

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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COMMANDER
UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND
AND
NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to represent the men and women of United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). I come before you today after my first three months in command to share some of our notable accomplishments from the past year and to discuss many of our future critical challenges.

USNORTHCOM was born out of the tragic events of September 11th, 2001 and each day when we arrive for duty at our headquarters in Colorado Springs, we walk past a girder salvaged from the site of the World Trade Center. The events of that fateful day are never far from our thoughts. In the twelve years since USNORTHCOM was established, we understand now more than ever that we are entrusted with the supreme responsibility of protecting our homeland. This is a deeply personal commitment for us; it is our families, our friends, our shared values, and our way of life we protect.

In the execution of our missions, very few forces are assigned directly to USNORTHCOM or NORAD, as the majority of the forces we use are either Service retained, or in a prepare to deploy status. This arrangement works exceedingly well for both the Services and us. I am confident that for now we will have forces when and where needed, as reflected by DOD (Department of Defense) prioritization of homeland defense as the Department's number one priority.

Upon taking command this past December, I set about performing a detailed analysis of the missions we are tasked to execute as part of the President's Unified Command Plan (UCP) and the NORAD Agreement. From a clean slate, we examined our available ways, means, and desired end-states to prioritize the commands' efforts so that the functions and tasks we perform

in support of the United States and Canada are those most important to mission success. In doing so, I have focused our efforts along several important lines of operation.

Defense of our Homelands is our paramount line of operation and common to both USNORTHCOM and NORAD. The two commands complement each other in this endeavor as evidenced by the integration across nearly all our headquarters functions. USNORTHCOM's homeland defense missions include Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), maritime defense and control, as well as defending against non-traditional threats to the homelands. As the world's only bi-national command, NORAD has been on watch for over 56 years and adds aerospace warning, aerospace control, and worldwide maritime warning in the defense of North America. The highly integrated air defense system of NORAD allows us to identify, track, and if necessary, engage both external and internal aerospace threats. However, today's threats are quite different from those we faced even a few years ago.

As the threats to the homelands continue to evolve, we must adapt as well. Non-traditional threats seek to exploit seams between geographic combatant commands (GCCs), DOD and interagency partners, and the government agencies of the United States, Canada, Mexico, The Bahamas, and beyond. Our *Homeland Partnerships* and *Regional Partnerships* (Canada, Mexico and The Bahamas) allow us to look into these seams and identify these non-traditional threats. Leveraging the significant interagency footprint within the headquarters and our mil-to-mil relationships with regional partners provides the opportunity for unity of effort to close seams as far away from our borders as possible. Accordingly, we depend on and foster these *Homeland Partnerships* and *Regional Partnerships* in order to accomplish our missions, and consider them our strategic center of gravity.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) is a unique compact between our citizens and their military to provide DOD assistance within the homeland. Should disasters in the homeland occur, whether natural or manmade, USNORTHCOM supports the lead federal agency to synchronize and coordinate DOD efforts. In addition to regional, federal, state, tribal and local government partners, we have built trusted relationships with private sector and non-governmental organization stakeholders. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (usually the lead agency) are our closest interagency partners in this endeavor.

The Arctic requires advocacy and partnerships from both within and outside the USNORTHCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) as the region grows in importance to our national security over the next few decades. USNORTHCOM is assigned as the DOD advocate for Arctic capabilities and coordinates DOD efforts to that end.

Although each Service is responsible for the day-to-day welfare of its people, nearly 90 percent of our nation's military and civilian personnel live and work in our AOR. We owe them and their respective Services a commitment to *Professionalism and Excellence* and the well-being of our *Warfighters and Families*. As we welcome back and care for those who have been in combat, we have an opportunity to re-commit ourselves to the profession of arms and ensure we are prepared to perform our missions in an ever-changing threat environment, for make no mistake: those who would attack our families and friends have never stopped trying since September 11th, 2001.

Enduring threats to the nation emanate from traditional state actors, as well as rogue states, extremist organizations, homegrown violent extremists, and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). And with cyber-attacks on the rise, clearly a multitude of threats present

an ever present danger to our nation. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has said many times, the homeland is increasingly vulnerable.

Our strategic partner Canada has also fallen prey to the effects of homegrown violent extremism. The loss of life during the tragic attack on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on October 22, 2014 was only limited by the heroic actions of the Sergeant at Arms, Paul Vickers. We mourned the loss of Corporal Nathan Cirillo that day and also Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, the victim of a targeted terrorist attack two days earlier. We stand together with our Canadian allies and know these events serve as a sober reminder of the complex challenges we face in maintaining the security of our nation.

DEFENSE OF OUR HOMELANDS

Defense of our homelands is a sacred mission for the men and women of USNORTHCOM and NORAD, and our success is made possible because of close partnerships with allies, other combatant commands, and federal agencies.

Since September 11th, we have focused on terrorist groups that have demonstrated the capability and intent to strike within our borders. However, resurgent state actors have invested in new capabilities that make North America vulnerable in ways not seen in a generation.

The past year has marked a notable increase in Russian military assertiveness on the world stage, including in the approaches to the homelands. Russian heavy bombers flew more out-of-area patrols in 2014 than in any year since the Cold War. We have also witnessed improved interoperability between Russian long-range aviation and other elements of the Russian military, including air and maritime intelligence collection platforms positioned to monitor NORAD responses. While these patrols serve a training function for Russian air crews,

some are clearly intended to underscore Moscow's global reach and communicate its displeasure with Western policies, particularly with regard to Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Russia is progressing toward its goal of deploying long-range, conventionally-armed cruise missiles with ever increasing stand-off launch distances on its heavy bombers, submarines and surface combatants, augmenting the Kremlin's toolkit of flexible deterrent options short of the nuclear threshold. Should these trends continue, over time NORAD will face increased risk in our ability to defend North America against Russian air, maritime, and cruise missile threats.

We remain vigilant against states that may seek to put North America at risk with ballistic missiles. Today we are focused primarily on North Korea and Iran, as both seek to advance their nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities. North Korea has successfully test-detonated three nuclear devices and, through its space program, has demonstrated many of the technologies required for an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) that could target the continental United States. Meanwhile, North Korean military parades have showcased the new KN08 road-mobile ICBM. When deployed, this system will complicate our ability to provide warning and defend against an attack.

Iran has likewise committed considerable resources to enhancing its ballistic missile capabilities and has already placed another satellite into orbit this year using a new booster that could serve as a demonstrator for ICBM technologies. Despite international condemnation and sanctions, Iran has failed to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency to resolve all outstanding concerns regarding its nuclear program, particularly those concerning its possible military dimensions. While we remain hopeful that current negotiations with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany (P5+1) will lead to a

diplomatic solution which addresses the international community's concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program comprehensively and in a durable fashion, we will continue to remain vigilant.

I want to emphasize that USNORTHCOM could not address these threats without the close coordination of our fellow GCCs. A significant event in the homeland from an external threat may not originate in our AOR, as such an event or attack is more likely to emanate from the AORs of United States European Command (USEUCOM), United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), or United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM). Since the enemy lives in the seams, we are seeking a new level of understanding and efficiency among the GCCs in order to deter, detect and, when necessary, defeat threats before they pose a danger to the homeland.

Aerospace Warning, Aerospace Control and Maritime Warning

In response to the attacks of September 11th, NORAD rapidly implemented an air defense construct named Operation NOBLE EAGLE (ONE). Every day, hundreds of airmen from the Air National Guard, active duty Air Force, United States Coast Guard, and Royal Canadian Air Forces are on alert to ensure a terrorist attack against the homelands from the air will never go unchallenged. ONE is perhaps the most visible element of the NORAD missions, having flown in excess of 62,500 sorties responding to over 5,000 aircraft of interest since its inception. What we have learned after almost 14 years of ONE is this: it is prudent and it works. The ONE mission has matured from its beginnings in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks. Today, ONE provides key national leaders in the United States and Canada with situational awareness on the real-time security environment, affording an opportunity to respond and, if necessary, defeat an asymmetric threat from the air. While NORAD aircraft have not had

to face a threat with the scale of the September 11th attacks, the deterrent value of ONE and its ability to assure air sovereignty and air defense is enduring. And ONE is more than just fighter aircraft—United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) provides air-refueling aircraft on alert status and the Army National Guard supports our ground-based missile defense capability—all part of the integrated air defense system in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The NORAD maritime warning mission promotes the integrated efforts of the Global Maritime Community of Interest. Dependent on secure, effective, and collaborative information sharing, the goal of this community is to prevent terrorist attacks and criminal, harmful, or hostile acts across the maritime domain. We continue to build our partnerships in this NORAD mission area and over the past year we have issued fifteen maritime warning advisories highlighting potential maritime threats.

As threats to the homelands evolve, we continue to test our ability to defend against them through a rigorous exercise program. Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD, conducted in October 2014, culminated twelve months of scenario development focused on the ability of NORAD and USNORTHCOM to defend the homelands against a modern adversary, and included United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), and Alaskan Command (ALCOM). The exercise included the first live-fly exercise in Goose Bay, Canada since the Cold War, with over 500 people supporting fighter, air refueling, and Airborne Warning and Control aircraft. From our headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base, we shifted operations to our alternate command and control center in Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station and sealed the Mountain's blast doors to accomplish a number of medical and infrastructure damage response drills. The exercise allowed us to evaluate our plans and ability to conduct limited, but direct, combat operations against a symmetric peer competitor. Of note,

this year's VIGILANT SHIELD represented a far-reaching evolution of an exercise that started as a very basic command post drill just a decade ago.

Missile Defense

Last September marked the tenth anniversary of Ground Based Interceptor (GBI) missiles standing alert at Fort Greely, Alaska, manned by the 49th Missile Defense Battalion of the Alaska Army National Guard and overseen by the 100th Missile Defense Brigade of the Colorado Army National Guard. We have high confidence in the ability of this system to defeat an ICBM strike against the United States from an enemy with limited ICBM capabilities. As the Committee noted in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the GBI fleet requires continued vigilance and investment to ensure reliability and mitigate obsolescence, and we believe we are on a prudent, viable course of action to do just that.

The FY 2014 Defense Appropriations Act included initial funding for an additional 14 GBIs, in addition to the 30 GBIs currently based at Fort Greely and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, while improving the existing fleet by incorporating the second generation Exo-atmospheric Kill Vehicle (CE-II EKV). The improved CE-II EKV accomplished its first successful test last June when a GBI launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base successfully intercepted a ballistic missile target launched from Kwajalein Atoll over the Pacific Ocean. We believe the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) is on track to have the additional GBIs on line by 2017.

Our BMD capability relies on a series of infrared space sensors as well as land and sea-based radars for targeting. This year, a second AN/TPY-2 radar was brought on-line in Japan that improves our ability to persistently track potential threats to the homeland originating from East Asia.

Like everything we do in defense of the homeland, many of the systems and sensors we rely on reside in other AORs, which makes developing partnerships between MDA, USPACOM, USSTRATCOM, and USEUCOM critical. This includes developing and deploying Long Range Discrimination Radar systems for more efficient and time-sensitive BMD. The Sea-Based X-Band Radar, still considered to be in test and development, provides unique discrimination and tracking capabilities that are unavailable in current operational systems. I believe we must continue to invest in these types of emerging technology BMD capabilities to counter tomorrow's missile threats. Engaging a target that is flying over 15,000 miles per hour in space with a kill vehicle that is roughly the size and weight of a basic military trainee's foot locker continues to expand the limits of what is technically possible.

We remain concerned with the development of conventional cruise missiles that could provide near peer adversaries with options to strike the United States without the perceived risk of retaliation of a nuclear exchange. For over forty years we have enjoyed an unchallenged ability to employ precision conventional cruise missiles at low altitudes evading radar detection. However, the emerging capability of near peers to generate similar long-range strike effects could complicate our decision-making and limit our options in a crisis.

Moreover, the need for improved situational awareness in the high latitudes and maritime domain continues to increase. Whether it is a strategic bomber, a submarine, or a surface combatant, defeating the archer is technically more feasible and affordable than defeating the arrow. The ability to locate, intercept, and if necessary destroy these platforms before they can launch a strike is crucial. We are working with our Canadian partners to develop plans to modernize or replace current assets such as the North Warning System that will further leverage emerging technologies.

Before we can engage an airborne threat, we must be able to see it. We are continuing to work with our partners to employ advanced surveillance capabilities that will enhance our ability to detect, track, and investigate suspicious aircraft to include cruise missiles and unmanned aerial systems, and when necessary, cue our defense systems against the full spectrum of air threats of all sizes, at all altitudes, and at all speeds.

Our first Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System (JLENS) aerostat is now airborne, with a second that is scheduled to be deployed later this year, beginning a three-year operational exercise. Using these aerostats moored at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, we will take the radar data these platforms provide and integrate it into our NCR air defenses, as well as the larger NORAD air defense architecture. Assessing JLENS' capability to enhance our surveillance capabilities is important to determine the best way forward to protect against a potential cruise missile threat from near-peer adversaries. We appreciate the support of Congress for full funding of the JLENS FY16 President's Budget request to keep the operational exercise on track and on schedule.

Counternarcotics and Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC)

USNORTHCOM defends the homeland across the threat spectrum and partners with lead federal agencies against non-traditional threats. The DOD has been the lead agency for detecting and monitoring the transport of illegal drugs into the United States via air or sea since the inclusion of Title 10, Section 124 into United States Code in 1989. Section 1004 of the FY 1991 NDAA provides authority for the DOD to support counterdrug missions of both domestic and foreign law enforcement agencies.

We execute Title 10 counterdrug support through our subordinate command, Joint Task Force North (JTF-N) based at Fort Bliss, Texas. JTF-N also coordinates with National Guard

Title 32 forces on an annual planning basis for DOD support to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. In 2014, JTF-N supported 23 missions involving over 500 personnel. These missions not only provided lead agencies along the southwest border DOD support, but also valuable training for active duty Army and Army National Guard Ground Sensor Platoons, Engineers, Mobile Training Teams and Aviation units.

We continue to execute our interdiction counterdrug mission in support of national strategies such as the President's 2011 *Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime*. Our law enforcement partners have reported the seizure of \$3.5 billion in assets from TCOs in 2013. Using global footholds and myriad communication tools, TCO networks now span across all GCC AORs.

TCO networks do not limit themselves to narcotics trafficking. They are global logistics enterprises with the ability to move any type of commodity into and out of the United States. We greatly appreciate the Committee's efforts to expand Section 1004 in the FY 2015 NDAA to allow increased DOD CTOC support to law enforcement agencies. We look forward to continuing our efforts, in collaboration with our mission partners, to close gaps and seams, disrupt and dismantle threats, build capacities, and work with interagency partners to provide national leaders with options to counter the TCO threat to our homeland.

Cyberspace

Over the past year, malicious cyber activity has been responsible for high profile data breaches of large corporations and government agencies resulting in compromises of intellectual capital, personal information, and financial records. The proliferation of ubiquitous, inexpensive technologies and easy access malware makes it easier for both state and non-state actors to hold the United States at risk in the cyberspace domain than in the kinetic domains.

To address growing cyber threats to our military operations, we rely on the protection of DOD critical systems through cybersecurity efforts and shared situational awareness with our mission partners. Our newly established Joint Cyber Center (JCC), along with our United States and Canada military and interagency partners, recognizes and assesses when malicious cyber activity is being orchestrated against us, and in concert with United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), directs the appropriate cyber measures.

Cyber Protection Teams supported by airmen of 24th Air Force will be attached to our JCC beginning this year. These teams are designed to focus on real-time cyber defense of priority missions, assess cyber terrain, and conduct risk analyses on protected missions. Additional steps to shore up cybersecurity include integrating cyberspace operations within our contingency plans and increasing proficiency training through robust cyber exercise activity.

We have a wealth of experience in responding to natural disasters in the homeland, but the unpredictable cascading impacts of a cyberspace attack have the potential to easily outpace those of a natural disaster. While our cyberspace mission is defined and limited to protecting our own systems, it would be simplistic to assume that a large scale cyber-attack on the nation's infrastructure would somehow not impact both us and many of our partners' ability to successfully perform the DSCA mission. It makes strategic sense to consider the steps that could be taken to mitigate or prevent these types of attacks before they ever evolve into a DSCA response by DOD.

I believe it is realistic to envision a scenario where this type of cyber-attack would require a federal response with the resources we typically see only with the most significant DSCA events. While our cyber systems might be up and running at USNORTHCOM, the ability

of our subordinate forces and other federal and state agencies to coordinate, plan and effectively execute their respective missions may be impaired.

We have begun to consider such scenarios, and are in the process of conducting table-top exercises with our partners to understand the triggers that could move an event from the cyberspace realm into a homeland defense or DSCA mission. We have more work to do, but I believe these are prudent steps to understand the risk these threats pose to the homelands and how we might respond to them before they become catastrophic.

HOMELAND PARTNERSHIPS

The partnerships we have built within the homeland serve as the foundation for all our responsibilities. Our most important relationship, which cuts across all lines of operations, is with DHS. In addition, the relationship we have with DHS' FEMA is a model of interagency coordination.

One recent example of interagency coordination is the support DOD provided in response to the influx of unaccompanied children across our southwest border. At the request of the Department of Health and Human Service (DHHS), our component command, United States Army North (ARNORTH), coordinated the use of DOD facilities for the temporary shelter of 7,700 unaccompanied children last summer. This effort reached across the Services with temporary housing located at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and Naval Base Ventura County-Port Hueneme, California. While ARNORTH and the Services made facilities available for this effort, DHHS's Administration for Children and Families provided the personnel to care for the children and had the overall lead responsibility.

In addition, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard C-130 aircraft equipped with U.S. Forest Service Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) at units in California,

Colorado, North Carolina, and Wyoming made 132 airdrops, releasing nearly 250,000 gallons of fire retardant to combat wildland fires during the past fire season. Our relationship with the United States Forest Service and the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) continues to exemplify the importance of homeland partnerships and how the resources of the Federal Government can be brought to bear to protect lives and property.

Within the DOD, we have successfully partnered with the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) to improve our ability to counter IED threats within our homeland. In turn, we have shared this DOD expertise with the lead federal agency, the Department of Justice, and the DHS to reduce response times in the event of an IED-based attack. For missile defense, our nation's BMD capabilities are built on the foundation of strong partnerships with the MDA and USSTRATCOM, and our cyber efforts depend upon USSTRATCOM's subordinate command, USCYBERCOM.

In countering terrorism, we continue to rely on established connections within the intelligence and federal law enforcement communities. It is through cooperation with agencies like the Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration, DHS, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that we are able to monitor the risks of internal air threats. Similarly, USNORTHCOM maintains liaison officers with the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI's National Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the DHS' Office of Intelligence and Analysis and National Protection and Programs Directorate.

Finally, in our headquarters, we host nearly 60 DOD and non-DOD federal agencies, department representatives, and liaison officers in our headquarters. These relationships give essential interagency context during operations planning and execution, while also providing the

DOD's perspective to external agencies. Interagency coordination is the cornerstone of unity of effort.

DEFENSE SUPPORT OF CIVIL AUTHORITIES (DSCA)

At the heart of DSCA is local civilian command authority, as all natural and man-made disasters ultimately start by impacting lives at the local level. Our nation's governors take very seriously their role as chief executives of their states, exercising their constitutional-based police powers, and we deeply respect that authority. When they turn to the Federal Government for assistance, DOD has unique military capabilities that can be utilized in support of lead federal agencies to protect, save and sustain lives and protect property.

Because National Guard, under the command of their Governor, and DOD forces, under the command of the President, may respond to the same DSCA event in the homeland, we can utilize a Dual Status Commander (DSC) construct to help promote unity. With a DSC, Federal and state military forces may be synchronized to achieve unity of effort more effectively in order to achieve Federal and State mission objectives in response to the same incident.

With our three subordinate commands—Joint Task Force Civil Support, ALCOM, and Joint Force Headquarters National Capital Region—we have continued to mature and enhance our DSCA mission through annual exercises. This past year Exercise ARDENT SENTRY was linked to the National Exercise Program Capstone Event held on the 50th anniversary of the Great Alaska Earthquake, while Exercise VIGILANT GUARD included over 10,000 Service members and 1,200 civilians to help address gaps in state level disaster response plans. We also welcomed our subordinate command Special Operations Command North to full operational capability with Exercise VITAL ARCHER, our Tier 1 counterterrorism exercise.

Exercise VIBRANT RESPONSE, held at Camp Atterbury, Indiana in July 2014, was our largest DSCA field training event of the year. Conducted in two phases, VIBRANT RESPONSE allowed us to practically apply our plans for a large scale man-made or natural chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incident on our soil.

What makes VIBRANT RESPONSE both unique and invaluable is the interaction we have with lead federal, state, and local agencies, as well as National Guard and Reserve forces. This also gives us also have the opportunity to validate our CBRN forces and further hone our DSCA skills. The concept of a DSC, which was a nascent thought just a few years ago, has matured through exercises like VIBRANT RESPONSE, with a return on investment demonstrated multiple times in real world application.

DSCA Playbooks

We devote the majority of our DSCA planning on what we believe are the most likely events to occur in the homeland. However, a complex catastrophe in the homeland will require a timely, coordinated response from all agencies at all levels, not just the Federal Government. Based on our lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy, we continue the development of DSCA playbooks, which are incident-specific plans for DOD support to lead federal agencies in the first seven days of a potential complex catastrophe. We believe these DSCA playbooks will greatly reduce response times.

This year we completed our first two playbooks, centered on major earthquake events in Southern California and Alaska. These playbooks were endorsed by key state leaders, including The Adjutants General and Governors of both states, and key federal leaders. We also advanced a third playbook based on a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and subsequent tsunami scenario in the Pacific Northwest.

In the development of the Southern California and Alaska playbooks, we learned many valuable lessons addressing issues such as command and control, initial operating forces, authorities, logistics, and critical infrastructure. Playbooks will enhance our ability to respond effectively, if called upon, during the initial days of a catastrophic natural disaster.

Infectious Diseases/Ebola

As the GCC that is tasked with synchronizing the DOD's DSCA planning for infectious diseases with lead federal agencies, our Ebola response centered on supporting both the DHHS and DHS. When the initial homeland Ebola case in Dallas expanded with the infection of two nurses, the DHHS requested DOD make an Ebola medical support team available that could be quickly deployed. We immediately requested and received the expertise needed from the Services to assemble a 30-member team of 20 registered nurses (ten of whom were intensive care nurses), five doctors trained in infectious disease, and five trainers in infectious disease protocols made up of soldiers, sailors and airmen—within just a few days they were at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for advanced training.

In addition to the on-call medical team, we provided planning expertise to the DHHS in the early stages of the crisis to deal with issues such as transporting large numbers of Ebola patients by air to designated treatment facilities around the country if needed, as well as identifying personal protective equipment sources from DOD suppliers. Finally, during our follow-on training events, we invited observers from our AOR partners to see how we prepare and take those lessons back to their own countries. We remain engaged in the interagency effort to identify any capability gaps to address biological threats to the homeland and our partner nations in the Western Hemisphere.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The USNORTHCOM AOR includes three countries that through geography and history, have stories that intertwine in unique ways with our own. No other GCC can say their AOR is populated solely with Western democracies that share borders with our homeland. Thus the non-traditional threats that seek to exploit seams are mutual security concerns for all of us—Canada, Mexico, The Bahamas, and the United States. We are fortunate to have mutually supporting relationships within our AOR that enhance our efforts to defend the homeland.

Canada

By virtue of our bi-national command, NORAD, we have enjoyed a special partnership with Canada for over a half a century. Within 72 hours of taking command, I took my first trip to Ottawa to visit with our Canadian partners. We have continued to grow our relationship with the CJOC in Ottawa with great success. It was an honor last year for NORAD and USNORTHCOM to host the Canadian Minister of National Defence (and now the Minister of Foreign Affairs) Robert Nicholson at the commands' September 11th remembrance. During his remarks that day, he highlighted how in the tense moments of those first few chaotic hours after the attacks, Canada opened their airports, at great risk I might add, enabling thousands of Americans to land safely.

We continue to look for areas to work even more closely together. Our NORAD mission would not be possible without the ties we have with Transport Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Arctic, border security, and CTOC are all areas where we believe there is more work to be done. Especially in the Arctic, we are learning that we have just as much to gain from Canada's experience as we have to offer to them. It is an exceptional relationship and a model of cooperation.

Mexico

This past year marked a historical milestone in our security relationship with Mexico. Mexico took the unprecedented step of approaching the DOD about acquisition of United States military equipment through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. A package of UH-60 helicopters and High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles valued at over one billion dollars was the result—a 100-fold increase from prior years. This is a substantial and long-term investment by the government of Mexico for United States equipment, training, and sustainment.

We believe the two branches of the Mexican military, the Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA) and the Secretariat of the Navy (SEMAR), continue to highly value security cooperation with the United States. Over the last three years, we have also seen a 60 percent increase in opportunities to train together with Mexico's armed forces. Last year we were able to interact with 3,000 Mexican students, and we anticipate nearly 4,000 this year. Exercise AMALGAM EAGLE again proved our ability to work with our Mexican partners to track suspicious aircraft. Senior leader engagements between our armed forces also continue to improve as evidenced by the unprecedented and heart-warming public honoring by the Mexican armed forces of my predecessor, General Jacoby, prior to his departure.

The response to Hurricane Odile in Cabo San Lucas is another positive indicator for our relationship. Mexico is widely recognized within the Western Hemisphere as a regional leader in disaster relief operations. With tens of thousands of tourists stranded after the storm, Mexico accepted the United States' offer of military airlift in addition to Mexican and commercial assets. The Although little United States assistance was ultimately needed, use of U.S. military aircraft in an evacuation from Mexican territory is a first and a demonstration of the increased level of trust and cooperation between our two militaries.

In addition, our Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP) made great strides this year to enhance Mexican disaster preparedness and response capacities. By working closely with Civil Protection, Mexico's equivalent of FEMA, we assisted Mexico in professionalizing its firefighting corps and developing a federal level urban search and rescue team. Hundreds of firefighters and emergency managers are better prepared to save lives and property. Our efforts were recognized by President Peña Nieto last May at Mexico's annual meeting of Civil Protection.

Along its southern border, Mexico continues to improve its ability to secure its southern border, including monitor illegal crossings supported by Mérida initiative-funded equipment and DOD training. Mexico and Guatemala work together at the tactical level to combat organized crime on their border and we continue to look for ways to support Mexico in this effort. Each day we are more and more encouraged by Mexico willingness to partner with us to achieve common goals while we remain ever respectful of its independence and sovereignty.

The Bahamas

The Bahamas has been a long-standing friend of the United States, with the Royal Bahamas Defence Force an eager and willing partner in efforts to improve cooperative defense and security. Unfortunately, with over 660 of the 700 Bahamian islands uninhabited and extending over an area the size of California, The Bahamas has historically been a favored location for illicit trafficking. A small, yet professional defense and police force can only provide minimal surveillance over such a large area. Our efforts have focused on reducing this surveillance gap to better enable our partners to make the most efficient use of their assets.

In addition, The Bahamas and the United States share common values and have mutual economic interests. On any given day, there are nearly 35,000 American citizens in The

Bahamas with nearly five million American tourists transiting their ports every year. We have a vested interest in ensuring local first responders are proficient in their response to natural and man-made disasters to protect Bahamian and United States citizens' lives.

As part of our HAP, we held a major disaster preparedness workshop this year bringing island administrators together with police, defense, and medical experts to better prepare The Bahamas to respond to catastrophic hurricanes. We are also planning to follow up last year's successful construction and donation of a fully stocked disaster relief warehouse with similar facilities geographically dispersed. We are particularly proud to have supported the first National Cancer Registry of The Bahamas through DOD's Global Health Engagement initiative.

Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC)

As we have aggressively labored to expand human rights education in our AOR, WHINSEC continues to demonstrate its enduring value. Introducing mid-level career officers of our partner nations to basic United States military doctrine and training improves the security environment in our AOR and the entire Western Hemisphere. It also directly contributes to the security of the approaches to homeland.

Human Rights

We share the Committee's concern regarding human rights abuses in our AOR. The possibility of forces we have trained and equipped who may be violating the rights of those they are charged with protecting is unacceptable. USNORTHCOM fully supports and rigorously complies with restrictions on providing US security assistance to units and individuals for which there is credible information of having committed gross violations of human rights. We look forward to implementing DOD remediation policy in order to incentivize holding perpetrators accountable.

A key aspect of our partnership with Mexico is supporting their military's efforts to build institutions that embody professionalism and respect human rights and the rule of law. Our own experience shows that no military is immune from incidents of corruption and abuses of authority. Arguably what matters most is how the institution responds to these incidents. I believe Mexico's 2014 Military Justice Reform is a step in the right direction, and we will continue to monitor progress of specific Mexican military cases under that new system. We are committed to advancing human rights protections in everything we do.

THE ARCTIC

The Arctic remains key terrain as the northern approach to North America. We view the Arctic as an emerging operating area with much yet to be defined. In support of the National Strategy for the Arctic Region and the DOD's Arctic Strategy, we are committed to a peaceful, stable, and conflict-free Arctic. As part of the UCP signed in 2011, USNORTHCOM became the GCC with responsibility for Arctic capability advocacy. To help fulfill this charge, the Secretary of Defense approved the transfer of ALCOM in October 2014 from USPACOM to USNORTHCOM. We believe this organizational transfer positions us to better execute the spectrum of USNORTHCOM and NORAD missions in the Arctic region.

The Arctic Council has proven to be a valuable forum for non-security-related Arctic governance, having gained agreements among member states related to oil spill response and search and rescue, as well as advancement of environmental and scientific issues in the region. We will continue our collaboration with like-minded Arctic nations and look forward to supporting the United States Arctic Council Chairmanship beginning in 2015.

Our Arctic roadmap lays the framework for persistent domain awareness, robust communications, deployable forces, and infrastructure in the Arctic to support our

responsibilities and missions in this region. It is still up to four times as expensive and can take up to four times longer to build infrastructure in the Arctic than anywhere else in the United States or Canada. In contrast to a large physical presence, we believe the ability to have forces that are trained and equipped for the Arctic, and limited infrastructure that can be scaled for contingencies is the most responsible approach.

Along with my predecessors, I support United States accession to the Law of the Sea Convention as a means to further the National Security Strategy in the Arctic and throughout our worldwide maritime security interests.

CONCLUSION

Today, we face increasing challenges from near peer competitors, rogue regimes, myriad terrorist organizations, individual violent extremists, and transnational organized crime looking for weaknesses to exploit. Near peers continue to erode what has always been our military technological advantage and the ability to hold targets at risk anywhere in the world. Asymmetric threats in the form of terrorism and cyber-attacks are ever evolving. Nature gets a vote as well with the complete unpredictability of the next major earthquake, fire, or flood, and the changing Arctic environment—all contributing to the complexity of our mission.

We can never become complacent in our thinking or actions. This past year we have continued our long-standing commitment of putting our own capabilities and those of our partners to the test by executing our plans through a rigorous exercise schedule. Combatant Commander Exercise Engagement and Training Transformation (CE2T2) funding allows our headquarters and force providers to conduct training and exercises to ensure readiness.

I am confident that today we are able to execute our assigned missions with forces by the Services that remain capable and ready. As a combatant commander, it is my responsibility to

identify the capabilities required to meet my requirements; it is the Services' responsibility is to fulfill it. But investment in readiness today leads to a ready force in the future. This includes training, recapitalization and modernization across the Services.

And so I continue to be strongly concerned about the long-term fiscal situation of the DOD. Sequestration targets both current and future readiness and risks a hollow force undertrained and underprepared for today's emerging threats. The across-the-board cuts required to meet sequestration spending levels beginning again in FY 2016 mean critical capabilities USNORTHCOM and NORAD depend on to accomplish our missions could be in jeopardy, even as our potential adversaries remain persistent and innovative.

Our true competitive advantage is the remarkable people dedicated to professionalism and excellence accomplishing our missions every day, including one of the most experienced civilian workforces in the entire DOD. While their dedication has never wavered, let me add my voice to those who have sounded the alarm over the morale of our civilians after several cycles of threatened and realized furloughs, pay freezes, and reductions in forces. We have broken faith with our civilians and can, and should, do better.

We appreciate the Committee's work to highlight for the entire Congress the adverse effects our current budget process not only has on our national defense, but also on our dedicated warfighting men and women, our exceptional civilian workforce, and their families. USNORTHCOM and NORAD are fully prepared to defend the homelands from those who would do us harm. I welcome your questions.