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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE HOUSE
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Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Cooper, members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on missile defense and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran. I am grateful for your consistent attention to and continuing support of the critical mission of defending our homeland, our partners and Allies, and deployed forces from a growing ballistic missile threat.

I would like to state upfront that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) places no limitations on the Department of Defense. For the Department, we do not see our activities in terms of deterrence or reassurance in the Middle East fundamentally changing, and this includes our enhanced missile defense plans. For decades, we have focused on and prioritized the totality of challenges that Iran poses to our interests in such a vital region. As my colleague Elissa Slotkin mentioned to you this morning, the Department has organized itself to deal with Iran through our preparations, partnerships, force posture, and plans. This is particularly true when it comes to our activities in the face of Iran's ballistic missile capabilities, the topic of my testimony today. I must say upfront that although I am happy to speak at length about our missile defense plans, non-proliferation programs and actions that restrict Iran's nuclear activities and ballistic missile development fall outside of my portfolio and I will have to defer those questions to the State Department.

As you have been briefed, the JCPOA is a nuclear deal, not a ballistic missile deal. Because Iran continues to develop and deploy a wide range of ballistic missiles, there is nothing in the deal that obviates the need for ballistic missile defenses (BMD) and we envision no changes to our missile defense posture or plans in the region or elsewhere as a result of the JCPOA. Iran has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East, and today can strike targets throughout the region and into Eastern Europe. In addition to its growing missile inventories, Iran is seeking to enhance the lethality and effectiveness of existing systems. While Iran has not yet developed an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), its progress on space launch vehicles, which utilize technologies applicable to ICBM-range missiles, provides Iran the means to develop longer range missiles. There is no doubt in my mind that Iran's ballistic missiles activities continue to pose a risk to the United States, and our partners and allies in Europe, Israel, and the Gulf. However, this is exactly why the United States has maintained a

robust BMD posture throughout the region and it has been a focus of cooperation with those same partners and allies.

Homeland Defense

As noted, Iran has not yet deployed ICBMs, but I want to reaffirm that the U.S. homeland is currently protected against potential limited ICBM attacks from Iran should they deploy such a capability in the future. We continue to strengthen our homeland defense posture and invest in technologies which better enable us to address emerging threats in the next decade. These improvements include continued improvement to the ground-based midcourse defense system (GMD). We remain on track to deploy 14 additional interceptors in Alaska by the end of 2017. These interceptors, along with the 30 that are currently deployed, will provide protection against both North Korean and Iranian ICBM threats as they emerge and evolve.

The Department is committed to modernizing the GMD system to make it a more reliable and effective defense of the United States. The budget request we submitted in February includes funding for development of a new radar that, when deployed in Alaska, will provide persistent sensor coverage and improve discrimination capabilities against North Korea. It also continues funding for the redesign of the kill vehicle for the Ground-Based Interceptor. Although we have fixed the causes of past failures in the GBI related to the Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle, the redesigned kill vehicle will improve reliability and provide greater discrimination capability.

As directed by Congress, the Missile Defense Agency is also conducting environmental impact studies at four sites in the Continental United States (CONUS) that could host an additional GBI missile field. These studies will be completed in 2016. While a potential additional CONUS interceptor site would add some operational capability, it would come at a significant materiel development and service sustainment cost. We believe that currently the highest priorities for the protection of the homeland should be improving the reliability and effectiveness of the GBI and improving the GMD sensor architecture. The current GMD system provides coverage of the entire United States from North Korean and potential Iranian ICBMs. If an ICBM threat were to emerge in numbers that necessitated the deployment of additional interceptors, the steps being taken now, to include conducting an environmental impact

statement, will shorten the construction timelines associated with deployment of a new missile defense site.

Regional Missile Defense

The Administration continues to recognize the Iranian ballistic missile threat, remains committed to strengthening our regional missile defense capabilities, and will keep working with partners and allies to strengthen their capabilities and foster interoperability. As President Obama stated in Prague on April 5, 2009 “Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile activity poses a real threat, not just to the United States, but to Iran's neighbors and our allies. As long as the threat from Iran persists, we will go forward with a missile defense system that is cost-effective and proven.” I would like to note that the President said nuclear AND ballistic missile activity.

In 2009 we pledged that the European Phased Adaptive Approach would have the ability to defend all NATO Europe from Iranian ballistic missiles and that pledge remains. EPAA Phases 1 and 2 are designed to address the SRBM and MRBM threat to Europe with existing and new BMD capabilities as they became available. The Aegis Ashore site in Romania (part of Phase 2) is nearing completion and will achieve technical capability declaration by the end of this year. The fourth BMD-capable U.S. Navy destroyer will arrive in Rota later this month. Because of the significant capability this weapon system will add to NATO BMD, we are working with Allies and the NATO staff to integrate it into NATO's existing BMD system. Phase 3 is designed to expand existing defenses to address MRBMs and IRBMs over the next several years. We will break ground on the Aegis Ashore site in Poland during the spring of 2016. That site will become operational during the 2018 timeframe. A new interceptor, the SM-3 Block IIA, along with upgrades to our fielded weapon systems and command and control network will enable EPAA Phase 3 capabilities to extend coverage to all NATO allies and U.S. forces and bases in Europe.

In addition, European NATO member nations are investing in BMD systems to complement capabilities fielded under EPAA Phase 2 and 3. For example, the Netherlands and Denmark are investing in upgrades for their radars for their Air Defense Frigates. The first test of an improved radar on a Dutch Air Defense Command Frigate will be during a demonstration and test in October 2015. Additionally, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Greece have Patriot

systems, while France and Italy have other point defense systems. And all Allies contribute to NATO's common-funded command, control, and data integration systems.

Outside of NATO, our commitment to working with Israel to address the Iranian ballistic missile threat is iron clad. We are currently co-developing missile defense technology with Israel on David's Sling and the Arrow system. Since 2001, we have provided over three billion dollars for BMD to Israel, including funding for Iron Dome. We will continue to prioritize Israel missile defense efforts. More recently, the Secretary visited Israel in July and discussed this specific issue with both Prime Minister Netanyahu and Minister of Defense Ya'alon. The Department continues to work closely with Israel on the threat posed by Iran's ballistic missile forces and these activities will continue. As the Secretary noted, we are full speed ahead on addressing these issues in collaboration with our Israeli counterparts.

The Department also continues to implement the deployment of missile defenses with a number of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which are tailored to the security circumstances in the Middle East and that focus on security cooperation and building partner capacity. Our first goal is to support the purchase of missile defense systems through the foreign military sales (FMS) program. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is procuring the THAAD system, with the first delivery expected this year. This is in addition to the UAE's earlier purchase of Patriot systems, which have been delivered. Kuwait is purchasing Patriot PAC-3 batteries. Qatar recently signed a FMS case for Patriot batteries and has expressed interest in the future purchase of multiple THAAD batteries. Saudi Arabia is in the process of upgrading its existing Patriot PAC-2 batteries to the PAC-3 configuration and recently purchased PAC-3 interceptors. In addition, Saudi Arabia has signed a technical assistance case to develop a defense design supporting potential future purchase of multiple THAAD batteries.

When complemented by U.S. bilateral missile defense, these individual efforts are likely to make a significant contribution to BMD capabilities in the region. The nature of the threat also demands that we look at how missile defense strategies are coordinated GCC-wide. We cannot rely upon equipment alone, but must also ensure our GCC allies invest in training and interoperability to employ a truly effective BMD system against the Iranian threat. Again, during the Secretary's recent travel and in discussions with the Saudi Minister of Defense last Friday, we reiterated our commitment to working with Gulf countries on missile defense, specifically

emphasizing the importance of collective BMD among the GCC and the importance of interoperability and a common intelligence picture. GCC member states committed to develop a region-wide ballistic missile defense capability, including through the development of a ballistic missile early warning system. The United States will help conduct a study to refine the requirements and develop the architecture for the GCC-wide Ballistic Missile Early Warning System. All participants decided to undertake a senior leader tabletop exercise to examine improved regional ballistic missile defense cooperation.

Another promising example of possible future expanded BMD cooperation in the region is GCC participation in the U.S. Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC). Given that one of the CAOC's missions is missile defense, including C2, the presence of the GCC partners in the CAOC presents an opportunity in the future for increased situational awareness of missile threats in the region as well as the potential for future BMD planning and operational cooperation.

I am firmly convinced that the JCPOA is the best means available to deny Iran the ability to develop nuclear weapons. This deal also allows us to maintain strong, multilateral restrictions on Iran's missile program. Under the deal, UN restrictions on ballistic missile-related transfers will remain in place for eight years after the JCPOA Adoption Day or until the IAEA reaches its Broader Conclusion, whichever is sooner. Even after that time, we will maintain the rest of the existing multilateral non-proliferation regime to prevent Iran from buying or selling ballistic missile technology. Although the ballistic missile threat from Iran remains, we will maintain a robust force posture in the region to deter against and respond to any potential Iranian aggression. We will continue to remain vigilant and hold Iran accountable against these remaining restrictions.