Remarks of General Victor E. Renuart

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Well Scott thanks very much for the kind introduction. It's always embarrassing to hear things about yourself. And sometimes they're a surprise. But fortunately, today you didn't add anything that my wife would be worried about. So I appreciate you doing that.

It is a great opportunity for me to be here with you today. It's pretty cool that they let the Missile Defense Division all gather in one place. Don't you know what a threat that is?. [audience laughs]. I hate to say we'll get decisions out of them today but we can always hope.

It's great to have the contract partners here as well today. I'm going to talk about an operational commander's perspective on missile defense and the contracting Missile Defense Agency team that is put together to make this system more capable of providing defense for the nation is truly a good thing. And the ability for us to operationally test and operationally employ that system simultaneously in a spiral development fashion has allowed us to maintain great capability for the nation at the same time as making sure that the system can run through a rigorous test process. So, it's great for me to be here today. And I appreciate all the support that the Missile Defense Division of NDIA has done for us. Your charter of objectives you provide the government with views on policies and practices and those have an operational impact to our team at NORAD and NORTHCOM. You worked to foster a mutual understanding and effective working relationships among all the players and it is noteworthy. In fact, in the last test FGGO5. I saw a little bit of that here. I actually have some gun-camera film for a fighter pilot. It's sensors moving around out there, but it's a pretty nice little clip. So if the questions die off or I put anybody to sleep in my comments, I'll run the video if you'd like. But I'm sure that probably in this room almost all of you have seen that in great detail because each of you have a vested interest in those results. But, the fact of the matter is in that test we had both the operational commander, the commander of NORAD and NORTHCOM conducting an operationally sound execution of the missile defense system. At the same time, 27 of my closest contractor friends looking over the shoulder witnessing my gun-camera films to ensure that the test also met their objectives. That synergy, that team has been a significant element of success in this process. I mentioned at lunch that just a little while ago we had some sense that North Korea might be trying to do another test. And so we had to adjust the test schedule. We had to adjust the sensor packet. We had to adjust the software, its install process to bring the system more operational and away from the test schedule for a period of time. And then once that was completed, we pushed it back in. That team approach, that synergy of effort between the operational users and the operational testers has been a really good relationship. So, I'm very pleased to be here and to one, to have a chance to say that and to thank you for that. But also to talk a little bit about why this is important to us.

Okay test question. Now those of you that I saw last night at a little AIA reception know the answer to this so you're not allowed to answer. But, does anybody know what was significant about yesterday? Well the ICBM Chapter was opened for the world 50 years ago yesterday, the first ballistic missile made a test flight over the Pacific Ocean, it was a Thor, launched from Vandenberg and it began a chapter of interest in missile defense as well as in, if you will, global strike. I don't think we were thinking about missile defense at that point. We were more interested in having a long range intercontinental ballistic missile to counter that Soviet threat that we saw out there. Well, today, we certainly have a number of nations with that long range capability but we also have completed a successful test on a missile defense system that while not designed to defend against those large numbers of threats out there, certainly gives us reasonable good capability to defend against the rogue nations that might threaten. So, that first Thor-missile really set in motion the process that brought us here today. Anybody assigned in that system in the earlier days? No body will admit that either. Nineteen fifty nine to nineteen sixty-three it was based in the UK. So, oh yeah there's a few people out there going okay I remember that now. Well, we can trace our interest in air and space back way before that obviously. All the way back to the Wright brothers and throughout our history we have aspired to go further, faster, higher and to understand that other people can do that to us. And that's really the important element of the defense is that other people are rapidly approaching a capability to threaten our homeland and we need to be in a position to have the choice to defend ourselves when it happens. And that's key for our country is to make sure that we have a capability to have the choice. And so we must continue our support of and commitment to missile defense system. And by the way, many of my remarks will be focused on the long range missile. We talked a little bit last night about cruise missile defense and certainly that's an element that we need to pay attention to as well. Those kinds of capabilities can certainly be used by an adversary in a much less symmetrical fashion to threaten our ports and our cities and we want make sure that in our discussion of missile defense we talk about short-range cruise missile type threats as well as long range intercontinental threats. We should see each of them the same. And we should be in a position to defend ourselves should it be necessary against any one of these threats. Adversaries are developing more and more complex delivery systems. They're developing countermeasures and in fact our last test was designed to approximate some of those conditions. We need to be sure that we understand what the proliferation may be of threat systems around the world. I mentioned rogue nations out there and recently Iran announced a successful test of a mid-range ballistic missile that had – it was a two-stage solid propelled missile. Now, we're not quite sure how successful that test really might have been. But if it was successful, it would suggest a significant development in Tehran's missile program and could begin to impact certainly our European friends but also the US in the longer term. Current estimates believe that Iran could test a crude ICBM in the years 2012 – 2015. I think there is a lot of speculation. There is no good data yet but certainly we have to believe and understand that nations like Iran will continue that development. We need to make sure that we keep a balance of power whether it's in the Middle East or with our European partners or here at home. And ensuring that we have addressed that is important to the nation.

Another interesting development in missile defense has been the discussion in Europe about a European based system. Our role as the operational commander for homeland defense is clear. We need to make to sure that we support and advocate for a capability that would give us reasonable assurance that the homeland is defended. We've also, as a nation, made a commitment to partner with our European and NATO friends to provide some capability for Europe to be defended against a rouge threat such as Iran. Obviously, that's generated a lot of discussion with our Russian friends. And this next year or so will be a very interesting set of developments as we've already seen the Russian leadership begin to posture with the new administration with respect to basing the interceptors in Poland, and positioning Russian short-range missiles in their western boundary, and how that political dynamic occurs will be a very interesting set of political discussions for the new administration. But also will have a strategic impact on how we shape in size our defense capabilities for the homeland. We partnered with MDA and a number of others on some studies to look at alternatives if the discussions in Europe don't continue. And certainly we are partnering with MDA in terms of different kinds of missiles, three-stage, and two-stage and what are the advantages of each to ensure that we have a credible and capable ability to do what I've been tasked to do and that is to defend the United States.

Okay, so what does all this mean in terms of our ability to, from an operational aspect, participate in the development of, participate in the testing of our missile defense systems?. Let me try to characterize for you a couple of elements of our relationship with the test process. First, we're a consumer. We don't necessarily have the need to define what kind of sensors alert us to a threat. I just need to know that there's a threat. We don't necessarily have to determine whether a two-stage or a three-stage or multiple kill vehicles or any of those characteristics are the most important. And thus, we ought to put all of our money against them. I do have to be able to say in good conscious to my leadership that if it gets shot at us, it doesn't matter what kind of capability it has, we have an ability to defend against it. And so we drive a requirements process into the system from the operational perspective. We do need to ensure that we have the appropriate number of ground control units. We do need to ensure that we have the appropriate number of bullets in the gun, if you will. Missiles in the silo that we can use to intercept. We do need to ensure that there is an operationally sound shock doctrine that will allow us to prioritize how many targets, who do they threaten, what's the first priority, how many missiles do we launch against that and those kinds of elements. So, we're working very aggressively with our friends in US Strategic Command and those in MDA to ensure that as we move down this test process, we do it in a way that is more operationally focused. The last three tests we had operational crews at Vandenberg that were firing. We had the chain-of-command in place that would allow us the decision cycle required to engage a target like this. We have increased the number of sensors made available in the test system. This last test FTG-O5 had FBX again pushed into an area where the test could be conducted, so it was over in Juno. We had BOB. Any body know who BOB is? BOB is the SBX radar. It looks like a big bobber floating in the ocean. It moves about that fast. So, we call it BOB. We had BOB positioned in a place where it could be an integrated part of the test system. We had Aegis in a position to replicate the kind of support that we would see

from a threat shot. So, for this test, FTG-05, we had many more of the players, if you will, involved in the test. Why? Well certainly MDA wanted that so they could validate the test. But from our standpoint we wanted it because we wanted to make sure the system was as real as we could make it. Now, you all know we hope to have two targets, if you will a decoy target. That didn't quite work the way we had hoped. On the other hand, the success story of all of this is, there are two success stories frankly. We saw a little bit of the discriminator on the scope, the IR and EO sensors are out there looking at different things, base junk, real junk, hit the real junk. That worked really, really well. And you saw the results there. I didn't get out my engineering, micrometer dupers but looked pretty much a shack. In fighter pilot terms that hits dead center on target. That's a good thing. So I think we have brought the test process a long way to incorporate the needs of the operational user. At the same time, we continue to develop the test program in a fashion that allows for test objectives to be met. So, for us, we want to continue that process. We want to see the tests become more complex. We want to see the systems available to integrate the test process be more robust. We want them to be more closely aligned with operational configuration. And we're still doing some software improvements. We're updating the missiles that we actually have in the operational field. We want to see that continue. But we want to have each of the tests successively be more operational focused. And I think there is no space between NORTHCOM and MDA or STRATCOM in that regard.

The other element that I think has been a success story is NORTHCOM representing PACOM and EUCOM is the operational participant in the missile defense executive committee. Didn't used to happen that way. It was more of an acquisition process focused in that organization making funding decision, and we had felt for a while that we needed to bring the operational user more into that process so that in addition to the acquisition decisions you have to make, you shape those based on the requirements of the user, the end user. Tre Over and I have had this discussion a number of times, but because we had focused really all of the effort of the nation into MDA to develop this capability we didn't necessarily pull in the operational users to get their impressions or approaches or requirements. We've made a lot of progress in that over the last six months. And so we sit on the missile defense executive board. We are actively involved in helping to shape the requirements piece of that. We still have work to do to get service executive agency assigned. I think that will occur over the coming days. That will allow us to focus not just on the test and employment but on the sustainment long term sustainment of the systems. And so, I think we're making the right progress. I think we've got some room for improvement. But by and large, I'm pretty pleased with the direction we're going.

Over time I would, I think we need to grow the missile defense umbrella to incorporate those important aspects of cruise missile defense and I have a role in my NORAD hat with respect to that as well. So in addition to NORAD watching the long range stuff and using our great space warriors out there to give us the appropriate warning and characterization, I also have the responsibility to ensure we can detect and defend against a rogue element firing a cruise missile at us. And so, that's a little different kind of sensor. It's a little different kind of defense capability. I need to

integrate all of that into a common approach to missile defense for the nation. So there's still some work to do and some of you may be involved in that stuff and some other things. But by and large we will try over the next couple of years to bring all of that into a common effort so that we can be in a position to defend against really any of those rouge threats or other threats that may be out there.

Finally, I think one of the keystones or the cornerstones, if you will, of NORAD's ability to assess a threat is the system called ITWAA; its identification threat warning attack assessment. I-T-W-A.-A. is based on a legacy system of ground-based sensors, radars. And in order to get a valid assessment of a threat you have to have both sets of radars looking at the same targets simultaneously. What's interesting is the architecture we've created for missile defense actually has multiple sensors. They're just not necessarily land based ITWAA certified radar sites. So, we are developing a network approach to this now that will allow us to have better reliability, more cost effective approach to sensor management and not be tied just to, if you will, COBRA DANE to give us the two looks that we see. So, we're trying to create a more network centric set of sensors that will allow us to have the same reliability for ITWAA that the US and Canada demanded of NORAD years ago, but do it in a way that is less tied to fixed sites and more integrates a variety of sensors both space based as well as land based for the future. So those kind of are the operational elements that we focus on a little bit each day.

John asked me while we were sitting at lunch, so how do you prioritize, you know, your workload? Is it more homeland defense or homeland security civil support? And some would observe that we seem to be doing all this civil support out there; hurricanes, and fires and all those things. What I said to John is that homeland defense happens 24 hours a day seven days a week. Those missile crews today are sitting in Greely, minus 57, on alert, prepared to respond should we have a rogue attack against our country. That happens everyday. It doesn't make a lot of news. People don't see it very often. Nobody wants to go visit them at Fort Greely. And yet, they're out there doing that. Our air defense fighters sit everyday at sites around the country; and 400 or so times a year they scramble out to identify some aircraft that's not complying with the rules of the road. And so far, 400 of those cases each year they're mechanical failure or buffoonery or something like that. But they're not a threat. But that happens everyday. That is the majority of our time spent is focused on those homeland defense missions. Port security, border security, and support to law enforcement in counter-narcotics business. Those things are below the radar scope that you all just assume is happening because we're here, it's quiet, nothing has occurred. But that's all about homeland defense.

On the other hand, civil support and homeland security gets a lot of visibility because if you have a big earthquake, a big fire or whatever that pretty much gets folks attention. Those are generally more episodic in nature but require larger forces to apply to them. So, we balance that each day. We're always alert and vigilant to the homeland defense missions. Everyday my command center, my integrated NORAD and NORTHCOM command center, focuses on space characterization, cataloging all of

those things, you know, those little pieces of tidbits that fly around in space out there. We keep a catalogue of those, understanding how they might threaten existing space vehicles and certainly anything that might threaten us that could reenter. We're partnering everyday with the FAA to look both inside our borders as well as our traditional NORAD mission of looking outside our borders. There are some pesky Russians flying around out there from time to time and we want to make sure that we don't allow any aircraft that is not identified and whose intentions we aren't sure of to enter our airspace. We don't want a repeat of 9/11, if it's humanly possible. So we're vigilant for that everyday. So those defense things really take up a lot of our time. They just don't necessarily make it onto the radar scope of most of the citizens of our country. But trust me we're out there doing them everyday and doing them pretty well.

Thanks very much for the opportunity to be with you.

Okay I promised I'd take questions and I've chatting for I don't know 25 minutes or so. And questions are way more fun than listening to me speak. Besides I've seen folks starting to nibble on the cheesecake. That sugar load is going to hit you here pretty quick and I don't want to be captured by that. So, let me stop my comments and throw it over to you and I'll fire away. I understand we're on the record and I see all our media friends back there going, 'I've got him now'. But I'm happy to take any questions you may have.