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Lt Gen Obering: I'm going to talk to you today to try to clarify some of the misconceptions that we've been reading in the press about our missile defense sites and what we have planned for Europe, to try to answer some questions about those and kind of set the record straight. But just to kick this off, the concept and the idea of locating missile defense assets in Europe actually goes back to the 2002 timeframe, when we determined that we wanted to extend coverage to our allies and friends and deployed forces in that region and also to enhance obviously the defense of the United States as well. And we actually began putting money for that purpose in the 2006, 2007 budget to begin the analysis and to begin the early work to prepare sites and site survey work and that type of thing for these locations. The sites are intended to be part of an integrated, layered system that we have been deploying since 2004. They are geared toward and are directed toward rogue nation capabilities, obviously not sophisticated ballistic missile fleets such as the Russians have, but are geared toward what we consider to be the rogue nation threat, as is our ballistic missile defense system that we've been deploying. And so with that background, I'd be glad to answer any questions, and Brian Green here with me would be answering any questions that you guys may have.

Marek Walkiski, Polish Public Radio: Do you have a preferred location for the base in Poland? What can Poland expect from the United States, from the Pentagon, in return for housing such a base on its territory?

Obering: First of all, we have surveyed several sites in Poland to be potential host sites and not just one particular one, so there are several of them that we will continue to look at. To answer your second question, we believe that it is obviously in the interest of Poland, in its national interest, to be able to host a site like this because it will enhance their security. There will be obviously, as we go in to construct a site in Poland, there will be opportunities for host nation industry to participate in the construction and in the build-out of that site. In fact, overall, we're going to spend about \$3.5 billion dollars between the interceptor site and the radar site that we will deploy, and of that about \$1 billion total between all of the work is involved in the construction activity.

Walkiski: Poland has some expectations from the United States. There is speculation about positioning in Poland Patriot missiles or THAAD system. Are you willing to put those elements of missile defense system in Poland?

Obering: In terms of the missile defense capabilities that we're talking about, there are many ways that we can handle the shorter range threats that are posed by the shorter range missiles, as you say, such as Patriot, the

Aegis sea-based system, etc. We don't perceive that to be a requirement in Poland to be able to have that kind of capability because of the ranges back from the threat that we're talking about, so the locations that we're referring to, the interceptor sites are long-range interceptors capable of defeating the longer and intermediate range missiles that we do not currently have a capability deployed in that area against. That's part of what we would propose to build out. We don't perceive that there's a need to deploy Patriot missiles, for example, to that location.

Walkiski: What about THAAD?

Obering: Not to my knowledge.

Green: No requirement that we're aware of to deploy THAAD in Poland. Specifically compensation for Poland for hosting a missile defense site, as General Obering noted, we believe and we believe that the Polish government believes that a missile defense site in Poland would be good for the security of Poland. As a matter of policy, we don't provide compensation for basing, though I would also add that the United States is always willing to talk to its allies about the general security situation and about other forms of deeper strategic cooperation.

Wade Boese, Arms Control Today: You say this is not geared toward Russia. Could you just speak about whether or not interceptors based in Poland would have any technical capability to intercept Russian ballistic missiles fired at the United States? Secondly, what steps might MDA or the Pentagon take to kind of reassure Russia that these interceptors aren't a threat to them?

Obering: Let me answer your question directly. We're talking about up to 10 interceptors that we would locate, for example, in Poland, to counter the rogue nation threat. From that location, and even working with the radars that we would put, for example, in the Czech Republic and any other forward-based radars that we would locate in terms of an overall capability, we cannot physically catch the Russian ICBMs even if we were trying to target those missiles. In addition to there being a very, very small number of them compared to the very large number of Russian ICBMs, they do not have the capability to even catch the Russian ICBMs from their location. You're talking about a tail chase if look at the geography, and so it does not pose a technical threat to the Russia ICBM fleet. With respect to the Russians, I have actually traveled personally to Moscow and talked with them. We've also briefed the NATO-Russia council that was held in Brussels, and we laid out our program, we laid out the locations of where we were proposing in terms of the general regions of the countries, and we laid out technical capabilities with respect to these interceptors, and we will continue to work closely with the Russians and continue to work closely with our NATO allies and our European allies to make sure that they understand what the technical and the program capabilities are of these missiles.

Amy Butler, Aviation Week: I just want to ask you a question about how the physical arrangements are going to be. The land that the bases will be on, will that remain the territory of the actual host nation, will that be

leased or will it be U.S. territory in a sense, will it be manned by all U.S. personnel, or will there be any kind of sharing in terms of the command structures and the data that they receive with the European military command authorities?

Obering: I'll let Brian handle the first part of that and I'll tackle the second part.

Green: The physical locations will remain the sovereign territory of the host nations. The host nations have complete control over it. I'll let Trey answer the operational aspects of it. Certainly, we'd have U.S. soldiers and contractors actually doing the operating of the system. But this would be a basing arrangement that would be consistent with other basing arrangements, and all U.S. personnel and contractors have responsibility for abiding by the laws of the host nations.

Obering: In terms of command and control, Amy, there's a tempo to a ballistic missile defense capability there that is very, very quick. As you well know, when you are trying to intercept a missile that could be launched from the Middle East headed to Europe or headed to the United States, you're talking a matter of minutes with respect to decision timelines and then the intercept windows that we have to react to those missiles. Because of the physical necessities, if nothing else, there has to be a fairly seamless command and control capability with respect to the site and the control of the site, and we would expect that that would remain within the overall U.S. ballistic missile defense command-and-control structure. That doesn't mean that we will not consult and that we will not confer with our allies in terms of the operation of the site of what the plans and that type of thing are with respect to the command and control and with the capabilities of it, certainly in terms of real-time command and control as I outlined.

Nathan Hodge, Jane's Defense Weekly: I wanted to know if you could elaborate a little bit more about how many personnel would be required to man these sites in Poland and the Czech Republic and where specifically, what locations you're looking at in those countries.

Obering: I won't get into specifics of the locations. Just suffice to say there are three or four acceptable locations in each country. What I will say is we're talking on the order of about 200 individuals with respect to the interceptor site. The radar site is designed to be unattended for the most part in terms of its operation. What we would need there would be contractors to be able to maintain the equipment and maintain the site, and then in both locations, we would have force protection personnel that would be deployed to the site, but I won't talk about the numbers there.

Hodge: But that would be over and beyond the individuals actually working at that site?

Obering: The force protection, yes.

Jim Wolf, Reuters: Would you talk about the timeline for the threat of

long-range missiles that Iran is developing and what that implies for when you need to have the ground-based interceptors ready in the proposed Third Site?

Obering: That's a great question, Jim, and it actually gets into why we began this several years ago. As you know, our process here in the states is slow when it comes to how we prepare and how we program and how we execute. It takes many years to be able to generate the program, the money and then the execution of something like this. As I said, if we begin this year, actually last year, 2006, with respect to the analysis and with respect to the overall siting and that type of thing, it's going to take us till the 2011, 2012 timeframe based on our experience at Fort Greely, Alaska, and in California to be able to begin to have an operational capability at these locations. It's going to take us three or four years to be able to come up to speed there. And that is why we want to get started, because we've learned our lesson in the past. We know that we cannot predict with certainty when nations are going to be able to attain certain capabilities. For example, back in 1998, just before the North Koreans launched that Taepo Dong 1, just months before that, there were many, many experts that were predicting that it would be many years before they would be able to demonstrate or have that capability and be able to demonstrate it. They did it within a month or so. We see what's happening right now in Iran, we know that they have a very aggressive test program that they have demonstrated in public obviously, and they have avowed themselves that they are going to attain a space launch capability, and when you do that, you have demonstrated all of the basic building blocks for a long-range, ICBM capability in terms of staging, controlling a vehicle through the staging, (inaudible) burns and that type of thing, and all indications are that they are working to be able to achieve that. So we want to have this in place by the 2011-2012 timeframe because we think the Iranians, for example, shortly thereafter will be able to have a long-range capability, not one that they've demonstrated today or necessarily tomorrow, but again you're talking about several years from now, and so it's prudent for us to be thinking about that now and begin to build toward that so that we're in a position that we can do something about it in that timeframe.

Reuters: How much time does that leave you for negotiations?

Obering: I could let Brian talk about the timelines for negotiations. We try to factor that in when we talk about the timelines that I just outlined in terms of 2011 or 2012.

Green: Negotiations are never subject to any precise schedule, as anybody who's participated in a negotiation knows. We're obviously interested in trying to pursue negotiations as expeditiously as we can, but there can be no precise timeline on those. And I think that also brings up another point that needs to be stressed here, and that is that we're obviously interested in proceeding and proceeding expeditiously, but all of this is clearly subject to the negotiation process and these deeper and more intensive discussions that we're going to have with the Czech Republic and Poland. So this is not a unilateral decision by any means on the part of the United

States. This is a cooperative enterprise.

Obering: The good news there is that we are both going to be motivated by the same factor, which is building a common capability to defend against what we perceive to be a threat that will emerge.

Green: We've been very, very pleased with our discussions in the past with both the Czech Republic and Poland.

Nick Simeone, Fox News Channel: General, we haven't heard your reaction yet to China's test earlier this month, I believe, of an attempt to shoot down a satellite in space. I'd like to hear your thoughts on that and how you assess that threat.

Obering: As you very well know, Nick, the system that we are fielding with respect to ballistic missile defense is not geared toward China. It is geared toward North Korea and toward the rogue nations like North Korea. Having said that, as any prudent military officer, we have to look at capabilities because that takes years to build, intent can change overnight. We are keeping track of what China is able to do in their program in our development program, so we have activities that if need be in the future, we may be able to bring that to bear. But in terms of what we have fielded to date and what we have plans to field, we do not have a plan to field any kind of a counter to the Chinese.

Butler: General Obering, with regard to an engagement if it ever came to that or even testing, does the geography associated with the Poland and Czech Republic sites pose an issue with regard to flying over land to do test and/or an actual engagement and how do you work through that issue?

Obering: First of all, good question. By the timeframe that we're talking about, 2011-2012, if you stop and think about it, we will have had a very extensive test program that we will have executed for very, very similar capabilities. For example, we will have flown numerous times with the Beale radar, we will have flown numerous times with the Sea-Based X-Band Radar. The Sea-Based X-Band is probably the closest that we would come to that midcourse radar that we would deploy in the Czech Republic. The forward deployed radar that we have in Japan today we have actually flight tested against that at Vandenberg when it was at Vandenberg. And so we would do it in basically a piecemeal fashion. We would make sure that we had tested the components, similar components like SBX and the TPY-2 radar that we have in Japan, and then we rely on the modeling and simulation results that we get from those tests and actually do digital simulation and ground testing of the radars when we put them in place. And that's basically what we would do. Now that is not without precedent. If you stop and think about it, this country has relied for many years on an offensive deterrent in our ICBM fleet and we have never done an end-to-end test of that entire system to include obviously a detonation of a nuclear warhead somewhere in the south Pacific, nor would we intend to. So this idea of taking a component, doing what we would call a component-level, end-to-end test, doing what we can with respect to flight test and then fleshing out the rest of it with very

high fidelity digital simulations and models is acceptable to us.

Butler: Do you think that poses some risk? The ICBM fleet, did it have as many testing challenges as the missile defense system has had to date?

Obering: I would think that for the state of art that they were faced with at the time, yes, very much so. But having said that, as I said, we will have flown many, many targets. In fact, this year we have two more long-range tests planned in our system. By this timeframe, we will have probably on the order of 10 or more. And we will have all that data from that testing to understand, very well understand the behavior of these components. Now I'll remind you that the radar that we are putting in the Czech Republic is actually a radar that has been in operation for many years in our test facility at Kwajalein, so this is not a radar that is brand new coming off the line. We actually will do some refurbishment and updating of the radar components to kind of modernize some of these components, but the basic functionality of the radar has been in flight testing so to speak for several years at Kwajalein.

Ashley Roque, Inside the Army: I was curious about what impact the congressional cut in '07 to the third GMD site will have.

Obering: We had requested about \$56 million, as I recall, in '07 to do the site analysis and to begin to do some of the work that we needed, and that was reduced down to about \$36 million or \$30 million, something along those lines. What it did is it delayed us basically, we had to push the work out about six to eight months that we would have started sooner, and so it forced us to do a little bit of a restructure in terms of the way that we approach it. We plan right now to finish doing the site survey work this year, in '07, obviously pending on the discussions and the outcomes with our allies and the host nations. And if all goes well, we would begin construction in the 2008 timeframe.

Roque: When you say delayed six to eight months, was that the site survey work or actual starting the construction?

Obering: It's both.

Roque: And could you talk a little bit about the restructure, or is just the 2008?

Obering: We had planned to start construction in late 2007, and what we basically did is had to push that out to 2008. That is the primary result of this. The biggest impediment would be that we couldn't get clearing the site started and that type of thing, and that's what we had to push out.

Alexander Pakhomov, TASS Russian News Agency: If you go ahead with your plans, are you going to invite Russians to observe the construction of the site and the actual deployment of missiles and radar?

Obering: Obviously, we have nothing to hide with respect to our Russian

allies. But any type of invitation for observation or verification or anything like that would be dependent on the host nation, as well as the United States, so that is not a question I can answer unilaterally. That's something that we would have to work with our host nation allies

Green: That's exactly the point that I would make as well. That would have to be a discussion in the first instance between United States and the host nation.

Obering: By the way, we have invited our Russian allies to visit us at Ft. Greely, Alaska, where we have an interceptor site that is very, very similar to what we would propose for Eastern Europe. It's larger than what we would propose for Eastern Europe. But we have invited them there as well.

Nick Simeone, Fox News Channel: General, I just wanted to follow up on the kind of question earlier. How much of a new threat do you think this capability by China (inaudible) represents now?

Obering: I don't know how much I can comment on that with respect to our overall system. Today, in the overall ballistic missile defense program, we do not have a heavy reliance on space-based assets in terms of how we actually execute the system. That is something obviously that over time could change. But in terms of an immediate threat to the operation of the missile defense system, we can survive that. I think it's just curious in terms of the fact that they chose to do this at this point and what message that they were trying to send as a result of this, and that's something that's not within my area of expertise. But speaking strictly from a ballistic missile defense perspective, it's not an immediate threat to our capabilities.

John Liang, Inside Missile Defense: Given the fact that one of the reasons for the site in Europe is to help defend our European allies, are there any plans to have our European allies help pay for those sites?

Obering: Actually, the fact that they are contributing their land, their access to their land and their territory and the facilities and obviously the road structure and everything that we would be using for that, we consider that a significant contribution for that.

Liang: Above and beyond the site nations, what about, say, Germany or England or Italy or France, any of those countries?

Obering: We have not requested that they fund any of this activity. We felt that this is something that is in the United States interest and therefore something that we needed to make sure that we had covered with respect to our funding. We did not want to have to worry about any kind of long, protracted negotiation with respect to funding support to get this started because as I said earlier, we believe that there is a compelling reason to begin to do this because of what we see emerging with respect to the threat. If we did not feel that there was that compelling urge, we may be a little more relaxed in terms of how we approach this, but we did not want to have

to be tied up with those kinds of discussions.

David Ahearn, Defense Daily/Space and Missile Defense Report: As far as China having the capability to take down satellites, I think I understood you to say that you're not at this point in time preparing any system to counter them or to prevent their doing that. Since the U.S. military, however, is reliant on military satellites and others for GPS and a host of other things, is that something you would like to develop?

Obering: I'll defer to Brian on that question. What the Chinese did with respect to their ASAT launch, as I said, we have capabilities and we have redundancies within our system that from a ballistic missile defense perspective, we can deal with today. In terms of the future implications of that, of their capability should they become operational or should they become more mature, that brings up a whole host of new questions and a whole host of issues that we would have to deal with. But where I'm sitting today is what I was answering the question from.

Green: Dave, the Chinese ASAT test really doesn't have a lot to do with ballistic missile defense efforts that we're talking about today, so I guess I would defer that question until a different forum.

Nathan Hodge, Jane's Defense Weekly: Just to follow on Jim Wolf's question, if, say, for instance, Iran goes away as a threat, whether for reasons of regime change or changing relations, what are the other emerging ballistic missile threats that would justify a site in Eastern Europe?

Obering: Today, for example, Iran is the biggest concern that we have. If they go away as a threat, then for all practical purposes our actions have achieved what they were intended to achieve, which is to remove the missile threat to the United States, our allies and our forces, so it would certainly cause us to rethink our deployment and the cause and rationale for that. Having said that, I don't know that we can predict the future that clearly. You could get other countries. One thing that is of great concern to us is that since 1972, when we entered the ABM Treaty with the Soviet Union at the time, back then there were only about seven or eight countries that had these missiles or these technologies. And, of course, since then, that number's grown to well beyond 20 countries and many of them are hostile to the United States. And so being able to predict the future about what we would need in 15 or 20 years is awfully difficult. But having said that, the immediate threat, or the immediate emerging threat I should say that we see is obviously the Iranians, and they're putting a lot of energy into that program.

Marek Walkiski, Polish Public Radio: What are your options if negotiations with the Czech Republic or Poland fail? I've heard you haven't been considering any other locations in that part of Europe.

Obering: We actually considered several other that we actually could locate these assets in Europe, but since they were not optimized with respect to the geography, the geographical coverage or the trajectory coverages, we

held them in reserve. Now obviously if discussions break down or if there's a problem, we would have to reevaluate that and probably ask those other countries would they would be willing to participate in this activity. There are other options and other alternatives that we could fall back to if in fact the negotiations were to not be successful.

Green: We've had extended discussions already with the Polish government and with the Czech Republic and we have every expectation that our more intense discussions and negotiations with those countries will succeed. That said, obviously if there are difficulties, I think it's fair to say that the U.S. interest in putting missile defense assets in Europe would remain and then we would simply have to consider the alternatives.

Thomas Duffy, Inside the Pentagon: For planning purposes, when would you need to buy the 10 interceptors that would go into the European Site? What year would you have to identify the procurement money for that?

Obering: First of all, we don't use procurement money.

Duffy: Right, that's R&D money, I'm sorry.

Obering: It's RDT&E money and I believe, if I'm not mistaken, that we actually have begun some of the long-lead purchases for those interceptors in 2007. So we've actually already begun this with respect to the interceptor purchase for the site.

Duffy: Do you know which numbers they are? I know you do these in, you've got interceptors, say numbers 31 through 40 and that type of thing.

Obering: This would be basically 44 through 54.

Luis Martinez of ABC News: Yesterday, we had the defense minister of Russia saying, reaffirming what another Russian general had said, which was that this system, the location is a real threat to Russia. Can we infer that your efforts at trying to assuage them are not succeeding?

Obering: I'm not going to try to estimate what our Russian allies are thinking or why they're thinking what they're thinking. What I can do is deal with the facts and I can deal with the realities, and the realities are that a very small missile field, up to 10 interceptors, from a numerical perspective in no way, shape or form challenges the hundreds of missiles of the Russian fleet, number one. Number two, as I said previously, they are not physically capable of catching the Russian ICBMs, even if they were attempting to from the locations that we've outlined in Eastern Europe. I can't be any more plain than that. We have gone out of our way to try to ensure that they understand that this is very much in consonance with our strategy for being able to counter rogue nation threats. You also heard them say, and I think very accurately, that there is no long-range threat right now from Iran. That's true, that's exactly true, there is no long-range threat today, but unfortunately it takes us a while to build these defenses, and so we're in a chess match in a sense that we have to try to stay ahead

of what we think the threat is That is our duty to the American people and to our allies and to our deployed forces. And so we believe, based on what we see and based on what has been avowed by the Iranians, that they are going to develop this capability and therefore we need to be prepared to counter that. And that's why we need to move ahead now with the discussions with our Czech and our Polish allies.

Jim Wolf, Reuters: One housekeeping matter, general. What is latest number of ground-based interceptors at Ft. Greely and at Vandenberg Air Force Base?

Obering: By the end of February, I'll give you that number because that's what I have inside my head, we'll have 14 interceptors in Alaska and two in California. By the end of the year, that should grow out to be about 24 to 25 interceptors.

Wolf: By the end of '07, you should have, what was that?

Obering: 24 or 25 by the end of '07.

Wolf: I'm sorry, repeat that.

Obering: 24 or 25 interceptors by the end of '07.

Amy Butler, Aviation Week: One more technical question if you don't mind. When you fire an interceptor from Eastern Europe, does it have to be optimized in any way or modified in any way given the trajectory and the geography of that particular threat as opposed to the interceptors that are placed in California and Alaska?

Obering: That's a great question.

Butler: Or is it like a standard model kind of thing.

Obering: There's not a standard model kind of thing. What happens is that all of that is computed in real time. And so as a threat missile is progressing in its trajectory, the system detects and tracks that missile and then computes what the trajectory is that an interceptor has to fly to be able to intercept that threat missile. All of that is done in real time. What I can tell you is based on the performance of the interceptor, in terms of its kinematic range, as well as its velocity, its capacity, we know what that family of trajectories are, and we know basically if you look at for example, Iran in terms of all possible launch locations, we can go through those calculations, so we understand what we call the threat bands are, where they would overfly, and then where we need to be to be able to optimize the intercept of those, so that's how we go through the analysis to determine where the optimum location is.

Butler: But they're all the same coming off the manufacturing plant?

Obering: Now the only thing that we will do is we are looking at a different version of the interceptor that would be able to react quicker, otherwise is

adapted more to the battlespace that would be in the European battlespace in terms of this intercept quickly from an Iranian launch. So there are some things that we're looking at to be able to accommodate that.

Butler: Like what?

Obering: For example, we could do some trajectory shaping. We could also otherwise what we call battle management. We could also potentially not activate the third stage so that we could more quickly, that kind of thing.