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**U.S. MILITARY POSTURE AND NATIONAL
SECURITY CHALLENGES IN EUROPE**

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CONTENTS

	Page
STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS	
Rogers, Hon. Mike, a Representative from Alabama, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services	1
Smith, Hon. Adam, a Representative from Washington, Ranking Member, Committee on Armed Services	3
WITNESSES	
Wallander, Dr. Celeste, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense	4
Cavoli, GEN Christopher G., USA, Commander, U.S. European Command	6
APPENDIX	
PREPARED STATEMENTS:	
Wallander, Dr. Celeste	55
Cavoli, GEN Christopher G.	64
DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:	
Ukraine Rejects 10 German Leopard tanks	93
US Urges Ukraine to stop attacking Russian oil refineries	99
F-16 Fighter Jets 'No Longer Relevant': Ukrainian Official	102
WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:	
Mr. Scott	115
Ms. McClellan	115
Mr. Davis	115
QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:	
Mr. Scott	119
Mr. Carbajal	124
Mr. Bacon	126
Mr. Bergman	128
Mr. Golden	129
Mr. Waltz	129
Mr. Gimenez	135
Mr. LaLota	136

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, April 10, 2024.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mike Rogers [chairman of the committee] presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROGERS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ALABAMA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will come to order.

Today we will continue our posture hearings with European Command (EUCOM). I remind members, when we adjourn the hearing, we will immediately move upstairs for the closed briefing. I want to thank our witnesses for being here and for their service to our Nation.

The United States is moving into an era of unprecedented danger. We have heard from the commanders of Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), Africa Command (AFRICOM), Central Command (CENTCOM), and Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM). They each raise grave concerns about how China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are working together to reduce America's global influence, harm our alliances, and undermine our national security.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in Ukraine. Iran and North Korea are arming Russia with deadly effect. In return, they are receiving advanced technologies and other illegal aid from Putin. And while China has yet—has not yet provided weapons to Russia, Xi is providing Putin critical economic and security assistance. This includes dual-use materials and components for weapons.

Kim, Xi, and the Ayatollah are eagerly aiding and abetting Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine because they know a Russian victory there will seriously undercut the credibility of American deterrence and leave our security partners exposed. It is the green light these despots have been craving for decades.

A Russian victory will embolden Kim, Xi, and the Ayatollah to confront South Korea, Taiwan, Israel, and ultimately the United States in a new and—in new and fatal ways. And I fear Putin will use a victory in Ukraine as a springboard to invade Eastern Europe. We can't let that happen. We must restore American deterrence. It starts with this Administration finally articulating a winning strategy.

Since the start of the war, President Biden's Ukraine policy has been plagued by hesitation. Every major weapons system the

United States has provided, from Stingers to Abrams to Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS), only came after serious congressional pressure, and it usually arrived months late and in insufficient numbers.

The President's hand-wringing has only prolonged the war and driven up cost in terms of dollars and lives. Meanwhile, the U.S. sanctions have failed to make much of a dent in Putin's war machine. The President's use—the President should use the billions frozen in Russian assets to support Ukraine, and he should arm Ukraine at the speed of relevance.

But in order for that to happen, Congress needs to pass the national security supplemental. If the United States is unable to send additional weapons to Ukraine, Putin will win. And I would remind my colleagues that nearly all of the money we are spending to arm Ukraine doesn't leave this country. It goes directly to U.S. companies and American workers to produce more weapons at a faster pace. This funding is revitalizing our defense industrial base after decades of atrophy.

It is exactly what we need to do to prepare for a potential conflict with China. But we can't do it all. The President needs to force our European allies to do more. While the UK, Poland, and the Baltic states, and the Czech Republic are punching well above their weight. There are some European countries that can and must do more.

We all want this war to end, but that can't happen if the West hedges. If Putin thinks he can win, he won't come to the bargaining table. The quickest way to end this conflict is to strengthen Ukraine's negotiating position by ensuring they are well armed and well supplied. I look forward to working with my colleagues to do just that.

Finally, last week marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO has been enormously successful at keeping America and our allies secure and providing the deterrence necessary to avoid another world war. But as we enter this new era where China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are working together to flaunt international laws and destabilize whole regions, NATO needs to broaden its focus.

It needs to secure its supply chains and reduce its dependency on China and Russia for goods and energy. And all NATO nations must meet their requirement to spend at least 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense. With a war raging in Eastern Europe, it is entirely unacceptable that a dozen nations are still falling short.

When NATO meets in Washington this summer, the President should insist—should demand—these nations present a clear plan on how they will meet the 2 percent benchmark as soon as possible. Every member state needs to fulfill its commitment because now more than ever we need a strong NATO.

I look forward to our discussion today and hearing from our witnesses about their security posture in Europe. And, with that, I yield to my friend and colleague, the Ranking Member.

STATEMENT OF HON. RANKING MEMBER, ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with almost all of what the Chairman said, particularly about the importance of NATO and the importance of the fight in Ukraine. I definitely look forward to hearing from our witnesses who are very well positioned to update us on the specifics of that fight and on the Alliance that is pushing back against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

And I will just right off the top foot stomp the point, you know, the House has waited months now to approve the security package to help protect Ukraine. You know, weeks ago, we were too late, and now every day is at an extreme cost to our ability to deter Russia—to deter Russia in Ukraine, but as the Chairman correctly pointed out, to deter the whole broad alliance that is trying to basically, you know, tear down the international rules-based system. All of that pushes them forward.

So we have the bill, the Senate bill, that we can pass. I would urge every member of this body to ask the Speaker and implore the Speaker to bring that up for a vote. It would pass the House and be signed by the President in short order. All we need is a little democracy. Give us the chance to vote on that bill, so that we can give Ukraine the help that they so desperately need.

I would love to get an update today from our witnesses about the fight in Ukraine. You know, my personal opinion is that Ukraine is in a strong position to stop Russia where they are if we give them the help. And this is where I have a tiny little bit of disagreement with the Chairman's remarks.

I think the Biden Administration has been very clear on their policy from day one, which is defend Ukraine, make sure that we maintain a sovereign democratic Ukraine while not stumbling into World War III with Russia. And that second goal is not irrelevant. Okay? Making sure that that didn't happen is an important part of the policy because that would make everything vastly worse. It is not simply a matter of we are going to war with Russia, no matter what. There are very complicated calculations to make sure that we don't stumble into that broader war, which would definitely jeopardize our interests and the world's interests, which means that taking some care in how we do that was actually a very smart policy.

But even with that, if we go back to February of 2022 when the war started, the assumption was it was over. There was nothing Ukraine could do. Russia would take them out in a matter of weeks. The coalition that was pulled together, in large part by this President and by this Administration, that built a 50-nation-strong coalition to support Ukraine, is the reason—part of the reason, the other part being Ukraine's incredible courage and ability to fight—that that was stopped. I think we need to recognize that.

We also need to recognize the other point, and I will get back to agreement with the Chairman at this point, that if we walk away from that mission, that will undermine our ability to build the alliances that we need to confront all elements of this, not just Putin but China and Iran and North Korea and Hamas and Hezbollah and all the groups that threaten us.

So you can't say, well, we need to walk away from Ukraine because China is more important. If China is more important, that just emphasizes the fact that we should not walk away from Ukraine as we go forward.

The other piece that I am interested in both of our witnesses' thoughts is on the sanctions piece. You know, part of the reason that sanctions have not been as effective as we would have liked is because China in particular has been there as an economic backstop, but not just China. Other nations like India, South Africa, Brazil, have continued to do business.

There is a fundamental shift in U.S. economic power globally in that there are other nations now that are stepping into that void. We don't have the ability to simply choke off another nation that we once had because of that alliance that is being built, and I think that means that we should start thinking about, well, how do we deal with that? What is a new strategy to recognize that we are definitely in a competition now for economic primacy in the world? And how do we best confront that competition?

I am worried that we overly rely on sanctions, certainly not in this case, not where Russia is concerned, but a number of other cases that push nations across the globe away from us and into the arms of China and Russia, which only further weakens our ability to hold Russia to account for this war.

Now, but let me close where I started, and that is the importance of Ukraine. Ukraine can in fact win. They can maintain a sovereign democratic Ukraine and stop Russia, but only if we help them. And the implications of that, certainly for NATO more broadly, are profound. So I urge the speaker again, give us that vote, so that we can help Ukraine defend the interests that are important to us as well as to Ukraine and the rest of the world.

And, with that, I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the Ranking Member.

I now introduce the witnesses. We have the Honorable Celeste Wallander, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, and also General Christopher Cavoli is the Commander of U.S. European Command.

I welcome the witnesses. Ms. Wallander, we will start with you.

STATEMENT OF DR. CELESTE WALLANDER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee. This is a great opportunity to testify, and I want to also thank you for the support of Congress and the committee to enable the Department of Defense's operations and posture in Europe. It is an honor to appear alongside General Cavoli.

With its unprovoked invasion in 2022, Russia revealed its determination to revert to an international system that rewards aggression. In response to Putin's challenge and to ensure continued deterrence and defense of our collective security, the Department has enhanced its posture in Europe over the last 2 years. But we are not alone.

I can report that our allies in Europe are sharing the responsibility for collective defense. Together with our allies, the Department is committed to reinforcing the lesson that aggression will result in very costly failure. American security and prosperity rely on that fact.

In Ukraine, our strategic goal is to see a sovereign, independent, economically viable, and democratic Ukraine emerge from Russia's failure, a Ukraine with a means to deter and defend itself against further aggression. Russian forces continue their assault in Ukraine's east and south and target civilians and critical infrastructure across Ukraine.

Ukraine's defenses and its population will face devastation without additional U.S. security assistance to join with Europe's. With congressional support, we will strengthen Ukraine in forging a strong defense industrial base that provides Ukraine with its required capabilities and resilience.

Meanwhile, we have organized our allies and partners into coalitions focused on key capability areas, for Ukraine's air force, ground-based air defense, artillery, maritime security, armor, information security, information technology, demining, and drones. Through U.S. leadership of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, we have provided more than \$88 billion in security assistance to Ukraine.

U.S. leadership is ensuring that Russia is bearing enormous costs as a result of its war against Ukraine. Russia has expended \$211 billion to equip, deploy, maintain, and sustain operations in Ukraine, resources that Russia's limited economy ill affords.

Russia's armed forces have suffered at least 315,000 casualties in the fight, yet because of Putin's obsessions, Putin's Russia will be a threat to European and U.S. security for years. DoD has focused on our defense and on deterring Russia from attacks on the United States and our NATO allies.

NATO is stronger today than ever. Finland and Sweden are allies, and more allies than ever are devoting at minimum 2 percent of GDP to defense. Today, 18 allies meet the 2 percent requirement compared to only 9 in 2020. Several more will meet 2 percent by the July Washington Summit.

In 2024, NATO allies will invest a total of \$470 billion in defense, which amounts to 2 percent of the aggregate GDP of all of the members of the Alliance. NATO allies together are answering the call to meet this historic threat. The Department will continue working with allies to defend our countries and our freedoms throughout Europe, including on its eastern flank, those facing Russia, where American soldiers serve on the front line from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.

America will welcome our allies this summer for the Washington NATO Summit to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the signing of the Washington Treaty that established the NATO alliance founded on freedom and democracy.

There are also states beyond NATO's Article 5 umbrella threatened by Russia. Moldova recognizes the threat posed by Russia and is undertaking significant defense reforms. Moscow continues its occupation of 20 percent of Georgia's territory and maintains an

unwelcome military presence in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. DoD works with all four to strengthen ties, build resilience, and advance Euro-Atlantic integration.

I want to emphasize how important Congress is to achieving our strategic objectives in Europe and beyond. Your reliable, stable, and consistent support in funding are critical.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Wallander can be found in the Appendix on page 55.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Dr. Wallander. General Cavoli, you are recognized.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL CHRISTOPHER G. CAVOLI, USA,
COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND**

General CAVOLI. Thank you, Chairman. Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to testify before you today on behalf of the men, women, and families of U.S.-European Command.

I would like to publicly recognize our service members' shared sacrifice, and I would like to praise their devotion to the mission, and thank you for your support of them. I am lucky to be accompanied by Command Sergeant Major Rob Abernethy here today, who represents those men, women, and families, and I am honored to testify next to Dr. Wallander.

We are facing challenging times, to say the least, in the European Theater. Russia's brutal, unprovoked war has ravaged Ukraine for over 2 years. Their forces are demolishing cities and are destroying innocent lives on a scale we have not seen since the Second World War.

Moreover, Russia is turning to the People's Republic of China, Iran, and North Korea to sustain its campaign in Ukraine. These countries are forming interlocking strategic partnerships in an attempt to challenge the existing order. This is profoundly inimical to U.S. national interests. And Russia shows no signs of stopping, nor does Russia intend to stop with Ukraine. Russia presents a chronic threat.

USEUCOM has responded to this Russian threat by enhancing our deterrence posture across Europe. We have strengthened our eastern flank with rotational force deployments. We have expanded prepositioned stocks, and we have modernized our infrastructure to enable rapid reception of reinforcing forces.

We have demonstrated this capability to reinforce in all domains through dozens of multinational training exercises. So we are ready to defend, and this allows us to deter. And we have deterred Russia from attacking our Alliance.

USEUCOM is also very proud to lead the international effort in support of Ukraine. We do this through the Security Assistance Group-Ukraine, SAG-U, which is led by Lieutenant General Tony Aguto. In the past 26 months of this war, the U.S. and our partners have delivered vast amounts of critical munitions and equipment to our Ukrainian colleagues.

The SAG-U has facilitated a full range of training to promote unit readiness. We have ensured that Ukraine knows how to use

their new equipment and knows how to maintain it. Nevertheless, Russia persists in its vicious campaign, and meanwhile Ukraine remains almost entirely dependent on external support to stay in this fight.

The severity of this moment cannot be overstated. If we do not continue to support Ukraine, Ukraine could lose. So our efforts are great, but in all of this USEUCOM is not alone. War in Europe has given our allies and partners clear purpose and unity, and they seized the opportunity presented by this catastrophe. Over the past year, there have been profound changes in NATO. We have new war plans for the first time in 35 years.

We have a new force model and a new readiness model. It makes more than 700 percent more European troops available to the Supreme Allied Commander—me—than just a couple of years ago. We have a streamlined and focused command structure. We have new authorities that give me the ability to respond to crises in a timely manner.

And European governments are backing these organizational changes with a concrete uptick in investment. In 2024, at least 20 nations are expected to meet the 2 percent of GDP defense spending mark. This compares to only three that did so in 2014.

Continued U.S. leadership is essential, however. Our allies are stepping up, but they require—and they hope for—our continued leadership and example. By upholding our commitment to Ukraine, and by demonstrating steadfast cohesion with the NATO Alliance, we provide a clear deterrent to our adversaries. Should that deterrence fail, USEUCOM, alongside our allies, is ready to fight and win.

I thank Congress for your unwavering support to our servicemen and women, to our mission, to their safety, and to their well-being.

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, on behalf of the entire European Command, thank you again for this opportunity today. I very much look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Cavoli can be found in the Appendix on page 64.]

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the witnesses. I recognize myself for questions.

General Cavoli, what would be the consequences for Ukraine, the United States, and NATO if Congress fails to in a timely manner pass the supplemental funding bill?

General CAVOLI. Chairman Rogers, you know, I can't predict the future, but I can—I can do simple math. And when I look at the supply rates, I look at the supply sources, when I look at the consumption rates, if we do not continue to support Ukraine, Ukraine will run out of artillery shells and will run out of air defense interceptors in fairly short order, Mr. Chairman.

Based on my experience in 37-plus years in the U.S. military, if one side can shoot and the other side can't shoot back, the side that can't shoot back loses. So the stakes are very high. We are the main supplier of ground-based air defense and artillery shells for Ukraine right now.

It is important to note that our allies are increasing their production rates. They are just not able to take it all under their control yet. They just don't have the supplies. They are increasing rapidly.

Both NATO and the European Union are working to increase European production. That will be the first part of a bridge to the future, and then meanwhile we are all working with Ukraine to increase their organic production rates. They are also producing about 11,000 artillery shells a year, and some other things, so we are bringing that up.

But, in the meantime, they are really dependent this year on us, Mr. Chairman. And without our support, they will not be able to prevail.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. Wallander, some of our members are frustrated. They feel like the Administration doesn't have a clear plan or objective in Ukraine. Could you articulate that for us?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The objective is Russia's strategic failure. Putin's goal is to subjugate Ukraine, to strip it of its sovereignty and independence, but also to weaken and subvert Europe, America, and especially, of course, the NATO Alliance.

So our objectives and what has guided our policies for the last 2 years is that Ukraine remain a sovereign, independent, European country that is able to defend and deter, and to deliver that failure to Putin. And Ukraine is doing that with our support every day. And it is to strengthen the NATO Alliance to defend America's European security, which is the core of our global security.

Our alliance in Europe enables American military presence more broadly globally, as well as to defend and deter against Russia. And China is watching how we perform in Europe because they are drawing lessons for how we will live up to our commitments to allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific. So we need to ensure that Putin also fail in his goal to undermine European security. We are doing this out of self-interest, out of American national security interest, as well as, of course, the admiration that we Americans feel for Ukraine. But, in the end, we are doing this so that Americans can be secure at home and abroad.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. General Cavoli, if funding is not provided by the U.S. and NATO for Ukraine and the government falls, do you believe that Russia will take the entirety of the country or just a portion thereof?

General CAVOLI. Mr. Chairman, I believe that Russia will take as much of that country as they can get. And if the Ukrainian armed forces are not able to hold, they will take as much as they can. This could, in the worst case, put Russian soldiers throughout Ukraine, which would put them on many more NATO country borders than they are currently. And that would—that would cost an awful lot for us to deal with.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you all have an expectation of what would happen next after—assuming that Ukraine falls and Russia takes the entirety of the nation, at some point, do you believe there will be further aggression or not? And, if so, what would that be?

General CAVOLI. I believe Russia would be emboldened, Mr. Chairman, and I believe at some point they would commit further aggression. And if I—if I may, I would like to ask Celeste if she has that as well.

Dr. WALLANDER. I fully agree with General Cavoli. Putin is not going to stop at Ukraine. Ukraine is a step towards undermining

European security and the Transatlantic Alliance and, therefore, American security.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the witnesses.

The chair recognizes the Ranking Member for any questions he may have.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Cavoli, taking the flip side of that question, if we get assistance to Ukraine as is currently outlined, what do you assess their chances of stopping Russia where they are at, at least right now?

General CAVOLI. Sir, I think those chances would be very good. I think—I think they would be able to do it. We work very closely with them on their general plans, and the way to accomplish them, and they have solid plans. They have a solid approach to their defense. It does need to be resourced, however.

Mr. SMITH. Right. Because, I mean, at the moment Russia is trying to press the advantage they have, because Ukraine is rationing what they used because of the lack of support. But even then, you know, Russia seems to be struggling to break through. Can you give us your assessment as to why that is, what are the weaknesses or strengths of the Russian force and why they are still in the situation they are in?

General CAVOLI. Absolutely. The first and primary reason the Russians are unable to break through is due to the tenacity of the Ukrainian defenders. They are defending very, very hard. They fight very hard. They fight every day.

On the Russian side, the Russians are struggling to put together combined arms operations or operations at the battalion level above the company level. It is very hard to aggregate very small unit actions into a larger offensive. They are trying. They are spending enormous quantities of materiel and enormous amounts of life to try to break through just by piling small attack after small attack.

It has not worked so far, but in the end, numbers matter in warfare, of course, as you know, Ranking Member Smith, and those numbers, if we don't support Ukraine, will favor the Russians over time.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

And, Dr. Wallander, on a more difficult policy question, the other aspect of the Biden Administration's policy here is to make sure that there was a sovereign, democratic Ukraine. Yes, Russia focused, as you emphasized in your answer to the Chairman's question is there, but we wanted to make sure that Ukraine was there. If we are able to get them support and we stop Russia where they are at, that of course is not the ultimate objective of Ukraine. Ukraine would like to take back all of the territory back to the, you know, pre-2014 borders.

At the moment, that seems unrealistic. What would you say is the scenario and the Administration's position on negotiation? So we get them the aid, we stop Russia, so that Russia cannot achieve their maximalist goals. I see risk if at that point we continue—nope, we have got to keep fighting, because we have got to get it all back.

How do you have that very difficult discussion with Ukraine and also, crucially, with other Eastern European allies, who are quite right? I mean, Ukraine should have, you know, pre-2014 borders. But should and what—you know, what should happen isn't the same as what can happen. How do you handle that discussion to get to a peace in Ukraine?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Congressman Smith. First, and most important, is we—our policy is to fight to preserve to support Ukraine, so that it is sovereign and make its own choices. So we have to understand that in the end it is the Ukraine people and their leadership, who will decide how, whether, and on what terms they might be willing to negotiate with Russia. And it is very important to remember that.

And we are supporting them in security assistance, but also economic assistance and other parts of the U.S. Government, so that Ukraine can be that sovereign country and have that decision and live to see that day.

I do think there is a misconception that what Putin is after is territory. He is not after territory. He is not after Bakhmut or Avdivka or even Odesa. He is after Ukraine.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Dr. WALLANDER. And so we have to understand that while there may be a negotiation over territory, at some point some territorial resolution, we have to be ready for the fact that that probably doesn't mean that Putin gives up on the goal to subvert Ukraine and, through Ukraine, Europe.

So we have to do both things. We have to support Ukraine in negotiations, if it chooses to negotiate, but we must not be fooled into thinking that brings an era of peace and cooperation back to Europe.

Mr. SMITH. Well, any negotiation would have to make sure that there were clear security protections for Ukraine going forward. We could not simply rely on Putin's word that he would not go further. I completely agree with that.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Wallander, I have a tremendous amount of respect for you. I have—I would tell you, I disagree on the Odesa statement. I do think Putin wants Odesa. I think it gives him control of the economy of Ukraine. And that port is extremely important to him, and I think that he would like to charge a tax on everything leaving that port and give it to one of his oligarchs or keep a portion of it for himself.

But my question gets to your statement about Russia's strategic failure being the Biden Administration's goal. Certainly, that is my goal. I want Russia to fail. I want Putin to fail. I want Ukraine to win. And you also talk about Russia's limited economy, but most numbers show that Russia's economy grew at a rate of 3.6 percent for 2023. Is that your understanding?

Dr. WALLANDER. Yes, and its inflation rate is 13 percent.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. So it is 13 percent.

Dr. WALLANDER. The inflation rate is 13 percent.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. But their economy is growing, and the Biden Administration has looked the other way while India, whose economy is also growing at a pace that is actually about 7 percent, has bought billions of dollars' worth of oil from Russia, in violation of the sanctions.

Is it correct—I won't ask you about the opinion on the Biden Administration. I will ask you, though, is it correct that India has purchased billions of dollars' worth of oil, in violation of the sanctions from Russia?

Dr. WALLANDER. India has purchased oil from Russia, yes.

Mr. SCOTT. In violation of the sanctions.

Dr. WALLANDER. That would be a technical issue on whether they are paying more than the price cap, and I am afraid I would have to get back to you on that.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 115.]

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. Fair enough. As I said, I respect you. I am not trying to play "gotcha" here. But my concern is that there are things the Biden Administration could do that would hurt Russia's economy, and then—and they have not done it. I am also concerned with the fact that Russia, when the Ukrainians hit Russia's oil and gas infrastructure, the Biden Administration came out and condemned the Ukrainians for hitting Russia's oil and gas infrastructure and suggested that they should not do that again.

Can you tell me why, while Russia is attacking Ukrainians' oil and gas and energy sector, why shouldn't the Ukrainians attack the Russian oil and gas and energy sector?

Dr. WALLANDER. The issue on attacking critical infrastructure is when those are civilian targets, we have concerns because Ukraine holds itself to the highest standards of observing the laws of armed conflict, and that is one of the elements of being a European democracy.

Mr. SCOTT. But the Russians are attacking the oil and gas infrastructure in Ukraine, correct?

Dr. WALLANDER. Absolutely.

Mr. SCOTT. And if you are going to win a war, you can't sit back and take punches and not deliver punches, so why shouldn't the Ukrainians attack the oil and gas infrastructure in Russia?

Dr. WALLANDER. Congressman, we have concerns about striking at civilian targets when we support countries. Again, this is Ukraine's sovereign decision, but we expressed those concerns.

Mr. SCOTT. But those oil and gas infrastructures in Russia are owned by the Kremlin, correct? It is not like they are owned by a private corporation that had shareholders and private assets that are being destroyed.

Dr. WALLANDER. They are owned by private Russian citizens who are part of the Putin regime. That is correct.

Mr. SCOTT. I mean, it makes sense to me that we should destroy them.

General Cavoli, you talked a lot about our NATO partners and their ascension to the 2 percent. Russia is currently spending, as I understand it, 6 percent of their GDP on their military. My question is, is the 2 percent enough? If your enemy is spending 6 percent, if your greatest threat is coming from a country that is spend-

ing 6 percent of GDP, should that 2 percent threshold—should we work to raise that 2 percent threshold for the NATO partnerships?

General CAVOLI. Thanks, Congressman. So, first of all, there is a lively discussion among the nations in NATO right now about whether 2 percent is even any longer the relevant figure. Should it be higher? As you know, a number of our allies are spending significantly above 2 percent. I would call attention to Poland here especially, which is closing in on 4 percent of GDP.

I personally believe, in the absence of any North Atlantic Council decision or agreement, I do think we are going to find that 3—that 2 percent is too low a figure. We have plans that have driven force structure requirements that nations are now going to be asked to build towards, so there is a—there is a blueprint, there is a shopping list for that 2 percent, and I think we are going to find that 2 percent goes pretty quickly, Congressman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, again, I just want to join the Chairman and the Ranking Member in terms of the urgency of getting this supplemental assistance package voted on. Again, I think it is important to remember that the vote in the Senate was 70 to 28, which, you know, in this polarized environment that sends a very strong, confident message that the votes will be there in the House if we take this measure up, and hopefully we could do it tonight.

There is a discharge petition that has actually been filed to force a vote, and it is just shy of 200. 218 is the magic number and, again, something hopefully members will think about as the clock keeps ticking in terms of the urgency of this issue.

General, your testimony pretty powerfully described the fact that, in pages 2 to 5 about the fact that, you know, Russia, despite the, like, horrific losses that they are experiencing, that is not slowing down investment in their military and their defense sector.

And you and I just had a brief conversation to talk about, you know, one of the areas where they have been continuing to invest is in the undersea domain. Particularly, again, because of their presence and activities in the North Atlantic, they have been steadily increasing over the years with construction of more sophisticated submarines, such as the Severodvinsk class and the upgraded Kilo platforms.

Again, I know a lot of this sort of topic has to happen or be discussed in a classified setting, but I guess the question is that, in terms of your command, I mean, and your predecessors have testified to this in the past, the Russian submarine activity in the North Atlantic is steadily, surely, in 2022, 2023, 2024, growing. Is that correct?

General CAVOLI. Absolutely. Correct.

Mr. COURTNEY. And can you talk about the need for, you know, our Navy to, again, have adequate attack submarine fleet to be out there to, again, safely and effectively conduct anti-submarine warfare?

General CAVOLI. Yes, Congressman. Thank you for the opportunity, in fact, because I think it is an extremely important topic. We absolutely have a need for a strong undersea warfare capability. As you pointed out, the Russian losses in Ukraine have been primarily in the land domain. We do not see significant losses in the air domain, especially their long-range and strategic aviation fleets.

Other than the Black Sea Fleet losses, we see no losses in the rest of the Russian Navy fleet. And in the modernizing, rapidly modernizing nuclear forces, we see continued investment and heightened level of activities underwater especially.

So our ability to handle that depends on a number of different things, but one of the primary things it depends on is our attack submarine fleet. And we have requirements that I share with US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) to defend the United States against the threat posed by Russian submarines, and we can always use more submarines to pursue that threat, sir. Absolutely.

Mr. COURTNEY. So to just put it more, you know, bluntly, I mean, your requests in terms of requirements are not met in terms of what is available in terms of the missions.

General CAVOLI. My requirements exceed what I am provided on a regular basis. Yes, sir.

Mr. COURTNEY. Great. Thank you. Again, you mentioned the Black Sea, you know, activities that are out there. I mean, in terms of people who are—sort of have doubts about, you know, Ukraine's commitment to stay in the fight here, I mean, it actually has been just, in my opinion, an underplayed success in terms of how they have, with no navy, really been able to inflict incredible losses. Twenty percent of the Black Sea Fleet was the latest number I saw.

Can you just sort of comment in terms of, you know, that sort of signal that, you know, they are in the fight, and there is a plan.

General CAVOLI. Absolutely. It is easy sometimes I think, Congressman, for us to stare at the fight on the land and think that it represents the totality of the situation. It does not. The fight on the Black Sea and the fight for the Black Sea is an important part of this. It is especially important because of what it does for the Ukrainian economy. Without the rollback of the Black Sea Fleet, we wouldn't be able to get as much of Ukraine's grain out and on to market. That would cause food security problems across the globe and severe and acute problems for the economy of Ukraine, which is obviously under great stress as it is.

I think the Ukrainians have done a fantastic and groundbreaking job using largely unmanned systems to push the Russian fleet back east of Crimea. It is very rare that a Russian warship ventures past the western—ventures west of the southern tip of Crimea right now.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you.

General CAVOLI. It is a big success story, and it is theirs.

Mr. COURTNEY. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee, Dr. DesJarlais.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you. Dr. Wallander, first, I want to say thank you. I was pleased to see that the Pentagon's Office of In-

spector General (OIG) launch of the new website last month that will allow the American people to directly see where our tax dollars are being spent to support Ukraine—something we have been talking about I think for about 6 months in our briefings—it is still a pretty hard sell back home because people don't see a pathway to victory.

Basically, you know, what they are seeing is a stalemate that has drug on for 2 years now. And with the continued problems in our own country with the border, et cetera, it is hard to justify this spending, even though most of us in this room understand the importance of it.

You know, one message it does seem to sell back home is when you talk about the evolving alliance between Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, it is almost an axis similar to World War II, Germany, and Italy, and Japan. So that seems to get people's attention.

What do you both see as a successful end of the conflict in Ukraine? And what more can the Administration and the DoD do to message the reasoning for spending this money to the folks back home?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Congressman. In addition to the strategic objectives that I already identified on—as Ukraine remaining a sovereign, independent European democracy, let me clarify that we are also supporting Ukraine to put it in the best possible position should Russia want to negotiate an end to the conflict on Ukraine's terms.

In order for Ukraine to be in the driver's seat in any negotiation, they have to have the advantage. And the military and security assistance support that we have been providing to Ukraine has given them significant advantages, including controlling most of their Black Sea coast, as General Cavoli pointed out. So those are the stakes, and the answer also has to be that constituents need to understand that of the \$60 billion in the supplemental that was requested, 48 billion of that goes to American industry to either replenish U.S. stocks or to procure for the longer term and to support General Cavoli's forces in Europe, who are working to defend and deter.

So that is money going actually to American companies and to American citizens to support the work that they are doing for European security.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. And I think that is the message the President should deliver directly to the country. I have said that before, and I still think that, you know, they are not getting that message. I hear and understand what you are saying, and I think it would help to hear that.

I wanted to get both of your opinion on Secretary Blinken's announcement last week that Ukraine will become a member of NATO sooner or later. It seems like a pretty provocative remark, and I wanted to see if you had any response to it.

Dr. WALLANDER. U.S. policy since I believe it was 2008 has been that Ukraine will be a member of NATO someday, and we have focused our bilateral relationship, as well as the work we do with NATO allies, to bring Ukraine up to the standards of not just NATO membership, but EU membership, because that is the aspi-

ration of the Ukraine people. They have elected leaders again and again who have promised to keep Ukraine on that path. So that—Secretary Blinken was reiterating a longstanding, bipartisan policy.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. Well, if memory serves, 2 years ago that was a major red line for Putin, if Ukraine entered NATO, the escalation could go way beyond Ukraine, at least that was his threat and one of the reasons that I think even Zelensky said Ukraine does not want to be a member of NATO, or at least at that time.

So it just seems antithetical in a way to throw that out there right now while we are trying to secure peace and/or victory in Ukraine. You know, maybe that is something that should have happened 2 years ago in hindsight, but who knows? But it just seemed pretty bold.

General, did you have any opinion on that?

General CAVOLI. No, not with regard to U.S. policy, Congressman. I would just add, from a NATO perspective, NATO's agreed policy among the 32 nations is that when the time is right, and all allies agree, Ukraine will become a member of the Alliance. But those two conditions are an important part of NATO's position, and they have not been met yet.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Garamendi, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And a personal thank-you to you for your strong statement about the necessity of passing the supplemental bill. Your leadership and the colleagues—all of us on this committee—play a critical role in getting that done.

And my question really goes to General Cavoli. In your written statement, you continue to use, quote, "Despite its military's evident deficiencies, dysfunction, Russia continues to pose an existential threat to Ukraine. Ukraine cannot sustain the fight alone. The United States, our allies and partners, must continue to provide Ukraine with munitions, weapons, and materiel."

How dire is the situation in Ukraine? And what is the role of the United States not providing support to that dire situation, if in fact it is dire?

General CAVOLI. Thank you, Congressman. The situation is extremely serious. The best way to think about this is in terms of what are the specific things that Ukraine needs. Our allies provide for some of those things, right? For instance, tanks. Ninety percent—more than 90 percent of the tanks that have been given have not been given by the United States. They have been given by allies. They are sustained by allies.

One hundred percent of the fuel, the petroleum products, that Ukraine needs have been provided by allies, not by—not by the United States. But there are two places where the American contribution is critical. They are in the provision of artillery munitions and interceptors for air defense. Those two things also happen to be the most critical things on the battlefield.

The biggest killer on the battlefield is artillery in most conflicts, but in this one definitely. And should Ukraine run out, they would

run out because we stopped supplying because we supply the lion's share of that 155.

Likewise, the air defense interceptors, sir. Russia launches very large-scale attacks every few days, keeping with their production rate, what we believe their production rate to be. They produce, they save up, they launch a big attack. Those attacks would absolutely cripple the economy and the civil society as well as the military of Ukraine if they were not defended against. Without U.S. provision of interceptors, that will happen.

And, in closed session, Congressman, I would be delighted to talk to you about the exact consumption rates and exactly how long I would predict things could go on without a supplemental.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I think it is extremely important that in an open session we fully understand the critical situation and the timeframes associated with it. To the extent that you can describe it, you have already described it as an existential, dire threat without United States' munitions, 155s, and air defense. Plow that field another time. If you want to restate it, restate it. It is absolutely critical that this Congress and the American public understand the situation. So say it again if you need to.

And, Ms. Wallander, if you would also chime in here from your perspective.

Dr. WALLANDER. Just two points to reinforce this. We are already seeing the effects of the failure to pass the supplemental. The Ukrainians are having to use less artillery. They are having—the Russians have made some advances, and they are having to decide what to defend, and that is why the Russian attacks are getting through and really harming the Ukrainian electricity grid. So we don't need to imagine. We are already seeing it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. General?

General CAVOLI. So the Ukrainians have been husbanding their shells in anticipation of, you know, the supply running out, Congressman. They have been rationing them. They are now being out-shot by the Russian side 5 to 1. So Russians fire 5 times as many artillery shells at the Ukrainians than the Ukrainians are able to fire back.

That will immediately go to 10 to 1 in a matter of weeks. We are not talking about months. We are not talking hypothetically. Again, I would like to be detailed in closed session, but we are talking about weeks, Congressman. Thank you for the opportunity to underline that. I do not see—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GARAMENDI. —how they would win.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bacon.

Mr. BACON. Thank you, both, for being here. I appreciate your testimony. I was just meeting with Israeli families of hostages, so I may duplicate some of the questions. But the first thing I would like to know, if Russians prevailed in Ukraine, what is the likely outcome for Moldova?

Dr. WALLANDER. Well, Russia already occupies Moldovan territory. It uses that military occupation to subvert Moldova's democracy and its economy, corruption is rampant because of that Russian influence. And Moldova is very much, in Russian policy, unfin-

ished business. They have been limited by being able to control more territory because Moldova—because Ukraine stands between Moldova and Russia. But Moldova ranks high as part of Putin's unfinished business.

Mr. BACON. It stands to reason if Ukraine falls, Moldova will be next. Also Russian leaders have been threatening the Estonian Prime Minister, the Latvian Prime Minister, in fact a leader in the Kremlin called them fake states. How much threats will the Baltics be under if Ukraine falls?

Dr. WALLANDER. Again, Russian nationalists and Putin themselves are very public, and clear that they believe that the status of the Baltic States as former elements of the Russian Empire remains unresolved, and that is business that they intend to get to. I do believe that NATO's Article Five commitment is strong and credible, and we need to keep it so. But we also need to make sure that Russia's operations in Ukraine are a failure.

Mr. BACON. Well, what we are saying here is this is that—this war with Ukraine by the way, just on its own merits, is barbaric. Russia's invading a country that was independent, wanted to go towards the west, wanted to go to free markets, it was an unprovoked invasion by Russia. So, it is bad in its own right, but this war with Ukraine is not just about Ukraine, would you agree?

Dr. WALLANDER. I absolutely agree with you, sir.

Mr. BACON. Well, thank you. I am the Baltic Security Chair, I'd like to maybe ask General Cavoli if you could talk a little bit about what we're doing there. I know we're trying to get better air defenses, we're trying to get more—a division equivalent there. But could you give us an update how we're doing? Because I think it's very much in our national security interest to have a deterrence in the Baltics.

General CAVOLI. First of all, Congressman, I agree with you on that last point, absolutely. I think our ability to help deter conflict in the Baltics is extremely important, it is a vulnerable part geographically speaking, military geography of the alliance. I would also point out that Dr. Wallander's comments about Russia's intentions, which reflected yours, those are shared by the leaders of those countries.

And they feel them acutely, and talk to me about them frequently, and I agree with their concerns. So, Congress has been very generous, and provided for a Baltic Security Initiative, and—

Mr. BACON. I also point out our initiative, which not to brag on it.

General CAVOLI. Okay, we're about one point four billion into that right now. We have started with air and missile defense improvements, we have completed the sensor networks, and now we're moving into effectors, or the shooters. I think it's having a big effect there. In parallel, we've got the plans in place for the other five components, which include land forces, medical forces, and the other things you're aware of, sir.

It's going very well, I mean we have eager, eager partners there, right? The three Baltic countries in and of themselves, just individually, are very serious about their defense, and have done extraordinary things to prepare. Different things in some cases, but ex-

traordinary. In the case of Latvia they've reintroduced conscription for example, which is not something we would have been thinking about some years ago.

In addition to the Baltic Security Initiative, we're doing a few other things. As the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe I'm responsible to put together a plan for rotational air and missile defense. One of the primary locations for those rotations is going to be in the Baltic countries.

Mr. BACON. That's great.

General CAVOLI. And then we have bilateral agreements that have been made between our secretary and the ministers of all three countries. So, as the U.S. European Commander, I maintain forces in each of those countries, they work to improve our interoperability, and stiffen the defense capabilities.

Mr. BACON. I don't have, really time for another question, but I have to make a comment, something for you to chew on. I support having armored units in Poland and Eastern Europe, but being at the rotational, it is putting a huge strain on the families, and we saw a report that suicide rates for folks in these armored units are significantly higher than the rest of the Army.

I think they need some kind of stability, maybe a permanency there. We don't have time for you to answer, but this is a huge concern for many of us. Thank you.

I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. And I would echo that, I would like to have more discussion with you, General, about exactly that point.

But anyway, we will recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Cavoli, you termed this as extremely serious. You said that the severity of this moment, this moment can't be overstated. And I have heard political deflection here in this committee today, and I hear it outside of this committee room on the floor, I hear it in all kinds of news reports, deflection.

Deflection mentioning President Biden, that two or three years ago maybe he should have done more. Deflection that there is no policy in spite of the fact that Dr. Wallander just concisely laid out our policy very clearly. Deflection that Europe's not doing enough, and why should we do anything if they're not doing enough, when we know that the GDP of European countries is greater than ours committed to this.

We know that a new NATO country like Finland is committed to ten years of their fight against Ukraine. We know even that historically Germany, for the first time since World War II is deploying troops right in Lithuania, something that you wouldn't believe was possible even a year ago, to put a line of defense up against Russia's aggression. And we've heard the name Biden again, and Biden again, yet we're here right now in this Congress with our responsibility, and one person is holding this up.

One person is holding up a huge bipartisan supported package in the Senate. Supported by the President and the Administration, supported by the majority of people on this committee across the aisle, and I think close to three hundred members on the floor. One

person. But I have never heard the name Speaker Johnson invoked once, not once. The person that's holding this up, not once.

And I hope during the committee that we will hear that name, because he is holding this up, and we need action right now, which you have made very clearly. One thing I want to extend is the idea that China is looking. China's doing more than looking right now. Chinese have entered agreement with Hungary, led by President Orban, who the former president praises and emulates.

Entered an agreement allowing Chinese police to patrol the streets of Hungary, a NATO country. China has helped rebuild Russia's defense industrially, and economically, militarily has helped them in this war, providing non-lethal assistance in drones, and computer chips, and increased imports in Russian goods by twelve percent last year. China's no limit partnership is parroting Russian disinformation about Ukraine.

And several European ports have entered into agreements with China's National Transportation & Logistics Public Information Platform where they present a risk, I believe to U.S. and NATO allies that use these European ports to ship military equipment throughout the region. So, all these things are real, and we do nothing here in Congress, when we can do the one thing that would be the most important thing at this moment that's so serious.

I just want to comment for those too that don't recognize the threat to the rest of Europe in terms of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. And that is the fact that just a few weeks ago Belarus began military exercises on its border. Belarus, the ally of Russia in this, the proxy of Russia in this. They began military exercise on the border not just with Ukraine, but with Lithuania and Poland.

So, I would ask about the significance of this, and to emphasize once again what the threat is to the rest of Europe here, including with this recent military exercise, two NATO countries where we have an Article Five commitment, a commitment that Europe and the rest of our allies came to our call after 9/11 to do everything we can, including deploying troops on the ground, U.S. troops on the ground, if you could?

General CAVOLI. Thank you, Congressman. Yes, so if Belarus is an extension of Russia, and its military is an extension of the Russian military, that closes the gap between the Russian armed forces and NATO, and that presents additional problems in terms of time, space, in strictly military terms. Our allies there realize that.

Our allies, when faced with the weaponization of immigration last couple of years, both state sponsored pushes of migrants across the border into Poland and Lithuania, both responded by fortifying the border, and closing the border with Belarus. So, relations with Belarus are going in the wrong direction, and it is because of Russia, and it does have military complications. Beyond that, perhaps Dr. Wallander has something to say.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you very much, I yield back.

Mr. SCOTT. [Presiding.] Mr. Moylan, you're recognized for five minutes.

Mr. MOYLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, General, for your leadership in working with our NATO allies. It is a lot of coordination to do, but obviously you're asking us to continue

to support, and which I absolutely do. Our allies, of course, are important, there are future battles as well, and General, my first question regards just that, and NATO's responsibility, and what they are able to do for future battles.

Specifically, as we look at Guam, Hawaii, and other U.S. Pacific island territories who are not covered under Article Five of the NATO chapter. Meaning if these jurisdictions were attacked, NATO allies would not be obligated to defend the United States. Now, while many countries have vowed, they vowed to defend the U.S. in the Pacific, what assurance can EUCOM give to my constituents in Guam regarding the relationship to NATO?

General CAVOLI. Thanks, Congressman. First, a little bit about the coverage of the North Atlantic Treaty, or the Washington Treaty, as it were. Article Six lays out what the boundaries are that were agreed at the time, and have been routinely updated over the years. It is north of the Tropic of Cancer is the first thing. That excludes French possessions in Polynesia like French Polynesia, it excludes British possessions such as the Pitcairn Islands, and it technically excludes Guam.

However, that is changeable, it is amendable. All nations, to include the United States, have elected not to amend that over the years, and opportunities have come up. So, as a highly technical matter, that's correct. However, any nation—under Article Four, any nation that is attacked any place can always invoke consultations under Article Four. Say I have been attacked, and I expect the rest of you to do something about it.

And they may or may not choose to apply Article Five no matter what the treaty says. So, it is a technicality, is it a technicality that's within our hands to amend? But I also think it is an extremely unlikely scenario, and I know that our allies are committed to our defense, just as we are to theirs, sir.

Mr. MOYLAN. Thank you, General, it's very assuring, and appreciate that. My final question is the future battlefields will present some unique challengers in the form of great distance in air and sea. On 2021 Rear Admiral Duke Heinz, Chief Logistic for EUCOM, stated the contest environment demands swift adaptability and flexibility to roll out new ways to address challenges.

One of those challenges will be the medical evacuation of our service members. General, given the different environments, and climates, and geographic combatant commands, has there been talks of best practices for the most effective medical evaluation plans that will result in the continued tactical, operational, and strategic advantages for our various commands and combatant commanders?

General CAVOLI. Yeah, absolutely, Congressman, it is something we work on quite a bit. We work on it even harder now because of what we are observing in Ukraine, the casualty rates are just enormous. And if you contemplate a large-scale war across the European continent, we can expect them to be greater. So, medical evacuation, a casualty evacuation inside the European theater would necessarily and inevitably include civilian infrastructure.

And we have coordination cells in NATO that helps us do that, and Duke Heinz also was responsible for making sure that as U.S. European Command, we were plugged into that system. It is com-

plicated because each country has its own national health system, some don't have national health systems, so there is quite a patchwork to be put together. At the tactical level, I think getting a casualty off the battlefield is something we're entirely capable of doing.

The further processing of casualties beyond that is where it would become complicated. The second point I would make on this has to do with the Defense Health Agency, and the transition to a new healthcare system. The healthcare system, the military healthcare system in the European theater, and I believe "Lung" Aquilino feels this way in the Pacific as well, is actually an inherent part of our combat capability.

And so, we've been lucky to be able to be sort of last in line for some of the transition there. The final thing I would say is I am concerned about this. One of the only things I offered as an unfunded priority back to the Congress this year, sir, was the construction of an air medical evacuation facility at Ramstein. Thank you for the opportunity, sir.

Mr. MOYLAN. I appreciate that, thank you for your leadership, and protecting our nation.

The CHAIRMAN. [Presiding.] The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Michigan, Ms. Slotkin.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Thank you, Chairman. And I want to appreciate our Chairman and Ranking Member for their bipartisan support for aid. We do need to get it over the finish line, and supporting it here in committee, and supporting it out in the world is great. But we need to get it on the floor, we have heard this repeatedly. Speaker Johnson has a choice to make, I accept that it is a complicated choice.

I accept that he is at risk of losing his job over that choice, but that is what leadership is, it is the big boy pants, and making tough choices. I also want to note that there is a discharge petition right now on the floor of the House. It is the exact bipartisan bill that the Senate passed that includes Ukraine aid. We have one Republican who signed it on his way out the door.

We need, I think, two more in order to have a vote that will pass on the House floor. So, we are not without action here, without actions that we can take to move this forward, even members of this committee. You have spoken eloquently about the consequences of not providing aid, about what Putin will do, or what he is proven to do, I mean what he has demonstrated he will do.

You have talked about how China is watching, and the demonstration this is setting. To my knowledge, unless someone corrects me, the United States of America has never allowed a sitting democracy to be taken over by a sitting autocracy since World War II, correct me if I am wrong. So, this would be precedent setting, and Ronald Reagan is right now spinning in his grave that we are giving up, or threatening to give up on peace through strength.

And I am super confused by the messages coming out of some of the members of the other side of the aisle both here and in the Senate about how Vladimir Putin should get a choice on who gets in NATO. That somehow he has a veto over our alliances. And maybe that logic would make sense if we thought that it would prevent him from invading other countries, if a deal with him would

prevent—but he has gone into Moldova, and Georgia, and Ukraine, and Ukraine again.

So, he has done it, people. There is no deterring him unless we take a strong stand, and that includes U.S. aid. I saw a report in the Washington Post yesterday that made my breath vacate my body, that while we are complaining about how the rise of Iranian weapons are being used by the Russians in Ukraine, that out of desperation the United States of America is now sending seized Iranian weapons from the Houthis from Yemen area to Ukraine.

Please give me the details on that, and help us understand just the depths of our desperation, I guess, Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) Wallander.

Dr. WALLANDER. Well, I can talk more about the details of provisions and specific capabilities to Ukraine, but we have used every opportunity to find ways since December to find extra stocks to work with allies and partners, and we have had to get quite creative, and the Ukrainians have made good use of that while we wait for a decision on the supplemental.

Ms. SLOTKIN. I just, I think again, if Ronald Reagan was spinning at our hesitance in providing arms to Ukraine, he is, I don't know what, exploding if he would see that seized Iranian weapons are now helping a partner stave off further invasion of their country. Can you outline for us what you think additional air defenses could do? Or basically can you outline what you think would be sort of the next things that we would want to provide in terms of not quantity but quality to the Ukrainians that might have a decisive impact?

We have lots of questions about air defenses, but can you walk me through certain systems in this next tranche that would be decisive?

Dr. WALLANDER. So, thank you for the question because I want to highlight something that often gets missed. Which is the supplemental would include not just Presidential drawdown authority (PDA), urgent—the capability we can deliver next week, as fast as EUCOM can move it. But putting on contract things like Patriot systems, replenishment missiles for National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (NASAMs), replenishment missiles for Patriots.

And those are long lead times, but the sooner we can put them on contract the sooner we can get them to Ukraine so Russia knows that they can't wait us out, that Ukraine will continue to be able to defend itself. I will turn to General Cavoli to speak about priorities, but I think that those are the stakes as well.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Thank you.

General CAVOLI. In addition to that, it is the monies that provide the demand signal that creates investment in the defense industrial base, and that is one of our big challenges, getting our war time production up, Congressman. Yes—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time is expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Banks.

Mr. BANKS. Dr. Wallander, DOD admitted last month that it underestimated the cost of replacing American weapons we have sent to Ukraine, leaving a ten billion dollar hole in our own stockpiles. The day after announcing that it was overdrawn, the DOD took

three hundred million dollars that it found and immediately sent it to Ukraine. Why didn't that money go to filling the ten billion dollar hole in our own stocks?

Dr. WALLANDER. Congressman, I apologize, I believe what we did was we assessed that we had overvalued the value of the stocks that were given to Ukraine, and that was what created—we hadn't used as much PDA authority as we had originally estimated. So, the reference you made to that particular package was that there had been an overvaluation of what the material and stocks were. So, it gave us more headroom to be able to provide capabilities to Ukraine.

Mr. BANKS. What does that mean? Mysteriously finding the three hundred million dollars? You say overestimating, unpack that more, what does that mean, how does that happen?

Dr. WALLANDER. Yes, sir. The procedures for PDA is you are supposed to value it at the value of the existing stock, not the replacement value. The replenishment value is absolutely key, as you note, and the replenishment money in the supplemental is calculated at the cost of replenishing. But in terms of the value under the PDA authority, I know it's very technical and mind blowing.

But the value of what we have authority from Congress to give Ukraine is supposed to be set at what the value of the stocks themselves were.

Mr. BANKS. Is this unusual? I mean mind blowing, three hundred million dollars, it seems like that would be very unusual.

Dr. WALLANDER. That was over a period of two years of PDAs, so I can't give you the exact percentage of what that was of the value of the PDA, but I can follow up with you on that part.

Mr. BANKS. It seems to me like funny math. So, we overvalue three hundred million dollars, so we sent more money to Ukraine. I'm trying to wrap my head around it, and I can't.

Dr. WALLANDER. We sent more—not money, sir, we sent more capability, more equipment.

Mr. BANKS. Why the emphasis on sending more money to Ukraine over replenishing our own stockpiles?

Dr. WALLANDER. There is not, those go hand in glove. In replenishing our stockpiles, we need the authority and the appropriation from Congress for the replenishment funds, as well as the authority for the PDA draw down.

Mr. BANKS. But you seem to be more interested in sending our stockpiles to Ukraine instead of replenishing them here. I'm not trying to make a point, I am just really confused by it. We find an extra three hundred million, we shovel it to Ukraine.

Dr. WALLANDER. Again, that was the authority, and it is matched by the replenishment money that Congress has provided us, and that we need in order to be able to do more under the supplemental.

Mr. BANKS. So, after you found this three hundred million dollar, as you said, mind blowing is a great word for it, did you do something to address that moving forward, that we are not going to find another—that the Pentagon is not going to mysteriously find another three hundred million dollars in extra money next year? How do you account for that moving forward?

Dr. WALLANDER. We do believe that that was a one time opportunity that we were able to advance because of the waiting for the decision on the supplemental. We do not expect that there will be similar findings, and savings.

Mr. BANKS. So, the public is hopefully paying attention to this hearing today, and they hear about the Pentagon, I mean the media covered this as well, headlines about three hundred million dollars found at the Pentagon, I mean is that embarrassing to you?

Dr. WALLANDER. I was relieved that we were able to provide capabilities to Ukraine—

Mr. BANKS. You are coming here asking us for more money to do more for Ukraine, but the Pentagon mysteriously finds three hundred million dollars in extra money that we can give to Ukraine. I mean, it is really, is that embarrassing?

Dr. WALLANDER. I was relieved that we were able to find authority to be able to provide Ukraine with some artillery ammunition so that Ukrainian forces don't get overwhelmed on the front lines.

Mr. BANKS. Your colleague said last year that it would be bad to send six hundred and fifty million dollars of U.S. weapons to Taiwan without cash to replace them. Do you think it is dangerous to send Ukraine four billion dollars in weaponry without the funding?

Dr. WALLANDER. We would not send capabilities to Ukraine were it not for Congress passing appropriations for replenishment.

Mr. BANKS. I have got to say, I lose trust in you and the Pentagon when incredibly, a mind blowing three hundred million dollars is found and sent to Ukraine rather than replenishing our own stockpiles, it is really bizarre.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Moulton, for five minutes.

Mr. MOULTON. Dr. Wallander, I have a question about disinformation. You warn in your written statement that Russia's cyber and disinformation campaigns continue to threaten Euro Atlantic security. We know that Russia has interfered in U.S. elections since at least 2016, and it is likely that Putin will ramp up disinformation campaigns as we move towards November's presidential election. Is Russia's disinformation machine trying to undermine U.S. support for Ukraine?

Dr. WALLANDER. Russia's disinformation machine is working not just in the United States to undermine support, but throughout Europe, and indeed globally. And it is being magnified, and picked up by disinformation operations in places advanced by China as well.

Mr. MOULTON. Is Russia's disinformation machine trying to undermine U.S. support for NATO?

Dr. WALLANDER. Russia's disinformation machine has been ramped up to undermine support for NATO, to try to raise doubts in Europe and in the United States about the value of the alliance to American security.

Mr. MOULTON. So, would you say that when Republicans echo these sentiments trying to undermine support for Ukraine, trying to undermine support for NATO, they are essentially echoing Russian propaganda?

Dr. WALLANDER. I think it is extremely important to make sure that the American people know when they are being influenced by Russian disinformation, and exposing that disinformation is something that we work on in the interagency, not just DOD, but we work with State, and with other agencies of the U.S. government so Americans understand very clearly where that disinformation is coming from.

Mr. MOULTON. Well, the Kremlin has made it very clear in a recently released trove of documents that they know exactly what they are doing in trying to get Republicans to support their cause. I am also concerned about China's increasing willingness to conduct disinformation and electoral interference campaigns against the U.S. General Cavoli, how is China coordinating with Russia to spread disinformation throughout the U.S. and Europe?

General CAVOLI. Congressman, China coordinates both in general terms, that is sort of echoing, and sort of spontaneously echoing, they echo each other's messages in that regard, and we also believe that there is some specific coordination, in closed session I think we could discuss the specifics of that. But your general point, I think is absolutely correct. This is a concerted effort, and it is not a single nation doing it.

Mr. MOULTON. Well, I mean just, I want to be clear so everyone understands. Russia has a clear policy of trying to get conservative elements of the United States to trumpet their propaganda, and they are coordinating with China on this propaganda. So, some members of Congress are becoming mouthpieces for Russian and essentially Chinese propaganda in the United States. I want to turn to a few lessons learned from Ukraine.

The conflict is providing an important insight into ways that electronic warfare and drones are used on the battlefield, and obviously we have to learn from these examples. I mean we have seen five thousand dollar drones take out five million dollar tanks with ease. So, General Cavoli, what are some of the lessons that DOD is learning from the use and counter use of drones and electronic warfare in Ukraine, and how are we quickly adopting those lessons for our own troops?

General CAVOLI. The Department of Defense and the services individually are very closely studying what is going on in Ukraine through a variety of overt and not overt means, Congressman. We are studying it very closely on a technical level, as well as at a tactical level. Drones do seem to be a feature of this war that is unexpectedly significant. I personally think that we have to be a little bit careful overdrawing conclusions about it.

Many of the drones involved are not very destructive, especially the small commercially available ones, or home-made types. And we don't yet see them, drones being able to replace concentrated artillery fire for example, but it is a great supplement to what is going on. With regard to electronic warfare, a lot of it we are familiar with, we have waged electronic warfare in the past and we know how to defend against it.

But the quantity of it and the ubiquity of it across the battlefield is important, and we are working on a lot of technical solutions, Congressman.

Mr. MOULTON. So, General, if I go and visit some of your troops training in the field, are they going to be training in an environment with a lot of drones, and a lot of electronic warfare, or are they going to have a few token drones flying around?

General CAVOLI. Yes, I think throughout the Army right now, especially in the Marine Corps, the ground forces, you would find a great deal of experimentation, as well as rapid fielding of small drones across the force. Both electronic warfare and drones are difficult to train with because of civil restrictions in airspace, and things like that, and spectrum management. But we manage to, and we are very enthusiastic about it.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time is expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Waltz.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to talk today about NATO contributions to its own defense. And you have both stated in your opening statements, kind of patting ourselves on the back that we are going from the pathetic number of eleven out of thirty, thirty-one member nations contributing its bare minimum of two percent to its national defense that—wow, we are going to twenty now, and we are on the right path.

I think, frankly, that is the tyranny of low expectations, and it has infected our national security apparatus for many, many decades. Including the many years that our European, look, we can be friends, and allies, and have tough conversations. But if we don't start imposing real consequences, if we don't start using the leverage we have, we literally cannot afford to subsidize European defense any longer.

And what we often talk about, I mean we are talking about the front-line European nations, they are contributing, the Baltics, Poland. But when we are talking about France, when we are talking about Germany, when we are talking about Spain, when we are talking about Italy, they are not. And all of those heads of state will be here in Washington for the Washington Summit this summer. Dr. Wallander, how are we as a matter of policy going to go from eleven to thirty-one contributing the minimum, the bare minimum?

Not half, not a third, because we are continuously, and you are asking us to go to the American people again, and again, and we will be having the same conversation at this posture hearing, Mr. Chairman, next year. American people dig deeper in your pockets because European politicians can't and won't get their people to dig deeper in their pockets. It is a good deal for them, it is a bad deal for the American people.

This is pathetic. Half, half is what we are congratulating ourselves for? Do you think that is a good deal for the American people, Dr. Wallander?

Dr. WALLANDER. No, I fully agree with you, it should be thirty-two, and we press—

Mr. WALTZ. What is the administration's plan, aside from asking, to get them to do it?

Dr. WALLANDER. So, the plan has already yielded improvement, and we can share with you the updated numbers. There are, as of today, eighteen NATO allies who meet two percent, which is fourteen too few. We expect around several more by the time of the

summit to announce publicly that they have met two percent. And we expect several other allies to have——

Mr. WALTZ. No, no, no, that two percent of that, they are on some kind of future pathway.

Dr. WALLANDER. That they have reached two percent, we expect the number to be larger by the summit.

Mr. WALTZ. We have Chancellor Scholz in his famous speech in 2022 just after the invasion, promised to enshrine the two percent in law, the German Chancellor, he did not. In fact they voted it down in their Parliament. Italian Prime Minister Meloni promised in 2023 Italian defense spending would increase, saying quote “freedom has a price” Italian defense spending is actually declining.

Spanish prime minister promises by 2029 two percent, it would have to double its defense budget. You know who is doubling their defense budget in relation to the threat? Japan is, their prime minister is here, they are living up to their shared burden commitment, the European nations are not. Mr. Chairman, it is not only the defense spending, what they are giving is in horrible condition. I’d like to enter into the record Ukraine rejects German leopard tanks due to their poor condition.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 93.]

Mr. WALTZ. In this article by Reuters, the tanks currently stranded in Poland constitute the second part of a large-scale supply of German Leopard tanks. By the way, these are the ones that they leveraged to get us to contribute ours. The tanks were retired from active service more than a decade ago. So, our European allies are under giving, what they are giving is often late.

What you see in the charts are often commitments and promises, we saw that in Afghanistan for years. And then what they are giving late and too few is often in poor condition. Dr. Wallander, how are we going to get to thirty-two? Will you commit to get us to thirty-two within the next three years? Is that possible?

Dr. WALLANDER. We will commit to work with those allies who have not met their commitment, their required commitment that they agreed to at Vilnius, and get to thirty-two one by one.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman’s time is expired, although he makes an outstanding point.

The gentlelady from New Jersey, Ms. Sherrill, is recognized.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And it is really, I think as we have heard today, necessary that we get a vote on the floor of the bipartisan supplemental. We have been waiting now for far too long, and every day that we wait Ukraine suffers, and those fighting for Ukraine suffer. And it is estimated that since Putin’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, our allies and partners have actually committed around forty-four point three billion dollars to direct security assistance to Ukraine.

In fact as a percentage of GDP, the United States only ranks at sixteen among all of the countries in NATO. So, our NATO allies have also made significant plans and commitments to improve the alliance’s collective defense and deterrents through defense spending, improved capabilities, and nested strategies. So, we see many

are in fact doing their part for the collective security of NATO, and ensuring Ukraine maintains their right of self-determination.

But Ukraine is running low on ammunition for essential artillery, air defense systems, and all while Russia's receiving shells from North Korea and Iran. So, the Speaker has got to bring this vote to the floor. Time is of the essence, has been of the essence, and we must pass the supplemental. It is time for him to show true leadership despite his own political concerns.

And to really stop playing politics with this, and start ensuring that Ukraine can effectively fight. Because our allies and partners have stepped up in the absence of U.S. support, but the United States is failing as a leader of the free world, and a vanguard of democracies worldwide, and our adversaries around the world are taking note.

So, Dr. Wallander, can you share your assessment of what the inaction of this legislative body will mean not only for the survival of Ukraine, but also the dangerous precedent that this would set for the status of the United States as a leader for democracy to our allies, partners, potential partners, and importantly to our adversaries?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Congresswoman. We are viewed with, and greatly positively by Europeans for our leadership in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group. But unfortunately, the fact that we have been unable to provide capabilities to Ukraine since December, when the previous supplemental funds were used up, has created a challenge in our leadership of that group.

Fortunately, Europe has stepped up in the four months since we have been unable to provide capabilities, and have announced billions of dollars of additional security assistance. That is not enough, as General Cavoli has made clear, but we have worked with Europeans, and they have stop gapped us.

However, they have stop gapped us in the anticipation that we will get that supplemental, and we will get that capability for all the reasons that General Cavoli pointed out, they are unable to provide, especially the artillery ammunition, and the air defense interceptors that Ukraine requires. So, we need to be able to do our part, because we haven't been doing our part in this collective support of European security through supporting Ukraine.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you. And General Cavoli, can you share your assessment of Ukraine's ability to defend their territory and air space without this vital U.S. security assistance?

General CAVOLI. Sure, Congresswoman. Their ability to defend their terrain that they currently hold, and their airspace would fade rapidly, will fade rapidly without the supplemental, without continued U.S. support. And it will continue to fade until such time as somebody else is able to provide those munitions to the Ukrainians. As Dr. Wallander just pointed out, that production level is not in sight right now.

We think it is at least months away, and that is why this is such an important time right now. That is why this is such an important time.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you. And I have to say personally, to see members of the Ukrainian military in my district seeking medical help who have lost their legs, who have lost their eyesight, who

have been on the battlefield for hours and lost a leg because they simply didn't have an armored vehicle to come pick them up is devastating.

And to think that as a foreign adversary to the United States of America attacks a democracy that we might stand in the wings and not fully support this is offensive, offensive to this nation's traditional support for democracy around the world.

Thank you, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Michigan, Mrs. McClain.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would agree with my colleague, that we need to stop playing politics, and I would agree with you, Dr. Wallander, but maybe not in the same perspective as you say we haven't been doing our part. I take a little bit of offense to that. I want to talk about this article, U.S. urges Ukraine to stop attacking Russian oil refineries, the report says.

In this piece, the U.S. government sources are said to be concerned with Ukraine targeting of Russian oil production facilities. Listen to this, because it could drive up gas prices. I quote, "ahead of a knife edge presidential election where prices at the gas pump are bound to be a contentious topic, this report seems to show that while the White House has incessantly demanded Congress pass additional Ukrainian funding, they are tying the hands of the Ukrainians for political purposes."

And I agree, we need to stop playing politics. If the president truly cared about defeating Russia, he would be acting as a leader, and not as a political hack worried about his next election. Mr. Chairman, this president has shown time and time again that politics are more important than our own national security. He is now giving Russia the green light to continue to destroy Ukraine.

Six months ago this President said October tenth, in his October tenth speech, he said we stand with Israel, and we will make sure Israel has what it needs to take care of its citizens, and defend itself. Now the President has been threatening Israel if they don't stop defending themselves. On Iran, the President has chosen to side with the Iranian regime over all of our allies in the region.

This decision has made the Middle East less safe, put American service members at risk, and given the regime room to provide deadly drones, ammunitions to Russia for their war in Ukraine. Again, the same war this President is demanding Congress provide more American tax dollars to, right? I take offense that we haven't done our part.

Our southern border, the President chooses to play politics with our nation's security by opening the floodgates to illegal immigrants simply because President Trump had the border secured. I want to remind my colleagues what President Obama's Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said about the then Vice President Biden in 2014. I quote "I think he has been wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past four decades."

A well respected Secretary of Defense, a man who was held in high regards by members on both sides of the aisle has said our

President is always wrong when it comes to our national security. Mr. Chairman, I think it is imperative that this committee investigate whether President Biden is playing politics with the lives of Ukrainians, and our NATO allies, and the rest of the western world. I ask unanimous consent to include the article in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

Mrs. MCCLAIN. And with that, I yield the balance of my time to Mr. Waltz.

Mr. WALTZ. Dr. Wallander, we have statistics here that our allies have contributed forty-four billion in direct security assistance to Ukraine, and we have talked about the accounting differences in the Pentagon that have yielded six billion, three hundred billion. What is the common accounting standard? Does NATO have a common accounting standard for how it is valuing its assistance?

Dr. WALLANDER. NATO does not have—NATO doesn't organize or advance that security assistance.

Mr. WALTZ. So, it is conceivable that it could be overvalued, as our equipment contributions were overvalued?

Dr. WALLANDER. Assessment of the value is provided by the countries providing the value of the equipment.

Mr. WALTZ. So, they could be using, I mean we have got what, thirty different countries, they could be using thirty different standards?

Dr. WALLANDER. I cannot speak to their national standards, these are democracies, they are accountable as well—

Mr. WALTZ. But you just stated on the record in front of the American people, they are doing their fair share, we have figures saying they've contributed forty-four billion, but you don't know how they're coming up to that forty-four billion?

Dr. WALLANDER. Those are the figures that they report to their parliaments, and—

Mr. WALTZ. So, they are grading their own homework, fair?

Dr. WALLANDER. Yes. Those are our allies, and when they report numbers, we take them seriously.

Mr. WALTZ. We just take it at face value?

Dr. WALLANDER. We take them seriously.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Chairman, I think we should look at legislation to understand what our allies are actually contributing. Is it replacement value, is it new value, is it some value that they valued? Because they think it is valuable, maybe they want to appear to be doing more than they are. I think this is a serious issue, and I find it concerning, Dr. Wallander, that we don't have a common standard for a number that we are putting out to the American people.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time is expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Escobar.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and I'd like to thank our witnesses, thank you for your service to our country. We are definitely living through very precarious times, and it is disheartening to see politics coming from this dais, and this com-

mittee at a time when we really need to be united around our common goals, and united for our common vision for the globe.

One of the areas of great concern that I keep hearing about on cable TV, and coming from members of Congress, and I heard it today from the dais, from one of our colleagues, that we are in effect sending bags of cash to Ukraine. That it is Congress that is being asked to approve money for Ukraine, when in fact the truth is we are approving funding to replenish stocks and munitions.

I think it is really important for the American people to understand what supplemental funding goes to specifically. Not specifically enumerating everything that it is funding, but can you please explain to the American people what the supplemental funding request from the President would fund for Ukraine, Dr. Wallander?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Congresswoman. So, there are three buckets to understand. First is presidential draw down authority, and the associated replenishment appropriation to replenish U.S. stocks. The authority allows for pulling capabilities from U.S. stocks based on an assessment that readiness requirements are maintained.

And then the contracts are made to replenish those stocks for the American military forces to be able therefore to move on to new production, new capabilities, in many cases more modern, new, advanced versions of the existing stocks. The second is Ukrainian security—

Ms. ESCOBAR. And who is building—I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt, but I think this is an important point, who is building the replenishment of the stocks?

Dr. WALLANDER. That money goes to American defense contractors to supply the American military with the most up to date, capable requirements that the combatant commanders have identified, and need in their stocks.

Ms. ESCOBAR. So, that funding is being invested in American jobs, American companies?

Dr. WALLANDER. Across forty states of the United States all put together.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you, I didn't mean to interrupt.

Dr. WALLANDER. And then the second bucket, the Ukrainian Security Assistance Initiative is direct procurement from American defense industrial companies in those forty states. So, going for paying for contracts and capabilities that then on a longer term are delivered to Ukraine for building that future force for defense and deterrence. But again, that is not money that goes to Ukraine, that is money that goes to American defense contractors, to American workers in those companies.

All that money stays in the American economy. And the third bucket goes to support EUCOM, its operations, its presence, its activities in support of Ukraine so they learn how to use that equipment, so they are trained, so they know how to repair it, so that they are able to field it, and also to support all the work that General Cavoli's team is doing in support of Ukraine.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much. I think it is so important every time a member of Congress talks about sending money to Ukraine, and uses that term, I think it is so important that we remind the American public where that money is actually going to.

The jobs it creates in our own country, in our own states. Otherwise this is part of, I'm concerned it is part of the Russian disinformation effort to mislead the American public about that funding.

Very, very quickly, the House has been frozen for months on this request. It is up to one man, the Speaker of the House, or colleagues on the Republican side who will sign a discharge petition. Only thirty seconds left, if we were to approve that supplemental request in the next week or two, how quickly would help get to Ukraine?

Dr. WALLANDER. We would be able to, with EUCOM's support, and Transportation Command (TRANSCOM)'s support, begin immediately within a week or two to provide the ammunition, the artillery ammunition, to provide interceptors to Ukraine.

Ms. ESCOBAR. And I think it is important to underscore today, the Ukrainian defense is being out shot five to one, that will change pretty quickly if the House remains frozen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Mills, for five minutes.

Mr. MILLS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, my colleagues have said a lot, and I just want to kind of make sure that we are referencing those comments. A few of them said that all we need is a little democracy. Well, I wish that there was significantly important, a vote by the Senate, and Chuck Schumer to bring House Resolution (H.R.) 2, Secure the Border Act, when we have got hundreds of thousands of Americans who are dying.

Fentanyl overdoses, child and human sex trafficking, not to mention one hundred and seventy-eight plus countries that are crossing our border, and over four hundred plus known individuals on terrorist watch lists that are coming across, but oh wait, that is not the priority, let's secure Ukraine's borders. You know, it is just politics as usual. I want to also go back to something one of my colleagues had talked about.

Which is in 1947 NATO was created for the ideas of stopping Soviet Union expansionism. And the idea is that we were so in fear of the idea that the Soviet Union would continue its encroachment, and yet the countries that are most at risk of this, Germany, France, Italy, others, for how many years wouldn't even pay two percent of their actual dues?

And America is left holding the bag at three point four seven percent, in addition to the one hundred and fourteen plus billion dollars that has already been allocated with Ukraine, who on multiple occasions, hasn't presented a military strategic plan that would show how they win this war, or even what is the definition of what winning the war means.

And so, I have a big, difficult problem with this. Not to mention that the E.U. member states under David O'Sullivan, the E.U. Sanctions Chief, has admitted that they have frozen assets from Russia exceeding two hundred and six billion dollars U.S., one hundred and ninety billion euro that they now are netting profits on at three and a half billion dollars that should be utilized if they are so concerned with a lack of ammunition.

This premise that we are going to go ahead and spend this sixty billion dollars in America, and that is somehow going to be great for the industrial base, you are still looking at the idea is that you are adding money in that we don't have which increases our inflation. And one of the things that we just talked about, Dr. Wallander, you said that Russia's inflation is thirteen percent, is that correct?

Dr. WALLANDER. That is, yes.

Mr. MILLS. Can you tell me what America's is?

Dr. WALLANDER. No, I cannot.

Mr. MILLS. Would you want to take just a shot in the dark at what you think America's inflation is at?

Dr. WALLANDER. I'd prefer not to guess.

Mr. MILLS. Yeah, try about twenty plus percent. And try thirty-four trillion dollars. It's eighteen percent plus two percent reduction in minimum wage, so we can go ahead and put those figures together. Not to mention roughly twenty-seven percent increase in fuel cost, cost of good allowances, yeah, inflation is one of those things that we admit is bad for Russia, and also bad for America.

You also made a comment recently when you said that we have concerns on hitting civilian targets with oil terminals. Was that the same concerns that we had in the 2003 Iraq War when we were bombing oil terminals, and we were hitting areas that?

Dr. WALLANDER. That is the concern in our discussions with Ukraine.

Mr. MILLS. Was that our concern when we were at war in Iraq?

Dr. WALLANDER. I do not know, sir, I was not in the U.S. government at that time.

Mr. MILLS. I was, because I was actually deployed to that war, as well as for the additional seven years in Iraq, three years in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Pakistan, North Somalia, blown up twice in 2006, all to do what? To play interventionism, to play neo-con, neo-lib ideas that we don't understand the evolution of warfare is beyond kinetics.

And now into the ideas of resource economics, supply chain, and non-kinetic influence operations that have been not only vastly more successful, but also safer, and not costly to the American people? You know, next year at thirty-four plus trillion dollars we are going to spend more in interest payments than the entire budget for our national defense annually.

We need to start thinking about three priorities for a change, America, Americans, and American interests. And if we are talking about building coalitions for allies, then we need to be putting the pressure that President Trump put on our NATO allies to say you need to be paying two percent of your GDP, which we agreed, now needs to be even more than that when you are looking at Russia's increase to six percent.

But instead we are continuing to play politics. Let's bring this vote to the floor, even though it is not a bill which has all the necessary things, and hasn't addressed the corruption, hasn't addressed the failure for a one hundred percent audit on Ukraine funding, hasn't addressed what does success look like for Ukraine. And this idea that whatever happens in Ukraine is somehow going to happen in Taiwan is a false premise.

That's the same idea as the George W. Bush model of we can fight them over here, or we can fight them here. Well guess what? Our borders are open, and we are allowing them to come in, not to mention this great, successful airlift operation of the 2021 botched withdrawal in Afghanistan that actually brought over seventy three percent of the people on that aircraft that wasn't vetted, didn't have biometrics, wasn't Special Immigrant Visas (SIV)s.

It's funny how we cherry pick what is beneficial, but we don't address the facts. I put America first, and I'm going to continue to put America first.

With that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Virginia, Ms. McClellan.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Dr. Wallander, and General Cavoli, for being here. Russia has sought to use irregular warfare and cyber weapons to bolster its aggressions in Ukraine, and sow division, and undermine democracy among our European allies, and some would argue here. How is EUCOM working to address this particular threat, and what do you need from Congress to support those efforts?

General CAVOLI. Thank you, Congresswoman. EUCOM has a very active strategic messaging apparatus. We have teams that analyze news and spot disinformation, and then we get the truth to usually a country's public affairs apparatus, and they promulgate the real story. A very simple example would be if we were having an exercise and somebody falsely posted a picture of a bicycle accident and said that an American truck ran over that.

We spot that, we get the truth to the country very quickly, they turn it around and put it out. I think more to your point though, we work very closely with nations at both an overt and a secret level to help them analyze the information environment, and then to help them combat disinformation and misinformation. And we do that country by country under the supervision of the chief of mission in that country, the U.S. chief of mission in that country.

And we also do that regionally under my authorities and supervision. It is a well-funded program, we could always do more, but nevertheless, I think it is well funded by the Congress right now, and it is very effective, Congresswoman, thank you.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Thank you. With Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, Finland and Sweden have now officially joined NATO and drastically increased both the fighting force and defense manufacturing capability of the alliance. How is the United States working to swiftly integrate our new allies into the alliance, and how can we here in Congress better facilitate those efforts?

General CAVOLI. Thank you. First of all, NATO is primarily responsible for that integration. NATO has already pulled both of those countries into our regional plans, and we had been working with them for some months to prepare to do that. So, that is going very quickly. As you are well aware, Congresswoman, both of those countries have very advanced, and sophisticated militaries that have a long operational history with the forces in NATO.

So, their interoperability is already sky high, so it is a very easy pull in that regard. The U.S. proper, U.S. EUCOM has conducted

exercises with them to make sure that our interoperability is high. We have worked with them to gain access to their airspace, to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance flights, those have proven very successful, it is real estate that we didn't have too much access to previously.

And in addition to that, we have made agreements with both countries for the prepositioning of material in those countries. So, not only are we helping NATO to integrate them, but they are helping us to integrate into places that we were previously unable to. Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Thank you.

Dr. WALLANDER. Our part of this at DOD is to support the policies required to enable General Cavoli to advance the exercises, the capabilities, the diplomatic relationships. And I would just say that Finland and Sweden will, the heads of state and government at the summit, be fully part of all the decisions on NATO's future, and the obligations and responsibilities of all the allies going forward.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Thank you. And I don't know if you will fully have time to answer the next one, so if not, maybe if you could submit it for the record? But with Russia pulling out of the New START Treaty, which is an incredible blow to the system of nuclear arms non-proliferation that has been a guiding light of the post-Cold War era, what does that decision mean for prospects for future nuclear non-proliferation efforts? And how concerned should we be about what this signals concerning Russia's strategic weapons goals?

Dr. WALLANDER. I will submit a full answer. The top lines would be we are very concerned about the signal it sends to the international community, that Russia does not respect or live up to its international obligations in the case of nuclear arms treaties, as well as the invasion, and other instances. So, but I will submit a full answer.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 115.]

Ms. MCCLELLAN. And as part of that, if you could discuss the risk of returning to a nuclear arms race, I would appreciate it.

With that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time is expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Fallon.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it. In 2014, NATO countries, as we all know, agreed to invest two percent of their GDP on defense, and that was a commitment that wasn't unfortunately followed through with expediency. There was a lot of words, and not actions, and particularly I feel what is egregious, and I think what is touched on by Mr. Waltz, were some of the larger European nation states.

Spain, Canada, Italy, France hovered around two percent, but the greatest, I think, egregious violator was Germany. Fourth largest economy in the world, and they weren't stepping up. So, I have a two-part question for General Cavoli. Let's look at a different world, 2014, that that commitment was met with expediency and our larger nation states in NATO followed through, the ones I had just mentioned.

With some timely decisiveness could the Ukrainian war have been deterred all together, do you think, if that happened, General?

General CAVOLI. I'm sorry, Congressman, are you asking had nations, especially the larger allies been spending at or above the goal would that have deterred—

Mr. FALLON. Yeah, if they had made their commitment with expediency, say in 2015 and 2016, and said you know what, particularly after Crimea, we are going to spend two and a half, whatever percent, and they follow through with it. And Germany said we are in a different world now, we are going to take the lead, and France followed as well, Italy, Spain, Canada, do you think that Vladimir Putin would have invaded anyway in 2022?

General CAVOLI. Yes, I do. I do not think we were extending mutual or collective defense guarantees to Ukraine at that time.

Mr. FALLON. Do you think it would have given him some increased pause?

General CAVOLI. Sure, it would have.

Mr. FALLON. Okay, so it would have been a good thing, but the lack of action certainly encouraged it? If you say you are going to do something, and then you don't do it, I think it is worse if you hadn't—you would have been better off not saying anything at all. And in NATO in 2014 a lot of our allies said they were going to do something, they didn't do it.

And I think that was a breeding ground for an authoritarian land grab, quite frankly. One other question, General. I notice that when you look at the closer you get to the threat, which is Russia, the more the defense spending tends to go up. In fact, I don't think there is a NATO country that borders Ukraine or Russia that has not met that two percent commitment. And the further you go away it seems the less spending you get.

Having said that, do you think it makes sense for us to move United States troops closer to the threat? So, my question is should we, in your opinion, make the Eastern European bases permanent?

General CAVOLI. First of all, Congressman, the United States has and is moving forces closer to the eastern flank. As you are aware, we have got an agreement signed a couple of years ago with Poland before this conflict began in Ukraine, signed with Poland to Poland provides significant infrastructure, and we will rotate forces through there.

The additional forces that we surged to Europe during the immediate aftermath of Russia's invasion, those have all gone to the eastern flank, principally the Baltic countries, again, Poland, and Southeastern Europe, and Romania, and Bulgaria, so there is an effort. There is also an effort on the part of nations in the alliance to go farther east.

So, in the immediate aftermath of the invasion, NATO, before I became the Allied Command Operations Commander, took the decision to establish new battle groups on a standing basis. They rotate, but they are permanently there, four additional ones, so there is a total of eight. But to design so they can all go up to brigade size at time of need. And a number of nations have elected to go up to brigade size early in that. So, there is a definite shift eastward in the alliance, sir.

Mr. FALLON. All right, thank you. Dr. Wallander, unfortunately, would you agree that the western sanctions on Russia haven't worked, economic sanctions?

Dr. WALLANDER. Western sanctions have imposed costs, but they have not stopped Putin.

Mr. FALLON. I think they have unfortunately—I mean, unfortunately they have been a dismal failure. I would have loved to have them work. But when you have got nations like the communist Chinese, you have got Iran, North Korea, in some ways even India dealing with Russia, they circumvented us. So, we talked a lot about Western European reliance, some call it an addiction to Russian energy.

You would be in favor of the United States doing all we can to wean their dependence, our Western European allies in particular, off of Russian energy?

Dr. WALLANDER. Yes, they have taken steps, and they can do more, and we fully support that, and actively work with them.

Mr. FALLON. Because we have a lot of natural gas in this country, for instance. The number one customer for liquid natural gas (LNG) that we export is Europe. So, I was perplexed, confused, and otherwise befuddled when this administration, and President Biden put a, whatever you want to call it, suspension, stopping, pause on our LNG exports. Did you advise him to do that?

Dr. WALLANDER. That is not my area of responsibility.

Mr. FALLON. Okay, so would you agree that that was not wise considering that it was really, essentially a gift to Putin?

Dr. WALLANDER. I cannot speak to that policy, it is outside the scope of DOD.

Mr. FALLON. But you are a very intelligent young woman, I think that you have a DR in front your name, I do not—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time is expired, and she is very intelligent, I agree with you.

The gentleman from Nevada is recognized, Mr. Horsford.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, and to the Ranking Member, for holding this important hearing. It has been over two years since we saw Russia launch a brutal invasion of Ukraine, but for many Ukrainians, this conflict began a decade ago, with Russia's continued occupation of Crimea. It has also been six months since President Biden released a national security supplemental that would reinvigorate the United States defense industrial base, while also providing much needed support for our closest allies and partners.

President Biden's supplemental request would provide billions in direct industrial investments in the United States, including over four million in my home State of Nevada alone. However, instead of putting this critical bill to a vote, the House majority has stalled, and even worse, repeated Russian propaganda on the House floor.

It was reported this week that U.S. Central Command has sent a stash of Iranian munitions it captured from Houthi militants to Ukraine. General Cavoli, I understand that desperate times call for desperate measures, can you provide examples on how Ukrainians are continuing to stay in the fight, even as support from the United States has lagged, and can you expand on how crucial it is that Congress pass the national security supplemental?

General CAVOLI. Absolutely, Congressman. The first, and most clearest, and present example is the self-rationing of artillery rounds that the Ukrainians are using right now. So, they know that they have a limited supply until we are able to begin supporting them again. And in the meantime, they have self-restricted the amount of artillery they use, this has significant consequences on the battlefield, of course.

They are already at a five to one deficit in artillery fire as compared to the Russians, and that will obviously increase dramatically in the absence of a supplemental, sir.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you. Assistant Secretary Wallander, several of our European allies continue to rely on Chinese made logistics networks, ports, and 5G capabilities. I am concerned that this leaves these countries vulnerable to economic pressure coming from the People's Republic of China (PRC). How are you assessing the threat of over reliance on Chinese infrastructure in Europe, especially in the telecommunication space? And how can we work with our allies and partners to give them an alternative?

Dr. WALLANDER. Thank you, Congressman. Yes, absolutely, reliance on Chinese provided technology or capabilities and logistics, as you note, creates a vulnerability among NATO allies, European countries. It undermines their resilience, it creates challenges for them to be able to advance strong policies. Countries like Lithuania, who have taken a very principled stand on China, have fortunately already divested themselves of those dependencies.

And we use that as an example when we talk to European countries to show how reducing or even eliminating those kinds of dependencies actually is a security step. Often it is framed as an economic benefit, and what we work with them is to understand the security risk that they undertake when they follow that path.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you.

General CAVOLI. Congressman, it might be useful to note also that U.S. EUCOM designs exercises, or aspects of its exercise program specifically to test infrastructure, and to flush out problems with its ownership. That gives us the opportunity to do everything from work on the networks, the communications networks and infrastructure, as well as the physical infrastructure, and the manpower of a port for instance.

And then we work very closely with the Department of State and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, specifically Dr. Wallander, to address our concerns with countries. It is actually a very successful program, I think, so far. But it is a big task that we are trying to push back on.

Mr. HORSFORD. Great. And in my final time, General, what are the lessons that EUCOM has learned about the use of these autonomous capabilities in large scale combat operations, and has it changed the way we think about the use of unmanned capabilities specifically?

General CAVOLI. Not completely, not yet it hasn't changed everything, Congressman. We are watching it very closely, because there is clearly something there, but I would note that the principal decisions on the battlefield for both sides are made by legacy systems, it is tanks, and it is artillery. All the drones and stuff have not yet produced that.

The one area, two areas where I would say are the most promising, long-range penetration from the air to substitute for ballistic missiles, and what the Ukrainians have done in the Black Sea with unmanned systems is —

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gimenez.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Wallander, let's go back to energy. It takes money to perpetuate, promulgate a war. What is the leading money maker for Russia right now?

Dr. WALLANDER. It is oil exports, and natural gas exports, primarily to China.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Okay. So, if the United States were to produce more oil and gas, and drive down the cost on a worldwide basis, would that affect Russia's ability to perpetuate this war?

Dr. WALLANDER. On the margin it would, but China is an energy hungry, greedy country, and it is willing to pay. It has long term contracts with Russia, and Xi does not want Putin to fail.

Mr. GIMENEZ. All right, fair enough. Now, Russia has been targeting Ukrainian's energy, and sources of energy, et cetera, is that true?

Dr. WALLANDER. Yes, that is true.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Has Ukraine been targeting Russia's energy production?

Dr. WALLANDER. There are public reports that Ukraine has done so.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Have we tried to stop them from doing that?

Dr. WALLANDER. The U.S. has raised concerns with Ukraine, which is a sovereign country, and can choose its own targets, but raised concerns about targeting civilian critical infrastructure.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Well, yeah, but the Russians have no problem in targeting Ukrainian energy production. Now, if the Ukrainians were able to disrupt Russian energy production, would that significantly alter their ability to perpetuate this war?

Dr. WALLANDER. So far the strikes that we have seen against Russian energy sources have not significantly altered Russia's ability to prosecute the war.

Mr. GIMENEZ. That is so far, but if they are actually able to do it successfully, would that alter the economics of this war?

Dr. WALLANDER. I am not an expert on energy infrastructure, but the evidence we have seen is that the Russians have been able to rapidly repair the facilities that were struck.

Mr. GIMENEZ. General, what would happen if we don't support Ukraine, and they actually run out of bullets?

General CAVOLI. In my military experience, Congressman, if somebody is shooting at you, and you can't shoot back, you lose, or you die.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Where is Ukraine now in terms of its arms supplies, and ability to fight back?

General CAVOLI. Sir, could I tell you about that in closed session, please?

Mr. GIMENEZ. Absolutely, thank you very much. A lot of folks, even on my side of the aisle somehow equate the lack of the Biden Administration securing our border being a reason why we can't

help Ukraine secure their border. The facts are that Ukrainians are spilling their blood to secure their border. And the fact that our administration does not secure our border shouldn't be the reason why we don't help people that are trying to fight for their freedom.

As somebody who came over from a communist country some sixty years ago, somebody who is not a fan of Russia, I think that we need to support the Ukrainians. All they are asking for is our aid, all they are asking for is bullets and armaments, and for the life of me I just don't understand why we don't support them, and we should. Some analysts believe that the F-16 could help Ukraine, do you share that, General?

General CAVOLI. The F-16 will help, any aircraft will help, Congressman. It is a particularly difficult jump to go from the older Soviet era stuff, aircraft that the Ukrainians have been flying, especially had been maintaining and supporting, it is tough to go from that to a modern fourth gen aircraft like the F-16. As you know, we are working on it with them, there is an entire coalition of countries working on it with them. But ultimately it will be a valuable thing for them to have.

Mr. GIMENEZ. I understand that we are actually training them, training them to fly the F-16s, and that there are some countries that will be actually supplying F-16s to Ukraine, is that true?

General CAVOLI. Both are correct, yes.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Okay, why isn't the United States giving them F-16s?

Dr. WALLANDER. We are supporting the provision of F-16s by European countries, and the numbers that they are going to provide meet the requirements for the Ukrainians at this time.

Mr. GIMENEZ. All right, thank you, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from California, Ms. Jacobs.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and first, I would like to thank the Chair and Ranking Member for their bipartisan support of the security supplemental. I think it is incredibly important that we get Ukraine the assistance that it needs, and also that we make sure that humanitarian assistance in that supplemental package is past. I was just on the border of Chad and Sudan, and saw the Sudanese refugees whose food is running out because we haven't yet passed that humanitarian assistance.

General Cavoli, I want to ask you, in the Operation Atlantic Resolve quarterly report to Congress, it stated that the Security Assistance Group Ukraine reported that it had no information to suggest that the Ukrainian armed forces were using U.S. provided weapons and equipment in any way other than intended. Can you provide more details about the reporting mechanism utilized to monitor the usage of U.S. provided weapons and equipment?

And are there mechanisms in place for independent verification or assessment of these findings regarding the usage of U.S. assistance?

Ms. JACOBS. Yeah, Congresswoman, thank you very much for the opportunity to talk about this important topic. First of all, it continues to be the case since the publication of that report, or since the authorship of that report, that we just don't have evidence that this is—that there is widespread diversion or anything like that.

Now, I have to admit that that is different from whether or not things get efficiently from the stockpiles to the soldiers' hands in the squad on the front line.

But we do work on logistical distribution with our partners in Ukraine quite a bit. So, things leave the United States accounted for by the service that provided it. In the case of something from a PDA, where we are giving something from our stockpile according to the amount of money provided under the authority, and then receiving money to replenish that, right?

So, that comes out, that is accounted for by the services, and I think we have a very, very good control over that. When things hit the ground in Poland, either by truck, plane, or train, they come into the hands of our soldiers in Southeastern Poland, they get accounted for there, and I'm very confident, we had some missteps early on when we were rushing to get things done.

But we have got systems in place, I know we know what we have got on our hands, and that it is faithful to what was sent. Then we consign it to the Ukrainians, and they sign for it item by item. So, I know as it goes onto trucks, that we have accounted for it. After it crosses the border, it gets harder for us. So, we bar code things, and we have issued the Ukrainians scanners.

We have automated the process of tracking things as it goes forward, we share our databases with them, and they share theirs with us, so we can track. It is really when you get down to the tactical edge that it starts getting a little bit harder, ma'am. And it is complicated by the fact that we can't go to a lot of those places simply because of the level of danger, and we have restricted ourselves from doing that.

So, in those cases we do ask the Ukrainians to self-report. And incredibly important part of this system though, is contractors that we hire to provide for us an outside view on front line units accountability. Those contractors are paid for with supplemental money. And when the supplemental, if it is not renewed, I won't be able to perform that level of fidelity outside third party verification of what the Ukrainians are claiming as their accountability. I hope that answers your question, ma'am.

Dr. WALLANDER. That is my understanding of the system, and that we also then have a duty at DOD to report those findings, and that tracking to Congress.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. I also wanted to ask about the Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell. Could you just talk about how we are working with Ukrainian defense manufacturers to most effectively use the assistance we are giving?

Dr. WALLANDER. We are working with the Ukrainians, and a number of European countries to create reassurance about the size of contracts, because what we need is for potential investors in Ukrainian defense industries to see not just the immediate need, but a multi-year requirement. So, we are working with Ukraine on locations, on what is required.

Our embassy works with potential investors to support those capabilities in Ukraine, and we are also sharing with them the lessons we have learned on rapid acquisition, on multi-year contracts, to inform them from the lessons of our success with congressional support that we have experienced over the last two years.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. McCormick.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is good to see you both here today. I have some specific questions that actually arose from some of your statements earlier. First, I will address the Supreme Allied Commander, which I think is the coolest title ever.

General CAVOLI. The title does not help me at home, Congressman.

Dr. MCCORMICK. This is an important question. When it comes to Ukraine, which I think is an incredibly strategically important country in the world, is this war, for the allies, winnable?

General CAVOLI. Yes, it is, in a couple of ways. The first, if we go back to what Secretary Wallander was talking about earlier, denying the Russians a strategic victory, or imposing a strategic defeat on them. That in itself is a victory, even if a temporary victory, for the alliance. So, in that sense it is winnable, we can do that with our Ukrainian colleagues.

Dr. MCCORMICK. So, I would agree, and here is my point on this, because I think this is really important. You mentioned the F-16s, and what is being supplied is adequate. I don't like that word, adequate, because that doesn't go back to what we learned in command and staff in the war college, which is overwhelming force, Clauswitzian warfare.

We have a GDP of around twenty-five to twenty-seven trillion dollars. Combine that with Europe, around forty-five trillion dollars. Russia has one point seven trillion dollars for a GDP. This shouldn't be a contest, it shouldn't be. But we are slow rolling our support. Not just what we have already committed, which has been slow rolling.

Getting our tanks over there, getting our airplanes over there, getting our munitions over there, the things we have already committed to. But also we continue to hold this up in Congress, which drives me crazy, because this is a winnable war. This idea that is being propagated on both sides of the house that we can't win this war is insane. We outnumber them dramatically.

But quite frankly, Ukraine, with a GDP of only two hundred billion dollars, has been able to hold out against a First World country army, and sustain fifty percent casualties to their armor, and three hundred and fifty casualties over all with a third-rate Army that is very ill trained. That is success by my measures.

And if we give them surge capabilities, which by the way in Iraq and Afghanistan, I don't know if you would agree with me general, but we didn't do very well until we had surge capabilities, and we are the big boy on the block. But we didn't succeed until we had surge ops, and we are the First World country when it comes to military capabilities. How do we expect a Third World country to succeed against a First World army if we don't give them surge ops in real time?

We are not giving—we can't give them adequate, we have to give them superiority, that is my point, and nobody is talking about that right now. We have to give them what it takes to get this done. This is a winnable war, would you agree?

General CAVOLI. Yes, I agree, I agree, Congressman. And much of the conversation, much of my testimony today has been about the minimum, about avoiding defeat for Ukraine, which does not necessarily immediately lead to the accomplishment of a strategic interest, yeah.

Dr. MCCORMICK. And when you talk about strategic interest, Ms. Secretary, would you agree that Ukraine is probably a top five country when it comes to resources? You are talking about seventy percent of European grain, you have titanium, you have steel, you have cobalt, you have rare minerals, including some of the radioactive stuff that actually powers the world.

All in this country that could be taken by Russia, and then that stuff could be moved over to China, North Korea, and Iran instead of our allies. It will have consequences for generations to come that people aren't really taking into account when they talk about the economic impact of this.

Dr. WALLANDER. I think you laid out the stakes extremely well, Congressman, I agree.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Great. So, I think if we are going to fulfill our word, by the way that is the third part of this, we actually gave our word, not just one time, but actually real time, NATO as a unanimous vote said we are going to support you during this. I think it is unwise to turn your back on the rest of the world. Reagan, forty years ago at the fortieth anniversary of D-Day from Normandy talked about the consequences of isolationism.

How it is a failed policy, especially against an expansionist, Marxist government, which is exactly what NATO was made for. This is the time to stand, now I agree with both of you. This is a winnable war, and strategically important to the future of the world. We have a fifty percent increase necessary in food stores by 2050, we have to secure our resources, this is strategically important, and it is important to us to fulfill our word to our allies overseas.

And with that, I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from the great State of Alabama, Ms. Sewell.

Ms. SEWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to add my voice to the chorus thanking you, Mr. Chair, and our Ranking Member, for your bipartisan support of the Ukraine supplemental package. As we have heard today, Congress must act. We must act to get Ukrainians the tools they need to defend their countries, it is a strategic ally of ours, and to allow the necessary tools not to be given is just unacceptable, frankly.

You know, I had an opportunity last year, General, to visit Poland on a bipartisan delegation to see firsthand the tracking and accountability systems that you all have put in place in order to make sure that we, the American people, know that the resources that they are sending to Ukraine are being utilized.

I get that you can't see once it is past the border, but overall have you been pleased with that system, and what can we do to strengthen it?

General CAVOLI. Thank you, ma'am. To be clear, we don't go blind when it goes across the border. We have folks in Kyiv who

inspect depots, we have folks in Kyiv who venture out farther, like to Odesa, and places like that to inspect depots. It is really when it gets down to front lines that it gets a little bit tougher for us, and I explained how we are doing that.

Am I satisfied? No, I am not satisfied. I mean, you know, in the U.S. Army when you change over command of a unit you have to sign for every single screwdriver, for every single screw in that unit, you have to account for it, or you have to pay for it, that is where I would like to be. We are just finding that it is difficult to be there right now.

I am satisfied under the conditions that we are doing a good job. I am not satisfied under the conditions that we are doing a perfect job, or even the best job we can, and we strive to improve it every single day.

Ms. SEWELL. Of course we strive to improve it. I just want my constituents in Alabama to know that we are doing everything we can to track it, and to be accountable. One of those NATO allies, and anchor of stability in the region is Romania. And last year, the Alabama National Guard and Romania celebrated thirty years as partners through the State Partnership Program, which has enhanced both of our country's armed forces.

As part of this program, the Red Tails, at the 187th Fighter Wing in Montgomery, which I am so honored to represent, partnered with the Romanian Air Force to share best practices related to the F-16 and the F-35 now, as Romania modernizes its fleet. So, General, can you speak to the benefit that the Alabama National Guard's partnership has on Romania's military readiness, and how does this partnership bolster our position in the region?

General CAVOLI. Ma'am, first of all, just for all members from all states, the State Partnership Program is just an incredibly valuable part of our strategy to be able to support the alliance, and to create strategic bonds between the United States and given countries. In many cases it pays off tenfold in terms of access, in terms of basing, in terms of influence, and things like that.

It is extremely practical, but it is also just strategically valuable. I work very hard with Dan Hokanson on making sure we do it. We have got exciting new developments in the State Partnership Program, it is helping us consolidate the position of formerly neutral, or neutral and wondering about it countries right now.

My Sergeant Major Rob Abernathy here, routinely engages with the soldiers from the various states, and he routinely attends the State Partnership conferences, and everything like that, it is extremely important. With regard to Alabama and Romania, particularly a huge success story, right? So, the Romanians are having a moment, their economy is doing well, and it is going into their military.

They have beaten back a lot of corruption problems they had. Their military is surging right now, it is going to become really an anchor of our alliance in the southeast. They are spending well on defense, they are buying all U.S. equipment, very high-end stuff, but to use that equipment you have got to have a mentor, it is not just a member going and learning how to fly the F-35, or learning how to use this piece of equipment.

You have really got to understand how to employ it in an organization, and how to take care of it, and the Alabama National Guard has been fantastic in that regard, in all domains by the way, on the ground as well, working with Multinational Corps Southeast to put that together. So, I can't thank Alabama enough, or the National Guard in general enough for what they do. It has a material impact on the combat readiness of our alliance.

Ms. SEWELL. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make sure that we were supporting the State Partnerships, really the Alabama Romanian partnership is a model to be followed, thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. It is.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gaetz.

Mr. GAETZ. Dr. Wallander, you have testified that the goal in the war is Russia's strategic failure, right? So, I want to drill down into what that specifically means. Does Russia's strategic failure require repatriating Crimea back to Ukraine?

Dr. WALLANDER. That is for Ukraine to decide whether that is their absolute required achievement to define this war.

Mr. GAETZ. You are a senior administration official in the Biden Administration, I just want to know to you does Russia's strategic failure require the repatriation of Crimea?

Dr. WALLANDER. To me, reinforcing the international law that borders cannot be changed by force is absolutely vital to teaching Putin a lesson, so ultimately, yes.

Mr. GAETZ. Yes, so the objective of the United States through your eyes, and granted Ukraine can have their own objectives, totally concede that, but in your eyes, as you testify to us, until Crimea has been repatriated, we have not achieved what you say is the goal in the war, which is Russia's strategic failure?

Dr. WALLANDER. That Russia does not gain territory through the use of force is a strategic success for Ukraine and for the United States—

Mr. GAETZ. But I just want—I know, but that is very amorphous, I am talking about a specific piece of geography, Crimea. You are testifying that Russia's strategic failure has not been achieved until Crimea is back under Ukrainian control. I think that is what you have said, I just want to draw the finest possible point on it.

Dr. WALLANDER. I appreciate that. I said that Russia will not succeed in seizing territory and having that recognized through the use of force.

Mr. GAETZ. All right, so now let's do the Donbas. Is your testimony the same, that Russia's strategic failure can only be accomplished through a repatriation of the Donbas region back to Ukraine?

Dr. WALLANDER. Russia's strategic failure requires that Russia not gain territory in Ukraine through the use of force.

Mr. GAETZ. And they have done that in the Donbas, right?

Dr. WALLANDER. We do not recognize that, and Ukraine does not recognize that, so no. They occupy the territory—

Mr. GAETZ. I am really interested in how Ukraine has historically recognized the Donbas. Have you ever heard the Donbas described as the ungoverned region by Ukrainian officials prior to the invasion?

Dr. WALLANDER. The Donbas?

Mr. GAETZ. Yes.

Dr. WALLANDER. You mean Donetsk and Luhansk?

Mr. GAETZ. Yeah.

Dr. WALLANDER. I personally have never heard that.

Mr. GAETZ. Really, I have. I heard the Ukrainian Ambassador describe it as the ungoverned region before, and now we are acting as though its repatriation is necessary to achieve Russia's strategic failure. Do you think setting such a high bar, like the repatriation of Crimea, that has been under Russian control for some years now, and the repatriation of the Donbas region, do you think that is a really high bar for us to achieve?

Dr. WALLANDER. I think that Russia is going to fail. I think the international community at large does not support this, and they see a stake in an aggressor being able to invade a neighbor, and slice off territory, and reclaim it as its own.

Mr. GAETZ. Here is what I think. I think that we are never repatriating Crimea back to Ukraine. And I think that if you set that as the objective, then we perpetuate this new forever war that is going to have a lot of death, and a lot of destruction, and it is for an unachievable goal. And I worry that is driving our thinking. General, you said any aircraft will help.

I take some exception with that, I want to quibble with that. Like aircraft that can't fly don't help, do they? Right?

General CAVOLI. There are aircraft that can't fly, and they are not helping—

Mr. GAETZ. Okay, yeah, so they wouldn't help. And then if you weren't able to properly an aircraft, and it were to create some sort of escalatory accident, that would be problematic too, right? Okay, so just for the record, Mr. Chairman, I seek unanimous consent to enter an April 5th publication from the TheDefensePost.com, F-16 Fighter Jets No Longer Relevant According to Ukrainian Official.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 102.]

Mr. GAETZ. Do you have any reaction to that reporting, general?

General CAVOLI. That is not what the Ukrainian officials I talk to think, that is not what they tell me.

Mr. GAETZ. Well, I guess then we shouldn't represent that there is unanimity on that position. There are some who think they will be helpful, some think they won't. Just real quick—

General CAVOLI. I'm not—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Mr. GAETZ. You guys are going to have folks leaving Cypress, and going to these operations in the Eastern Med, and Gaza, and I think the Biden Administration wants us to become the port authority in Gaza, presumably forever. But do we know yet where we are going to build this pier in Gaza?

General CAVOLI. So, that is not in my area of responsibility, sir.

Mr. GAETZ. Okay, so you are not supporting that out of Cypress? Just because on page fifteen of your testimony—

General CAVOLI. No, no, I'm supporting it, yes I do know where—

Mr. GAETZ. But do you know where it is going to be since you are supporting it?

General CAVOLI. I do know where the pier is going to go, but it is not my area of responsibility, and I would refer you to General Kurilla, sir.

Mr. GAETZ. Okay, I'll check with him. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time is expired.

The chair now recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. SMITH. It is a fascinating world we live in, because I actually agree with Mr. Gaetz on something around Ukrainian policy, which I would not have thought of. And this is a really important point, right now what we need to do is get money to Ukraine so they can defend themselves, I am one hundred percent with you on that. I think all the arguments that we have heard today dance around that fundamental reality.

That giving Putin Ukraine is an enormous mistake, and not giving Ukraine the money right now to defend it, that is giving Putin Ukraine. But we have got to get off of this Crimea trap that we walk right into like you just did. Realistically, Crimea is not coming back to Ukraine. And we can absolutely win this war, and absolutely make a difference even in that reality.

We do not have to have Crimea to make it one thousand percent worth it to give Ukraine the money, okay? We need a sovereign, democratic Ukraine that can survive. We have a sovereign, democratic Ukraine that can survive right now, we do. All right, but if we are telling the world you must support us, Ukraine taking it all back, that is an entirely different proposition.

And I have never liked, I have heard this phrase over, nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine. Forgive me, that is a ridiculous thing for any U.S. diplomat or person in U.S. policy to say, okay? We have partners all over the world, and yes, we listen to them. But when we are footing the bill, when we are spending so much money over there, we have a say.

And to act like we don't, I get it, I know why you don't want to act like you are bullying Ukraine into something, but let us walk down that road, as Mr. Gaetz just walked you down that road, and see that that initial instinct that saying well, we are not—we are going to just make sure that Ukraine has a say is a problem. So, I don't really want an answer to this, I just want everybody listening within the Biden Administration to walk down that road a little bit more effectively from this point forward.

So that we don't wind up abandoning Ukraine because we are defending something that is largely theoretical basically, and we get ourselves in that trap. And I just wanted to get that on the record at this particular moment.

And I yield back to the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I completely agree with the Ranking Member.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Panetta.

Mr. PANETTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Ranking Member, for your comments, Doctor, General, thank you for being here, appreciate your testimony today. I also want to harken back to the gentleman from Georgia's testimony. I appreciate how he did sort of sum it up, in that last summer we sort of had high hopes about potentially, using the vernacular, of winning.

But unfortunately now, we are sort of in a situation where we definitely are not as optimistic, and we are getting to the point where we are going to be very, very pessimistic. I had a conversation with a couple of my colleagues who had just traveled to Ukraine last week, and their attitude was that the situation was tense, stable, but they are very, very worried about what is going to happen.

Like I said, last summer, we had high hopes that Ukrainian troops could punch through Russian lines. But unfortunately, the counter offensive failed, and we got to a point where we started to accept that Ukraine was settling into a stalemate. Now, we are starting to worry it is going beyond that, especially with the potential for a big Russian push this summer that could punch through Ukrainian defenses, and deep into the country.

And what we are seeing is that Ukraine is suffering from quote unquote shell hunger, where Russia is firing five shells for every one Ukrainian shell that Ukraine can fire. In addition, Ukraine is low on air defenses, they are low on air defense interceptors, they are low on cruise missiles, they are low on tanks, they are low on fighting vehicles, it is not just leading to a stalemate, it could be leading to a loss.

Straight forward question, what can Congress be doing that we change not just the vernacular, but we change the outcome?

Dr. WALLANDER. What we need right now to prevent Russian success and Ukrainian defeat is passage of the supplemental. It is critical for the reasons General Cavoli has made clear. We are able to get to a longer-term solution by working with Europe, that is well underway. But none of that work that we have done for two years in investing in Ukraine's future will pay off unless we get them through the next few months.

Mr. PANETTA. General?

General CAVOLI. Congressman, I really don't have anything to add to what Dr. Wallander just said, I thought it was very well put. We have spoken at length today about what the critical steps are, and why it is the U.S. So, a very valid question that I have heard from members both in the hearing today, and previously, sir, is why can't somebody else fill in this requirement?

And on those two items, the artillery shells, and ground-based interceptors, we are really leading the world in the production of those, for one five five, especially for the NATO standard. Nobody else is producing it in the quantity necessary. They are trying to get there, but they are not there yet.

So, this supplemental at this time, to get us to that day when others are going to be able to be producing, to include Ukrainians producing their own, which is their and our goal together, I think that is really why this is a critical moment for this supplemental, sir.

Mr. PANETTA. Thanks to both of you. General, obviously what we have seen, and I think you talked about this earlier in one of your answers, the war in Ukraine has been one of both advanced technology and conventional warfare. The Russians have been relying on the age-old tactics, including mines, tanks, and layered defenses. But Ukrainians have actually been merging both advanced technology and conventional warfare.

In some cases Ukraine has been losing some of these technologies in high volumes to combat Russia's sheer number of firepower. What is your assessment of Ukraine's use of emerging technology to reduce some of the asymmetric advantages against Russia's military, and war economy, and how do you anticipate that this can be sustained?

General CAVOLI. It is quite innovative, Congressman. They successfully brought into their military in the very early stages a large, large number of engineers and scientists from what was a very highly developed, technical education base. So, their tertiary education system was very long on engineers and scientists, and those folks have made a big, big help inside the military adapting technologies.

Both new military technologies and grafting it onto old systems, or civilian technologies, and finding a military use for them. Very innovative, very useful, difficult to scale.

Mr. PANETTA. Great, thanks again to both of you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. I would advise members and their staff that are watching, that after Mr. Davis, we are going to recess and go to 2212 for the classified portion of this hearing.

But right now we will recognize the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS. Thanks so much, Mr. Chair, and to the witnesses here today, Doctor, General. Seymour Johnson Air Force Base is the crown jewel in Eastern North Carolina, plays a key role in our national security and defense. General Cavoli, can you explain the role that Strike Eagles particularly are playing in the European theater, and in particular, how divesting a fighter squadron at the base would impact operations in Ukraine?

General CAVOLI. So, the Strike Eagle is a very capable aircraft. It is at the very top end of the fourth generation of aircraft, it carries a very large payload, and can deliver it in very, very difficult places. So, it has proven its worth over the years, sir. It is one of the aircraft that figures heavily in my plans, in the plans at U.S. EUCOM. It is an aircraft that will continue to be valuable for some time.

I do recognize that the Air Force is trying to replace them with more capable aircraft, and it will be very important for us not to have a gap between the retirement of one and the arrival of the next. With regard to the particular squadron at Seymour Johnson, I don't know off the top of my head, and I would refer that question to the Department of the Air Force, and I will get that to them if you would like, sir.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 115.]

Mr. DAVIS. Absolutely. And just a follow up here, how do the F-15Es stationed in particular at Lakenheath directly support or indirectly support Ukraine right now?

General CAVOLI. They form an invaluable part of our air policing, and our air defense system. And that has proven very important in a couple of locations, where it has been necessary to have an ac-

tive missile and air defense. And I would like to be more detailed about that in closed session if you can.

And if you are not going to be at the closed session, sir, I would be happy to answer you in a classified setting elsewhere. There are other very important uses for it.

Mr. DAVIS. Okay, thank you. I visited Ukraine a few weeks ago, and one of the take-aways for me, and I am sticking along this aircraft theme so to speak, and that is not just the aircraft they are receiving, but going through the training, getting pilots trained through the pipeline, could you speak towards your knowledge of all—are we able to help the Ukrainians get through this process that is meaningful in a way that is still going to help us meet all the demands in terms of the national security demands here?

General CAVOLI. Sure, Congressman. First, it is worth pointing out, I think, that we are not the only ones training Ukrainian pilots, and working on fourth generation aircraft. The co-lead of the coalition that Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) has put together with our allies are Denmark and The Netherlands, and they are doing the preponderance of it right now. We are training some pilots in the U.S., and we are working on some of their maintenance programs and everything in the U.S. also.

Just a couple of notes, an important feature of this, believe it or not, has been English language capability, and English language training. If all the manuals, and all the instructions, and all the buttons are written in English, you at least got to know that much English. By the way, it is also the international language of flight, and so it is just necessary to have some level of language skill.

That is the first step. The second step is to determine whether or not the pilot has sufficient basic pilot training. If the person is an accomplished pilot already, go straight to an F-16 transition, and that brings some challenges, because these are very different aircraft from what they have been flying in the Ukrainian Air Force. Otherwise, you go to basic flight training.

And we do have some aviators in basic flight training as well in a couple of different countries, and then they will graduate to an F-16 transition. I hope that answered your question.

Mr. DAVIS. And just one follow up here in the few seconds left. Do we have the capability, the capacity to train more Ukrainian pilots in your opinion?

General CAVOLI. Yeah, the limiting factor on how many we are training right now, sir, is Ukrainian pilot availability. The Ukrainians have carefully calculated how many pilots they can spare and still maintain an adequate level of combat activity inside Ukraine, and that is what is driving the actual size of the pipeline, or how many are in the pipeline.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you, I yield back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. The committee will now stand in recess for five minutes as we move to room 2212 for the closed portion of this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 12:42 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

APRIL 10, 2024

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 10, 2024

STATEMENT BY
DR. CELESTE WALLANDER
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

BEFORE THE 118TH CONGRESS
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
APRIL 10, 2024

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on policy matters related to the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) area of responsibility in my capacity as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

I would first like to express my appreciation for the support of Congress and the Committee enabling and informing the Department of Defense's efforts in this region. It is an honor to appear again alongside General Cavoli, who is an outstanding colleague. In my testimony today, I will describe how the Department of Defense approaches Europe as a whole – specifically, how our posture and our partnerships across the continent enhance U.S. national security.

Security Environment

With its unprovoked, full-scale invasion in 2022, Russia not only doubled down on violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but revealed its intent to bring us back to a “might makes right” international system that rewards aggression over cooperation.

For the last 75 years, together with our Allies and partners, we have defended the rules and norms of state behavior that have provided for the unprecedented peace and prosperity Americans enjoy. U.S. leadership and the credibility of our commitment to Euro-Atlantic security has deterred wars, kept the homeland safe, and provided stability that American jobs, supply chains, and trade depend on.

Today, as Russia's brutal war against Ukraine tragically continues into its third year, we are reminded how critical it is that the malign actions of our competitors and adversaries are not rewarded. Beyond Ukraine, Russia continues to threaten Euro-Atlantic security by exploiting fractures within sovereign states, interfering in elections, prosecuting cyber and disinformation campaigns, and disrupting integration efforts. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is attempting to leverage its economic and diplomatic power to weaken and fracture NATO cohesion and unity. The actions of both pose a direct challenge to Euro-Atlantic security and the global stability that underpins our own safety and prosperity.

In response to this challenge – and to ensure continued deterrence and defense of our collective security – the Department has enhanced its posture in Europe over the last two years. While we continue to respond to urgent demands from the battlefield in Ukraine, we are also looking at how to sustain our support and make Euro-Atlantic security indelible over the long term.

But we are not alone. I can report that – contrary to some outdated misperceptions – our Allies and partners in Europe are stepping up and sharing the responsibility of providing for collective defense more than ever before. Finland and now Sweden have joined the NATO Alliance and committed their highly capable militaries to the solemn principle that an attack on one is an attack on all. On both sides of the Atlantic, Allies are ramping up defense production. A record number of Allies are exceeding the 2 percent defense spending benchmark. Around twenty Allies – including Germany – are on track to meet the pledge of at least 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024. European Allies and non-NATO partners are providing aid to

Ukraine, training Ukrainian forces, and leading Capability Coalitions. Finally, our European Allies and partners are also standing shoulder-to-shoulder with us even beyond their borders. They are helping protect the free flow of commerce as part of Operation Prosperity Guardian in the Red Sea, supporting our efforts to establish a humanitarian corridor in Gaza, and contributing to the coalition that will achieve the lasting defeat of ISIS.

Together with our Allies and partners in Europe, the Department is committed to reinforcing the lesson that aggression will result in costly failure. Our collective security and prosperity rely on that principle.

Ukraine

In Ukraine, our strategic goal is to see a sovereign, independent, economically viable, and democratic Ukraine emerge from the war with the means to deter and defend itself against further aggression.

On the battlefield, Russian forces continue their assault along the front line in Ukraine's east and south, and continue to target civilians and critical infrastructure across Ukraine. But in the Black Sea, Russia has been compelled to disperse its Black Sea Fleet, as Ukraine inflicts considerable damage on Russian vessels and fleet headquarters in Crimea. The diminished presence of Russian naval forces has allowed Ukraine to increase grain exports to global markets, which is not only critical for Ukraine's economy, but for global food security.

However, Ukraine's military positions and its population centers will be put at serious risk without additional U.S. security assistance. Ukrainian forces need critical munitions such as GMLRS and 155mm artillery ammunition. Ukraine needs air defense systems and munitions to protect against Russian aerial attacks. In March, we were able to provide a limited package of assistance as a short-term stop gap thanks to contract savings, but it is nowhere near enough to meet Ukraine's battlefield needs. Without supplemental funding, DoD will remain hard-pressed to meet Ukraine's requirements.

With Congressional support, we can put into place a sustainable approach to strengthening Ukraine. We can help Ukraine develop a strong defense industrial base of its own, one that is less reliant on the provision of equipment from others.

Meanwhile, we are organizing our Allies and partners into new, multi-national coalitions focused on key capability areas – to support Ukraine's air force, ground-based air defense, artillery, maritime security, and armor requirements. These are accompanied by three enabling coalitions – on information technology, demining, and drones. These coalitions will streamline assistance and create more efficiency. Over a dozen Allies and partners have signed up to lead or co-lead these coalitions. Several Allies have committed to their coalition leadership roles as part of their bilateral, long-term security commitments to Ukraine.

Through continued U.S. leadership in the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, Allies and partners have now committed approximately \$44.3 billion in security assistance to Ukraine.

Russia

Turning to Russia, which has absorbed enormous costs as a result of its war against Ukraine, Russia has probably spent up to \$211 billion in direct financial outlays to equip, deploy, maintain, and sustain operations in Ukraine. The war has cost Russia an expected \$1.3 trillion in previously anticipated economic growth through 2026. Russia's armed forces have suffered at least 315,000 casualties in the fight.

Despite those setbacks, however, I want to underscore that Russia continues to present serious risks to European and U.S. security in several areas. These include threats posed by Russia's nuclear arsenal, its malign cyber and information operations, and its capabilities in counterspace and undersea warfare, among others. As a result, the Department remains focused on deterring Russia from attacks on the United States and NATO Allies, including conventional aggression.

U.S. Posture in Europe

Last year I testified that, in response to Russia's February 2022 aggression against Ukraine, the United States reinforced NATO's security faster and with more combat capabilities than any other NATO Ally. This included both repositioning stationed and rotational forces already in Europe, temporarily extending some rotational forces beyond their planned redeployment dates, and deploying additional forces from outside Europe.

This rapid response was enabled by the billions of dollars of investments in infrastructure improvements, building partner capacity, rotational presence, exercises and training with Allies, and prepositioned equipment DoD has implemented – with the support of Congress – since Russia's invasion and purported annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The Department continues to make long-term investments to improve our ability to operate from – and rapidly reinforce – locations across NATO's Eastern Flank. As demonstrated by our rapid reinforcement in 2022, such long-term investments pay dividends on our ability to rapidly surge additional forces in times of crisis, enhancing our deterrence and defense posture across the Eastern Flank.

Over the last two years, DoD has continued to backfill the bulk of the additional forces surged to Europe in 2022 and has continued to enhance our deterrence and defense posture alongside our NATO Allies. Beyond the enhancements on the Eastern Flank I will detail below, we are transitioning from F-15C/Ds to F-35 squadrons in the UK and adding engineer and air defense capabilities in Germany and Italy. We have also added Space Component Headquarters, a Theater Medical Command, and additional sustainment capabilities to Europe.

Working closely with our State Department colleagues, we also continued our steady progress on agreements with Allies. In 2023 alone, the United States concluded Defense Cooperation Agreements (DCAs) with Czechia, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden.

As we continue to transition from our initial crisis response to a more sustainable posture aligned to the threat, the Department has also adapted to meet the enduring missions – such as security

assistance to Ukraine – we have taken on. We established a purpose-built three-star headquarters, the Security Assistance Group-Ukraine (SAG-U), to address those requirements and continue to provide force protection – including Patriot air defense – for that mission. To reaffirm the United States’ commitment to Euro-Atlantic security, and to enable DoD to support and sustain an enhanced presence and level of operations in Europe, in July 2023 the President authorized DoD to activate members of the Reserve Components, in limited numbers, to support Operation Atlantic Resolve. While this authority does not increase DoD’s current presence in Europe, it allows the Department to better plan its force rotations over the long term.

NATO

Transitioning to NATO, which is central to our approach to Euro-Atlantic security, we are engaging with our NATO Allies to ensure that the Alliance is prepared for modern challenges and can deter aggression from any adversary. In response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, NATO has continued to adapt, strengthen its deterrence, and be ready to defend every inch of Alliance territory.

NATO is stronger today than ever. Over the last year, we welcomed Finland and, just last month, Sweden – two highly-capable nations – to our Alliance. As I noted, more Allies than ever are meeting the 2 percent of GDP benchmark. Non-U.S. NATO Allies collectively increased defense investments by 8.3 percent, reflecting a ninth consecutive year of increased defense spending that amounts to an additional \$450 billion for defense since 2014. At the Vilnius Summit in July 2023, NATO leaders approved three regional plans for the defense of NATO territory. The Defense Production Action Plan underscores a shared sense of urgency to ramp up the production of critical equipment and enable Allied deterrence and defense. The Department will continue working with NATO Allies and partners to build capacity along Europe’s Eastern Flank, strengthening defensive capabilities to bolster deterrence. We look forward to welcoming our Allies this summer to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the signing of the Washington Treaty that established our Alliance. Allies will focus on implementation of the plans, pledges, and agreements leaders concluded at Vilnius. Critically, the Summit will be an opportunity to showcase for the American people and populations in Allied countries how NATO safeguards our shared security and values.

Europe

Poland

NATO’s Eastern Flank, and Poland in particular, is a linchpin of our work to strengthen Euro-Atlantic deterrence and defense. Since 2017, the Department has maintained an enduring rotational presence in Poland, and the United States continues to serve as the framework nation for the NATO Battlegroup in Poland. In addition, as announced by the President at the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid, the United States has forward stationed a Corps Forward Command Post as well as an Army Garrison and sustainment capabilities in Poland, the first permanent stationing of U.S. forces on NATO’s Eastern Flank. With our planned level of forces and pre-positioned equipment, Poland will continue to host the majority of U.S. forces on the Eastern Flank while providing us substantial host-nation infrastructure and logistical support.

Baltics & Nordics

Further north, the Baltic States are the first line of defense in the Eastern Flank. These nations continue to punch above their weight and have exceeded expectations by contributing nearly 3 percent of their GDP to defense spending in support of NATO and at least 1 percent of their GDP on support to Ukraine. They provide critical host nation support to NATO's forward land forces and to U.S. deployments in the region.

Eastern Flank

Elsewhere on NATO's Eastern Flank, Romania and Bulgaria remain steadfast Allies and anchors of stability. In addition to the enhanced NATO presence in these countries, the Department continues to headquarter a division command element and a Brigade Combat Team (BCT) in Romania. This rotational BCT's subordinate elements retain the flexibility and ability to deploy across the Eastern Flank in support of the Alliance. The Black Sea region more broadly continues to be a focus area for the DoD in which we will promote political engagement, regional security coordination, and democratic resilience among our Allies and partners.

Türkiye

Türkiye will continue to play a critical role in the USEUCOM area of responsibility. It has demonstrated its geostrategic significance as an important NATO Ally through its efforts to increase food security in the Black Sea, contributions to NATO missions, and diplomatic efforts to resolve long-standing disputes with Greece. The recent approval of Türkiye's F-16 modernization request will directly advance U.S. interests by preventing the deterioration of an Ally's military capabilities, strengthening NATO interoperability, and helping enable U.S. force projection with access to key regions in support of steady-state operations and contingencies.

Western Balkans

In the Western Balkans, Russia is working to exploit ethnic and political differences to serve its goals of disrupting further Euro-Atlantic integration. In Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), the actions of Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik are destabilizing and jeopardizing decades of hard work to build lasting peace and prosperity based on the Dayton Peace Agreement. In Kosovo, KFOR continues to provide a stabilizing presence amid tension and violent incidents in the last year. We are watching this region with increasing concern and engaging with our Allies and partners in the region to encourage restraint and an emphasis on dialogue.

Maritime

In the maritime domain, we are increasing our forward-deployed U.S. Navy guided missile destroyers in Rota, Spain from four to six as announced by President Biden at the 2022 NATO Summit. This force posture change increases our combat credible deterrent against attacks on the North Atlantic Treaty area and improves our ability to reinforce NATO's maritime flanks in the event of a crisis.

Caucasus and Moldova

There are also states beyond the NATO umbrella that remain vulnerable to Russia's malign influence, economic coercion, and aggression. Across the Caucasus and Moldova we are strengthening the sovereignty of our partners.

In Moldova, President Sandu has taken critical steps toward European integration. Moldova well recognizes the threat posed by Russia and is undertaking significant defense reforms based upon lessons learned from Russia's war against Ukraine.

Russia also remains determined to subjugate its neighbors by undermining stability and sovereignty in the South Caucasus. Moscow continues its belligerent occupation of twenty percent of Georgia's territory and maintains a force presence in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Georgia, a front-line state, is a critical partner and NATO-aspirant that we are committed to helping reform its military to strengthen its deterrence and defensive capabilities. We also recognize the important and courageous steps Armenia is taking to strengthen its own sovereignty. The DoD works with all three to strengthen ties, build resilience, advance Euro-Atlantic integration, and support efforts to achieve peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Belarus

In Belarus, Lukashenka's regime continues to enable Russia's war in Ukraine. Russia has uncontested use of Belarusian territory and resources to train, enabling Russian forces to reconstitute combat power for the war in Ukraine. Furthermore, Lukashenka's June 2023 announcement on the transfer of the Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons to Belarus is exacerbating the increasingly tenuous security environment in Europe. The United States will nonetheless continue to ensure that the complicit Lukashenka regime in Belarus pays a severe economic and diplomatic price for both its support to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its violent repression of the Belarusian people.

PRC

While Russia is the acute threat in Europe, the PRC is the Department's pacing challenge and presents a real challenge to Euro-Atlantic security. The PRC's investments in European critical infrastructure have the potential to directly impact NATO logistics, military mobility, and communications. We're also seeing the rapid advance of the PRC's space, cyber, and nuclear capabilities, which are particularly concerning as domains without borders. Finally, we are gravely concerned about the PRC's growing strategic partnership with Russia.

The only path to counter Beijing's malign behavior is in close coordination with our Allies and partners. European militaries are increasing their deployments to the Indo-Pacific region and deepening their partnerships with key U.S. allies in the region like Japan, Australia, and South Korea. We've also seen many European Allies join the growing chorus calling for maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Transnational

Finally, there are numerous transnational challenges that Europe and the United States must face together. The effects of conflicts in Gaza and the Red Sea are not isolated to the Middle East and we are engaging with our European Allies and partners on those issues. Terrorism and violent extremism remain enduring threats. Cyber and hybrid threats are evolving in their nature and application. All the while, climate change and rapid technological developments further

complicate the challenges we already face. The Department is continuously thinking about how our requirements for deterrence and defense evolve in response to these challenges and how policies should change to meet those requirements.

Closing

To conclude, I want to emphasize how important Congress is to achieving our strategic objectives in Europe and to hindering those of our competitors and adversaries. Your reliable, stable, and consistent support and funding have been – and will continue to be – critical to ensuring deterrence and defense. It is my strong belief that helping our Allies and partners develop their defense capabilities is far less costly than the American lives that could be lost should we have to respond to aggression on our own.

The Department will continue to work closely with our Allies and partners, the rest of the U.S. Government, and in consultation with Congress to ensure Russia's actions will constitute a lasting strategic failure and further aggression is deterred.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Department of Defense and I appreciate your continued support to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, and civilians who work every day in service of the American people.

CELESTE WALLANDER

Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs



Celeste Wallander is Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy at the U.S. Department of Defense. She previously served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russia/Central Asia on the National Security Council (2013-2017), as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia (2009 to July 2012). Outside government, she served as President and CEO of the U.S.-Russia Foundation (2017-2022), professor at American University (2009-2013), visiting professor at Georgetown University (2006-2008), Director for Russia/Eurasia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (2001-2006), Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations (2000-2001), and professor of Government at Harvard (1989-2000). She is the author of over 80 publications on European and Eurasian security issues, focused on Russian foreign and defense strategy. She received her Ph.D. (1990), M.Phil. (1986) and M.A. (1985) degrees from Yale University, and her B.A. (1983 - summa cum laude) from Northwestern University. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Atlantic Council of the United States, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

64

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UNITED STATES HOUSE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
GENERAL CHRISTOPHER G. CAVOLI, UNITED STATES ARMY
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND

10 April 2024

UNITED STATES HOUSE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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1 Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the House
2 Armed Services Committee, it is my distinct honor to testify before you again on behalf of our
3 brave service members and their dedicated families in the European Theater. As the
4 Commander, United States European Command (USEUCOM), I have the honor to lead a
5 dedicated group of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen, civilians,
6 and defense contractors who work alongside our NATO Allies and partners to secure the peace
7 and advance American interests. My posture statement will: offer my assessment of the threats
8 in the Euro-Atlantic security environment; describe our strategic approach to address these
9 threats; detail USEUCOM's force posture throughout Europe; explain our operations,
10 investments, and activities; and, in all of this, highlight the importance to America of NATO's
11 modernization of its system of collective defense.

12

13 The Euro-Atlantic Security Environment

14 The United States faces a combination of challenges and threats in the Euro-Atlantic
15 area that we have not seen in more than thirty years. Russia is waging a full-scale war in
16 Europe and shows no signs of stopping. This presents the real potential for escalation into a
17 wider war, and is cause for significant strategic concern to the United States. But when we view
18 Russia's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine together with Russia's rapid military
19 reconstitution; Russia's deepening ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC), Islamic
20 Republic of Iran (Iran), and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK); Russia's
21 continual machinations and malign influence in the Balkans and other sensitive areas; and
22 Russia's persistent efforts to undermine allied cohesion, U.S. global influence, and Western
23 values, we find a chronic and growing threat to American interests and to the security of our
24 NATO Allies and all residents of the Euro-Atlantic area. This Russian threat is exacerbated by
25 China's continued malign influence in the European Theater, continuing regional instability both
26 inside and outside the USEUCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR); the ever-present threat of

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27 violent extremist organizations; and climate change. In all, we see a Euro-Atlantic area that
28 faces more threats and dynamic challenges than at any time in the past thirty years.
29 Nevertheless, there are opportunities for the United States in this environment.

30 **Russia**

31 Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has fundamentally altered the Euro-Atlantic
32 security environment. It is clear that we have a long-term "Russia problem," and the war in
33 Ukraine is but one example.

34 This ongoing conflict is the largest war on the European continent since World War Two.
35 The Ukrainian people are fighting hard, from Kharkiv to Kherson, against a formidable and
36 ruthless Russian adversary. With the help of the United States, and invaluable help from other
37 allies and partners, Ukraine has inflicted significant damage upon the Russian military.
38 However, Russia relies on the mass and quantity available to a large country, and despite its
39 military's evident deficiencies and dysfunctions, continues to pose an existential threat to
40 Ukraine. Ukraine cannot sustain this fight alone. The United States, our allies, and partners
41 must continue to provide Ukraine with munitions, weapons, and materiel.

42 Russia remains a capable threat beyond Ukraine, and it's necessary to examine what
43 has and has not happened to the Russian military in Ukraine. Russia poses the most stressing
44 nuclear, biological, and chemical threat in the near-term and will continue to retain WMD
45 capabilities in the medium and long term. First and foremost, Russia's nuclear forces have been
46 unaffected by the conflict, and Russia retains the largest arsenal of deployed and non-deployed
47 nuclear weapons in the world. These continue to present an existential threat to the U.S.
48 homeland, our Allies, and our partners. Additionally, Russia continues to modernize its nuclear
49 forces, and continues to pursue efforts to develop nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic
50 missile systems, nuclear-armed hypersonic boost glide vehicles, nuclear-powered cruise

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51 missiles, nuclear-powered underwater drones, anti-satellite weapons, and orbital nuclear
52 weapons.

53

54 Moreover, during this conflict Russia's strategic forces, long range aviation, cyber
55 capabilities, space capabilities, and capabilities in the electromagnetic spectrum have lost no
56 capacity at all. The air force has lost some aircraft, but only about 10% of their fleet. The navy
57 has suffered significantly in the Black Sea – but nowhere else and Russian naval activity
58 worldwide is at a significant peak. Russian long range precision fires have increased in
59 production, and Russia has also begun to buy ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and long-range
60 drones from third countries who were previously outside this fight. In fact, it is mainly only in the
61 land forces that Russia has suffered, losing over 2,000 tanks and 315,000 soldiers wounded or
62 dead. However, Russia is reconstituting that force far faster than our initial estimates
63 suggested. The army is actually now larger – by 15 percent – than it was when it invaded
64 Ukraine. Over the past year, Russia increased its front line troop strength from 360,000 to
65 470,000. Russia's army increased the upper age limit for conscription from 27 to 30, which
66 increases the pool of available military conscripts by 2 million for years to come. Russia has
67 announced plans to pursue an ambitious ground forces restructure, increasing to 1.5 million
68 personnel with an expanded footprint. This restructure includes plans to transform seven
69 motorized rifle brigades into divisions and a new army corps. Russia plans to base some of
70 these new formations in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine, as well as Karelia in the High
71 North, opposite Finland. Perhaps most concerning, the Russian military in the past year has
72 shown an accelerating ability to learn and adapt to battlefield challenges both tactically and
73 technologically, and has become a learning organization that little resembles the chaotic force
74 that invaded Ukraine two years ago.

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75 Russia continues to display a resilient economy and an ability to withstand sanctions
76 and export controls. Last year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted a 2.1 percent
77 drop in Russia's 2023 Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, by the end of the year, the
78 IMF revised its estimate that Russia's GDP increased by 3%, primarily due to heavy
79 investments in defense. Currently, the IMF outlook predicts Russia's GDP will increase by 2.6%
80 in 2024. Russia is on track to spend 6 percent of its GDP on the military, with defense spending
81 exceeding social spending for the first time since the end of the Soviet Union. This defense
82 spending includes new manufacturing plants and factories for weapons production. Russia is
83 on track to produce or refurbish over 1,200 new main battle tanks a year, and to manufacture at
84 least 3 million artillery shells or rockets per year – over triple the amount the US estimated at the
85 beginning of the war – and more ammunition than all 32 NATO Allied combined. Moreover,
86 Russia has responded to international sanctions by adopting evasion and import substitution
87 strategies that have allowed it to overcome challenges in acquiring key components, including
88 microelectronics and machine tools. This has allowed Russia to continue to invest in high-end,
89 exquisite weapon systems to offset U.S. strategic advantages, several of which were
90 successfully tested this year.

91 In sum, Russia is on track to command the largest military on the continent and a
92 defense industrial complex capable of generating substantial amounts of ammunition and
93 materiel in support of large scale combat operations. Regardless of the outcome of the war in
94 Ukraine, Russia will be larger, more lethal, and angrier with the West than when it invaded.

95 Diplomatically, Russia has used the past two years to attempt to alter the global
96 security architecture by creating relationships that challenge the existing order. Russia, the
97 PRC, Iran, and DPRK are forming interlocking strategic partnerships across the world's largest
98 landmass. This block of adversaries is more cohesive and dangerous than any threat the
99 United States has faced in decades. As of March 2024, the DPRK provided Russia with roughly
100 6,700 containers that could contain up to three million artillery shells. Iran has provided Russia

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L01 with drones, artillery, and missiles that have enhanced Russia's lethality in Ukraine. Russia and
L02 Iran have a billion-dollar weapons deal that includes domestic production of 6,000 drones by the
L03 summer of 2025. The PRC provided Russia with nonlethal assistance ranging from drones to
L04 computer chips, and increased its imports of Russian goods by 12% to \$117.8 billion in the last
L05 year. The PRC, Iran, and DPRK are sustaining Russia's economy and enabling it to continue
L06 its aggression in Ukraine. This new axis of adversaries will create strategic dilemmas within an
L07 increasingly challenging international security environment.

L08

L09 Peoples Republic of China

L10 Getting China right is critical for European stability. PRC's expanding influence in
L11 Europe and its deepening partnership with Russia create complex challenges within this theater.
L12 PRC attempts to sow division and exert influence across Europe. China employs media
L13 manipulation and disinformation campaigns to subvert democratic institutions and sway public
L14 opinion. It employs trade coercion, boycotts of European goods, and export controls on critical
L15 raw materials to coerce policymakers in European states.

L16 PRC's strategic approach undermines political cohesion in Europe. This includes
L17 investments in dual-use infrastructure directly impacting our collective security. China makes
L18 economic investments that superficially appear to be benign, but turn out to have pernicious
L19 effects on our security. PRC has spent the last decade investing in European ports, airports,
L20 utility companies, and telecommunications, putting at risk our collective sustainment and
L21 communication systems. For example, PRC's ownership of critical seaport infrastructure could
L22 seem purely commercial, but has been used to deny allied navies port calls, and calls into
L23 question the reliability of use for military reinforcement of the NATO Alliance. Similarly, the
L24 inclusion of Huawei's 5G technology in some NATO members' networks could necessitate their
L25 exclusion from vital communication and intelligence networks, decreasing interoperability
L26 among Allies and partners.

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l27 Certainly, PRC is closely watching the conflict in Ukraine – learning military lessons,
l28 political lessons, and trying to project those onto China's own interests. Moreover, PRC's
l29 increased support for Russia reveals the depths of the Chinese Communist Party's commitment
l30 to partnerships that challenge our collective security. The continued "No-Limits" partnership
l31 between PRC and Russia positions PRC as a formidable adversary to European interests. This
l32 partnership is not just diplomatic; it extends to informational, economic, and military realms,
l33 aiding nations that exhibit hostility and aggression. For example, through its global propaganda
l34 machine, PRC directly parrots Russian disinformation narratives on Ukraine. The partnership
l35 between Beijing and Moscow raises questions about PRC's broader strategic objectives in the
l36 European Theater. As PRC continues to position itself in support of Russia, it is foreshadowing
l37 its long-term position as a challenger to Euro-Atlantic security.

l38 **The Balkans**

l39 The situation in the Western Balkans has grown more tense in the past year.
l40 Negotiations to resolve internal political and social issues have not made progress. Russian
l41 malign influence to incite tension contributes to this regional instability. Violence has worsened
l42 – both spontaneous violence and that which is fomented from outside the country. Last autumn,
l43 attacks on Kosovo police and a Serbian troop buildup on the border of north Kosovo presented
l44 the highest threat of interstate violence since the end of the war in 1999, and illustrated the
l45 worrisome level of instability in the region. In response to the escalating tension, NATO sent
l46 troops from the United Kingdom (UK) and Romania to reinforce its peacekeeping mission in
l47 Kosovo. Additionally, the Alliance is reevaluating its force posture in the Kosovo peacekeeping
l48 mission to respond to the new threat environment.

l49 Ethnic tension in Bosnia and Herzegovina also has the potential to escalate and
l50 destabilize the Western Balkans region. Russia's activities to foment the tension between
l51 ethnic Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats aim to weaken the country and prevent deepened ties with
l52 the EU and NATO. Ethno-nationalist politics prevent Bosnia and Herzegovina from adopting

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L53 much-needed political, legal, and economic reforms that would advance its Euro-Atlantic
L54 integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb-majority entity, Republika Srpska, seeks to weaken
L55 state authorities and weaken relationships with the EU and NATO while maintaining close ties to
L56 Russia.

L57 Finally, active Russian influence operations in North Macedonia, Montenegro, and other
L58 West Balkan countries continues to present challenges to alliance unity, as well as to general
L59 stability in the region. The narratives Russia promulgates stoke inter-ethnic tensions, and
L60 degrade support for the rule of law and democracy in general. Russia may not be alone;
L61 Serbia's role in these influence operations remains open to question, none of which is good for
L62 the region.

L63 **The Sahel**

L64 In the Sahel, economic instability, extreme poverty, and climate change are deeply
L65 intertwined with rapid population growth, youth unemployment, political and social fragility,
L66 corruption, and the pervasive threat of terrorism. These issues are not isolated; they are
L67 inextricably linked and have significant repercussions for European and NATO security. A key
L68 manifestation of this instability is the rise in irregular migration toward Europe. Large influxes of
L69 people entering European countries are straining resources, fueling political debates over
L70 immigration, and raising legitimate concerns about border security and the potential for
L71 extremist infiltration.

L72 The recent withdrawal of United Nations (UN) peacekeepers from Mali marks a
L73 significant shift in the regional security dynamic. This development poses serious questions
L74 about the future stability of Mali, the broader Sahel region, and the void left by French and UN
L75 forces being filled by non-Western actors, notably Russia and PRC. Russia's increasing
L76 involvement in the region challenges our counterterrorism efforts and broader security interests.
L77 Meanwhile, PRC's expanding role, driven by its economic agenda, includes a growing presence
L78 in security affairs, contributions to UN missions, and arms trade. Russia and PRC's expanding

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!79 influence in the Sahel is one example of how they are influencing the global south to seek
!80 advantages.

!81 **The Levant**

!82 The conflict in Gaza introduces complex security challenges for NATO and USEUCOM.
!83 The increasing violence in the region and its consequent humanitarian crises raise the specter
!84 of mass displacement and broader regional destabilization. Europe has struggled in the past
!85 with issues related to mass migration; more would not help right now. Moreover, almost all
!86 nations in Europe have significant expatriate populations in the Levant, and would be eager to
!87 safeguard them in the event of a wider war. Finally, various NATO nations have diverse current
!88 and historical relationships to the nations in the Levant, and a wider war could produce fissures
!89 in the Alliance regarding an external issue at a time when unity is of paramount importance.

!90 **Violent Extremist Organizations**

!91 Violent Extremist Organizations continue to pose a threat to NATO Allies and U.S.
!92 security interests in our AOR. Europe has suffered 18 terrorist attacks since 2018. Groups like
!93 ISIS, despite territorial losses in Iraq and Syria, persist with their global agenda. ISIS' sustained
!94 network and capacity for high-profile operations make them a resilient and dangerous
!95 adversary. Along with the continuing challenge of lone actors and small groups, inspired by
!96 foreign terrorist organizations, the threat posed by VEOs continues to challenge our European
!97 Allies and even threatens US personnel abroad.

!98 **Climate Change**

!99 Changes in the climate continue to pose security challenges in the Euro-Atlantic area.
!00 The retreat of the Arctic ice cap has been opening waterways in the High North, a phenomenon
!01 Russia and China are eager to exploit. Extreme weather events strain resources, disrupt
!02 economies, and increase the likelihood of conflicts in states with already fragile governments.
!03 Climate change can worsen floods, fires, water shortage, and migration, and challenge regional
!04 stability and security. Moreover, climate-related loss of agricultural productivity, shifts in fish

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!05 stocks, and water variability can lead to heightened geopolitical tensions and potential resource
!06 conflicts.

!07 As we look to the future, the security of the region, and by extension, the interests of the
!08 United States and NATO, are intricately linked to the health of the environment and the stability
!09 of the climate. USEUCOM will continue to engage in a comprehensive approach that includes
!10 monitoring climatic changes, assessing the strategic impact climate change has on Euro-
!11 Atlantic security, working with NATO on interoperability and energy security, and deterring our
!12 adversaries from exploiting the climate crisis. Additionally, USEUCOM continues to develop
!13 relationships and work with both United States and European climate change organizations to
!14 develop innovative solutions. Through strategic planning, collaborative efforts, and proactive
!15 measures, we aim to safeguard our interests, promote regional stability, and contribute to the
!16 global effort against climate change.

!17 **Opportunities to Expand Influence**

!18 Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, in many ways, has had the opposite effect of
!19 those intended. Indeed, it has actually produced opportunities to expand US influence abroad,
!20 both through NATO and through bilateral relations.

!21 It's well known that where Russia wanted to get less NATO, it got more: USEUCOM
!22 celebrates the accession of both Finland and Sweden to the Alliance and notes that these
!23 nations both increased our collective defense capabilities from Day One.

!24 More opportunities exist in the neighborhood.

!25 Georgia, historically a bridge between East and West and a stalwart NATO partner,
!26 raised concerns in 2023 with actions that seemed to indicate a departure from its Euro-Atlantic
!27 trajectory. However, today the government is taking steps to reform Georgia's economic and
!28 political institutions to meet prerequisites for EU membership. There is strong evidence that the
!29 government of Georgia desires to move closer to the West, just as the overwhelming majority of
!30 the Georgian population has desired for three decades. Georgia's defense establishment

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!31 maintains a close relationship with USEUCOM and is taking steps to modernize its forces.
!32 Maintaining this positive relationship underpins U.S. influence in this important region and
!33 creates opportunities that extend beyond Georgia.

!34 The situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan remains tense following Azerbaijan's military
!35 actions in Nagorno-Karabakh this past September. Azerbaijan's military success and Russia's
!36 failed role as a ceasefire guarantor have altered the regional balance of power. Importantly,
!37 Russia refused to aid Armenia during Azerbaijan's offensive, creating a significant rift between
!38 Armenia and Russia, and giving Armenia a strong impetus to move closer to the West. As a
!39 result, USEUCOM is strengthening its military relationship with Armenia, and the command
!40 conducted training exercises in Armenia for the first time in many years in 2023. USEUCOM
!41 applauds efforts to reach a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We see an
!42 opportunity to establish stability in the region while giving nations an opportunity to move out of
!43 Russia's coercive orbit.

!44 Finally, Moldova has seized the opportunity to realize its West-leaning ambitions. The
!45 nation has intensified its efforts to rid itself of Russian coercive influence, and has embraced
!46 closer partnerships with Europe. USEUCOM has redoubled our efforts to help Moldova develop
!47 the resiliency and reform necessary to follow their chosen path.

!48 These opportunities, when taken together, represent a chance to diminish malign and
!49 coercive Russian influence throughout Europe.

!50 **Opportunity in NATO**

!51 At the 2023 NATO Summit in Vilnius, allied Heads of State and Government approved
!52 the three Regional Plans and gave NATO Allied Command Operations the approval to proceed
!53 with implementing and developing the Alliance's modernized collective defense system.

!54 With approval of those plans, the first formal plans the Alliance has had in more than
!55 three decades, the Alliance is finally armed with a comprehensive blueprint for modernizing its
!56 system of collective defense. First, the plans have produced a force structure requirement, and

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!57 NATO now has an objective, reality-based driver for nations' defense planning and
!58 procurement. Second, NATO is now able to tie that force to specific geography and tasks,
!59 giving focus to the Alliance's operations, activities, and investments. Third, the force is now
!60 able to exercise against the requirements of our plans, instead of fictional scenarios. Fourth,
!61 the force now has objective readiness requirements that each one will be held to. On top of
!62 these enormous changes, Allied Command Operations will also emplace an updated Command
!63 and Control design, transforming headquarters once fit for peacetime and out-of-area-
!64 operations into warfighting headquarters ready to defend allied territory.

!65 Throughout this fundamental change, the Alliance continues to exhibit unprecedented
!66 cohesion, focus, and determination. It is a strong statement of NATO unity that in considering
!67 the three Regional Plans – which cover 8 percent of the globe and over one billion people –
!68 there were no military or operational disagreements among the 31 Allies. More, the Alliance is
!69 backing up its ambition with money. In 2023 NATO saw a real increase of 11% in defense
!70 spending across European Allies and Canada. In 2024, NATO expects 18 Allies to spend 2
!71 percent gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. In total, European Allies will invest a
!72 combined total 280 billion U.S. dollars in defense, which amounts to 2 percent of their combined
!73 GDP– a far cry from the three members who met the 2 percent goal in 2014.

!74 This renewed sense of purpose and definitive plan of action give us the opportunity to
!75 create a more effective alliance with a more sustainable division of labor and effort, which will in
!76 turn give the U.S. opportunity to face all global challenges while still ensuring the deterrence of
!77 Russia and security of Europe. We need to be with NATO every step of the way through this
!78 transformation, which is so clearly in our interests.

!79

!80 USEUCOM's Strategic Approach

!81 Our strategic approach to these challenges and opportunities centers on assisting
!82 Ukraine, deterring Russian aggression, strengthening the NATO Alliance, and responding to

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!83 crises while actively shaping the operational environment. It ensures the security and prosperity
!84 of the Euro-Atlantic region while preserving our shared values and interests with our Allies.

!85 **Supporting Ukraine**

!86 United States support for Ukraine demonstrates our commitment to upholding the
!87 principles of national sovereignty and international law – principles that underpin global stability
!88 and security. Failure to assist Ukraine poses a grave threat to its survival. Inaction will
!89 embolden Russia and establish a precedent that threatens the global security environment. The
!90 United States and our European Allies lead the global effort to enhance Ukraine's military
!91 capabilities through comprehensive training and arming. Continued U.S. leadership is essential
!92 for enabling Ukraine to defend its sovereignty and preserving stability, security, and democracy
!93 throughout Europe and beyond.

!94 Deterring Russia from expanding its aggression into alliance territory is essential to
!95 preserve the rules-based international order, safeguard the sovereignty of nations within our
!96 AOR, and protect U.S. strategic interests. Russia's aggression poses a direct threat to the
!97 peace and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. Now is the time to capitalize on Russia's failures
!98 in Ukraine by accelerating our modernization of capabilities, posture, and security cooperation
!99 to outpace Russia's reconstitution.

!00 A strong and cohesive NATO is the cornerstone of deterrence, and therefore is the
!01 basis for peace in the Euro-Atlantic. The Alliance is more unified than at any point since the
!02 Cold War and is undergoing its most significant transformation in three decades as it
!03 modernizes its system of collective defense. In line with the Nuclear Posture Review, the United
!04 States is modernizing systems to strengthen strategic deterrence to ensure a strong extended
!05 deterrence capability and assurance to European Allies. Positioning the right U.S. forces
!06 throughout Europe to support this transformation is a necessary investment in our future
!07 security. As the Alliance continues to modernize, U.S. leadership is more important than ever.

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While we assist Ukraine and work with NATO to deter Russia, we remain always ready to respond to unexpected crises within and beyond our AOR. Concurrently, through the proactive shaping of the operational environment, we create strategic dilemmas for our adversaries, neutralize potential conflicts, and establish conditions conducive to U.S. interests. These are interconnected, with crisis response delivering immediate security benefits, and shaping the operational environment ensuring long-term stability and deterrence.

We are poised to respond to the Euro-Atlantic's complex security challenges. USEUCOM's force posture is an extension of our strategic approach. It enables us to have the right forces, in the right locations, at the right time, with the right capabilities.

USEUCOM Postured Across Europe

USEUCOM's posture is the baseline for executing our strategy. It is both a reflection of our commitment and a testament to our ability to respond. Strategically positioned, we spearhead the U.S. government's efforts in support of NATO, ensuring our forces are not just present, but combat-ready, adaptable, capable of deterring, and if necessary defeat any threat. Our operations span the European Theater, utilizing the capabilities of our seven service components. From the Black Sea, where our efforts bolster Ukraine's defense, to the Baltic Region, where large-scale U.S.-NATO exercises enhance our interoperability, our posture is clear: we stand united with our Allies, ready to face and overcome any challenge.

The key to deterring Russia is having combat-credible forces in the right position. U.S. force posture in Europe includes 83,000 members of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard, many of whom moved their families across the Atlantic Ocean to become part of communities throughout Europe. The footprint for these forces includes main operating bases, forward operating sites, and cooperative security locations from Spain to Estonia, and from Iceland to Türkiye.

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133 USEUCOM's land force consists of five U.S. Army brigade combat teams and two
134 division headquarters. These forces enhance our deterrence posture along the Eastern Flank.
135 United States Army Europe and Africa and V Corps' Forward Command Post in Poland provide
136 command and control of our ground forces. We have positioned long-range fires, anti-air
137 defense, sustainment, and communications equipment across Europe to support and protect
138 our ground forces. U.S. continued investment in Army Prepositioned Stocks and facilities
139 enable rapid integration of rotational combat units into the USEUCOM AOR.

140 In the air domain, USEUCOM will complete the stand-up of one U.S. Air Force
141 squadron of fifth generation F-35 fighters at RAF Lakenheath this month and is on track to
142 receive a second squadron by August 2025. The United States Air Forces in Europe and Africa
143 provides command and control for these forces as well as for fourth generation fighters,
144 bombers, tankers, and transport aircraft positioned in the UK, Italy, Germany, Iceland, Norway,
145 and other European countries. Additionally, USEUCOM is working closely with our Allies and
146 partners to decentralize the physical infrastructure required to generate air power by
147 operationalizing the concept of Agile Combat Employment (ACE). ACE enables the sharing of
148 infrastructure and capabilities necessary to support air platforms with our Allies and partners.
149 Decentralized infrastructure located throughout Europe enables our Air Force to be more
150 dynamic, survivable, and lethal.

151 USEUCOM's maritime command and control is provided by U.S. Naval Forces Europe
152 and Africa and the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet from Naples, Italy, which controls Carrier Strike
153 Group and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Units, guided missile destroyers and
154 other naval assets. Sixth Fleet will also receive one more guided missile destroyer in Spain this
155 summer, with another arriving in two years. In addition, United States Marine Corps Forces
156 Europe and Africa provides command and control for Marine air and ground forces to conduct
157 exercises, training, and operational support to USEUCOM missions. Finally, the U.S. Second

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158 Fleet reinforces NATO's Western Flank in the Atlantic Ocean and into the waters of the High
159 North.

160 USEUCOM formally added the Department of Defense's fourth Space Force service
161 component, United States Space Forces Europe and Africa (USSPACEFOR-EURAF), this past
162 December. The component stood up at Ramstein Air Base and will serve both the European
163 and African Theaters. USSPACEFOR-EURAF is integral in creating networked, joint-space
164 architecture, and deepening relationships with allies and partners in the space domain.
165 Furthermore, this component enables us to respond to our adversaries as they find innovative
166 ways to threaten our national interest and security from space.

167 USEUCOM's Cyberspace Operations Division defends our cyber architecture from our
168 adversaries, hackers, and threat actors seeking to undermine our networks. Additionally, each
169 service component has a robust cyber capability to protect its networks from external threats.
170 USEUCOM also coordinates with U.S. Cyber Command to assist in bolstering the offensive and
171 defensive cyber capabilities of our allies and partners and in countering malign influence.

172 Special Operations Forces (SOF) maintain a persistent presence throughout Europe.
173 Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) continues to train Ukrainian SOF and support
174 joint operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Special Forces stationed at Stuttgart and
175 Baumholder, Germany are focused on USEUCOM-directed tasks designed to counter Russian
176 aggression. Additionally, SOCEUR is expanding its relationships with Denmark, Finland,
177 Norway, and Sweden. NATO Special Operations Forces Command and SOCEUR are working
178 closely together and building interoperability that expands the U.S. and NATO Special
179 Operations footprint.

180 Our posture in Europe is a clear signal of our commitment and readiness to protect U.S.
181 interests, support our Allies, and maintain regional stability. USEUCOM's forces located
182 throughout Europe enable us to execute our strategy. Our success will be defined by our
183 operations, activities, and investments in the European Theater.

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185 **USEUCOMs Operations, Activities, and Investments**

186 USEUCOM's operations, activities and investments (OAs) are aligned with our
187 strategic approach, and our success will depend on how well we: support Ukraine; deter Russia;
188 strengthen the Alliance; and respond to crises, all while shaping the environment in the Euro-
189 Atlantic area.

190 **USEUCOM Support to Ukraine**

191 USEUCOM's comprehensive support to Ukraine, which comprises military aid, training,
192 and logistics, all of which is coupled with the contributions of our Allies and partners, forms the
193 backbone of Ukraine's defense against Russian aggression. The Ukrainian people are acutely
194 aware their fate as a free and independent nation hinges on our assistance to help them defend
195 their homeland. Ukraine depends on our effort, and our responsibility to assist them is a driving
196 factor in our daily operations. The security of the Euro-Atlantic area also depends on it, as does
197 the sustainment of a US-led global order that has produced prosperity and peace for our country
198 for decades.

199 Since February 2022, the United States has committed more than \$44.2 billion in
200 security assistance to Ukraine through Presidential Drawdown Authorities, the Ukrainian
201 Security Assistance Initiative, and Foreign Military Financing. Our Allies and partners,
202 meanwhile, have also risen to the task: their collective contributions of our Allies are
203 substantially more than those of the United States. In some cases, Allied countries are donating
204 large portions, if not all, of their own military inventory and a disproportionate amount of their
205 budgets. When measured as a percentage of GDP, the U.S. ranks 14th in the top 25 nations
206 that have donated to Ukraine. EU institutions provided over \$80 billion in financial and
207 humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. Nevertheless, it is the leadership of the United States – our
208 adherence to and defense of our ideals, our strategic perspective, and above all our ability to
209 convene and influence other nations — that makes us the critical nation in this effort. It is the

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110 United States that leads all like-minded nations to support Ukraine and to give them a viable
111 chance to defend their sovereignty.

112 Materiel contributions from the United States enable the Ukrainian Defense Forces to
113 defend their country against the larger Russian force. In 2022, the Department of Defense
114 authorized USEUCOM to activate the Security Assistance Group-Ukraine (SAG-U). SAG-U
115 includes a large non-U.S. component and aggregates Ukrainian requirements, works with the
116 Department of Defense, our allies, and partners to resource them, and then delivers those to
117 our Ukrainian partners. SAG-U also trains Ukrainian Defense Forces to operate and maintain
118 the complex weapons systems we provide, such as the M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank, F-16s,
119 and HIMARS.

120 SAG-U's efforts do not end with providing training and materiel. SAG-U also leads a
121 multinational effort to support the maintenance and repair of the donations we have given to
122 Ukraine, so the nation can continue to prevail in the grueling combat they are engaged in.

123 Critical to all these efforts is the sustainment and logistics support network established
124 within the borders of our NATO Allies. This network is the lifeline for the flow of equipment,
125 munitions, and material support to the Ukrainian front lines. It would be impossible to sustain
126 this without the mature logistical "footprint" and systems that exist in the USEUCOM AOR. This
127 logistics system is the envy of the Department of Defense, and is a key capability that we must
128 sustain even as we enjoy its benefits.

129 Our experience supporting Ukraine has shown that a healthy Defense Industrial Base
130 (DIB) and a strong Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program are just as important as ready forces
131 to generate enough combat power to sustain large scale combat operations. For example,
132 aligning the DIB to produce critical munitions and replenish stocks requires buy-in from industry
133 and a clear demand signal these munitions are needed. Vulnerable global supply chains and
134 competition for resources can quickly lead to production delays and, therefore, impair the
135 fielding of equipment at the time of need. We will keep helping the Services work with Congress

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136 on streamlining and de-risking these processes as we continue supporting Ukraine and
137 modernizing the DIB and FMS processes to enhance our long-term collective defense
138 capability.

139 **USEUCOM's Deterrence of Russia**

140 USEUCOM seeks to deter Russian aggression by denying Russia its ability to gain
141 advantage over NATO in geography, readiness, or domain. Our efforts are expressed as OAls
142 and are virtually always embedded in the context of NATO efforts.

143 USEUCOM is the Department's coordinating authority for the Russia problem set. Our
144 leadership of the Department's Russia Strategic Initiative is crucial in providing a cohesive
145 understanding of Russia's intentions and shaping our collective strategic response.
146 Congressional appropriations play a vital role here, enabling us to build and maintain a robust
147 force structure, conduct vital training exercises, develop necessary infrastructure, and sustain
148 combat credible force levels required to ensure the U.S. and Alliance defense posture can deter
149 Russian aggression.

150 The forces within USEUCOM are the essential building blocks for deterring Russia, so
151 investing in these capabilities sends a clear message to Russia about the U.S. resolve to
152 respond to aggression and defend its interests globally. The presence of five brigade combat
153 teams and two division headquarters within the USEUCOM AOR forms a robust defense
154 against the unpredictable Russian threat. The presence of seven fighter squadrons is essential,
155 and the upgrade of our air power to 5th generation technology enhances the ability to deliver
156 precise effects in the complex battle space we face today. The strategic positioning of air and
157 missile defense capabilities to safeguard our forces ensures our combined air, ground, and sea
158 power can withstand an initial attack. Moreover, the readiness of our AOR for the rapid
159 reception and mobilization of forces is essential for conducting large scale operations or
160 sustaining any prolonged conflict. Modernizing and expanding USEUCOM's long-term
161 prepositioned stocks enhances our readiness and positions us to fight and win against any

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162 adversary if deterrence fails. We are working with our NATO Allies to create long-term storage
163 facilities and maintenance complexes to host prepositioned equipment. For example when
164 complete in May, the storage facility in Poland will be outfitted with M1 Tanks, Bradley Fighting
165 Vehicles, artillery, and support equipment that contributes to the equipment sets of 2 armored
166 brigade combat teams in Europe. Investment in prepositioned infrastructure and maintenance
167 facilities ensures our equipment will remain in peak war-fighting condition.

168 The European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) has been vital to this posture. EDI allows
169 USEUCOM to maintain combat credibility by supporting rotational force deployments,
170 infrastructure investments, and delivering the right capabilities at key locations throughout
171 Europe. Continued Congressional support of EDI is an investment in Euro-Atlantic security and
172 U.S. military capability. The FY24 EDI budget allocation of \$3.6 billion allows USEUCOM to
173 support force presence, training exercises, and infrastructure projects that are enduring
174 investments in U.S. and European security. Activities supported by EDI are clear
175 demonstrations of the United States commitment to NATO and the collective defense of our
176 Allies.

177 USEUCOM's exercise program demonstrates our war-fighting capabilities to fight
178 anywhere in the AOR alongside our Allies. While USEUCOM conducts dozens of training
179 exercises every year, there are three recent exercises that stand out as demonstrations of our
180 combat credibility.

181 First, as I testify to you today STEADFAST DEFENDER 24 is on-going; it is the largest
182 live exercise NATO has done since 1988, and is focused completely on building readiness to
183 defend the territory of the Alliance. More than 90,000 service members from all 32 NATO Allies
184 are participating in the exercise to enhance interoperability and strengthen the deterrence
185 posture of the NATO Alliance

186 Second, the US-led, multinational maritime exercise in the Baltic Sea, BALTOPS 23 in
187 June 2023 demonstrated the collective power of 17 nations. Over 6,000 service members

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188 trained on anti-submarine, anti-surface, mine warfare, and naval coordination and shipping
189 guidance. The exercise strengthened combined response capabilities critical to preserving the
190 freedom of navigation and security in the Baltic Sea.

191 Third, USEUCOM participated in the annual German-led, air training exercise, AIR
192 DEFENDER 23. This is one of many success stories that show how our NATO Allies are taking
193 larger leadership roles to strengthen the Alliance. AIR DEFENDER 23 was the largest air-
194 training exercise in European history and involved the deployment of the most aircraft into the
195 European Theater since World War Two. USEUCOM participated in AIR DEFENDER 23 along
196 with 16 other nations to demonstrate our collective ability to reinforce the Eastern Flank with air
197 power.

198 **USEUCOM's Support to NATO**

199 USEUCOM's primary reason for being located inside Europe is to enable NATO, and
200 enabling NATO to deter, and if necessary defeat, Russia is the most important thing we do on a
201 daily basis. Our comprehensive commitment to the Alliance – through the deployment of forces,
202 rigorous training programs, and strategic investments – bolsters our collective defense and
203 enhances the interoperability of the Alliance. The more the US invests to strengthen the
204 Alliance now, the less we will need to provide in the future.

205 Our commitment to NATO's new focus on Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic
206 Area is evident in both our relation to the Alliance's command structures and our participation in
207 its activities. There are more U.S. forces assigned, allocated, apportioned or affiliated with
208 NATO structures and plans than at any time in the past four decades. U.S. forces assigned to
209 Europe can now be tasked directly by USEUCOM to support the NATO's new defense plans.
210 This is a huge win for European and United States security. Rather than waiting for conflict to
211 arise before U.S. forces can be tasked to support NATO, USEUCOM can now provide
212 predictable and consistent forces in support of collective territorial defense. This supports
213 NATO's ability to execute its plans and helps influence Allies to contribute their own forces.

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§14 Our commitment to NATO defense plans is also evident in our active participation in
§15 allied planning and training exercises, which are transitioning from a focus on deployment to a
§16 focus on deterrence and large-scale territorial defense. Last year, USEUCOM participated
§17 broadly in NATO's flagship exercise, STEADFAST JUPITER 23. STEADFAST JUPITER 23
§18 included the largest and most complex computer-assisted, command post exercise conducted
§19 in the 21st century. The exercise included more than 7,000 people from 17 NATO countries
§20 training on the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area. Future iterations of the
§21 STEADFAST series of exercises will continue to build interoperability as well as train on
§22 requirements outlined in the new NATO defense plans.

§23 USEUCOM also leads our own flagship training exercise, AUSTERE CHALLENGE.
§24 Last year's event, AUSTERE CHALLENGE 23, included participants from Allied Joint Forces
§25 Command Brunssum, along with 15 other allied and partner countries. AUSTERE
§26 CHALLENGE 23 demonstrated our collective ability to project power across the USEUCOM
§27 AOR, integrating a diverse array of foreign forces in a multi-week training operation. We have
§28 just completed AUSTER CHALLENGE 24, which included an unprecedented level of allied
§29 participation, and tied together U.S. plans with NATO's new Regional Plans for the very first
§30 time.

§31 Moreover, USEUCOM's service components actively participate in training exercises
§32 organized by the militaries of our NATO Allies. These exercises are smaller in scope, but large
§33 in impact. For example, Finland led an asymmetric warfare exercise called SOUTHERN
§34 GRIFFIN which built special operations capability among NATO Allies. SOCEUR trained
§35 alongside Special Forces from Finland, France, the United Kingdom, and NATO's newest Ally
§36 Sweden. Other exercises such as LIGHTNING STRIKE/SPRING STORM, NEPTUNE STRIKE
§37 23-2, and ATLAS GUARDIAN present additional opportunities for USEUCOM's service
§38 components to train alongside our NATO Allies and strengthen our collective defense and
§39 relationships.

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¶40 Finally, USEUCOM supports the Alliance's effort to collaborate on innovative, modern
¶41 opportunities that build defensive capabilities. For example, USEUCOM's air component
¶42 supported the first-ever NATO Weapons and Tactics Conference (WEPTAC), which developed
¶43 the framework for the first-ever "Ramstein Flag" exercise. This exercise, modeled on U.S. Red
¶44 Flag exercises, will provide realistic, advanced, aerial combat training. Representatives from 24
¶45 NATO Allies attended WEPTAC and the inaugural "Ramstein Flag" exercise is scheduled to
¶46 take place in the fall of 2024 in Greece.

¶47 **Respond to Crises**

¶48 While we work with allies and partners to prevent crises, USEUCOM maintains the
¶49 ability and responsibility to respond to any crisis in our AOR. USEUCOM's power projection
¶50 capability enables U.S. forces to deploy anywhere in the world. In addition to combat forces, we
¶51 can also project logistical and medical organizations that provide essential resources during
¶52 times of crisis or instability. USEUCOM works closely with our interagency and international
¶53 partners to maintain readiness to prevent and respond to crises.

¶54 USEUCOM's geographical position enables us to support other Combatant Commands
¶55 in crisis. For example, during the current conflict in Gaza, USEUCOM supported USCENTCOM
¶56 with air and maritime forces for operations in the Middle East. Likewise, we routinely support
¶57 AFRICOM's operations on the African continent. The constant interaction among our three
¶58 commands allows us to solve "boundary problems," and ensures that in a crisis USEUCOM will
¶59 be positioned and able to support either command to further US interests.

¶60 USEUCOM values our interagency partners and collaborates with our offices located
¶61 around the European Theater. For example, our work with the Department of State on removal
¶62 and abatement of unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war in Ukraine contributes
¶63 to the safety of civilians caught in the war's crossfire. USEUCOM also works with the
¶64 Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as the Joint Interagency
¶65 Counter Trafficking Center, to enforce sanctions levied against Russia by the United States.

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§66 Our support to the Department of Energy and U.S. Agency for International Development in
§67 Europe provides winterization and infrastructure to areas in Ukraine effected by the damage
§68 caused by Russia's war.

§69 **USEUCOM Shaping the Operational Environment**

§70 USEUCOM deliberately engages in an array of activities and investments that shape
§71 the operating environment. Significant Security Cooperation Initiatives funded out of the
§72 International Security Cooperation Programs (ISCP), military sales, military construction, and
§73 key leader engagements (KLEs) inform the activities and attitudes of our Allies and partners.
§74 Our goal is to build support for U.S. interests that will have a positive impact on Euro-Atlantic
§75 security while simultaneously strengthening relationships with our Allies and partners.

§76 USEUCOM's use of ISCP funding is critical to meeting our security requirements
§77 throughout the AOR. Our deliberate use of the \$295.08 million allotted to us by the Office of the
§78 Secretary of Defense goes directly to fulfilling critical requirements in the Baltics, Bulgaria,
§79 Georgia, Poland, and Romania. These funds will improve facilities, enable countries to
§80 purchase military equipment, and increase training of host-nation militaries.

§81 Leaders from throughout USEUCOM have conducted over 800 KLEs in the past year.
§82 These engagements, and years of similar engagements before them, have been instrumental in
§83 fostering deep, enduring, trust-based relationships. One cannot surge trust at the time of need;
§84 the investment needs to be made beforehand and over time. USEUCOM's relationships in this
§85 AOR are fundamental in developing common understanding of the security environment; in
§86 reassuring our Allies and partners; in demonstrating our commitment to partnerships; and in
§87 realigning productive relationships with foreign countries. They are the bedrock of our efforts to
§88 maintain security in the Euro-Atlantic region, ultimately contributing to the security of the United
§89 States.

§90

§91 **Improving NATO's Deterrence and Collective Defense Capabilities**

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§92 As we continue to implement our strategy through OAs, our greatest strategic
§93 opportunity lies in the Alliance's transformation of its collective defense system. This
§94 transformation is not just about responding to current threats. It is a wholesale transformation of
§95 the operational forces and procedures of the Alliance, and represents a proactive step towards
§96 a future where collective defense of the Euro-Atlantic is more integrated, resilient, adaptable,
§97 and resilient to emerging challenges.

§98 **Conclusion**

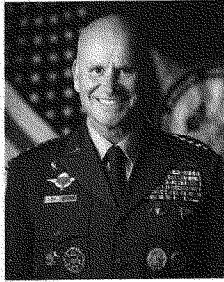
§99 The bond between the United States and Europe is fundamental to American security.
§100 Our shared history, values, and objectives form the bedrock of this relationship. As we
§101 approach the 75th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty, we are reminded of the enduring
§102 strength of the NATO Alliance and its impact on regional and global security. With the
§103 continued support of Congress, our NATO Allies, and our partners, we will ensure European
§104 security remains synonymous with American security. Together, we will face the challenges of
§105 the future and continue to build a free, prosperous, and secure Euro-Atlantic area.

§106 Thank you, again, for your continued support to our service members stationed
§107 throughout Europe and your commitment to protect our shared values and interests. Taking
§108 advantage of the opportunity to help Ukraine fight Russia sets the conditions for Ukrainian
§109 success on the battlefield and for the U.S., our allies, and our partners to outpace Russia's
§110 reconstitution, and secure the future of the Euro-Atlantic. With support to deter Russia,
§111 continued progress on the development of a resilient defense industrial base, and a more
§112 streamlined foreign military sales program, the United States will have every advantage as it
§113 supports NATO's transformation and sets the conditions for long-term security in the Euro-
§114 Atlantic.

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GENERAL
CHRISTOPHER G. CAVOLI

Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander, U.S. European Command



General Christopher G. Cavoli assumed duties as Commander, U.S. European Command, July 1, 2022 and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), July 4, 2022. Gen. Cavoli previously served as Commander of the consolidated U.S. Army Europe and Africa October 2020 through June 2022. From January 2018 until the consolidation, Gen. Cavoli served as the commander of U.S. Army Europe. Commissioned into the Infantry in 1987, Gen. Cavoli has served in a wide variety of positions throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. He's commanded the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment; 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division; 7th Army Training Command; and 25th Infantry Division. He also served as the Deputy Commander of Regional Command West in Herat, Afghanistan, and as the Deputy Commanding General for Operations at the 82nd Airborne Division. Gen. Cavoli's staff experience includes service as the Director for Russia on the Joint Staff; Deputy Executive Assistant for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Director of the Chief of Staff of the Army's Coordination Group. He has held fellowships at National Defense University, the George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies and the Army Chief of Staff's Strategic Studies Group. Gen. Cavoli is a Foreign Area Officer with a concentration on Eurasia, and speaks Italian, Russian and French. He holds degrees from Princeton University and Yale University. His awards include the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Ranger Tab and Master Parachutist's wings.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 10, 2024

Ukraine rejects 10 German Leopard tanks due to their poor condition



Leopard 2A4 tanks from the Royal Canadian Dragoons, C Squadron travel in the Wainwright Garrison training area during Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada on May 15, 2017. (Reuters)

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Ukraine rejects 10 German Leopard tanks due to their poor condition

2 min read

Ukraine rejected a group of 10 Leopard 1A5 tanks from Germany because they needed to be repaired while Kyiv had no technicians or the necessary parts to conduct the repairs themselves.

Kyiv informed the German defense ministry that the Leopard 1 tanks that arrived in Poland are in need of repairs and some of them required a major overhaul, according to Ukrainian newspaper Ukrayinska Pravda citing German outlet Spiegel.

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Germany sent a group of experts to Poland to investigate the state of the tanks and it was then revealed that the tanks “were already quite worn out after the training of the Ukrainian soldiers in Germany and needed repairs,” Ukrayinska Pravda reported.

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Ukraine rejects 10 German Leopard tanks due to their poor condition

Spiegel's report additionally highlighted concerns regarding the state of the Leopard 1A5 tanks, of which Germany undertook to ship 100 units to Ukraine. This situation sheds light on logistical challenges in Germany's military assistance efforts, according to Ukrayinska Pravda.

The tanks currently stranded in Poland constitute the second part of a large-scale supply of Leopard 1A5 tanks. These tanks were retired from active service by the Bundeswehr more than a decade ago. However, due to the substantial number of tanks still in storage, there was a directive for armorers to undertake repairs urgently.

Read more:

[US Abrams tanks to arrive in Ukraine 'soon': Pentagon chief](#)

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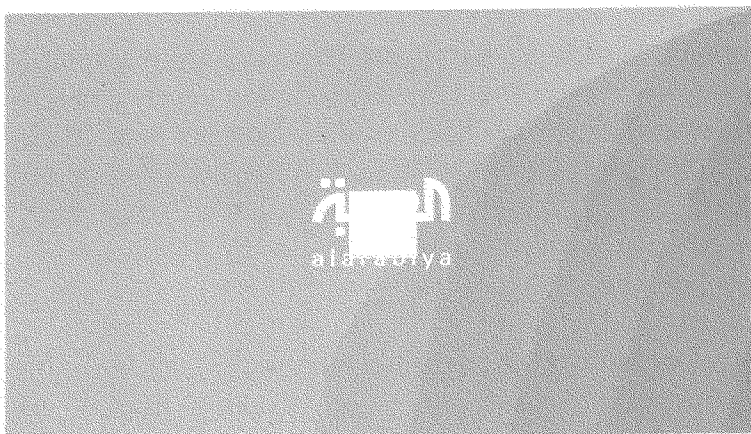
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NEWS POLITICS

US urges Ukraine to stop attacking Russian oil refineries, report says

Washington fears rising oil prices and extra retaliation from Moscow.

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Moscow has repeatedly attacked Ukraine's energy facilities throughout 2023 and into the new year. (Arin Messinzi/AFP via Getty Images)

MARCH 22, 2024 1:45 PM CET
BY CLAUDIA CHIAPPA

The U.S. has pressed Ukraine to halt drone strikes on Russian energy facilities, fearing that it could provoke massive retaliation and drive up global oil prices.

In recent months, Kyiv has ramped up its strikes against Russian energy infrastructure, hitting several oil refineries across multiple regions, causing financial damage to the Kremlin, which still trades oil and gas despite sanctions.

Now Washington has urged officials in the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and Ukraine's Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) to put a stop to these attacks, the Financial Times reported Friday, citing three unnamed sources.

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The U.S. is concerned that targeting Russia's energy facilities will impact the Kremlin's oil production capacity and drive up global prices — ahead of a knife-edge presidential election where prices at the gas pump are bound to be a contentious topic.

The sources also fear that these repeated strikes will provoke Russia into retaliating and targeting energy infrastructure the West relies on, including oil pipelines.

A spokesperson for the SBU declined to comment to POLITICO, while officials at GUR and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office did not respond to POLITICO's requests for comment.

According to Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Olha Stefanishyna, Ukrainian officials have said that oil refineries are "absolutely legitimate targets from a military point of view."

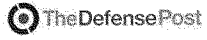
"We understand the calls of our American partners," she said at the Kyiv Security Forum, Ukrainska Pravda reported. "At the same time, we are fighting with the capabilities, resources and practices that we have."

Moscow has repeatedly attacked Ukraine's energy facilities throughout 2023 and into the new year, including a massive barrage Friday which left several cities without electricity and damaged the Dnipro hydropower plant.

Veronika Melkozerova contributed reporting from Kyiv.

7/22/24, 10:32 AM

F-16 Fighter Jets 'No Longer Relevant': Ukrainian Official



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F-16 Fighting Falcon, Photo: Airman 1st Class Mario Colabro/US Air Force

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F-16 Fighter Jets 'No Longer Relevant': Ukrainian Official



JOE SABALLA APRIL 5, 2024 1 MINUTE READ

A senior Ukrainian military official has claimed that the US-made F-16 fighter jets set to arrive later this year are “no longer relevant” against Russian forces.

Once tagged as a potential war-winner in Ukraine, the aircraft sparked prolonged debate as countries carefully weighed in on whether or not it should fly in Ukrainian skies.

Washington only gave the green light in August 2023 on the condition that Ukrainian pilots undergo rigorous training in allied countries to safely and effectively operate the jets.

However, a high-ranking military official told *Politico* that every weapon has its own right time in the ongoing war and that the F-16s are no longer significant in Ukraine this year.

“Often, we just don’t get the weapons systems at the time we need them – they come when they’re no longer relevant,” he said. “F-16s were needed in 2023; they won’t be right for 2024.”

Right Time for Traditional Weapons, Drones

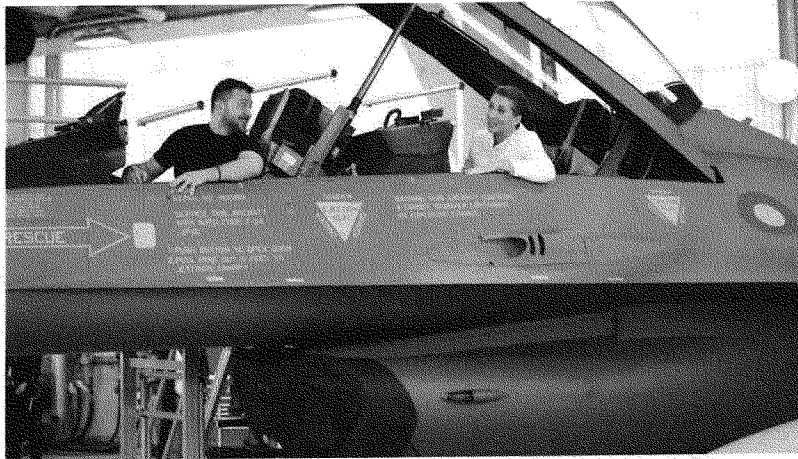
The Ukrainian military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, emphasized the importance of delivering weapons when they are needed the most.

He said the anti-tank missiles supplied on time by the UK and the US in the early weeks of the war proved decisive for Kyiv’s forces.

The more delays, the less significant a weapon system will be on the battlefield, the official said.

7/22/24, 10:32 AM

F-16 Fighter Jets 'No Longer Relevant': Ukrainian Official



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen sit on an F-16 fighter jet. Photo: Ritzau Scanpix/AFP

For now, another source said Kyiv needs traditional weapons and drones in greater volume to match Russia's offensive.

"We need howitzers and shells, hundreds of thousands of shells, and rockets," he stressed, estimating that the war-ravaged nation needs at least 4 million shells and 2 million drones to win the war.

Great Risk of Frontline Collapse

Without the right weapons in sufficient quantity, the officials admitted there would be great risk of a frontline collapse wherever Russian forces focused their attacks.

Moscow has for weeks been smashing Ukrainian positions using guided aerial bombs, increasing the likelihood of penetrating the frontline.

Even billionaire businessman **Elon Musk** remarked on the critical situation Ukraine currently

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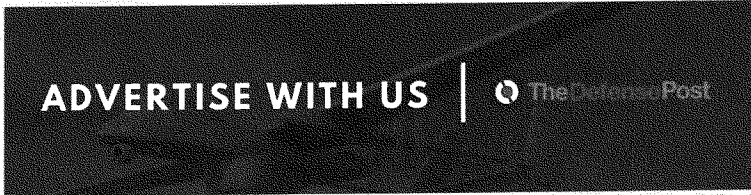
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@DefensePost · Apr 25, 2023



Israel will deploy its new missile warning system in Kyiv next month to detect incoming Russian attacks, according to Israeli and Ukrainian officials

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**WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING
THE HEARING**

APRIL 10, 2024

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SCOTT

Dr. WALLANDER. We coordinate with allies and partners to mitigate the impact of Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine on energy markets. The price cap policy and import bans of the Price Cap Coalition partners maintain oil market stability, while lowering the value of Russian crude relative to competing crude oil and shifting more of Russian exports from higher-value refined products to lower value crude oil. We are aware that India continues to leverage the price cap to negotiate heavy discounts on purchases of Russian oil. The United States, along with Price Cap Coalition partners, is working to prevent Russia from earning a wartime premium on oil while supporting stability of global oil markets. We will continue price cap enforcement actions with a view to raising costs for Russia and reducing Kremlin revenue. [See page 11.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. DAVIS

General CAVOLI. The two USEUCOM Strike Eagle squadrons are integral to the USEUCOM mission and the support USEUCOM provides to the overall NATO mission. The aircraft actively support the NATO Response Force, NATO Operations, SECDEF directed EXORD, and one USEUCOM directed mission in support of material transfer to Ukraine. Divesting the USEUCOM Strike Eagle squadrons would result in the COCOM losing over 25% of its fighter capacity, increasing the strain on the aircraft, pilots, maintainers, and support functions due to no corresponding reduction in tasking. As a USEUCOM directed mission, the operations supporting the transfer of material to Ukraine may be the first to be suspended as capacity dwindles. This would result in a lack of defensive coverage for these logistics operations. USEUCOM defers to the Air Force concerning fighter modernization timelines and basing decisions. [See page 49.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. MCCLELLAN

Dr. WALLANDER. Deterrence and arms control play complementary and indispensable roles in reducing nuclear dangers. The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review underscores the importance of U.S. leadership in arms control but also emphasizes that we need a willing partner operating in good faith. Russian actions make mutual and verifiable arms control challenging, but preparing for engagement and realistic outcomes with Russia remains in our national security interest. The most effective actions the Department of Defense can take now are to complete the current modernization of U.S. nuclear forces, continually assess whether changes in U.S. strategy and force posture are required as a result of the evolving security environment and continue to message to Russia that it will not be safer in an unconstrained environment. [See page 35.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

APRIL 10, 2024

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SCOTT

Mr. SCOTT. Terrorist groups obtain financing through many different methods. What actions are your COCOM taking to combat the financing of terrorists? Are there areas in which increased collaboration with interagency partners, Allies, or Strategic partners would lead to cutting terrorist financing to prevent them from buying weapons and conducting attacks?

General CAVOLI. U.S. European Command's (USEUCOM) Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center (JICTC), which hosts the Command's counternarcotics (CN) funded counter threat finance team, leverages Congressional authorities that allow DoD, under certain circumstances, to utilize CN resources and personnel to support U.S. law enforcement investigations targeting terrorist finances originating or transiting Europe. Notably, the JICTC's strong relationships with the Command's Drug Enforcement Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Homeland Security Investigations representatives allow for a whole-of-government approach to terrorist finance disruption. Additionally, the JICTC provides USEUCOM-funded commercially available tool suites to Intelligence Directorate analysts based at Joint Analytic Center—Molesworth, the Command's analytic lead for countering violent extremism. This information ultimately provides investigative leads for U.S. and partner nation investigations. We also partner with National CounterTerrorism Center (NCTC) Pursuit Group and Special Operations Command's Operation Gallant Phoenix to collaborate on terrorist threats and terrorist finances related to Europe.

Opportunities to increase collaboration with allies and strategic partners relies on U.S. access to European financial data. Currently, U.S. investigations are largely limited to U.S. correspondent banking, a limitation that becomes more pronounced as financial flows move farther from the Homeland. Therefore, enhancing our access to European financial data is not just a strategic advantage, but a necessity for effective counterterrorism efforts.

Mr. SCOTT. How should NATO's and US force presence evolve in the Baltic region to effectively counter the threat posed by a reconstituted Russian military? Is the current posture of a NATO brigade per nation sufficient?

General CAVOLI. NATO's current posture, including the NATO Forward Land Force Battalions that can expand to Brigade size during crisis, represents a significant step toward bolstering NATO's defense capabilities. However, even this new posture may be insufficient on its own to effectively deter potential Russian aggression. Other necessary considerations to bolster the effectiveness of NATO's force presence include:

Enhanced Interoperability: Improving interoperability among NATO Allies is crucial for effective collective defense. This includes conducting joint exercises, training programs, and military ex-

changes to ensure seamless coordination and cooperation among Allied forces.

Investment in Defense Capabilities: The United States must continue to encourage all Allies to invest in and prioritize rebuilding their defense capabilities, particularly in the land domain. This includes increasing defense spending, modernizing equipment, and investing in critical infrastructure to better withstand potential threats.

Mr. SCOTT. What air defense capabilities are still needed to protect Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania?

General CAVOLI. The Baltics currently possess a mixture of Soviet-era and Western style short range air defense systems and sensors with no medium-to-long range active air defense assets, including sensors. The Baltics' sensor network is being actively improved through a security cooperation initiative sponsored by the United States. To efficiently defend Baltic airspace and critical assets against both air and ballistic missile threats, a layered defensive network consisting of medium-to-long range capabilities and interoperable sensors is recommended. These assets should consist of systems such as PATRIOT, IRIS-T (German), SAMP/T (French/Italian), and Sky Sabre (UK) in order to improve the network and mitigate risk.

Mr. SCOTT. Now that Sweden and Finland has joined NATO, how do you ensure seamless planning and operations in the Baltic Sea area in the air, land, and maritime domains?

General CAVOLI. Sweden and Finland have exercised with NATO nations for many years and possess advanced and highly capable military forces. The accession of Sweden and Finland as NATO members, and their inclusion in the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic family of plans, significantly enhances integrated planning and coordinated operations. It alleviates the need for bilateral, trilateral, or multi-lateral planning between the United States, NATO, and those countries, and allows me, in my capacity as CDRUSEUCOM, to ensure integration between U.S. plans and NATO plans. Additionally, Sweden and Finland have also disclosed their national defense plans to the Alliance through the Joint Force Commands (JFCs) and SHAPE, which will serve to better synchronize both Allied Command Operations and national efforts.

Mr. SCOTT. What is the right balance of "in place" permanent US/western allied forces in Central Eastern Europe versus rotational and "response" forces?

General CAVOLI. USEUCOM sees the existing in-theater presence, including the rotational and "response" forces and pre-positioned equipment brought to Europe following the 2014 and 2022 invasions, as an enduring requirement post-Ukraine. Furthermore, additional forces may be required depending on the specific outcomes of the war in Ukraine. USEUCOM prefers assigned forces over allocated forces due to operational flexibility, familiarity with the theater, efficiency, and continuity in building relationships to increase operational effectiveness. USEUCOM, the Services, and the Department of Defense (DoD) use the following criteria to determine the method of sourcing combatant command requirements: Operational (basis for requirement and associated risk); Political-Military (including host nation and/or NATO concerns); Force Man-

agement (available capacity and deployment models); and Cost (affordability of options associated with implementing a change). The balance considers risk across multiple combatant commands. The Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs evaluate all COCOM requests against the services' abilities to source the forces requested.

Mr. SCOTT. What are your top 5 priorities for Moldova in FY 25?

General CAVOLI. DoD's priorities for Moldova are to strengthen Moldova's deterrent against Russian aggression, support Moldova develop its strategic vision and requirements, ensure sustainable change as part of Moldova's defense capacity building, divest of Soviet legacy equipment, and enhance resilience against Russian hybrid threats. USEUCOM's priorities will serve these larger objectives.

The USEUCOM priorities for Moldova in FY25 are: 1. Advocate for Foreign Military Sales (FMF), Humanitarian Assistance (HA), 1251, and 321 funding for Moldova to remain the same or increase so that my other priorities for Moldova continue to be funded. 2. Air Defense and Air Domain Awareness 3. Anti-tank/armor training and equipping 4. Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) development 5. Conduct surveys of Marculesti Airfield and all military training areas for Exercise Related Construction (ERC) and exercise planning.

Mr. SCOTT. Do we need a robust multi-category weapons/ammunition enactment of the Defense Production Act (DPA)?

General CAVOLI. I welcome any proposed amendment or legislation aimed at leveraging the Defense Production Act to its fullest extent across various weapon categories and munition types. An expansion like this, coupled with DPA appropriations needed to execute, will help us improve the defense industrial base, enhancing our ability to respond to increased and surge procurement demands as we counter emerging threats and evolving security challenges. This approach would also need to be supported by funding the Services to procure munitions in sufficient quantities as requested in the budget. It will enable our military, Allies, and partners to remain prepared to defend those nations' interests, while simultaneously strengthening our commitment to regional stability and international security cooperation.

Mr. SCOTT. What actions are still needed to strengthen Moldova's immunity to hybrid threats by Russia?

General CAVOLI. Moldova must first elevate public messaging to clearly articulate its national achievements and highlight its trajectory towards EU integration. Second, it must persist in exposing instances of Russian interference through various media channels to heighten awareness among the populace. Third, inter-ministerial coordination must be seamless, including through identification of a clear focal point for cybersecurity and resilience planning.

From a DoD perspective, we need to continue investing in activities and programs aimed at increasing Moldova's cyber security and resilience to Russian mis/disinformation. We must also increase the national army's capability and capacity by promoting the importance of increased defense spending, and identify a clear strategy for procurement. Finally, we must help Moldova strengthen the image of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and national army

as institutions that are favorably viewed by the public, including through support to the civilian population in emergencies and natural disasters.

Mr. SCOTT. Does NATO intend to increase the frequency of military exercises conducted with Moldova?

General CAVOLI. Moldova continues to advance opportunities to realize its West-leaning ambitions through targeted participation in NATO's exercise program. While NATO, as an alliance, does not conduct exercises with specific Partner Nations like Moldova, NATO does prepare a set of exercises under the Military Training and Exercise Program (MTEP) that are open to Partners and Non-NATO Entities. Partner Nations can choose from over 125 events based on national goals. NATO is specifically looking at developing relationships with non-NATO partners, with an eye towards Moldova. 2022 represented the first year for Moldovan participation in a NATO exercise when Moldova participated in STEADFAST JACKAL and NATO-GEORGIA. Moldova also participated in Coalition Warrior Interoperability Exercise (CWIX) and STEADFAST JACKAL in 2023. Moldova will tentatively participate in two exercises in both 2024 and 2025. Exercising with NATO, or with other international partners, will support Moldova's interoperability with current and future international peacekeeping missions, such as KFOR, to which Moldova's contributes troops.

Mr. SCOTT. How has Moldova done in updating their policy documents, relevant legal acts, the structure of the national defense system, and the training system, based on the lessons learned from the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine? What more needs to be done?

General CAVOLI. Moldova has made significant strides in updating policy documents, relevant legal acts, and the structure of the national defense system. Moldova published a new National Security Strategy (NSS) in December 2023, with plans for National Defense and Military Strategies as early as this calendar year. Additionally, Moldova has adopted Western Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) pre-deployment requirements prior to integrating with Kosovo Forces (KFOR). Continued support from Romania, the United States, the EU, and other partners will be instrumental as Moldova works toward advancing these efforts.

Mr. SCOTT. How important is it for the strategic credibility of Moldova to ensure a gradual growth of their defense budget with the objective to reach 1% of the GDP during the current decade?

General CAVOLI. Growing the defense budget to 1% of the GDP is paramount for Moldova's strategic credibility; it allows for implementation of needed reforms, modernization of defense capabilities, and strengthened bilateral relations. A consistent increase in the defense budget would signal a significant shift in priorities and bolster the MoD's standing in the international community, while opening new doors for defense procurement of critical defense equipment.

Mr. SCOTT. What recommendations do you have for Moldova on how they can deepen their special relationship with Romania?

General CAVOLI. Moldova stands at a similar juncture to where Romania stood more than 30 years ago. This presents an opportunity to learn from Romania's experiences in NATO integration,

Foreign Military Sales, and long-term project management. Additionally, Moldova can train on equipment that it has in common with Romania, such as tactical radars, AntiTank Guided Missiles (ATGM), K-Loaders, airfield operations, and maintenance capabilities. Moldova can also similarly adapt its operational and defense model to a more Western style, as Romania has sought to do, with Romania's support. Romania has demonstrated willingness to support Moldova in these areas.

Mr. SCOTT. How many GLSDB are on contract for Ukraine? When will they receive all of them? What feedback have the Ukrainians provided on them? Will more be ordered if additional USAI funds are appropriated?

General CAVOLI. There are 12 launchers and 606 GLSDB rounds on contract for Ukraine, and the deliveries are projected to be completed in FY25. Given operational feedback from Ukraine, the systems will undergo additional refinement and operational testing throughout the latter half of FY24. Additional procurement decisions will be driven by Ukraine's security assistance priorities and available resources.

Mr. SCOTT. What is the status of NASAMS deliveries to Ukraine? What is the main production rate limiting factor: radars, launchers, control vehicles? When can they expect to receive all of the ones that have been committed via USAI?

General CAVOLI. Two U.S. donated systems have been delivered to date, two additional systems will be delivered in FY24, and the remaining eight systems are expected to be delivered in FY25. The primary limiting factor for NASAMS is not the number of systems fielded in Ukraine, but the low availability of the compatible air defense interceptors.

Mr. SCOTT. Between FMF funds from the 4 Supplementals, annual S&FO Appropriations, and any other sources, how much FMF has actually been obligated for Ukraine since Feb 2022? After the recent obligation for HAWK sustainment, how much is available for them?

General CAVOLI. Prior to passing the 2024 supplemental bill, Congress has appropriated \$1,642,580,000 in FMF to the Department of State for Ukraine since 2022. Including the 9 April 2024 announcement of HAWK sustainment, a total of \$623,953,181 in FMF has been obligated with \$1,018,626,819 remaining available. I recommend contacting the Department of State for further details.

Mr. SCOTT. What is the status of HIMARS deliveries to Ukraine? When can they expect to receive all of the 18 committed via USAI? Have these been given priority in the queue ahead of the Army's own orders?

General CAVOLI. The 18 HIMARS systems funded via USAI are projected to be delivered to Ukraine in FY26. I recommend contacting Headquarters Department of the Army, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology) (HQDA ASA(ALT)) and Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) regarding the prioritization of customers on the HIMARS production line.

Mr. SCOTT. In July 2022, DOD reprogrammed \$50 million in Ukraine replacement funds to LTAMDS RDT&E to increase it's

interoperability with “friendly foreign countries.” Has LTAMDS been provided to Ukraine to support their Patriot batteries?

General CAVOLI. The United States has not provided Lower Tier Air and Missile Defense Sensor (LTAMDS) to Ukraine. Since July 2022, the United States and our Allies and partners have provided Patriot, NASAMS, HAWK, and other air defense systems to Ukraine. I recommend contacting Headquarters Department of the Army, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology) (HQDA ASA(ALT)) for further details on the specific status of the LTAMDS RDT&E program.

Mr. SCOTT. What issues still need to be addressed in order for the Danube to be fully utilized as a strategic route for long-term European security?

General CAVOLI. The Danube River is a strategic route for European commerce. However, it does not traverse through contiguous NATO territory, which limits its military utility. Additionally, the Cargo Preference Act of 1904 limits our options by requiring DoD cargo to be transported on U.S.-flagged vessels, restricting the use of foreign-flagged ships to maximize this route’s potential.

The 21st Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) successfully utilized the Danube River for transporting military equipment to Romania in 2021 and 2022, demonstrating its viability as a congestion-reducing route. However, the full capabilities for offloading and utilizing river Sea Ports of Debarkation (SPODs) have yet to be fully tested, with the Bratislava River port under consideration for future loading and unloading operations.

Mr. SCOTT. What are the best resources to counter the nearly 400–600 drifting mines in the Black Sea?

General CAVOLI. Freedom of navigation in the Baltic and Black Seas depend heavily on mine countermeasure capabilities. Although many NATO Allies maintain robust mine countermeasure capabilities organized and deployed as part of two Standing NATO Mine Countermeasure Groups, Romania and Bulgaria have very limited organic mine countermeasure capacity. At such time that Russia’s war of aggression permits warships to transit the Black Sea through the Turkish Straits, NATO intends to re-establish mine countermeasure presence in the Black Sea, and the Ukraine Armed Forces intends to homeport mine countermeasure ships they have received from the United Kingdom from Royal Navy Bases in the UK.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. CARBAJAL

Mr. CARBAJAL. How does a strong NATO alliance bolster the United States’ defense capabilities within the European Command AOR?

General CAVOLI. A strong NATO Alliance significantly enhances the United States’ defense capabilities in the USEUCOM AOR by promoting collective defense, interoperability, intelligence sharing, strategic partnerships, forward presence, deterrence, and burden sharing. NATO’s cohesive and unified approach to security in Europe reinforces U.S. security interests and contributes to regional stability and peace.

NATO's principle of collective defense under Article 5 ensures that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all members. This mutual defense commitment greatly enhances the U.S. military's deterrence posture in Europe.

NATO facilitates interoperability and integration among Allied armed forces through Allied Command Operations (ACO) exercises, training programs, staff coordination and standardization efforts. This enables U.S. forces deployed within the USEUCOM AOR to operate alongside Allies, enhancing the overall effectiveness of Allied military operations, and ensuring a unified response to potential threats.

NATO serves as a platform for the increased sharing of intelligence, information, and assessments among Allies. This collective intelligence-sharing network enhances situational awareness, facilitates early warning capabilities, and enables more informed decision-making for U.S. forces.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Can you speak to the role space-based capabilities have played throughout this conflict for both sides? Drawing on lessons from this war do you feel you have access to the space capabilities you need for your AOR?

General CAVOLI. Space-based capabilities remain a critical enabler in the current war. We have observed that uninterrupted access to resilient satellite-based communications is integral to command, control, and communications networks and that space-enabled technologies are crucial for achieving information dominance and unfettered access to battlespace awareness as well as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). Additionally, we have observed from both UAF and RUSMIL that space-based technologies are necessary for command of the electromagnetic spectrum. Consequently, from a defensive perspective, Russia has integrated counterspace activities as a part of its order of battle, and Russia will likely continue to challenge its adversaries across the entirety of the space domain.

Based on these observations, we believe that space-based capabilities—both military and commercial, fielded and in development—will continue to play an essential role in future conflicts for USEUCOM, NATO, and partners within our AOR. NATO's reliance on space-enabled capabilities is increasing; however, this has increased the strain on our appropriated systems, frequencies, and resources as a result. To best prepare ourselves for competition and future crises, USEUCOM requires additional resources and expertise across the command at all levels, to include a significant increase in authorized manpower at the Space Force Component Command.

Mr. CARBAJAL. How does a strong NATO alliance bolster the United States' defense capabilities within the European Command AOR?

Dr. WALLANDER. Our alliances and partnerships around the world are our most important strategic asset. A strong and unified NATO not only deters aggression, it provides a platform for mutually beneficial cooperation. NATO's collective defense obligations, which are enshrined in Article 5, ensure every inch of NATO territory on both sides of the Atlantic will be defended if attacked. Without this credible deterrent, Europe and North America would

face tremendous instability with massive human and economic consequences that would be felt globally. At this moment, for example, Russia is deterred from attacking European Allies because of our ironclad commitment to collective defense.

Furthermore, U.S. posture in Europe, distributed across various nations of the Alliance, strengthens the security of the United States, and enables us to rapidly respond to crises in Europe as well as in Africa and the Middle East. Our membership in NATO and our rights under the NATO Status of Forces Agreement enable this posture.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine poses a grave risk to the security of all Europe, as well as U.S. interest in the region.

What are your biggest concerns for what Russia may do next to threaten the security and stability of Europe and U.S. interests?

Dr. WALLANDER. The Euro-Atlantic region is currently confronted with a unique set of challenges and dangers not witnessed since World War II. Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine shows no signs of abating, raising concerns about the potential for a broader conflict.

We remain concerned about Russia's threat to bordering states and its willingness to use force in pursuit of territorial expansion. By collaborating with Allies and partners in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, we seek to enhance their resilience against Russian malign influence and bolster their defensive capabilities, ensuring a robust and effective response if deterrence fails.

For northern European nations, the Arctic's strategic significance has led to heightened Russian interest and increased risk for confrontation. Russia has been actively bolstering its regional presence, establishing new Arctic units, upgrading existing airfields and infrastructure, and setting up additional military bases along its Arctic coast. Russia aims to become the leading Arctic power, viewing the region as crucial for its national security and economic development.

Russia's unlawful invasions of Ukraine and Georgia, alongside its swift military buildup, deepening alliances with China, Iran, and North Korea, and its disruptive activities in sensitive regions like the Balkans, reveal a significant and escalating chronic threat to not only our NATO Allies but to American interests.

The threat posed by Russia is not bound by geographic borders. Russia continues to conduct malign cyber operations, pursue capabilities in space, and interfere in election processes—all of which pose a threat to U.S. interests in Europe. The Department remains focused on deterring any and all attacks—including aggression—from Russia on the United States, its Allies, and partners.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BACON

Mr. BACON. I understand the Ukrainian Air Force may receive its first F-16s and trained pilots later this year. However I'm aware of concerns that by the end of next year the Ukrainian Air Force will have more F-16s from our allies than they have trained pilots and maintainers. A) Does the Ukrainian Air Force have enough trained pilots and maintenance personnel to begin combat operations this year and to support planned F-16s deliveries

through the end of 2025? B) Does the US have a plan to train additional pilots and maintainers and what factors are limiting our ability to train more Ukrainian personnel to operate the F-16? C) Does the DoD currently plan on providing US F-16s or related munitions and support equipment to Ukraine? Why or why not? D) What organization in the Department of Defense has the overall lead for developing and coordinating the plan to train and equip the Ukrainian Air Force to operate the F-16?

General CAVOLI. As a co-lead of the multinational Air Force Capability Coalition, the United States is committed to supporting Ukraine's fourth-generation fighter capability through our ongoing work to train and equip the Ukrainian Air Force to operate, service, and maintain F-16 fighter aircraft and integrate the F-16 into Ukraine's Armed Forces. Currently, there are several dozen pilots and maintainers training in Denmark, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. With current plans, we anticipate training enough pilots and maintainers to meet Ukraine's initial operational requirement in 2025. Alongside co-leads Denmark and the Netherlands, and in close consultation with our Ukrainian counterparts, my team will continue to develop and refine a future training plan, particularly as Allies refine their delivery timelines. We will maximize our ability to enable an operationally relevant F-16 capability for Ukraine. Considering additional training in the United States over the next calendar year and beyond will be an important element of any future training plan. Ukrainian pilot English proficiency, U.S. training capacity, and funding will be critical components to ensure we are able to meet aircraft sourcing requirements.

The United States does not plan to provide Ukraine with F-16 jets from U.S. stocks at this time. However, we are supporting Ukraine's future F-16 capability by providing training, key support equipment, spare parts, and munitions. Many of these munitions are also utilized on Ukraine's current legacy aircraft thanks to Western integration efforts.

The U.S. Air Force, with oversight from OSD Policy, is taking a lead role in the Air Force Capability Coalition to develop and coordinate the plan to train Ukraine on and equip Ukraine with the F-16. As Ukraine begins to receive its initial jets, the Department will continue to fine tune efforts to enable a sustainable and effective capability for Ukraine.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BERGMAN

Mr. BERGMAN. General Cavoli, it's my understanding that commercial cellular networks are being used to target Ukrainian troops, and that this problem is exacerbated by the fact that Russia weaponizes its state-owned telecom networks. How has EUCOM sought to make most efficient use of innovative solutions in the US tech industry to utilize pre-existing commercial cellular infrastructure for improved telecom security and resilience in places like Poland and the Baltic states?

General CAVOLI. There is no concern of commercial cellular networks being used to target US troops in theater by Russian forces. USEUCOM purchases pre-existing commercial cellular phones and cards from vetted and trusted third party German vendors, which are then deployed within the theater (to include when travels to Poland and Baltic States) as members execute operations in the area. Similarly, units stationed and operating outside of Germany purchase commercial cellular phones and cards from approved local vendors (to the region they are operating in). Purchasers of telecommunications equipment take steps during acquisitions process to protect US government employees' identity and aim to make

their cellular network use appear the same as any standard commercial user.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. GOLDEN

Mr. GOLDEN. The debate is not if F-16s will be of aid to Ukraine, but when. As we have seen over the course of this brutal war of Russian aggression, the longer we wait, the more Ukraine loses. With that being said, would you agree that F-16s are a key asset that would help the win Ukrainians now and defend themselves in the future?

General CAVOLI. Yes, F-16s are an asset that will provide Ukraine with additional capability, including the ability to conduct operations using a broad variety of munitions. However, this capability is not a silver bullet in Ukraine's war against Russian aggression. Longer term, the F-16 offers the potential of future integration and interoperability with NATO, improves the effectiveness, survivability, and sustainability of the Ukrainian Air Force, and strengthens the capabilities of the Ukrainian Air Force to deter and, if necessary, defeat future Russian aggression.

Mr. GOLDEN. What is the current status of the F-16 assistance to Ukraine? When will the first aircraft, pilots, and maintainers arrive? How many more aircraft and crews are needed, and how soon should they be available to Ukraine?

General CAVOLI. The multinational Air Force Capability Coalition, co-led by Denmark, the Netherlands, and the United States, is committed to supporting Ukraine's F-16 program. The initial aircraft, pilots, maintainers, and support personnel should arrive this summer, with a plan for additional aircraft, pilots, and maintainers to arrive later in 2024 and beyond.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. WALTZ

Mr. WALTZ. I'd like to discuss the proposed EU fund to send a million 155mm artillery shells to Ukraine per year, announced last March. This fund would allegedly be capitalized at \$2 billion and include some joint procurement. The artillery shell piecer, however, would include PDA-style reimbursement for existing member stocks.

Have you received any information from the Europeans about how those valuations are made?

The funded joint procurement efforts would be limited to EU products, rather than what will help Ukrainians most. Have you raised this in your discussions with the allies? It seems like an EU jobs program.

General CAVOLI. Yes, I am aware of the EU's Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), which is intended to support ammunition projects and boost production among EU member states through 2025. ASAP is one of three tracks targeting the overall EU goal to deliver one million artillery rounds (not specifically 155mm) to Ukraine within one year. The other two tracks agreed by the Council were focused on:

1. Funding reimbursements from member state stocks (Track 1/€1 billion)
2. Funding for member states to contract for new supplies of ammunition (Track 2/€1 billion).

The EU did not meet its target due to lack of concrete industry orders and delays in Europe's defense industrial mobilization. Earlier this year, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and security Policy/Vice President of European Commission Joseph Borrell stated that 52% of the promised rounds would be delivered by the deadline, with the original target to be reached by the end of 2024. He also noted that the production capacity for artillery shells in Europe has gone up 40% since the start of the war and is expected to reach 1.4 million rounds a year by the end of 2024.

ASAP is intended to focus Europe on enhancing its defense industrial base capacity and promoting EU production, which will help a variety of nations to collectively meet the immediate demand for artillery ammunition.

Mr. WALTZ. The recent ISIS-K attack on a Moscow concert hall reminded the world of the enduring danger of Islamist terrorism and the ambitions of ISIS-K outside of Afghanistan. The growing focus in Europe, coupled with GEN Kurilla's statement in our recent posture hearing that ISIS-K "retains the capability and the will to attack US and Western interests abroad in as little as six months with little to no warning."

How are we combating the increased terrorist threat in Europe from ISIS-K? Are we getting appropriate support from our European allies to defeat this threat? How is this threat perceived against the U.S. homeland?

General CAVOLI. Our European partner security services have the lead in disrupting terrorist threats in Europe, to include those from ISIS-K. USEUCOM, in coordination with Department of State, DoD, and U.S. interagency partners, assists our European partners by sharing intelligence on potential terrorist threats. In addition, USCENTCOM's efforts against ISIS-K within their AOR help to stem the spread of ISIS-K into Europe.

In regards to our European allies, they maintain robust counterterrorism and information sharing capabilities to detect and disrupt these threats. They are not taking the ISIS-K threat lightly, as evidenced by several nations raising their threat levels and increasing their security postures. Our European allies are diligent in deterring and pre-emptively halting terrorist actions. For example, France and Turkey investigate and where appropriate detain persons believed to be "known or suspected terrorists." Germany is persistent in their investigative processes and will, after months of surveillance, ensure they have the evidence to detain individuals as appropriate. Countries in the southern part of Europe are working with North African intelligence agencies to stop plots before they cross the Mediterranean Sea. These collaborative international efforts play a key role in interdicting transnational threats and bolster our ability to protect the U.S. homeland forward.

Mr. WALTZ. Russian influence has extended into the next frontier for maritime trade- the arctic. The Arctic waterways open an extremely strategic water way cutting down on seafaring trade while also providing a strategic outpost for a potential military conflict.

How are we closely aligning with Sweden and Finland as new NATO allies to strictly enforce sanctions to prevent Russian encroachment and land seizure as they are proactively doing in

Ukraine? How are we projecting increased maritime power in the Northern Atlantic to prevent and curb the expansion of Russian influence on the former Soviet states and the surrounding European nations?

General CAVOLI. Carrier Strike Groups (CSG) and amphibious forces deliver credible combat power to deter Russia and reassure U.S. Allies and partners. Persistent indications and warnings capabilities and uncrewed systems across the Greenland, Iceland, and UK (GIUK) gap are critical for high-end subsurface threat detection and defense of the homeland. The two additional destroyers planned for the European theater will enhance Allied sea power projection and deterrence in the North Atlantic and Arctic. Finland and Sweden bring highly capable forces that add a world-class submarine fleet, operational icebreaking capabilities, and underwater EOD operations to the Alliance in the Arctic. In December 2023, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin signed three bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreements with Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. DoD will focus on implementing its bilateral defense cooperation agreements to enable calibrated presence using existing Allied infrastructure. Large-scale, joint, and combined exercises, such as Nordic Response and Arctic Shock, prepare ground, naval, and air forces to operate in extreme cold weather. USEUCOM also collaborates with other Combatant Commands and Arctic Allies to deliver a 360-degree approach against Russia. Allies and partners are the center of gravity for our National Strategy for the Arctic Region (NSAR). The NSAR is heavily focused on work with partners—by, with, and through. The NSAR highlights the necessity of working together to enhance our domain awareness, improve our information sharing, and develop a shared threat picture.

Mr. WALTZ. As part of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement in recent years, the U.S. has shifted eastward while moving more U.S. troops and assets to Poland from Germany to enhance deterrence against Russia, strengthen NATO, reassure our Allies, and our forward presence in Poland on NATO's eastern flank will improve our strategic and operational flexibility.

Have you seen a positive impact of this Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement with Poland? Has this increased our ability to project eastward in our Russia deterrence? What resources (i.e. Patriot batteries, F-15s, etc.) or personnel increases do you need to better project this power?

General CAVOLI. The Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement has created a positive impact with Poland and supports our bilateral objectives. Through this agreement, Poland has increased support to the U.S., providing the facilities and life support required to support forward deployed U.S. personnel. This enhances force projection, improves operational readiness, and enables deterrence.

Our forward presence on NATO's eastern flank improves our strategic and operational flexibility. The United States serves as the framework nation for the NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battle Group in Poland. Additionally, the permanent stationing of V Corps forward HQ in Poland expands U.S. command and control capabilities. This summer, USEUCOM will move an armored brigade combat team's equipment from Germany to Poland. This army prepositioned stock, maintained by a permanent army

field support battalion, will increase our power projection capabilities in Eastern Europe.

USEUCOM recommends maintaining a robust force posture in Poland and across Eastern Europe for continued strong U.S. support to Poland and the Polish NATO Battlegroup. USEUCOM also requires additional Patriot systems to defend against the totality of the Russian air threat and to ensure that the Patriot batteries in place can rotate out and meet deployment-to-dwell timelines without a lapse of coverage for our deployed forces.

Mr. WALTZ. I think our allies are vastly overestimating the dollar value of the military assistance they are giving Ukraine, and I'm worried DOD is going along with that to make a better case that our diplomacy is working. For example, it was reported in the March 31st edition of France's La Tribune newspaper, in an interview with the French armed forces minister, that Paris would send "hundreds" of its Renault VAB armored personnel carriers to Ukraine this year. The defense minister called the equipment "old," and France is currently phasing it out.

Would DOD count this type of aid as military assistance? How would it value such equipment?

Dr. WALLANDER. Although I cannot comment on the specifics of a media report, the Military Departments value equipment for presidential drawdown authority purposes consistent with the Foreign Assistance Act and implementing policy. This involves starting with the equipment's original acquisition cost and making reasonable adjustments for condition and market value.

I can say that Ukraine's battlefield needs are vast. Some of the critical battlefield requirements, such as the ability to safely transport personnel to and from the front lines, can be readily met through the provision of available on-hand equipment, including older variants. In situations like this, availability and quantity can make an important difference.

Mr. WALTZ. Last June DOD stated that it overestimated the value of the weapons it has sent to Ukraine by \$6.2 billion over the past two years, resulting in a surplus that will be used for future security packages. It was reported that this error was caused when DoD officials overvalued some of the systems sent to Ukraine, using the value of money it would cost to replace an item completely rather than the current value of the weapon. This accounting error thereby has been allowing DoD to send more weapons now without asking Congress for more money.

We are entrusted with the American taxpayer money and painstakingly review where each dollar and cent go. How does this enormous error happen? What have we done to correct this error and prevent a repeat in the future?

What is the standardized NATO valuation for equipment? How is DoD arriving at its valuations for weapons sent to Ukraine?

Are you (as DoD) partnering with our European allies to inflate the contributions to put pressure on Congress to act on the supplemental bill?

Dr. WALLANDER. The issue of re-valuing equipment provided to Ukraine is one centered on authority to provide up to a certain monetary value of goods. It is not one involving funding or the misuse of taxpayer dollars. No funds were ever lost or found.

During the Department's regular oversight of our execution of presidential drawdown authority (PDA) for Ukraine, last year we discovered inconsistencies in equipment valuation for Ukraine. In a significant number of cases, Services used replacement costs rather than net book value, thereby overestimating the value of the equipment drawn down from U.S. stocks and provided to Ukraine. Once we discovered the mis-valuation, the Comptroller reissued guidance clarifying how to value equipment in line with financial management regulation and other Department policy to ensure we use a common accounting method for PDA purposes. The Military Services now certify to the Department's Comptroller that their estimated valuations of U.S. stocks and services drawn down for Ukraine are in line with DoD guidelines.

Our Allies and partners report their own commitments through various announcements and in bilateral and multilateral conversations. When totaling security assistance provided by Allies and partners, the Department captures what was actually transferred by Allies and partners. It does not include the long-term support funds that may have been committed or identified as necessary, but not yet provided. We will continue to work with our Allies and partners to meet Ukraine's most urgent security requirements. In addition to committing over \$44 billion in security assistance, our Allies and partners can, at times, provide capabilities not readily available in U.S. inventories, meeting a key battlefield need.

We have found that our Allies and partners robustly track and report the values of the equipment they have donated to Ukraine. OSD Policy has tasked our U.S. Defense Attaches serving in Allied capitals to report back on the monetary values of security assistance to Ukraine to ensure our Ally/partner donation estimates are as accurate as possible.

Mr. WALTZ. I'd like to discuss the proposed EU find to send a million 155mm artillery shells to Ukraine per year, announced last March. This fund would allegedly be capitalized at \$2 billion and include some joint procurement. The artillery shell piecer, however, would include PDA-style reimbursement for existing member stocks.

Have you received any information from the Europeans about how those valuations are made?

The funded joint procurement efforts would be limited to EU products, rather than what will help Ukrainians most. Have you raised this in your discussions with the allies? It seems like an EU jobs program.

Dr. WALLANDER. The European Peace Facility (EPF) is the vehicle that the European Union (EU) uses to provide security assistance to Ukraine. In March 2023, the EU approved €2 billion in funds from the EPF to support its ammunition initiative and specifically reimburse member states for deliveries of ammunition to Ukraine from existing stocks and to support joint procurement efforts. Since then, in March 2024, the EU increased the ceiling of the EPF from €12 billion to €17 billion, with the additional €5 billion intended exclusively for Ukraine. Initially, the use of EPF funds for joint procurement for Ukraine was limited to purchases from European Union and Norwegian defense industry. However, in March 2024, the EU relaxed the restrictions, al-

lowing EU member-states to receive reimbursements from the EPF for procurements of munitions and weapons from non-European sources over the near-term, if European industry cannot source the items in time to meet Ukraine's urgent requirements.

In our consultations, including at the Ukraine Defense Contact Group (UDCG) chaired by Secretary Austin, we have consistently urged the EU and bilateral European donors to surge assistance to meet Ukraine's immediate battlefield needs. The EU continues to emphasize its unwavering support for Ukraine and underscore its willingness to leverage the EPF to address Ukraine's urgent requirements.

To date, the EFP has disbursed €5.6 billion to reimburse member states for donations to Ukraine. I do not, however, have visibility on how the EU assess individual valuations, and would refer you to the EU for more information.

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Dr. WALLANDER. Allies and partners are the center of gravity for our National Strategy for the Arctic Region (NSAR). The NSAR is heavily focused on work by, with, and through partners. The NSAR highlights the necessity of working together to enhance our domain awareness, improve our information sharing, and develop a shared threat picture.

As you likely know, Russia is making excessive maritime claims in the Arctic region, refurbishing infrastructure in the Arctic along their so-called Northern Sea Route (NSR) and threatening military action to enforce these claims.

The infrastructure in the Arctic impacts missions outside the Arctic, including nuclear deterrence and power projection into the Indo-Pacific and European theaters. DoD's posture includes not only our own infrastructure, but also "access, basing, and overflight" of our Allies' infrastructure.

The United States benefits from its close relationships with European Arctic nations (both bilaterally and through NATO) as well as with Canada (through coordination between North American Aerospace Defense Command [NORAD] and U.S. Northern Command [USNORTHCOM]). These relationships build shared threat perceptions and create opportunities to sustain the ability to project power into and through the Arctic region.

By training alongside our Allies at exercises like NORDIC RESPONSE and ARCTIC FORGE we will improve our interoperability and understanding of Arctic operations. In December 2023, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin signed three bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreements with Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, respectively. DoD will focus on implementing its bilateral de-

fense cooperation agreements to enable calibrated presence using existing Allied infrastructure.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. GIMENEZ

Mr. GIMENEZ. This week, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavron in Beijing. As the world is focused on Russia/Ukraine, what have the Chinese been doing in EUCOM? What developments or investments have they made in the region? How many European sea ports have they invested in?

General CAVOLI. China attempts to sow division and exert influence across Europe through malicious means like trade coercion, boycotts of European goods, and export controls in order to shape policymakers in European states. Notably, in 2023 the European Union maintained a trade deficit with China of over 291 billion euros, down from a record 390 billion euros in 2022. Additionally, China invests in European ports, airports, utility companies, and telecommunications, putting at risk our collective sustainment and communication systems. Chinese state-owned enterprises have investment stakes in commercial seaports that handle more than 10 percent of Europe's shipping capacity; this includes at least 14 ports in close proximity to or collocated with hubs that provide logistical support to NATO. European nations are awakening to the massive extent and potentially damaging effect that Chinese influence is having in the region.

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Dr. WALLANDER. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is the Department's pacing challenge and presents a challenge to European security. In the USEUCOM area of responsibility (AOR), we see the PRC attempting to weaken and fracture NATO's cohesion and unity—which represent the bedrock of the Alliance's deterrence and defense capabilities. In addition, the PRC's investments in and access to European critical infrastructure have the potential to directly impact capabilities that are critical to SACEUR. For example, PRC companies growing worldwide ownership and operation of important infrastructure, such as port and rail projects across the European continent, could affect NATO's logistics, military mobility, and communications. Moreover, the presence of PRC technology and services in Europe's telecommunication infrastructure could increase the risk of potential intelligence collection by the PRC. We're also seeing the rapid advance of the PRC's space, cyber, and nuclear capabilities, which are particularly concerning as domains without borders. We know the only path to counter Beijing's malign behavior is in close coordination with our Allies and partners and in all our engagements we continue to encourage our European Allies and partners to continue their focus on the PRC to collectively address these issues.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LALOTA

Mr. LALOTA. Dr. Wallander, recognizing the significant contributions of Long Island's defense industrial base to our national security, and in light of the recent unveiling of the European Defense Industrial Strategy aimed at bolstering the EU's defense base, could you share your perspective on how the American defense industry and suppliers can contribute to fostering a robust transatlantic defense base, ensuring a steady supply of critical defense products, and supporting the modernization efforts of the European defense sector?

Dr. WALLANDER. The United States is engaging with NATO Allies and European Union (EU) member states to advocate for keeping the EU defense industry market open, competitive, and free of non-tariff barriers for entry of U.S. defense industry.

The 2022 EU Strategic Compass described the United States as "the EU's staunchest and most important strategic partner and a global power contributing to peace, security, stability and democracy on our continent." We hope the EU will maintain the Strategic Compass as a guiding document as the EU moves forward to bolster the European defense sector.

Prohibition of U.S. entity involvement could drastically weaken shared security by limiting procurement options during a time of severe defense article shortages, wasting resources through duplication of efforts, and hindering U.S.-EU and NATO-EU interoperability in defense industry production and development.

Aspects of the EU Defense Industrial Strategy (EDIS) which support Ukraine and promote its defense industrial base growth are positive, as is the intention for greater cooperation with NATO. The United States continues to support development of EU defense initiatives and the defense industrial and technological base that are coordinated and complementary to NATO.

Partnership with non-EU industry, in particular American defense industry, will help grow and expand European defense industrial capacity. The best way for the EU to expedite efficient production in the short-term is to reduce barriers and allow transatlantic cooperation.

Since the signature of the DoD-European Defense Agency (EDA) Administrative Arrangement (AA) in April 2023, DoD has facilitated several conversations with the EDA and EU member states with large on efficient production and increased interoperability between our defense industrial bases. DoD hopes to continue these dialogues throughout the EU's development of defense initiatives mapped out in the EDIS.

The DoD's first National Defense Industrial Strategy (NDIS), released earlier this year, emphasizes the importance of enduring cooperation with our NATO Allies and EU member states, alongside other partners.

The NDIS recognizes that fortifying the defense industrial base of the 21st century requires a collaborative effort involving the U.S. government, private industry, and international partners.

The NDIS calls for an expansion of our network of allies, and for closer working relationships to achieve integrated deterrence against our pacing threat. Specifically, it calls for developing interoperability standards and other infrastructure to ensure that allies

and partners can produce products for use by the Military Departments, and that products made by the domestic DIB can be used by foreign militaries.

The NDIS also calls for the development of markets in which materiel and knowledge produced by the domestic Defense Industrial Base (DIB), or the DIB of our allies and partners can be shared without fear of knowledge theft or other anti-competitive market practices. This sharing of materiel and knowledge can strengthen the relationship between the United States and our partners and allies and enable closer cooperation to rapidly address adversarial actions.

In support of the key actions laid out in the NDIS, DoD has and will continue to engage the EU and its member states in dialogue as we move forward to face the common security challenges of the 21st century.

