Statement of

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Chairman Katko, Ranking Member Rice, and members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Office of Global Strategies (OGS) and our efforts to mitigate the international aviation security risk to the United States.

TSA's mission is to protect the nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. Within TSA, OGS works proactively with international and domestic partners to reduce security risks to international transportation modes. When a new or potential threat or vulnerability emerges, OGS coordinates with foreign governments, air carriers, and international organizations to implement responses that will effectively mitigate the likelihood of a successful attack. This involves a spectrum of activities to identify risk in terms of threat, vulnerability, and consequence. Once a threat is identified, OGS analyzes the underlying factors and develops mitigation plans.

Identifying the Inbound Risk

Under title 49 of Chapter 449, United States Code, the Secretary of Homeland Security is required to assess security at all foreign airports served by U.S. aircraft operators and at those foreign airports serving as last point of departure locations for foreign air carriers using, at a minimum, the security standards adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The Secretary's authority to do so has been delegated to OGS on behalf of TSA. Under this authority, as well as under regulations at 49 C.F.R. §§1544.3 and 1546.3, OGS identifies vulnerabilities at foreign locations through assessments of foreign airports and inspections of air carriers that fly from those airports.

To determine the appropriate frequency of the assessment and inspection visits, OGS developed a methodology, using the threat, vulnerability and consequence model, to define the risk associated with each airport under its jurisdiction. This methodology ensures the allocation of OGS assets is based on the likelihood of a location being targeted (threat), the protective measures in place (vulnerability), and the impact of the loss of that airport's services (consequence). Once this is determined, assessments are coordinated by the applicable TSA

Representatives (TSARs) and completed by a team of Transportation Security Specialists (TSSs) from one of our six Regional Operation Centers (ROCs) located worldwide.

In addition, OGS engages in recognition of international programs commensurate with TSA's own requirements in the United States, as well as interagency initiatives, and screening pilots. These DHS programs – such as the recognition of National Cargo and National Explosive Detection Canine Security Programs, the Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT), and the Air Cargo Advance Screening Pilot – provide TSA with opportunities to identify vulnerabilities at last point of departure (LPD) airports overseas while also engaging closely with domestic and international partners to promote information sharing.

In Fiscal Year 2015, our TSSs performed 289 air carrier inspections and 146 foreign airport assessments. Our commensurability programs also continued to thrive, with the recognition of now 40 National Cargo and three National Explosives Detection Canine Security Programs with foreign governments, to include the 28 Member States of the European Union.

Analyzing the Inbound Risk

OGS works to fully gauge the inbound risk from LPD airports based on specific attack methods. This analysis provides valuable insight into what mitigation actions would have the greatest impact to reduce inbound risk.

OGS gathers data through foreign airport assessments, air carrier inspections, and other operational activities and feeds it into its risk methodology framework. OGS then analyzes each area of concern to identify high-risk locations, possible attack methods, and key risk factors. LPD locations deemed to be highly vulnerable or high risk are further analyzed through a review process that involves subject matter experts within OGS. This entire process enables OGS to evaluate the key risk drivers with a focus on identifying vulnerabilities at that LPD location and their associated root causes to determine the appropriate mitigation strategy.

Mitigating the Inbound Risk

OGS has a variety of tools available to mitigate issues identified during airport assessments, air carrier inspections, or other visits. Options range from providing on-the-spot correction recommendations, conducting formal training, and recommending enacting a Public Notice stating that the airport does not implement adequate security measures, or suspending service entirely. These last two responses are usually considered when all other attempts have failed in assisting the airport or host government to improve security. When a specific threat is identified or significant vulnerabilities warrant additional and immediate mitigation actions, TSA may issue Security Directives (SDs) and Emergency Amendments (EAs) for implementation by air carriers at selected LPD locations. TSA works diligently to develop appropriate regulatory language for the SDs and EAs to address identified vulnerabilities and also communicate new policy requirements with foreign and domestic partners.

SDs are regulations issued to mitigate threats posed to transportation for U.S. airport and aircraft operators, and EAs are issued to foreign air carriers. These regulations apply to all U.S. air carriers operating anywhere, foreign air carriers operating to or from the United States and U.S. airport operators. SDs and EAs are intended to mitigate security related risks against civil aviation. Additionally, TSA may issue information circulars to regulated parties to share security concerns.

Last month, OGS coordinated with internal and external partners to develop SDs and EAs related to the crash of Metrojet Flight 9268 in the Sinai Peninsula at 8 LPDs in the region.

Following issuance of these SDs and EAs, OGS conducted visits or inspections to the regulated air carriers at the applicable last point of departure airports to verify compliance with the additional measures. Follow-up inspections will allow TSA to continue to assess continued compliance and whether any additional or modified measures are necessary in light of evolving threats. As with other vulnerability-driven SDs and EAs, the results of these visits will enable TSA to determine if the mitigation actions were successful.

Another important part of OGS's mitigation efforts is capacity development. OGS provides aviation security training to foreign partners through a variety of courses in screener supervisory skills, preventative security measures, crisis management, basic security, cargo security inspections, and train-the-trainer programs, among others. In addition, TSA provides equipment loans to those countries that do not have the allocated resources to procure their own equipment. Often, OGS works in conjunction with its international partners, such as Australia or the United Kingdom, to provide training or equipment to countries where we have mutual operations.

Because mitigation measures overseas are implemented by each country's own personnel, OGS relies on its internationally deployed workforce to influence key decision makers in foreign locations and industry partners to understand the threat, maintain awareness of vulnerabilities to the aviation security system, and encourage the implementation of mitigation strategies. Our TSARs provide onsite representation at U.S. Embassies and Consulates around the globe. TSARs are based in Abu Dhabi, Amman, Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Brasilia, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Dakar, Johannesburg, London, Madrid, Manila, Mexico City, Miami, Nairobi, Nassau, Ottawa, Panama City, Paris, Rabat, Rome, Singapore, Sydney, The Hague, Tokyo, and Warsaw. The TSARs all have regional responsibilities in addition to their duty post assignment. International Industry Representatives, also located in Embassies and Consulates around the world, serve as TSA's primary representatives to regulated non-U.S. air carriers and U.S. aircraft operators that serve international airports.

OGS also conducts extensive outreach and engagement at the global, regional, and bilateral levels with our international counterparts. OGS collaborates on mitigation measures to counter existing threats as well as new and emerging threats. Specifically, OGS works with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to establish and enhance baseline international standards for aviation security. As the U.S. Government's representative to the ICAO Aviation Security Panel of Experts, TSA works with other international representatives to shape international aviation security standards on important issues such as cargo security and the coordination of capacity development. TSA also engages international air carriers and aviation stakeholders, such as the International Air Transport Association, Airlines for America, the American Association of Airport Executives, and Airports Council International, or in forums like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the North American Aviation Trilateral. TSA's engagement is continuous, and includes the highest organizational levels: for example, Administrator Neffenger recently visited his counterparts in London, Amsterdam, and Tel Aviv to discuss ongoing security vulnerabilities and to share best practices with our international partners.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss TSA's work mitigating inbound risk to the United States from overseas. We are constantly looking at more effective ways to improve and enhance the international aviation security arena to ensure the

freedom of movement for people and commerce in an ever-evolving threat environment. I look forward to answering your questions.