

S. HRG. 117-950

THE POSTURE OF UNITED STATES EUROPEAN
COMMAND AND UNITED STATES TRANSPOR-
TATION COMMAND

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—————
MARCH 29, 2022
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Printed for the use of the Committee on Armed Services



Available via: <http://www.govinfo.gov>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 2025

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THE POSTURE OF UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2022

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jack Reed (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Committee Members present: Senators Reed, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King, Warren, Peters, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Inhofe, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton, Ernst, Cramer, Scott, Blackburn, and Tuberville.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED

Chairman REED. Let me call the Committee to order. Good morning.

The Committee meets today to receive testimony from General Tod Wolters, Commander of United States European Command and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and General Jacqueline Van Ovost, Commander of United States Transportation Command. Thank you both for your service to the Nation, and I thank the men and women serving under your commands at this critical time. General Wolters, I would also like to take a moment to recognize the tragic loss of four marines during a training accident in Norway. Please convey the Committee's condolences to their families and fellow marines.

The security challenges for European Command, or EUCOM, have never been clearer. One month ago, Russia unleashed its illegal and unprovoked attack on Ukraine, upending decades of general peace and stability in Europe. Putin's invasion has inflicted horrific suffering upon innocent civilians in Ukraine, threatened European security, and caused serious consequences for the global economy. The Ukrainian military has performed heroically in the face of this overwhelming violence and the Ukrainian people have shown the world what true courage looks like.

If Putin thought his actions over the past month would drive a wedge between NATO members and within the international community, he was badly mistaken. The conflict in Ukraine has reinvigorated the NATO alliance and, as NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg noted recently, this is a "pivotal moment" for European security. Since the start of the conflict, the international commu-

nity has implemented a severe and far-reaching set of economic and energy sanctions, increased military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, and reinforced NATO's military presence along the eastern flank, including the deployment of four new NATO battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia. Germany has announced historic new defense spending; additional nations have indicated an interest to join NATO; and even Switzerland has announced an intent to freeze Russian financial assets. The international community has united in a way not seen in generations.

EUCOM and TRANSCOM are playing a critical role in this effort. American troops continue to operate enormous forward logistics centers to receive, identify, and transport the majority of security aid intended for Ukraine from across the international community. This has been a herculean task executed with admirable skill on very little notice.

I would ask our witnesses to provide the Committee with any updates, and also to help place the current Ukraine crisis in the larger context of our long-term competition with both of our strategic competitors, Russia and China.

Keeping an eye to the future, an important reality we are seeing in Ukraine is that any potential adversary is going to attack our logistics support systems. This idea of "contested logistics" will include obvious threats to our forward bases, as well as the aircraft and ships that resupply those bases. It could also include cyberattacks against the information technology systems that support our deployments, government and commercial, and possible kinetic attacks against ports and airfields supporting our deployments.

I am concerned that our thinking about logistics during conflict has defaulted to our experiences dating back to Vietnam, that we have owned the sea and air lines of communication and have only had to worry about logistics efficiency, not effectiveness. General Van Ovost, I would like to know what steps are being taken to prepare for such threats to our logistics, and how the military services can alter their acquisition programs to take these concerns into account.

Thank you, again, to our witnesses. I look forward to your testimonies. Now let me recognize the ranking member, Senator Inhofe.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES INHOFE

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and General Wolters and General Van Ovost, it is nice having you here and we are always proud of you and the contributions that you make.

As I have said many times, this Committee's top priority has been ensuring the effective implementation of the 2018 National Defense Strategy. It is still good today. It told us China is our pacing threat and that we need much more effort from our military to take on that threat.

The threats have only gotten worse since then. Yesterday, the Administration sent us the classified 2022 National Defense Strategy. I hope the unclassified version is public soon.

I understand this strategy was late in part because the Biden administration revisited what were likely rosy assumptions about

Russia. It is a good reminder that we must deal with the world as it is, and not as we would have it to be.

Our plan to deal with that world must rest on a strong foundation of military power, and it must focus on actions, not words, for credible deterrence.

Four months ago, Secretary Blinken justified not sanctioning Russia by saying, quote, “The President believes that sanctions are intended to deter.” Last week, the President himself said, and this is a quote, “Sanctions never deter.” Nothing about this makes sense.

Deterrence failed in Ukraine. We must ensure it does not fail anywhere else. The costs of war are far greater than the costs of preventing war.

We must ensure that our combatant commands have what they need to credibly deter our adversaries and address the challenge of strategic competition.

These threats highlight the need for real growth in the defense budget and a sense of urgency and willingness to take risk both at the Pentagon and here in Congress.

We just received the President’s fiscal year 2023 budget and it does not request the real growth we need. We will do our due diligence and our constitutional duty, as we did last year.

General Wolters, I look forward to hearing your assessment of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and how the United States and our NATO allies will bolster European defenses while continuing to support Ukraine’s ability to defend itself.

I am troubled by lackluster funding for the European Deterrence Initiative in recent years and concerned about the ability of our industrial base to support re-arming ourselves, our NATO allies, and the Ukrainians.

General Van Ovost, I would like to know if you have the resources you need to support not only General Wolters in Europe but also our INDOPACOM commander.

Additionally, I look forward to hearing your views of our current sealift readiness and how that impacts your ability to support your combatant command counterparts.

Thank you both again for testifying today, Senator Reed.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

General, you may begin.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL TOD WOLTERS, COMMANDER,
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND/NORTH ATLANTIC
TREATY ORGANIZATION SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER
EUROPE**

General WOLTERS. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished Members of the Committee, on behalf of the men, women, and families who serve our Nation we extend our thanks for your steadfast support. It remains a privilege to serve alongside these dedicated patriots and our allies and partners.

It is also an honor to testify alongside my longtime shipmate, General Jackie Van Ovost. Her TRANSCOM team continues to deliver miracles at the point of need.

We are fully aligned with the Department of Defense priorities to defend the Nation, take care of our people, and succeed through

teamwork. Every day we work to generate peace with our allies and partners by strengthening the deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic.

This is a pivotal moment in Europe with generational implications. When testifying before this Committee last year, Russia was already on the path to further intimidate and threaten Ukraine while testing the will and resolve of the Transatlantic Alliance. Russia's premeditated and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has galvanized our allies and global partners. We admire the courage and tenacity of the Ukrainian armed forces and citizens, and so respect their sovereign democracy.

In the Euro-Atlantic area, NATO remains the cornerstone of deterrence and defense. As we face the largest conflict in Europe in three generations, our Transatlantic Alliance has responded in all warfighting domains. In the air, NATO has established an air defense architecture along the eastern flank that includes contributions from 11 allies. On land, allies continue to deploy additional forces to enhance its forward presence from Tallinn in the north to Sofia in the south. At sea, our standing maritime forces are infused with additional capabilities to ensure freedom of navigation spanning from the Arctic to the Aegean. Aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean dramatically increase the inherent air combat capability and NATO's air defense architecture along the eastern front.

NATO's capabilities in space and cyberspace are more closely integrated than at any other time in the alliance's history. The sum of these modern, multi-domain capabilities underwrites the security of NATO's Article 5 guarantee.

A protagonist of our commitment to NATO begins with our efforts in the United States European Command. Our primary mission is to compete, deter, and prepare to respond to aggression with the full weight of the NATO alliance. Our investments in military-to-military relationships, training, and readiness build unity, resolve, and combat-credible deterrence.

USEUCOM, with support from forces in the continental United States, has sparked allies to enhance posture along the eastern flank, rapidly deploying three brigades of European-based and CONUS-based combat forces, a carrier strike group, and fourth- and fifth-generation fighters. This effort is America's effort, with soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, guardians, and Defense Department civilians from all 50 states and territories, some based in Europe, others rotating into Europe from across the Nation.

This build is enabled by years of focused investment through the European Reassurance and Deterrence Initiatives, commonly referred to as ERI and EDI. These enhancements, including facilities, pre-positioned equipment, rotational deployments, and all-domain exercises improve our speed and agility. As a brief example, thanks to EDI and ERI, we were able to deploy the entirety of an armored brigade combat team from Georgia in the United States to Germany in just one week. That level of speed and agility is unmatched. On behalf of the men and women of European Command, we thank Congress and the American people for their contributions to this effort.

The capabilities the Department has brought to bear in response to this acute security environment have required critical partner-

ships with USTRANSCOM, USCYBERCOM, USSTRATCOM, and the intelligence community. These partners are vital to establishing and sustaining our current deterrence and defense posture.

We are witnessing a generational moment, a historic demonstration of unity and will, and an unprecedented effort by allies to strengthen defense while simultaneously helping those in need. Just an example, but it is a critical one. We have seen Germany commit to meet the alliance 2 percent benchmark, and we expect other allies will follow and redouble efforts to adequately invest in defense to generate peace.

From Turkey in the southeast to Norway, Sweden, and Finland in the north, in air, land, sea, space, and cyber, allies and partners are committing.

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, we thank you again for this opportunity, and I look forward to answering your questions. [The prepared statement of General Wolters follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GENERAL TOD D. WOLTERS

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, on behalf of the dedicated men, women, and their families preserving peace in the European theater, it is an honor to testify before you today for a final time a United States European Command (USEUCOM) Commander. It has been a privilege to continue to serve alongside our dedicated patriots in a mission essential to our national security. Their selfless service and determined commitment is an inspiration. Together, with allies and partners, our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, guardians, coast guardsmen, and civilians work tirelessly to deliver peace and secure the United States' interests.

For the last eight decades, European nations have been key Allies and Partners for the United States, and today, they collectively serve as exporters of global peace and security. The Interim National Security Strategy articulates how a free and prosperous Europe, defended by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Alliance, remains foundational to our security in a competitive geopolitical environment. USEUCOM aligns operations, activities, and investments to meet the challenges of Strategic Competition with the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. Through our strategy, we compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare with our Allies and Partners to respond decisively. Standing alongside our teammates, USEUCOM remains ready, should deterrence fail, to fight and win. We value collaboration across the Joint Force to implement U.S. and Allied strategic direction, and express gratitude for your continued Congressional interest and support.

In Europe, malign activity and direct military aggression, energy competition, and forced migration stress the rules-based international order and strain the resources of states. Strategic competitors use all instruments of national power to exploit these conditions to gain advantage and create instability. This nexus challenges governments and institutions like NATO and the European Union (EU) to develop coordinated and complementary policies to counter malign activity. To address these issues, USEUCOM's strategy prioritizes supporting NATO's deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area, countering malign influence, strengthening strategic relationships, and enabling U.S. global operations. We have seen NATO, EU, and global partners unite to collectively push back against Russia's invasion of Ukraine and efforts to undermine the rules-based international order.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES IN THE USEUCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (AOR)

USEUCOM's geographic region encompasses 50 countries and territories. It contains a vast maritime domain, encompassing a large part of the Arctic region, the North and central Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea, and multiple strategic chokepoints. We work diligently across the Euro-Atlantic to secure our common interests and to deter and respond to aggression.

Russian Federation

Russia's nuclear arsenal and strike capability remains an enduring, existential threat to the United States, democracy, and our peaceful Allies and Partners. A cen-

tral concern is Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons stockpile and the Kremlin's potential to use these weapons in crisis or conflict.

Russia pursues malign activities, including military aggression, aimed at undermining democracy, the rules-based international order, and has a willingness to use force to achieve its aims. Russia pursues these activities despite widespread international condemnation and economic sanctions. President Putin leverages coercive and aggressive policies to counter Western influence and threaten peace and stability in Europe.

Russia employs grey area activities to maintain its purported sphere of influence, and attempts to coerce neighboring sovereign nations and form fractures between Allies at NATO. Russia meddles in European politics, abrogates its responsibilities under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, engaged in an unprovoked and unjustified armed attack against Ukraine, and retains a military presence on sovereign soil in Moldova and Georgia against the will of those nations. Russia maintains a large conventional force presence along NATO's borders and conducts snap exercises to increase instability. Russia employs unconventional tools, ranging from disinformation campaigns, malicious cyber activities, and the manipulation of energy markets to support Moscow's efforts at political subversion and economic intimidation. These tools and others are intended to coerce, weaken, and divide our Allies and Partners in the European theater and beyond. Russian leadership habitually misinterprets warnings and has directly instigated armed conflict with Ukraine, while continuing to expand the space below the level of armed conflict in other Allied and Partner nations.

Beyond Ukraine, Russia continues its military modernization while displaying its destabilizing capabilities during operations in Syria, and Libya. As a result, the Russian government has growing confidence in its military leadership and menu of hybrid, conventional, strategic, and non-strategic nuclear capabilities needed to underwrite its 21st century security approach. Today, Russia underpins its military with Integrated Air Defense Systems (IADS), tactical undersea warfare capabilities, cyber and electromagnetic systems, anti-satellite weapons and counter-space capabilities, unmanned aerial and ground systems, and long-range hypersonic and precision fire capabilities.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

The PRC seeks to increase its access, presence, and influence in Europe and globally to achieve its objective of being socially-stable, economically prosperous, and militarily powerful by 2050. The PRC engages in aggressive and subversive economic and diplomatic activities in the USEUCOM AOR not only to find markets to strengthen the Chinese economy, but also to establish presence at key transportation nodes and increase its political influence. China's foreign direct investment, government-backed business ventures, and infrastructure deals not only secure the PRC's advantage in global trade, market access, and technological standards, but also provides Beijing an avenue to assert influence at the expense of enduring U.S., Allied, and Partner interests. The PRC primarily pursues bilateral deals, as well as engagements, through PRC-led forums such as the 16+1 Cooperation Framework (Lithuania withdrew in 2021) with Central and Eastern European nations. European nations are growing increasingly skeptical of these engagements and have identified the formats as divisive.

The PRC focuses on seizing the "high ground" in critical and emerging technology sectors with military application, including Artificial Intelligence, advanced robotics, quantum technologies, and hypersonic systems, and at the same time it seeks to export its national technology standards globally. The PRC's efforts to expand 5G networks throughout Europe via state-backed firms, such as Huawei and ZTE, pose significant security risks to the interests and military forces of the U.S., Allies, and Partners. These networks place intellectual property, sensitive information, technology, and private personal information at heightened risk of acquisition and exploitation by the Chinese government. PRC continues to invest significantly in European ports and transportation nodes, as well as other critical infrastructure in Europe.

USEUCOM works closely with our European defense counterparts to articulate risks and establish a shared understanding of the security environment. We also support the U.S. interagency in highlighting the shared values, interests, and equitable business practices that distinguish the current rules-based international order. European nations are becoming increasingly aware of, and concerned about, the strings attached to capital and investment from the PRC, and are recognizing that the PRC is a systemic rival. Together, we must hold the PRC accountable for its predatory and unfair practices and ensure that Western technologies do not facilitate the PRC's military buildup. Several countries have removed Huawei from their

networks, imposed new investment screening mechanisms, and have decided not to choose Chinese investments particularly because of the threat this poses to European security. More than at any time in recent years, our European Allies and Partners recognize the risk PRC presents to European security.

Eastern Flank

NATO's Eastern Flank remains a strategic focal point. It remains at risk of Russian aggression and lies on the territorial periphery of Russia's invasion of peaceful Ukraine. The geopolitical alignment of the Bucharest 9—Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia—reminds Russia of its limited sphere of control and NATO's appeal to regional states. These states have made significant contributions to assist Ukraine against Russia's aggression. Collectively, they have provided both lethal and non-lethal assistance, have opened their borders to Ukraine refugees, closed their air space, and supported economic sanctions against Russia.

In the Baltics, the Russian government actively targets ethnic Russian population with extensive propaganda and malign influence operations, while conducting cyber operations to weaken Alliance resolve. Russian forces along NATO's periphery in its Western Military District and Kaliningrad hold a geographic and numerical advantage over regional military and NATO enhanced Forward Presence forces. This imbalance emphasizes the importance of timely indications and warnings that enable the positioning of combat-capable forces to deter and respond if deterrence fails.

NATO Allies continue their commitment to collective defense. Enhanced Forward Presence bolsters NATO's posture in the east with four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia are all currently working on additional posture plans within a NATO context. In the face of Russia's aggression, the United States and our NATO Allies have committed additional forces demonstrating our collective resolve. NATO air and missile defense forces reinforce collective security and stability through Baltic air policing operations and air defense exercises. Each of these states contributes to their own defense and the three Baltic States have expanded their efforts to control the maritime domain in their littoral.

Poland continues to meet Alliance commitments through defense budget increases, infrastructure improvements, and logistical support via the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, and its modernization efforts include Abrams tanks, Patriot air defense, and F-35 weapon system acquisitions. Poland also hosts the United States Army's Fifth Corps forward headquarters in Poznan, providing a needed level of command and control to synchronize multi-national tactical formations operating in Europe. Poland also demonstrates its commitment to collective security by hosting additional U.S. Forces during the current crisis.

Black Sea Region

Russia continues to exert malign influence and demonstrate its willingness to use overt force in the Black Sea region to include use of its Black Sea fleet to attack Ukraine. The war in Ukraine, instigated solely by Russia, continues to destabilize Ukrainian security and the entire region. In addition to armed attack against Ukraine, Russia continues to subvert the Ukrainian government through malicious cyber activities and information operations, illegally recognizing Ukraine's eastern areas of Donetsk and Luhansk as sovereign states, and continuing to illegally occupy Crimea. Contrary to Russia's intent, these coercive actions reinforce Ukraine's aspirations of membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions. Russia's aggression also led to a deployment of United States forces in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

The Russian government exerts influence over South Caucasus countries by exploiting regional tensions and unresolved military conflicts, and employing economic levers and provocative information activities. Russia maintains leverage over Georgia by occupying the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, blocking free movement of people and goods within Georgia's territory, detaining and harassing civilians living in and near occupied areas, and undermining the NATO membership aspirations of Georgia and other partner nations. After brokering a ceasefire arrangement between Armenia and Azerbaijan in November 2020, Russia increased its military presence in the region by deploying 2,000 troops to Nagorno-Karabakh as "peacekeepers." Since the early 1990s, Russia has continued to occupy the Transnistria region of Moldova with 1,500 "peacekeepers" without host nation consent. Moldovan President Sandu has called for the withdrawal of Russian troops and we continue to support a peaceful resolution to the Transnistrian conflict and full reintegration of Transnistria with Moldova.

Atlantic and the Arctic Region

As part of the global ocean, the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans must remain open and free to facilitate commerce between Europe, North America, and other international markets. We ensure these vital sea lines of communication remain open by securing the Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom gap, enabling access between the Atlantic and Arctic. USEUCOM coordinates with U. S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in these regions ensuring a comprehensive approach between Euro-Atlantic and homeland security. Collaborating with our European defense counterparts, we work to enhance interoperability and proficiency, while demonstrating collective resolve to counter malign behavior.

In the Arctic, Russia continues to develop its Northern Sea Route and the PRC seeks increased access to expand its Polar Silk Road initiative. The Chinese government continues to invest in Russian energy and seeks economic footholds among Arctic nations to gain influence over regional governance. To ensure openness, USEUCOM joint forces maintain near persistent North Atlantic and Arctic presence while strengthening all-domain relationships with Allies and Partners. Alongside our UK, French, Norwegian, and Canadian counterparts, United States maritime forces continue to demonstrate maritime capability and credibility presence in the region.

The existing rules-based international order benefits all Arctic nations by facilitating sustainable economic development, fostering cooperation, and promoting a stable, conflict-free region. As a strategic corridor, a more open and active Arctic region will increasingly connect the United States Homeland, Europe, and the Indo-Pacific. In concert with other Arctic advocates, via a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM must continue to maintain a credible Arctic deterrence to ensure that growing competition in this dynamic region does not lead to conflict.

Western Balkans

The Western Balkans remains a strategically significant region as a nexus for strategic competition where Russia, and now PRC, use malign influence to roil existing ethnic tensions and seek to foster instability. Russia uses social and political pressures to impede these countries' Euro-Atlantic alignment and integration. Since Russia's attack on Ukraine, Balkan NATO members and partners have joined efforts for assistance and support. PRC's emergence as an alternative patron for economic and defense cooperation, under suspect terms, further disrupts the region. With our four newest NATO Allies, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia, and Albania, we have expanded bilateral defense relations to the benefit of European collective security on NATO's southern flank.

Despite Kosovo declaring independence in 2008, Russia, the PRC, and some other states have failed to recognize its sovereignty. Kosovo and Serbia have to make more significant progress towards the normalization of relations. We support the EU-facilitated dialogue between the parties as it works for a peaceful, lasting solution. NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) retains a small but significant United States contribution that continues to bolster regional stability. KFOR enables the security conditions required for a safe and secure environment and conducive to reaching a political solution on normalizing of Serbia-Kosovo relations. The United States continues important work assisting the Kosovo Security Force's planned 10-year transition to a limited, territorial defense force.

Serbia has maintained its strategic goal of joining the EU, while seeking balance between East (Russia and the PRC) and West. However, Serbia recently joined 140 other nations of the United Nations General Assembly in condemning Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Serbia has a long road to its eventual EU accession, and its full alignment with EU foreign policy remains an important part of that. The United States and our Allies have improved bilateral defense ties with Serbia in recent years, with increasing cooperation in military exercises, training, and cooperation on international peacekeeping. Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to face political and ethnic instability. Fueled by Russian influence, obstructionists seek greater autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb-majority political entity, Republika Srpska, to weaken state authorities and frustrate further alignment with Western institutions. Nationalist politics and narratives of ethnic divisions between Bosniaks, Bosnian-Croats, and Bosnian-

Serbs challenge Bosnia and Herzegovina's ability to chart a path of lasting stability and eventual NATO membership. Nevertheless, the United States maintains robust ties with the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, assisting its progress toward NATO-standard capability targets.

PRC seeks to expand influence in this region primarily through economic means. PRC investments focus on large-scale transportation, energy, and information infrastructure. USEUCOM is concerned about PRC motives as these initiatives expose

EU and NATO member states to coercion and adversely affect the security of critical infrastructure. Furthermore, the PRC continues to expand its defense and security ties with Serbia, particularly via high-level visits, arms sales, and exercises.

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO)

We continue to support United States interagency counter-VEO initiatives and those of our European counterparts. VEOs remain a transnational threat with decentralized command and control, finance, and facilitation networks spreading from conflict zones into Europe. In particular, VEOs threaten to attack the United States and European Allies, with the actions of lone actors presenting the primary terrorist threat to Europe. Extremists also exploit instability in Afghanistan, North Africa, Iraq, and Syria to prepare for possible attacks in Europe. Successful VEO-inspired and organized attacks in Europe complicate integration efforts, potentially isolating refugee and migrant communities and increasing the possibility for VEO recruitment. Despite diminished capabilities, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other VEOs desire to conduct external operations, requiring global vigilance to prevent a resurgence and preclude future attacks against the United States Homeland and the Euro-Atlantic area.

Climate Change

Climate change will exacerbate risks to security as the physical impacts increase and geopolitical tensions mount on how to respond. Increasing physical effects such as droughts, ice melts, sea level rise, and extreme weather events will strain national governance, budgets, and stability in Europe. This year, we supported Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response efforts in Germany, providing war stock bridges following flash flooding, as well as air support in Turkey and Greece in response to widespread forest fires. For populations most vulnerable to climate change, migration can serve as a form of adaptation, further challenging international stability and governance. In the Arctic, melting sea ice increases maritime access to this resource-rich region for exploration and commerce while thawing permafrost increases vulnerabilities to existing infrastructure, including forward operating locations and military bases. Working across the region, USEUCOM will prioritize adaptation strategies that promote resilience to climate change effects. Additionally, we are integrating climate change considerations into strategy, plans, budgeting, and exercises to ensure we are able to train, fight, and win in an increasingly complex environment.

USEUCOM OPERATIONS, ACTIVITIES, INVESTMENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy Implementation

Along with Allies and Partners, USEUCOM confronts challenges by competing to secure long-term sustainable advantage, deterring aggressors, and preparing to respond decisively. As the coordinating authority for the Russia Problem Set, USEUCOM advises the Secretary of Defense on force structure, resources, and synchronization of Department of Defense activities to deter Russia and counter its global malign activities. We work tirelessly with our defense cohorts and the U.S. interagency to address the evolving challenges posed by our adversaries. We display vigilance in this complex security environment, and—should deterrence fail—we remain ready to respond with lethal and resilient force in all domains.

Congress provides critical support to the USEUCOM area of responsibility through the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) in our baseline appropriation. EDI enhances our posture to deter adversaries and compete in a contested logistics environment alongside our European defense counterparts. Increases in forward-stationed and rotational forces strengthen our contact, blunt, and surge layer capabilities, providing an ability to compete and win in a multi-domain crisis or conflict. EDI investments improve theater infrastructure and prepositioned stocks. Funding for exercises, training, and building partner capacity strengthens the readiness, architecture, and interoperability across the Euro-Atlantic area. These advances enable our deterrence and defense efforts through rapid deployment and sustainment of forces.

Support NATO's Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area

USEUCOM's primary mission is to compete, deter, and prepare to respond to aggression with the full weight of the NATO Alliance. NATO adapts continuously to meet the challenges and complexities of our dynamic security environment. Together, we continue improving our posture, transparency, alignment, and speed of response. Through new strategic concepts, establishing new commands, investing in critical military capabilities, implementing enhanced readiness, and pursuing a robust array of operations, missions, and activities, we demonstrate our combined

ability to deter and defend. The cohesion of these efforts has strengthened NATO, bolstered deterrence, and brought the Alliance even closer together.

In 2020, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) released the Concept for the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA). This concept guides the Alliance's approaches to competing with Russia and to countering international terror groups during peacetime and crisis, uniting national, regional, and theater-wide military efforts towards a common purpose. DDA outlines how NATO competes with Russia and directs the development of SACEUR's AOR-wide Strategic Plan (SASP). SASP provides the foundation for USEUCOM's efforts towards further contingency plans convergence. This architecture provide maximum military coherence at the operational and strategic levels, across all domains, in both everyday peacetime campaigning and if required, through periods of potential crisis and conflict.

NATO nations continue to invest in critical military capabilities, contributing to common defense and support of the Alliance. For the past seven years, Allies have increased their total defense spending, and future projections remain positive despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

NATO Allies and Partners are increasing interoperable combat power through major acquisitions to include cyber capabilities; M1 Abrams and Patriot Missiles in Poland; fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and Switzerland; and High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) capability in Romania and Poland. Within USEUCOM, integration of Fifth Corps' forward headquarters and the establishment of the 56th Field Artillery Command and the 2nd Multi-Domain Task Force increases U.S. and NATO capabilities across multiple domains. Also, the 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade's deployment to Georgia, Latvia, North Macedonia, Poland, and Romania strengthens Allied and Partner capabilities.

USEUCOM demonstrated joint capabilities during the United States-led exercises DEFENDER Europe and ASTRAL KNIGHT. In February, USEUCOM began exercising the ability of the United States and Allies to deploy into the Eastern Flank and conduct defensive operations during exercise SABER STRIKE, which will continue during the BALTOPS exercise with NATO and partner defense of the Danish Straits and Baltic Sea. This month, we will participate in the Norwegian-led multinational and multi-domain cold weather exercise, COLD RESPONSE, focused on interoperability, the ability to fight in the Arctic, and demonstrating Allied resolve. These multi-domain exercises directly complement NATO-led exercises that maintain maritime air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime interdiction capabilities. Ongoing enhancements to multinational information sharing systems enable USEUCOM execution with NATO and our Partners. Ultimately, military exercises with our Allies remain an integral part of demonstrating Alliance readiness, interoperability, and capability.

USEUCOM participation in NATO activities further demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Alliance. Our soldiers serve in Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence mission in one of four battlegroups deterring Russian aggression in Poland and the Baltics. Allied nations will host Enhanced Vigilance Activity and battlegroups in Central and South-East Europe operating alongside host nation defense forces as a powerful statement of will and Alliance cohesion. These Battle Groups will demonstrate improved readiness, military equilibrium, and posture coherence force. United States Air Forces in Europe support NATO Enhanced Air Policing and Icelandic Air Surveillance missions, safeguarding the sovereignty of Allied airspace against Russian incursions. We plan to support Standing NATO Maritime Group Two in 2022 with U.S. naval capability to counter maritime challenges in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea. Operation ATLANTIC SENTRY, conducted by United States Aegis destroyers based in Rota, Spain, and the Aegis Ashore system in Romania provides the foundation of NATO's ballistic missile defense capability.

We leverage Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) to demonstrate operational unpredictability to adversaries, improve deterrence, and support Allies. Recent DFE operations include posturing a guided missile destroyer to the High North, Bomber Task Force missions, and an F-35 deployment with Allies. Each force presence and operation demonstrates our ability to generate significant combat power across the AOR, while improving posture and warfighting readiness. This operational flexibility enhances cross-combatant command coordination and resource sharing, allowing for seamless transition and handover across Unified Command Plan boundaries to deploy forces for emerging requirements.

Rotational Army, Marine, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) maintain a presence across the theater. These forces work alongside Allies and Partners to deter aggression, counter malign activities, build host nation defense capability, and en-

hance interoperability. For example, in Eastern Europe, a rotational armored brigade combat team and combat aviation brigade participate in Operation Atlantic Resolve to hone Alliance warfighting skills and increase NATO's deterrent posture. Additionally, deliberate deployments of Marine Forces in Norway reinforce NATO's Northern periphery while training in Arctic conditions with our Norwegian allies. Rotational forces are critical to our ability to deter Russia and assure Allies.

Counter Russian Activities and Malign Influence

Every day, USEUCOM and NATO work to deter the large and increasingly capable military underwriting Russia's power. Simultaneously, we counter Russian malign activities that undermine the rules-based international order. Aside from USEUCOM's own capabilities, we leverage European defense initiatives and the unique attributes our United States interagency team brings to deterrence and defense.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO must remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO's nuclear capability preserves peace, prevents coercion, deters aggression, and instills confidence in the transatlantic bond. The United States continues to make available its strategic nuclear forces to the defense of NATO and they are the supreme guarantee of the security of our Allies. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and also contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. In addition to strategic forces, the United States continues to forward deploy nuclear weapons to Europe. These weapons combined with U.S. and Allied dual-capable aircraft and supporting infrastructure tangibly demonstrate Alliance cohesion and resolve through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens. NATO continues to adapt its nuclear posture to ensure these capabilities remain credible, resilient, and adaptable. USEUCOM fully supports modernization and recapitalization of our nuclear forces. Sustained Congressional funding for these programs demonstrates commitment to our operations and NATO solidarity.

In the ground domain, we expect to establish a U.S. division-sized capability through forward-stationed forces, rotational forces, and Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). Continued investment in APS equipment facilitates increased agility and lethality by enabling rapid integration of rotational combat units into USEUCOM and NATO operations. During Exercise Defender-Europe 21, United States Army Europe and 26 participating nations demonstrated readiness to command and control large-scale operations by exercising at the battalion and brigade levels while building interoperability. In Exercise Defender-Europe 24, we plan to assemble a divisional formation on NATO's eastern flank for the first time since the end of the Cold War, conducting a multinational command post exercise with U.S. and multinational divisions and brigades operating under U.S. Army Europe leadership. These prepositioned stocks enabled us to respond swiftly in response to Russia's aggression in and around Ukraine.

In the maritime domain, we will execute integrated, all-domain naval operations and theater security cooperation alongside our Allies and Partners. Our operational maritime forces provide an essential capability in Strategic Competition. In addition to our forward deployed Naval Forces, we will continue to leverage Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Units to contribute to the maritime force. U.S. Sixth Fleet provides maritime command and control capability across the USEUCOM AOR while U.S. Second Fleet complements and contributes to reinforce NATO's western flank. In exercise NORTHERN VIKING, we will enhance our partner capabilities and further deter Russian aggression while sharpening our competitive edge. We are committed to a robust prepositioning program in coordination with our Allies, further building our agility and resilience in the maritime domain.

In the air domain, we are improving our assortment of sensors, fighter aircraft, and ground-based air defense systems to enhance Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD), support Allies' air defense efforts, and increase long-range strike capability for deterrence. During Astral Knight 22 in May, the U.S. Air Force will lead a joint and combined IAMD exercise with our Allies in Poland and the Baltics. This exercise will assess the execution of an enduring regional IAMD architecture and our ability to transfer authority to NATO during the follow-on, NATO-led IAMD exercise Ramstein Legacy. In recent Bomber Task Force missions, U.S. bombers launched from bases in the United States and Europe fly vast distances across the AOR while integrating with NATO and partner nation forces. Through Agile Combat Employment, we seek to enhance current posture, complicate adversary decision-making, and impose costs while assuring our NATO Allies. Agile operations, supported by Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control, and improved communications and domain awareness capabilities, will demonstrate a credible,

networked combat deterrence from potential airfields across the continent. This expansion of European contingency air operation and deployable air bases enhances the survivability of our forces.

In the space domain, we coordinate across the Department of Defense and NATO to protect U.S. and Allied interests. Maintaining assured access to space capabilities and stability within the space domain are vital to USEUCOM and NATO operations. We coordinate with U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) to leverage space capabilities that ensure our ability to execute multi-domain operations, and protect Allied space capabilities from malign actors. We synchronize our messaging on responsible behavior in space and seek to deter unsafe or provocative actions in space by our adversaries. Additionally, we work with the United States Space Force (USSF), along with USSPACECOM, and our Allies and Partners to expand space partnerships within our AOR and further integrate space capabilities into joint and combined operations and activities.

In the cyber domain, USEUCOM coordinates with Joint Forces Headquarters—Cyber and United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) to counter Russian malign cyber activities and enhance our Allied and Partner capabilities. USEUCOM synchronizes USCYBERCOM's persistent engagement activities with USEUCOM operations, activities and investments (OAI) to enhance warning of adversary actions, enable defense, and build trust with Allies and Partners. In coordination with USCYBERCOM, USEUCOM identifies cyber options to compliment OAI and support response actions should deterrence fail. Recognizing the worldwide cyberspace capabilities of Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, USEUCOM works with other combatant commands and interagency partners to enhance global cyber defenses and our ability to impose cost on malicious adversary behavior. USEUCOM has also invested in sharing information on foreign malign cyber activities with Allies and Partners to enhance collective cyber defenses.

In the information environment, USEUCOM conducts activities to promote both deterrence and assurance, contest Russian malign narratives, and build resilience among foreign audiences to counter malign influence and disinformation. USEUCOM generates effects in the information environment through the Russian Influence Group (RIG), a State Department led interagency network focused on countering Russian malign influence. Congressional funding for unique cybersecurity and hybrid warfare programs (i.e., electromagnetic warfare, special operations, and operations in the information environment), particularly through the State Department's Countering Russian Influence Fund—Foreign Military Financing (CRIF-FMF), enables the RIG to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation. Congressional funding for these unique information operation capabilities enables USEUCOM to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation.

Our Special Operations forces (SOF) work with European Allies and Partners to build capacity, counter malign activity, and improve resilience. These unique capabilities enable USEUCOM to identify, attribute, and counter Russian malign influence. Furthermore, our Special Operations personnel provide invaluable contributions in sensing the operational environment, enhancing our ability to deter through indications and warnings. USEUCOM's Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC), Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), provides a persistent Special Operations presence throughout Europe. SOCEUR regularly leads and participates in bi-lateral and multilateral exercises to improve interoperability with Allies, build partner capacity, and strengthen deterrence messaging. SOCEUR is preparing to lead TROJAN FOOTPRINT 2022, a regional exercise focused on mission command for SOF that rotates between the Baltics and the Black Sea. Exercises like TROJAN FOOTPRINT set conditions for better integration between SOF and conventional forces during combined, joint, and multi-domain warfare.

As part of a whole-of-government approach, our Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center supports interagency efforts to combat Russian malign activities, primarily by assisting federal law enforcement activities. This initiative provides USEUCOM with additional areas for competition. Through these partnerships, USEUCOM leverages a range of interagency-driven efforts, including criminal investigations, convictions, seizures, sanctions, and designations.

Lastly, our approach in competition considers escalation management and control to maximize deterrence and defense. We make use of authorized military-to-military channels with Russia to safely de-conflict activities, when necessary, in order to maintain strategic stability.

Advance and Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Allies and Partners bolster U.S. initiatives through their own national contributions and by providing critical host nation support to forward-stationed U.S. forces across the region. Since the start of Russia's invasion against Ukraine, we have seen

Allies strengthening defense budgets to include Germany's announcement to increase military spending above 2 percent of gross domestic product. Allies and Partners contribute forces to ongoing NATO and U.S.-led coalition missions, advancing our common interests in Kosovo, Iraq, and Syria. Furthermore, Allies underwrite infrastructure investments and defray costs of United States military construction through the NATO Security Investment Program. Additionally, we expect improvements by individual European nations and the EU to enhance military mobility, increasing their responsiveness and combat capability. The EU, in consultation with NATO, projects it will invest 1.69 billion euros over the next seven years for civilian and military dual-use transportation infrastructure improvements across the continent.

Turkey remains a key, strategic United States and NATO Ally. We recognize Turkey's critical leadership role in hosting United States servicemembers conducting a wide array of NATO, bilateral, and unilateral missions including radar and tanker support to ongoing operations, and strong bilateral cooperation on Afghanistan. Additionally, Turkey directly contributes forces to NATO missions in Iraq, Kosovo, Baltic Air Policing, and Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Mediterranean Sea. Turkey has supported United States Bomber Task Force missions in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean regions with tanker and fighter assets. Turkey's military capability and geographic location make it a key stakeholder in United States responses to regional events and within NATO. We must continue to execute and advocate for fundamental security cooperation activities with Turkey such as Professional Military Education, exercises, and Foreign Military Sales. These actions will strengthen NATO interoperability and enable U.S. force projection.

Turkey possesses the second largest military in NATO, borders a volatile region, and retains a pivotal role in countering Russia. The Turkish and Russian government's relationship remains competitive and transactional, with Turkish engagement often aimed at constraining Russian behavior. Both nations view the Black Sea region within their natural spheres of influence, and each continues to oppose the other in Ukraine, Libya, and Syria. Turkey can best counter Russia through close cooperation with the United States and NATO. We laud Turkey's strong support to Ukraine up to and during Russia's invasion, and we will continue to find ways to increase our cooperation with Turkey bilaterally and within NATO.

In the South Caucasus, Georgia remains a steadfast partner in regional security and the effort to counter Russian malign influence. Georgia's status as the largest non-NATO contributor to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan demonstrated the enduring strength of our strategic partnership. In October 2021 in Tbilisi, Secretary Austin announced sunseting the Georgia Defense Readiness Program (GDRP) and transforming into the Georgia Deterrence and Defense Enhancement Initiative. This initiative will build upon GDRP's success to further develop capabilities and capacities required for effective deterrence and territorial defense, and foster interoperability with NATO.

We strengthen our strategic relationships through security cooperation initiatives. U.S. National Guard forces maintain vibrant relationships and unique access with Allies and Partners through the State Partnership Program (SPP). USEUCOM now has 23 active programs with the addition of the Austria and Vermont partnership. The SPP conducts over 500 engagements annually in EUCOM's AOR, cultivating regional expertise and strengthening personal relationships to improve readiness and alignment across the AOR. Programs such as the Black Sea Maritime Domain Awareness Initiative and enhancing Baltic IAMD represent potent, regionally-focused components of a resilient theater posture.

Enable U.S. Global Operations

Europe and the United States remain the foundation for upholding a free and open international order. Our unique geographic location enables global operations, including U.S. interagency and multinational operations, through synchronization and agreements for access, basing, and overflight permissions within Europe. We work within a whole-of-government framework to maintain essential access and permissions under bilateral agreements and to resist Russian and Chinese strategic investments. Absent these agreements, the United States could not meet treaty obligations or effectively protect vital national interests. The shared ideals, values, trust, and longstanding relationships we have in Europe enable the U.S. to generate coalitions for worldwide operations in support of shared national interests.

Last year, Allies and Partners proved essential during Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome, the evacuation of at-risk civilians from Afghanistan to the continental United States. Germany, Italy, Spain, Kosovo, and Slovakia—among other Allies and Partners—collaborated with the United States both in the evacuations and by accepting refugees into their countries. Close coordination with

Germany, Italy, and Spain enabled us to temporarily shelter and care for thousands of evacuees at United States airbases in these respective countries. Our close bonds with European Allies and Partners, forged over two decades of conflict in Afghanistan, facilitated the safe movement of over 42,000 evacuees through USEUCOM air bases to safe havens in Europe and the United States. We worked tirelessly with U.S. Central Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Northern Command to support the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security to enable this monumental U.S. global operation.

Conclusion

Maintaining a capable U.S. presence in Europe strengthens our national security by generating peace, unity, and cohesion among Europe's sovereign nations. Russia and China present formidable, enduring challenges to preserving a free and peaceful Europe. Nevertheless, the West is more united than it has been in years. NATO is stronger, not weaker, and we are ready to respond decisively. Our strategy addresses the dynamic security environment by ensuring we effectively compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively.

We appreciate Congressional interest in these challenges and your continued pledge to meet them through engagement, funding, and authorities. Your continued support for the European Deterrence Initiative and International Security Cooperation Programs remains critical to our overall strategy. These authorities and funding enhance U.S. and Alliance readiness and posture to respond in crisis or conflict. We stand in a strategically critical part of the world, and the dedicated men and women of USEUCOM are deeply humbled by the trust our Nation places in us. Together with the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coast guardsmen, guardians, and civilians of USEUCOM, your support demonstrates our Nation's continued commitment to defend the Homeland forward and protect the peace for the one billion people living in the Euro-Atlantic region.

Chairman REED. Thank you, General Wolters. General Van Ovost, please.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL JACQUELINE VAN OVOST,
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND**

General Van OVOST. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the Committee, good morning. It is my honor to join you today with my senior enlisted leader, Fleet Master Chief Donald Myrick, to represent the men and women of the United States Transportation Command. Every day I am immensely proud of their contributions to national defense.

As I sit here today, we are in lockstep with General Wolters in providing critical aid to Ukraine, and assuring our NATO allies through troop deployments and exercises. TRANSCOM coordinates the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise, creating a strategic comparative advantage through logistics that no other nation can achieve. Our success would not be possible without the steadfast support of this Committee and the whole of Congress.

TRANSCOM operates an agile and resilient logistics enterprise, comprised of our military components, commercial partners, and industry teammates deliver for our nation, our allies, and partners around the world. We project and sustain the world's most capable military force. The speed and reliability at which we execute these missions demonstrates our nation's resolve and serves as a deterrent to our adversaries.

However, the world is evolving, and the complex contested environment that is emerging will test the future readiness of our enterprise and challenge TRANSCOM's ability to deliver a decisive force when needed. It is imperative that we evolve into a more agile, resilient mobility force through focused modernization and

recapitalization of our capabilities to ensure we remain ready now and into the future.

My top readiness concern remains sealift, as 70 percent of our government-owned surge sealift ships will approach the end of their service life in 10 years. I greatly appreciate your support on the authorization and funding of the first steps of our sealift recapitalization effort. The funding for five new ships in the fiscal year 2022 omnibus appropriations will enable us to continue this vital process, and we look forward to working with the Navy to satisfy restrictions in current law to execute these purchases.

Next, air refueling is critical to the joint force's ability to deploy and employ an immediate force. I appreciate your continued support to funding the KC-46 recapitalization program and critical modifications to the KC-135 aircraft. We must continue to modernize and recapitalize our aging air-refueling assets to ensure that they remain agile, resilient, and relevant to the future fight.

One last and very critical thought. Cyber is an area of significant vulnerability for TRANSCOM. As we are inextricably linked to our commercial industry and 90 percent of our systems operate outside the Department of Defense information network, we remain focused on strengthening our partnerships with our transportation providers to mitigate cyber vulnerabilities. As such, cyber resiliency and digital modernization initiatives are a top priority.

Just as we are engaged globally in supporting the DOD's operations, we have vital responsibilities to take care of our DOD employees and their families. Among the most important is the management of the Defense Personal Property System, responsible for the movement of household goods. Our continuing overhaul of this system, to include the recently awarded Global Household Goods Contract, strives to deliver both the high quality our servicemembers, Department employees, and families deserve as well as the accountability Congress demanded.

I am honored to join General Wolters in his last appearance before this Committee and thank him for his nearly 40 years of service to our country and his commitment to our nation's security. Together, with all combatant commands, TRANSCOM routinely demonstrates the nation's ability to fight, deliver, and win.

I would like to thank you once again for your leadership and for the support you provide our servicemembers. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Von Ovost follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GENERAL JACQUELINE D. VAN OVOST

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The 2020 Unified Command Plan clearly articulates TRANSCOM's responsibility for the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise (JDDE) within the current and future global environment. The Interim National Security Strategy Guidance describes a global security landscape at an "inflection point" of shifting power dynamics and global crises, specifically calling out the need to work with allies and partners to strengthen and defend the global commons, freedom of navigation, and rights of overflight. This complex new security environment will test the future readiness of our JDDE, and challenge TRANSCOM's ability to deliver a decisive force for high-end conflict when needed. We must ensure the Joint Force is ready to defend our Homeland, support our allies and partners, protect our interests abroad, deter potential adversaries, and defeat any threats that may emerge. For TRANSCOM, this means we will continue to integrate with the other Combatant

Commands, the Services, other federal and state agencies, and our commercial industry partners to ensure the JDDE remains a credible deterrent, ready to respond tonight if called upon by our nation.

TRANSCOM's vital contribution to integrated deterrence is evident in the ongoing support to Ukraine and the EUCOM effort in support of our NATO allies. The JDDE's agility and responsiveness allowed for the rapid deployment of troops and equipment to the EUCOM AOR as an assure and deter effort, as well as the delivery of security assistance to Ukraine authorized under the Presidential Drawdown Authority. TRANSCOM's ability to execute these complex moves within days and even hours of authorization clearly communicates our nation's resolve to our allies and adversaries alike.

Every operation the Joint Force participates in starts and ends with TRANSCOM and is facilitated through the global networks and nodes made available to us through the JDDE. Our locations around the world, in cooperation with our allies and partners. As TRANSCOM evolves to match the strategic environment, we are posturing our forces for the complexity of future operations and the increased demands on our warfighting framework. The contested environment will present challenges that degrade our ability to exercise command and control of our forces, delay integration of our commercial partners in a timely manner and disrupt the steady tempo of mobility operations. In addition, our adversaries are coercing other nations, causing them to make economic, diplomatic, and military decisions that can adversely affect our forward posture and reduce our freedom of maneuver. In light of these challenges, TRANSCOM's focus is on a more agile, resilient force while relying on integration, both internally and externally, with commercial industry as well as our allies and partners. This will ensure the JDDE remains united in effort and purpose as we illuminate the need for change necessary to defeat the pacing threat.

DELIVERING FOR OUR NATION

TRANSCOM's enduring purpose is to project and sustain military forces anywhere on the globe at a time and place of our nation's choosing. Our ability to rapidly move forces transoceanic distances is a strategic comparative advantage that provides a wide range of options in support of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) while creating multiple dilemmas for our adversaries. As 1 of 11 Combatant Commands, TRANSCOM is responsible for operating the Defense Transportation System and integrating the entire JDDE. Our assigned Unified Command Plan responsibilities are executed through three component commands (U.S. Army's Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command, and U.S. Air Force's Air Mobility Command) and one major subordinate command refueling, aeromedical evacuation, sealift, domestic rail, and motor freight, all of which are enabled by a global posture that provides the United States with positional, temporal, and psychological advantages to respond as needed across the operational spectrum. In addition to these tasks, Fiscal Year 2022 NDAA language designated TRANSCOM the Department of Defense's (DOD) element responsible for bulk fuel management and delivery on a global basis. Finally, none of this could happen without our total force and civilian personnel, who are critical to our daily capacity and ability to seamlessly transition to a wartime footing.

The DOD's ability to project military forces is inextricably linked to commercial industry. These industry partners provide critical transportation capacity and global networks to meet day-to-day and wartime requirements. On behalf of the Department, TRANSCOM spends approximately seven billion dollars with industry partners each year in transportation services to execute DOD mission requirements. Additionally, TRANSCOM manages several emergency preparedness programs that call on industry to specifically support wartime requirements. They include the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF), Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA), and the anticipated to be renewed Voluntary Tanker Agreement.

YEAR IN REVIEW

The events of 2021 further demonstrated how important logistics is to the DOD's global operations. TRANSCOM exercised deployment capabilities, sustained combat operations and managed the expansive JDDE, all while surging assets to facilitate the Afghanistan drawdown and the Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) that followed.

Starting early last year, the Command supported Afghanistan retrograde operations by moving 14,431 Pallet Position Equivalents and 12,944 passengers from April through June. Moving into the summer, TRANSCOM moved 600,000 square feet of cargo and 7,212 passengers during Exercise Defender Pacific, a U.S. Army Pacific exercise designed to operationalize the NDS through realistic, iterative train-

ing across all domains—air, land, sea, cyber, and space. Concurrently, TRANSCOM supported all stages of the largest NEO airlift in history. To enable a rapid and effective planning process, TRANSCOM deployed members of the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command (JECC) to embed with U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command. This team of joint planners, public affairs specialists and communicators became a vital part of Joint Task Force—Crisis Response and deployed forward to Hamid Kharzi International Airport. Additionally, the JECC deployed multiple personnel to various locations across the United States to plan and execute the movement of evacuees to include standing up a 30-person TRANSCOM Coordination Cell led by the JECC Commander at the Department of State. TRANSCOM air refueling tankers created the air bridge to enable the airlift of approximately 9,716 passengers and 1,784 tons of cargo into the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility to facilitate the NEO. This resulted in the successful movement of more than 124,000 personnel over 16 days from Hamad Karzai International Airport in Kabul by all airlift providers, with USAF C-17s evacuating more than 79,000 people.

Throughout 2021, TRANSCOM conducted extensive global operations, delivering over 104 million gallons of fuel during air-to-air refueling missions resupplying nearly 32,000 receiver aircraft and directly supporting 39 Bomber Task Force missions, ensuring deterrence and reassuring our partners across all six theaters. Additionally, TRANSCOM transported over 790,000 passengers, 315,000 tons of cargo, and 24.2 million barrels of DOD petroleum products, all while complying with COVID-19 preventative measures, testing and restrictions. Many of these missions would not have been successful without the strong relationships with our allies and partners, and our commercial transportation providers.

Globally, TRANSCOM executed 6,680 patient movements, including 129 battle injuries and 402 COVID-19 positive patients. As part of the Afghanistan NEO mission, TRANSCOM safely executed 187 total patient movements to include 156 Afghan Nationals. While only a small portion of our total movements, the importance of taking care of our people and engendering good will among our allies and partners cannot be overestimated.

TRANSCOM WARFIGHTING FRAMEWORK

The success of DOD's power projection capability is contingent on three critical elements of TRANSCOM's organizational warfighting framework: Global Mobility Posture; Global Mobility Capacity; and Global Command, Control, and Integration.

Global Mobility Posture

Global Mobility Posture is the foundation of power projection. It is enabled by a deep bench of allies and partners, which includes access to global transportation networks maintained by industry to support our nation's ability to mobilize and deploy. Diplomatic alignment with our allies and partners enables access, basing, and overflight for U.S. Forces and is critically important to the rapid deployment of personnel and equipment at the time and place of our choosing. This robust and resilient network also provides the U.S. the positional advantage required to rapidly advance our national security interests, deter adversaries, and when necessary, win decisively. While this provides the U.S. a comparative advantage, it must be continually assessed and refined, as necessary, to meet the evolving geopolitical landscape. We must continually strengthen and diversify our global enroute infrastructure, and agreements to maintain this advantage, especially as new operational concepts drive us to more distributed operations.

On the domestic front, TRANSCOM works closely with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) on numerous transportation programs to include three National Defense Programs: Highways, Railroads, and Ports for National Defense. Although TRANSCOM assesses that our nation's infrastructure is currently capable of supporting military transportation requirements, substantial public and private sector investment is needed to sustain the current transportation infrastructure. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act proposes substantial investments in roads and bridges which would positively impact the overall condition of the Strategic Highway Network and could have benefits for national security. Through these National Defense Programs, TRANSCOM will continue to proactively engage the Federal Highway Administration to encourage investment to enhance infrastructure critical to national security.

Global Transport Capacity

Our Global Mobility Capacity includes conveyances and platforms that move troops, supplies, fuel, and equipment through global transportation networks. These include rail, motor transport, sealift, air refueling, and airlift. During times of war, 90 percent of our personnel are transported via commercially contracted air and 90

percent of our military cargo is transported by sealift vessels. In addition, more than 60 percent of TRANSCOM's air transport aircrews reside in the Reserve components—the National Guard and the Reserves, underscoring our reliance on the Total Force.

Mobility force sizing and shaping are informed by Mobility Capability Requirements Studies (MCRS). MCRS-20 released in June 2021, assessed future mobility forces, operating environments, and necessary conditions to support the NDS's daily competition and wartime missions. The study found the programmed mobility capacity to be sufficient in most areas and identified a few areas that will be challenged to meet wartime demands with acceptable risk or active mitigations. Sufficiency and risk within our mobility programs will be critically reassessed in response to a new National Defense Strategy or changes to programmed capacity. The Fuel Tanker Study quantified the risk of reliance on foreign flag tankers, with recommendations to mitigate this risk in the Indo-Pacific. An initial significant step is implementing a 10-ship Tanker Security Program, along with the renewal of the Voluntary Tanker Agreement, to provide assured access to an increased fleet of U.S.-flag, U.S.-crewed tankers during contingency operations. With appropriations in hand, the Maritime Administration, in coordination with TRANSCOM, will implement the program later this year.

Global Transport Capacity Modernization Priorities

The DOD's programmed resources maintain our readiness and preserves strategic decision space. However, without continued Congressional support for the mobility recapitalization efforts, I am extremely concerned about our ability to effectively operate in a future contested logistics environment.

Sealift

By 2032, approximately 70 percent of government-owned surge sealift ships will approach the end of their service life and must be replaced. DOD, DOT, U.S. Navy and TRANSCOM made initial progress in executing the strategy to recapitalize the fleet with used sealift ships from the commercial market and are working through the process of the initial purchases. The Vessel Acquisition Manager will also survey additional ships authorized for purchase in fiscal year 2022. These first ships are a welcome beginning to the recapitalization of vital square footage and capacity.

Our current recapitalization authority to acquire used vessels is limited by previous legislation, hampering the Department's ability to purchase ships when the market conditions are favorable. Without authorization changes and stable appropriations, DOD will not be able to recapitalize the sealift fleet. Instead, we would be forced to extend service life on existing and aging ships, which is not an effective means to maintain readiness. As we complete the upgrades on the first two used roll-on/roll-off ships purchased this year, and continue the acquisition process for five additional ships, we seek continuing support for future recapitalization.

Air Refueling

The air refueling fleet remains our most stressed fleet under wartime conditions. It is critical to rapid global mobility and is the lifeblood of the Joint Force's ability to deploy and employ the immediate and surge forces across all NDS mission areas. The current air refueling fleet is comprised of the KC-135 and KC-10 aircraft, and the new KC-46. When the last KC-46 is purchased, the average age of the KC-135s will be 67 years. We ask for your continued support to recapitalize the KC-135s with a future air refueling platform. TRANSCOM continues to work with the USAF, OSD, Joint Staff and other Combatant Commands to ensure sufficient capacity to meet global demands during wartime at acceptable levels of risk as well as implement potential mitigation options if needed. TRANSCOM does assess the air refueling fleet is postured to meet expected future daily global demand using a combination of KC-46s, with some interim restrictions, along with existing KC-135s and KC-10s.

Intra-Theater Airlift

From a requirements perspective, intra-theater airlift has experienced the greatest change of all mobility priorities over the past few decades. C-130 fleet capacity dropped almost 50 percent from a high of well over 500 aircraft in Operation DESERT STORM to the current programmed levels. The elimination of a "two major war" sizing construct, as well as the de-emphasis of other high priority global missions not associated with a major contingency as a force-sizing demand, drove reductions to this mission area. However, MCRS-20 highlighted the potential value of this mission area in the future operating environment, and as such, intra-theater lift is an area of increased interest to the Department. TRANSCOM is assessing emerging warfighting concepts and future operating scenarios to evaluate mobility

capacity along with other related variables to better characterize risk in meeting NDS wartime missions and expect to publish the results in the Summer of 2022.

Strategic Airlift

The strategic airlift fleet, comprised of our organic airlifters and commercial partners, stands as the cornerstone of this command's, and the Nation's, ability to rapidly project the Joint Force with an immediate response anywhere on the globe. The Afghanistan go-to-zero and Noncombatant Evacuation Operation were illustrative examples of the value provided by this critical capability. Given the U.S. asymmetric advantage in Strategic Airlift, coupled with the continued high demands placed on this fleet, we should anticipate the need to recapitalize and modernize this strategic capability.

Global Command, Control, and Integration

Global Command, Control, and Integration remains central to our ability to align scarce mobility resources with the highest strategic priorities. Our ability to command and control mobility forces is enabled by a portfolio of information technology (IT) systems and is contingent on secure networks and continuous digital modernization efforts.

Our competitors are actively leveraging the cyber domain to achieve their national objectives. As a result, cyber resiliency and digital modernization initiatives will remain a top priority for the Command. We continue to modernize our IT systems by not only taking advantage of cloud computing services but also through advancing our ability to manage data as a strategic asset to advance decision making at all levels. We also continue to increase our cyber hygiene and harden our cyberspace terrain to impose costs on an adversary's ability to compromise our networks and systems. However, as adversaries advance their capabilities, cyber hygiene alone is not enough. We are also improving our ability to proactively operate within our terrain and look for signs of compromise or unusual activity. In addition, in partnership with U.S. Cyber Command, we are implementing Zero Trust security model principles on our classified network and expect to complete implementation no later than the Summer of 2022. These actions have increased our cybersecurity posture as well as our ability to detect and mitigate adversarial activity.

As we are inextricably linked to commercial industry, we remain focused on strengthening partnerships with our transportation providers to mitigate cyber vulnerabilities. We are in our fourth year of having contractual cybersecurity compliance requirements in place and requiring annual cybersecurity self-assessments of National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) security controls. Compliance continues to improve each year, which highlights our partners' understanding of the importance of implementing sound cybersecurity practices. This last year, we began a proof-of-principle contract to have a third-party assess commercial partner compliance with NIST security controls, and three companies have partnered with us on this initiative. The first assessment, on one of our CRAF partners, was complete this January and confirmed they have robust security controls in place. The other two assessments will occur later this year. We have also increased information sharing and collaboration initiatives with our commercial partners and have a couple of special projects that link providers with defense intelligence agencies to help them mitigate risks.

DEFENSE PERSONAL PROPERTY PROGRAM (DP3) REFORM

The U.S. market experienced tighter-than-normal labor and supply chain capacity which plagued servicemembers and their families who relocated this moving season. These conditions also negatively affected the Services' personnel operating Processing and Shipping Offices responsible for supporting our DOD customers. These issues further amplified the flaws in the current personal property system and highlighted the need for change. TRANSCOM, on behalf of the DOD, continues to lead this overhaul of the Defense Personal Property Program (DP3). Over the last year, TRANSCOM re-awarded the Global Household Goods Contract (GHC) and continued to develop MilMove, a new IT system, to replace the legacy system.

By transitioning to a single move manager, GHC fundamentally restructures DOD's relationship with the household goods moving industry to deliver not only the high quality our servicemembers, DOD employees, and their families deserve, but also the accountability Congress demanded. This single move manager construct has already proven successful through the movement of privately owned vehicles (POVs). To date, the single move manager for POVs maintains a 99 percent customer satisfaction rating. In contrast, the current household goods program maintains a 93 percent customer satisfaction rating. Although 6 percent may not seem like a significant difference, when you consider the volume of moves, (314,000

households moved in 2021), having a single move manager capable of this higher performance equates to approximately 18,800 more satisfied families ... that is significant!

TRANSCOM's awarding the GHC to HomeSafe Alliance is a crucial step in the right direction. It will improve access to and management of quality household goods moving capacity to meet DOD's peak demand; enhance communication throughout the move process; deliver modern, digital management tools to customers; simplify the claims process in the event of loss, damage, or inconvenience; and enable the Department to affix accountability and responsibility lacking in today's program. The contract will also provide industry with the confidence and rationale to invest in capacity and relationships with trusted suppliers to meet DOD's demand.

TRANSCOM has not waited and is not waiting ... GHC, although a critical step in addressing longstanding issues identified by DOD families, is only one component of a broader reform effort. For the 2021 moving season, TRANSCOM implemented numerous 'customer facing' changes, to include publishing metrics on a Customer Facing Dashboard via a publicly accessible website, addressing the transparency Congress requested. Additionally, TRANSCOM provided additional protections for residential property, improved claim options for families, and improved requirements for customer communication. Over the next year, TRANSCOM will continue with numerous reform efforts to include protecting a customer's sensitive personal information and implementing business rules that allow greater flexibility in requesting pickup and delivery dates and filing inconvenience claims. While I am pleased with these improvements, the current program limits the extent of these efforts, re-emphasizing the importance behind the GHC award.

I am grateful for your continued support in the Department's efforts to improve the Defense Personal Property Program and I look forward to providing you updates as we deliver the quality, accountability, and transparency our military families deserve.

CONCLUSION

In closing, I'd like to reemphasize the leading role the men and women of TRANSCOM play in underwriting the lethality of the Joint Force, advancing American interests around the globe, and providing our nation's leaders with strategic flexibility while creating multiple dilemmas for our adversaries. While I know TRANSCOM is ready, our mobility enterprise will continue to modernize to meet the challenges of tomorrow, so we will not rest on the achievements of the past. We will continue to accelerate our momentum to ensure we can surge the entire enterprise at any moment, to anywhere.

The strategic comparative advantage the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise provides our Nation is second to none and I am proud of the empowered, competitive, and resilient team who deliver for our Nation, every day. I thank Congress for their continued support to the men, women, and mission of TRANSCOM. We remain dedicated ... to fight, deliver and win!

Together, We Deliver!

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, General Van Ovost.

General Wolters, the initial Russian plan did not work in their favor, thank goodness, due to the courage of the Ukrainian people and the support of the international community. So it appears now that they are engaged, as they were in Chechnya and other episodes, in a campaign of attrition and direct attacks on civilian targets rather than military targets.

The question really, in that context, is can the Ukrainian forces maintain their efforts and can we continue to maintain our support for the Ukrainian forces?

General WOLTERS. Chairman, I think we can and we will continue to maintain our support for the Ukrainian armed forces. We will do so with materiel support as well as thought. As you well know we have made dramatic improvements in our information sharing and intelligence sharing, and as they continue to prosecute their campaign our advice and our assistance with respect to materiel will be very, very important.

Chairman REED. Thank you. Now we are in the midst of a tremendous sort of shift or pivot, as the General Secretary of NATO said. What areas should we be encouraging our European and international allies to take to face this not only present threat but the continuing threat of Russia and China?

General WOLTERS. Chairman, I think we have to comprehensively improve our military disposition in all quadrants and in all domains, and we have a plan in place to do so. As the Secretary General approaches the leader summit this June, his overall NATO plan coincides with that military plan to ensure that we can show greater NATO strength and greater military strength. As you well know, we are on the appropriate glidepath to do so as we continue to fortify the eight battle groups that exist in the proximity of Eastern Europe.

Chairman REED. Thank you.

General Van Ovost, the issue of contested logistics, which you touched upon, includes not just the platforms to carry materiel but getting that materiel through to our forces in the Pacific, in Europe, or anyplace in the world. With the ability of our adversaries to detect and to hit targets at long ranges, how are we planning to do that?

General Van OVOST. Chairman, that is of concern to us, as we work in the Indo-Pacific, with Admiral Aquilino, we are looking at a strategy of diverse and disperse. In other words, we are seeing that we are going to have more distributed operations in more locations, which will provide us that redundancy and resilience, and then diversity to have some capability to move with respect to ships on the water that are in motion, which are harder to target, than a large, single location where we stack up our logistics. So we are very much looking at how we do intra-theater dispersement at a time and place where we will be able to resupply the forces securely but keep it moving so that they do not become targets in the future. That gets back to the agility of the force that we need, and to do that our forces need to be connected—they need to be on the network—our ability to securely command and control and understand where the forces are, where the logistics are, and where they need to go.

Chairman REED. So in some respect communications is the primary tool in your efforts.

General Van OVOST. Yes, Chairman. The ability to securely command and control and direct the resources to the highest priorities is a critical capability that we have.

Chairman REED. Also I think by implication you would need a significant number of platforms, and probably smaller than the ones we are customarily used to. In addition, we would have to take steps to try to electronically hide those vessels. Is that correct, or airplanes?

General Van OVOST. Senator, we know that now we cannot afford to simply disperse forces into the field. They have to be integrated, integrated with all joint functions—fires, maneuver, force protection. So in that manner we are going to have to deploy in packages forward, and to your point, it is not simply large ships or large aircraft. It will be a variety of capabilities, depending on the scheme of the maneuver and who we are supporting.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much. Thank you both. Senator Inhofe, please.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The recent emergency supplemental provided an additional \$3 billion to support Ukraine, backfill our allies, and invest in United States stocks dedicated to this effort. General Wolters, you have indicated that EUCOM needs significant increases to sustain efforts to deter Russia, including through the European Deterrence Initiative that the Biden administration cut last year.

Okay. General Wolters, credible deterrence only works when you have a strong national defense backing of our words, and President Biden's warnings to Putin clearly failed to stop his invasion. Russia's actions are a wake-up call for this Administration and for Europe and Russia, and Russia remains a significant threat.

As your opening statement attests, this crisis has provided how much of a game-changer the European Deterrence Initiative has been since it enabled the military to stand up the Army pre-positioned stock sites that our troops have now fallen in on. Can you expand on how critical those sites have been to enable our troops to surge in Europe over the past few weeks?

General WOLTERS. Senator Inhofe, to take an armored brigade combat team and launch it from the continental United States and put it on European turf and have the tanks that comprise that brigade combat team to shoot, move, communicate, and fire on range in one week is an amazing accomplishment. That was facilitated by those Army pre-positioned stocks and it was practiced in previous exercises, which are very expensive and part of the EDI fund.

So I would just say that when we demonstrated to the European community and to the NATO community and to the world how well we can shoot, move, and communication and transition a large force from CONUS to Europe, at that pace, is something that demonstrates the great value of EDI.

Senator INHOFE. I think that is right. Are there any force elements included in the new 20,000 forces that you have in Europe now that would be extremely useful in your deterrence efforts in the long run, in the future?

General WOLTERS. There are, Senator, and most of them have to do with critical enablers, that you are very familiar with. We have been able to benefit from their existence as they have arrived in Europe.

Senator INHOFE. Good, and General Van Ovost, strategic lift refers to the ability to transport personnel, equipment, and stores from the continental United States to operational theaters around the world. General Van Ovost, as we discussed in my office, could you further describe the current readiness of the sealift fleet?

General Van OVOST. Thanks, Senator. Look, the sealift fleet is critical to the execution of our plans. They move 90 percent of the cargo in wartime. Today, as we stand, about 70 percent of our roll-on, roll-off capacity is going to exceed its service life in 10 years. Our ability to keep those sealift ships in readiness status is costing more and more every year. So it has been imperative that we embark upon the sealift recapitalization program, for which I am grateful for the appropriation and the authorization, which will get us up to four new ships. Then we are going to work with the Navy

to get beyond four, up to nine, as they submit their sealift build plan, and hopefully that will satisfy the requirements and we can continue to purchase sealifts when favorable conditions are occurring right now in the market.

Senator INHOFE. That is good, and I think they will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Gillibrand, please.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Wolters, Senators Ernst, Rosen, and King, we just returned from visiting with our troops in Germany and meeting Ukrainians as they flee across the border into Poland. Can you give us, consistent with this unclassified setting, an update on what EUCOM's role is in facilitating both the delivery of lethal aid but also our humanitarian efforts to support the Ukrainian people?

General WOLTERS. Senators, as you are familiar, based off your visit, we had 18th Airborne Corps and the 82nd, and a large force put in play in the appropriate geographic region to assure and deter. Part of that program was, when the conditions were right, facilitate the flow of citizens back and forth across the border. That has certainly taken place, and the utilization of those 5,500 soldiers has enhanced our ability to secure our European population on the Polish side of the border and to take into account the disposition of activities inside of Ukraine by consulting and communicating with those who have departed.

So that force has been integral to ensure that the 4 million-plus refugees from Ukraine have a soft landing once they come into Europe. We have still got a lot of work to do, and we will continue to facilitate that flow and do the best we can, from a military perspective, to secure those soft landings for the refugees coming out of Ukraine.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Can you speak to Special Operations Command Europe's intention to establish a new forward operating base in Albania to improve our current ability to operate in the Balkans, and can you speak to how this has affected our ability to partner with neighboring forces?

General WOLTERS. I can, Senator. That advancement is critical. With Albania we will improve their resiliency, we will improve their familiarity with other nations on the peripheries' resiliency, and it will make that region much stronger and much more ready when it comes to identifying nefarious activities that start to creep in. The Special Forces do a fantastic job in the information environment of ensuring that we are out in front of malign influence in that area.

Senator GILLIBRAND. I appreciate the chart that you have given us for the United States force posture in Europe, having a total of 102,000 forces as of March 24, 2022. Do you envision additional changes to force posture in the next few weeks to appropriately stand against Russia?

General WOLTERS. Senator, we take a conditions-based approach and we look at the issues second by second, minute by minute. I would just tell you that based off the dynamic environment that exists today that number could change. I suspect that it probably

will, and in which direction will be determined based off conditions in the environment.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Could you please speak to the issue, as we are addressing the ongoing situation in Ukraine, China continues to attempt to cultivate influence in Europe and is another challenge that EUCOM has to face. Do you feel that EUCOM is adequately equipped to manage both the acute crisis in Ukraine as well as the long-term challenges posed by China?

General WOLTERS. We are, Senator, and this goes back to Senator Inhofe's NDS from previous years and the new NDS that is out, that focuses heavily, from a U.S. Department of Defense perspective, with respect to integrated deterrence and cross-COCOM activity. I am very, very familiar with the challenges that Admiral Aquilino faces in INDOPACOM. He is very familiar with the challenges that we face in Europe. When it comes to the transactions that take place between Russia-China, and China-Russia, we are both very dialed into that, as a result of the architecture and process that is in place in the Department.

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you. General Van Ovost, one issue that my office has heard from servicemembers throughout the pandemic was how COVID delays negatively impacted their PCS, including servicemembers being told to handle their own move due to lack of contractors and services. Do you feel that TRANSCOM's ability to help servicemembers has improved and that TRANSCOM has adapted to the new normal since the onset of the pandemic?

General Van OVOST. Senator, we are also concerned about the household good movement industry, but writ large, with essentially contested logistics in here in the Homeland, it has affected all aspects of what we do. I do believe we are headed for a more stable future with respect to the labor market, and frankly, our ability to complete the Global Household Goods Contract means that I have really good indications we are going to have the capacity necessary to ensure that this does not happen into the future.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Wicker, please.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. General Wolters, in the last few moments we are seeing news reports that Moscow is committing to withdrawing a majority of its forces surrounding Kyiv. Of course, it is now afternoon where the negotiators are. Multiple teams have been withdrawn from the axis of the attack, and DOD officials are saying they see this as a major strategy shift, according to news reports.

What is your assessment of the authority and status of the current Russians who are negotiating at this moment? We had had reports initially that they were not sending the A-team to these negotiations.

General WOLTERS. Senator, I have heard those same reports but I cannot verify whether or not they are the varsity or the junior varsity. I can verify that the comments that you made with respect to the shifting dynamics in the ground domain in the vicinity of Kyiv are exactly what we see from a EUCOM perspective.

Senator WICKER. Okay. Well, we will see how significant that is. I have got my doubts, but we certainly hope for peace.

Let me just ask you, in terms of permanently stationed forces in EUCOM, is our current posture enough? What are the numbers there, and should the United States have more permanent or rotational forces in EUCOM, and specifically in the Baltics?

General WOLTERS. Senator, the numbers increase. From a United States perspective, as a result of the incursion into Ukraine by Russia, have boosted our numbers from 60,000 to approximately 100,000. What I also examine in my other command hat is the increase of European involvement, and in specific targeting of what we are doing with respect to the population and capability increase in the Baltics, we have seen a dramatic shift as a result of contributions from multiple nations. Several have been published in open press. Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark have all been very, very generous with respect to their recent contributions to the EFP battle groups.

Senator WICKER. But sir, what is your recommendation as to more permanent U.S. Forces?

General WOLTERS. I think what we need to do, from a United States force perspective, is look at what takes place in Europe following completion of the Ukraine-Russia scenario and examine the European contributions, and based off the breadth and depth of the European contributions be prepared to adjust the United States contributions, and my suspicion is we are going to still need more. Obviously there is always a mix between the requirement of permanent versus rotational, and there are pluses and minuses of each one. We will have to continue to examine the European contributions to make a smart decision about where to go in the future.

Senator WICKER. Okay. Let me ask you about expectations when this war began. What we were hearing is the Russians would defeat the Ukrainians and obtain their invasion objectives within 5 days or so. Is there an intelligence gap in our capability that made us overestimate the Russians and underestimate the defensive capability of the Ukrainians?

General WOLTERS. Senator, there could be, and as we have always done in the past, when this crisis over with we will accomplish a comprehensive after-action review, in all domains, in all departments, and find out where our weak areas were and make sure that we can find ways to improve, and this could be one of those areas.

Senator WICKER. Then finally, what barriers do you see increasing the number of DDGs in Rota to six?

General WOLTERS. Senator, the infrastructure is set as a result of the tremendous EDI contributions over the years, and as we speak we have temporarily put more destroyers into EUCOM's portfolio. We have been able to test the infrastructure receptiveness in Rota to taking on two more cruiser destroyers, and we are ready, willing, and able to support.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator Blumenthal, please.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you both for your service and thank you for being here today.

General Van Ovost, in my visit to the border a couple of weeks ago I was impressed not only with the incredible courage and resilience of the refugees coming across the border but also the work of the 82nd Airborne in that area, enabling the Ukrainian military to transport many of the resupplies of weapons, Stinger and Javelin missiles and so forth, to the forces on the ground, sometimes within hours of the unloading to actual combat. Would you agree with me that the Ukrainians—and they are the ones who are transporting. I know that none of your men and women are involved—but would you agree with me that they have been extraordinarily agile and effective in their transporting across Ukraine under fire or potential fire, to their forces, of those weapons systems and other supplies we are providing?

General Van OVOST. Thank you, Senator. Look, I absolutely believe that they have been effective, as you can see, that none of the lines really have been hit on the way, and it appears they have been delivering right to the right location at the right time. I want to thank everyone with respect to supporting the logistics flow and be able to donate the security cooperation that has been so successful to date.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Yeah, the 82nd Airborne has been extraordinary. I know that other forces of the United States and NATO allies have been as well.

General Wolters, as very far from the expert that you are in this area, I think to many of us it looks like the Ukrainians could win this fight if it were a fair fight on the ground and if they were not vulnerable from the skies to the reign of terror that the Russian military has unleashed through artillery, jet fighters, missiles. The urgent and predominant need is aerial defense. Could you tell the Committee how many S-300s, SA-3s, what is the inventory that is available to provide to Ukraine so that it can defend itself and, in effect, have a fair fight on the ground, and also protect civilian targets, which Vladimir Putin has mercilessly and ruthlessly hit repeatedly?

General WOLTERS. Senator, in a different setting I would adore the opportunity to give you specific numbers. What I can say is from a United States perspective there is consultation about supply and demand on the Ukrainian armed forces to ensure that they are getting the right equipment at the right time, based off their military campaign design, so that they can best protect their forces.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. In your judgment, are they getting what they need?

General WOLTERS. They are, Senator.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Are we replenishing or backfilling—for example, as we apparently did in Slovakia—with Patriot missile systems, the air defense that our NATO allies need, if they are providing the Soviet-era air defense such as the S-300s?

General WOLTERS. We are, Senator, and in multiple portfolios, above and beyond just the surface-to-air missiles.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. One of the lessons, it seems to me, of the combat so far is that the Russian tanks have been far more vulnerable than Putin ever contemplated. Are there lessons about the use of tanks here for future warfare, in your judgment?

General WOLTERS. Absolutely, to include the command and control of those tanks.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. That would involve better communication systems.

General WOLTERS. It would, Senator.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Are you satisfied that the United States and our NATO allies could and would avoid those same kinds of mistakes if we had to respond to aggression by the Russian army?

General WOLTERS. We can and we could and we would.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you. Thanks, General, and thanks for your many years of service. To both of you, thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Senator Fischer, please.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, General Wolters, for your many years of service. Thank you, General Van Ovost, for being here today as well.

General Wolters, in your prepared testimony you note the importance of our nuclear deterrent, and in particular our non-strategic nuclear weapons that are forward deployed in Europe. Can you talk a bit more about their importance and the support that our allies have for this mission?

General WOLTERS. Senator, what nuclear strategic deterrence offers is tough to communicate to our European partners, and over the course of the last several years they have all gained a greater understanding of the freedom of maneuver that the strategic nuclear deterrence umbrella provides those nations in Europe. With contributions from the European nations, with respect to allowing the facilitation of non-strategic nuclear weapons I feel that Europe is in a much better place to effectively defend and deter.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you. Can you also talk about the support that our allies have shown for the additional four battle groups and the level of interest you have seen from them in participating, please?

General WOLTERS. The participation has been very, very strong. The level of interest continues to increase, and it corresponds with nations' voluntary national contributions that continue to mount, specifically in those four battle groups in Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia. The campaign momentum to build those minimum battalion-sized battle groups with all-domain capability is improving with every day.

Senator FISCHER. Also many of our NATO allies are talking about increasing their defense spending, I think basically in response to the Russian invasion that we have seen in Ukraine. We have seen countries in NATO, our allies, comes together and pledge to reach that 2 percent. Some have even pledged to go higher.

Can you tell us how you are working with our allies and partners to ensure that the additional sources are really focused on the right capabilities that are needed?

General WOLTERS. I can, Senator. We have a strategy. We have plans that ultimately allow nations to identify military requirements that contribute to delivering the appropriate effect in the environment to ensure that we can better defend. So now you have, in print, the appropriate connective tissue that allows the taxpayers in all the European countries to understand why it is they

are committing the euros to what causes, to generate the appropriate effect to have better defense.

Senator FISCHER. Is the United States participating not just with the alliance as a whole but with individual countries in trying to determine just what is needed where, what type of capabilities are needed where, when you look at the entire alliance?

General WOLTERS. Senator, the U.S. is, and so are the other 29 nations of NATO, and that is part of the great aspect of having an alliance like NATO. There is a lot to be learned when you are willing to listen to Estonia's needs, and we do, and we learn a lot, and they listen to ours, from a United States perspective.

Senator FISCHER. Are you hopeful that the alliance will continue to work well together, that there a new understanding about the threats that are out there? I have deep concerns about the classified briefings that we have, and all of that information is not available to the people of this country. I think if we could see some material that would be declassified and be able to share with the citizens of the United States there really would be a deeper understanding, more concern felt when the population understands the threats that are out there. I can see that happening in Europe, but it took an invasion for it to happen. How are we going to address that?

General WOLTERS. Senator, I am hopeful and confident that the degree of cooperation amongst the NATO nations will continue. Looking back to how we approached this campaign and the degree of intelligence sharing and information sharing and the impact that it had on building trust amongst nations was very, very powerful, and we need to continue that practice.

Senator FISCHER. I think we need to continue it in this country as well, so that the people in the United States understand the very real threats that we face to our national security. Thank you, sir.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Fischer.

Senator HIRONO, please.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you both for being here.

General Wolters, you mentioned something that definitely perked my interest, piqued my interest. We know that China and Russia have a relationship, and China seeks to expand its influence in Europe. So you mentioned that you are working, I think, much more closely with Admiral Aquilino because of this recognition that things do not just stay in one command theater. So can you talk a little bit more about your increased, closer working with Admiral Aquilino?

General WOLTERS. I can, Senator. We have shared thoughts about what Russia has done with respect to its physical actions in the vicinity in Ukraine and its activities outside of Ukraine with its so-called allies and partners, and the impact that it has on the actual execution. Admiral Aquilino is obviously very interested in that because he faces a scenario that is reasonably similar to this with respect to Taiwan, and how we examine the United States response, the allies' and partners' response, will help image Admiral Aquilino in working his way through some of the tough spots that we anticipate that he will have to work with in the future with re-

spect to state-on-state activities and state-on-state alliance activities and state-on-state activities with respect to other partners and allies on the periphery.

Senator HIRONO. It sounds as though this is a more close relationship that you are having with another combatant commander. Is that so?

General WOLTERS. I have that same relationship with all the other combatant commanders.

Senator HIRONO. That is good to know. It makes sense.

General Van Ovost, it is good to talk with you again. As you are aware, the Department of Defense recently made the decision to defuel and close the Red Hill storage facility on Oahu, and so there will be a transition period. It will take a significant amount of planning and funding for this transition.

Last year's NDAA established TRANSCOM as the DOD bulk fuel manager of the Department, which will become effective later this year. As you assume this new role, what will you be focused on to ensure the Department's fuel needs are met in the Pacific, and what do you anticipate being the greatest challenge as Red Hill is closed and we move to a more distributed laydown?

General Van OVOST. Thank you, Senator. As you are aware, there are really multiple studies, analyses, and war games highlighted that our global bulk fuel, our command and control, our distribution, where it is at, access to it, and the infrastructure that supports it are inadequate in this contested environment. Frankly, as the new NDS also states that the PRC is the most consequential strategic competitor we have. So we as look to the Pacific we have to do things differently.

So what we are doing right now, under the throes of providing a strategy back to Congress here on 1 October on how we are looking at the globe with respect to posture, war reserves, our ability to maneuver the force both from an inter-theater standpoint and within the theater, to ensure that we have dispersed and diverse, specifically with respect to fuel, to reduce the risk.

Indeed, in the decision to defuel Red Hill we are going to use that as an opportunity to put a storage afloat so that we can actually practice techniques and procedures that we would actually use should we have to go to conflict, with respect to our inter-theater tankers, doing console operations, and new intra-theater, smaller tankers that we would need to move the fuel forward into theater.

So as we look to those conops, in developing them and resourcing them, it will be something we will be looking forward in the future as the global bulk fuel manager.

Senator HIRONO. Just one more question along those lines. As we move to a more distributed fuel operations, is there an opportunity to expand investment in places like the compact states to build out a resilient fuel laydown while also building economic cooperation with our compact partners?

General Van OVOST. Senator, I defer to Admiral Aquilino with respect to specific partners. He has, as you know, a 2B posture that is laid out that is really looking more south and in that area, and from my perspective, we could not do what we do without the commercial partnerships that we have around the world. So we are looking to thicken our partnerships, especially out in the Pacific.

Senator HIRONO. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator Hirono.

Senator Ernst, please.

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and General Van Ovost and General Wolters, thank you so much for your service and for appearing in front of our Committee today.

General Wolters, you know that I traveled with many of my colleagues several weekends ago to visit Germany and Poland, and we were grateful for the time that we had on the ground. We had Senator Gillibrand, Senator King, and Senator Rosen from this Committee. So we were able to spend time not only with significant leaders from Germany and Poland but also with the tremendous men and women of the 18th Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne All-American, and our armored brigade as well. I want to thank those men and women for being there on the front lines and assisting with your NATO mission.

But as we focus on Ukraine we also get very concerned about movement with Russia and the thoughts that perhaps they would also engage in other countries as well. This is something we really have not addressed in this hearing yet. Despite the fact that Russia is stalling a bit in Ukraine, there are a number of Russian troops, I believe about 1,500 Russian troops that exist in Moldova, and we are concerned about that. For folks that might be watching out there, Moldova is a country on the southwestern border of Ukraine.

So we are concerned about this community, this country as well. So what capabilities, both militarily—perhaps you can speak to humanitarian issues as well—but what have we offered to Moldova as a way of reassuring their country as well?

General WOLTERS. Senator, our European strategy calls for comprehensive defense and shared response, and from a EUCOM perspective we examine the 51 nations as part of that grouping, and Moldova is one of them. Whenever there are opportunities to increase our ability to share more info and share more intel, we are attempting to do so. So that for all of Europe we are improving our comprehensive indications and warnings and command and control and feedback so when problems arise we hear about it sooner rather than later. If there are information pieces that need to go to Moldova sooner rather than later, to help their disposition with respect to participation in a free Europe, we are doing so.

The number of liaisons and the number of times that we exchange has certainly grown over the years.

Senator ERNST. Have we seen any movement of those Russian troops that exist in Moldova to reinforce the actions in Ukraine, or do we see any movement shifting from Ukraine into Moldova?

General WOLTERS. At this point, Senator, neither.

Senator ERNST. Okay. That is good. So we know that Poland has offered MIG fighter jets, the S-300 anti-aircraft systems, to support the defense of Ukraine, and to this point the United States has chosen not to engage and be party to those transfers or to backfill our NATO allies. My question is not why—I think there has been a lot of debate about that—but who specifically is the final authority on making the decision on what gets transferred to who?

General WOLTERS. Senator, with respect to my European job, the national leader is obviously the individual who is responsible for

making that policy decision. I say that because, as you well know, other nations were involved in this transaction. The first thing that Secretary General Stoltenberg was keen on was the fact that nations can make the choice with this decision and it typically comes from their national leaders.

Senator ERNST. If we shift back to the United States of America, with the assumption that those countries are willing to receive or to transfer if we are to be a party of those actions, if we are transferring items, who is the ultimate authority in that decision-making chain?

General WOLTERS. Our commander in chief.

Senator ERNST. Okay. Thank you. I will yield back.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Ernst.

Senator Warren, please.

Senator WARREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, General Wolters, for your leadership in responding to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. I support the Ukrainian people and our allies in this work.

So Congress recently approved \$13.6 billion for Ukraine, including \$6.5 for the Pentagon. We also supported NATO partners against Russian aggression for years through the European Deterrence Initiative, or the EDI. But because of the way Congress and DOD set up this fund the Pentagon does not have to explain how EDI spending supports a long-term plan.

EDI was first funded through the Overseas Contingency Operations, or OCO, account, which was primarily set up to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. But it became a slush fund for the Pentagon to funnel billions of dollars towards programs that were unrelated to those conflict.

Now the Biden administration eliminated OCO, and to make sure that EDI did not turn into the same thing Congress required your command to provide annual plans for long-term EDI spending. General Wolters, three of those plans had been due since the fiscal year 2020 NDAA made this requirement the law. How many of those plans have actually been provided to Congress?

General WOLTERS. Senator, I can tell you that EUCOM has made a response, and the transaction between the Department and Congress I am not aware of.

Senator WARREN. Okay. Well, I will tell you the answer—zero. Congress has pumped an additional \$13 billion into the EDI, and it is now highly likely that the EDI will grow in tandem with our need to support our European allies. So even though these are required by law, we have not gotten these reports.

General Wolters, has your command provided the DOD with the information they need to provide those plans to Congress this year so that they can finally follow the law and submit a report?

General WOLTERS. We have, Senator.

Senator WARREN. I am sorry?

General WOLTERS. We have, Senator.

Senator WARREN. You have provided the information. I appreciate that because I am counting on seeing that report soon. If we do not, it sounds like the process is breaking down at DOD, and I will follow up with DOD to make sure that we get the report we need. I appreciate your cooperation in that.

In addition to requiring plans for how EDI money would be spent in the upcoming year, the fiscal year 2020 NDAA put in place requirements for an annual report on how EDI money was spent. Congress also never received those reports. So General Wolters, will you make sure that this Committee receives a report by November 30th of this year on how EDI money has been spent to date?

General WOLTERS. I will do everything within my command authority to do so, Senator.

Senator WARREN. All right. Well that one is within your command authority so I very much appreciate that.

You know, this Committee is being asked to sign off on an \$813 billion in national security spending next year. It is no secret that I think that level of spending is too high. Our strong, multilateral response in Ukraine shows how important it is for us to invest in diplomacy, in helping refugees, and in using all of our foreign policy tools. But that does not mean giving the Pentagon a blank check or shrugging when we do not get the budget information we need to conduct spending oversight. Tracking these dollars is part of how we keep America safe and how we work with our allies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator, and let me recognize Senator Blackburn, please.

Senator BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you again to you all for being here.

General Wolters, I know this is not because of you. Unfortunately, I think you are on the receiving end of a lot of frustration from people because of the way we have received information regarding Ukraine. I know that we need to continue to keep a lot of what is happening on the ground in Ukraine in a classified space.

But for the second time in less of a year, American is plunged into a military crisis for which our leadership seems unprepared and unaccountable. I talk to a lot of veterans. As you know, we have got Fort Campbell, we have Arnold Engineering, we have the U.S. Naval Station, we have got Oak Ridge. So a lot of military in our state. I think that people really want some transparency. They want some answers. They want some accountability.

Interestingly enough, silence is a message. Silence is a very strong message, and it is not a message of strength. I think that it does not work in concert with the principles on which this Nation was founded. So I hope that in the near future this Committee is going to be able to have an open hearing on the issue of what is happening in Ukraine.

Now, I want to go on to a long-term concern that we have discussed, and regardless of what is happening in Ukraine I want us to look at what is happening with Beijing. Maintaining China as the pacing challenge, not just for DOD but for each combatant command is of the utmost importance, and it is something that this Committee needs to assist DOD with as well as to hold the different divisions accountable for.

So to each of you, very quickly, what are the roles of your combatant commands in supporting the implementation of the 2018 National Defense Strategy with regard to China?

General Wolters, to you first, and then General Van Ovost.

General WOLTERS. Senator, I have to do everything within my power, as the commander of USEUCOM to take a look at the coordinating authority activities that take place inside of my territorial boundaries, and find the ones that have any potential impact with respect to China. As Admiral Aquilino governs and manages his UCP, he needs to do the same with respect to Russia. This is a process that has been in place for several years, and it is improving, but it continues to require vigilance and scrutiny and iterations to ensure that we can get better.

Senator BLACKBURN. Let me ask you this. As you look at what is happening with the CCP, what are the trends that are of greatest concern to you?

General WOLTERS. I would contend that it is the activities of allies and partners as they apply to those nations, being able to get what they want or what they should not get.

Senator BLACKBURN. Okay. General Van Ovost?

General Van OVOST. Thank you, Senator. With respect to trends that I look at as the Transportation Commander, I monitor their ability to project power around the globe, because that is our operating area, and I am monitoring their investments into ports, and their impact of these investments on our ability to maneuver around the world, their ability to disrupt and degrade our ability to project and sustain a force into the Pacific.

Senator BLACKBURN. Is that the trend that concerns you most? You know, take Djibouti. So their work in areas like that, where they go in under Belt and Road but then they couple that with their military. Is that kind of at the top of your list of concerns?

General Van OVOST. On the top of the list of my concerns is the kinetic and non-kinetic threats in the region. But secondarily, as I look to them maneuvering around the globe and influencing other nations' decisions, this is about allies and partners. So the second main thing we are doing is we are trying to thicken our relationship with allies and partners around the world to robust them against these threats. Certainly from our perspective the military threats but also the diplomatic and economic threats that they face from China on a day-to-day basis.

Senator BLACKBURN. So you consider those in total and not separately.

General Van OVOST. I do. I do. A whole-of-government approach for all of these allies and partners to be able to robust them. I will take it a step further. We are inextricably linked to commercial industry. So our commercial industry networks that are around the world right now, we are also working on thickening and protecting them, because they are working in these regions day in and day out, delivering around the world, and we rely on them as well.

Senator BLACKBURN. Thank you. I have some questions I will submit to you all, and thank you very much for your time today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Blackburn.

Let me recognize Senator King, please.

Senator KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Wolters, Putin has been talking for years about his ostensible claims to Ukraine and part of Russia and all those kinds of things. One of his principal strategic goals seems to be a land bridge between Russia and

Crimea. Are they making similar noises about Kaliningrad, and is this something we need to be concerned about, or do they accept that Kaliningrad is essentially landlocked from the east?

General WOLTERS. Sir, with respect to Kaliningrad it is something we should always be concerned about, but over the course of the last 4 to 5 months that has not been an issue, with respect to Russian activity.

Senator KING. Thank you. Quick question. Speed of shipments, from the time the order is given in Washington to authorize equipment to Ukraine, how long does it take to get to the Polish-Ukrainian border?

General WOLTERS. Senator, it depends. We have been iterating on this. It is improving, and we have seen cases, for example, with a large, armored brigade combat team that we have been able to transact that in weeks as opposed to months.

Senator KING. So that is improving, and these are timely shipments. The Ukrainians need this equipment right now, not a month from now.

General WOLTERS. It is improving. We have cases with smaller force settlements where it would take 28 to 30 days, and in many of those cases we are down to single-digit days, in less than a week.

Senator KING. I am not talking about necessarily force elements but materiel, weapons.

General WOLTERS. That falls into the same category.

Senator KING. Same category. Okay.

We heard at the beginning of the invasion that there were something like 200,000 Russian troops in Belarus and in Russia. They have committed many, if not all of those. What reserves do the Russians now have? In other words, what portion of their entire military force, in terms of people, have been committed to Ukraine at this point, and what level of reserves do they have to call upon?

General WOLTERS. Sir, in a different setting I can give you a precise number, but in the 70 to 75 percent category are devoted to this, from a Russian perspective, at this time.

Senator KING. So a very substantial portion of their total force is committed in Ukraine. Can the Ukrainians succeed in the east as they have around Kyiv? They are going to redeploy in that direction too, I presume, since the Russians are doing so. Do the tactics that they have been able to use in the north and northeast succeed in stalling the Russians or perhaps even pushing them back?

General WOLTERS. Senator, I certainly believe that they can succeed in stalling the Russians.

Senator KING. Okay. I understand the comment. But have the Ukrainians improved over the course of the past month in their terms of use of the weapons and tactics? They seem to have shown significant success in the last week or two.

General WOLTERS. Absolutely, Senator. The Ukrainian armed forces show a very, very positive learning curve. Hence, I am optimistic about being able to force additional stalling on behalf of the Russians.

Senator KING. Let me change the subject for a minute. I am concerned that Russia falls into a number of different COCOMs—I am sorry, the Arctic—and I am concerned about coordination between the various COCOMs that have a piece of the Arctic defense, be-

cause Russia is certainly militarizing on their shore of the Arctic. What steps are there, or do you feel that there is sufficient coordination? The whole idea of a COCOM is somebody is in charge, and if you have got, I think it is three COCOMs that have a piece of the Arctic jurisdiction, do you feel it is sufficiently well coordinated to respond to a Russian action in the Arctic?

General WOLTERS. As you are well aware, Senator, in 2019, we established NORTHCOM as the capability advocate for DOD, and in his responsibility today, General VanHerck is doing a tremendous job of orchestrating the support that supports the relationships with the other COCOMs.

To the point to where all of us have plans for the Arctic, being held accountable to support those plans so that we can improve our indications and warnings on our command and control and our mission capabilities—

Senator KING. So NORTHCOM has the lead.

General WOLTERS. NORTHCOM is the capability advocate for DOD for the Arctic.

Senator KING. I have never heard the term “capability advocate.” Does that mean they are in charge?

General WOLTERS. In so many areas it does, especially when it comes to capabilities, which is ever so important for us in the military to deliver the appropriate effect in the environment.

Senator KING. General, I will have some questions for the record on TRANSCOM. The two specifically are, cyber resilience, which you have cited as a potential problem—or not a potential but a serious problem—and also what lessons TRANSCOM has learned from the Ukraine experience, a kind of preliminary after-action review, if you will. I will submit those for the record.

Thank you very much.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Cotton, please.

Senator COTTON. Thank you both for your appearance today and your service to our nation. General Wolters, I am sure you deeply regret this will be your last appearance in front of this Committee, as the combatant commander in Europe.

A couple of weeks ago Russia shot missiles that landed about 10 miles from Poland’s border. You are the combatant commander for American forces in Europe. You are the supreme allied commander for NATO forces. What direction or authorization have you received from the President or from the NATO council about the immediate action you should take if a missile were to hit Polish territory?

General WOLTERS. Continue to fortify the security disposition from a military perspective in air, land, sea, space, and cyber, on the eastern portion of Europe.

Senator COTTON. Are you authorized to immediately strike back at that aircraft that launched the missile or a missile battery that fired it?

General WOLTERS. No, I am not.

Senator COTTON. By the time you receive that authorization, that aircraft and that missile battery probably would have moved and no longer be susceptible to immediate strike. Is that correct?

General WOLTERS. That is correct, and again, this all applies to activity that occurs in Ukraine, with respect to Russia, not on NATO territory.

Senator COTTON. I am disappointed to hear that you do not have that authorization, General.

The President said, while he was in Europe, that we are training Ukrainian forces in Poland. Is that accurate?

General WOLTERS. At this time—was that the time setting of the statement?

Senator COTTON. That is what the President said. Jake Sullivan said we are not. I am just trying to figure out if we are or are not.

General WOLTERS. I do not believe that we are in the process of currently training military forces from Ukraine and Poland. There are liaisons that are there that are being given advice, and that is different than I think you are referring to with respect to training.

Senator COTTON. A few weeks ago, President Zelensky asked for the transfer of MIG-29 aircraft from Poland. The Secretary of State said that we gave a green light to that. Two days later the Pentagon said it was untenable because they were afraid that it would be escalatory. Were you asked for your best military advice about this decision, and if so, what was it?

General WOLTERS. I was and I provided that best military advice to the Secretary of Defense. If Secretary Austin would like to share that with you I know that he will.

Senator COTTON. Can you help me understand how it would be escalatory to provide these aircraft to Poland if they came from us but not if they came from Poland?

General WOLTERS. I think that nations have to make the decision independently about whether or not they want to give aircraft to the Ukraine, and that is certainly the case with respect to Poland's choice. With respect to what we do, part of the decision, from a United States perspective, was metered through the return on investment for the capability of those platforms versus potential escalation. When that balance was looked at, the decision was made not to advocate giving MIGs to Poland.

Senator COTTON. Yeah, I mean, I understand that some people think that these MIGs would not be that useful for Ukraine, and I do not believe they will be a silver bullet, but President Zelensky and the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense has asked for them, and I think this would be a case where we respect their judgments, even if they just use them for spare parts for their aircraft. I think they have earned that right. I do not think if you are a Russian pilot you view old MIGs as any more escalatory than modern Stingers, if you are the one being shot out of the sky. I suspect you would not either, General.

Are we still making distinctions between offensive and defensive weapons that we provide to Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. Senator, I would expect that we are examining each and every one of the weapons and making sure that on a case-by-case basis we are taking into account the escalatory potential that they present.

Senator COTTON. I just think that Russia invaded Ukraine. Ukraine is defending its soil. By definition, every weapon it has is defensive.

Two weeks ago, the President announced the delivery of a package of arms to include switchblade drones. One week ago, the Pentagon acknowledged that they had not yet been delivered. Have those drones been delivered yet to Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. They have not yet landed in Ukraine. They are in the process.

Senator COTTON. Do we know why that is taking so long?

General WOLTERS. I do not at this time, Senator.

Senator COTTON. One final question I have here. This is about your placemat on the disposition of U.S. Forces. We have 40,000 troops in Germany. That is four times the next-largest troop presence, almost, and 40 percent of our total enhanced presence in Europe now. Is there a strategic reason to have so many troops in Germany, or is that just a historic artifact that it used to be the front lines of the east-west conflict?

General WOLTERS. It has to do with mostly the United States Army and availability of training ranges. So when those force elements come over they can practice shooting, moving, and communicating, and when called to go forward you will have a ready force, and that is because of the long tradition that you have experienced in your Army career of Hohenfels and Grafenwohr.

Senator COTTON. Can you tell me how many of those 40,000 troops that we have in Germany have the primary job of shooting a weapon, driving a vehicle, or flying an aircraft that can kill a bad guy?

General WOLTERS. Well over 70 percent.

Senator COTTON. So over 70 percent of those 40,000 troops have a military occupational specialty or APSC that is about killing bad guys, not supporting frontline troops?

General WOLTERS. That is correct. They are the teeth of the military formation.

Senator COTTON. Thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Cotton.

Senator ROSEN, please.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you, Chairman Reed, for holding this critically important hearing.

General Wolters, I am sure you understand more than most that the world is watching the United States as we support our NATO allies and help the Ukrainian people defend their country from Vladimir Putin's violent, unprovoked war on their democratic way of life.

So with this in mind, earlier this month I traveled to Poland and Germany as part of a bipartisan codel to reinforce to the world that Americans stand united in our support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Throughout the trip we did have the privilege of meeting U.S. Forces supporting the EUCOM mission, we received briefings from commanders on the situation on the ground in Ukraine, and we saw first-hand the security assistance and training NATO is providing. This trip underscored for me that we can and we must do more, taking additional actions to support Ukraine, helping them to defeat Putin's forces.

So I want to just turn to a little bit of talking about the humanitarian aid, because in Poland we visited a refugee center where displaced Ukrainians were seeking shelter and refuge from Putin's

brutality, and I saw women and children—they were all women and children, primarily—they fled their homes and the lives they built. We heard on the ground people in Ukraine are running out of food, water, medical supplies.

So General, what role is EUCOM playing in supporting the United States military's humanitarian mission in the Ukraine, and how concerned are you that potential Russian gains might complicate your efforts to provide both the military and humanitarian assistance that they need?

General WOLTERS. Senator, we are very concerned, and EUCOM is assisting with inventories, transactions back and forth, with security assistance as well as humanitarian assistance, to make sure that from the supply and demand standpoint that the right stuff goes in at the right time, with the best possible force protection. We will vary as necessary, based off trends that exist in the environment to ensure that we can, as best we can, safely get the right goods to the right people at the right time, both from a security assistance standpoint and both from a humanitarian assistance standpoint. As a military organization we are obviously working side by side with many of our government partners outside of the Department of Defense as well as those that represent departments outside of the Department of Defense in the countries where these transactions are taking place, Poland and others.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you. I want to move on to cyber threats, because obviously you have alluded to it, General Van Ovost, and of course my colleagues as well. But I want to turn Russian gray zone tactics. Russia has launched malicious cyberattacks to target Ukraine's infrastructure, its government networks, while utilizing disinformation to falsely paint Ukraine, of course, and I am going to quote here, "a Nazi regime."

So General Wolters, I have a three-part question for you on Russian hybrid warfare threats. First, have Russian cyberattacks compromised Ukrainian command and control? Second, do we have adequate strategies for countering Russia's information operations in eastern Ukraine? Third, given that NATO, in 2014, declared that a cyberattack could lead to the invocation of Article 5, in your view what should be the threshold for a Russian cyberattack that could lead to invoking Article 5?

General WOLTERS. Senator, the first question that has to do with Ukrainian C2, as I think most of us have seen in the public domain, Ukrainian C2 is currently in place, from a whole-of-government perspective, on Ukraine's part, all the way down to the military. So I would contend that Russia has been very challenged in that area and Ukraine has continued to be successful.

I think the strategic implications are profound, and I believe that when we examine what has taken place up to this point, and write books about it in the future, we will look back and conclude and be comfortable with the fact that we have dramatically, from a U.S. perspective and NATO perspective, improved our tactics, techniques, and procedures as they contribute to a campaign in the area of offensive cyber and defensive cyber, as well as the manipulation of how information comes out and how we can ensure that the truth still gets to the appropriate point.

I would just say that when it comes to what NATO does to declare an Article 5, as a military commander what I am responsible for is ensuring that we have all of the fact. As you well know, Senator, we typically wind up in situations to where the next day after we quickly discover that we did not have all the facts. What I would owe the North Atlantic Council and NATO so that they could make the appropriate decision is to get as many of those facts as I can and provide my best military advice to the North Atlantic Council that would be responsible for making that decision, all 30 nations, about whether or not to enact Article 5. In situations like this, when it comes to cyber, it is very difficult to get the facts, and you have to work hard to make sure that you get those, and that would be my responsibility at the time when that would occur.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you. I see my time is up, but General Van Ovost, I will take this for the record, about investing in the right cyber talent and modernizing IT capabilities in order to support all of this.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Rosen.

Senator Cramer, please.

Senator CRAMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to both generals for being here and for your incredible service.

General Wolters, I want to begin with you, go back to a conversation you had with Senator Wicker, specifically about the distinction of permanent and assigned forces, as we obviously see this increase now in force. As I understand—and maybe I will drill down a little more—he was asking about permanent and assigned forces. I think the bottom line was you said we should probably grow them.

What I am wondering is over the last several years, as we have been drawing down, EUCOM and CENTCOM, to prepare more forces for other places, specifically the Pacific, and you have talked a little bit with Senator Hirono about the global issue, how do we reconcile the need for more forces everywhere? Do we just grow the force, or does this management of personnel become much more difficult? By the way, I might also ask, and how does agile combat play into all of that? We, in North Dakota, are very cognizant of the B-52s and the role they have played, exercising, obviously. Maybe just talk a little bit about ACE and how that fits in as well.

General WOLTERS. Well, Senator, first, Agile Combat Employment is very helpful, whether or not you are addressing permanent or rotational forces, to be able to take a unique capacity and quickly insert it into a region, and then when no longer does it deliver the effect that helps enhance peace in that region pull it out and get it back home where it needs to be, to refit and be ready to respond globally. It is incredibly important.

With respect to permanently assigned versus rotational, as we have seen, what has unfolded in Ukraine with respect to Russia, it has allowed us the opportunity to take a look at a whole-of-government, multi-domain force and examine what shifts we could possibly make in the future. I contend that we would probably be wise to examine what has unfolded in Ukraine and Russia and the periphery nations, and certainly from a NATO perspective and being a commander, with respect to those NATO forces, those contributions that those allies and partners have committed impacts

the appropriate effect that we can deliver, which goes all the way back to how smart we need to be with respect to making the right decision, giving global ramifications on permanent versus rotational.

The answer is still, I believe it depends. There is always goodness and badness in both cases, but I think we need to be smart about it and refit just a little bit and examine what has unfolded here, to make a prudent decision going forward.

Senator CRAMER. Well said, and you actually anticipated my next question and answered it, so thank you.

Speaking of whole-of-government, General Van Ovost, you probably are as engaged in the whole-of-government approach as much, or more importantly, probably, than anybody. There are two things that you have said, one in your opening statement—I think it was your opening statement—where you said something to the effect that “I look forward to working with the Navy to satisfy restrictions in current law.” I think that was regarding the building of ships, right? Could you just elaborate a little bit on “satisfy restrictions in current law”? Should we be changing the restrictions? Are you implying that, or are you just saying there is a lot of bureaucracy we have to work through, and help me help you?

General Van OVOST. Thanks, Senator. The authorization is to purchase up to 9 used sealift ships, 4 ships without a requirement for new build, but in order to purchase the fifth ship the Navy has to submit a plan for 10 new ships being build, sealift or OSV, general utility type ships, so we can continue to purchase used number 5 through number 9. So in 2021, we have now purchased two ships, and we have been given the appropriation to purchase 5 more used ships, but we will only right now be able to purchase 2 more until either the law is changed or the Navy submits a plan that is satisfactory to the Committees.

Senator CRAMER. I understand. So we need to work on that.

You also referenced, in a conversation—I do not remember which Senator it was; it might have been Hirono—you referenced the term “thickening partners” a couple of times, I think. What I am wondering is, have you seen, in recent months or recent years, a changing, if you will, or a growing cooperation among our partners, with our partners in the Pacific, specifically, to allow, for example, better access to ports and navigability that maybe was not there in the not-so-distant past? Are you seeing some improvement?

General Van OVOST. Senator, I would say we are seeing improvement. The fine points of that improvement I would leave to Admiral Aquilino. But as we look to both our military and our commercial networks, as we are increasing our activities and exercises and interoperability with our allies and partners in the Pacific, we are seeing an increase.

Senator CRAMER. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Cramer.

Senator Duckworth, please.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you both General Van Ovost and General Wolters for joining us today.

As we near the milestone of one month into the invasion of Ukraine we are hitting a critical moment in our pledge to support

Ukraine and our NATO allies. What were once seen as ad hoc efforts to gather and distribute aid to the Ukrainian heroes combating Russian aggression has become a new normal. What was once an emergent situation will now test our commitment and our resilience as the fatigue of warfare sets in?

This new reality will stress our own logistics networks as we have to reinforce our delivery mechanisms into Ukraine in order to deter Russian interdiction, and it will challenge our industry partners to reopen or accelerate manufacturing lines to incorporate into the next aid package and to replenish our own stockpiles.

So I would like to start off by discussing the status of our inter-theater capabilities, which are critical to the work that we are doing in Europe, and will be just as critical if ever needed for a contingency in the Pacific.

During our last meeting, General Van Ovost, we discussed your plans to reduce the age of your strategic maritime assets by purchasing used replacement ships. This strategy is clearly proving successful, but with 34 or your 50 assets set to retire I am concerned that we are not moving fast enough.

General Van Ovost, what are the biggest obstacles you face in your strategy to buy used maritime assets, and what can Congress do to support your efforts during fiscal year 2023?

General Van OVOST. Thank you, Senator, and as we discussed, the aging ships are costing more to maintain, and even with that more money we are not getting the readiness bang out of that buck. So we have had to make some prudent and cost-effective decisions to accelerate retirements of platforms even without a back-fill.

I think most importantly a stable plan of recapitalization with used ships to ensure that we get the most value out of it, and also to stabilize the shipyards, because these ships do go back and get modifications done as they come into the ready reserve fleet, so a nice, stable platform for buy, about 4 a year, would be very helpful to close and be able to mitigate those gaps.

But I also wanted to just reiterate that, you know, our organic fleet will never be able to do everything we need to do, so maintaining a healthy ready reserve fleet is good, but I also want to thank this Committee for their work on not only on the continued stipend for the MSP but also for the tanker security program that we just started, to provide U.S.-crewed, U.S.-flagged ships for both fuel movement and for our regular maritime security program. These are force multipliers for us to ensure that we can continue to project and sustain the force into the future.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. For my second question I want to turn back to logistics, but in Europe. I would like to touch on issues of lessons learned and potential obstacles for the future. I know we have already had a bit of a discussion on the EDI with my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator Inhofe. Given that we are nearly 4 weeks into this conflict in Ukraine and a month and a half into our increased presence and posture, we must take the opportunity to evaluate this strategy and look forward to what logistic challenges may be in our future.

So General Wolters, I would like to give you the opportunity to sort of discuss what lessons related to logistics should we be learn-

ing from United States operations in Europe, and what steps should we be taking during this fiscal year's budget cycle to plan for the enduring logistics challenge of a prolonged war in Ukraine, as well as the recovery that will come after that?

General WOLTERS. Senator, as you well know from your history this take constant scrutiny, constant iterations, constant willingness to listen and process and improve. We, during the start of this campaign, in the vicinity of 27 February, stood up two logistics cells that actually iterate on all these processes. One is EUCOM-represented and the other one is internationally represented. At the end of the day you have got to get the right stuff in at the right time, and it has to be appropriately defended so that those individuals that are responsible for what we are putting in and protected, and when it goes into the actionable area, Ukraine, it is put to good use. Then you have to track it every second along the way.

We have that data, are maintaining that data, and we continue to iterate the process and improve, all the way from acquiring it in CONUS to where it gets to the operator in Ukraine, to make sure that we are doing the right thing from a logistics standpoint. That is actually what those two cells are charged to do, as well as current-day ops. At the end of the day it takes gigantic elbow grease, every millisecond of the day, to get right, and you have to wake up the next morning and tell yourself you are probably not doing it right and be prepared to iterate one more time, and that is what those two cells are currently in the process of doing at Stuttgart.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Duckworth.

Senator Tuberville, please.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you. Good morning. Thanks to both of you for your service. General Van Ovest, in 2017, China put their first military base in Africa, in Djibouti. Now it looks like they are possibly going to put one on the Atlantic side, Equatorial Guinea. Does that give you any concerns in TRANSCOM?

General Van OVOST. Senator, it absolutely does. As they begin to elbow their way into these countries they will begin to effect their economic decisions and their diplomatic decision, which could disrupt or delay our ability to access those same areas. So I am concerned about their building operations around the world as they are trying to protect their growing interests, not only in South America but in Africa.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you. General Wolters, off the question here a little bit. Do we still have Afghan refugees in your purview?

General WOLTERS. Sir, we just closed out the last set that were at Camp Bechtel. They are safe and secure in another country right now.

Senator TUBERVILLE. How many do you think you have processed through your venue?

General WOLTERS. We actually processed 70,000 through the four sites in Europe.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you. Awesome job.

What do Finland and Sweden bring to the table in NATO?

General WOLTERS. Sir, the first thing they bring is forces that are ready, and they have a history of doing some wonderful things against folks that elect to violate their sovereignty. Their ready forces help lead from the front, many of the other national forces that represent the NATO nations.

Senator TUBERVILLE. They have a pretty strong military, considering their size?

General WOLTERS. Yes, sir.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Thank you. Why do you think they shot hypersonics in Ukraine when they did not have to?

General WOLTERS. I think it was to demonstrate the capability and attempt to put fear in the hearts of the enemy, and I do not think they were successful.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Yeah. What did it hit? Or was it one or two?

General WOLTERS. There have been multiple launches. Most of them have been directed at military targets, still TBD based off the intelligence returns. But what I can say is most of those strikes have been designated at specific military targets.

Senator TUBERVILLE. One went from one side of the country to the other. I mean, that takes a lot of guts to do that, know that, I guess, they knew it was going to work.

You know, when I was over in Ukraine a few months ago, the generals there were telling me about the new armor that they were putting on tanks. Has that been successful for Russia? I notice a lot of tanks are torn up. Do you have any information on that? Have they held up, you know, the new armor, to the Javelins and the Stingers?

General WOLTERS. Sir, this is pretty anecdotal but the feedback we are getting is if you have a lot of anti-armor, anti-tank munitions you can slow down a tank. So even their new armor has some chinks in their armor, so to speak, with respect to multiple projectiles being launched at them.

Senator TUBERVILLE. Have we seen any new weapons, other than hypersonic, used in this war?

General WOLTERS. No, sir.

Senator TUBERVILLE. I am anxious to see how the switchblades work. I think that could be a huge benefit for us down the road, and hopefully to Ukraine.

Let's see. I have a couple more here.

General Van Ovost, Alabama is proud to have been selected as the permanent home of the U.S. Space Command, in Huntsville. Recently there have been comments made that question if the command would be able to easily move from their temporary home. That obviously would be part of your purview there. I just want to say that I have every confidence in your ability to guide TRANSCOM through facilitating this move following the IG's decision in the near future. If you can pull off the last-minute Afghanistan evacuation, this should be a piece of cake. But hopefully we can get that done.

I yield my time, and, General, thank you for your service. I hope you are looking forward to playing golf and fishing. Thank you.

Chairman REED. Thank you, Senator Tuberville.

Senator Peters, please.

Senator PETERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Wolters, let me first congratulate you and thank you for your 40 years of service. Your leadership and dedication to the men and women of our Armed Forces and our allies and partners has certainly helped shape the unprecedented strength and the unity of NATO against Putin's criminal aggression, so thank you.

In your posture statement you highlight this is a perhaps the last time you expect to testify as EUCOM commander, and the history has yet to be written about how the illegal invasion of Ukraine concludes. We will continue to count on you to remain steadfast in a difficult challenge until the time as you pass the mantle of leadership for EUCOM commander and NATO supreme allied commander of Europe.

General Wolters, in November of 2020, a trilateral ceasefire agreement was signed between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia, to conclude the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, and it seems as if Azerbaijan has taken advantage of the conflict in Ukraine by launching unprovoked assaults against Armenian villages. Given Russia's poor military performance in Ukraine, I am concerned about their ability to keep the peace, especially as they may need to draw on the 2,000 Russian troops that are deployed there.

So my question for you sir, is what actions are we taking and what actions should we be taking to promote peace and stability in the Caucasus?

General WOLTERS. Senator, what we have to do first is ensure that through the defense attaché offices in Azerbaijan is get the facts with respect to the activities in Nogorno-Karabakh, and as you can well imagine right now there is lots of finger-pointing taking place back and forth. The facts, as we know right now, is that Russia's involvement in imposing good order and discipline in that scenario was very little and very curious.

So we will continue to gather the facts and then take the next step forward with respect to Russia's play in this activity and with respect to Nogorno-Karabakh's activities of their defense force and the Azerbaijan force.

Senator PETERS. Great. General Wolters, nowhere in the world is the power of our alliance more evident than NATO, and the Michigan National Guard is proud to play a role in that alliance at Latvia's partner for nearly 30 years, through the National Guard's State Partnership Program. In January, members of the Latvian National Armed Forces trained on air and ground force synchronization at Joint Terminal Attack Controllers at Camp Grayling, Michigan.

My question for you, sir, is how valuable is the state partnership program to your security cooperation initiatives and do you consider this an area of high return on investment in your AOR?

General WOLTERS. Sir, I would consider it an area of very high return on investment. The disposition of the force elements in Latvia today are very robust. There are lots of United States entities in Latvia as we speak, and they are able to shoot, move, and communicate side by side with Latvian armed forces to a far more lethal degree than they have in the past, as a result of the State Partnership Program.

Senator PETERS. General Wolters, I understand that one brigade set of the United States Army's most modern Abrams tank has been deployed from the Army's pre-position stock in Germany to Poland, to enhance NATO's deterrence posture. Given the use of heavy armored forces by Russia in Ukraine is continued, is rapid mobilization of the Abrams as the most powerful ground combat vehicle that we have important to you, as a combat commander in Europe?

General WOLTERS. It is, Senator. It is a tremendous force multiplier when it comes to deterrence.

Senator PETERS. Is the recent decision by Poland to upgrade its tanks to the United States Army's Abrams to replace older Russian-designs a significant development for NATO and allied nations in Europe?

General WOLTERS. Absolutely yes, Senator.

Senator PETERS. General Van Ovost, in your posture statement you highlighted the significance of air refueling mission and stressed the importance of timely recapitalization. I spoke with Secretary Kendall just last week and we each agree that it is critical that Congress provides the Air Force with the right systems needed to deliver needed capabilities. While the 2006 RAND analysis of alternatives may be somewhat outdated, it certainly outlined a few recapitalization options.

So my question for you, ma'am, is from a capabilities standpoint what do you think is the best recapitalization strategy?

General Van OVOST. Thank you, Senator. As I said the air refueling is the lifeblood of our ability to project and employ a force. If I could also mention that we cannot do it without the total force, so I appreciate the National Guard capacity.

The best way to recapitalize is to have a stable plan that gets after the capabilities we are going to need in the future. The KC-46 is the future of air refueling because it can do multiple things, and it is connected to the battle, both with Link 16 and ability to be able to get communications offboard and long-range from that aircraft securely.

So as we look to develop what capabilities we need in the future, in a contested environment, we will be looking at the lessons from the KC-46, and I will be working with the Air Force to describe those requirements into the future.

Senator PETERS. Great. Well thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman REED. Thank you very much, Senator Peters.

I want to thank both the witnesses, General Wolters, not only for your testimony but for your extraordinary service over many, many decades. You are in the most, at this moment, critical position, I think, in the military, and we are all fortunate that you are there. Thank you very much, and please communicate that to the men and women, particularly the 82nd Airborne Division. Yes, sir. All-American.

General Van Ovost, thank you very much for your thoughtful approach to these problems and your very clear signals to us that we need to make some significant and difficult decisions with respect to reconfiguring our logistics, particularly in conflicted areas.

With that, in the absence of any further questions from my colleagues here, I will adjourn the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the Committee adjourned.]

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

BLACK SEA SECURITY

1. Senator SHAHEEN. General Wolters, what is your assessment of Russia's expansion in the Black Sea region, particularly in light of their invasion of Ukraine and do you believe it would be in the best interests of United States national security to develop and implement an interagency Black Sea security strategy?

General WOLTERS. Russia continues to see the Black Sea region as an area of strategic importance resulting in high level strategic competition. They seek to increase their regional influence through a variety of diplomatic, economic, and military means. A whole-of-government, whole-of-alliance Black Sea security strategy would put increased emphasis on this strategically important region and ensure a coordinated United States approach to countering Russian regional interests.

2. Senator SHAHEEN. General Wolters, how can the United States improve our joint training and exercises with allies to improve U.S.-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) interoperability and ensure the alliance's full capability?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM funds Joint training and exercises with Allies through components' European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) which has decreased since 2019 levels. Fully resourcing and executing our Joint training program builds transparency and alignment across command and control, integrated defense, fires, and logistics. Restoring EDI training funds improves our combat readiness alongside NATO, enhances interoperability, and demonstrates Allied and Partner assurance to deter further Russian aggression.

3. Senator SHAHEEN. General Wolters, please share any details you have on the plan to expand the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence/battlegroup to Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria, including information on force composition, size, capabilities and timeline.

General WOLTERS. In response to Russia's attack on Ukraine, NATO is forming battle groups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia. These battle groups provide a deterrent force across NATO's eastern front and demonstrate NATO's commitment to interoperability and partner integration. Currently, the United States provides a company-sized force in Bulgaria and Hungary, and a battalion-sized force in Romania. NATO Allies fill out the balance of the forces, including leadership roles.

At this time, there are no plans to significantly increase U.S. contributions to the NATO battle groups.

4. Senator SHAHEEN. General Wolters, in your opinion, how will the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence/battlegroup expansion impact regional security and alliance cooperation?

General WOLTERS. The expansion of the NATO Battle Group construct into Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia provides NATO a deterrent force across NATO's eastern flank. The battle groups provide an opportunity to collectively demonstrate commitment and resolve to defend NATO territory against Russian aggression. The battle groups will serve to further increase alliance cooperation and demonstrate readiness.

KC-46

5. Senator SHAHEEN. General Van Ovost, how has Russia's invasion of Ukraine tested the capacity of our tanker fleet and what lessons have we learned so far?

General VAN OVOST. Air operations around Ukraine were managed carefully to avoid unintentional provocation and escalation. As a result, the overall tanker demand was modest. USTRANSCOM provided the support USEUCOM requested with minimal impact to global air refueling operations.

At the onset of hostilities, the uncertainty of Russia's intentions caused us to take a closer look at our tanker capacity and posture. The potential for combat operations in Europe coupled with the requirement for homeland defense against a nuclear-capable adversary was, and will continue to be, one of our great concerns. Our Active

Duty (AD) force provided the preponderance of USEUCOM support for this operation; however, two-thirds of USTRANSCOM's air refueling units reside in the Air Reserve Component (ARC). Mobilization of ARC personnel is a lengthy process, so much of the discussion in the days following Russia's invasion focused on the amount of time the AD could sustain tanker operations before readiness would be degraded, and ARC capability would be required. This discussion highlighted the capabilities and limitations of our AD force and reinforced the need for an early decision to mobilize ahead of any potential large-scale conflict.

6. Senator SHAHEEN. General Van Ovost, how important is it to Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) for the KC-46 to be fully cleared to refuel all TRANSCOM supported aircraft and for the fixes to the Remote Vision System to remain on schedule?

General VAN OVOST. The KC-46 program is crucial to the recapitalization and modernization of our aging air refueling fleet. USTRANSCOM supports the agreed upon schedule the U.S. Air Force and Boeing developed to deliver fully capable KC-46 aircraft for global missions. As a bridge to a fully capable KC-46, the U.S. Air Force and Air Mobility Command developed an Interim Capability Release (ICR) process providing limited KC-46 capacity for USTRANSCOM and Service tasking. The ICR process exceeded expectations and is ahead of schedule with the KC-46 providing additional capacity for USTRANSCOM above the initial projection. The KC-46 is currently cleared to refuel approximately 85 percent of receiver aircraft. While USTRANSCOM recognizes the U.S. Air Force and Boeing are invested and committed to the Remote Vision System remediation schedule, the ICR process provides a hedge in the event of minor slips in the schedule and ensures USTRANSCOM can meet daily global air refueling demands. USTRANSCOM eagerly looks forward to a fully capable KC-46, and based on the success of the ICR process, in the interim I'm confident the KC-46, with the current Remote Visual System limitations, could contribute to wartime missions if required in combination with KC-135s and KC-10s, acknowledging the normal readiness impacts to units in conversion.

7. Senator SHAHEEN. General Van Ovost, do you see the KC-46 be able to provide TRANSCOM support for U.S./NATO assets in the current Ukraine contingency?

General VAN OVOST. The KC-46 has been providing direct and indirect support to ongoing USEUCOM operations. As examples, the KC-46 provided an air bridge for troops and cargo across the Atlantic, it refueled fighter aircraft as they deployed, and it covered worldwide air refueling missions. Air Mobility Command also sent four KC-46s to Europe for an Employment Concept Exercise (ECE) in support of U.S. and NATO operations. During the effort, the KC-46 enabled global bomber shows of force, supported forward fighter combat patrols, trained with Aeromedical Evacuation personnel, and completed the first ever KC-46 air refueling with a European aircraft (Spanish EF-18). In the first 60 days of European operations, the KC-46 executed 81 missions in the European theater and more than 90 non-training missions elsewhere around the globe. Without the KC-46, each of these missions would have required support from the already strained KC-135 and KC-10 fleets.

Of equal importance was the rapid advancement in international air refueling clearances resulting from the Ukraine contingency. In response to the situation, USTRANSCOM, AMC, and the Air Refueling Certification Agency (ARCA) expedited their processes and delivered five certifications for the KC-46 to refuel NATO fighter aircraft: the Spanish EF-18, Spanish AV-8, Italian AV-8, Italian F-35B, and British F-35B. ARCA also provided an assessment of the technical compatibility for air refueling between the KC-46 and every known receiver belonging to U.S. allies and partners in case of contingency operations in Ukraine.

8. Senator SHAHEEN. General Van Ovost, how important is Pease Air National Guard Base to enabling TRANSCOM operations and meeting strategic requirements?

General VAN OVOST. Pease Air National Guard Base (ANGB) is continually evaluated against posture plan requirements to support operational plans and contingency missions. The KC-46 aircraft assigned to Pease ANGB are a key part of the air refueling fleet supporting the Joint Force's ability to deploy and employ immediate and surge forces. Those forces are critical to sustaining capacity during steady state, contingency, and wartime operations.

9. Senator SHAHEEN. General Van Ovost, do you support investing in the parking apron repairs that Pease Air National Guard Base in New Hampshire needs to support current operations and future contingencies?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM works with the Department of the Air Force and the National Guard Bureau through the military construction (MILCON) working group process for project prioritization and funding allocation. While Pease ANGB is an important operational location, parking apron restoration would be prioritized with all U.S. Air Force facility restoration, modernization, and repair projects. U.S. Air Force staffs review, prioritize, fund, and execute these projects on an annual basis. Pavement evaluations, mission requirements and field commanders will help inform prioritization of any future Pease ANGB apron restoration projects.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO

CLOSING UKRAINIAN SKIES

10. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, are the ground based air defense systems, such as Stinger missiles, being supplied to Ukraine by the United States and allies meeting their needs?

General WOLTERS. The ground-based air defense systems delivered to Ukraine by the United States and Allies provide a critical capability and are currently meeting Ukraine's low-altitude, ground-based air defense requirements. Russia's lack of air superiority in Ukraine provides a tangible example of the effectiveness of these contributions as well as the Ukrainians' ability to effectively utilize ground-based air defense systems.

11. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, what more can we do short of enforcing a no-fly zone to help Ukraine close down their skies to Russian aircraft?

General WOLTERS. The ground-based air defense systems delivered to Ukraine by the United States and Allies have effectively pushed back Russian aircraft. We have provided, and will continue to provide, Ukraine with anti-air weapons to assist Ukraine's stance in deterring Russian aircraft.

CHEMICAL/BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS ATTACKS

12. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, there are growing concerns that Russia will resort to using chemical or biological weapons against Ukraine in the near future, to include the possibility of conducting a false-flag operation to justify their use. What is your assessment of the risk of such an attack encroaching on a NATO member and triggering an Article 5 NATO military response?

General WOLTERS. Russia has a track record of using chemical weapons. They have falsely raised the specter of Ukraine using chemical or biological weapons as a pretext for war with Ukraine for months. We cannot speculate about hypotheticals, but if a NATO Ally is attacked, regardless of the type of weapon used, we will consult together as an Alliance on an appropriate response. We will defend NATO territory with the full force of American power, and our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. NATO is united and determined to defend our collective security and together we have reinforced NATO's eastern front by repositioning thousands of United States and Allied troops to reassure frontline allies and deter Russian aggression.

13. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, the Biden administration has expressed a willingness to respond to such an attack-with the nature of the response depending on the nature of use. What options would you recommend or consider to leadership in the event of such attacks?

General WOLTERS. The United States doesn't have an active chemical or biological weapons program, but if requested, USEUCOM will provide a spectrum of military response options across the theater's breadth of capabilities for the Secretary and President's consideration. Recommendations will be tied to the scope of Russia's attack and will consider escalation risks, the laws of armed conflict, and other factors. Our response will be in close consultation with NATO and our Allies, and based on a rapid and collaborative attribution process to hold Russia accountable across the international community.

PARTNERS AND ALLIES

14. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, in what ways have United States forces in Europe conducted experimentation with exercises to ensure we maintain our competitive edge against our adversaries?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM's service components conduct unilateral, bilateral, and multi-lateral exercises to maintain readiness and conduct large scale exercises with Allies and Partners to ensure interoperability, expand Allied partner capacity,

and integrate planning to maintain our competitive edge against our adversaries. We consistently look to advance new tactics, techniques, and procedures to advance our competitive edge, increase our speed, and become more lethal.

15. Senator HIRONO. General Wolters, how has this experimentation been beneficial given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. The conflict in Ukraine has demonstrated our great relationships with Allies and Partners across Europe. This crisis has created a historic moment in which Allied nations have found new ways to join forces and work together to provide aid to Ukraine. Working by, with, and through Allies and Partners, we have already delivered an unprecedented amount of aid to the Ukrainian forces and continue to find new solutions to move lethal aid into Ukraine to counter Russia's unprovoked war.

FUEL TANKER STUDY

16. Senator HIRONO. General Van Ovost, I understand that recently you conducted a comprehensive study concerning the ability of the U.S. flag and U.S.-owned tanker fleet to meet the demands of our National Security Strategy. In our recent conversation, you identified that commercial assets will play a vital role in logistics moving forward and the Department of Defense (DOD) is looking for additional ways to support growth in the commercial base. How do you plan to fill the gaps and mitigate the shortcomings of our current tanker capacity?

General VAN OVOST. The Tanker Security Program (TSP) that Congress has authorized and funded is a key first step to address the tanker capacity gap. I thank the Congress for their support in addressing fuel distribution challenges as we clearly see the tension China is creating in the Indo-Pacific theater.

The Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) required Fuel Tanker Study provided in June 2021 (tanker study) provides a comprehensive depiction of the looming challenge for fuel movement in the Indo-Pacific. There are two segments with unique requirements and shortcomings for the movement and distribution of fuel: (1) long-range, inter-theater fuel movements, and (2) shorter-range distribution to many Indo-Pacific locations, many requiring shallow draft vessels. Today, the U.S. is heavily reliant on commercial fuel tankers and smaller vessels, the majority being foreign flagged which increases risk for access during crisis or conflict with China.

The inter-theater segment requires over 50 large fuel tankers typically involved in international trade. Currently, there are only six U.S. flagged vessels engaged in international fuel trade, with almost all operating under contract with Military Sealift Command (MSC) for the movement of DOD fuel requirements. Anticipated wartime usage of U.S. commercial Jones Act tankers would require a handful involved in fuel movements during conflict to locations such as Hawaii, Alaska, and Guam. The initial 10-vessel TSP will fill a critical gap in the inter-theater segment where the underway consolidated cargo fuel transfer requires unique equipment and mariners, with those missions performed by U.S. flag ships. The Tanker study showed the currently available U.S. flag tankers, combined with the 10 TSP tankers, sufficiently satisfy these U.S. flag requirements. Foreign flag tankers from our allies and partners ("Blue" tankers) would have to meet the remainder of the inter-theater bulk fuel requirements, which will be achieved through agreements and contingency contracts to enhance access to "Blue" tankers and companies with a high likelihood to support U.S. operations.

The area of greatest concern, however, is intra-theater segment for fuel distribution across many locations in the Indo-Pacific requiring over 100 smaller fuel vessels to meet our anticipated wartime demands. While numerous foreign flag general purpose and coastal vessels operate in the Indo-Pacific, an increased potential exists for their People's Republic of China (PRC) influence or financial control, making access uncertain and elevating risk. Currently, there is only one U.S. flagged coastal tanker under long-term contract to MSC. For even smaller fuel vessels with shallow drafts to maneuver into austere locations, numerous suitable U.S. flag commercial assets exist in the Gulf of Mexico. However, the timing needed to configure and move them in sizeable numbers to the Indo-Pacific is a significant planning constraint. Thus, USTRANSCOM is seeking to expand the TSP program by targeting smaller vessels needed to support intra-theater fuel distribution. In addition, we have conducted industry engagements to determine the availability and willingness of U.S. flag carriers and their associated parent companies operating suitable "Blue" foreign flagged vessels to support the intra-theater fuel mission. Finally, we intend to seek agreements with specific nations and companies to gain assured support in time of crisis or conflict, similar to the Korean Flag Shipping program.

The Department has elevated our focus on fuel as a critical commodity in a crisis or conflict with China, and Congressional support will be needed to continue expanding our U.S. commercial fuel capacity in the Indo-Pacific. While U.S. flagged assets are an important component of addressing the gaps and shortcomings in this area, we must still pursue agreements and contractual arrangements to enhance access to foreign-flagged capacity from allies and partners as major element in this approach.

17. Senator HIRONO. General Van Ovost, how can the department better leverage commercial companies to ensure increase the number of tankers available and ensure they are going to be available and willing to support defense requirements during conflicts?

General VAN OVOST. Opportunity does exist to better leverage the U.S. commercial fuel shipping industry. However, specific steps must be taken to enhance the economic viability of U.S. flagged ships and increase opportunities to better access all vessels that may be provided by commercial companies. As indicated in the Fiscal Year 2020 NDAA-required Fuel Tanker Study (tanker study), the Department of Defense will continue to rely on friendly foreign flagged (i.e., “Blue”) fuel vessels of allies and partners to move and distribute fuel in the Indo-Pacific. The tanker study indicated the need to increase the number of U.S. flagged fuel tankers and smaller fuel vessels to meet wartime requirements. The most significant impediment to increase U.S. flagged vessel capacity is the unfavorable cost to operate U.S. flagged vessels in international trade. Like the Maritime Security Program for dry-cargo vessels, there are two major elements to create the economic conditions favorable for U.S. commercial shipping companies to operate in international trade. The first is a direct stipend to offset the cost of operating a U.S. flagged vessel, and the second is cargo preference for movement of U.S. cargos at a rate reflective of the elevated cost to operate U.S. flagged vessels.

To address the first component, USTRANSCOM is grateful for the support already provided by the Congress through the initial 10-ship Tanker Security Program (TSP) to address larger inter-theater fuel tankers. USTRANSCOM, working with the Maritime Administration, expects the initial TSP program will be in place by the end of 2022. Additionally, the tanker study indicated elevated risk exists in the Indo-Pacific intra-theater fuel distribution where over 100 smaller fuel vessels are required under wartime conditions. To mitigate this risk, a range of ships will be required, with the likely need to expand the TSP for a wider variety of fuel vessels to create an U.S.-international trading fleet in the Indo-Pacific region. In addition, to enhance U.S. fuel tanker viability, changing locations and methods for fuel procurement as a preference-cargo may be necessary to meet our wartime fuel requirements.

Even with an expanded TSP, access to friendly foreign flagged vessels of our allies and partners is still required. Most U.S. vessel companies operate with parent or sister companies, which the Department must leverage to access and employ an expanded fleet of “Blue” fuel vessels to minimize risk of fully meeting our wartime needs. This requires a close relationship with the maritime fuel shipping industry to create the right conditions, such as bi-lateral agreements or contingency contracts, for their wartime support.

Finally, as an adjunct to the new TSP, USTRANSCOM is implementing a Voluntary Tanker Agreement (VTA) similar to the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement as the primary program to access TSP tankers under wartime conditions. The VTA provides the venue to engage our fuel industry partners and expend the necessary operating constructs and relationships to ensure U.S. commercial fuel industry can meaningfully contribute to our national security needs. The VTA is undergoing final review and should be in place by the end of 2022 as part of the overall TSP implementation.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ANGUS KING

CYBER DEFENSE

18. Senator KING. General Van Ovost, in your posture statement and command priorities you cite cyber threats as one of your top concerns for TRANSCOM due to the networks 90 percent of your operations take place on. What has TRANSCOM done to build their cyber resilience?

General VAN OVOST. To build USTRANSCOM’s cyber resilience and decrease attack vectors, we have implemented a layered defense-in-depth construct to harden our networks and remain focused on quickly mitigating critical vulnerabilities

across our portfolio. USTRANSCOM invested in a robust network intrusion detection system, continuous network monitoring program, and access to third-party threat intelligence from industry experts, allowing our intrusion detection analysts to better deter, detect, and respond to events. In addition, USTRANSCOM's continued investment in cloud services has led to a more robust infrastructure, increased our security posture, and improved resiliency of mobility systems hosted in the cloud.

In partnership with U.S. Cyber Command, USTRANSCOM has made significant progress towards implementing Zero Trust security capabilities on our classified network. Zero Trust capabilities will enhance network traffic visibility and better position USTRANSCOM to secure sensitive data, systems, and services. In February 2022, a National Security Agency Red Team completed a validation event that tested our core capabilities and confirmed our sound implementation. USTRANSCOM is now finalizing deployment of these capabilities and will achieve the baseline Zero Trust maturity level, as outlined in the Department's Zero Trust Reference Architecture, by the summer of 2022.

To reduce cybersecurity risks with our commercial partners, USTRANSCOM strengthened our commercial partnerships to build cyber resilience. For example, USTRANSCOM continues to have contractual cybersecurity compliance requirements in place, as well as the annual requirement for our commercial partners to assess their compliance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-171 security controls. Over the last four years of requiring self-assessments, USTRANSCOM's analysis of commercial partner self-reporting showed improved compliance each year. Continuous learning is critical to staying ahead of the cyber threat. To this end, USTRANSCOM engages in significant information sharing and collaboration with our commercial partners. In 2021, USTRANSCOM also put in place a proof-of-principle contract for a third party to assess our commercial partner compliance with the NIST SP 800-171 security controls. We offered this assessment on a voluntary basis to our commercial partners, and to date, three partners have volunteered for the assessment. The first assessment was completed in January 2022, and the results confirm this partner placed an emphasis on cyber security and was compliant with 90 of the 110 security controls. The second assessment is scheduled to complete in May 2022, and the date for the third assessment is pending.

UKRAINE LESSONS LEARNED

19. Senator KING. General Van Ovost, what are some of the preliminary lessons learned from TRANSCOM's efforts supporting expedited troop and materiel movement to European Command (EUCOM)?

General VAN OVOST. Preliminary lessons learned from USTRANSCOM's support to USEUCOM indicate that our systems-based approach of modal and nodal analysis coupled with flattened communication enhanced military and commercial transportation flow. From the outset of USTRANSCOM's expedited movement of troops and materials to Europe, USTRANSCOM initiated meetings with industry leaders to provide transparency and awareness of major objectives and future requirements. USTRANSCOM successfully communicated with members of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet to promote the mutually beneficial volunteerism over a possibly detrimental activation. Moreover, deliberate coordination with Army Materiel Command, USEUCOM, Joint Staff, and other agencies optimized information sharing to resolve issues rapidly to meet capacity and velocity requirements. USTRANSCOM, in coordination with Joint Staff, will continue to develop lessons learned as operations continue.

HYPERSONIC DEFENSE

20. Senator KING. General Wolters, as the first combatant commander to deal with the detection and impacts of hypersonic weapons, what do you believe should be the DOD top priorities for hypersonic defense investment?

General WOLTERS. The Secretary of Defense is best suited to prioritize the Department's hypersonic defense investments. In USEUCOM's area of responsibility, the short flight time of hypersonic weapons relative to other adversary long-range precision strike capabilities challenges our current detection capabilities. Investments to increase capability in ground and space-based sensors, with correlating processing and exploitation tools across the intelligence community, would enhance our ability to track and characterize hypersonic weapons employment.

FINLAND AND SWEDEN

21. Senator KING. General Wolters, do you believe the time has come for Finland and Sweden to join NATO and what would they bring to the alliance?

General WOLTERS. If Finland and Sweden were to join NATO, it would enhance their already strong relationships with the U.S. and NATO Allies. These existing bilateral and multi-lateral defense relationships promote security in the Baltic Sea region and the Arctic. They reinforce transatlantic linkages, strengthen stability in northern Europe, and build interoperability between the United States and two of its most capable and like-minded partners.

KC-46 BASING

22. Senator KING. Maine is the proud home of the Air National Guard's 101st Refueling Wing, the "MAINEiacs." Maine geographic location and air corridors offer a strategic hub for supporting trans-Atlantic deployments as well as Arctic operations.

General Van Ovost, would you support modernizing the unit with the new KC-46 aircraft?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM and I fully understand the proud heritage of the MAINEiacs. I am extremely grateful for the dedication and extensive contributions by the men and women of the 101st Refueling Wing in support of national defense priorities. I support the USAF strategy of continuous recapitalization and modernization of the tanker fleet. That said, aircraft basing is a Title 10 responsibility, and I would defer to the U.S. Air Force on KC-46 basing decisions.

23. Senator KING. General Wolters, do you believe having a modernized and capable fleet of KC-46s at the strategic location of Bangor, ME is beneficial to the facilitating operations in the Arctic and trans-Atlantic flights to EUCOM?

General WOLTERS. A modernized and capable KC-46 fleet is critical to meet the goals of the National Defense Strategy and our strategy to compete with and deter Russia in the Arctic and High North. USEUCOM benefits from the readiness and capability those tankers provide and would welcome any further capability in the theater, but would defer to the U.S. Air Force on any specific basing decisions.

UNCLOS

24. Senator KING. General Van Ovost and General Wolters, do you support the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)?

General VAN OVOST. I support U.S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Convention codifies navigation freedoms in a manner beneficial to our operations, to include freedoms of navigation and overflight, passage rights, and traditional uses of the sea. These freedoms are essential to executing USTRANSCOM's mission to conduct globally integrated mobility operations, lead the broader Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise, and provide enabling capabilities to project and sustain the Joint Force in support of national objectives.

General WOLTERS. Ratification of UNCLOS, as amended in 1994, would enable the United States to fully protect its navigational rights and freedoms, economic rights, access to critical minerals, and other ocean-related interests. U.S. accession is also a matter of geostrategic advantage, including the Arctic. It would also strengthen United States credibility when challenging excessive maritime claims by Russia, The People's Republic of China, and others. Our national security depends on the global mobility of U.S. forces and the navigational freedoms codified in the Law of the Sea Convention. As a Party, the United States would be better able to influence the interpretation, application, and development of the law of the sea in a manner that reflects our status as a major maritime power.

CHINA COMMISSION

25. Senator KING. I believe we must establish an unbiased and non-partisan commission to examine a grand strategy for our approach to China, similar in intent to President Eisenhower's Solarium Project. We need to think of a holistic approach to create a stable international order in which China (or Russia) cannot dictate regional developments.

General Van Ovost and General Wolters, what are the 'toughest problems' OUTSIDE of military imbalances?

General VAN OVOST. Outside of the military realm, U.S. power projection, a core mission for USTRANSCOM, is dependent upon three critical elements.

First, access, basing, and overflight to deploy, maneuver, and sustain the Joint Force on a global scale is dependent upon strong allies and partners aligned in support of our mutual interests. The 2022 National Defense Strategy clearly indicates the department's approach for integrated deterrence and campaign activities to counter forms of competitor coercion, complicate China's military preparations, and develop our warfighting capabilities together with those of allies and partners. We

must provide a whole-of-government approach to engage and assure our allies and partners so they can constructively enable operations. This approach must counter China's efforts to marginalize allies and partners necessary to ensure our freedom of maneuver; we observe this developing on a global scale in multiple vulnerable locations. We must leave no doubt that we can and will provide options across the full range of military operations and will deny China's objective to constrain our power projection capability.

Second, a concern is that China and Russia are pursuing kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities to disrupt, degrade, or delay our ability to operate. Our dependence on unclassified networks and civil infrastructure, especially in the Homeland, creates opportunities to negatively impact power projection during critical periods. A whole-of-government effort for cyber mission assurance and recognition that major deployment activities require a nationally coordinated approach would improve USTRANSCOM's ability to rapidly build and sustain elevated levels of operational activity. The Homeland no longer is a sanctuary, and we must think and act with the intent to operate through disruption, requiring cooperation from multiple federal, state, and local agencies.

Third, our commercial transportation industry partners are both a great strength and a vulnerability. Beyond our military capabilities, the U.S. requires a robust network of commercial providers capable of supporting U.S. operations. As a minimum, our key providers require the ability to achieve some level of cyber mission assurance in the face of elevated threats. The ability to anticipate other potential threats to our commercial partners requires USTRANSCOM to set conditions for them to operate with federal government agencies, especially with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Transportation, as we confront the reality that adversaries are both capable and willing to put commercial operations and civil infrastructure at risk. These topics are of high importance to USTRANSCOM and require concerted and coordinated efforts to gain advantage over our adversaries.

General WOLTERS. A whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-alliance effort is necessary to address China's influence in Europe. Providing alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure can mitigate or stall China's One Belt-One Road projects, reducing Allied and Partner nations' exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence. The ability for the U.S., Allied, and Partner nations' ability to secure sensitive supply chain processes and protect operations and technologies from malign influence is critical for collective security and interoperability, and requires a holistic approach.

26. Senator KING. General Van Ovest and General Wolters, in order to avoid the U.S. trying to "spend our way out of conflict," how can we specifically counter China's major activities in your area of responsibility (AOR)?

General VAN OVOST. Countering China's major activities in the USTRANSCOM AOR is a complex topic. USTRANSCOM's AOR is global, and we must always be able to create options to deliver for the nation, despite the efforts of our adversaries to erode our asymmetric power projection advantage. USTRANSCOM accomplishes this by demonstrating that we can conduct operations daily with speed and agility coupled with ready capacity to scale to major mobility operations, almost overnight, and operate despite disruptions. This is USTRANSCOM's most powerful means to deter and counter China's intent to gain advantage in multiple regions of the world. Four examples illustrate USTRANSCOM's ability to achieve this outcome.

First, USTRANSCOM, working with our component commands and commercial partners, responds to crisis such as the Afghan refugee evacuation in August 2021, or the recent Ukrainian support, with the ability to rapidly create tailored responses. Beyond these high visibility events, USTRANSCOM supports the dynamic employment of military capabilities on a global scale ranging from bomber task force missions as a show of force to recurring exercises in support of multiple geographic combatant commands to support our national interests and demonstrate resolve with our allies and partners potentially impacted by PRC malign influence.

Second, USTRANSCOM identifies those specific airfields and seaports of high importance on a world-wide basis to ensure we have access, basing, and overflight options for the full range of operations from humanitarian relief efforts to potential large-scale response to threats in response to aggression or conflict. These efforts are done in full partnership with the geographic combatant commands to reinforce their theater posture plans. These efforts also reinforce their exercise programs or engagement strategies to counter PRC investments in regions of elevated interest and ensure USTRANSCOM's locations of significance are proactively addressed to enhance U.S. freedom of operations.

Third, USTRANSCOM seeks to retain sufficient and ready capacity to meet the National Defense Strategy wartime missions, which identifies China as the pacing

challenge. USTRANSCOM accomplishes this by maintaining a total force capability that can quickly employ our highly ready Reserve and National Guard partners, critical for our airlift and air refueling overall capacity. USTRANSCOM also conducts large-scale, no-notice activations of major elements of the sealift fleet from reduced operating status to underway in approximately five days, with the largest ever conducted in 2019. The ability to employ our commercial partners is unmatched, and our National Preparedness Programs (Civil Reserve Air Fleet and Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement) provide significant strategic airlift and sealift capacity. Under these programs, USTRANSCOM conducts recurring engagements with industry to sustain the healthy and robust relationships necessary to demonstrate to China the ability to rapidly marshal these capabilities with high confidence.

Finally, knitting together all the areas above through global integration of mobility operations and resilient command and control is USTRANSCOM's center of gravity. Whether the response is for humanitarian assistance, disaster relief operations, non-combatant evacuation operations, or responding to a European crisis, this enterprise has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to direct and control mobility forces with great effect, which directly confounds China's perception on the U.S. ability to respond decisively to any provocation in the Indo-Pacific. USTRANSCOM seeks to ensure our ability to integrate operations and command and control mobility forces is resilient under likely disruptions and is expanding our ability to make sense, decide, and act through increased focus on data and analytics.

General WOLTERS. A whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-alliance effort is necessary to address China's influence in Europe. Providing United States, Allied, or Partnered nation alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure can mitigate or stall China's One Belt-One Road projects, reducing Allied and Partner nations' exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence. The ability for the United States, Allied, and Partner nations' ability to secure sensitive supply chain processes and protect operations and technologies from malign influence is critical for collective security and interoperability, and requires a holistic approach.

27. Senator KING. General Van Ovost and General Wolters, what would be the greatest benefit this commission could deliver?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM recognizes that China competes directly with United States interests and the PRC seeks to exert malign influence over key allies and partners on a global scale to erode our freedom to operate. The 2022 NDS lays out a PRC-focused, alliance-centric approach which outlines that deterring conflict with the PRC is a generational imperative extending well into the middle of the 21st century. The Department does not currently have a position on the creation of a commission, but DOD works with various partners across the U.S. Government to achieve national security priorities.

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM welcomes any opportunity to provide whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-alliance alternatives to thwart malign influence, reduce exposure to coercion, and deter threats to Alliance peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic. Together with our Allies and Partners, we strive to secure sensitive supply chain processes and protect operations and technologies from malign influence to preserve the collective security and interoperability of all NATO nations.

28. Senator KING. General Van Ovost and General Wolters, what would put us in the best position to avoid the United States and China from escalating conflict and careening into a war with China?

General VAN OVOST. The best position for the U.S. to avoid escalating conflict and careening into a war with China is described in the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), where the central premise reflects an urgent need to sustain and strengthen United States deterrence across all domains, theaters, and spectrum of conflict against the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Department of Defense's (DOD) principal approach to advancing this end-state is through integrated deterrence. Integrated deterrence entails developing and combining our strengths to maximum effect, by working seamlessly across warfighting domains, theaters, the spectrum of conflict, other instruments of U.S. national power, and our unmatched network of Alliances and partnerships. Integrated deterrence is enabled by combat-credible forces, backstopped by a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. Campaigning will strengthen deterrence and enable us to gain advantages against the full range of competitors' coercive actions. The United States will operate forces, synchronize broader Department efforts, and align Department activities with other instruments of national power, to undermine acute forms of competitor coercion, complicate com-

petitors' military preparations, and develop our own warfighting capabilities together with Allies and partners.

USTRANSCOM's contribution to this approach is to enable the DOD's campaigning activities day-to-day and ensure the United States asymmetric power projection advantage always provides options for the Nation to project and sustain the Joint Force on a global scale. There are two areas that are at the top of my list to ensure DOD is in the best position to enable the NDS.

First, China has watched and learned from past U.S. success in large-scale military operations starting with DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM. In a conflict, what China seeks is the ability to achieve their objectives by disrupting, degrading, or delaying our ability to build combat power at the speed and scale. To enhance our ability to manage conflict and escalation, USTRANSCOM ensures we maintain sufficient capabilities and capacity within the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise, not only with military forces, but also with our commercial partners who bring aircraft, ships, mariners, and networks to bear on our challenges as a core component of our power projection footprint. Ensuring USTRANSCOM can deploy and sustain the Joint Force and fight through disruptions is a key element in deterring the PRC aggression and assuring allies and partners of the United States ability to respond.

Second, our ability to gain access, basing and overflight with our allies and partners is being challenged by the PRC in many parts of the world. Mutually-beneficial Alliances and partnerships are an enduring strength for the United States, and are critical to achieving our objectives, as the unified response to Russia's further invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated.

Answering this "call to action," USTRANSCOM will incorporate ally and partner perspectives, competencies, and advantages at every stage of defense planning.

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM is committed to preserving peace in the Euro-Atlantic Area and strives to maintain relations that avoid conflict. The United States and Europe demonstrate political cohesion and defend our shared values in a rules-based international order. Maintaining and strengthening trans-Atlantic unity, through NATO, ensures we have a shared understanding in preserving the values of the Alliance.

EXPEDITIONARY TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER

29. Senator KING. The shift to a more scalable, lethal, and mobile combat elements such as the Marine Littoral Regiment and Multidomain Task Force is critical to the countering the dynamic threats in your Area of Responsibility. The DOD's recent investments in the University of Maine's composites and advanced manufacturing initiatives has resulted in improving blast and ballistic resistant structures and materials. Maine small businesses are the direct benefactor of the growing talent and innovation in this sector and are concurrently providing critical capabilities to the warfighter. The Modular Panelized Shelter System (MPSS) is one system of note and is currently employed by Northern Command (NORTHCOM) in Alaska, EUCOM in Italy, and Africa Command (AFRICOM) headquarters.

General Wolters, how has your command benefitted from utilizing MPSS?

General WOLTERS. While not occurring in the USEUCOM AOR, our understanding is United States Army Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF) plans to field test one Modular Shelter System (MINATORS) made in Brewer, Maine, in Exercise African Lion 22. We recommend engaging with United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) after the exercise to gain more insights into the efficacy of the system.

30. Senator KING. General Van Ovost, could your command and service component commands further benefit from an expeditionary, affordable, all weather, TS/SCI certified structures such as the MPSS?

General VAN OVOST. Rapid Global Mobility is reliant upon onsite processing and dissemination of intelligence information to inform crews of the most pertinent and timely threat information. The use of the MPSS (or similar system) directly would enable this capability by advancing warfighting capabilities, projecting and connecting the joint force, and ensuring strategic advantage. The MPSS (or similar system) would facilitate each of these vectors by providing an agile and secure platform enabling the transfer of real time information at the appropriate classification level. For example, the Air Mobility Command would be better enabled to deploy and support assets globally using a modular and agile system such as the MPSS. Critically, the use of SCI communications infrastructure is dependent upon the structure meeting Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 705 standards and the MPSS would require certification through the Defense Intelligence Agency to confirm compliance.

ARCTIC

31. Senator KING. I supported Senator Sullivan's Arctic Security Initiative amendment last year, and helped get it into law with the Chairman.

General WOLTERS, what specific resource shortfalls does EUCOM have to conduct exercises in the High North? Please be specific to include operations and sustainment funding for exercises, equipment shortfalls such as weather gear for soldiers or unique platforms.

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM requires additional high-altitude communication satellite coverage, "over the snow" transportation capabilities, and domain awareness options to effectively detect, deter, and defeat adversarial forces in the High North. Consistent, sufficient Joint exercise funding for the largest exercises, including Cold Response and Trident Juncture will provide opportunities to exercise our plans to effectively train as we intend to fight.

32. Senator KING. General Wolters, how else could EUCOM potentially benefit from dedicated funding from the Arctic Security Initiative?

General WOLTERS. Funding from the Arctic Security Initiative will enhance each Service's capabilities to operate in the Arctic which will help USEUCOM defend the Homeland, project power in and through the Arctic, and deter and defeat potential adversarial forces. Increased investments in dispersed resilient and adaptive basing, pre-positioned forward stocks, maintenance capabilities, transnational supply lines, and infrastructure will enhance USEUCOM's interoperability with European Allies and Partners.

 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOE MANCHIN III

ENERGY SECURITY IN EUROPE

33. Senator MANCHIN. General Wolters, as you know, Vladimir Putin blatantly used energy as a weapon in an attempt to gain leverage over our European allies in the months and years leading to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In response to Putin's war in Ukraine, our European allies are working closely with us to lessen Western Europe's dependence on Russian oil and natural gas. With reduced quantities of Russian oil and natural gas flowing into Europe, what do you believe will be the impact on American forces stationed in Europe?

General WOLTERS. Department of Defense (DOD) installations in Europe rely on host nation energy providers for power generation and heating; the source fuel suppliers are difficult to precisely determine so as a result it is difficult to determine the direct flow of Russian fuel to United States bases. However, reduced fuel supply will result in rising fuel costs in Europe and impact petrol, utilities, and general cost of living for American Forces in Europe.

34. Senator MANCHIN. General Wolters, I've long advocated for prioritizing domestic energy production and energy imports from our trusted allies. One of those trusted allies is Israel who received notice from the State Department at the beginning of the year that the United States did not support the construction of a pipeline linking Israel to Greece and potentially Italy. Everyone has been concerned about Nord Stream cutting off Eastern European nations from energy, but I'm also concerned about Russia's Turk Stream pipeline cutting off Balkan nations, including Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Romania, and Slovenia who are a NATO members. If we're not supporting the construction of energy infrastructure to support these nations Russia certainly will. Do you share my concerns with our Balkan allies, and how can European Command get out ahead of them?

General WOLTERS. As part of a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM works with the lead Federal agencies (Departments of State, Energy and USAID) on European Energy Security and Independence efforts in collaboration with NATO Allies and other Partners. NATO dependency on Russian crude oil is greater in Eastern European nations than Western European nations, and there are mitigation options being pursued to alleviate and address this dependency. Through contracting requirements, we encourage alternatives to Russia's energy sources, but ultimately, the EU and the individual nations will decide the future of European energy infrastructure.

AFGHANISTAN RETROGRADE LESSONS LEARNED

35. Senator MANCHIN. General Van Ovost, your command just went through arguably one its most challenging and high tempo periods in its thirty-five-year history. During the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, TRANSCOM was the main effort in the return of our forces and equipment to the United States. Further, TRANSCOM facilitated the evacuation of 124,000 civilians from Kabul. Six thousand of this number were American citizens and we can thank TRANSCOM for their safe return home. As you know, the withdrawal and the non-combatant evacuation was a massive undertaking and took a major toll on your command's capabilities and the readiness of our strategic lift capabilities. I am sure that there are many lessons learned or capability gaps identified which the United States can learn from and correct. Understanding the open and unclassified nature of this venue, can you summarize any gaps and lessons learned that TRANSCOM identified during and after the withdrawal from Afghanistan? I am especially interested in any gaps or lessons learned that can be helped by Congressional action.

General VAN OVOST. The USTRANSCOM After Action Report (AAR) on the Afghanistan withdrawal is part of a larger Department-wide draft AAR currently in coordination. I will thoroughly review the lessons learned and work with the Committee on any areas USTRANSCOM needs help with.

TURKEY AND NATO

36. Senator MANCHIN. General Wolters, Turkey's membership in NATO has been a concern of mine for a long time. While Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952, recent activities of the Turkish government have been problematic. I am especially concerned over Turkey's stubborn desire to acquire S-400 air defense systems from Russia. This led to the cancellation of F-35 sales to Turkey. The Erdogan government has also brutally repressed political opposition and public protest and maintains hostile relations with Greece—another NATO ally. All of this suggests that Turkey is not committed to the democratic values NATO is designed to defend. Despite past problems, I do acknowledge that Turkey has been a constructive partner in response to Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Since the invasion, Turkey provided armed drones to Ukraine and closed the straits linking the Mediterranean and Black Seas to Russian warships. Can you briefly comment on any recent developments regarding Turkey's relationship with NATO and how they are synchronizing their response to Putin's invasion of Ukraine with the rest of the NATO alliance?

General WOLTERS. Turkey actively supports Ukraine's efforts to defend its sovereignty from the weeks leading up to Russia's invasion and continues to support Kyiv today, holding peace talks in Istanbul. On 28 February, Turkey activated the Montreux Convention, not employed since World War II, and closed the Turkish Straits to military ships from nations involved in the conflict. Turkey has also provided humanitarian aid and military equipment across a broad range of military capabilities.

EUROPEAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND EUCOM RESPONSE

37. Senator MANCHIN. General Wolters, Putin's War in Ukraine has caused untold suffering that will reverberate in Europe for generations. According to the UN Refugee Agency, approximately 10 million people, which is about a quarter of Ukraine's population have been displaced as a result of Putin's War. Of that, nearly four million Ukrainians have fled to neighboring countries such as Hungary, Moldova, and Poland. An unmanaged refugee crisis can exacerbate a growing humanitarian crisis and present further security challenges to Europe. What is EUCOM doing to assist in the caring of refugees from Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. Under a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM is prepared to provide Department of Defense resources and material as required to support refugee operations led by Department of State country teams, including Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid funding. To date, the lead Federal Agencies, working in concert with Border States hosting Ukraine refugees, are managing the humanitarian situation without requested assistance from the Department of Defense.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JACKY ROSEN

DOD CLOUD MIGRATION

38. Senator ROSEN. General Van Ovost, as you know, TRANSCOM was the first DOD organization to move its cyber capabilities and command and control applica-

tions to a commercial cloud environment—which offers capabilities and security that we didn’t have before its adoption. Can you provide us with an update on TRANSCOM’s migration of services to the cloud? Specifically, how many systems have been moved into the cloud?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM has moved 25 systems to a commercial cloud environment. Over the next three years, USTRANSCOM will continue to execute its implementation plan to move the remaining 11 systems to a commercial cloud environment in a phased approach.

39. Senator ROSEN. General Van Ovost, can you discuss the key benefits of migrating TRANSCOM’s networks to a commercial cloud and how it can potentially benefit the rest of the Department?

General VAN OVOST. The key benefits of migrating USTRANSCOM’s systems to a commercial cloud are the security, scalability, resiliency, and application advantages cloud technology provides to deliver modernized services and warfighting capabilities. Throughout the migration, USTRANSCOM has shared, and continues to share, lessons learned and best practices with the entire DOD through group collaborations. These groups include the DOD Digital Modernization Executive Committee, the DOD Chief Information Officer Cloud Community of Interest, and the DOD CIO Cloud Working Group. USTRANSCOM has also had one-on-one conversations with organizations to provide best practices as they migrate to a commercial cloud environment.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARK KELLY

POTENTIAL DELAYS IN KC-Y DELIVERY

40. Senator KELLY. General Van Ovost, the delivery of the KC-46 was delayed by three years following a bid protest on the awarding of the initial contract in February of 2008. As I understand it, the KC-Y will serve as a bridge tanker between the 179 planned KC-46 tankers and the future KC-Z, or “Advanced Air Refueling Tanker.” The expectation is that the KC-Y, like the KC-46, will continue replacing our aging KC-135 fleet and will enter service sometime late this decade. The KC-Y, per the “sources sought” notice released last year, will be a commercial derivative tanker aircraft, and there is more than one competitor for this contract. What, in your estimation, would be the operational impacts, with respect to the current tanker fleet, of a protest and subsequent delay of the KC-Y contract, similar to what happened with the KC-46 in 2008?

General VAN OVOST. When the 179th KC-46 is delivered, the average age of the KC-135 fleet will be about 67 years old. Thus, continued recapitalization of the aging KC-135 fleet is critical to sustain and modernize this critical force element. As an aging platform, KC-135 availability has declined and lags mission capability rate performance standards. The operational impact of a delay in recapitalizing the remainder of the air refueling fleet, would be fewer available aircraft to meet global missions in both daily operations and, if necessary, in scaling for crisis or conflict.

41. Senator KELLY. General Van Ovost, what efforts are being made to prevent delays with the KC-Y contract?

General VAN OVOST. The Secretary of the Air Force submitted a report to congressional committees in March 2022 that provided an update on the KC-Y draft acquisition strategy. The Air Force is best suited to provide an update on the program.

FINLAND & NATO/STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

42. Senator KELLY. General Wolters, polling in Finland shows that support for joining NATO is at an all-time high; 62 percent in a March survey compared with a historical average of 20 to 25 percent. Clearly, this is a reaction to Russia’s aggression in Ukraine. How sustainable do you believe that support to be?

General WOLTERS. We welcome Finland’s growing aspiration for joining NATO, and if Finland were to join NATO, it would enhance their already strong relationships with the United States and NATO Allies. European nations bordering Russia, including Finland, increasingly realize that joining NATO’s collective defense bolsters their own security.

43. Senator KELLY. General Wolters, do you believe this is a view shared by the government and military in Finland?

General WOLTERS. While unable to speak for the Republic of Finland, Finland participates with NATO at the highest level possible for non-NATO nations, under

the Modalities for Strengthened Interaction (MSI). These existing bilateral and multi-lateral defense relationships promote security in the Baltic Sea region and the Arctic. They reinforce transatlantic linkages, strengthen stability in northern Europe, and build interoperability between the U.S. and one of its most capable and like-minded Partners.

44. Senator KELLY. General Wolters, what is your view on Finland joining the NATO alliance in the future?

General WOLTERS. Finland's accession to NATO would be a positive step for the security situation of the Arctic and the Baltic regions. Finland has an experienced and professional military, capable of immediately increasing NATO's capabilities and ability to detect and deter any regional aggression. Finland would reinforce transatlantic linkages, strengthen stability in northern Europe, and build greater interoperability between the United States and a very capable and like-minded partner.

45. Senator KELLY. General Wolters, what other forms of bilateral defense cooperation have we pursued with Finland? For example, Finland does not have a National Guard State Partnership Program partnership. Is that something that EUCOM is considering?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM welcomes discussions with Finland about pursuing a formalized State Partnership Program, as Finland has previously worked with the National Guard. For over twenty years now, the Finnish Staff and Virginia National Guard have formed a special bond, with peer-to-peer exchanges and regular training together with the Finnish Defense Forces, including multi-national exercises and Finnish-hosted cyber engagements.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES INHOFE

UKRAINE

46. Senator INHOFE. General Wolters, could you provide additional detail to us on what NATO Allies are requesting in terms of backfilling military aid they have delivered to Ukraine, including specific weapons-systems, whether they are United States-produced systems, what our inventory and industrial capacity is to meet such requests, and what other nations, either in NATO or partners globally, might through the aid they've provided also be candidates for further use of supplemental funds to backfill their stocks?

General WOLTERS. NATO Allies and Partners across the globe have responded with a historic demonstration of unity and will to strengthen defense while simultaneously helping Ukraine. We have provided Ukraine with thousands of American-made weapons and capabilities like drones, anti-tank, and anti-air defense weapons. Through the coordination of the USEUCOM Control Center—Ukraine, other nations are also contributing security assistance to provide Ukraine with additional capabilities they have requested and need to defend their country. The Department of Defense is actively engaged with Industry to increase capacity to backfill inventory. As our Allies and Partners seek to backfill their weapons coffers, we will work collaboratively to encourage the adoption of NATO standardized systems eligible for security initiative funding to enhance the shared defense capabilities of NATO and Partner nations.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TOM COTTON

PERCENTAGES OF COMBAT FOCUSED SOLDIERS IN GERMANY

47. Senator COTTON. General Wolters, in an answer to one of my questions during the hearing, you testified that 70 percent of Army troops deployed to Germany were "the teeth," or combat-focused troops. Could you please clarify if you were referring to the increased troop presence since the beginning of 2022 or if that was in reference to the permanently stationed soldiers in Germany?

General WOLTERS. The 70 percent refers to the deployed numbers prior to Jan 2022 to include the increased assured and deter presence supporting the War in Ukraine and other emerging requirements.

48. Senator COTTON. General Wolters, of the United States Army soldiers permanently stationed in Germany, what percentage of them are "the teeth" as you ref-

erenced in the hearing? Please provide documentation of which military operational specialties you are considering as “the teeth.”

General WOLTERS. The “teeth” is the core of our operational force structure, comprised of a cross-section of capabilities and associated military specialties both organic and deployed. The approximation of 70 percent (28K of the 40K you referenced) denotes several key Operational Military Occupational Fields: Aerospace, Armor, Aviation, Aviation Ordinance, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN), Combat Arms, Engineers, Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD), Field Artillery, Infantry, Maintainers, Pilots, Special Forces, Special/Surface Warfare, Submariners and Tankers. The other 30 percent are aligned to Force and Operational Support capabilities, i.e., staff, intel, logistical, medical, and services personnel.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR THOM TILLIS

ABRAMS TANKS

49. Senator TILLIS. General Wolters, in July, 2021, Poland announced its intent to buy 250 Abrams tanks. In late February 2022, just before Russia invaded Ukraine, congressional notification was successfully completed allowing Poland to break its link to older Russian tanks and become far more interoperable with the United States and NATO.

I understand that as part of the United States deterrence measures up to and after the invasion of Ukraine that there are now three United States armored brigades forward deployed in Europe, the most since the early 2000’s when the United States made a strategic decision to pull its permanent heavy armored forces out of Europe and bring them back to the United States

Recently, Army senior leaders have noted that the strain on the Army’s 11 Active Duty armored brigades (ABCTs) is at a highpoint, noting that rotational units need a 3-to-1 ratio to avoid excessive operational tempo (OPTEMPO) and that 11 Active ABCTs falls short of that sustainable ratio.

I also note that while Congress has consistently provided for a baseline Abrams modernization rate of at least one brigade of tanks each funding cycle up to and including the recently enacted fiscal year 2022 defense bills, only three U.S. Army brigades have been fielded the most modern Abrams tank including one brigade set in Army Preposition Stock in Germany that is now forward deployed to Poland.

So, it came as a shock to me that the Fiscal Year 2023 President’s Budget cut Abrams tank production significantly—by more than half a brigade.

General Wolters, what signal do you think such a large proposed reduction in the U.S. Army’s production of Abrams tanks sends to NATO allies seeking to rebuild their ground combat capability and Russia as it eyes potential further aggression?

General WOLTERS. While unable to speak to the signal the President’s budget has on other sovereign NATO Allies, USEUCOM and the Alliance benefits when militaries reduce reliance on aging, incompatible Soviet-era weapon systems. Poland’s modernization investment towards the Abrams tanks, which will operate in concert with the United States Abrams tanks in theater, is in line with the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept, ultimately enhancing NATO interoperability and our collective deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area.

50. Senator TILLIS. General Wolters, do you think we need more armored forces available in Europe now than we did last year as this budget was being developed?

General WOLTERS. Yes, a second ABCT was deployed to USEUCOM and resourced via Ukraine Supplemental funding. This force element, along with additional deployed formations, demonstrates U.S. commitment to the defense of NATO and provides flexibility to source contributions to NATO forces along the Eastern Flank. Additionally, the ABCT provides USEUCOM with the adequate lethality to deter aggression, react to the uncertainty of the conflict, and ensure it remains contained.

51. Senator TILLIS. General Wolters, do you think OPTEMPO on the 11 ABCTs we have will be sustainable over the long term given Russia’s apparent expansionist goals in Europe?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM conducts deliberate planning to posture forces and aligns force rotation to maintain sustainability with minimum risk. Credible deterrence against Russian expansionism will likely continue to require a NATO force presence that includes U.S. rotational Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCTs). Demand for rotational U.S. ABCTs to contribute to NATO deterrence activities will remain high, and through United States Army Europe and Africa, USEUCOM will

work with NATO to continually assess the security environment to posture the right force at speed while maintaining readiness.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN

DISTRIBUTED, CONTESTED LOGISTICS

52. Senator SULLIVAN. General Van Ovost, in light of the recent Russian logistics debacle in Ukraine, the importance of a distributed, resilient, and agile logistics supply chain is clear. Could you provide your assessment of the Joint Force's ability to conduct sustained and effective combat operations against our great power adversaries?

General VAN OVOST. Today, we are postured for success, but at elevated risk due to adversary capabilities and intent. In preparation for the future contested operating environment, we must pursue multiple approaches to ensure the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise maintains the necessary agility and resiliency to successfully deploy, maneuver, and sustain a distributed Joint Force.

At the high end of conflict, adversary kinetic and non-kinetic attack vectors will threaten the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise from CONUS to the point of need in a geographic combatant command's theater of operations. Our adversaries' ability to contest our transoceanic lines of communications continues to grow. Their capabilities include improved, complex layers of meshed Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and advanced lethal kinetic platforms to extend the reach of their anti-access/area denial ability. Addressing these threats to our ability to project and sustain combat power will require the fusion of logistics, fires, intelligence, and command and control to support maneuver in the joint warfight.

The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) highlights the critical importance of logistics and sustainment with an emphasis on maintaining agility and resilience in the face of opposition from an adversary. In support of this imperative, USTRANSCOM continues to work with Department of Defense agencies, Joint Staff, Services, and Combatant Commands to ensure that as an enterprise we are postured to remain agile and resilient in the face of a future contested operating environment. The three elements identified in the USTRANSCOM warfighting framework underpin our ability to meet future Joint Force requirements across the spectrum of conflict.

We must continue to maintain and enhance, where possible, our global posture as specified in the NDS. Our robust network of partners and allies that afford us access, basing, and overflight privileges provide both agility and resiliency in the face of adversary action. Our aerial ports and seaports provide numerous paths to deploy and sustain the Joint Force as well as providing the means to disperse the Joint Force in a theater of operations. Secondly, our mobility capacity provides our Nation an asymmetric advantage over our adversaries to rapidly deploy critical capabilities literally overnight via airlift as well as deploying mass over time via sea-lift to provide a decisive force to the theater of need. Maintaining and recapitalizing capacity is necessary to meet future Joint Force needs. Further, we are working with the services to identify the intra-theater lift requirements and platforms that can augment our existing strategic and theater lift assets.

Finally, the command and control and integration of mobility assets is the center of gravity that allows us to operate within an adversary's decision cycle. Gaining and maintaining decision advantage is essential to achieving agility, and our networks and systems must be resilient to

sustain operations in the face of adversary cyber threats. Through robust Joint Force training and exercises we will refine techniques, tactics, and procedures as well as inform and shape operational concepts and strategic approaches that provide agility and resiliency in the future contested operating environment.

STRATEGIC FUEL SITES

53. Senator SULLIVAN. General Van Ovost, as we increase our presence in the Arctic to counter competition from authoritarian aggressors in the region, logistical infrastructure will play a pivotal role in our ability to remain persistent in this presence. As you are aware, there is no deep water port north of Dutch Harbor, Alaska at this time. However, Nome, Alaska is nearly 800 miles north of Dutch Harbor and has finally been granted money to develop a port. When discussing the Arctic in his recent testimony before this Committee on March 24, 2022, the Commander of United States Northern Command, General Glen VanHerck stated, "Persistence is also enabled by having a fuel capability further north than currently in Dutch Har-

bor, in Nome as you alluded to . . . [t]hat is strategically important to that location.” Do you agree with General VanHerck’s assertion regarding the strategic importance of the Port of Nome?

General VAN OVOST. I agree with General VanHerck’s assertion that the Port of Nome is of strategic importance; however, it is important to differentiate the nature of this port from those designated as “Strategic Seaports” in the Strategic Seaport Program. This formal program, managed through the National Port Readiness Network, chaired by the Maritime Administration, is explicitly intended to ensure the readiness of commercial seaports to support large-scale force deployment from major military installations during contingencies and other national defense emergencies. The Port of Nome is not required for this purpose and is not suitable geographically to perform this role.

54. Senator SULLIVAN. General Van Ovost, given the Secretary of Defense’s recent order to shut down the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility on Oahu, Hawaii within the next 12 months, the Joint Force will need to find a way to replace the 250 million gallons of fuel storage capacity lost. While not well advertised, the Aleutian Island chain in Alaska is actually closer to many of our allies in the Indo-Pacific region than Hawaii, and should warrant serious consideration for additional bulk fuel storage capacity. What is your assessment of the potential utilization of the Alaska, specifically the Aleutian Island chain, for bulk fuel storage?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM recognizes the critical geographic value of Alaska for almost any potential conflict in the Indo-Pacific and values the capabilities resident in Alaska. One of USTRANSCOM’s roles is to support USINDOPACOM’s future wartime fuel posture which is best suited to provide sufficient capacity, fuel network resiliency, and timely distribution to sustain envisioned wartime operations. As part of the Red Hill assessment to redistribute fuel in the Indo-Pacific, fuel storage in Alaska was considered but not pursued because it does not align effectively with the future Indo-Pacific wartime fuel posture. Certainly, adequate fuel must be located in Alaska to support robust operations in that vicinity, but additional storage to support future Indo-Pacific wartime operations would not be advantageous.

55. Senator SULLIVAN. General Van Ovost, will you commit to look into the feasibility and strategic implications of bulk fuel storage in Alaska to augment Joint Force logistics?

General VAN OVOST. One of USTRANSCOM’s roles is to support USINDOPACOM’s future warfighting sustainment requirements, and operational demands drive our requirements to array fuel to meet future needs. USTRANSCOM is willing to evaluate all possible options, but the wartime fuel posture best suited to providing sufficient capacity, fuel network resiliency, and timely distribution to sustain envisioned wartime operations will determine the most effective solutions. Our most recent analysis, conducted as part of the Red Hill assessment, indicates increased fuel storage in Alaska currently does not meet these criteria.

UKRAINE

56. Senator SULLIVAN. General Wolters, in his recent Wall Street Journal article titled, “A Veteran Putin Foe Sizes Up the Response to the War in Ukraine,” Mr. Tunku Varadarajan describes how the rampant kleptocracy in Russia has contributed directly to the military incompetence of the Russian Armed Forces. Quoted in the article is Mr. Bill Browder, a man intimately familiar with the rampant corruption of the Russian regime, stating, “[m]y estimate is that 80 percent of the military budget is stolen by Russia’s generals, because 80 percent of all budgets in Russia are stolen by the officials in charge,” and that he believes their army has been “gutted by corruption.” Is this assessment by Mr. Browder similar to the reporting and intelligence you’ve seen?

General WOLTERS. We assessed Russia’s forces would struggle to achieve operational goals in a non-permissive environment against a near-peer adversary, and their low readiness at the onset of the invasion into Ukraine can probably be linked in part to corruption. Russia’s inability to achieve air superiority in Ukraine is most likely due to limited pilot proficiency, years of suspect training, and failure to prioritize near-peer combat tasks to use their technology to its fullest extent. Additionally, Russia has invested most of its defense budget in strategic nuclear forces, resulting in less money for conventional forces.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARSHA BLACKBURN

DISINFORMATION

57. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, how specifically is Beijing competing below the level of conflict in EUCOM?

General WOLTERS. Beijing uses economic investment, political engagement, and information operations to compete in the EUCOM AOR below the level of armed conflict. A whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-Alliance effort is necessary to address Beijing's influence in Europe. Providing alternatives to the PRC's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure can mitigate or stall China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, reducing Allied and Partner nations' exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence. The ability for the US, Allied, and Partner nations' ability to secure sensitive supply chain processes and protect operations and technologies from malign influence is critical for collective security and interoperability, and requires a holistic approach.

58. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, what are the short- and long-term implications of Chinese disinformation and propaganda campaigns in Europe?

General WOLTERS. Most PRC disinformation and propaganda campaigns in Europe seek to shape positive perceptions of China, build popular support for China's governance model and international agenda, amplify Western fissures and anti-NATO sentiment. However, disinformation surrounding COVID-19 and Russia's invasion into Ukraine has sparked renewed awareness for protecting democratic institutions, human rights, and the rules-based international order. PRC messaging could resonate with a few European countries, population groups, or political elements, and we welcome opportunities for NATO and the EU to collaborate on opportunities to reduce Europe's exposure to coercion and vulnerability of PRC disinformation and propaganda.

59. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, what are the potential military implications of Beijing echoing Russian state media stories or disinformation?

General WOLTERS. Beijing repeats Russian disinformation and propaganda about Russia's invasion into Ukraine in an attempt to undermine European cohesion and Western unity in supporting Ukraine. However, growing European frustration with Beijing, combined with stalwart NATO resolve and unity, continue to shield the Alliance from malign influence and disinformation.

60. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, how is EUCOM working across the force to identify instances of Chinese and Russian disinformation campaigns in Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. A whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-Alliance effort is necessary to address disinformation in Europe, including Ukraine. USEUCOM works closely across the interagency to focus resources on countering false narratives, exposing criminal behavior and sharing and amplifying Ukraine's successes in helping protect its people, defend its territory, and its free and democratic future.

UKRAINE

61. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, how is EUCOM integrating United States forces with NATO in response to the situation unfolding in Ukraine?

General WOLTERS. All NATO Nations remain united through the war in Ukraine, and our trans-Atlantic Alliance has responded in all warfighting domains. In the Air, NATO has established an air defense architecture along the eastern flank that includes contributions from 11 separate Allies. On land, Allies continue to deploy additional forces to enhance its forward presence from Tallinn in the North to Sofia in the South. At sea, our standing maritime forces are infused with additional capabilities to ensure freedom of navigation spanning from the Arctic to the Mediterranean. Aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean dramatically increase the inherent air combat capability and NATO's air defense architecture along the entire eastern flank. NATO's capabilities in space and cyberspace are more closely integrated than at any other time in the Alliance's history. The sum of these modern, multi-domain capabilities underwrites NATO's ability to shield all Allies because of the biggest adaptation of NATO Strategic Concepts since the Cold War.

62. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, how has NATO responded to Russia purposefully targeting Ukrainian nuclear power plants?

General WOLTERS. NATO continues to monitor the situation in Ukraine for Russian attempts to use chemical, biological, and radiological or nuclear weapons.

BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI)

63. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, what are military implications for NATO concerning the BRI?

General WOLTERS. In Europe, loans and investment are the PRC's greatest tools to build influence. Providing alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure can mitigate or stall China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, reducing Allied and Partner nations' exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence. The ability for the U.S., Allied, and Partner nations' ability to secure sensitive supply chain processes and protect operations and technologies from malign influence is critical for collective security and interoperability, and requires a holistic approach. We welcome opportunities for NATO and the EU to collaborate on opportunities to provide alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure, mitigating or stalling China's BRI projects.

64. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, how does China's European footprint impact TRANSCOM's air, ground, and maritime missions?

General VAN OVOST. To date, China's European footprint has not impacted USTRANSCOM operations in Europe; however, PRC investments in ports and infrastructure via state-owned enterprises, as well as their focus on emerging technologies for tracking cargo, may provide potential future impacts on USTRANSCOM operations.

65. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, how do you assess NATO's current role in offering analysis or recommendations to the EU on the military implications of foreign investment from countries like China?

General WOLTERS. Sharing strategic interests and facing the same challenges, NATO and the EU cooperate to address China's influence in Europe. We welcome opportunities for NATO and the EU to collaborate on opportunities to provide alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure, mitigating or stalling China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, thereby reducing Europe's exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence.

TRANSCOM

66. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, how is TRANSCOM working with private sector partners to improve cybersecurity and deter cyberattacks?

General VAN OVOST. USTRANSCOM has strengthened its partnerships with private sector partners to improve cybersecurity and deter cyberattacks. USTRANSCOM continues to have contractual cybersecurity compliance requirements in place, as well as the annual requirement for our commercial partners to assess their compliance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-171 security controls. Over the last four years of requiring self-assessments, USTRANSCOM's analysis of commercial partner self-reporting showed improved compliance each year.

Continuous learning is critical to staying ahead of the cyber threat. To this end, USTRANSCOM engages in significant information sharing and collaboration with our commercial partners. We also have some ongoing special projects that link select USTRANSCOM commercial partners with defense intelligence agencies to help these commercial partners identify and reduce their cyber security risk.

In the summer of 2021, USTRANSCOM put in place a proof-of-principle contract to have a third party assess commercial partner compliance with NIST SP 800-171 security controls. USTRANSCOM offered this assessment on a voluntary basis, and to date, three partners have volunteered for the assessment. The first assessment, on one of USTRANSCOM's Civil Reserve Air Fleet partners, was completed in January 2022, and the results confirm this partner has placed an emphasis on cyber security and was compliant with 90 of the 110 security controls. The second assessment is scheduled to complete in May 2022, and the date for the third assessment is pending.

When USTRANSCOM engages with our commercial partner top executives, it is evident they understand the importance of improving their cybersecurity posture and are making investments to mitigate risk. Together with our partners, we are making progress on improving our cybersecurity and ability to deter cyberattacks, while recognizing more can be done to build collective resilience.

TELECOMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE

67. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, what is EUCOM's current message to our NATO counterparts regarding network security and untrusted vendors in regards to 5G networks?

General WOLTERS. Sharing strategic interests and facing the same challenges, NATO and the EU cooperate to address China's influence in Europe. We welcome opportunities for NATO and the EU to collaborate on opportunities to provide alternatives to China's investments and loans to advance Europe's infrastructure, mitigating or stalling China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, thereby reducing Europe's exposure to coercion and vulnerability of critical infrastructure to PRC influence.

68. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, how does TRANSCOM's concept of operations need to change to account for Chinese electronic warfare and cyber capabilities?

General VAN OVOST. Due to the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise's dependence on cyber critical infrastructure, our adversaries recognize its importance to our mission. Our China review focuses on offensive cyber operations and electronic warfare capabilities to deny us the advantages of modern, information technology-driven warfare. We have witnessed China establish the Strategic Support Force (SSF) to reduce or eliminate United States technological advantages. Emphasizing the SSF's mission is equal to that of traditional ground, sea, and air forces, the People's Liberation Army continually seeks to develop its capabilities in preparation for a potential conflict.

To meet the challenge, USTRANSCOM's concept of operations is continually reviewed for resiliency and redundancy across the modes and nodes of operation. It is paramount that we remain vigilant in the execution of global operations by enforcing information technology and operational technology cyber domain best practices. Additionally, USTRANSCOM must continue to explore innovative ways to leverage the resources at its disposal (e.g., federal labs, industry partners, academia, other federal agencies, the military departments, and our coalition partners) to enable and maintain dominance in this domain.

69. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, how do we make our logistics more agile and resilient in contested environments?

General VAN OVOST. Our adversaries' ability to contest our transoceanic lines of communications continues to grow. Their capabilities include improved, complex layers of meshed ISR and advanced lethal kinetic platforms to extend the reach of their anti-access/area denial ability. As the National Defense Strategy notes, those kinetic and non-kinetic threats extend to the United States' Homeland, and we will work with the Department to take necessary actions to increase resilience—our ability to withstand, fight through, and recover quickly. Addressing these threats to our ability to project and sustain combat power will require the fusion of logistics, fires, intelligence, and command and control to support maneuver in the Joint warfight.

At the core of the National Defense Strategy is integrated deterrence. At USTRANSCOM, we have long advocated our own form of integrated deterrence to counter threats to our logistics enterprise and maximize our effectiveness. We continue to work to enhance our world class organizational agility—exploring initiatives to move to data-driven decisions and to make those decisions in reduced time. We collaborate closely with our fellow combatant commands to work seamlessly across warfighting domains and across theaters and brought in our commercial partners into our exercises and wargames so they can understand the degree of agility and resiliency that will be required of them.

I want to highlight the importance of our unmatched network of alliances and partnerships in facing contested environments. Our robust network of partners and allies that afford us access, basing, and overflight privileges provide both agility and resiliency in the face of adversary action. Our numerous aerial ports and seaports provide multiple paths to deploy and sustain the Joint Force as well as providing the means to disperse the Joint Force in a theater of operations. The robustness of our networks creates dilemmas for our adversaries.

USTRANSCOM is a strategic competitive advantage for the Joint Force. For it to remain an enduring advantage for the future Joint Force requires investing in maintaining and recapitalizing the airlift, air refueling and sealift capacity necessary to meet future Joint Force needs. Further, we are working with the Services to identify the intra-theater lift needs and those platforms that can augment our existing strategic and theater lift assets.

Finally, the command and control and integration of mobility assets is the center of gravity that allows us to operate within an adversary's decision cycle. Gaining and maintaining decision advantage is essential to achieving agility, and our networks and systems must be resilient to sustain operations in the face of adversary cyber threats. Through robust Joint Force training and exercises, we will refine techniques, tactics, and procedures as well as inform and shape operational concepts and strategic approaches that provide agility and maintain resiliency in the future contested operating environment.

FUEL COST

70. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, what are the concerns about fuel costs crowding out other spending priorities?

General VAN OVOST. Impacts of execution-year fuel price increases fall primarily on our customers, most of whom are funded by their military department Operation and Maintenance appropriations. Year to date in fiscal year 2022, the fuel increases had an \$618 million impact on transportation costs, \$253 million which was offset through targeted fuel related topline increases in the fiscal year 2022 Omnibus. These targeted increases matched the impacts of the first Transportation Working Capital Fund (TWCF) rate increase. I would defer to the Services on specific spending priority impacts for the \$365 million delta. USTRANSCOM primarily funds its operations through the TWCF which has been made whole through two rate increases, affording the ability to maintain transportation operations. To the extent USTRANSCOM is authorized to adjust TWCF rates commensurate with fuel adjustments, we assess minimal impact on USTRANSCOM's operational or financial flexibility.

71. Senator BLACKBURN. General Van Ovost, what impacts do you anticipate fuel price volatility will have on TRANSCOM's Defense Working Capital Fund?

General VAN OVOST. The Department has authorized us to increase our rates in response to unscheduled fuel rate increases over the past two years, which has resulted in minimal impact to our Transportation Working Capital Fund viability.

If at some point, however, DLA fuel rates increase, and we are not permitted to increase our transportation rates at a commensurate level, it quickly could erode our cash, thereby impacting our ability to operate. Such an event could hamper our cash reserves, and therefore our ability to expand capabilities rapidly during a surge in operations.

TURKEY

72. Senator BLACKBURN. General Wolters, what are the potential shortfalls that EUCOM has identified within the current relationships with Turkey?

General WOLTERS. Turkey is a key NATO Ally, actively supports Ukraine's efforts to defend its sovereignty, and together we maintain a strong military-to-military relationship. While unable to procure F-35 fighter jets, USEUCOM strongly endorses Ankara's request to procure 40 F-16 Block-70s and 79 VIPER upgrades for its current F-16 fighter fleet. These new and upgraded platforms would also support Turkey's dual-capable aircraft capability that provides the Alliance a credible, resilient, and critical deterrent. In order to maintain NATO's second largest air force readiness, we support an F-16 Service Life Extension, ground avoidance, AIM-9 and AIM-120 cases to ensure NATO's southeastern flank remains poised to shield the Alliance in the Black Sea region.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSH HAWLEY

SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE

73. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, what have been the most effective forms of United States security assistance for Ukraine thus far?

General WOLTERS. NATO Allies and Partners across the globe have responded with a historic demonstration of unity and will to strengthen defense while simultaneously helping Ukraine. The United States has provided Ukraine with thousands of American-made weapons and capabilities like drones, anti-tank, and anti-air defense weapons. Authorities including the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Presidential Drawdown Authority, and Section 331 have been highly effective, helping Ukraine resist aggression with courage and determination. All of this is making a difference, helping Ukraine to protect its people, defend its territory, and its free and democratic future. We thank Congress and the American people for their contributions in this effort.

74. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, how do you expect Ukraine's security assistance requirements to change over time?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM aims to sustain our support for as long as necessary for Ukraine to prevail. In the long-term, Ukraine will require advanced Western-compatible systems along with capability and capacity to train, integrate, and maintain these systems.

DETERRING RUSSIAN ATTACK

75. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, how important are attack submarines for deterring or, if necessary, defending against Russian aggression against NATO or the United States, particularly in the North Atlantic?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM benefits from the U.S. Navy's near persistent presence across the North Atlantic and Arctic, and U.S. and NATO submarines are a vital component of a 360 degree, all domain campaign to compete and deter Russian aggression. Maintaining our undersea advantage requires a comprehensive maritime domain approach integrating aircraft, surface ships, submarines, satellites, electromagnetic and cyber capabilities, and unmanned airborne, aquatic, vehicles and fixed and portable underwater sensors. Working with our Allies and Partners, USEUCOM welcomes all efforts supporting a secure and stable Arctic region where U.S. and NATO interests are safeguarded, the U.S. Homeland is defended, and nations can work cooperatively to address shared challenges.

76. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, how important are carrier strike groups for deterring or, if necessary, defending against Russian aggression against NATO or the United States?

General WOLTERS. Our operational maritime forces provide an essential capability in Strategic Competition. In addition to our forward deployed Naval Forces, we will continue to leverage Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Units to contribute to the maritime force. The presence of Carrier Strike Groups in the Mediterranean dramatically increase the inherent air combat capability and NATO's air defense architecture along the entire eastern flank. With a dedicated, persistent Carrier Strike Group and amphibious assault presence, USEUCOM assures a lethal and agile theater posture.

77. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, how important are the Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile or Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile and the latter's variants for deterring or, if necessary, defending against Russian aggression against NATO or the United States?

General WOLTERS. Both the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) and the Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM) provide vital deterrence and defense capability as advanced air-launched, stealthy, long-range precision missiles. Both missiles enable multi-domain Allied force freedom of action in an anti-access, area-denial environment across Europe and beyond.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

78. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, how would restoring America's energy independence help to strengthen deterrence against Russia, including by reducing its coercive leverage over us and our allies?

General WOLTERS. As part of a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM works with the lead Federal agencies (Departments of State, Energy and USAID) on European Energy Security and Independence efforts in collaboration with NATO Allies and Partners. Currently, USEUCOM is collaborating with various NATO-funded Centers of Excellence across a broad spectrum of energy security and resilience related exercises to identify alternative energy sources.

LOGISTICS CAPABILITIES

79. Senator HAWLEY. General Van Ovost, you testified last year that, according to the Mobility Capability Requirements Study of 2020, "we would be stressed to meet the globally integrated requirement for air refueling and for intra-theater airlift" during simultaneous conflicts in Europe and Asia. Your testimony reflects what the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Hudson Institute, and others have found, which is that our logistics forces will be hard-pressed to meet requirements in a fight against one strategic competitor, no less against two at once. What are some of the challenges you anticipate facing if the United States found itself at war with China in the Indo-Pacific and Russia in Europe at the same time and TRANSCOM were called upon to meet logistics requirements in both theaters at once?

General VAN OVOST. The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) builds upon the 2018 strategy, shifting Department of Defense's focus to great power competition and potential conflict, which was also addressed thoroughly in the MCRS-20 study. The challenge to deploy and sustain the Joint Force in a conflict against either China or Russia is daunting. As the MCRS-20 study indicated, elevated risk exists in several areas, which I would be glad to discuss further in a classified setting.

USTRANSCOM assesses both near-term and long-term strategic risk against China or Russia based on the following three key factors. First, the ability to deploy and sustain the Joint Force over global distances remains an asymmetric United States advantage to support campaigning, deterrence, and war-winning approaches under all envisioned conditions against either China or Russia. As the DOD develops new warfighting concepts and approaches, mobility and logistics remain critical capabilities. It is a USTRANSCOM priority to maintain sufficient capacity, with the right mix of capabilities. Second, both Russia and especially China have studied the United States ability to wage war, and both have developed specific capabilities to delay, degrade, and disrupt United States power projection through both kinetic and non-kinetic means, to include cyber and malign influence over adversaries and partners. USTRANSCOM is working to address resilient approaches to fighting through disruption and setting the necessary conditions through access and protection of bases and routes to sustain the flow of warfighting forces and materiel. Cyber domain mission assurance remains a high priority for both the DOD and our commercial providers as we contemplate operating under these conditions, even in the Homeland. Finally, for a conflict in the Indo-Pacific, the long-distances and distributed nature of future conflict in that region will place new demands on the logistics and mobility enterprise in areas such as dynamic maneuver of forces and distribution of key commodities such as munitions and fuel. USTRANSCOM continues to address these challenges to ensure DOD can respond at the speed and scale future operations may require, regardless of theater.

In alignment with the 2022 NDS, USTRANSCOM addresses the sufficiency of the mobility enterprise against great power competitors, with China identified as the pacing challenge. The assessment of sufficiency includes the requirements to support the critical missions of homeland defense and nuclear deterrence. "Deterrence in a second theater" employs an integrated deterrence approach as described in the 2022 NDS, which includes some mobility forces to achieve deterrence outcomes. The MCRS-20 study analyzed mobility capabilities in this context, and we are aligning a classified assessment of the MCRS-20 results against the 2022 NDS to ensure USTRANSCOM represents a contemporary depiction of overall mobility enterprise sufficiency and risk.

FORCE LEVELS AND POSTURE IN EUROPE

80. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, we have deployed approximately 20,000 forces, based on public reports, from the United States to Europe in recent months. Assuming the war in Ukraine persists for months, or potentially even years, is the plan to keep them in Europe for that entire time?

General WOLTERS. In close consultation with our Allies and Partners, we adapt continuously to meet the challenges and complexities of our dynamic security environment. Together, we continue improving our posture, transparency, alignment, and speed of response. We are laser focused and united in having the right posture to shield the Alliance.

81. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, former Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Wess Mitchell recently wrote: "The U.S. should also make better use of the large number of troops we have stationed in Western Europe by moving them East. The Stryker Brigade recently shifted from Germany to Romania should make its permanent home there, and the 173rd Airborne sent from Italy to Norway should make Norway its new home." Do you agree that we should move these units farther to the east, rather than keeping them in central Europe, and why or why not?

General WOLTERS. We closely examine our prepositioning requirements based on operational requirements, regularly training and exercising across the entire Area of Responsibility to ensure we have a complete understanding of capabilities and requirements. This enables moving combat-credible forces at speed while maintaining readiness, responsive to a dynamic global security environment.

82. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, Dr. Mitchell also wrote, "The U.S. also has an inventory of weapons that it is in the process of decommissioning that could be given or sold to frontline NATO states, such as the F-15, F-16, and A-10 aircraft."

Would frontline NATO states be able to make good use of aircraft, such as those listed by Dr. Mitchell, that the United States is currently in the process of decommissioning?

General WOLTERS. Under a whole-of-government approach, USEUCOM supports the Department of State and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency's Foreign Military Sales program, and welcomes opportunities for NATO Allies and Partners to be recipients of defense articles made available through that program.

EUROPEAN BURDEN SHARING

83. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, our European allies, particularly Germany, are stepping up their defense commitments as a result of the war in Ukraine. This is a positive development, but it is long overdue, and it's imperative that Germany and our other allies sustain these increases over the long term. Do you agree that it is imperative for our allies to sustain increased defense spending and commitments, rather than surging investments now and then letting them die off in the months or years ahead?

General WOLTERS. NATO resolve and unity is as great as it has ever been. We are witnessing a generational moment, a historic demonstration of will and an unprecedented effort by Allies to strengthen defense, while simultaneously helping Ukraine resist aggression. USEUCOM welcomes all efforts of our NATO Allies to commit to meet the Alliance two percent benchmark and redouble their efforts to sustain long term defense investments to shield the Alliance.

84. Senator HAWLEY. General Wolters, assuming Germany follows through on its commitment to spend more than 2 percent of GDP on defense from here on out, what capabilities can Germany provide that United States forces are currently providing in the EUCOM AOR?

General WOLTERS. Germany's commitment is a welcome announcement and bodes well for future Alliance capabilities and contributions. As a sovereign nation, Germany will determine the best place to invest those resources. Investments in advanced fighter aircraft like F-35 and fourth generation electronic warfare capable fighter aircraft would enhance the Alliance's air domain capabilities, and increase readiness across Allied air forces. Other investments in air defense and anti-ballistic missile defense technologies, naval warfare, mechanized and armored land formations would strengthen the deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic.

