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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
30 MARCH 2011

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Chairman McKeon, Congressman Smith, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the missions and focus areas of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Let me begin by saying how impressed I am by the talented cadre of professionals—from the active and reserve components of all Services of the U.S. military, DOD civilians, our Canadian partners, and representatives from 68 different civilian organizations—who work in and about my headquarters in Colorado Springs each and every day. It is truly humbling to work with such a great team.

I'm also very encouraged by the strong partnership we have with the National Guard; they are essential to operational success across the full spectrum of our missions. We have over 40 full-time National Guard positions in USNORTHCOM, including my Deputy Commander, Lieutenant General Frank Grass, from the Missouri Army National Guard, and on any given day, the number of Guardsmen in our headquarters is around one hundred. The Army National Guard provides the bulk of personnel for air defense capabilities protecting our Nation's capital. In addition, they provide all of the manning at our Ground-Based Interceptor sites in support of missile defense. They are also currently developing additional capabilities to take on a much larger role in support of consequence management in the aftermath of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack. And finally, the Air National Guard provides the majority of NORAD's operational force for Air Sovereignty Alert missions. Simply said, we could not do our missions without the National Guard, and I'm very pleased with the positive trajectory of our relationship.

We in North America face a changing world that presents us with many challenges. These include violent extremists, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, rogue nations,

traditional competitor states, transnational criminal organizations, insecurity within the global commons, economic distress, natural disasters, emerging infectious diseases, and the effects of climate change. Each of these challenges poses a potential threat to the United States, Canada, and our regional partners and is pertinent to the missions of USNORTHCOM and NORAD. Fortunately, we also enjoy great strengths and are presented with opportunities born of our nations' ideals, ideas, and resources and those of our partners. Today I will describe how we plan to capitalize on these opportunities to overcome the challenges we face.

The mission statements for USNORTHCOM and NORAD reflect the language in the *Unified Command Plan* and the *NORAD Agreement*.

USNORTHCOM Mission: United States Northern Command conducts homeland defense, civil support, and security cooperation to defend and secure the United States and its interests.

NORAD Mission: North American Aerospace Defense Command conducts aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning in the defense of North America.

Accomplishing these missions demands a diverse array of disciplines and activities within my headquarters. Accordingly, and in order to assist me in allocating my two commands' time and resources, I have grouped our activities into the following eight focus areas:

Counterterrorism and Force Protection. Because violent extremists present a threat that currently exhibits both the capability and the intent to attack our nation, Counterterrorism and Force Protection continue to be a vital focus area for USNORTHCOM and NORAD.

Within the confines of our borders, current laws, policies, and democratic traditions and practices properly restrict most counterterrorism activities to civil authorities. As a result, USNORTHCOM's principal role is to synchronize joint force protection and ensure military

infrastructure across our area of responsibility is properly postured to mitigate and prevent potential terrorist attacks. However, we are fully aligned within the federal government's counterterrorism network and play a supporting role—assisting with information sharing and remaining prepared to supply military-unique capabilities or to enhance civilian capacity when directed by the President or Secretary of Defense.

To help prevent acts of terrorism, we are working to improve information sharing to better position ourselves to preemptively detect and protect against these threats, particularly in regard to our military bases and other infrastructure. We are fully implementing the relevant recommendations of the Department of Defense Independent Review Related to Fort Hood, and have made progress over the last year in our ability to rapidly disseminate threat information to DOD installations when required. In the wake of a terrorist event, we are prepared to support civil authorities, as directed, to assist in mitigating the consequences.

Countering Transnational Criminal Organizations. The United States and Mexico—and many of our other Western Hemisphere partners—are confronting serious security and public health challenges driven by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) responsible for illicit trafficking of drugs, human beings, money, and weapons.

The facts are daunting. Over 34,000 Mexicans have lost their lives in the last four years, including a dozen mayors in 2010. Murder, kidnapping, extortion, and other crimes have intimidated large segments of the Mexican populace, primarily, but not exclusively, along our shared border. In some areas, the TCOs have muzzled the media and chased away businesses.

Meanwhile, on the U.S. side of the border, the Drug Enforcement Administration estimates that Mexican TCOs operate in over 230 U.S. cities. Each year illicit, drug-related deaths number in the thousands, and treatment center admissions and emergency treatment facility visits both

exceed a million. The annual direct cost for treatment, prevention, interdiction, and local law enforcement of drug abuse exceeds \$52 billion. These and other consequences of drug abuse, including lost productivity, the impact on the criminal justice system, and the environmental impact resulting from the production of illicit drugs are estimated to cost our nation nearly \$181 billion annually.

The TCOs are vicious, well-financed and heavily armed, due in no small part to cash and weapons smuggled across our southern border. They have diversified their businesses and are increasingly sophisticated in their methods. By fighting one another and the government for the impunity to pursue their illicit trade, the TCOs are confronting Mexico with a complex, but not unprecedented, blend of trafficking activities and challenging security problems. I am profoundly impressed by the determination and courage of the Mexican Government, the various Mexican security forces, and the Mexican people in taking on this challenge. They know this is about the long-term future of their country.

The complex challenges associated with defeating the TCOs and the abundant opportunities for progress all underscore the vital importance of our close relationship with Mexico. In my ten months as the Commander of USNORTHCOM, I have observed the Mexican security forces work with increasing effectiveness against the TCOs, gradually achieving success in unraveling these organized crime networks. The Mexican Army and Navy have been drawn into this struggle due to the severe threat it poses to Mexico's security and prosperity, and are working hard to overcome several important challenges. First, they must operate under the legal restrictions to which any democratic nation's military must adhere when operating within its own territory. Second, they are temporarily transforming from a traditional force to one that can be called upon to confront threats from domestic criminal enterprises. Third, they are working hard

to build interagency teamwork, with budding indications of success. Finally, and despite a very information-savvy adversary, they are determined to respect human rights during their operations, and have been eager to gain insights from our own hard-earned lessons in this area. None of these challenges are foreign to our own military. And the fact that many of the families of these security forces reside in the same areas where TCO violence is greatest only heightens the respect we have for our Mexican partners.

In keeping with U.S. Government policy and the law, we are working closely with the country team in Mexico City and other key stakeholders to assist the Mexican Government in defeating the TCOs. Building on the momentum established by our civilian leadership, the Mexican and U.S. militaries have forged a cooperative relationship based upon mutual respect, professionalism, and reciprocity. With all our partners, we have stressed the many dimensions of the solution—including building strong and resilient communities, forming more robust judicial institutions, establishing a 21st Century Border, and directly disrupting the TCOs themselves. Regarding the latter, we are working with our Mexican military partners to enhance their materiel capability and capacity, as well as sharing our own operational insights. In so doing, we carefully emphasize the sovereignty, dignity, and capability of a proud Mexican nation, which recently celebrated 200 years of independence.

Another important partner in this effort is the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), which provides an effective mechanism to build relationships with militaries throughout the hemisphere and to influence a positive trajectory on human rights. In June and December, I participated in the WHINSEC Board of Visitors meetings, and I have been impressed by the quality of WHINSEC's faculty and students and the foundation of respect for human rights upon which its various curricula rest. In FY10, there were 108 Mexican students at

WHINSEC and I would like to see that number grow. Moreover, it is an important message both to and from Mexico that WHINSEC's Assistant Commandant is a Mexican officer.

USNORTHCOM also provides a considerable amount of support to our interagency partners operating on the U.S. side of the border. Such support includes construction of personnel barriers, roads, and bridges; air and ground transportation; intelligence support; and training in and fusion of intelligence and operations. We have begun to combine the intelligence assets at Joint Task Force North in El Paso, Texas with the interagency El Paso Intelligence Center to enable greater unity of effort. We are working closely with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to share some of our lessons learned from ten years of countering a different irregular threat overseas, including a close partnership in CBP's Tucson Sector. Additionally, over the past year we employed multiple sensors, including radar, forward-looking infrared, as well as manned and unmanned aerial surveillance in support of the U.S. Border Patrol's counternarcotics operations on both the northern and southern borders.

In support of our northern border, last year Joint Task Force North dedicated 22% of its available resources to supporting law enforcement agencies in securing the northern border. Our support in this region included eight operational missions that provided aerial reconnaissance, ground-based radar, and ground-based sensor support; eight mobile training teams that taught targeting and intelligence courses; and one intelligence analyst who provided intelligence expertise.

From a southern border perspective, recently the aerial reconnaissance support we provided under existing counterdrug authorities assisted in the apprehension of the suspected killers of U.S. Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. From November 2010 to January 2011, this platform assisted in the interdiction of 17,000 pounds of marijuana.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities. The complexity of our nation’s response to natural and man-made disasters presents ample challenges and opportunities for improvement. We can respond relatively quickly to events with available DOD capability—when called upon by civil authorities. We are looking for ways to eliminate barriers to speed, enhance cooperation with our mission partners, and lean forward with Governors and the National Guard to advance understanding and teamwork.

With our National Guard partners, we are successfully exploring new ways to close an historical gap in philosophy regarding command and control of federal forces operating in support of a state in the wake of a disaster. Over the past year, together we made significant progress on an initiative, supported by the Secretary of Defense and the Council of Governors, to prepare “dual status commanders” to achieve true unity of effort between state and federal military forces in response to a natural or man-made Stafford Act incident or Economy Act event. This initiative is transforming the way we do business together. I look forward to the next National Level Exercise this spring, in which we will have the opportunity to thoroughly examine the progress we have made over the last year in unity of effort using a New Madrid Seismic Zone earthquake scenario.

As a signal of our deepening relationship, USNORTHCOM for the first time hosted Adjutants General from 54 U.S. states and territories attending the National Guard Bureau Senior Leader Conference in October 2010. The conference focused on improving understanding, fostering relationships, and furthering collaboration between USNORTHCOM and the National Guard.

In addition, I have had the honor of participating in two Council of Governors meetings. The bipartisan Council of Governors was directed by Congress in the National Defense

Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 and established by President Obama by Executive Order on 11 January 2010 to advise the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the White House Homeland Security Council on matters related to the National Guard and civil support missions. These meetings have proved to be a key forum for progress in ensuring unity of effort in responding quickly in the event of disasters or other emergencies that affect the American people.

As a Combatant Commander, I am a strong advocate for the Reserve Component. I firmly believe our nation needs a strong and well-equipped Guard and Reserve force. As such, I urge Congress to fully fund the Fiscal Year 2012 President's Budget request for Reserve and National Guard capabilities for both federal and non-federal roles.

We continue to tighten our already-close relationship with the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), with frequent senior leader exchanges and planning efforts. I also recently directed establishment within my staff of a cadre of Regional Desk Officers charged with working with the Defense Coordinating Officers associated with each FEMA Region, as well as a host of other partners, to bring better understanding and coordination of disaster planning between my headquarters and the various state and federal agencies.

Finally, we are closely examining the role USNORTHCOM would play in response to a cyber attack in order to synchronize our efforts with U.S. Strategic Command and U.S. Cyber Command. We view our role as assisting the lead federal agency in mitigating the physical effects of such an event, while staying close to our partners working in the cyber domain.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear (CBRN) Consequence Management.

Managing the aftermath of a CBRN event would be exceptionally challenging due to the

potential scope of an event, the specialized skills required, and the general lack of knowledge among our population of the relative hazards associated with such an incident. USNORTHCOM has a key leadership role in ensuring our nation is prepared to succeed in this mission area. The Quadrennial Defense Review directed a transition to a CBRN Consequence Management Enterprise with more responsibility resident within the National Guard, more lifesaving capability, and faster response times. I am convinced this is the right path for this capability, which will be in high demand if such an event ever occurs. USNORTHCOM and our ground component command, U.S. Army North, are working closely with the National Guard Bureau and the Joint Staff to assist in making the new enterprise operational. The first two state Homeland Response Forces and the federal Defense CBRN Response Force, or DCRF, will stand up this fiscal year. While we collectively have much work to do to bring this project to fruition, I am pleased to report that together with our partners we have leveraged excellent teamwork across the board in this effort, and are committed to ensuring a smooth transition from existing to planned capability in this area.

Maritime Warning and Control. We remain concerned with potential threats in the maritime environment—whether presented by nation-states, extremists, or a natural event. Moreover, opportunities abound for shared awareness and control and much remains to be done to both clarify and energize NORAD’s mission area of Maritime Warning.

One of our key projects this year is to strengthen our day-to-day maritime competency relationships for USNORTHCOM and NORAD to enable improved planning, maritime domain awareness, training, theater security cooperation, and execution of homeland defense and security operations—and to do so without requiring additional investment.

Aerospace Warning and Control. This continually evolving mission is NORAD’s

central focus, and it maintains the same importance to the United States and Canada that it has for over 52 years. It's a real privilege to have 122 Canadians in my headquarters as part of a team that reflects the overall vitality of the relationship between our two nations.

We continue to challenge our assumptions in this arena to ensure we are accounting for potential changes in threats before they occur, while offering our two nations our best thinking on how to execute this mission as efficiently as possible.

We view this problem as a spectrum of potential threats with varying capabilities and intentions. Despite recent improvements in U.S.-Russian relations that reflect a dramatically reduced likelihood of conflict, we maintain our vigilance regarding the high-end threat to the United States and Canada because of enduring and continually improving Russian capability. However, our principal concern remains potential extremist intent to again use civil aircraft, ranging from commercial airliners to general aviation aircraft to ultra-lights, as a means for employing terrorist tactics. While we have made tremendous progress in our efforts to ensure a 9/11-type of event can never occur again, the threat continues to search for ways to exploit potential vulnerabilities. Accordingly, we search every day for new ways to improve our tactics, techniques, procedures, and technical capability to enable us to execute the detect-assess-engage sequence as effectively as possible.

To do so, we need the right capability in the right place at the right time. We are analyzing our future Air Sovereignty Alert requirements and sharing this analysis with the leadership of the U.S. Air Force and the Air National Guard. We are focusing our analytical effort on exactly what our Air Sovereignty Alert force is intended to protect, against what types of threats, under what conditions, and at what cost. As part of this effort, we are identifying capability gaps to the Joint Staff and the Services that we believe are required to defend against an evolving threat and

contributing to an examination of means by which some of these gaps, which remain classified, might be filled. In addition, we are preparing a Report to Congress on the Air Sovereignty Alert mission as directed by Section 333 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2011.

We also need to ensure we have the right capacity to execute the Air Sovereignty Alert mission—not too much and not too little. Given the recently announced slip in the F-35 program, NORAD is working closely with and counting on the Air Force to ensure we have adequate resources to sustain our mission. This is critical because seven of our Air Sovereignty Alert sites fly older model F-16s, which are currently scheduled to reach the end of their service life between 2020 and 2023.

Another area we are watching closely is the pace of wind farm development. Increases in the number of wind farms raise the likelihood that radar signals vital to our ability to protect the national airspace will be obstructed. We believe enabling the construction of alternative energy sources and conducting our national air defense mission are not mutually exclusive as long as we exercise due diligence in assessing the impact of potential projects. To this end, we have developed a more mature process for evaluating the impact of wind farms on national security. Multi-departmental cooperation is required to develop the policy, technical solutions, and future surveillance infrastructure that will provide both national security and renewable energy at the same time.

We are also fostering a more collaborative relationship with the Russian Federation. In August 2010, NORAD and the Russian Federation completed an historic first—a cooperative three-day, live-fly exercise designed to establish clear communication processes that would allow our two forces to work together during a real crisis. The exercise, VIGILANT EAGLE,

was an international air terrorism scenario exercised over the Pacific Ocean consisting of forces from the United States and Russia responding to the simulated hijacking of a B-757 en route to and from the Far East. The exercise scenario created a situation that required both the Russian Air Force and NORAD to launch or divert fighter aircraft to investigate and follow a hijacked airliner, with a focus on shadowing and coordinated hand-off of monitored aircraft between fighters of our two nations. This exercise was an overwhelming success and has helped create an environment for further cooperative efforts.

Missile Defense. Several nations are developing the capacity to target North America with ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction in the belief those weapons will give them more freedom of action. Thus far, the United States is pacing the threat, but a lack of certainty of threat intentions and capabilities demands vigilance and agility. We focus on three imperatives in order to perform our missile defense mission:

- Execute the ballistic missile defense mission with precision using the existing Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI) fleet located at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California and Fort Greely, Alaska
- Develop realistic training simulations and constantly train as we intend to fight
- Assist the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and U.S. Strategic Command as they continue concurrent research and development activities to improve capability

I have gained increased confidence in the existing ballistic missile defense system's ability—including our sensors, weapons systems, and highly trained operators—to defend against current limited threats. Nonetheless, I would like to see a more robust and redundant architecture for sensor and command and control nodes. It is critical that we continue to ensure our sensor network provides adequate warning and targeting information, that we test the entire

system to verify its reliability and validate ongoing improvements, and that we remain vigilant to ensure our capabilities remain ahead of the evolving threat. Accordingly, I fully support the Department's recent decision to keep the GBI production line open until at least 2016, as well as consideration to procure additional GBIs in light of recent flight test results.

As we continue to monitor other nations' advancements in their long-range missile programs, I am optimistic the Administration's Phased Adaptive Approach to Ballistic Missile Defense will add another layer of defense for the homeland if future conceptual programs envisioned to support this approach materialize and mature. In the meantime, MDA has begun to demonstrate a 2-stage GBI capability that I believe could contribute to U.S. homeland defense if a more mature threat appears more rapidly than we had originally projected.

I remain alert to our ability to defend the nation against the potential future threat of cruise missiles and other less conventional forms of air attack from off our coasts. This is a complex problem space that is defined by: the spectrum of capabilities and intentions of potential threats; our ability to generate indications that these capabilities or intentions might be changing; and the costs, timelines, and capabilities of varying levels of potential defensive postures. Presently, we are aware of no threat possessing both capability and intent to conduct such an attack. However, we must remain vigilant and prepared to adjust our posture should a threat combination emerge that changes this equation. Clearly, a strong deterrence posture is one of our most important hedges against such a threat. USNORTHCOM and NORAD are drafting a Report to Congress on this issue as directed by the House Report to Accompany the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (House Report 111-491).

The Arctic. The geopolitical importance of the Arctic has never been greater, because as far as we know, the natural environment in the Arctic in civilized times has never changed faster.

Up to 25% of the world's remaining undiscovered oil and natural gas deposits may lie beneath the Arctic ice cap. While most experts believe it will be some time before commercial Arctic shipping routes through the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route see a significant increase in volume, some countries and commercial interests are actively testing the waters and making plans to increase their activity. We have seen a marked increase in Arctic ecotourism, and its attendant safety concerns, including the grounding of a cruise ship in the Northwest Passage last summer.

Because these changes involve a complex mosaic of issues, challenges, and opportunities, and because a peaceful Arctic is central to the continued safety and security of the United States, I have elevated the Arctic to the status of a key focus area. We are crafting a Commander's Estimate on the Arctic for use within DOD, and my commands are examining how we can best support our interagency partners in this region with search and rescue assets, humanitarian assistance, disaster response capabilities, and support to law enforcement. We are also working hand-in-hand with Canada Command as a vital partner to produce a concept of operations regarding how we would partner in the Arctic to ensure our efforts are coordinated and that we pursue complementary rather than redundant capabilities in accordance with our respective national direction.

Regarding capabilities, we are maturing our understanding of our gaps in this unique environment. We face shortcomings in all-domain awareness, communications, infrastructure (to include a deepwater port), mobility (to include adequate national icebreaking capability), search and rescue enabling capabilities, Arctic Ocean charting, and the ability to observe and forecast Arctic environmental change.

The good news is that cooperation is on the rise in the Arctic, and we must continue that trajectory using the array of mechanisms available to us, such as the Arctic Council, the International Maritime Organization, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. I would like to add my voice to those of the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Chief of Naval Operations in urging the Senate to ratify the latter. Becoming party to the Convention would protect and advance U.S. interests in the Arctic by bolstering our national security, securing U.S. rights over extensive marine areas, and giving the United States a seat at the table when our vital interests are at stake—without abdicating any sovereignty.

Conclusion. It is a privilege to be the military commander charged with the diverse array of missions to protect our vital interests in our homeland, whether deterring or defeating a direct attack, or supporting civil authorities in disrupting and defeating TCOs, or supporting other civil authorities in responding to disasters.

You have a great team in USNORTHCOM and NORAD—Americans and Canadians serving side-by-side. We are proud to serve together and as we do, we remember the vital importance to both the United States and Canada of the NORAD partnership, as well as the broad spectrum of missions demanded of USNORTHCOM. We pledge to you—the U.S. Congress and the American and Canadian people—to give each one our best effort. Thank you.