

STATEMENT OF  
DR. JOHN F. PLUMB  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPACE POLICY  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
ON FISCAL YEAR 2025 STRATEGIC FORCES POSTURE  
MARCH 21, 2024

## **Introduction**

Chairman Lamborn, Ranking Member Moulton, and distinguished members of the Committee: Thank you for inviting me to testify before you on the Department's nuclear, space, and missile defense. I am honored to appear alongside Generals Cotton, Guillot, and Whiting.

The United States faces a highly dynamic and challenging security environment characterized by intensifying competition, increasingly assertive behavior by multiple adversaries, quickly transforming domains of conflict, and changing balances of power. Our competitors are modernizing, diversifying, and expanding their nuclear arsenals, and we now face two major nuclear powers, Russia and China, as strategic competitors for the first time. They are rapidly fielding space and counterspace capabilities to hold the Joint Force at risk and deny us the space-based services on which our Joint Force relies. And they are fielding more advanced missiles in greater numbers to not only deter involvement in a regional conflict but also to target the U.S. homeland. The scale and scope of these threats present significant risk to the American people, U.S. national interests, and our allies and partners.

The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), and Missile Defense Review (MDR) recognized the dynamic changes in the security environment and the imperative to strengthen our integrated deterrence using all of our strategic capabilities. To meet these challenges, the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY) 2025 calls for critical investments in the Department's strategic forces posture.

## **Security Environment**

### **People's Republic of China (PRC)**

The PRC is undergoing a significant and rapid modernization of its nuclear forces, which has resulted in a nascent nuclear triad of land- and sea-based ballistic missiles and a nuclear capable strategic bomber. The Intelligence Community assesses that the PRC will likely have more than 1,000 operational nuclear warheads by 2030, most of which will be fielded on systems capable of ranging the United States. The PRC's intercontinental-range forces are complemented by several classes of theater-range road-mobile ballistic missile systems. The PRC is also fielding sea-launched ballistic missile submarines that can hold the U.S. homeland at risk and developing a strategic hypersonic glide missile that can deliver nuclear systems.

The trajectory of this expansion points to a large, diverse nuclear arsenal with a high degree of survivability, reliability, and effectiveness. These developments could provide the PRC with new options both prior to and during a crisis or conflict to leverage nuclear capabilities for coercive purposes against U.S. allies and regional partners. Unfortunately, the PRC remains reluctant to engage in meaningful conversations on strategic risk reduction or to be transparent regarding its rapid nuclear development.

The PRC views the space domain, and the ability to deny it to its adversaries, as a critical component of modern warfare. The PRC has made significant investments in space capabilities to rapidly expand its ability to monitor forces across the globe and improve its long-range precision strike capabilities against U.S. or allied forces to deter or deny outside regional intervention. To advance its concept of "informatized" warfare, the PRC continues to develop and modernize space capabilities to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR)

and to enhance communication, data relays, and positioning, navigation, and timing for its forces. The PRC also continues to rapidly develop counter-space capabilities to hold our on-orbit assets at risk. These capabilities include direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles, ground-based lasers, electronic warfare, directed-energy systems, co-orbital satellites potentially capable of kinetic effects, and orbiting space robots. To support its increased investment in space, the PRC is modernizing its launch capabilities and capacity to reconstitute its space capabilities if needed.

The PRC is also rapidly modernizing its ballistic, hypersonic, and cruise missile capabilities, and it is increasingly capable of conducting strikes against regional air bases, logistics and port facilities, communications, and other ground-based infrastructure. As highlighted in the China Military Power Report, the PRC is developing a layered missile defense system. It is also fielding the DF-17, which is a hypersonic glide vehicle-armed medium range ballistic missile that is likely intended to strike U.S. and allied/partner military bases and fleets in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **Russia**

Russia continues to emphasize nuclear weapons in its security strategy. It is modernizing and expanding its nuclear forces, which pose an acute threat to the United States and a direct threat to NATO and neighboring countries. Russia's nuclear saber-rattling throughout its invasion of Ukraine is irresponsible and troubling. Although Russia has not formally withdrawn from the New START Treaty, its illegal suspension of implementation has reduced transparency and eroded the Treaty's effectiveness. Further, Russia maintains a significant stockpile of warheads that are not treaty-limited, and it continues to pursue novel nuclear systems that are designed to hold the U.S. homeland, allies, and partners at risk.

Russia is seeking to mitigate U.S. space capabilities by developing a range of offensive counterspace capabilities, including directed energy weapons, direct ascent anti-satellite systems, and orbital systems with counterspace applications. These investments in counterspace systems are designed to exploit what it views as a U.S. overreliance on space for conducting military operations and to offset perceived U.S. military advantages. Russian military doctrine embraces multi-domain attacks, using both reversible and irreversible capabilities, to target adversary satellites. Russia has conducted cyber intrusions against commercial satellite communication networks, and it has demonstrated through both its public statements and actions that it views commercial satellites providing space-based services to Russia's adversaries as potential targets.

Since its unprovoked and illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has used thousands of air-, land-, and sea-launched cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic missiles to indiscriminately target both civilian and military infrastructure. Russia's growing cooperation with Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to continue its war of aggression remains a concern. Iran has been providing Russia with significant numbers of drones, guided aerial bombs, and artillery ammunition, while the DPRK has similarly provided Russia with ballistic missile launchers and ballistic missiles capable of ranging approximately 550 miles.

### **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**

The DPRK is a persistent threat and source of continuing provocations to both the United States and our allies and partners. The continued expansion, diversification, and improvement of the DPRK's nuclear and missile capabilities presents a growing danger to the U.S. homeland and

the Indo-Pacific region. A crisis or conflict on the Korean peninsula could involve multiple nuclear powers and several U.S. allies and partners, raising the risk of broader escalation.

The DPRK continues to pursue a space program, launching several reconnaissance satellites over the last year in violation of multiple UN Security Council Resolutions related to DPRK use of ballistic missile technology, and maintaining previously-demonstrated non-kinetic counterspace capabilities, including jamming communications and Global Positioning System (GPS) signals. The DPRK also continues to advance its conventional and nuclear missile capabilities, posing an increasing risk to the U.S. homeland and to U.S. forces, allies, and partners abroad. Since January 2023, the DPRK has launched at least 40 missiles, including a solid-propellant intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) and purported submarine-launched cruise missiles for the first time this year.

## **Iran**

Iran does not today possess a nuclear weapon, and we believe it is not currently pursuing one. However, Iran's pursuit of nuclear activities continues to be of deep concern. Iran is also continuing to develop its space program despite repeated failures, and this year it has used Russian launch services to place communications and navigation satellites into orbit. Iran has publicly acknowledged its capabilities to jam space-based communications and GPS signals, and its continued development of space launch vehicles (SLV), such as the Simorgh, support the development of ICBMs.

Iran has the largest ballistic missile program in the Middle East, with more than 10 distinct ballistic missile systems either in its inventory or in development, and a stockpile of likely thousands of missiles. It is exporting Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) to fuel conflicts

around the globe. In addition to Russia's use of Iranian attack drones in Ukraine, Iranian partners and proxies such as Hizballah in Lebanon, Iran-aligned militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen are using these UAS to conduct attacks against Israel, U.S. bases in the Middle East, and commercial and naval vessels transiting the Red Sea.

### **Nuclear Strategy and Posture**

As the Department previewed in the 2022 NDS and NPR, the security environment has continued to deteriorate. We now face, for the first time, two major nuclear powers: Russia and China. This development is already creating new challenges for deterrence and stresses on strategic stability. This more uncertain environment underscores the importance of delivering on the full-scope modernization of the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

As part of NPR implementation, the Department has an ongoing process to assess the implications of the evolving security environment on deterrence and allied assurances. The Department has closely studied the findings of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States regarding the PRC's emergence as a major nuclear power and the dilemmas this presents for strategic deterrence and our overall defense strategy. We fully agree with the Commission's independent assessment on the need to maintain a nuclear triad, the importance of delivering on full-scope modernization, and the need to posture to address two nuclear-armed adversaries. The Department has a two-pronged approach to address the challenges of the evolving security environment: First, we will invest in both strategic and regional deterrence capabilities, taking actions necessary to ensure a safe, secure, and reliable deterrent to protect the U.S. homeland, allies, and partners. Second, we will continue supporting

efforts to pursue arms control and risk reduction with both Russia and China, even as we recognize that progress requires more than one party to engage responsibly.

## **Investments**

Delivering modernized nuclear forces is essential to sustaining and strengthening deterrence. The President's FY 2025 budget calls for a \$49.2 billion investment in nuclear enterprise modernization as well as sustainment and operations. This request fully funds recapitalization of all three legs of the nuclear triad and includes \$11 billion for the sustainment and modernization of Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) systems.

- *Sea-leg:* The President's Budget requests \$9.9 billion for the COLUMBIA-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), which will replace the current fleet of OHIO-class SSBNs as the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad. COLUMBIA will safeguard the effectiveness and availability of the sea-leg of the triad through the 2080s. The President's Budget also requests \$3.1 billion to enhance flexibility in the options that could be provided to decision-makers and reduce risks to the sea-leg of the triad during the transition from legacy to modern systems.
- *Air-leg:* The President's Budget request includes \$5.3 billion for the B-21 RAIDER bomber and \$833 million for the Long-Range Standoff cruise missile (LRSO). These programs will contribute to the continued credibility of the air-leg of the triad and provide the President with flexible options to deter and respond to strategic attacks. The President's Budget also supports modernization of the B-52 bomber's radars and engines to support its continued viability through the 2050s.



- Ground-leg: As the most responsive leg of the nuclear triad, our intercontinental ballistic missiles deter aggression day-to-day, in crisis, and in conflict. The Department of Defense is committed to conducting a comprehensive review of the Sentinel program as statutorily required under the Nunn-McCurdy Act. We are working hard to prevent future delays and cost-overruns. As we continue to modernize our intercontinental ballistic missile fleet, we will work to guarantee that Minuteman III remains a viable deterrent.

These investments will build on the accomplishments of the past year, including the first flight of the B-21 RAIDER; preparations for a modern variant of the B61 nuclear gravity bomb, the B61-12 and development of the -13; the completion of nuclear certification of U.S. dual-capable aircraft and personnel deployed to Europe in support of NATO; and the completion of a DoD strategy to defeat Hard and Deeply Buried Targets (HDBT), which will enable the timely retirement of the B83 gravity bomb.

The Department is committed to fielding flexible nuclear forces suited to deterring regional nuclear conflict, including weapons deliverable by strategic bombers and dual-capable fighter aircraft as well as the ability to forward deploy nuclear weapons. We have retained the W76-2 low-yield submarine launched ballistic missile warhead and continue our fielding of the F-35A dual-capable fighter aircraft equipped with the B61-12 bomb. We are also complying with the statutory requirement from the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2024 to establish a program to develop a nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile (SLCM-N). We will look to execute the program in a manner that provides the most deterrence value for the least risk to other modernization programs, and we look forward to working with Congress to find the most beneficial and effective approach to implementing the SLCM-N legislation.

## **Allies and Partners**

We are also continuing to invest in extended deterrence and assurance by fielding flexible nuclear forces suited to deterring regional nuclear conflict, identifying pragmatic steps to strengthen deterrence consultations, and exploring opportunities for multilateral and trilateral dialogue, exercises, and other activities.

In the Indo-Pacific region, we continue to deepen nuclear consultations and coordination as part of our alliance commitments. We recently convened the second meeting of the U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), an outgrowth of the Washington Declaration between President Biden and President Yoon at the White House in 2023. The defined workstreams of the NCG—including information sharing, consultation, coordination, strategic communications, integration of ROK and U.S. forces, and leadership decision-making—will strengthen extended deterrence and manage the threat posed by the DPRK. In December 2023, our Japanese Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs counterparts hosted us in Tokyo for a meeting of the U.S.-Japan Extended Deterrence Dialogue. And last month, in February 2024, we hosted our Australian colleagues in Hawaii for the annual U.S.-Australia Strategic Policy Dialogue. These discussions allow us to coordinate our deterrence policies, strategic messaging, and activities that reinforce regional security, including promoting better synchronization and interoperability.

In Europe, the United States and our NATO allies have stood united against Russia's brutal war of aggression in Ukraine and reckless and coercive nuclear rhetoric. The United States is implementing its commitments under NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept to take all necessary steps to "ensure NATO's nuclear mission remains credible, effective, safe, and secure." Following the Vilnius Summit in 2023, the United States is working through the NATO High

Level Group to achieve the broadest possible participation in NATO's nuclear burden-sharing in the Alliance's nuclear mission and augment our planning to increase the flexibility and adaptability of NATO nuclear forces. We are working closely with allies to modernize NATO's dual-capable aircraft to maintain NATO's nuclear posture's effectiveness.

### **Arms Control Implications**

The United States cannot ignore the PRC's continued nuclear build-up, Russia's acute challenge to regional and global security, and the persistent threat posed by North Korea. We will continue to seek opportunities to pursue pragmatic arms control and risk reduction measures with our competitors. However, we must be prepared for a world in which Russia continues to possess large numbers of strategic, non-strategic, and novel nuclear weapons systems while the PRC continues to expand and modernize its arsenal. The Department will continue to evaluate changes in the security environment and examine whether adjustments to our nuclear strategy or force posture are necessary to sustain deterrence, assure our allies, and achieve U.S. objectives.

### **Space Strategy and Posture**

The space domain is critical to U.S. national security and space is essential to all four of our National Defense Strategy's top priorities. Our Joint Force relies on space-based services every day to conduct operations and to protect the Joint Force from space-enabled attack. Together with our allies and partners, we must ensure space capabilities continue to support integrated deterrence options, and, if needed, the ability to prevail in conflict should deterrence fail.

Our competitors recognize the importance of space to the United States, and they continue to develop and field capabilities designed to deprive us of the advantages of space during conflict. To enhance resilience and maintain our advantage in space, the Department will continue to emphasize space control, promote responsible behavior in space, enhance cooperation with allies and partners, address the overclassification of space activities, and make sustained investments in our capabilities and resiliency.

## **Resilience**

The Department continues to adopt resilient-by-design architectures through a range of approaches that includes disaggregation, distribution, diversification, proliferation, and protection. But resilience alone is insufficient to provide mission assurance or to deny adversaries' uncontested use of space in conflict. As I have testified previously, increasing the mission assurance of the space-based services on which the Joint Force relies to fight and win requires a balance of resiliency, protection, and reconstitution ability. Our investments must address each of these areas in addition to capabilities across all domains that support U.S. interests in space.

One way we are increasing the resiliency of our space capabilities is through the Space Development Agency's proliferated satellite architecture. In April 2023, the Department launched the first ten satellites of the Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture, followed by an additional 13 satellites five months later. This was accomplished in less than three years from contract award to launch, an accelerated timeline made possible by leveraging commercial satellite bus lines and existing technologies. This architecture will enhance and support no-fail

missions such as networked communications, missile warning, missile tracking, and missile defense.

We continue to advance our Tactically Responsive Space capabilities to support integrated deterrence and warfighting needs. Last September, the Victus Nox mission successfully launched with 24-hour notice, showcasing our ability to reconstitute space-based services, support warfighting mission assurance at operational speeds, and the benefits of commercial systems, capabilities, and services.

### **Responsible Behavior in Space**

The United States recognizes the benefits derived by all nations from space, and the Department continues to lead by example in ensuring space remains available to all. I want to highlight three efforts. First, we continue to hold ourselves accountable to the Secretary's Tenets of Responsible Behaviors in Space. Second, the Department continues to encourage nations to commit to not conducting destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests, which has already been endorsed by 38 nations and contributes to the establishment of a recognized norm of responsible behavior. Third, in partnership with the Department of State, DoD participates in the United Nations' efforts to develop risk-reducing voluntary behaviors through efforts such as the upcoming 2025 open-ended working group on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors.

The United States remains committed to responsible leadership in preserving the safety, stability, security, and long-term sustainability of the space domain, and that includes upholding all of our obligations—international and internal—that serve to support these ends. Meanwhile, instead of cooperating with the international community to implement and abide by constructive

norms of responsible behavior and existing obligations, China and Russia have sought to undermine international efforts by promoting their proposed legally-binding, but hypocritical and unverifiable, treaty on the “prevention of the placement of weapons in space” as the only path to improving space security, all while developing sophisticated counterspace capabilities.

### **Allies and Partners**

The U.S. network of allies and partners are an asymmetric advantage that our competitors can never hope to match. The Department is committed to expanding space cooperation to enhance information sharing, set standards for interoperability, promote responsible behavior, and develop combined operations in space. The Combined Space Operations (CSpO) Initiative, a group of defense representatives from likeminded nations, continues to be the premier forum for civilian and military space leadership to work towards shared goals. In December 2023, the CSpO Initiative Principals Board welcomed representatives from Italy, Japan, and Norway, joining representatives from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The CSpO Initiative will continue to seek opportunities to enhance space cooperation and coordination.

The Department is also focused on better leveraging the commercial sector’s innovation, scalable production, and rapid technology refresh rate to enhance our resilience and strengthen our deterrence. The forthcoming DoD Commercial Space Integration Strategy, a first for the Department, will help promote deeper integration of commercial space solutions. Integration will enhance space mission assurance by ensuring the Joint Force has acquired and trained with relevant commercial space solutions prior to crisis and that the Department has assured access to them across the spectrum of conflict.

## **Space Classification Policy**

The Department has made significant progress towards overcoming longstanding barriers rooted in the way we classify space activities. In December 2023, the Deputy Secretary of Defense signed an extensive re-write of DoD's Space Classification Policy guidance, which updates a set of 20-year-old policies and enables more appropriate classification of space activities in light of the current security environment and how we use space today. One of my goals from day one has been to remove policy barriers that impede cooperation with allies and partners and integration across the Joint Force on how we operate, plan for, and invest in space. This policy sets new minimum classification standards of certain activities and provides space stakeholders with the authority to take certain programs out of Special Access Programs controls. These changes will take time to implement, but they will pay significant dividends in facilitating space cooperation with allies and partners, working with commercial and industry partners, and preparing the Joint Force to fight and win using space should deterrence fail.

## **Investments**

The President's FY 2025 budget request of \$33.7 billion for space strikes a balance among current warfighting needs, modernizing our architecture, and developing new capabilities to outpace our potential adversaries. This request includes critical investments in resilient architectures, space command and control, integrated space fires and protection capabilities, modernized and agile electronic warfare architecture, enhanced battlespace awareness and space systems defense, and a range of capabilities designed to enhance our space control. Important investments for the Department include:

- \$2.4 billion for National Security Space Launch, which will procure 11 launch vehicles to provide assured access to space and to modernize space launch range upgrades to support increased commercial use.
- \$1.5 billion for more resilient position, navigation, and timing (PNT) for GPS III Follow-On satellite support, including two GPS III follow-on satellites, and Next-Generation Operational Control System (OCX) development.
- \$4.2 billion for a resilient protected tactical, wideband, and narrowband communications architecture and Space Development Agency's proliferated Low Earth Orbit (pLEO) transport layer development.
- \$12.3 billion for a range of capabilities to increase resiliency of existing architectures and to enable us to protect our space interests during competition, crisis, and conflict.

While the depth and breadth of space threats continues to rapidly expand, we can only meet these challenges through strong and sustained investments in our space capabilities. We cannot continue to operate under repeated continuing resolutions. I respectfully request your assistance in ensuring we pass timely appropriations both this year and every year, which will provide predictable, adequate, and sustained funding for our warfighters. Our requested investments represent critical capabilities to protect the Joint Force and preserve global freedom of action for our decisionmakers.



## **Missile Defense Strategy and Posture**

As the conflicts in Ukraine and Israel as well as operations in the Red Sea have demonstrated, missiles are the principal means by which our competitors and their proxies seek to gain strategic, operational, and tactical advantages. Active missile defense intercept systems such as PATRIOT, Aegis, and U.S.-Israeli co-developed systems have proven highly effective against many of the air and missile threats. In particular, Ukraine's use of PATRIOT against Russian hypersonic missiles highlights the importance of continuing to invest in active defense systems.

As noted in the 2022 MDR, today's diverse, evolving, and advanced missile threats require pursuit of a more comprehensive approach, beyond continued improvement, to active air and missile defenses. The Department's comprehensive missile defeat effort utilizes right- and left-of-launch capabilities and expands our possible response options against these threats. We are also applying passive defense measures such as hardening, dispersal, and resilience to further complicate a competitor's targeting and reduce the value of any one site.

We cannot defend our way out of this problem; a balanced offensive-defense strategy is essential. Air and missile defenses are finite in quantity and can be numerically overwhelmed by barrage-style attacks. Offensive measures add credibility to our response and reduce the possibility of continued attacks.

The Department has made tangible progress on many of its Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) priorities over the last year. In line with the NDS and MDR, we have prioritized missile defeat efforts that strengthen homeland and regional deterrence and defense.

## Allies and Partners

The Department has also continued to advance missile defense cooperation with our allies and partners:

- *Ukraine:* Ukraine has relied heavily on air and missile defenses to defend its sovereignty and deny Russia important strategic, operational, and tactical gains. However, without additional U.S. foreign military assistance, Ukraine's ability to successfully withstand further air and missile attacks will be in jeopardy. The Department is requesting \$1.7 billion in supplemental funding for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Ukraine, and countries impacted by the situation in Ukraine, to build air defense, artillery, armor, anti-armor, and maritime security capabilities.
- *Israel:* The Department continues to work with Israel to strengthen its air and missile defenses as it faces barrages of rocket, mortar, and missile attacks by Hamas and other Iranian proxy groups such as Hizballah and the Houthis. The United States has temporarily transferred its two Iron Dome batteries to Israel and offered to replenish Iron Dome interceptors. To help Israel ensure it can continue to defend itself, the Department is requesting \$10.6 billion in supplemental funding, which includes \$5.2 billion for acquisition of additional air-defense systems such as Iron Dome.
- *Indo-Pacific region.* The Department consults regularly with Japan and South Korea on IAMD, and both nations continue to pursue a wide range of additional air and missile assets to strengthen regional deterrence. In August 2023, President Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida publicly announced plans to pursue a Glide Phase Interceptor cooperative development program to counter high-end hypersonic missile threats.

Additionally, in December 2023, the Department activated a trilateral early missile warning data-sharing mechanism against DPRK threats with Japan and South Korea.

- *Europe:* The United States is leading NATO's on-going efforts to improve its IAMD capability, posture, readiness, and interoperability. In December 2023, the U.S. Navy completed operational acceptance of the Aegis Ashore site in Poland, and after a period of testing, will deliver this capability to NATO as part of the U.S. contribution to the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA). The Department is also encouraging our European allies and partners to acquire their own IAMD capabilities and supporting multinational IAMD procurement initiatives such as the European Sky Shield Initiative.
- *Middle East:* The Department is taking steps to help partners in the Middle East develop a regional missile early warning system. Saudi Arabia's and the UAE's acquisition of multiple Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) batteries supports the defense of their own territories against multiple missile attacks.

## **Defense of the Homeland**

The Department continues to make progress building a layered defense capability on Guam designed to strengthen regional deterrence and, if attacked, defend against simultaneous raids of cruise, ballistic, maneuvering, and hypersonic threats. We are aiming to have initial operational capability by 2030.

In October 2023, the U.S. Navy and the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) successfully demonstrated the capability of a ballistic missile defense-configured Aegis ship to simultaneously engage both ballistic missile and aerial targets. In December 2023, MDA, U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Space Force, and U.S. Space Command successfully demonstrated the

ability of an upgraded Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI) to engage a target in an expanded engagement battle space. The Next Generation Interceptor (NGI) program is next moving into the product development phase and will provide critical improvements to the Ground-Based Midcourse Defense System, the backbone of homeland missile defense. In February 2024, two of MDA's Hypersonic and Ballistic Tracking Space Sensors (HBTSS) were launched into orbit. HBTSS will provide tracking of missiles from launch through intercept, irrespective of the launch point.

## **Investments**

Air and missile defenses play an essential role in defending population centers, critical assets and infrastructure, and more. For FY 2025, the Department is requesting \$28.4 billion for missile defeat and defense to defend the homeland, deployed forces, allies, and partners against increasingly complex missile threats. This amount is a reduction of \$1.4 billion due to the mandatory budgetary caps put in place last year, which forced the Department to make tough choices across the entire budget. Important missile defense and defeat investments include:

- \$2.5 billion to develop the NGI for ground-based midcourse defense, as well extend the service life of the current Ground Based Interceptors.
- \$1.9 billion for hypersonic defense programs, which includes \$175 million for the Glide Phase Interceptor (MDA), \$653 million for SM-6 Block IA (Navy), and \$963 million for PAC-3 MSE (Army).
- \$4.7 billion for Space-Based Missile Warning Systems, which includes \$2.6 billion in resilient Low Earth Orbit and Medium Earth Orbit missile warning/missile tracking systems, and \$2.1 billion in Overhead Persistent Infrared Systems.

- \$1.5 billion for the Army and MDA for the development and procurements of the Defense of Guam program.
- \$383.6 million for and Cruise Missile Defense of the Homeland, specifically the \$372 million for RDT&E for Over the Horizon Radar modernization.

The Department's FY25 missile defense and defeat budget positions us to meet evolving threats head-on as one critical element of the Department's broader integrated deterrence strategy.

### **Conclusion**

Nuclear, space, and missile defense capabilities remain central to the National Defense Strategy and our ability to deter competitors in this challenging security environment. As we contend with dynamic threats, the Department remains committed to making the critical investments necessary to strengthen our strategic forces posture. Thank you to the Committee for its tireless dedication to the Department and our servicemembers, and I look forward to answering your questions.