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AS PREPARED

Good afternoon, everyone! Thanks to Jim and his team for putting on this great conference and for the opportunity to participate in these discussions.

As I understand, I am the first TRANSCOM Commander to speak at this event. I suppose now that people are paying more attention to the importance of logistics, Jim finally decided to send me an invite.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a great privilege to represent the men, women, military, and civilian members of the DoD's greatest command. On the strength of our logistical competence rests the ability to employ the finest fighting force on the planet, securing America's position as a global leader - an aspiration that many nations hold, but none can match. Without fail, our team leads the broader Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise to conduct globally integrated mobility operations and provides enabling capabilities to project and sustain the Joint Force in support of national objectives.

Almost every Joint Force mission begins and ends with TRANSCOM.

With the help of our commercial industry partners, our air, rail, sea, and surface capabilities ensure that the humanitarian aid and combat power emanating from the United States reach their intended destinations.

From Kabul to Kyiv, our resilient team of logistics professionals continually exceed expectations, and make history by ensuring that hope and victory are assured for our senior leaders, allies, partners, and most importantly – the American people. To maintain the unrivalled strategic advantage to posture and sustain forces over global distances, through natural disasters, pandemics, conflicts - peace and war, and while defending the homeland - we must preserve our logistical dominance.

Lessons abound with historical examples of logistics' critical role on and off the battlefield. Given the context of current events, I wanted to quote one of the greatest wartime leaders.

Employing one of his more colorful metaphors, Sir Winston Churchill prosed "Victory is the beautiful, bright-colored flower. Transport is the stem without which it could have never blossomed. Yet even the military student...often forgets the far more intricate complications of supply." Regardless of the mission, success depends on a nation's capacity to transport and supply its forces.

Russia's challenges clearly demonstrate Churchill's maxim, despite their secure interior lines.

Meanwhile, TRANSCOM has delivered, millions of small arms and artillery rounds, thousands of vehicles, and other weapons systems from around the world. The entire enterprise proudly continues to enable Ukraine's national defense, that in turn delivers success for our Allies and America. Despite the significant demands of the European theater, TRANSCOM continues to execute our enduring global mission.

In all theaters, we supported joint and combined exercises with geographic combatant commands, including bilateral, multi-domain maneuvers to increase the combat readiness and interoperability of US and allied partner nations. Our commercial and military aircraft, airlifted infant formula to ease supply chain burdens,

and, within 24-hours of notification, delivered urban search and rescue teams to support Türkiye following the devastating earthquake

The air refueling fleet enabled the readiness training, and global reach of airlift, ISR, fighter, and bomber aircraft with their cumulative deterrent effects. These feats require all aspects of TRANSCOM's air, land, and sea components: from deployed joint planners to thousands of military and civilian aircraft, vessels, trucks, and trains. Every day, from combined training to crisis, TRANSCOM delivers all forms of power for our nation.

In the context of global competition, the PRC recognizes TRANSCOM's critical role in the American power paradigm. With 85% of the US's combat forces in the mainland, all major weapons systems require TRANSCOM to present a credible deterrent. The PRC understands that to compete effectively, the DoD must have agile, resilient, survivable, and sustainable logistics – all linked to underwriting the lethality of the Joint Force.

For that reason, they have custom designed their kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities to target our lines of communication. Contested logistics, from the homeland to delivery, is now a reality for every major operation. If the associated threats and logistical demand is not sufficiently mitigated, almost every aspect of the mobility enterprise will incur increased risk to mission. Consequently, this elevates risk for the Joint Force Commander. Based on our extensive assessments, we know that the Joint Force's requirements will challenge our experience and capabilities. In non-permissive environments, the ability to generate momentum in compressed timelines, to more destinations, with our finite capacity, will be an imperative.

However, with the right support we believe significant opportunities exist to exploit our expertise. To make this a reality, we're focused on developing and rehearsing mobility concepts that will support joint force maneuver in a contested environment.

With our priorities and warfighting framework nested within the National Defense Strategy's strategic ways, TRANSCOM is dedicated to ensuring the enterprise is ready to accomplish our mission when called. Through this framework, we plan and execute operations through Global Posture, Global Mobility Capacity, and the ability to Globally Command, Control, and Integrate our forces to meet the Joint Force Commander's intent.

Global mobility posture is the foundation of our formidable projection capability and relies on access, basing and overflight. This begins at home with installations, ports, highway, pipelines, and railway infrastructure to mobilize and deploy forces. Internationally, our ability to leverage these distributed and scalable logistics networks is highly dependent on a deep bench of diplomatically aligned allies and partners. This creates dense layers of contacts and contracts - military, commercial, allied, and partner – allowing us to set the globe. Through a whole of government approach, we must continue to expand and strengthen these connections as a flexible strategic advantage that sets America apart.

With favorable posture, we can apply our global mobility capacity to maneuver forces and equipment. Detailed analysis continually reconfirms our capacity is sufficient to meet demands but at an increased level of risk in a contested environment. This includes the ability to scale through emergency preparedness programs such as: Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement, Voluntary Tanker Agreement, and Civil Reserve Airlift Fleet. These provide assured access to commercial capacity and services needed to support DoD contingency requirements. The combination of our organic logistics fleets and these commercial capabilities must continue to present a credible deterrent for delivering forces – regardless of the environment. Achieving this end requires proactive efforts to recapitalize and modernize our capacity. My highest concerns lie in reductions in capacity and readiness in sealift and air refueling.

In ten years, more than 50% of the US government-owned surge sealift ships will reach their end of service life. For this reason, TRANSCOM supports the Navy's strategy to recapitalize the fleet by acquiring used sealift vessels from the commercial market and to provide Secretary of Defense discretionary authority to purchase foreign built used ships without limitation on number – ensuring flexibility to purchase under favorable market conditions. The Department is presently authorized to purchase only nine used vessels, and working with the Maritime Administration, we are currently executing the purchase of two used Roll-On/Roll-Off vessels and three used Roll-On Container ships.

But retirements are currently set to outpace recapitalization. So, to preserve capacity and readiness, we're advocating for accelerating the 2-ship per year recapitalization rate, and reconsidering currently scheduled vessel retirements. Increasing our ability to transport fuel is also critical. Recent congressional authorization allows us to expand the Tanker Security Program from 10 to 20 US flagged vessels. We're working to retrofit the first 10-ships for underway refueling operations in a contested environment. This will allow us to meet DoD requirements, reduce strategic risk, and develop an international trade presence in the Pacific.

In the air, the refueling fleet is our most stressed capability. Joint force projection relies on air refueling as the backbone of rapid global mobility. Our capacity must remain credible to cover simultaneous global requirements, this is where I have daily and wartime concerns. To meet significant joint and combined air refueling needs, TRANSCOM supports the Air Force's continued efforts. This includes focused modernization of the fleet...specifically, readiness, connection, and survivability upgrades...uninterrupted tanker recapitalization, and accelerated pursuit of the next generation air refueling system.

The ability to rapidly move cargo via aircraft also represents a vital dependency of the Joint Force. Moving oversized cargo early in a high-end conflict underscores the need for a robust organic strategic airlift fleet to carry cargo that our commercial partners cannot. Tactical airlift requirements also constitute a large portion of Joint and Service maneuver concepts, including transloading from other aircraft or vessels, patient evacuation, and distributed operations to sustain forces. The demands on the capacity of inter and intra-theater airlift are increased but reflect manageable levels of risk. In daily competition and prospective operations, our fleets continue to present an asymmetric advantage that elevates the value of airlift in all theaters.

TRANSCOM's third warfighting element, global command and control and integration, allow us to plan, coordinate, and synchronize the movement of our military and commercial capacity at echelon. This begins with cyber mission assurance and digital modernization to mitigate malicious cyber activity. In partnership with our commercial transportation partners, USCYBERCOM, and intelligence agencies, we share threat information, best practices, and updates on implementation of cybersecurity frameworks such as Zero Trust to reduce disruption.

We fully embraced the DoD's Artificial Intelligence and Data Accelerator Initiative to improve our data maturity posture and set the foundation for future analytic opportunities. This is the first crucial step in using data as a strategic asset and machine learning capabilities to create decision advantage. TRANSCOM is accelerating our identification as a data-driven organization with the capabilities, tools, and culture to gather and analyze data faster than our competitors can match.

Future operations will also require high-degrees of battlespace awareness to align scarce mobility resources with the greatest strategic need. Integration into battle networks, resourcing cryptographic modernization, and ensuring resilient positioning, navigation, and timing is a requirement for our platforms and our personnel. TRANSCOM recognizes that enduring advantages we build through our warfighting framework reinforces integrated deterrence and reduces the possibility of conflict.

But we cannot lose sight of the fact that for decades, our transportation and logistics prowess, conducted in permissive environments, has masked operational risk in a manner we can no longer afford. The allure of battle and misplaced belief in swift victories has frequently obscured the physical realities of war. Throughout history, the ability to leverage logistics has delineated those nations prepared to fight a war and those prepared to win one.

TRANSCOM is confident that we'll remain ready now and in the future to transport the Joint Force at a time and place of our nation's choosing – to deliver hope, deterrence, and when necessary, victory.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Together we deliver!