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Statement of Chairman Richard Burr

February 13, 2018

I'd like to welcome our witnesses today, Director of National Intelligence, Dan Coats; Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Mike Pompeo; Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, General Robert Ashley; Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Chris Wray; Director of the National Security Agency, Admiral Mike Rogers; and Director of the Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Robert Cardillo. We've got a long day in front of us, and I thank you all for being here.

Since 1995, this Committee has met in an open forum to discuss the security threats facing the United States. This has never been – nor will it ever be – a comfortable conversation to have. The threats this country faces are complex, evolving, and without easy answers. They exist in multiple domains. They are asymmetric and conventional. They can be launched from across the ocean, or be planned in the heart of the Homeland. Nonetheless, this conversation serves a vital purpose, and it is essential that it takes place in the public square with as much detail and candor as possible.

In my view, that is the true value and public service of this hearing – it provides the American people with insights they just don't normally get.

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Those insights are about the spectrum of threats we're up against as a nation. But importantly, those insights are also about the work that the Intelligence Community does to push back on those threats.

This is work that is both time and labor intensive. It can be frustrating, heart-breaking, and dangerous. It is often thankless. But because of the tireless dedication and patriotism of the women and men who make up the U.S. Intelligence Community – it gets done on behalf of the American people, every single day. To this point, I encourage all the witnesses this morning to not only address the threats to our nation, but to talk about what their organizations are doing to help secure this country – to the degree they can in an unclassified setting.

Director Coats, your statement for the record ties together the expertise, capability, and wisdom of the entire Intelligence Community. I encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with its content. It is lengthy, it is detailed, and it is a testament to the broad range of talents our IC brings to the table. It is also a compelling reminder of why this country invests so substantially in its intelligence apparatus.

Director Pompeo, when we held this hearing last year, I invited you to share your assessment of things on the Korean Peninsula. I'm going to again ask for your insights into the state of North Korea's nuclear and

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missile programs, and importantly, what is going on politically with North Korea's leadership. Perhaps you can help us differentiate between a genuine effort to reconcile with South Korea, and an opportunistic attempt to drive a wedge between Washington and Seoul.

General Ashley, the work just never seems to end for our Department of Defense. I would value your latest assessment of the battlefield situations in Syria and Afghanistan. Last week, we had U.S. advisers and their Kurdish allies come under fire in eastern Syria.

This prompted a retaliatory strike that killed dozens of pro-regime forces. In Afghanistan, a string of terrorist attacks in Kabul left 150 dead last month – suggesting to me that even after 16 years of war, the insurgency is nowhere near folding, and the government remains hard-pressed to provide security for its people. I'd particularly value your unvarnished appraisal of where progress is being made in Afghanistan, and where it is not.

Admiral Rogers, cyber is clearly the most challenging threat vector this country faces. It's also one of the most concerning, given how many aspects of daily life in the U.S. can be disrupted by a well-planned, well-executed cyber attack. I'd appreciate your assessment of how well we're doing when it comes to protecting the nation's most critical computer

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networks. From the systems that guide our military, to the networks that ensure the nation's energy supply, they are all essential to the functionality of modern America, and I fear they are increasingly vulnerable to state and non-state adversaries.

Director Wray, I am keenly interested in hearing your assessment of the threat posed by the spread of foreign technology in the United States.

This Committee has worked diligently to sound the alarm when it comes to the counterintelligence and information security risks that come pre-packaged with the goods and services of certain overseas vendors. The focus of my concern today is China – and specifically, Chinese telecoms like Huawei and ZTE that are widely understood to have extraordinary ties to the Chinese government. I hope you'll share your thoughts on this, and I also ask you to provide your insights into how foreign commercial investment and acquisition are jeopardizing the nation's most sensitive technology. Lastly, I'd ask you to spend a moment on the counterintelligence threat to our national academic, research, and laboratory construct. What's the scale of the problem, and what is the FBI doing to help fight it?

And finally, Director Cardillo. We've come to associate NGA with the modernization of the Intelligence Community. The adversaries of this

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country are innovating faster and with fewer constraints than we are. The threats we face are multi-dimensional, decentralized, and global. NGA is playing an essential role and pushing the envelope with new ways of tackling problems like having more data than you can feasibly analyze. As the IC edges closer to automation, machine learning, and eventually artificial intelligence, the computer learning and computer vision work at NGA will be the bridge to getting there. I look forward to your thoughts on what's next at NGA, and how the Intelligence Community as a whole can make better use of innovation and technology to advance intelligence disciplines that have not changed much in the past 60 years. Our adversaries aren't going to wait for us to catch up.

I'll close there because we have a lot to get to, but I want to thank you – and more importantly – the folks you represent, for being part of the ongoing dialogue between the Intelligence Community and this Committee. We can't do our oversight work without it.

Before turning to the distinguished Vice Chairman, I would highlight for my colleagues that the Committee will reconvene at 2:30 this afternoon to hear from the witnesses in a classified setting. Please reserve any questions that delve into sensitive matters until then.

Mr. Vice Chairman...

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