

**Testimony of**  
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**before the**

**House Foreign Affairs Committee**

**on**

**US Policy on Nuclear Weapons**

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I welcome the opportunity to come before you to describe recent changes and decisions on US nuclear weapons posture. As you know, the Department has just completed a total review of our entire nuclear posture which accounts for the numerous important changes the world has experienced over the last half-decade. All aspects of US nuclear posture—force structure, infrastructure, safety and security, command, control, communications and intelligence—were reviewed in depth, with no holds barred and plenty of discussion and debate within this department. I would like to describe the broad outline of the Nuclear Posture Review's results for the Committee, and then to answer the questions posed in your letter of January 26.

### Nuclear Posture Review

The Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) decisions allow us to put our nuclear programs in DoD on a stable footing after several years of rapid change in the international environment and rapid changes in our forces and programs; and at the threshold of a decade of reductions called for by the START I and START II agreements.

The President's National Security Strategy, published this July, described why the United States has a nuclear arsenal:

"Even with the Cold War over, our nation must maintain military forces that are sufficient to deter diverse threats....

"We will retain strategic nuclear forces sufficient to deter any future hostile foreign leadership with access to strategic nuclear forces from acting against our vital interests and to convince it that seeking a nuclear advantage would be futile. Therefore we will continue to maintain nuclear forces of sufficient size and capability to hold at risk a broad range of assets valued by such political and military leaders....

"A critical priority for the United States is to stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their missile delivery systems."

It is the task of the Department of Defense to calibrate our nuclear posture—our policy, our force structure, our alert rates—to the degree of overt threat we face at any particular time. Accordingly, as a result of the Nuclear Posture Review, we will be making important adjustments in our future plans for the U.S. nuclear posture. These adjustments reflect the changed political situation at the end of the Cold War and the reduced role nuclear weapons play in U.S. security. Indeed, the percentage of the DoD

budget devoted to nuclear weapons programs is lower than it has been at any time for more than thirty years.

These reductions also take place on top of the drastic adjustments and reductions in U.S. (and former Soviet) nuclear forces that have, since the end of the Cold War, already been made and are underway. Since 1988, deployed US strategic weapons have been reduced by 47%, non-strategic weapons by 90%. The levels agreed to in the January 1993 START II agreement will result in total weapons reductions of 79% by 2003 over 1988 levels.

The nuclear forces we are retaining ensure that we have a credible nuclear deterrent -- one that deters attack on the United States and our allies. As long as nuclear weapons remain a factor in international life, this must be our objective.

Today, consistent with the threat situation, our nuclear weapons are not targeted at (any) country. Should a direct threat emerge which would require us to reactivate targeting, we would hold at risk those assets valued by the leadership of the hostile state. By doing so, we would make clear that, because we were prepared to respond and were capable of doing so, those leaders should never attack us. This is the essence of nuclear deterrence.

### *Force Adjustments*

In terms of concrete changes, there are several important results of the Nuclear Posture Review:

- In general, our force structure will rely on fewer types of nuclear weapons delivery systems.
- We will retain a triad of strategic nuclear forces but we will reduce the strategic nuclear force structure we plan to retain after the START II Treaty is implemented -- for example, reducing the fleet of Trident submarines from 18 to 14, and the number of B-52 bombers from 94 to 66.
- We will eliminate entirely the capability of our surface navy to carry nuclear weapons: aircraft carriers have not carried nuclear bombs for some years, nor have surface ships carried nuclear Tomahawk cruise missiles. But as a result of the NPR, these carriers and surface ships will not retain the capability to carry such weapons.

Just as important as these force structure reductions are some improvements to further strengthen safety, security, and use control over nuclear weapons. The US has

taken since 1988 a number of steps to improve the safety and security of our nuclear weapons. We have removed all nuclear weapons from the custody of US ground and naval forces except SSBNs, and the Army and the Marines—and now, the surface navy—no longer have a nuclear role; Our bombers no longer stand day-to-day alert. In an important development stemming from the January 1994 Summit, US strategic ballistic missiles are no longer targeted against any country. We have reduced the number of nuclear storage locations by over 75%, and the number of personnel with access to weapons or control by 70%.

### *Safety Improvements*

We are highly confident of the safety, security, and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile. Nevertheless, the NPR identified several areas for further improvements in US forces' safety, security and use control, and we will pursue those upgrades so that all US nuclear systems will have the most modern safety devices possible. We will accelerate the equipping of our missile submarines with coded locking devices, and we will upgrade the locking devices on our bombers and silo-based missiles.

### *Alert Posture*

We have taken numerous recent actions that have reduced our alert posture. Our command post structure has been reduced significantly and the operations tempo of our world-wide airborne command post system has been significantly reduced since the Cold War. A dramatic change has been the new mission for the National Airborne Operations Center, previously only used in a nuclear role, is now available to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for use in civil disasters. Bombers have not been on day-to-day alert since President Bush's Nuclear Initiative in September 1991. ICBMs will continue to be targeted on broad ocean areas, but will remain manned and on alert day-to-day. SSBNs will not be targeted at any country.

These adjustments reflect the continuing profound changes in the world, and our hopes for a world where nuclear weapons play a smaller role for all, as they do for us.

### *START I and START II*

We kept in mind as we conducted the NPR that START I has not yet entered into force, nor has START II been ratified. For this reason, and because of the uncertain future of the rapid political and economic change still underway in the former Soviet Union, we made two judgments in the NPR:

- First, we concluded that deeper unilateral reductions beyond those we made in the NPR would be imprudent at this time.

- Second, we took several actions to ensure that we could reconstitute our forces as the decade went along, if we needed to. For example, we determined we would retain the Triad as a hedge against system failure of a leg of the triad, either because of technical failure of a delivery platform or warhead, or technological breakthroughs by potential adversaries.

On the other hand, if all goes as planned with the implementation of START I and START II, nothing in the NPR precludes further reductions in the future. We therefore believe that we have struck a prudent balance in the NPR between leading the way to a safer world and hedging against the unexpected.

### Cooperative Threat Reduction

We are trying to hasten the START implementation process through, among other things, our "Nunn-Lugar" Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programs with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. While the CTR program started out slowly, the pace of implementation increased dramatically over the past year. The CTR obligation rate which was at \$70 million in January 1994 has increased six-fold to over \$425 million by September 1994. Over 7,000 items of assistance have been delivered. Today, \$897 million is committed in 38 signed project implementing agreements with the FSU states; 30 of these agreements were signed since June last year.

### Summit Initiatives

We are making adjustments in the US nuclear posture unilaterally, in response to our own assessment of our military needs. They are consistent with, but are not required by, any new arms control agreements. We hope, however, that they provide an occasion for Russia to undertake a comparable review, and to make similar adjustments in its strategic force plans, non-strategic force plans, and ways of ensuring safety, security, and use control. Last week President Yeltsin came to Washington to meet with President Clinton, and they had the opportunity to discuss these adjustments, which are made possible in important measure by our new security relationship with Russia -- which Dr. Perry has referred to as a "Pragmatic Partnership."

At last week's Summit, the Presidents made important progress on a number of arms control issues, and in fact, took steps down the road of further reductions and increased cooperation on nuclear issues. The Presidents confirmed their intention to seek early ratification of the START II Treaty, once the START I treaty enters into force, and expressed their desire to exchange START II instruments of ratification at the next US-Russia Summit meeting. The Presidents also instructed their experts to intensify

their dialogue to compare conceptual approaches and to develop concrete steps to adapt the nuclear forces and practices on both sides to the changed international security environment, including the possibility, after ratification of START II, of further reductions of, and limitations on, remaining nuclear forces.

### *Early Deactivation*

In an important new development, the Presidents agreed that, once the START II Treaty is ratified, the United States and Russia will proceed to deactivate all strategic nuclear delivery systems to be reduced under START II by removing their nuclear warheads or taking other steps to remove them from combat status. This initiative reinforces the NPR's themes of rapid implementation of existing arms control agreements, moving away from Cold War risks of accidental or unauthorized launch, and strengthening the safety and security of warhead storage.

### *Transparency and Data Exchange*

Another important Summit initiative was the prospect for confidence-building and transparency measures in the area of nuclear forces. At the next meeting of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission, the two nations will exchange detailed information on aggregate stockpiles of nuclear warheads, on stocks of fissile materials and on their safety and security. The sides will develop a process for exchanging this information on a regular basis.

### *Nuclear Proliferation*

The Nuclear Posture Review highlighted the importance of non-proliferation in US security policy. The growing security threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles is at the top of DoD's list of security priorities. Dr. Ashton Carter, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, is responsible for formulation and overseeing the implementation of DoD's counterproliferation initiative. This effort is actively coordinated with the Joint Staff and the Acquisition community.

The Committee, in its January 26 letter, raised six sets of questions which I would like now to address based on what we learned and decided in the NPR.

### *- 1. Strategy and 2. Targeting*

The nature of the threat today is different than the one we faced during the Cold War. The Review confirmed that, with the demise of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, nuclear weapons will play a changed role in our national security strategy. But there are problems we must deal with as we reshape our nuclear posture.

With regard to Russia, first we must take into account the small but real danger that reform in Russia might fail and a new government arise hostile to the United States, still armed with 25,000 nuclear weapons. This process requires us to maintain deterrence as we reduce our strategic forces and to carry out our reductions in concert with reductions in the FSU. Second, because of instabilities attendant to the drastic social, political and economic reforms underway in Russia and the other new states, we must be especially concerned with the security of nuclear components and materials on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

We are also concerned about the potential threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction around the world

Nuclear deterrence continues to be fundamental to our national security objectives. We have maintained both strategic forces and non-strategic nuclear forces for the purpose of deterrence.

Our nuclear posture has already changed significantly in recognition of the end of the Cold War. For instance, the U.S. and Russia agreed that as of May 30th of this year, our respective nuclear forces would not be targeted on a day-to-day basis. Both the U.S. command post structure and the operations tempo of the world-wide airborne post system have been significantly reduced since the end of the Cold War. Bombers are not on day-to-day alert. SSBNs have a reduced number of boats at sea day-to-day.

But deterrence is ensured by having a survivable capability to hold at risk what potentially hostile leaders value, and we will maintain that capability. We do not target any nation today. But we must be prepared for the possible emergence of a hostile government in Russia or failure of the arms control process in the FSU. We will also retain the capability to hold at risk that which is valued by other potentially hostile powers, in order to deter those countries.

### *- 3. Nuclear Safety*

We are highly confident of the safety, security, and reliability of the US nuclear stockpile. Nevertheless, as I noted earlier, the NPR identified several areas for further

improvements in US forces' safety, security and use control, and we will pursue those upgrades so that all US nuclear systems will have the most modern safety devices possible. The U.S. nuclear weapon stockpile is currently safe and reliable. In order to maintain the stockpile, over the next few years, we will need to further develop other safeguard programs aimed at maintaining confidence in the safety and reliability of our weapons.

By increased effort in these areas, we believe we can maintain confidence in our nuclear arsenal without nuclear testing. Retiring older weapon systems, changing operating procedures, and evaluating the safety and reliability of some weapon and delivery systems are also some of the things we can do. The Department of Energy can provide additional details regarding their part of the stockpile stewardship program.

#### *- 4. Nuclear Weapons Force Planning and Arms Control*

##### *START I and START II Implementation*

As we made adjustments in our future plans for the U.S. nuclear posture as a result of the NPR, uppermost in our minds was the fact that the states of the former Soviet Union are yet in the early stages of implementing the agreed reductions called for by the START I and II agreements. Although all five parties to the START I Treaty have ratified it, the Treaty has not yet entered into force. The last hurdle to entry into force is Ukraine's accession to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state. The Russian parliament made NPT accession a condition for instruments of ratification to be exchanged and thus for entry into force to occur. Ukrainian President Kuchma has stated that he plans to submit NPT to the Ukrainian parliament in October of this year. However, even though START I is not officially in force, all parties have been deactivating strategic delivery systems that would be eliminated under the Treaty. For example, the United States has removed all of the warheads from its ballistic missiles whose launchers are scheduled for elimination under START I. Similar warhead removals are occurring in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

Since START II cannot enter into force before START I does, neither the United States nor Russia has yet acted to ratify START II.

As I noted earlier, during the recent summit, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreed that, once the START II Treaty is ratified, the United States and Russia will proceed to deactivate all strategic nuclear delivery systems to be reduced under START II by removing their nuclear warheads or taking other steps to remove them from combat status. In addition, as I noted earlier, the Presidents also instructed their experts to intensify their dialogue to compare conceptual approaches and to develop



concrete steps to adapt the nuclear forces and practices on both sides to the changed international security environment, including the possibility, after ratification of START II, of further reductions of, and limitations on, remaining nuclear forces. ssame

### Comprehensive Test Ban

We strongly support the goal of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and have been actively negotiating to this end. While we cannot guarantee that a CTB will be achieved by a date certain, we hope that one can be concluded by 1996 in accordance with the Congressional mandate in the Hatfield-Exon-Mitchell law. Given the complexity of a CTB, we do not believe there should be any linkage between it and extending the NPT indefinitely, which must and should occur next spring.

The President has stated that a comprehensive test ban treaty should be negotiated at the earliest possible time -- the time necessary, negotiating diligently and in good faith, to write a sound treaty. Beyond that, setting a specific target date would not be useful, and could be counterproductive.

### ABM Treaty and Ballistic Missile Defense

The Presidents discussed the ABM treaty at the Summit. President Clinton unequivocally supports the ABM Treaty as a central element of strategic stability with Russia. In response to the growing threat of proliferation of missiles and of weapons of mass destruction they could carry, we have increased our emphasis on highly effective theater ballistic missile defense to protect forward deployed U.S. forces, U.S. allies and friends. This in turn has made it necessary to make clear the distinction between ABM systems for countering strategic ballistic missiles (which are strictly limited by the ABM Treaty) and theater missile defense systems (which are not). We are pursuing agreement in the Standing Consultative Commission -- the Treaty's implementing body -- to clarify the demarcation between ABM and non-ABM systems, which we have acknowledged as ambiguous in the existing Treaty.

We are seeking the aforementioned clarification in order to strengthen the Treaty in the face of changed circumstances and enhanced technical capabilities, and we continue to believe that highly effective theater missile defense and a strong ABM Treaty are compatible goals. And, while I cannot enter into detail on the negotiations in the SCC, I believe they have demonstrated there is general agreement among the parties regarding the extent of the theater missile threat and the need to clarify the Treaty.

Noting the recent progress made on the issue of ABM/TMD demarcation and multilateralization of the ABM Treaty, the Presidents at the Summit instructed their respective delegations, working with the other participating states, to complete agreement on remaining issues in the shortest possible time. The Presidents also agree both the US and Russia have an interest in developing and fielding effective theater missile defense systems on a cooperative basis.

### *- 5. Nuclear Proliferation*

A centerpiece of the Administration's nonproliferation policy is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. DoD strongly supports the Administration initiative to secure the indefinite, unconditional extension of the NPT. We view such an extension as the best means to eliminate uncertainty about the future of nuclear non-proliferation efforts and to ensure that efforts to reduce nuclear arsenals will continue to be successful.

As part of the USG strategy to ensure a successful extension decision in 1995, the USG has begun preliminary discussions on an internationally-verifiable cut-off convention on fissile material for weapons purposes in the Conference on Disarmament. Toward this end, in June we agreed with Russia that if they dismantled their three remaining military plutonium production reactors, we would help provide alternative power sources.

Additionally, we strongly support the goal of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and have been actively negotiating to this end.

With regard to export controls, clearly, limiting the spread of nuclear weapons technology is an issue of the utmost importance to the Department of Defense. Unlike many other national security issues, this concern has not diminished with the end of the Cold War. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear, poses a grave and increasing military threat which must be countered on a number of fronts, one of which is technology security, or export controls.

To make informed judgments on export controls, U.S. officials need the very best intelligence on the proliferation-relevant activities of nations of concern and their procurement patterns. Second, to be effective, export controls should, to the extent possible, be broadly multilateral. DoD has been active on both these fronts. With regard to intelligence on activities and procurement, DoD, as part of its Counterproliferation Initiative, is engaged in an on-going dialogue with the Intelligence Community regarding how better to support our licensing efforts.

DoD is also an active supporter of Administration initiatives to multilateralize unilateral USG export controls. Although controls on some items have been liberalized (e.g., computers), we believe this liberalization is consistent with our national security and counterproliferation objectives. By liberalizing licensing requirements on items that are available throughout the world, we can focus our export control efforts on denying transfers of items and technologies of key significance to the development of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

#### **- 6. Nuclear Weapons and Naval Vessels**

The Committee also asked about the status of US policy on the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (SPNFZ). Secretary Christopher made a commitment to have the question of USG adherence to the protocols of the SPNFZ reviewed when he spoke to ASEAN in the summer of 1993. We are conducting extensive discussions on this subject with US allies, inside the U.S. government and especially within the Department of Defense.

While the USG has not signed the SPNFZ protocols, we have assured South Pacific nations that our behavior in the region will not be inconsistent with them.

The United States maintains a long-standing policy of neither confirming nor denying (NCND) the presence or absence of nuclear weapons at any general or specific location, including aboard any U.S. military station, ship, vehicle, or aircraft. Since 1992, we have also stated "it is general U.S. policy not to deploy nuclear weapons aboard surface ships, attack submarines and naval aircraft. However, we do not discuss the presence or absence of nuclear weapons aboard specific ships, submarines, or aircraft." As a result of NPR recommendations, the President decided to eliminate the option to deploy nuclear bombs with dual-capable aircraft on aircraft carriers and to eliminate the option to deploy TLAM/N capability from surface combatants, while retaining the option to deploy TLAM/N on SSNs. In light of those NPR decisions, we will review our NCND policy and see if any changes are appropriate.

#### **Conclusion**

I look forward to the Committee's questions on these and other nuclear weapons issues. Thank you.