

Statement by
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Introduction

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Thornberry, distinguished Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the national security challenges faced by the United States and Department of Defense (DoD) actions to meet these challenges. I am honored to be here in the company of General O’Shaughnessy, the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), and Admiral Faller, the Commander of U.S. Southern Command.

As the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security, I am the principal civilian policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy on a diverse range of matters, including Homeland Defense, Cyber, Space, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, Mission Assurance, and Defense Support of Civil Authorities.

I would like to emphasize two key points for you today: (1) the U.S. homeland is not a sanctuary, rather, the homeland is a target in a complex global security environment in which every domain is contested; and (2) we have taken action, guided by key strategies, supported by analyses, and strengthened by partnerships, to ensure that our Nation will prevail in this security environment.

Strategic Environment

As I testified last year, today’s security environment is increasingly complex, characterized by challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term strategic economic, information, diplomatic, and military competition. Every military domain is contested—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace. Action in these domains will spike when we approach active conflict, but attacks against our homeland -- our critical defense, government, and economic infrastructure – are occurring now. Adversaries are seeking to understand our dependencies on commercially owned infrastructure, and they seek to hold that infrastructure at risk to threaten the United States and to challenge DoD’s ability to operate in and from the homeland.

Our adversaries seem to believe that they can conduct malign activities against the United States below the threshold of armed conflict in order to achieve their objectives without firing a shot. However, such tactics are misguided, dangerous, escalatory, and destabilizing. Regardless, we are prepared and we are improving.

China and Russia

China and Russia continue to challenge the United States' power, influence, and interests by attempting to erode our national security and prosperity. China and Russia have studied our military capabilities and seek capabilities to counter them and reduce our advantages. The erosion of our competitive edge against China and Russia continues to be a central DoD challenge. China's arsenal includes its first aircraft carrier; anti-satellite capabilities; short, medium, and long-range missiles; and anti-ship ballistic missiles. China continues development of an increasingly sophisticated integrated air and missile defense system; successfully tested hypersonic glide vehicles; modernized and expanded its nuclear capabilities; claimed, or created, and militarized islands in the South China Sea in its efforts to coerce the United States and its allies and partners; and continued efforts to penetrate systems and networks for data mining and other purposes. Our competitors' actions underscore that we must anticipate multi-dimensional attacks – on land, in the air, at sea, in space, and in cyberspace – targeted not just against our military forces, but on critical infrastructure at home. Our adversaries are mapping, targeting, and infiltrating U.S. and allied and partner critical infrastructure, notably power, transportation, water, and communication networks, most of which DoD neither owns nor operates, with the intention of laying the groundwork for future disruptive attacks.

The November 5, 2019, "Joint Statement on Ensuring Security of the 2020 Elections," released by the Attorney General, Secretary of Defense, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security, Acting Director of National Intelligence, and other Federal leaders, highlights the threats Russia, China, and Iran pose to our elections.

Additionally, the Arctic poses new challenges to the defense for the United States and Canada. Russia has steadily expanded its military presence in the region and, by fielding advanced long-range cruise missiles, left us no choice but to improve our homeland defense

capability and capacity. China has displayed an interest in expanding its influence and taken incremental steps to increase its military presence in the region. Defense of the U.S. homeland increasingly depends on our ability to deter, detect, and defeat threats both in and passing through the Arctic. DoD must ensure the security of U.S. Arctic interests, including open sea lanes of communications, while promoting cooperation with our competitors.

North Korea and Iran

Rogue regimes such as North Korea and Iran continue to pose threats to the United States and our allies and partners. Iran has grown increasingly brazen, as demonstrated by its ballistic missile attacks on Iraqi military bases hosting U.S. personnel in January 2020. Although currently unable to strike our homeland with strategic weapons, Iran is investing significant resources on ballistic missile and space-launch capabilities, which could provide the know how to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of ranging the contiguous United States. Iran is also responsible for proliferating ballistic missile capabilities with other malign actors. North Korea and Iran are developing cyber capabilities to target our defense capabilities, civilian critical infrastructure, and economy, and Iran particularly continues to execute a robust counterintelligence campaign against the United States. Iran retains the ability to conduct attacks in our homeland through its terrorist proxies and its growing cyber capabilities.

Violent Extremist Organizations

Despite our successes, terrorists still actively seek to harm the United States and its citizens, its allies, and its partners. Terrorists also continue to pursue weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The continued emergence of dangerous naturally occurring, pathogens coupled with advances in bioengineering increase the potential for, expand the variety of, and ease access to biological agents, and challenge our ability to defend against them. Additionally, terrorists, trans-national criminal organizations, cyber hackers, and other malicious non-state actors threaten us with increasingly sophisticated capabilities, including tools of mass disruption, such as cyber capabilities.

Support of Civil Authorities

In support of the National Security Strategy, DoD is prepared to support civil authorities: in response to natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, floods, and pandemic

diseases) and in response to man-made threats (e.g., terrorism and terrorist use of WMD); to assist civil authorities in securing special events such as the State of the Union Address and the presidential conventions; to help protect our nation's elections against malign foreign influence; to support civil authorities' efforts to secure our borders, and to respond to other national security threats.

We Continue to Take Action

Guided by the 2017 National Security Strategy, the 2018 National Defense Strategy, and the 2019 National Military Strategy, we continue to take action to counter threats to our Nation. DoD is improving its defensive capabilities. Our actions will: deny adversary benefits from aggression; impose costs on adversaries should they commit acts of aggression against the United States and our strategic interests; and, better protect our surge capabilities when projecting power.

Air and Missile Defense

The United States is strengthening its homeland missile defenses and is pursuing more advanced capabilities to stay ahead of rogue state threats. Today the U.S. is defended by the ground-based mid-course defense (GMD) system – 44 ground-based interceptors (GBIs) supported by a globally integrated network of sensors and a command and control system. To improve the current GMD system, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget request includes funds for increasing the current GBI fleet's reliability through hardware and software improvements, deploying a new radar, and improving advanced sensor capabilities. DoD is also developing a new interceptor to meet future threats, the Next Generation Interceptor (NGI), which will incorporate the advanced technology needed to defeat rogue state missile threats. The FY 2021 budget contains \$638M for NGI development and risk reduction and we anticipate it will begin to be fielded in 2028, and, over time, bringing the total number of GBIs to 64. We are developing a new generation of advanced ground and space based sensors to better detect, track, and discriminate enemy missile warheads, including the completion of ground based radar in Alaska (\$132M in FY 2021) and the development of new space-based sensors to track more sophisticated missile threats (\$100M in FY 2021). Lastly, to maintain and improve an effective, robust layered missile defense system, DoD is funding options for layered homeland missile

defense capabilities to complement the existing GMD system and enhance protection of the homeland, including a Spring 2020 flight test of the SM-3 Block IIA against an ICBM-class target as well as evaluating the development of a new THAAD interceptor to support homeland defense. DoD is requesting \$274M for these layered homeland defense efforts which, when fully developed, could be available mid-decade.

With the expansion of additional sensors and aerospace control Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar equipped alert fighters, our defensive capability and the capacity of our missile defense sensors will continue to improve. This is a part of a phased effort to enhance our ability to warn and defend against threats from the air and cue our air and missile defense systems against them. In Fiscal Year 2021, DoD has proposed to use \$67.3M to address development of point missile defense capabilities, indications and warning (I&W) capabilities, and site surveys of long-range I&W capabilities in Alaska, Oregon, and Maine. The Department is conducting a binational Northern Approaches Surveillance Analysis of Alternatives (AoA) with the full partnership of the Canadian Science and Technology community, sharing data and analysis from the Canadian All Domain Situational Awareness effort in order to fill capability gaps and inform executive decisions on appropriate binational investments in surveillance modernization.

Counter Unmanned Aircraft Systems

In the face of the proliferation and operation of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), we appreciate the vital support of Congress for the Department's ability to protect its installations, activities, and personnel in the U.S. homeland. Small UAS are being used in ways that test the seams in our physical defenses, legal authorities, and jurisdictional boundaries. The Department continues to develop and deploy counter-UAS capabilities in close partnership with the Departments of Transportation, Homeland Security, and Justice. We continue to work with our partners to ensure safety and navigability in the national airspace system. To these ends, we are once again asking Congress to close critical gaps in our authority to protect DoD facilities and assets from UAS.

The Arctic

The Department is also improving its defensive posture in the approaches to North America, especially the Arctic. There is a joint U.S. and Canadian effort to identify technology options that could modernize the North Warning System – the radar network that provides threat warning and surveillance for the northern approaches to North America. Additionally, DoD is building the Long-Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) to improve ballistic defense discrimination.

Space

Space systems underpin virtually every weapon system in our arsenal. But many systems were designed for an era when there were few threats in space. This is not the case today. China and Russia both seek to be able to deny the United States and our allies and partners the advantages of space. The United States is responding to this threat by transforming our space enterprise, fielding resilient architectures, developing space warfighting expertise, and working closely with our allies and partners in combined operations. I want to acknowledge and recognize the bipartisan leadership role that this committee played over several years to establish the U.S. Space Force as a sixth branch of the Armed Forces and make this historic step possible. The President’s Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Request provides \$18 billion for space programs, including \$111 million to support the establishment of the headquarters and field centers for this new Military Service. In addition to the U.S. Space Force, the President’s Budget also provides funding for the new space combatant command – U.S. Space Command – and the Space Development Agency, which will accelerate the development and fielding of military space capabilities necessary to ensure U.S. and allied and partner technological and military advantages.

Cyberspace

We have taken great strides forward in advancing the objectives of the President’s National Cyber Strategy and DoD’s Defense Cyber Strategy, and in addressing critical gaps identified in the congressionally directed Cyber Posture Review. New Presidential policy on cyberspace operations, as well as statutory authority, have enabled a proactive approach to competition in cyberspace. For example, U.S. Cyber Command engages in “hunt forward” operations – defensive cyber team operating globally, at the invitation of allies and partners, to

search for adversary malicious cyber activities. DoD's Cyber National Mission Force leverages its operations to expose malicious signatures publicly to the cybersecurity community, allowing organizations and individuals around the world to mitigate identified vulnerabilities and, as a result, degrade the efficacy of adversary tools and campaigns. We are also postured to complement and support lead Federal agencies efforts, such as efforts undertaken by the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency, efforts to protect U.S. election systems. Working closely with our interagency partners and informed by the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, we are maturing our concept of layered cyber deterrence which combines traditional deterrence mechanisms and extends them beyond the Federal Government to develop a "whole of society" approach. It also incorporates the concept of defending forward to address the range of foreign malicious cyber activity that the United States has thus far been unable to deter.

Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction

To counter the spread of WMD, the Department is focused on preventing proliferation globally, working with domestic and international partners, and ensuring U.S. military forces are prepared to respond to WMD incidents and operate in WMD environments. In the Western Hemisphere, DoD engages with domestic and international partners through the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a global effort to stop trafficking of WMD and their delivery systems and looks for opportunities to help our partners develop their own WMD response capabilities. As the WMD threat has evolved and increased, so too has the need to measure our success, ensure our activities yield a return on investment, and look for process efficiencies, international partnerships, and new technologies that can improve homeland defense capabilities. In 2018, DoD established the Countering WMD Unity of Effort Council to: share information; improve cooperation; identify challenges and generate solutions; and inform actions consistent with the NDS and the Department's Strategy for Countering WMD. These efforts strengthen DoD's ability to detect and respond to WMD threats.

Protecting Critical Infrastructure

We are working with our Federal partners and with other the public and private sector partners to expand sharing of threat information that affects Defense Critical Infrastructure and

the Defense Industrial Base. The Department's Mission Assurance Strategy identifies and prioritizes our most critical assets, evaluates their vulnerabilities and most likely threats, and employs risk mitigation measures to enhance their resilience. We are now actively expanding that process by working with industry to ensure the resilience of privately owned infrastructure, systems, and networks on which DoD depends. We are also looking at ways that we can manage risk to strategic missions earlier in the acquisition lifecycle. We are investing heavily in critical infrastructure risk management initiatives, such as expanding the scope of cyber vulnerability assessments and performing integrated cyber dependency analysis across our global strategic mission set. We are pursuing resiliency in our systems as well as in our decision-making process to blunt attacks in the U.S. homeland during conflict, or perhaps even before full conflict, we will respond in decisive terms to prevent further attacks.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

DoD is better prepared to assist civil authorities than at any other time in our Nation's history. We maintain this level of preparedness through continual integrated planning, training, exercises, and real-world experience. In 2019, DoD responded to 113 requests for assistance. So far in 2020, DoD has responded to 20 requests for assistance, including from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to assist with: the safety and security of special events; supporting FEMA responses to natural disasters, including severe storms and an earthquake in Puerto Rico; continued assistance to DHS and CBP to secure the U.S. southern border; and assistance to HHS to respond to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak.

The Western Hemisphere

The Western Hemisphere is a relatively peaceful and stable region but continues to face significant challenges. Growing Chinese and Russian malign influence threatens regional prosperity and security. Repressive regimes in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua undermine democratic principles and create destabilizing conditions throughout the region. Weak governance, corruption, poverty, crime, violence, and the effects of natural disasters risk regional stability and thus threaten U.S. national interests. These challenges suppress the full potential of

our increasingly capable military and security partners to contribute to our shared defense and security goals while exacerbating domestic challenges associated with migration and illicit trafficking.

One of the objectives of our National Defense Strategy, which is derived directly from the National Security Strategy, is to maintain a favorable regional balance of power in the Western Hemisphere. Our national prosperity and security depend on well-developed, cooperative relationships with our neighbors in the region that help prevent instability and mitigate the influence of strategic competitors.

The Inter-American System

The Western Hemisphere has developed a track record in recent history of resolving conflicts through diplomacy and institutions, rather than through force. Partner nations' militaries throughout the region consistently demonstrate high levels of professionalism, adherence to civilian control, de-politicization, and respect for human rights, but we continue to take seriously all credible allegations of abuse, especially with concern to security forces' conduct during peaceful civilian protests in the region. The Organization of American States, through the 2001 Inter-American Democratic Charter, and other entities, such as the Lima Group and most recently, select members of the Rio Treaty, demonstrate the region's shared values and multilateral cooperation in support of democracy and the rule of law. The Conference of the Defense Ministers of the Americas and the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) provide venues to advance multilateral defense and security cooperation. Canada is an important ally in the region and globally.

Collaborative defense and security relationships in the region are vital to advancing U.S. security interests. With sustained engagements, we can undermine our competitors' attempts to increase their influence near U.S. borders and help our partners manage more effectively the domestic security challenges that often undermine U.S. interests at home. By promoting U.S. and partner bilateral and multilateral cooperation and burden-sharing, including by building partner capacity, our partners in the hemisphere can increasingly contribute to our mutual objectives in the region and globally, thereby reducing reliance on U.S. resources and personnel.

Challenges

Despite the enormous potential of our region, we face some very real dangers. The Peoples Republic of China (PRC) and Kremlin do not share our same interest in a region that upholds democratic governance, the rule of law, market-driven economies, and compliance with international rules and norms. Instead, their activities aim to prop up the failing, repressive regimes of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua to encourage autocratic governance in the region and export their preference for government surveillance measures, enabling those regimes to tightly control their respective populations. The PRC also erodes our partners' sovereignty by applying coercive pressure on their political, diplomatic, economic, and security decisions through predatory practices designed to create security and economic dependencies.

Terrorist organizations, such as the ELN and FARC dissidents, find safe harbor under the Maduro regime in Venezuela, fomenting further insecurity along the Venezuela/Colombia border and stoking conditions for increased hostilities with the Colombian Government. Another ongoing challenge present in the region is illicit trafficking, which corrupts societies in many countries and exacerbates violence. Also, irregular migrant flows due to the crisis in Venezuela add significant burdens on partner nations in the region. Finally, natural disasters threaten to devastate the region, requiring a coordinated multilateral response to thwart human suffering and lessen the long-term effects on regional growth and prosperity.

Venezuela is a prime example of how an oppressive regime results in regional challenges. The corrupt Maduro regime – with support from Russia, Cuba, and China – fails to provide Venezuelans with food and medicine, which has made a once proud resulting in tragic and unnecessary starvation and death, and has made a once proud and prosperous country destitute. In response to this crisis, the region unified in support of the Venezuelan people, as most governments of the region recognize Interim President Juan Guaidó as the legitimate leader of the country. Neighboring countries provide generous refuge to Venezuelans fleeing their country, but this has put significant strain on those countries. The U.S. Government, along with our partners, is using diplomatic, information, and economic means to pressure Maduro to step down, and the United States is also responding to Interim President Guaidó's call for

humanitarian assistance for the Venezuelan people. In 2019, for the second year in a row, the Department of Defense deployed the U.S. Naval Hospital Ship COMFORT to the region in 2019 to provide humanitarian medical assistance to partner nations that received influxes of refugees from Venezuela. The United States remains committed to the people of Venezuela to restore their democracy and liberty.

Although Venezuela is the most striking challenge to security in the region today, there are other challenges we must face. Over the last year, there has been civil unrest in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, and Peru in response to internal challenges, including economic inequality, the implementation of austerity measures, constitutional crises, and the manipulation of elections. In some cases, unrest has put security forces in difficult positions. We are monitoring these developments closely and reinforcing to our partners the importance of armed forces demonstrating restraint, staying out of politics, and meeting the highest standards of respect for human rights.

The Western Hemisphere is among the most prosperous economic regions in the world, and our vision is that it remains a collaborative, prosperous, and secure region. It is a region where nations prefer to work with the United States, and together we advance mutual interests both regionally and globally. The Department of Defense has several primary objectives for the region:

- 1. Work with Partners to Limit Malign Influence:** The Western Hemisphere is a region of Great Power competition. China and Russia continue their efforts to deepen influence in the Western Hemisphere through predatory economic practices and offers of security cooperation, and by propping up repressive regimes. The authoritarian model offered by the PRC and Kremlin uses economic, diplomatic, and security means to gain undue influence over the sovereign decisions of others. Left unchecked, China and Russia's aggressive marketing of information technology, including 5G infrastructure, and cyber cooperation create dependencies and vulnerabilities that could limit DoD's ability to deepen cooperation with our partners and risk the security of the region's citizens and governments' communications.

As China expands access to markets, natural resources, and port infrastructure in the region, it uses predatory economic policies to exert leverage, gain access to key infrastructure, and create extractive relationships. Russia is focused on increasing its role as a provider of military training and arms sales while demonstrating military presence near the United States. Russia has increased support to the Maduro regime at the expense of the Venezuelan people and its neighbors, sending weapons, materiel, and disinformation support; propping up its oil industry; and pillaging Venezuela's gold reserves by encouraging illegal mining that has devastated Venezuela's ecosystem.

- 2. Collaborate with our Partners:** Our ability to work together with our partners is paramount. At the Department of Defense, we work to deepen our relationships with our NATO and NORAD ally Canada to defend the homeland and strengthen global security. We also work with other regional partner nations that address shared regional and global security challenges. We will focus on advancing defense relationships with our self-funding partners, while continuing support for our traditional train and equip programs, focusing on a strategic level of cooperation. We strive for interoperability among our forces and seek to improve our abilities to share vital intelligence, increase our defense science and technology and trade cooperation, build increased capacity in cyber, and increase the complexity and frequency of our bilateral and multilateral exercises. We are stronger when we act together with our partners, and our emphasis in this area ensures that the threats and challenges we face together can be resolved together.

We work with Canada and Mexico, including through the North American Defense Ministerial, to strengthen the defense of North America and support Mexico's increasing leadership role in the region and willingness to cooperate with DoD on mutual defense objectives. DoD relies on strengthening our partnerships with regional security exporters, several of which are self-funding. In 2019, Brazil was designated the region's second Major Non-NATO Ally, and Chile provides regional humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) leadership. Colombia became the region's first NATO Global Partner in 2018, Mexico provides institutional capacity-building to Central American and Caribbean partners,

Jamaica sends its Disaster Assistance Response Teams to regional partners, and Uruguay is the region's number one UN peacekeeping troop contributor.

- 3. HA/DR Cooperation and Collaboration:** Most of the region is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters including earthquakes and hurricanes, the outbreak of infectious diseases, and a variety of destabilizing effects that follow those events, which compound economic hardship and cause increases in large-scale migration. DoD prioritizes expanding the HA/DR capacity of our regional partners and seeks to address these challenges to reduce human suffering and insecurity, reduce pressures on migration, and reduce requirements for U.S. forces to respond to disasters in the region. DoD will also promote military and security force interoperability through regional HA/DR operations and strengthen the U.S. role as the partner of choice in the region.

At the 2018 Conference of the Defense Ministers of the Americas (CDMA), the Secretary of Defense and his counterparts agreed that promoting regional HA/DR cooperation should be a permanent agenda topic for the conference and called on the IADB to play a central role in facilitating the collaboration. Chile is utilizing its leadership of the 2020 CDMA to develop a HA/DR response coordination mechanism for the Western Hemisphere.

Weak health systems in partner nations make countries like Venezuela and Haiti especially vulnerable to potential pandemics, such as the coronavirus. The 2019 deployment of the USNS COMFORT exemplified DoD's strong multilateral cooperation and commitment to the hemisphere, providing much needed medical assistance to nations affected by the influx of Venezuelan refugees and other partners whose health systems cannot address all their populations' needs. During its five-month deployment, the USNS COMFORT made mission stops to 12 nations, positively affecting the lives of more than 67,000 patients, providing world class medical care, and relieving the strain on local health systems.

- 4. Sustain Defense Cooperation through Institution Building:** A pillar of the U.S. National Defense Strategy is institutional reform. DoD emphasizes defense institution building as an increasingly important aspect of our efforts in the hemisphere. Strong institutions and anti-

corruption efforts are intended to promote good civil-military relationships and effective resource management, reduce corruption, promote human rights, and sustain warfighting capabilities over time. In conducting defense institution building initiatives with our partners, we seek to share experiences and help them implement processes that magnify the effectiveness and sustainability of all other aspects of our cooperation. We have defense institution-building efforts underway at both the strategic and operational levels, and we seek to expand those efforts to a broader number of countries, given increasing demand. The William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies is one of the lead DoD entities implementing institution-building efforts and has sponsored numerous regional and bilateral strategic policy-level discussions on this topic.

- 5. Support U.S. Government Efforts to Disrupt Illicit Trafficking:** The Department of Defense helps to support interagency efforts to counter illicit trafficking, which not only affects the United States, but affects the safety, security, and prosperity of the citizens of the region. Drug cartels and criminal organizations create fear, promote corruption, increase political instability, and negatively affect legitimate economies. We in the Department of Defense help to counter trafficking by supporting U.S. law enforcement agencies and providing monitoring and detection capabilities. The Joint Inter-Agency Task Force at U.S. Southern Command leads a multi-national effort for interdiction operations. Our defense capacity-building programs with partner countries contribute to this success. Beyond simply conducting maritime interdiction activities, we also improve the security of citizens in partner countries. We work closely with our colleagues from the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Justice to promote cooperation among the militaries and law enforcement agencies of our partners. We also continue our strong emphasis on human rights training as fundamental to the basic security of citizens and the effectiveness of military and police actions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to note that the Department of Defense takes a global view of the challenges facing the United States. Driven by and focused on key strategies, supported by analyses, and strengthened by experience and partnerships, we continue to improve our ability to

defend the U.S. homeland in all domains, counter the WMD threat, and develop capabilities to defend the Nation's interests globally. DoD's strategy regarding effective defense engagement with the Western Hemisphere region is founded on strong relationships based on cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Our partners watch carefully for signs of changes in U.S. attention to the hemisphere, and China, Russia, and other malign actors actively promote a narrative of U.S. decline and disengagement. Through sustained bilateral and multilateral engagement, DoD can counter that narrative, demonstrating value as the region's partner of choice, countering Chinese and Russian inroads into the region, and helping develop partner militaries that are increasingly willing and able to contribute to shared objectives.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Thornberry, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee. I appreciate the critical role Congress plays in ensuring that the Department is prepared to compete, deter, and win in every contested domain – air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace. I especially thank the men and women of the Department of Defense – military and civilian, Active, Guard, and Reserve – and their families for all that they do every day to keep our nation safe and secure.