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"Future of the Combat Air Force"
AFA - Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition
16 September 2014**

Air Force active duty, civilian, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Airmen are the keys to our ability to fly, fight, and win...today, tomorrow and as far in the future as we can see. Through tenacity, creativity, honor, and courage they provide dominant combat airpower around the world, ensuring our Nation's security. They are our most sophisticated and precious resource and I am proud to call them my peers and wingmen.

We owe our Airmen the best equipment, training, and skills our nation can provide, but our ability to do so is being challenged by today's fiscal realities. In 2013 our government implemented a stopgap solution to limit federal spending—known as sequestration, this program forced the military to make some drastic short-term cuts. As a result, our readiness, morale, and the ability to deliver capabilities to the Combatant Commanders are eroding. I don't see any actions underway that will end sequestration or that are going to solve the fundamental problems that are driving sequestration. Thus, your Air Force leadership is seeking to reshape the force to allow us to remain capable and ready, despite diminishing budgets over the next decade.

As the commander of Air Combat Command, my job is not to complain about whether or not I have enough resources. My job is to produce as much combat air power as possible with the resources the nation provides me. Even if we suffer full sequestration, all ten years plus the additional two from the Ryan-Murray agreement, we can still field the finest and most capable Air Force on the planet. We will be a smaller force that is not able to go to as many places at once, but wherever we go, we will still be able to dominate.

However, for this to come to pass we have to be able to make some very hard decisions now and through the next several years in order to maintain that dominance. The challenge we face is that politics are not likely to let us make these hard decisions. Given the reality of tremendous resource constraints, we have proposed a fiscal plan based upon our best military judgment. This proposal includes near-term risks such as cutting certain capabilities, like the A-10 and U-2, in order to develop longer-term capabilities that counter our most likely and most dangerous threats. The only way to shrink the budget as drastically as we are being directed to is to shed force structure. I don't want to cut the U-2 or the A-10 and I don't have direct replacements for those systems. I have a need for both the capacity and capabilities those systems deliver. However, I just don't have the resources to retain them, and still have a ready and capable force.

To implement proposed directed-spending decisions we may be forced to make additional cuts to preserve readiness. Readiness is the lynch pin for Air Combat Command...I won't deploy our Airmen if they are not ready. I tell the commanders every day: I want you to work to achieve the maximum amount of combat capacity and capability you can produce. When you hit a limitation, tell me what it is. Don't push past it. Don't try to do

more with less. Don't cut corners. I realize it is difficult to report failure but tell me what your limits are and stop at that point. I will either fix the problem immediately or take steps to mitigate the risk until the problem can be permanently solved. We owe it to our young airmen to only ask of them what we have trained and equipped them to do. That's our mission at Air Combat Command...To organize, train and equip combat ready forces.

Throughout the 37 years of my military career, I have formed beliefs that have guided my decision making process. In particular, five beliefs have played a major role in my efforts and decision making while at Air Combat Command. It is my hope that by sharing those beliefs, current and future leaders can take something from what I have learned and use it to ensure that our military and civilian Airmen are resourced, equipped, and trained to execute the missions our nation asks of them.

First, I fundamentally believe in civilian leadership of the military. It is critical that we, the military, have a strong and trusted relationship with our civilian leaders. Mutual trust will ensure that the best advice of our military advisors is heard and will further increase the ability of our military to act in the best interests of the nation, consistent with budgetary and capability constraints.

Through a coordinated effort with our democratically elected leaders, we can work to mitigate the potentially catastrophic impacts of the challenges and changes that we face today. When I entered the Air Force we numbered nearly 700,000 personnel; now, even as we continue to shrink towards 309,000, the Air Force is being asked to address new and evolving issues in Europe, the Pacific, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas. As the missions grow, we're shrinking our force to the point where we're going to have serious challenges living with some of

the non-military decisions that are being forced into the equation. When we were 700,000, and the world was far less turbulent, the less than optimum political decisions that are a reality of our system were absorbable. However, now that we are cut to the bone and we are being stretched thin by a multitude of overseas crises; sub-optimum fiscal decisions directly threaten our readiness and effectiveness.

One clear example is our bases. We no longer have the latitude or the need to hang onto our current amount of infrastructure given our radically reduced force structure. Right now, I could close one in three bases across Air Combat Command and still have sufficient infrastructure to support my force. But politically, closing a base is just not going to happen. ACC continues to carry this excess capacity and we are getting small enough that this burden is sapping our ability to deliver maximum combat power.

Then there is force structure. We find ourselves in the difficult position where we are forced to make cuts to legitimate priorities. We executed a deliberate process in determining just how to maximize our capabilities given the limited resources we were allocated. Now, I hear discussions inside the beltway describing how funding is being moved from lower priorities to prevent some of the difficult cuts that we proposed. The problem is, we ran out of those lower priorities years ago. The lower priorities spoken of now are not military priorities but political priorities. And shifting of funds at this point will most likely impact readiness.

Ultimately, it is our duty to inform our civilian leaders of the risks and impacts of their decisions. With the mutual trust I spoke of, we can ensure that best military advice is heard, the risks are properly assessed, and then we, the uniformed military, will do our utmost to implement as directed.

Second, I believe that a strong and capable military is critical to the continued survival and success of the United States. A strong military makes it possible for the nation to achieve its objectives without the use of force. A weakened military sends a message to both allies and enemies that we cannot respond to threats towards our interests. Even the appearance of weakness greatly increases the risk to our nation and to our allies.

To mitigate risk we must have the ability to project force and provide allies with a measure of assurance. The Combat Air Force's ability to secure the skies shields our forces and our allies from aerial attack and allows freedom of maneuver.

A strong Combat Air Force underpins the achievement of our national will. It secures Air Superiority which denies freedom of maneuver to our enemies. By dominating the skies, the CAF further shapes the battlefield by enabling friendly forces to execute their missions while we hold adversaries at risk and deny them sanctuary. In order to have an effective military we must acknowledge the critical role Combat Air Forces play.

For nearly 67 years the Air Force has been there to fly, fight, and win as our nation needed. Six years after the formation of the Air Force as an independent service, we established air dominance on a global scale. The result of this dominance is clear, 1953 marks the last time a US or allied service member on the ground was lost to enemy air attack. During the conflict in Vietnam our third generation weapons systems supplied air support to our ground forces while dominating the North Vietnamese Air Force. The Cold War pushed us to develop a fourth generation of aircraft and the training necessary to defend against a peer adversary along with the capacity to deal with conflicts on multiple fronts. These systems, training, and capacity have allowed us to maintain air dominance in the decades since. This dominance was

showcased during Operation Desert Storm, as video feeds showed stealth fighters destroying targets with pinpoint accuracy and impunity. Our dominance in this arena has resulted in generations of friendly forces that never have to worry about the sound of jet noise overhead...as it has always been ours! We cannot take Air Superiority for granted; I can assure you that potential peer competitors out there do not.

While we must sustain the precision ground support capabilities that have been honed during two decades of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must also address the need for new technologies and the associated tactics, techniques, and procedures required to ensure continued success in other areas of air combat. It is necessary to recapitalize and refurbish our full spectrum air assets in response to the rapid evolution of adversary threat capabilities and the increase in density and lethality of their Integrated Air Defenses. The Nation's ability to project Global Power is predicated on the relevance of its combat air power. To be relevant, the CAF must be ready to operate in highly contested environments and have an adequate number of technologically advanced aircraft and operators trained to deal with the most dangerous threats. In addition we must sustain the capability and capacity to deal with the lesser, but more likely threats.

It is necessary for us to recapitalize our air arsenal and work to better understand and develop the capabilities required to achieve long-term air superiority in the anti-access, area-denied or A2/AD environment. It is time for us to restructure...to prioritize programs that allow the CAF to execute full-spectrum operations in order to continue to meet our nation's security demands.

The A2/AD environment presents one facet of a future challenge. However, nearly every region of the globe demands our attention today and will continue to for the foreseeable future.

It is imperative that we continue to support our NATO allies in Europe and promote peace in the region. Likewise, our allies in the Middle East must know that they can depend on strong, enduring US support.

The Pacific will remain a focal point for our efforts, both military and non-military activity. Simply through population alone, the Pacific is a center of gravity for politics, commerce, and conflict over this next century. US national interests in the region are best served through sustained peace and open trade lines. In order to confront the challenges of the region, it is necessary for the military to develop a battle plan that integrates the efforts, capabilities, and technologies necessary to support this objective. Currently termed Air-Sea Battle, this integrated effort must be about all domains, not just the air and sea.

At the same time that we develop a strategy for handling the challenges in the Pacific, we must also continue to define our role and develop our strategy in Africa. Africa presents a multitude of challenges, as potential adversaries seek to harness the natural resources and take advantage of unstable governments for nefarious purposes. The harsh tyranny of distance is but one of many challenges. We must continue to develop long range capabilities that can deliver Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance as well as kinetic and non-kinetic effects...all of this to improve our ability to respond to emerging challenges that threaten our national interests.

One non-kinetic effect in particular needs attention due to continued instability in

places like Libya, Mali, and the Horn of Africa. Our CAF rescue forces have been in high demand in Africa for over a decade and the worldwide demand will only continue. In order to meet combatant commander requirements it is necessary to pursue recapitalization of the combat rescue helicopter and the new HC-130Js. It remains a moral imperative to retain sufficient numbers of well-equipped combat rescue forces today and in the future.

To be a strong military in today's fractious world requires that your Combat Air Forces be able to field the full range of military capabilities to match the needs of the different theaters. However, key to every theater will be the need for Air Superiority.

The third belief I want to address is the need to develop strong partnerships with industry. In my view, the historic strength of this nation lies in our industrial capacity. However, our adversaries are aware of our historical tendency to surge from behind and are countering this by developing technologies and tactics that get inside any surge time- window, effectively negating the historical pattern of an American industrial surge.

We cannot afford to lose our organic industry. The capability to develop and produce game changing technologies is vital to national defense. To protect this, we must begin to find new ways to encourage development and long term partnerships with industry.

At the same time we must look to industry to supply better, faster, and cheaper solutions to our existing capability gaps. Together we need to refine our acquisition process for more speed while retaining proper oversight. Military science and technology efforts and a clear articulation of our operational challenges must provide focus for industry research and development investments.

In recent conflicts we saw our adversaries use common inexpensive items to

develop effective weapons, witness the IED fight. We were forced to scramble to develop expensive countermeasures to keep our blood and treasure safe. We need to flip this cost imposition paradigm; I want future adversaries to spend a million bucks to counter a five dollar weapon. We can't afford to be on the opposite side of that equation.

My fourth core belief is that leaders need to take a stand on the issues they believe in and not back down just because their position might be politically unpopular. General Eisenhower once said "Making decisions is of the essence of leadership." The attitude of leadership should be to provide the best advice in a given situation and then stand ready regardless of popularity. New ideas aren't always popular or readily accepted, but a good leader must have the conviction to stand by them.

One new idea I have been discussing is distributed control. While not particularly controversial, it will require us to adjust the way we control airpower. Through the concept of centralized command, distributed control, and decentralized execution we can diminish the impact of a temporary break in the link between CFACCs and their forces. Our adversaries are sinking massive resources into denying our forces access to tools such as Position Navigation and Timing, data links, communication networks, and radars. However, our adaptation of distributed control and its associated TTPs will ensure that we remain effective. Centralized command, distributed control, and decentralized execution are not a change from our past, but a healthy adaptation to the realities of contemporary warfare.

The keys to effective use of distributed control are the clear articulation of intent and standing directions that will continue to allow our forces to operate in a broken link environment.

Unlike distributed control, the acquisition of the Joint Strike Fighter has drawn a lot of criticism. It is my professional judgment that recapitalizing our aging legacy fleet with a 5th generation capability is a national imperative. Recapitalization to 5th generation ensures lethality and survivability against emerging high end threats, delivering the best answer to the challenges posed today and in the future. The political and fiscal realities of the day make this a lightning rod for discussion.

The defining characteristic of the fifth generation fleet is its tremendous fusion capability. By enabling F-35 machine-to-machine communication as well as the ability to pass information back and forth with our 4th generation platforms, we will give viability to the combined 4th and 5th generation fleet for a longer period of time. We are in a situation where we are forced to do less with less and the recapitalization to 5th generation allows us to retain the most capabilities in the long term. The F-35 is the cornerstone to our continued success and every possible action should be taken to ensure the Air Force acquires the full planned fleet while getting the greatest value for the dollar.

Another idea attracting a lot of criticism is greater integration of our active, reserve, and guard forces. I stand by my vision of a fully integrated Air Force that can adaptively respond to both Title 10 and Title 32...federal and state requirements. We are all Airmen, and we must be one force with common goals and unified priorities. Today, we succeed only when the components work together in unison. My long-term vision for the Combat Air Force is one team comprised of Airmen—some full time, some part time—functioning as an integrated whole. Despite legal, cultural, and leadership challenges to this vision, we must continue to take steps to make the Total Force Integration a reality where “One Patch, One Boss, One Fight” will exist as the reality for our Air Force. We should work to build a culture

that supports unified action. In time, as our force develops, and barriers impeding effective integration disappear, we will succeed in becoming an integrated Air Force.

Finally, I believe the foundation of a successful leader starts with his or her credibility. Good leadership is palpable. Good leaders produce results because their people feel empowered, and empowered people want to excel at the mission. Leaders must believe in the mission and strive to position people to succeed. To do this our leaders must know the basic ins and outs of the mission they are responsible for. This requires proficiency in the mission and comes with the expectation that our leaders can sustain the same level of combat readiness that we expect of our Airmen.

In my view, leaders must lead from the front. If you are going to ask a young Airmen to put their lives on the line for the mission, leaders must be willing and able to do so themselves. As both the CFACC and as COMACC, I found that only by going out and flying with aircrews could I fully understand the operational challenges and risks that those under my command faced. These experiences were critical in informing my decision making process and allowing me to establish true credibility in the eyes of the troops I led in combat as well as in garrison. This does not mean I expect my commanders to be down at the tactical level day in and day out...they are still leaders and the expectation is for them to lead. However, sustaining the skills and the ability to execute the mission ensures they retain a perspective of what it takes to achieve combat air power for the nation. It is through credibility that our military leaders can ensure that their troops and our civilian leaders place credence on what they say. This credibility is the basis for trust in our best military judgment.

Budget cuts and force reductions will ultimately make us a smaller force, but by leveraging the technology of today and the advancements of tomorrow we can be a more capable force with

the ability to counter our most dangerous threats. In addition, we must retain the capacity and capability to deal with our most likely threats, sustaining the hard earned skills and lessons learned during the most recent conflicts. This is dependent upon a balanced approach to recapitalization and refurbishment of our combat fleet. In the coming decades, we must complete the transition of our fighter fleet from 4th to 5th generation, develop the next generation JSTARS, recapitalize our rescue force, and continue to develop the Long Range Strike Bomber. Dynamic threats will require further advancements to maintain the combat edge we have become accustomed to over the last 60 years.

In Air Combat Command we recognize that the fiscal and threat environments are constantly evolving. We also recognize our Airmen are our asymmetric advantage. By understanding the enduring role of the CAF, the historic need for our restructuring, and the imperative to grow our 5th Generation fleet, we'll be able to arm our Airmen to deliver the dominant combat airpower America expects.

As leaders we use our beliefs and our experience in guiding our decisions. I believe the military and the CAF specifically will have a critical role now and in the future as there will be a continuing need for stabilizing forces around the globe. I believe we must have a strong relationship with our industry partners and civilian leaders, based on mutual respect and trust. Finally, I believe competent leaders must lead from the front and champion causes even in the face of heavy criticism.

At ACC our task is clear: Provide warrior Airmen trained, equipped, and ready to fly, fight, and win America's wars when and where they are called upon to do so. The ability to provide dominant combat airpower underpins our Nation's ability to pursue and protect our vital interests, and without it, we put at risk this precious bastion of liberty, the United States of America.