

STATEMENT OF  
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DEPUTY COMMANDER  
UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND  
BEFORE THE  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES  
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Chairwoman Stefanik, Ranking Member Langevin and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. Last month General Thomas testified to the House Armed Services Committee, Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee. During that address, he discussed U.S. Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM) responsibilities in our role as DoD's Coordinating Authority (CA) for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD), on which this testimony is focused. I am proud to say that we have made tremendous strides in enhancing the dedicated CWMD community of action, including: heightened operational coordination within and among entities; the development of a center dedicated to coordinating information flow and executing planning efforts; and further refinement, and thus improvement, of our initial goals. A tremendous amount of work remains. We must finalize and continue to refine an active campaign plan. To that end, we must expand and refresh efforts to assess and understand the environment in which we operate, and regularly measure how our capabilities map to these assessments. The reality is that the CWMD mission is highly dynamic and constantly evolving, requiring unity of effort and constant vigilance.

The WMD threat has evolved beyond state-sponsored programs, and its transregional nature challenges regionally focused planning efforts and operations. The danger from state and non-state actors attempting to acquire, proliferate, or use WMD is increasing and the technology, materials, and expertise to develop WMD are more readily available than ever before. There is a need for robust monitoring of potential sources of supply and expertise, whether witting or unwitting, while also focusing on emerging threats and capabilities. Advances in, as well as the dual use nature of, science and technology further exacerbate this problem. Differentiating between peaceful scientific research and nefarious intent requires exquisite access into adversary

leadership decision-making. The United States and our partners face a persistent threat against our citizens and interests.

Just over a year ago, USSOCOM assumed responsibilities as DoD's CA for CWMD. This role broadens USSOCOM's scope of responsibility from its traditional Special Operations Forces (SOF)-specific CWMD roles to encompass CWMD planning efforts for the Department. As such, we aim to bridge the gap between policy guidance and tactical capability and capacity by actively supporting Combatant Command (CCMD) planning efforts, Departmental priorities, and, as directed, other U.S. Government agencies. We are doing this, as directed in the Unified Command Plan (UCP) by integrating DoD plans and intelligence priorities to support operations against state and non-state networks that possess or seek WMD and executing global operations against the same, in coordination with other Combatant Commands.

USSOCOM's traditional role in the tactical aspects of CWMD likely contributed to the Department's decision to transfer many of the U.S. Strategic Command's (USSTRATCOM) responsibilities to USSOCOM, though not all missions were included. USSTRATCOM remains the lead for strategic deterrence, nuclear operations, Global Strike, and missile defense. Similarly, U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) maintain responsibility for Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) response. Other ancillary missions associated with WMD are assigned to appropriate staff agencies, such as the capabilities development portfolio, assigned to the Joint Staff. The shift in responsibility exposed gaps that the community continues to resolve, underscoring the need to continue to build and foster a strong and efficient CWMD team. In coordination with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency

(DTRA), we are gaining greater fidelity on shortfalls with respect to CWMD capabilities within the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC).

Given both the complexity of this mission and our role as the CA, USSOCOM established the CWMD Fusion Center (FC) located at both HQUSSOCOM at MacDill Air Force Base and at Ft. Belvoir, collocated with DTRA. The FC is a nexus of CWMD awareness, active planning, and operational advocacy across functional and geographic missions. The FC accomplishes its mission by coordinating planning, integrating intelligence, assessing campaign progress, advocating for CWMD operations with the Services and CCMDs, and – when directed – supporting execution. Operating within broader national and Department policy guidance, as conveyed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy (OSD-P) and the Joint Staff, the FC combines the strengths and perspectives of CWMD stakeholders in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the threat environment as well as partner capabilities. In turn, the FC identifies opportunities for action against adversary vulnerabilities and advocates for intelligence priorities. In doing so, we facilitate an operational construct that is active and responsive to the dynamic CWMD environment, while maintaining a persistent strategic focus.

The CWMD mission space is broad and varied. In pre-crisis scenarios, other Departments and agencies have traditionally maintained primacy with DoD playing a supporting role. These efforts span from export license reviews to interdiction of specialized WMD components. The CWMD FC is working with OSD and the Joint Staff to enhance DoD's operational relationships across the interagency and Intelligence Community, in order to optimize DoD support. Within DoD, we are engaging with OSD, the Joint Staff, the GCCs, Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), and other DoD elements to ensure we share a collective understanding of the threat and are making best use of existing resources. The

CWMD FC has also improved our ability to assess DoD's CWMD requirements and drive unity of effort.

During our first year, we conducted a baseline assessment of the draft Functional Campaign Plan Strategic Objectives with significant input from the GCCs. The primary finding is that the GCCs lack sufficient capacity and, therefore, assume risk in CWMD. This finding is based on a number of factors which include: resource competition with other priority mission areas; gaps in understanding the threat – a global and evolving threat; unconnected data sources – absence of a complete picture; traditional prevalence of Interagency/Intelligence Community (IA/IC) in preventing proliferation – prevention not viewed as a primary military task; and lack of clear tasks in support of a strategy – perhaps the primary cause for the CWMD-related risks we have assumed. In addition, the baseline assessment identified the difficulties with anticipating the emergence of new WMD programs, and that analysis remains important to understanding the networks supporting WMD pathways. As we conduct future baseline assessments, we will expand our analysis to include the Services, the rest of the Interagency, and Partner Nations. Finally, we will highlight any gaps in policy, authorities, or other strategic issues that may be illuminated through our assessments with our teammates in the Joint Staff and OSD.

In addition to the baseline assessment, we have focused efforts on writing a Joint Staff-directed Functional Campaign Plan for CWMD as an engine for change. The Functional Campaign Plan for Countering WMD (DoD FCP-CWMD), which was developed in coordination with the Combatant Commands, translates policy into strategic guidance that can be further refined into GCC-specific operational planning. Close coordination with GCCs - who conduct the majority of campaign activities - enables us to assess and, when appropriate, adjust guidance

in light of operational effectiveness and changing intelligence. We have established collaborative forums among CCMDs, combat support agencies, Military Services, other U.S. Government agencies with CWMD equities, allies, and partner nations. The plan opens the operational aperture of how DoD sees the WMD problem with a transregional perspective, emphasizing active prevention of new WMD development, and precluding aspiring actors from attaining WMD.

The FCP is crosscutting with the Department's threat-specific Global Campaign Plans (GCPs) and has three Lines of Effort (LOE): Prevent, Protect, Respond. It nests with, supports, and complements the National Defense Strategy, DoD Strategy to Counter WMD and other strategic guidance documents. The FCP focuses heavily on the Prevent LOE, given the strategic imperative to operate as early in the WMD threat spectrum as possible. Actors of concern, in accordance with priorities set by the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy, are addressed individually in the campaign plan's supporting annexes, which in turn, provide operational constructs that guide the GCCs operational planning.

The central idea driving the FCP's strategic approach to preventing proliferation is disrupting or defeating WMD pathways. Pathways represent the way actors of concern move from the notion of WMD to development, delivery, or use. Examining pathways through the lens of people, places, and things – coupled with monitoring movement of WMD-related technology, materials and equipment – illuminates emerging WMD actors and identifies opportunities to disrupt. Disrupting pathways at the far left of the continuum includes affecting the decision making of aspirants as well as the means to acquire infrastructure and expertise. Disrupting progress as early as possible ensures that those undeterred lack the means to produce WMD. The FCP prioritizes intelligence collection, analysis, and production to outline

adversaries' objectives concerning research and development and highlights potential vulnerabilities along the continuum. We are applying this model in close coordination with the CWMD community of action and, as a result, are already seeing progress in implementing a more active campaign. In support of this model, the FCP provides a guidepost for GCCs to prepare supporting plans or to integrate campaign activities into existing plans to meet objectives and accomplish tasks outlined in the base plan and annexes.

Through recurring battle rhythm events, we aim to coordinate DoD operational activities across the spectrum of the strategic and operational space. The cornerstone of this battle rhythm is the semi-annual CWMD Global Synchronization Conference (GSC). The GSC serves as a venue for the CWMD community to address and advance activities to prepare, deny, defeat, and respond to the threats posed by WMD. These conferences emphasize the interoperability between USG assets and international partners to succeed in the global environment. While previous GSCs focused on broad sets of topics applicable across the entire spectrum of the mission, we focused our most recent one – this month – on identifying detailed requirements and describing how the FCP is implemented for a specified WMD actor of concern.

In closing, I would like to emphasize our priorities going forward. First, we will finalize the Department's Functional Campaign Plan for Countering WMD in an inclusive manner that builds and strengthens established partnerships. Second, we will improve our assessment process in order to measure more holistically how we can best operate and achieve our objectives in this complex environment. In addition, we will continually update our approach as our understanding of the myriad adversaries, threats, and capabilities evolves. Thank you for your interest in our role as Coordinating Authority and your continued support of USSOCOM and our people.