

LTG Joshua Rudd, Opening Statement for SSCI, January 29, 2026

Chairman Cotton, Vice Chairman Warner, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored and humbled to appear before you today as the nominee for Director of the National Security Agency, Chief of the Central Security Service, and Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. I want to thank President Trump, Secretary Hegseth, the Chairman, and the Chief of Staff of the Army for the nomination and their trust in me to lead this critical national security role.

First, I would like to acknowledge my family. My mother, who is observing us today from South Carolina; my wife, Ansley; our two daughters and our son-in-law. Each of you have made profound, often understated, sacrifices that have been instrumental to my life of service, and have positively impacted our military, their families, and civilian communities. Your presence here today is a testament to your unwavering support, for which I am eternally grateful.

My career has been shaped by the remarkable men and women with whom I have served. I am particularly indebted to our Non-Commissioned Officers Corps, whose leadership and professionalism have inspired me for the past three plus decades. Finally, we must always remember and honor our nation's fallen and their families, who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

My path in the Army has been unconventional, starting as a logistician before I transferred to Special Forces. This background has given me a unique operational lens. I spent over 25 years leading our nation's special operations missions; integrating high-consequence capabilities, which has given me a deep, practical understanding in how to use intelligence to drive operational success, while ensuring the protection of our most critical sources and methods. These leadership roles involved pioneering highly technical, and increasingly digital, solutions through close collaboration with American industry, and ensuring these complex, multi-domain systems were seamlessly woven into operations.

My last six and a half years in the Indo-Pacific have made clear that we are witnessing a surge in adversarial activity. These complex threats are amplified by the low-cost, widespread proliferation of disruptive technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), cyber capabilities, and autonomous systems, which place advanced capabilities into the hands of a broader range of actors.

Today's threats are no longer distant. They are immediate challenges to our critical infrastructure and democracy. However, through a growing ecosystem of trusted partners in industry and academia, we are developing, experimenting, and rapidly improving solutions to address these challenges head-on, through agile cycles of improvement against real-world application. This relentless pursuit of excellence is central to my personal and professional ethos and reflects the spirit of American innovation, a critical asymmetric advantage that ensures we remain ahead of dynamic adversarial threats.

As a leader, consumer, enabler, generator, and integrator of NSA and Cyber Command's capabilities, my focus has been on defending the homeland, deterring adversaries, and strengthening partnerships by delivering credible, technologically advanced capabilities in all domains.

If confirmed, I am prepared to lead these organizations as an integrated and essential team, dedicated to increasing the speed and agility of our support for the nation's toughest challenges and cultivating and retaining a uniquely qualified workforce. Central to this will be the delivery of accurate and timely intelligence, advice, and options, always conducted with frequent, transparent communication with Congress and absolute fidelity to our Constitution. With this Committee's support, my focus will be to lead the NSA in its vital foreign intelligence mission, driven by the pursuit of innovation and an unwavering commitment to unbiased, objective analysis.

It is a privilege to appear before you today and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you closely. Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.