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STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

FISCAL YEAR 2018 PRIORITIES AND POSTURE OF

THE NATIONAL SECURITY SPACE ENTERPRISE

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Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Cooper, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on national security space strategy. I request the committee accept my statement for the record.

As this committee has highlighted on many occasions in recent years, the United States faces unprecedented changes in the nature of security within the space domain. Moreover, the interconnected nature of all domains – space, cyber, air, maritime, and land – means these changes have multi-domain implications that are fundamental to the nature of deterrence and warfare in the 21st century, at both the conventional and nuclear levels. Understanding these implications is critical as this administration prepares the President’s new National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy and as Congress carries out its responsibilities for oversight and funding of the programs and activities necessary to realize those strategies.

No less important, we must also recognize, as this committee has underscored on many occasions, that strategic success requires additional resources and an end to the years-long pattern of extended continuing resolutions, and a return to a normal process of annual appropriations. Secretary Mattis has committed the Department of Defense to work in concert with congressional leaders to raise the national defense cap. Accomplishing that objective would return Congress to its active oversight role instead of relying on non-strategic and self-destructive cuts, and would enable the Department to act on the basis of sound strategic planning. Failure to reverse sequestration or to end the pernicious cycle of lengthy continuing resolutions would bring about the need to recalibrate our approach to asserting U.S. influence around the world, and even call into question the integrity of many U.S. strategic interests.

Today, we consider our space security strategy in an era in which Russia and China present new challenges to U.S. interests and seek veto power over the economic, diplomatic, and

security decisions of nations on their periphery. A common element in their approaches is to develop anti-access/area-denial capabilities intended to prevent or counter U.S. intervention in crises or conflicts. In short, these approaches aim to undercut our ability to secure our interests, which includes standing by the international commitments we have made especially to our treaty allies in NATO and the Asia-Pacific region. As Director of National Intelligence Coats recently testified, “We assess that Russia and China perceive a need to offset any U.S. military advantage derived from military, civil, or commercial space systems and are increasingly considering attacks against satellite systems as part of their future warfare doctrine. Both will continue to pursue a full range of anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons as a means to reduce U.S. military effectiveness.”

Diplomatic solutions remain our preferred option to settling the differences that sometimes divide nations, but U.S. diplomatic influence rests on the credibility and capability of our military power, which is fundamental to deterrence and to the confidence of our allies and partners in knowing that they do not have to submit to the coercive pressures of large and powerful neighbors.

America’s space posture enables the ability of the U.S. military to project power globally, respond to crises rapidly, strike swiftly and precisely, and command forces in multiple theaters of operation simultaneously. Those capabilities are at the heart of the ability of the United States to deter conflict by imposing unacceptable costs on an aggressor. They support our deterrent capabilities at the conventional and nuclear levels. Potential adversaries have understood this for many years, and they have likewise observed that the great majority of space systems on orbit today were developed for an environment that, aside from natural threats, was relatively benign. This high reliance on systems that are perceived as relatively vulnerable is destabilizing and has

led some military observers to conclude that, in times of conflict, attacking U.S. military space systems may make an irresistible and most tempting choice. Disabusing people of such misguided notions is a strategic priority for our national security space community.

Now, it is essential that we understand that the threats in space are not independent of terrestrial threats, but are fundamentally extensions of those threats. There is scant evidence that any nation is interested in conflict in space for its own sake. And there is widespread recognition that war in space could have disastrous effects for all nations, not just the belligerents.

Nonetheless, some nations have concluded that there is great military advantage to be achieved through early attacks on space-based capabilities, especially if those attacks are plausibly deniable. Further, these nations conclude that if they can obtain that early advantage in space, then they can shift the terrestrial military balance in their favor and use armed forces to achieve their terrestrial objectives.

This is why in the Department of Defense we are making such a concerted effort to strengthen the mission assurance of our space-based capabilities, including their associated ground systems, and to deny aggressors the benefits and the plausible deniability they seek through attacks in space. You are seeing this priority in our budgets and in changes we are making to develop the doctrine, the operational tactics, techniques, and procedures, and the skilled personnel necessary to survive and prevail in a contested space domain. Not only are we investing in improvements to the inherent resilience of individual systems and in space control capabilities, but we are also making investments in foundational capabilities like space situational awareness systems and our space command and control systems.

You are also seeing changes in our attitude about how to acquire necessary capabilities. These are not problems that the government will solve on its own. More and more, the

commercial sector is driving innovation in the space domain, and the Department of Defense is striving to take advantage of this great American strength to improve our capabilities, improve our mission assurance, and reduce costs across the range of space mission areas. From space launch, to wideband communications, to space situational awareness, to satellite operations, to remote sensing and more, we must continuously challenge ourselves to identify innovative ways of harnessing civil and commercial solutions that expand our capabilities, diversify our risks, and assure our missions. As has been the case in so many other fields, leveraging civil and commercial innovation must be at the heart of our strategy.

It is also important to remember that the United States is not alone in this effort. U.S. allies and partners are likewise very concerned about the threats to their national security that emanate from the contested nature of space. And they are eager to work with us on this common challenge to our common defense. International cooperation is never easy, and in the space arena must overcome longstanding institutional biases that favor national programs. But just as we are able to employ common systems and operate in coalitions in the other domains, so too must we develop and normalize these patterns of behavior and reap the associated operational and strategic benefits in our approach to the space domain. This requires cultural change, and in bureaucracies cultural change requires top-down persistence, which the Secretary of Defense and our Air Force leadership and Commanders are providing. Earlier this year we completed a new International Space Cooperation Strategy that lays out approaches to expand the benefits of international cooperation in areas ranging from our operations, to our research and development, to our acquisition, to strategic planning, and even to our understanding of how the law of war applies in a domain that most people have assumed was benign. We are increasing the focus on space in longstanding exercises and wargames with our allies, and increasing allied participation

in our space-focused games and exercises. We are increasing the exchanges of personnel. And in a first-of-its-kind initiative, we now have more than a dozen allies participating in the ongoing Analysis of Alternatives for Wideband Communications Services, where we are taking allied and commercial supply and demand considerations into full account. We have a long way to go before we will fully realize the potential benefits of our alliances and partnerships with respect to the space domain, but we have taken the first steps.

Our priorities also include working with Congress on a number of space policy issues. In particular, I want to highlight the rapid growth of space traffic, which has led many to ask whether the time has come for a civil approach to space traffic management. In the Department of Defense, we welcome that discussion. For although we provide basic forms of space traffic monitoring and space situational awareness support to operators around the world in accordance with our authorities, we are not a regulatory agency and we do not optimize our space surveillance network for those tasks, nor should we. There are credible proposals for commercial satellite communications and remote sensing constellations that number in the thousands of spacecraft. The rapid past and projected growth of space traffic that is already taking place makes it imperative for all space operators – commercial, civil, and national security – to come together before we have more collisions in space and to identify a more suitable approach for managing space traffic that continues to spur economic growth, investor confidence, and technological innovation, while also assuring the safety of space flight and the sustainability of the space environment. Congress is an essential player in that effort. Eventually, this needs to be an international effort, and indeed international companies are already undertaking some informal efforts on their own. But the United States has deep interests in this arena, and we in government have a responsibility to lead.

Finally, I want to address an issue that this committee has prioritized, which is the organization of national security space. The Department of Defense takes very seriously the concerns this committee has appropriately raised regarding the organization, management, and leadership of space within the Department of Defense. Given the dynamism of the threat, it is only natural and appropriate that we ensure we are doing everything we must to outpace the threat. And that includes examining ourselves honestly to ensure we have the correct alignments of authority, responsibility, and accountability; to identify necessary changes; and to work with the White House and Congress to implement them. This question has the attention of the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Defense. They expect to be presented with sound analysis and a full range of options, and they mean for us to meet the deadline of reporting to you and our other oversight committees this June. I anticipate this topic will be an area of continuing discussion with Congress in the months ahead as we work together to get this right.

In conclusion, I want to thank this committee for keeping the challenges of securing space before the public and for consistently pressing us to think harder about the strategic challenges in space that our nation faces. The United States and all of our neighbors on this relatively small planet are inextricably linked by a common interest in avoiding wars that extend to space. Yet we know that the history of our species is a history that has seen war follow us wherever we have gone. And every year, as our global community increases its dependence on services from space, the societal costs of a possible war in space continue to mount. Our national security establishment is no different from civil society in its dependence on space. But by denying aggressors the benefits of attacks in space, the national security community has the unique responsibility and capability to reduce the likelihood that wars will begin in or extend to space. And that in turn can reduce the benefits that aggressors may see in resorting to armed

conflict, and increase the likelihood that nations will choose to settle their differences by peaceful means. I look forward to working with this committee to ensure that we have the right strategy and the necessary programs, posture, and organizational structures to achieve those outcomes.