepts of operation to enhance the ability of first responders, law enforcement agencies, and emergency services to execute large-scale crisis response operations promptly and effectively. Through the analysis of past CBRN events (whether natural or manmade), the development of wargames and exercises, and the promulgation of guidance and strategic policy, DoD has played a central role in developing the intellectual framework for developing best practices in domestic and international CBRN-response and mitigation operations. Working closely with the Joint Staff, we continue to partner with a wide array of interagency partners, including DHS, the Department of Energy (DoE), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to address the challenge of a coordinated response to CBRN events in the U.S. homeland.

CONCLUSION

We must anticipate that our adversaries will continue to evolve and develop increasingly sophisticated methods to pursue, develop, or deploy CBRN weapons. These emerging CBRN threats intersect with challenges of political instability, violent extremism, and poor infrastructure in States suffering from natural outbreaks of devastating diseases. The DoD

Strategy to Countering WMD continues to provide a framework for assessing and understanding these real and potential challenges.

We will continue to work with other departments and agencies and international partners to confront the threats posed by WMD at home and abroad. As WMD-related crises continue to emerge, your continued support in the areas described today are critical to our ability to understand, anticipate, and mitigate these threats.