

NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

MS. THERESA M. WHELAN

PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
HOMELAND DEFENSE AND GLOBAL SECURITY
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND
EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES
FEBRUARY 11, 2020

NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Stefanik, and members of the subcommittee, I am honored to testify today regarding the Department of Defense's (DoD) efforts related to the countering weapons of mass destruction (CWMD) Enterprise. The DoD CWMD Enterprise's mission is to dissuade, deter, and, when necessary, defeat actors of concern who threaten or use WMD against the United States and our interests. Key to ensuring mission success is the DoD CWMD Enterprise's capability and capacity to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the effects of WMD use. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Ken Rapuano and I work alongside Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (DUSD) for Acquisition and Sustainment Alan Shaffer; Director, Defense Threat Reduction Agency Vayl Oxford; Deputy Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, Vice Admiral Timothy Szymanski; and other DoD, interagency, and international counterparts to advance this mission in the face of existing WMD threats and a rapidly changing threat landscape that will yield new ones.

As we look to prevent and contain WMD threats abroad, we also work consistently to ensure we can respond to crises and mitigate the effects of WMD use at home and abroad – all while continuously improving internal DoD practices and processes. The DoD CWMD mission is extensive and complex, requiring expertise from across the Department's components to ensure the effective development and implementation of guidance, analysis, capabilities, and activities. The DoD CWMD Enterprise continues to work collaboratively and with increasing efficiency to prevent WMD proliferation and acquisition, contain and reduce threats, and respond to WMD-related incidents and contingencies.

THREAT ENVIRONMENT

The Department's CWMD Enterprise is postured to address current and evolving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats. The threats of WMD use and proliferation are rising, and all of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) "2+3" actors (China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, and Violent Extremist Organizations) have or are pursuing WMD capabilities that could threaten the United States or U.S. interests.

The DoD CWMD Enterprise is postured against a range of threat actors. The 2018 National Defense Strategy and the evolving WMD threat environment focus our attention on Russia and China. China maintains and advances a modest but growing nuclear weapons arsenal and associated delivery systems, including road-mobile and silo-based intercontinental ballistic

missiles (ICBMs), ballistic missile submarines, and medium-range ballistic missiles. China maintains a public policy of “no-first-use” of nuclear weapons, and publicly pledges never to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State. China is a State Party to both the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and has pledged to meet its commitments under these arms control treaties. At the same time, WMD material continues to be proliferated from China to North Korea, Iran, and other actors of concern – not necessarily with the Chinese Government’s direction, but without the Government’s sustained focus to stop it. We continue to assess how to counter WMD proliferation threats from China. Additionally, given China’s military-civil fusion, the U.S. Government continues to be concerned about China leveraging U.S. and other international components to advance its nuclear and other strategic military programs.

Russia has prioritized investments in its nuclear weapons arsenal and a diverse set of associated delivery systems. Russia has committed \$28 billion and is now nearing completion of the modernization of its nuclear triad. President Vladimir Putin announced in 2018 that Russia is developing several destabilizing new strategic nuclear weapons that are designed to evade and counter traditional missile defenses. These include a nuclear powered cruise missile, an autonomous underwater vehicle, and a recently fielded hypersonic glide vehicle. In addition to investing in strategic nuclear weapons, Russia is increasing its already large arsenal of non-strategic or ‘tactical’ nuclear weapons, which Russia will use to compensate against NATO’s conventional military superiority. This necessitates increased attention on how the Joint Force could fight and win in a nuclear contaminated environment. Additionally, Russia’s use of a chemical weapon in Salisbury, UK, to poison the Skripal family shows that Russia has maintained an undeclared chemical weapons program and has not met its obligations under the CWC. We have serious concerns about Russia’s chemical weapons program and the threat it poses to U.S. and Allied forces.

We assess that North Korea is the country most likely to pose a WMD threat to our Joint Force and, thus, North Korea dictates a significant amount of our attention and efforts. Despite the U.S. Government’s tireless efforts to reach a negotiated denuclearization arrangement with North Korea, Kim Jong Un’s regime continues to pursue WMD capabilities, putting the United States and our allies and partners at risk. North Korea’s continued actions in this regard, which violate multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs), undermine the existing

nonproliferation regime and threaten international stability. The Department works with international partners to implement obligations under relevant UNSCRs and to contain North Korea's WMD ambitions. The Department remains postured to respond to North Korean WMD and missile attacks and works with allies and partners to ensure they are similarly prepared to mitigate North Korean CBRN threats.

We continue to watch Iranian actions to breach limits on Iran's nuclear program. Iran said in January 2020 that its uranium enrichment program is now operating without constraints, though there are no indications at present that Iran has made the strategic decision to pursue a nuclear weapon. Significantly, Iran continues to permit access to International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors, in accordance with its international nuclear commitments. DoD will continue to work in support of the President's direction to ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon, and will continue to monitor any other Iranian WMD activities, to include potential efforts to develop central nervous system-acting chemicals for offensive purposes.

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) maintain varying levels of interest in acquiring and using WMD. ISIS's use of chemical weapons in Iraq and Syria makes clear the threat posed by VEOs gaining access to materials, knowledge, skills, and the safe harbor necessary to develop and use WMD. The availability of materials, knowledge, and skills necessary to create, at a minimum, crude biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear WMD continues to be a significant risk that the United States and its allies and partners work to mitigate.

The WMD threat landscape is changing continuously. Today's threats will not necessarily be linear in leading to tomorrow's concerns. This is evident in the risks posed by rapid advances in biotechnologies, such as genome editing, genetic sequencing, and engineered biology, which increase the potential, variety, and ease of access to biological weapons. The Department is closely tracking these developments, as well as converging enabling technologies such as artificial intelligence and high-performance computing. The DoD CWMD Enterprise works simultaneously to mitigate these potential threats while ensuring that the United States is also postured to realize the benefits offered by these emerging technologies.

Meanwhile, certain countries, such as Russia and Syria, are not living up to their treaty obligations and thereby are threatening the rules-based international order that the United States and our allies and partners helped to establish to increase stability and security by deterring

actors from developing and using WMD. The Syrian regime has used chemical weapons against the Syrian people in attacks that have killed or injured thousands.

OSD POLICY'S ROLE IN THE CWMD MISSION

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) is the principal staff assistant (PSA) to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense for developing, coordinating, and overseeing the implementation of DoD strategy and policies for CWMD, in line with DoD and national strategies. In practice, OUSD(P) develops and guides CWMD strategies and policies, and leads related interagency and international engagements. My team and I work closely with our colleagues across the Department — including from the Offices of the Under Secretaries of Defense for Research and Engineering (R&E), for Acquisition and Sustainment (A&S), for Personnel and Readiness (P&R), and for Intelligence and Security, and the Joint Staff and the Combatant Commands — to develop and implement cohesive policies in support of the Secretary's priorities and the National Defense Strategy.

The Department's efforts to address WMD threats span the CWMD mission spectrum: from preventing new actors' acquisition of WMD, to containing existing threats, to responding to CBRN incidents. The variety of offices in the Department that focus on CWMD, as enumerated in DoD's Report on CWMD, submitted in compliance with Section 1082 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 (Public Law 115-232), offer unique expertise in ensuring our forces are prepared to respond to and operate in a CBRN-contaminated environment to ensure resilience and survivability, while also working to avoid such a necessity by preventing WMD threats from emerging or escalating.

The DoD CWMD-Unity of Effort (UoE) Council, which recently completed its first official year in operation, is a key cross-cutting venue for identifying gaps in our approach and bringing together all stakeholders to drive towards solutions. With Assistant Secretary Rapuano and Lt Gen David W. Allvin (Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy, Joint Staff) as co-chairs, and DUSD Shaffer, as the Vice Chair, in his role as Performing the Duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs (NCB), the Council is increasing members' and staff awareness of ongoing DoD CWMD activities, sharing concerns, and reducing overlaps in how the Department's CWMD Enterprise operates. By creating a venue for us to meet regularly and hold frank discussions concerning Department-wide CWMD-related gaps and opportunities, the CWMD-UoE Council is helping build a more sustainable and

resilient force, and is working towards providing a type of “consolidated buying power” to address gaps as they are identified.

Over the last year, the CWMD-UoE Council focused on four primary agenda items — two related to the potential use of pharmaceutical-based agents (PBAs) as a chemical weapon; one related to Joint Force readiness for a North Korea contingency; and one related to Enterprise-wide WMD prioritization — while continuing to advance issues raised previously by stakeholders toward resolution. Previously raised issues include ensuring adequate operational guidance for exposure to chemical and biological weapons in a contingency, DoD policy and capability to address contaminated human remains, and preparing for noncombatant evacuation operations in a CBRN-contaminated environment.

With the increasing concern and questions about the potential use of PBAs as chemical weapons, the CWMD-UoE Council assessed the implications of, and appropriate scenarios for, using DoD CWMD authorities to counter the PBA threat. The CWMD-UoE Council also worked with the Joint Staff Directorate for Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment (J8) to initiate a capabilities-based assessment that will evaluate whether U.S. forces have gaps in operating within a PBA-contaminated environment. The CWMD-UoE Council will be available to support J8-led efforts to address gaps that the study identifies.

Addressing shortfalls related to a potential North Korea contingency is a CWMD-UoE Council priority. After the Korea Readiness Review and the assessment of U.S. Forces Korea CBRN materiel shortfalls per Senate Report 115-262, which accompanied Section 2987 of the NDAA for FY 2019, the DoD CWMD Enterprise harnessed the CWMD-UoE Council to help close the gaps. The CWMD-UoE Council Capabilities Subcommittee has worked to ensure that there are leads for each outstanding item, and is now monitoring progress toward ensuring the gaps are closed in a timely manner so our forces will be ready to operate and win in a contaminated environment, if necessary. At our next CWMD-UoE Council Executive Committee meeting, the DoD CWMD Enterprise will collectively discuss how to address eliminating any remaining gaps to ensure U.S. forces are resilient in the face of WMD threats on the Korean Peninsula.

In the United States, DoD supports its Federal- and State- partners' preparedness efforts to respond to CBRN incidents in the homeland, such as integrated regional planning, training, and exercises in coordination with Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency

Management Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other Federal partners. DoD assists civil authorities' efforts to detect, identify, neutralize, dismantle, and dispose of CBRN threats before they reach our nation's borders and if they succeed in penetrating our borders, DoD leverages these capabilities to prevent employment against our nation and its population. DoD has developed a wide range of CBRN-response capabilities and continuously plans, trains and exercises so that DoD is prepared to employ these capabilities rapidly in support to civil authorities to help save and sustain lives in the aftermath of a CBRN incident.

The DoD CBRN Response Enterprise (CRE), approximately 18,735 Active, Guard, and Reserve military personnel, is postured to respond within hours of a CBRN incident. The CRE brings critical capabilities such as detection and assessment of CBRN hazards; casualty search and extraction; casualty decontamination; emergency medical, patient triage, trauma care, and surgical and intensive medical care; fatality recovery; ground and rotary-wing air patient movement; security; command and control; engineering; logistics; transportation; and aviation lift.

DoD is currently conducting an analysis of CRE mission requirements to align capabilities to the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS).

PRIORITIZATION EFFORTS

The CWMD-UoE Council is also focused on enabling the Department's CWMD Enterprise to work more collaboratively and to guarantee the best return on DoD investment through an OUSD(P)-led prioritization effort. The CWMD Policy Office, with assistance and contributions from the other DoD stakeholders, is leading an effort to prioritize WMD threats and provide related policy guidance for the Department to organize DoD CWMD operations, activities, and investments (OAI) around a cohesive threat picture. This prioritized list of threats will reflect traditional intelligence-related factors, such as capability and intent, as well as policy factors related to DoD CWMD missions, capabilities, and authorities. The prioritization effort also take into account the guidance provided by the 2017 National Security Strategy (NSS) and 2018 NDS. The resulting policy guidance will inform and, where appropriate, drive decision-making on CWMD-related OAI.

Ultimately this prioritization process is not intended to replace prioritization processes already employed by various DoD CWMD Enterprise stakeholders that are conducted through

the lens of their unique authorities and missions, but will be designed to complement those efforts. For example, OUSD(P) sets the strategic priorities for DoD's Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program and over the last year instituted a new approach to ensure alignment with the WMD threat reduction objectives articulated in the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy. Moving forward, we will incorporate the Unity of Effort Council WMD prioritization work and strategic guidance into our CTR prioritization methodology. The DoD CTR prioritization effort will evolve further to reflect the CWMD-UoE Council's forthcoming DoD-wide WMD prioritization guidance.

OUSD(P)/CWMD ROLE IN NDS EXECUTION

The DoD CWMD Enterprise plays a critical role in achieving NDS objectives. The NDS "2+3" actors pose great concerns because of their development or possession of WMD programs. The DoD CWMD Enterprise has several distinct responsibilities: prevent WMD proliferation and acquisition, contain current WMD programs, and ensure U.S. forces can fight and win in a contaminated environment as well as help manage the consequences of a WMD crisis. Through these responsibilities, we are continuing to advance the three NDS lines of effort: (1) restore readiness through lethality; (2) business reform; and (3) strengthen alliances and building partnerships.

Restore Readiness through Lethality

The DoD CWMD Enterprise, using OUSD(P) guidance, works to prevent WMD threats from emerging and to contain existing threats so an actor that poses an otherwise manageable challenge is unable to become a strategic threat through the development or acquisition of WMD. For example, the Department supports interagency-led efforts by remaining prepared to interdict WMD and delivery-system related materials going to threat actors that cannot be stopped through other means. OUSD(P) also works to bolster the strength of the international nuclear nonproliferation system by lending expertise to the Department of State-spurred Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) initiative that is bringing key countries worldwide together to advance the disarmament objectives under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Additionally, the DoD's CTR Program has contributed to force readiness and lethality by responding to and preventing outbreaks of disease that could affect DoD or allied personnel, whether or not such diseases are caused by biological weapons. For example, during the 2014 Ebola outbreak, DoD's CTR Program-provided training and capabilities contributed to

West African nations' ability to stop the spread of the disease. Similarly, in 2019, Uganda leveraged capabilities previously provided by CTR to help stop Ebola's spread from neighboring DRC. Both examples demonstrate DoD's unique authorities and capabilities through the CTR Program to halt outbreaks of diseases of security concern and keep the force mission-capable.

Containing existing threats also bounds the WMD problem set from advancing past a point where our forces would be unable to compete, as does preparing forces to respond to CBRN crises. The readiness of U.S. forces to operate and prevail in a CBRN environment will deny adversaries any benefits from attempts to degrade our effectiveness in a conflict. In late 2019, DoD and the Republic of Korea Ministry of Defense (ROK MoD) signed a Joint Statement outlining one another's commitment to reduce the threats posed by WMD, and to utilize the DoD CTR Program's authorities and resources to work towards common objectives. Additionally, through U.S. DoD-ROK MoD engagements we will continue to reduce the risk posed by CBRN employment. As a direct result of these engagements, ROK restructured their Nuclear Characterization Team construct and sent over two dozen ROK military members to four weeks of individual and unit level skills training, ensuring the availability of a professional cadre of military service members.

The CWMD Policy Office is also working to limit North Korea's ability to advance its WMD and missile programs via U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), by coordinating with partners through a United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) Enforcement Coordination Cell. This Cell is charged with documenting and disrupting illicit ship-to-ship transfers of refined petroleum, as the refined petroleum is available to support and advance its WMD and missile programs. Australia, Canada, France, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, and the United Kingdom have all contributed personnel or operational assets to support diplomatic and intelligence-led efforts to disrupt networks and, where possible, prevent transfers from occurring.

Business Reform

As I mentioned earlier, we are focusing the DoD CWMD Enterprise on core mission functions to achieve peak return on investment. The ongoing CWMD-UoE Council efforts to align officials to support high-priority requirements, prioritize OAI, and remove any overlaps to contribute to a high-functioning community of effective stakeholders. For example, DoD is refocusing efforts to integrate early coordination with host nations to help plan for their

sustainment of DoD's CTR Program training and capabilities. Such forward planning contributes to lasting and meaningful threat reduction contributions to the CWMD mission at-large, while helping the Department be good stewards of taxpayer resources.

Strengthening Alliances and Building Partnerships

Finally, the DoD CWMD Enterprise's work contributes to strong alliances and partnerships, which in turn enables burden-sharing. We work with capable allies and partners to increase and sustain common ground and collective resolve in the face of WMD adversaries, and to uphold international norms, treaty commitments, and counterproliferation efforts. The Department has affirmed its support of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) by hosting, co-hosting, and participating in eight bilateral and multilateral events in FY 2019, with an additional eight scheduled for FY 2020, to include the U.S.-hosted Fortune Guard 20, which will kick off a new round of the PSI Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation.

The Department is taking full advantage of its authority under Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 333, to build partner nation CWMD preparedness and incident response capability in countries such as: North Macedonia, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Senegal, Morocco, Philippines, Thailand, Lebanon, and Oman. In so doing, we are working to ensure that our partner nations have a CWMD response capability that is interoperable with U.S. CBRN forces, once deployed in times of crisis.

We also work regularly to expand CWMD partnerships with key allies, though I will save the examples for the classified session.

Conclusion

Looking ahead, the DoD CWMD Enterprise's agility and expertise will enable us to address the existing and emerging WMD threats of 2020 and beyond. While containing the WMD threats posed by our greatest adversaries and preventing manageable concerns from posing strategic WMD threats, we will continue to improve upon the Department's ability to address WMD threats and operate and win in a contaminated CBRN environment. The prioritization efforts led by my team will further ensure that the DoD CWMD Enterprise is focused on areas where the Department has a core role, and will help to reach peak return on our investments. Thank you for your continued commitment to and support of the CWMD mission.