

AFGSC SASC-SF Testimony: Verbal Opening Statement

Chairman Nelson, Ranking Member Sessions, and distinguished Members of the Committee; I am honored to appear before you today for the first time as the Commander of Air Force Global Strike Command, representing nearly 24,000 dedicated Airmen and civilians.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide this committee with an update on the current status of the Command, our progress since my predecessor, Lt Gen Klotz, last testified in March of 2010, and what I see as our central challenges going forward.

Over the past year we have pursued three parallel efforts: the methodical stand-up of a new major command, disciplined execution of current operations in support of our combatant commanders, and the enduring effort to establish a culture that embraces the special trust and responsibility nuclear weapons require.

We are now fully engaged on our core organize, train, and equip mission areas. Our new headquarters is operating at 81% of our authorized strength and we have established the organizational structure, battle rhythms, metrics, and reviews necessary to execute the mission.

This headquarters' only measure of merit is the success of our wings as they execute the mission. Our work in revitalizing the nuclear enterprise is ongoing as we build upon relationships between all stakeholders representing the Services, the Combatant Commands, and other Federal agencies.

Our mission requires specialized and tailored training. As such, we established a number of new training programs to build upon the excellent initial training the Air Force provides. These programs

develop expertise throughout the nuclear enterprise to include operations, maintenance, intelligence, and security forces.

As we sustain and develop our forces, we have advocacy responsibilities for the Minuteman III, UH-1N helicopter, the B-2 and B-52 bombers, air-launched cruise missile, gravity nuclear weapons, and Air Force Nuclear C3.

I must report, I am particularly concerned about the status of our UH-1N helicopter fleet, which performs critical missile field support and convoy security missions. Presently, the UH-1N fleet does not meet our missile field security requirements for endurance, speed, and payload. As lead MAJCOM, we will continue to advocate for the Common Vertical Lift Support Platform, or CVLSP, to ensure the security of missile field operations and to meet the requirement posed by the Air Force's continuity of operations and government missions in the National Capital Region.

As we go forward, I see three major challenges facing Air Force Global Strike Command. First, we must consolidate the gains of the last few years across the nuclear enterprise. We will continue to mature our Headquarters and be rigorous in the examination of our progress.

Our second major challenge is to achieve enduring cultural change in our nuclear enterprise while aggressively supporting the current conventional fight. Our bomber forces are more than just dual-capable, they are full-spectrum platforms. We will master both missions and ensure the availability of long range strike options for the Commander-in-Chief. Our recent B-2 and B-1 missions into Libya from bases in the United States show how quickly a crisis can develop, and how long range bombers can rapidly bring flexible combat power to a joint commander.

Finally, we must sustain and enhance our current force while preparing to meet the challenges of the future. At Air Force Global

Strike Command we recognize our responsibility to be efficient and effective stewards of resources. Our goal is to instill a culture that consistently encourages innovation and fosters productivity improvements.

Air Force Global Strike Command's central mission remains unchanged. We will develop and provide combat ready forces for nuclear deterrence and global strike operations to support the President of the United States and the Combatant Commanders.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the other members of the committee again for the opportunity to discuss the status and future of Air Force Global Strike Command and look forward to your questions. With your permission, I would like to have my written testimony entered into the record.

Thank you.

(710 words, approximately 5 minutes)