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UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Statement of
The Honorable James G. Roche
Secretary of the Air Force

Before the
United States
Senate Armed Services Committee
Strategic Subcommittee

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Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, we thank you for the opportunity to come before you on behalf of the dedicated men and women of the finest aerospace force in the world. From the beginning of the last century, air power pioneers have debated and anticipated the strategic potential of long-range [global] strike operations. That potential is summarized in the ability to overfly two-dimensional land or sea forces to strike an enemy at the heart of his political, economic, and/or military power. Properly realized, such operations confer an asymmetric advantage in warfare, and the United States Air Force believes that Aerospace Power is America's asymmetric advantage. The application of this capability began influencing operations during the strategic bombing campaign in the European theater of World War II, and continued with the delivery of atomic bombs on Japan in 1945. However, the Army Air Corps and the early Air Force lacked the accurate intelligence, range, speed, and precision to truly create decisive strategic effects. As technology progressed and intelligence systems improved, strategically applied air power revolutionized modern warfare. A glimpse of its potential was seen during Operation DESERT STORM and was demonstrated during Operation ALLIED FORCE and the capitulation of Slobodan Milosevic's regime to NATO.

Much of yesterday's airpower theory has evolved into today's aerospace reality, based upon comparable concepts and competencies originally envisioned by early air-pioneers, but with improved concepts of operation, organizations, and technologies. In the future, we will build on our enduring competencies by modernizing and integrating the proper mix of our existing air, space, and information systems. Our goal is to provide intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance capabilities in real-time, 24-hours

a day, 7-days a week, and reap the deterrent effect of being able to strike any target with requisite speed, range, and near-perfect accuracy. Our current goal is to find, fix, assess, track, target, and engage any target, anywhere in the world, within hours or minutes, as appropriate. Tomorrow, our vision is to provide global reconnaissance and strike capabilities near-instantaneously.

Our ability to reach out and influence potential adversaries in support of our national objectives provides this country a method to prosecute the full-spectrum of contingencies B from humanitarian assistance to major theater war, and from dissuading an adversary from considering an option to deterring an enemy from an attack. The ability to create these strategic effects ultimately helps us and our allies shape a strategic environment that is consonant with our values and interests. Our hope is that through maintaining our global reconnaissance and strike preeminence, potential enemies will think twice while our friends and allies will sleep easier.

The DoD is now engaged in a number of strategy development exercises, including the Quadrennial Defense Review. The results of these studies will undoubtedly influence our future military and aerospace power strategies. When these efforts are concluded, we will be able to elaborate on specific recommendations for forces, doctrines, and resources. However, the Air Force-s enduring competencies have been and remain the ability to provide global reconnaissance and strike capability which we believe will remain relevant well into the future. Inherent in this vision is the understanding that Astrike@ means creating the right effect at the right place at the right time, regardless of an adversary-s attempts to deny access to our forces. Using all of our capabilitiesCfrom computer network attack, to humanitarian pallets, to directed-energy,

to manned and unmanned aerospace platformsCwe now strive to achieve strategic effects versus quantitative target list assessments. As technology improves into the future, the Air Force will rely less upon conventional platforms and more on transformational capabilities, manned and unmanned. However, for the foreseeable future, until many of these technologies mature, the most effective method to deliver precision strike weapons over great distances with mass is with our bomber fleet.

Today's reality, however, is that we remain limited by budgetary constraints. The Air Force realizes it must enable its existing long-range strike fleet to migrate successfully from a force developed during the Cold War for nuclear employment to a force relevant in global expeditionary operations within a much broader spectrum of operations. Our current bomber force must be able to target and retarget in real-time through airborne data links with standoff weapons and large payloads of precision and near-precision munitions in order to meet the requirements of the uncertain future.

In the coming years, several factors will affect our force planning considerations and budgetary decisions. President Bush clearly articulated three overriding objectives that have and will guide our decisions in the DoD. In essence, they are to: 1) improve the quality of life B and quality of service B of military personnel, giving them a renewed sense of purpose; 2) modernize our aging force after a decade of neglect while concurrently addressing new strategic realities and technologies; and, 3) manage the dollars of our taxpayers in the most efficient manner possible, introducing more business-like practices and processes into the Pentagon. I wholeheartedly believe that our recent FY02 budget deliberations and proposals reflect a solid down payment for our people and the readiness of our forces.

Second, the global security environment has changed dramatically from the Cold War garrison force of the last century. The Air Force has transformed its organizational structure and operating principles in two crucial ways to address this world, as well as the budgetary and personnel declines of the last ten years. Our first major change was to take our historic garrison and forward-deployed force and create an Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF). This organizational structure gives the regional Commanders-in-Chief (CINC) expeditionary aerospace packages that are tailored and trained-to-task to meet their full mission requirements. The EAF has given us a more sustainable, flexible, and responsive force while enhancing the stability of our people's lives and families. In addition to the EAF reorganization, we have developed a Total Force culture, building upon the high standards and strong cooperation between our active, Reserve, Guard, civilian, and contractor personnel. Simply stated, we could not perform our mission without the combined contributions of all these components.

The changing global security environment will also require us to deploy in various threat scenarios. These scenarios represent the full spectrum of conflict, from a high threat and limited access scenario, to a medium threat or aggressive offensive action, to a lower threat scenario where we have established air superiority with accompanying low threat conditions. Our long-range precision strike platforms play unique and complementary roles in potential threat scenarios because of their flexibility to adapt to evolving threat situations.

In the future, we expect adversaries with advanced technologies to try to deny the US military access to a region. The Air Force is carefully evaluating this possibility and proposing a concept of operations called the Global Strike Task Force to counter

threats to access and to prepare the region for deployment and employment of joint forces. This scenario requires forces that capitalize on recent advances in speed, range, stealth, super-cruise, and precision. We believe that, used in appropriate combination, our B-2 and F-22 forces can quickly and decisively destroy the most threatening anti-access air, ballistic and cruise missile, and sea defense systems. For example, during Operation ALLIED FORCE, each B-2 destroyed multiple targets with an 83% hit rate, all while flying combat missions from Whiteman AFB, MO. However, the 20-plus-year old B-2 design requires continued modernization to remain effective, including the latest secure UHF/VHF communications, in-flight data-link, in-flight replanning, and advanced integration of follow-on hard target and other munitions. This transformational capability can enable joint forces to enter into the region, quickly limit the adversary's initiative, and perhaps plant doubts or cause reevaluation of his objectives. The Air Force believes the full complement of F-22s, our current force of B-2s, a reconstituted force of B-1s, standoff B-52s, and a full complement of precision and standoff weapons (e.g., enhanced CALCMs, JDAMs, JASSMs, and small smart munitions) will work in concert with submarine launched missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, and special operations forces to ensure our allied and U.S. forces timely access to future high-threat theaters.

As an adversary takes an offensive action toward or on friendly territory, our nation must rapidly apply its combined instruments of power to halt him, allowing friendly forces to regain the initiative. This scenario requires a rapid-halt capability that is best accomplished with long-range precision strike systems. Our force of B-2s, B-52s and transformed B-1s will be employed to halt forces rapidly.

However, to utilize either the B-1 or B-52, they must have the weapons, be mission capable, and be able to adequately protect the airmen risking their lives in our nation's service. The Air Force has found that as our systems age, parts are becoming obsolete and maintenance costs are skyrocketing. The B-1 aircraft's mission capable rates have remained between 51 and 62 percent during FY 2000 and FY2001 below the goal of 75%. The B-1 aircraft missed Operation DESERT STORM because of its poor reliability and its limited survivability in high-threat environments. Furthermore, only 5 Block-D modified aircraft were available for deployment to Operation ALLIED FORCE. Although the five aircraft dropped approximately 20% of all bombs over Kosovo, they could only be deployed during the second week of the war following suppression of enemy air defenses.

We believe that cutting the B-1B force from 93 less-effective aircraft down to 60 mission-ready aircraft will reap over \$1.5B in savings over the future years defense plan (FYDP). Similarly, by reducing the B-1 support infrastructure from 5 bases to 2, we will gain additional economies of scale and harness real property maintenance and military construction dollars. The choice of how to consolidate the bases was selected using two criteria. The first criterion was to find the maximum gain of potential savings available by consolidating multiple, small squadrons. The second criterion was to minimize the impact of this reduction on the base, looking for other missions and operations as possible transitions for these units. We plan to apply savings from consolidation to upgrade the remaining B-1 aircraft and improve both its mission capable rates and modernize its precision weaponry, self-protection systems, and combat reliability. The Air Force believes strongly that this plan will make the B-1 bomber into

the survivable, effective, long-range precision strike platform in this century that had been envisioned when it was built in the last century.

In yet another scenario, as we obtain greater air-dominance or in the face of limited air defense capabilities, the B-52 can effectively overfly adversary airspace and dramatically increase the amount of ordnance placed on target. For the last seven years, the Air Force has attempted to cut 18 B-52 aircraft from Minot AFB, ND, and use the savings to help us modernize the rest of the B-52 fleet. The Air Force believes maintaining 76 B-52 aircraft meets the current force structure requirement called for in today's national security strategy, especially as we see it principally as a standoff, conventional cruise missile carrier. To keep the B-52 relevant in the near future, we need to modernize this aircraft with an avionics mid-life improvement, the situational awareness defensive improvement, and some electronic countermeasures improvement.

Other important upgrades include the Link-16 datalink, advanced weapons integration into the internal bomb bay, Global Air Traffic Management compliance, and advanced munitions capability. When completed, these combined upgrades will meet our vision to provide real-time targeting and retargeting and long-range precision strike with mass capability. The B-52 is the only aircraft we envision capable of launching the conventional air-launched cruise missile from standoff distances. This capability allows it to participate in high-threat missions from a standoff position. We want to develop conventional cruise missiles with even greater range to add to the plane's effectiveness. The B-52 also continues to play a role in the nation's nuclear triad. In summary, continued aggressive modernization and investment will allow the B-52 to remain an effective long-range strike platform through 2040.

The scenarios described above show that each of our three bombers play complementary roles in our long-range global strike capability. The B-2 will provide high-altitude stealth with uncanny precision, the B-1 will provide precision standoff strike capability, and finally the B-52 can swing from an extended standoff conventional cruise missile launcher to a low threat enabled conventional precision workhorse. Further, they can often best operate and are complemented by an environment of air supremacy established by the F-22 and, eventually, JSF.

Finally, the Air Force has been faced with maintaining and modernizing these platforms in an environment of numerous competing budgetary priorities. The current B-1 force alone has some \$2 billion in unfunded requirements. As our recent next-generation bomber study showed, aggressive modernization of the current bomber force will fill the gap before a future strategic bomber capability can be funded and developed.

However, the Air Force simply does not have sufficient funding to modernize our current bomber inventory at a pace commensurate with the need to transform or adapt to a new era. That said, we have made significant advances in bomber modernization the last few years fielding Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) and Global Positioning System (GPS) navigation on the bombers. In the next few years we expect to further enhance our long-range bombers- lethality, survivability, and sustainability. By FY04, we expect each bomber to be capable of employing Wind Corrected Munitions Dispensers, the Joint Stand Off Weapon, and the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Munition. These weapons greatly improve the long-range strike portfolio-s lethality and contribute to survivability by allowing platforms to strike from longer distances.

However, we face serious challenges ahead in modernizing the onboard computers for

each of our bombers, as well as the necessity for funding data links, and beyond-line-of-sight communication for en-route mission updates.

All three current long-range strike platforms face serious sustainability issues. Modernizing the B-2's stealth technology will improve its maintainability by 8%. And, the B-2 requires significant upgrades to cockpit displays and in-flight replanning tools before we can fully capitalize on the tremendous advances inherent in our new precision guided weapons. The B-1 is confronted with serious sustainment problems such as depot tooling, avionics test equipment replacement, reliability & maintainability upgrades to aircraft subsystems, and depot engineering. Plus, the B-1 must be equipped with standoff weapons like the JASSM. Additionally, the B-52 requires modernization to its avionics for it to remain effective. With the realization that we simply cannot fund all the bomber modernization efforts and meet other obligations, we believe we must develop better solutions. With the required upgrades unfunded, the B-1 would be unable to fill its role even in the medium threat environment, and the Air Force has been funded to maintain more outmoded B-52s than we believe are required to meet our current national security strategy. Therefore, I ask you to evaluate these decisions in the context outlined by the President. How can we modernize our systems to restore their relevancy and combat capability for the next war without demanding more funds? How can we be better stewards of our nation's tax dollars and take advantage of potential economies of scale, efficiencies, and force consolidation? Finally, how can we provide our people higher quality and more survivable weapon systems worthy of the service they have dedicated to our nation? We appreciate the opportunity to testify before you regarding the future of our global strike capabilities.

