TO CONDUCT A CONFIRMATION HEARING ON THE EXPECTED NOMINATION OF: GENERAL PHILIP M. BREEDLOVE, USAF, FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2013

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room SDG–50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Donnelly, Kaine, King, Inhofe, McCain, and Ayotte.

Committee staff members present: Peter K. Levine, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Joseph M. Bryan, professional staff member; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, general counsel; and William G.P. Monahan, counsel.

Minority staff members present: John A. Bonsell, minority staff director; Steven M. Barney, minority counsel; and Thomas W. Goffus, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, John L. Principato, and Lauren M. Gillis.

Committee members' assistants present: Jeff Fatora, assistant to Senator Nelson; Marta McLellan Ross, assistant to Senator Donnelly; Karen Courington, assistant to Senator Kaine; Jim Catella, assistant to Senator King; Paul C. Hutton IV, assistant to Senator McCain; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Todd Harmer, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Brad Bowman, assistant to Senator Ayotte; and Craig Abele, assistant to Senator Graham.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. The committee meets this morning to consider the nomination of General Philip Breedlove, U.S. Air Force, to be Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. General Breedlove is familiar with the European area of responsibility as he currently serves as Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe. He

is also familiar with the challenges of wearing more than one hat, as he currently is also Commander, U.S. Air Forces, Africa.

General, we thank you for your three and a half decades of military service and for your willingness to answer the call to serve once again. We thank your wife Cindy, who is also here with you this morning. Your family, as you know better than anybody, their support and their sacrifices make it possible for you to succeed. Please feel free when we call on you for your opening statement to introduce your wife and any of your family or friends that are with you here today.

The next EUCOM Commander and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, will face significant challenges within a constrained budget environment. We received the President's budget yesterday and, like the budgets passed by the Senate and the House, it does not address the possibility of a $52 billion sequester next year. If we don't take action to avoid this second sequester, cuts to defense spending will have a real impact on our strategy and programs in the coming years. Despite these cuts, the United States remains committed to our longstanding trans-Atlantic relationship with our European allies and to our mutual defense obligations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

General, we'd be interested in your thoughts on the impact of the current sequester and the possibility of a second sequester in fiscal year 2014 on EUCOM's ability to carry out its mission.

Last year the Defense Department announced reductions in the U.S. force posture in Europe, including the removal over the next couple years of two of the four Army brigade combat teams deployed in Europe. In addition, two U.S. Air Force squadrons under General Breedlove's command in Europe were designated for deactivation.

As the United States continues to rebalance its military posture globally, I hope you'd share your thoughts on the ongoing rebalance and what additional revisions, if any, to the U.S. footprint in Europe you would recommend if confirmed.

Nearly all of our NATO allies have undergone budget cuts of their own in recent years, raising concerns about what the capabilities of the alliance will be when the next crisis arises. Yet, after ten years of fighting together in Afghanistan, the level of NATO cohesion is high and is unprecedented. One of the major challenges in the coming years will be capturing the lessons learned from these coalition operations and maintaining current levels of interoperability within the alliance.

The NATO missions within Afghanistan is entering a critical phase in the coming months, with the transition to Afghan security forces taking the lead on security throughout the country later this spring and coalition forces shifting to an advisory mission between now and the end of the International Security Assistance Force mission by the end of 2014.

The next NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, will play a critical role in ensuring the smooth implementation of NATO's "in together, out together" policy for the Afghanistan mission and in shaping the post-2014 mission in Afghanistan which was discussed at the NATO defense ministers meeting in February.

While Syria is not in the EUCOM's area, its impact is felt by key allies in the EUCOM region, including Turkey and Israel. As the civil war in Syria rages on, President Assad and his increasingly small inner circle are resorting to the use of Scud missiles, air strikes and other indiscriminate capabilities that terrorize innocent Syrians and increase further the flow of refugees out of Syria.

Last year the alliance agreed to deploy Patriot missile batteries to defend Turkey against potential action by Assad. This action by NATO is commendable, but it's not enough. The United States needs to build a coalition to ramp up the military pressure on the Assad regime, and I hope our allies in NATO will join this effort. The Arab League has already stripped the Assad regime of its seat at the Arab League and invited the Syrian opposition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people.

General, if confirmed as Supreme Allied Commander for all NATO military operations, you will be confronted with these issues and we look forward to hearing from you on this matter today as well.

At the Lisbon summit in 2010, NATO agreed to develop missile defense capability to defend NATO European territory, population, and military forces. This is essential to protect our forward-deployed forces, allies, and partners against the existing and emerging regional missile threat from Iran. To achieve that commitment, NATO agreed to develop and finance a command and control system and the United States is contributing Phases 1 through 3 of the European Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense, which remain on track to protect NATO Europe by 2018, with its defense sites in Romania and Poland.

Secretary Hagel recently stated that our commitment to NATO missile defense, quote, "remains ironclad." He also announced that the United States no longer plans to deploy Phase 4 of the EPAA because Phase 4 was designed to protect the United States, not Europe, and we can achieve enhanced protection of the United States from a potential Iranian long-range missile sooner by deploying 14 additional ground- based interceptors in Alaska. General Breedlove, we're interested to know your views on that issue.

As part of its 2010 Lisbon agreement, NATO also invited Russia to cooperate on missile defense. Although NATO and Russia have had different views on missile defense, there are numerous successful areas of U.S.-Russian and NATO- Russian military cooperation and the NATO–Russia Council continues to have active discussions on missile defense cooperation, including a joint theater missile defense exercise program.

The United States and NATO believe that cooperation on missile defense can enhance the security of both NATO and Russia and such cooperation could also send a vitally important signal to Iran that we are united in opposition to any Iranian efforts to acquire nuclear weapons and long- range missiles.

Other challenges facing the next EUCOM Commander and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, include continuing and strengthening bilateral and NATO efforts to counter transnational threats from terrorism, to prevent illicit trafficking, including the flow of narcotics from South Asia and elsewhere through Southeastern Europe, to counter cyber threats, including to the NATO

Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence in Estonia, to counter piracy, and to maintain strategic assets, the key transit facilities for global operations, particularly in support of U.S. Central Command and U.S. Africa Command.

So we all look forward to your testimony today, General, on these and other issues, and again we thank you for your continuing willingness to serve our Nation.

Senator Inhofe.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We are faced with a little bit of a problem this morning in that at 10:30 we have an EPW meeting and there are five members on the Republican side alone that will be going back and forth, as I've already explained to General Breedlove. So we'll be moving around a little bit.

I enjoyed very much meeting your beautiful wife and two daughters. I guess Dave is there somewhere; is that right? Yes. Well, I didn't mean to sell you short. I just kind of walked by you to the beauty. So anyway, it's nice to have your family here with you.

As I look at Iran, North Korea, and al Qaeda, as you and I talked in my office, and Mali and the conflict in the Central African Republic, and 70,000 dead in Syria, I can't understand how the President thinks that, quote, "The tide of war is receding." On my recent trip to Korea we visited the DMZ, which as you know from your time in Korea is anything but demilitarized. And on my visit to North Africa we discussed the problems there, and they are very—none would indicate that the tide of war is receding. If this is what receding looks like, I'd hate to see what a threat looks like.

Through my extensive travel in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East and Asia, the critical importance of U.S. engagement and leadership abroad is readily apparent and the security dividends of our investment in NATO include the multinational operations in Afghanistan and Libya and counter-piracy missions in the Horn of Africa. I do want to cover that in my questions to you because it's probably even more extensive than people realize that it is. It's clear that the future operations we conduct in Africa and the Middle East will be from Europe and with Europe.

I don't remember a time when the world was more dangerous than it is now. I can remember people saying that in the past, but it's for real now. Yet due in part to the wrong perception that the tide of the war is receding, we are poised to cut our defense budget by, if you take what has already been done and what we're looking at in sequestration, about a trillion dollars. I agree with our former Secretary of Defense it's devastating to our defense. While our military commanders have done a phenomenal job with the hand that they are dealt, we owe them a better hand.

Unfortunately, the President released a budget yesterday that's symbolic of his last four years in office. It highlights his failure to address the unprecedented resource challenges facing our military. His proposal continues his unfortunate history of saddling the men and women of our military with disproportionate and illogical budget cuts that would undermine their readiness and their capabilities.

As we speak, as we speak, as you and I talked about in my office, four of the six U.S. fighter squadrons stationed in Europe have been grounded, and our tanker and airlift squadrons will revert from full mission capable to a greatly reduced status of basic mission capable. The lack of resources will make EUCOM's support of AFRICOM even more difficult. We'll have a chance to talk about that and I've expressed to you my concern there.

Over the long term, I'm greatly concerned that we'll squander our investment of our National blood and treasure in Afghanistan by precipitously drawing down the troops' capability similar to what we saw in Africa.

Now, when you're confirmed, General Breedlove, you'll be charged with guiding the most successful alliance in history through a difficult fiscal environment and be responsible for ensuring that our efforts in Afghanistan over the last decade will not have been in vain. I can't think of anyone who is more up to this very difficult task than you are, and so I'm looking forward to the successes that we'll see through your leadership in this new position.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

General.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PHILIP M. BREEDLOVE, USAF, NOMINATED FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL AND TO BE COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND, AND SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I would like to introduce my family, sir. I'd like to introduce first my wife Cindy. She's been beside me for 34 years. She's moved our household 21 times, 9 of those times across the oceans, and she completely raised the 3 wonderful children who have already been acknowledged, Samantha, Rebecca, and Daniel. I know that I would not be here today without her and my family.

I'm honored to have my oldest daughter Samantha here. She's a world-class triathlete in my mind. Her husband Kevin serves in the Army National Guard and has accomplished two one-year tours in Iraq.

I'm also honored to have with me my daughter Rebecca and my son-in-law Clay, both of whom proudly serve their Nation as lieutenants in the United States Air Force. Clay is a third generation Air Force officer. His father, Master Sergeant Mike Hardy, is also here with him today.

My son Daniel is here and is a freshman in college and he makes me proud every day with what he does.

Chairman LEVIN. Is he going to the University of Michigan, I hope?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, no, sir. I'm off to a bad start. [Laughter.]

Senator DONNELLY. We have some other suggestions for that as well.

General BREEDLOVE. My mother-in-law, Ms. Lib Thompson, is here today with us as well. Her husband Don Thompson, now deceased, served in the Marine Corps and they have both supported Cindy and I throughout our Air Force career.

Ms. Regina Hagerty is also here in support. She has been a part of our family for over 28 years, since her husband was my most influential commander in my early years.

Finally, I'm proud to have Chief Master Sergeant Craig Adams here. He is the most important half of my command team at USAFE.

It's a tremendous honor for me to be here today and I'm humbled to have been nominated by our Commander in Chief for the position of Commander of United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. Allow me to publicly thank Secretary Hagel and General Dempsey for their recommendation and for their trust and confidence. I'd also like to say thank you to Admiral Jim Stavridis for his 36 years of service to our country. His leadership of our joint and coalition forces as our longest serving combatant commander has truly been inspiring.

The nations of Europe make up the majority of an alliance key to our collective defense strategy. They have been our most reliable allies for over 70 years. These partnerships are irreplaceable. We cannot rebalance or pivot towards Asia without Europe.

I have served in Europe for a third of my career and if confirmed this will be my eighth assignment. I have worked hand in hand with our partner nations to advance U.S. and alliance objectives. While it's a tremendous honor to be nominated to this position, I believe leadership is a responsibility that must be earned through action, a daunting task for anyone selected to lead the great men and women responsible for a coalition that has ensured the trans-Atlantic security of our Nation and its allies.

If confirmed, I fully acknowledge the significance of our mission in Europe and your expectations of me as a commanding general. Cindy and I pledge to give nothing less than our all to live up to decades-long standards of excellence. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen who selflessly serve deserve nothing less than everything I have to offer.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the committee, for allowing me to appear before you today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Breedlove follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

Our timing system worked very well yesterday, so we'll continue. We thank Senator Inhofe for that suggestion to use this highly advanced technology, which has been here for probably 20 years without use by this committee.

So, General, last month Senator McCain and I sent a letter to the President urging him to work with NATO and our regional partners to pursue additional options in Syria, including the following options: to degrade the Assad regime's air power with precision air strikes or the possible use of Patriot missile batteries; to target Syrian aircraft and missiles; to create with Syria—with Turkey's initiative, a safe zone within Syria, with a limited no-fly zone; to provide additional assistance to vetted opposition groups.

Can you give us your personal assessment of these options? Are they viable and are they desirable in your professional military opinion?

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. As you know, we have six batteries of Patriots in Turkey at this time and they are reacting to and under the command of my NATO element, AIRCOM NATO. They are voluntary national contributions to an Article 4 request by Turkey to participate in the defense of a stalwart ally.

Two of those batteries are U.S. batteries and four are NATO. In order to be able to use any of those batteries in a safe zone protection of Syria, of course, we would have to engage Turkey and NATO about the four additional batteries. As you and I have discussed, sir, clearly the U.S. batteries could be used in a role to project into Syria. They have the capability to do it. Their range is somewhat limited, as we have discussed, at doing that, but they have full capability to do that. If Turkey and the U.S. were to look at doing this in a bilateral fashion or if we could convince our NATO partners to come alongside of us to also be a part of that, then we could do that.

The fact of the matter of being able to project power into Syria is physically possible. There is both good and bad at creating this impression into Syria. I think that it enables some of the things that we discussed that you are concerned about as far as a safe zone in northern Syria. What it would do is ask us then to reorient the defense away from what they are defending now, and I guess that's the down side of reorienting where those Patriots are.

Creating a no-fly zone. I think General Mattis in his last testimony to this committee put it pretty much the way I see it: A safe zone could create opportunity to engage with the opposition, but creating a safe zone in northern Syria would be much more than—would have to be much more than Patriots. It would probably require fixed wing air and other capabilities that we would have to bring to the problem.

As I know you and I have talked and your staff have talked, creating a no-fly zone first starts with having to take down the IADS of the enemy, which would be something that would have to be done kinetically. I know that CENTCOM has thought through those issues and their recommendation at this point is they don't see a military value in that.

Chairman LEVIN. Excuse me. CENTCOM has said they don't see a military value in taking down air defenses of Syria—I'm sorry.

General BREEDLOVE. I'm sorry, Senator. Let me say that a different way. What they have said is they don't believe that there are good military options or outcomes by creating a no-fly zone.

Chairman LEVIN. Over a safe zone?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Who have they said that to?

General BREEDLOVE. I think, Senator, that was General Mattis in this committee. Maybe I have that wrong.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, I don't think so. But we'll review that testimony. Senator McCain I know has been very actively involved in this issue.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, let me. Could I?

Chairman LEVIN. Yes.

Senator MCCAIN. With your indulgence, sir, General Mattis said, quote: "The United States and our allies could identify and destroy quite a fair amount of Assad's operational aircraft on the ground using precision strike and standoff weaponry," General. So your statement is in direct contradiction to what General Mattis said in testimony and has told me.

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, I sit corrected. You have it exactly right, what Senator—excuse me—what General Mattis said in your testimony.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you for that important clarification. The stakes here are very, very significant.

Yesterday the administration—an administration spokesman, senior administration official, said that, quote: "The President has directed his national security team to identify additional measures so that we can increase assistance." I would hope that would happen quickly, and I know Senator McCain and other members of this committee have spoken on this subject as well.

So I'll leave the subject of Syria, I'll leave it at this point, in order to be able to ask some additional questions. But we do hope, General, that when you're confirmed that you will take back to our NATO allies the feeling of many members of this committee, who will all speak for themselves, and hopefully by then an administration position that we be much more forward-leaning in terms of putting additional military pressure on Assad, which would require NATO really support, and it obviously would require Turkey to decide that it is willing to create a safe zone in northern Syria, providing it has NATO support. So we would hope that you would be able ought make this case to NATO as we've just outlined.

On the missile defense issue, on European missile defense, is it your assessment that our European allies are supportive of our new missile defense policy in Europe?

General BREEDLOVE. Mr. Chairman, thank you again for that question. I have talked to numerous of the major allies that are a part of AIRCOM since AIRCOM, which is my NATO current hat, is in charge of the missile defense, which is in its nascent form now, our initial capability. And as I understand the feedback from all of my NATO counterparts at this point, as long as we remain steadfast in our support to Phases 1 through 3, which was the portion of the missile defense that was about Europe, as long as we are unfaltering in our support to proceed apace with those first three phases, our NATO partners are comfortable with the announcement.

Chairman LEVIN. And that is our new policy, is that correct?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. In your response to prehearing questions you said that we should continue to seek zones of cooperation with Russia and that we should continue to believe that cooperation with Russia on missile defense could enhance the security of both NATO and Russia. Can you describe ways in which you believe that missile defense cooperation and transparency with Russia could enhance our security, including whether such cooperation could send a powerful signal to Iran that we oppose jointly, NATO and Russia oppose Iran acquiring nuclear weapons and long-range missiles?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I agree with the opening statement that was made, and that is that we have to find ways to cooperate with Russia. I think in the opening statement it made reference to the signal to Iran. What a powerful signal to Iran if the U.S. and Russia were cooperating on missile technology and missile defense.

So I think we do need to press hard to move forward with that. I've started in my current job connecting to senior Russian leaders and actually have hosted at my headquarters there their commander of long-range aviation as a first step to get to the senior leadership. I'm committed, if confirmed, to continue that pursuit to bring Russia alongside of us in these important endeavors.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your drawing attention to the family. I think a lot of people don't understand the sacrifices that are made. To me, Cindy, when I hear something like you've been married for 34 years and moved 25 times or whatever it was, it's inconceivable to me. My wife and I have been married 54 years and we've never moved. Same house that we were originally in. So it's hard to see that. But that's a lifestyle that you've become accustomed to and you've made great sacrifices.

I'm not going to do it, but for the record, because of your current position, not the position for which you will be confirmed, I hope, I am concerned about where we are in our Phase 1, 2, 3, and 4, and the fact that cancellation of the fourth phase in terms of the capability of our SM–3's, the 1A, the 2B, 2A's, and what we don't have. Just I'd like to get just for the record from you from your past experience where you really think that puts us today. You and I talked about this in the office, but I'd like to have it down so that we can have that in writing.

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I have that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator INHOFE. All right, sir. That's good.

Now, you mentioned in my office and I mentioned in my opening statement that four of the six U.S. fighter squadrons stationed in Europe have been grounded. Now, I have to ask you that—and our tanker and airlift squadrons will revert from full missile capability to a greatly reduced status for basic mission capability. How long does it take to make that up?

I'm thinking more because of my personal background in what's happening to our fighter squadrons stationed in Europe, because you've got a problem. You're going to have to get them back up ready. What do you do with them during this period of time? You've got four of them that are down there and you've also got the pilots. There's so much you can do on simulation. What do you do with them and how long will it take you to get back and the kind of comparable cost should we see fit to address this in our NDAA for the year 2014?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, it is a great question and we have been thinking about this ever since we have begun to contemplate that we would have ground forces. As I have explained to some, the forces actually degrade over time. Our youngest pilots after about

30 days lose their qualifications. Our older pilots after about 45 days, they lose their qualifications.

Once they lose their landing qualifications and other combat skill qualifications, then we essentially have to put them through a requalification process. If we were to receive funding to be able to start flying them very shortly after they're grounded, that would be a longer process—a shorter process. If we had to wait all the way to the end of the fiscal year to get budget authority for flying hours in the next fiscal year and they are grounded for say three, three and a half months, then it would be much longer.

We've looked at that, sir, and I think for the fighter aviation a rough number is two months, a little more than two months to get the squadron back on track. For the lift squadron, when they lose some of their exquisite capabilities like paradrop, precision drop, supporting the Army in their parachute training, etcetera, those are harder to regain simply because it takes—we have to get the training opportunities to do it. It's not like you can just fly sorties the next day. We have to marry with the Army and other things. So that could take significantly longer, and that concerns me, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. I think that as we go into our development of our NDAA and we start our discussions, we want to get from you some more specifics, because should we do what I consider to be the responsible thing we need to know the costs and what we have sacrificed in this interim period of time.

Just one real question I normally do ask. It's becoming less relevant, but it still is somewhat relevant. That is on the sequestration. If we were, as I suggested some seven weeks ago, able to take the same top line and give the commanders in the field more flexibility, would that—I have talked to all the service chiefs. I have them on record here. But would you agree with them that it would be far less devastating if we could have some flexibility at the discretion of the service chiefs?

General BREEDLOVE. I do, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. One of the areas that I've been very much concerned with is of course in AFRICOM. You'll have that responsibility. It's an awesome responsibility because with your shrinked resources, with the problems that are happening there. Now, we're used to problems in Africa. We've never prior to 9–11 really addressed them to any real degree.

Everyone is aware of what happened in Somalia. They're aware of piracy on the east coast. But as you and I talked, I'm reminded when I go over there that with the new finds of the oil and the resources in West Africa that we have a new problem that's developing there and that's piracy in West Africa.

Now, just when you look at the fact that you are up in Stuttgart and you have to get your resources down to that huge, huge continent of Africa, what kind of—how are you going to handle that? It's hard enough as it is today, but as this expands, and with the resources you have—and I'm talking about maybe lift resources. Maybe this is something we need to reevaluate.

How can you handle that with these new problems coming in, that vast continent of Africa?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir. I think that my last several assignments in USAFE where we supported Africa before AFRICOM and now as the Africa commander, I have learned the definition of geography and what geography means, time, distance, and heading. I often show a picture, a map of Africa, where you can literally put almost exactly four continental United States in the continent of Africa. I understand now as an operational commander just how hard access is to Africa even if it's unopposed. Time, distance, and heading becomes a real problem.

Being able to have forces forward deployed in the southern tier of USAFE so that they can reach into Africa is incredibly important. Our basing in these southern states—Spain, Italy, and others—are critical to us. I believe that we are now, as you know, in northern Africa looking to see where are there lily pads inside of Africa that we can establish relationships with nations whereby when we need to we can move forces forward, to cut that time, distance, and heading problem down.

Senator INHOFE. I think that's important because that's a moving target. Not long ago no one was really concerned about Mali and Chad and some of that area in there. However, we are. When we look at the five African brigades that we originally talked about building, not that we're on schedule for doing it, which would be another question for the record, it concerns me that we are already to the point where you've got to have these resources, you've got to have them developed.

Initially when we, as you well know and most of the people at this table know, when we established AFRICOM, the idea—it would have been better to have that headquarters down more centrally located, maybe even in Africa, maybe in Ethiopia. But we know the political problems down there that made that impossible.

So with the reduction in the resources that are already there and the escalating problems already in eastern Africa, but now in West Africa, that's going to be one that's going to be a huge, huge problem for you. So I'd like to have you be sure to let us know as we go into the development for 2014 just what those problems are so we can help you to address those problems when that time comes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

For everyone's information, the vote is now scheduled at 11:00 o'clock.

Senator Donnelly.

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, thank you for your service, and to all of your family. I noted that you graduated from college the same year I did. I consider you as young as I am, and it's wonderful to see your family here with you today.

You will help in your new position coordinating our reduction in forces from Afghanistan. As we look at that process moving forward, what do you consider as the most significant challenges for the Afghan army, for the police, for their government, as we move forward in this process?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, it's a great question. As we look at what are the sizes that are being contemplated for the long term force structure and what are the capabilities that are being con-

templated, it is center in our discussion. I think first and foremost we need to continue the pressure on making sure the professionalism of the military meets the requirements of the Nation. I think that, quite frankly, we are doing pretty good there in the armed forces piece and we have some work to do in the Afghan police piece.

But we need to make the military creditable, capable, and responsive and appear creditable to the Nation of Afghanistan and the people that they would protect. I would offer that their recent performance in the military realm has been quite respectable. As you know, almost 90 percent of the Nation now is back to the Afghanis. And they have led now some very large formation attacks and complex military maneuvers, which are fairly encouraging in this matter.

Senator DONNELLY. Do you have as we move forward on this almost a set of metrics as we head closer toward the end of 2014, that at this point we hope to be here, at this point we hope to be here?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, the short answer is no, I do not. But I know that Joe Dunford, who is a long-time friend we have served together many times, I know that he is working on that. And if confirmed my pledge is to get there to talk to Joe and then go down and see Lloyd Austin immediately thereafter, to do just that: How can we develop metrics and thoughts that will inform this Congress and inform our leadership on the way to go ahead?

Senator DONNELLY. What do you see as the biggest challenge in this process of transition?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, my initial response now, not having been there, will be colored by the color of my uniform. As I talk to the other NATO nations and as I have talked to the commanders there in my past trips as an Air Force officer, they are very concerned about enablers. They are very concerned about being able to do the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance that we do, to be able to do the personnel recovery that we do, to do the medevac that we do, inter- and intra-theater airlift.

These are all things that they are not capable of doing and that NATO has been providing by and large during the time, and I think those are things that we need to be concerned about.

Senator DONNELLY. Admiral Stavridis had told us a few weeks ago that the remaining bases in EUCOM were forward operating bases needed for access and that we could conceivably drawn down further. I met with the Army this week and they briefed us on their plans. Their plans, they told me, were to reduce the infrastructure in the region by 51 percent between now and 2016. How do we match those goals and the previous testimony that we heard?

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, let me just talk to what I've been doing as the air commander there and what I've watched my fellow commanders around do the same thing. When I took command about nine months ago, I immediately started looking at what is the enduring mission of USAFE as it supports Africa and Europe and the Middle East, the Eastern Med, and Africa?

I do believe that we have more infrastructure that we can draw down in the Air Force. I have heard my fellow component com-

manders speak to the same. I know very much less about what Bruce Clingan is looking at in the Navy, but I do know that the Army thinks that they can bring down further.

I think it's in all of our best interests to do that, because these bases cost money and the infrastructure that we can draw down saves money for flying aircraft.

Senator DONNELLY. One of the things I just want to try to get your commitment for. Indiana National Guard, we're extraordinarily proud of them. They have ongoing relationships with European state partners, and I just want to make sure that we can get your commitment that the longstanding relationships between National Guards and the European state partnership countries will remain with the Guard as we move forward.

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, I can absolutely assure you in that respect. For EUCOM, 21 state partnership programs servicing 22 nations. As I talked to the staff in preparation for this hearing, they tell me that literally one-quarter of our interaction with our partners are done by the state partnership program.

Specifically in the Air Command, I could not run by air operations center either in peacetime or in conflict without the support of two Guard units that bring people and expertise to my AOC.

Senator DONNELLY. As we look at Syria, obviously we're concerned with all the border areas, but one of the border areas that we're concerned about conflict threatening to boil over is in Israel. We are wondering the coordination between EUCOM and the Israeli Defense Forces, as well as coordination with our other friends and allies in the area. What kind of coordination is occurring now and what do you plan moving forward in this extremely challenging situation?

General BREEDLOVE. The coordination level now is higher than I've ever seen it. I have been participating in working with Israel since I was a colonel in Europe. I have flown in Juniper Falcon from Nevatim Air Base twice in my life during large exercises with Israel.

At the senior staff level, in preparation for last year's Austere Challenge 12, which you have heard billed as the largest missile defense exercise ever, we could not have been more tightly lashed to Israel in how we plan to do missile defense of that area should we need to.

I think that it is very strong. It continues to grow stronger and it should as we bring ourself closer and closer together, to dealing with a neighborhood that has been altered, I think, by the Arab Spring.

Senator DONNELLY. Right. And that's with our other allies, too, I presume.

Well, I'm almost out of time, so I want to ask you one last question. As you look at this region, as you look at your new potential command, what is your greatest concern as you look, as you move ahead? What keeps you up at night, other than your children?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I think my first focus is going to be getting the transition in Afghanistan right. I need to get over there, engage with the commanders, come back and engage with the leadership here in the Congress and our Nation, and make sure that

we have force sizing, drawdown schedules, and what we leave behind in residual capability right. I've got to focus on that.

Then, I'm running over a little bit, but, sir, I think it's really important that as we begin this drawdown in Afghanistan that we don't take a peace dividend and, as was mentioned in the opening comments, back way off of the gains that we have made with our European allies in interoperability and their investment in defense and in participating in Afghanistan.

Senator DONNELLY. General, thank you. And to your family, thank you very much for all your service.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Donnelly.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General, for you and your family's service. You mentioned all the different duty stations and I'm sure that your time at Luke Air Force was by far the most enjoyable of all of those.

You know, General, I mentioned to you in my office both Admiral Stavridis in General Mattis have been very candid with this committee, which is one of the questions that's asked of you on your confirmation. I hope you will follow in their footsteps, and I would remind you again on the issue of Syria Admiral Stavridis testified before this committee that Patriot missile batteries could be deployed from their current positions closer to the border with Syria, where they could help defend civilian populations in Syria and serve as a powerful deterrent to Syrian pilots. Do you agree with that?

General BREEDLOVE. I do, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Patriot missiles—Can Patriot missiles shoot down Scud missiles?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir. In fact that's their primary duty as they're aligned right now.

Senator MCCAIN. Can they shoot down aircraft?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir, they can.

Senator MCCAIN. General Mattis also testified that a fair amount of Assad's operational aircraft could be destroyed on the ground using standoff weaponry. Do you agree with that statement?

General BREEDLOVE. I do, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. So we really aren't putting pilots at risk and there's not a requirement to take out the air defenses around Damascus in order to assure the security of a no-fly zone. I think we all know that if pilots think they're going to fly into areas where their risk is incredibly high, as it would be with the Patriot missile and other capabilities, they would not do that.

Both former Secretary of Defense Panetta and General Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, both testified before this committee that they had supported supplying weapons to the rebels. Have you reached a conclusion on that? In Syria.

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, I think that if we could assure that the weapons were going to the right people and that we would not have to face them in the future, that it would be helpful to removing the regime.

Senator MCCAIN. I thank you for that answer. Obviously, the best way to assure that would be if there were a safe zone, such as Benghazi was in Libya, for the resistance to organize and con-

trol the flow of weapons. I think we all know, and I know you agree, that the situation has worsened over time, to the point where the jihadists are playing a greater and greater role in Syria, which obviously post-Assad, which will happen some day, is going to be incredibly complicated.

Do you believe that, as opposed to two years ago, that Lebanon and Jordan are more or less stable than they were before the last two years?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I would say they are less stable, not because their intent is not good, but there is so much instability with the Arab Spring and, as you know, sir, a pretty large refugee problem at this point.

Senator MCCAIN. And of course you are aware that the Russians continue their flow of weapons into Bashar Assad's forces; and even now, later reports that the Iranians are not only providing weapons, but they're training, actually training people in Iran and sending them back into Syria. Have you heard those reports?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I have not, but I do know that in general we would not categorize Russia's support to us as helpful in this area now. I am not privy to those reports yet.

Senator MCCAIN. You know, I think it's good to give them flack jackets. I don't think there's any way that that can really seriously affect the equation on the ground. And I—well, my opinion is well known.

General Mattis recommended 13,600 U.S. troops and about half as many international troops in post-2014 Afghanistan to do counterterrorism and train and assist missions. Have you had a chance to look at that assessment of General Mattis's?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I have looked at General Mattis's testimony and other thoughts on 13.6. I think that it relates back to a comment I made earlier, Senator, that I think that our eventual number in Afghanistan is yet to be determined, but influencing that will be do we remain at 352 in the ANSF or do we come down to what was proposed at the Chicago summit of 230 and when that happens. If we keep the ANSF high through '18, it should give us more flexibility on numbers. If we don't keep the ANSF number high, then that would probably cause input.

Senator MCCAIN. One of the things that is a little frustrating to some of us is we're sort of seeing a repeat of the Iraq scenario, in that we delay and delay and delay on these decisions. Meanwhile it puts Karzai and our friends in the region in an uncertain position. So I hope that as soon as you are confirmed that you would in the deliberations urge a decision soon on the post-2014. We're into 2013. We need to have a firm decision as to what our troop strengths are going to be, what our presence, and what their role is going to be. I greatly fear the same kind of unraveling that we are seeing in Iraq today.

Finally, could you—you made a very strong statement to me in my office when we had the pleasure of our visit about sequestration. You mentioned that certain squadrons are having to stand down, that there is certainly decisions having to be made that you really—that are basically no- win decisions.

When I asked you about the effect, especially since you have a couple of young members of your family here, the effect of seques-

tration on the decisions that these young officers, junior officers and mid-level officers, are going to be making about whether to remain in the Air Force and in the military, what's your personal view of that particular situation?

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, it's a great question and I'm happy to have an opportunity to comment. As I took command, the chief and I, we got out and talked to our troops. So what I will do is just report to you things that I'm hearing from the troops. This concerns them greatly. It concerns them, will we have the wherewithal to do what we do? Will we be able to continue educational benefits that we thought were a part of our business? Will we be able to train and fight at the level that we expected to train and fight at?

I would just say that, from the number of questions that the chief and I have got as we have circulated the battlefield forward and in Europe, that this is a concern on the mind of our troops. And I am concerned that it will impact the long-term retention, health and welfare of our troops.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, General.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Senator King.

Senator KING. First, General, thank you very much for your service, and delighted to have you here. I too was struck by the number of times you moved. I as a young man worked on a moving truck for Allied Van Lines and we used to say that four moves equals a fire. So you've been through it.

As NATO reflects—and you mentioned this a bit in your testimony—on the experience in Afghanistan, what do you come away—what are the major learnings from that experience and how do you see that reflecting itself in future activities?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, there are a couple of very positives that I think we should take from this experience. First of all, NATO in general and some of the partners has become much more interoperable. Much more of the troops have come up to the same level of standards. We use an acronym "TTP" for "tactics, techniques, and procedures." We have standardized tactics, techniques, and procedures. We have brought their special forces very close to the level of ours. Their JTACs, joint tactical air controllers on the ground, are acting almost interchangeably with our U.S. JTACs.

So I think the most positive gain out of a horrific situation is that our alliance has really begun to be much more gelled in its ability to employ interactively and mixed together because of the skill and capability of all.

Sir, I would tell you that that's also my number one concern. You asked about my concerns. That is that if we come out of Afghanistan we cannot allow what we have gained to fall back because it was bought with precious time and effort of our people. So I think it's going to be important for me, if confirmed, to keep pressure on not only defense investment, but to keep pressure on our ability to train together and keep the standard of excellence high so that we can remain interchangeable.

I believe one of the reasons that Libya went so well with NATO in the lead is because we have become so much more like each other in the way we do business.

Senator KING. I think that clearly is an important lesson.

Just to be clear on the record, you've talked several times about the grounding of the I think it's four squadrons you said in Europe. Is that because of the sequester?

Senator KING. Sir, that's because of the budget effects of sequester, that's correct. My O and M budget—and it's not just Europe. These squadrons are grounded in the United States. In your States we have squadrons grounded.

And the lift and tanking squadrons are equally as affected. As was mentioned earlier, the effect of going from a fully mission capable air crew in a lift aircraft to an air crew that can simply do air-land, load, reload, it is a big effect on our military capability in a time, as has been captured by the chairman, a very volatile time.

Senator KING. And you listed earlier all the qualifications that were being limited and the mission abilities that were being limited.

I think it's important to emphasize that the sequester is not a one-year deal. At least it's not according to current law. If nothing happens, it keeps going. So this condition that you are in, unless it's alleviated in some way, would continue and in fact accelerate.

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir. And I think that, as you know, in my specific command as we service not only Africa but Europe, but our mission in Africa is growing now, which is a strain as well on our budget.

Senator KING. Well, I heard recently on the news a member, not of this body but a member of our government, characterized the sequester as a "home run." I hope this gentleman will talk to you about the effect on our readiness, on our retention, and on our military.

Another question, changing the subject, is: Under your area of responsibility comes both Turkey and Israel. What's your assessment of the current relationship between Turkey and Israel, and are we headed for a better relationship? What are you hearing from your counterparts?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, a month ago I probably would have had a negative report. But as you know, there has been some work done by our senior leadership and Israel has come forward and talked to some of the problems that they've had with Turkey in the past. I now am cautiously optimistic. I think that this relationship is headed in the right direction. And if confirmed, I will continue to try to foster that relationship.

In my current capacity, I do today, because these are two incredible allies—Turkey is absolutely critical to us. Their geopolitical position, their moderate voice in this world—there are so many things about Turkey that are absolutely dear to us. We cannot have two of our most important allies in an adversarial state.

Senator KING. Thank you.

One final question. As we've been focused so much on the Middle East and on Afghanistan, attention has been shifted from the Balkans, which was a major area of concern a decade ago. What's the situation there? Are we comfortable with the circumstances and is there any need for concern or new attention to that region?

General BREEDLOVE. Sir, I would tell you that I am not comfortable with the Balkans. Progress has been made. We have

brought the troops down to just about 5,000 now, of which about 800 are U.S. We need to bring that down lower. But I have heard the situation in northern Kosovo described as stagnant. We were making progress and now we have slowed down in that progress. That worries me because I think that our Nations are a little weary of that situation and want to move on. What I don't think we can do is totally take our eyes off of a situation that if not watched could possibly go in a direction we don't want it to go.

So I think that there are good things happening. There are great things happening in the training of the Kosovo Defense Force. But we need to keep our eye on the ball.

Senator KING. Thank you very much, General, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator King.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, General Breedlove and all of your family, for being here and for your service to our country.

I wanted to ask you about our relationship with Russia, and in particular looking at the advance questions, you described Russia will remain the primary actor of regional concern through 2020. Why do you believe that Russia is the primary actor of regional concern?

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Senator. I think that I would try to put that in some context, and that is that Russia remains a very important influence with many of the Nations on its periphery and nations that have been leaning more West than East and have become good allies—not allies, but have been great partners with us in places like Afghanistan and others.

But these nations are clearly still tied to Russia for such things as energy needs, transportation, and others. There's lots of tentacles that go back and forth. So Russia's ability to either help us or hinder us as we work with these nations I think is still very great.

I do and I have been quoted often saying that, I think we would be better off if we quit treating Russia or thinking of Russia as an enemy and try to bring them into a partnership as we deal with Europe and other places around the Nation. As you know, Russia has been very helpful with us in counter-piracy and other things outside of the European theater. So I think that Russia still has deep influence in Europe. We need to try to find out how to work with them, as opposed to at them.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, General, one of the things I wanted to get your view on is you said we need to stop treating Russia as an enemy. That strikes me as in line with when the Administration, the Obama Administration, came into office, the whole reset of the Russian relations. Yet if you look at the Russians' actions both in the United Nations and also on numerous issues, we have not gotten the reaction that we had hoped in fact, if you think about issues like the adoption issue that obviously all of us have heard from our constituents on, which is just outrageous, to use children to advance a policy objective like that or to somehow think that they're going to punish the United States.

So I hear, I understand what you're saying, but we're not in my view getting the reaction that we would hope in turn from the behavior of the Russians. So what is your view on that, and what are

the differences that remain between us and how in your view are we going to improve our relationship with Russia in a way that protects our interests and those of our allies?

General BREEDLOVE. Ma'am, I could not agree with your assessment more. In fact, I've described the reset as sort of on pause. We had made some progress. There were some political changes in Russia and we are now sort of very much slowed down.

I think that we have to continue to reach out. I do agree with your concern that this not become a one-way street and that we just give, give, give. I think that the principle of reciprocity is how we need to think about our work with Russia. But I don't think that we should stop. We need to keep working with them.

As I mentioned, ma'am, before you were here, I have reached out to several very senior levels in their air force to establish dialogue so that we can begin to get some normalization of conversation and then do some mil-to-mil work. If confirmed, I will continue the effort as the SACEUR and as the Commander in Europe.

Senator AYOTTE. I would agree with you on the reciprocity issue very much, because I feel like it has been a one-way street at the moment. The Russians, for example, if you look at conflicts like Syria, could have a major influential role, and yet they are actually fueling that conflict with their arms provisions. It's outrageous really. I think in many instances they have as much the blood of some of the Syrians that are being murdered on their hands as the Assad regime. So I can't imagine why Russia would want to stand for that.

So one of the things that concerns me as well is the arms control agreements that we have with Russia. Do you understand whether, or if you can give us some insight, whether the Putin government is in full compliance with all existing arms control agreements that we hold with them right now?

General BREEDLOVE. Ma'am, I could not comment on that at this time. But I will get back to you on that with a position and an answer.

Senator AYOTTE. I would appreciate that, because the administration, of course, has made some announcements in the press that there is some thought of further reducing our nuclear arsenal in some types of negotiations with the Russians. I think it's very important for us to understand what their posture is on existing arms agreements right now.

I would also express the hope, to the extent you weigh in on these issues, that they would, the administration, would seek to go through the Congress on these types of issues, particularly with what we see happening in the world right now. You have in your area of responsibility, of course, Israel, with Iran marching toward a nuclear weapon, what we have happening in North Korea. I think this is a very important issue for the Congress to weigh into, rather than just a unilateral agreement between Russia and the administration.

So will you—certainly in your role, if you're asked for advice, I hope that you will recommend that the Congress be given the role, its constitutional role in this?

General BREEDLOVE. I will, Senator.

Senator AYOTTE. Okay, I appreciate that, General.

You talked about your area of responsibility with Israel and the relationship that you have had based on your experience with the Israeli military. Do you believe it's important that Israel maintain its qualitative military edge over any potential adversary in the region?

General BREEDLOVE. I do, Senator, and that is one of the primary duties of EUCOM, to continue to make sure that that is upheld.

Senator AYOTTE. Why is that critical in light of the position we are in right now?

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, I think that it's pretty clear to all that Israel is in a tough place and the neighborhood is unsettled. I think that the Arab Spring has furthered unsettled the area, and the strategic depth that we talk about Israel having or lacking is only getting less. So we need to make sure that Israel is able to respond capably with the weapons that enable them.

Senator AYOTTE. When you're confirmed for this position, what do you think that you could do to further deepen our relationship with Israel?

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, I think that, building on the success of Austere Challenge 12, we made a huge leap forward in our ability to interact in missile defense. We have been doing exercises such as Juniper Falcon and others that I've participated in, and Juniper Stallion, which I flew in, where we bring the interoperability of our conventional forces closer together.

I believe we need to be very straightforward in our ability to interact with and come to those same TTP's, tactics, techniques, and procedures, we talked about before, make sure that our interoperability is high and our ability to support Israel is ready.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, General. I appreciate your being here today and look forward to supporting your nomination.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

General Breedlove, what a treat to have you here,and to see your family and hear you talk about them with such pride is something that makes an impact on all of us. I've got there youngsters, one a newly minted second lieutenant like one of your own and two artists. They all grew up eating the same food and breathing the same air, but they've all gone in very different directions, but we're proud of all of them.

I kind of want to start where Senator McCain finished with you, which is as you look at these budgetary uncertainties, sequester, we can talk about Air Command units standing down. We can talk about effect on logistical operations, refueling, airlift capacity. We can talk about a lot of things in the here and now, but there is a concern about tomorrow as well.

As I talk to my son and his colleagues and others—recently I was at University of Virginia talking about to an ROTC group and one of the youngsters training to be an officer there said: I sign up voluntarily, knowing that I'm potentially going to face hostile fire, and I'm willing to do that. I'm willing to make a career decision that involves doing that. But I kind of have to wrestle with whether I

want to make a career decision to do that if the support for me from Congress, budgetary support, is so uncertain.

That was kind of a chilling thought of anything that I've heard about sequester as I've traveled around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I've heard a lot about it because we're so connected to the military. The thing that probably has struck me the most is what it is as a young person being willing to face hostile fire, but having to ask yourself the question of should I do it if I'm not sure whether Congress is going to be there with the right kind of budget support for the work that we do.

Just you testified about that a good bit already, but I'm just really struck by that and it's a sobering thought for all of us. I just would wonder if you have any additional comment on that from what you've heard from your own troops?

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, you have it exactly right. Our troops, including my daughter and her husband, are concerned about these things and we've had these conversations. As I took over United States Air Force Europe and AF–Africa nine months ago, the chief and I set a mantra: mission, airmen, families. We've got to be able to keep the mission going. That is driving everything we do. But the way we get the mission done is through our airmen, and we have to set the airmen so that they can focus on their mission. If the airmen are not—if the families are not set, the airmen are not going to be set. So these are inextricably tied.

If confirmed, going forward in Europe one of the concerns that I've talked about to my fellow commanders in Europe are the three things that my wife talks about every time we move: schools, housing, and access to medical care. So if confirmed, Senator, that will be one of the first focus items I have across the broader EUCOM Command, because, as I said in the "Mission, Airmen, Families," if we can keep the family, which is at the base, squared away, then the airmen can focus on the mission, and that's where we have to be. In the case of EUCOM, then it would be our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines and Coast Guardsmen that we would be enabling.

Senator KAINE. Excellent, excellent.

Well, let me jump around a bit. What an awesome thing to be up for nomination to be Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. Some pretty amazing people have had that, that title. That's got to be—well, it's a good thing, but it's a humbling thing, too.

Talk to me a little bit about that role, and in particular NATO lessons learned from Libya? You describe them in a positive way. We did well because we've gotten to be so much like one another in the way we approach these challenges. I'd like you to talk a little bit about that, what you meant by that, but then how you see that relationship going forward. And to the extent that sequester and other budgetary uncertainty potentially jeopardize some of what we might be able to do in that NATO combined operation, I'd love to hear your thoughts.

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Senator. Very shortly, I would also say that if confirmed I would find myself sitting behind the desk that Eisenhower sat behind. I would tell you that my father from the State of Georgia would roll over in his grave at that

thought, and some of my grammar school and high school teachers probably as well.

Sir, as far as Libya and NATO, as in almost every case, there are good things that we learned and there are bad things that we learned. I highlighted a couple of the good things previously and those are that we have trained so much together and now we have fought beside each other in Afghanistan and other places for some time. What has happened is it has enabled us to be much more seamless across being able to employ the NATO force and being able to interchange NATO people, having a Belgian officer be your deputy commander and having a French officer be your chief of operations and having a German officer being your intelligence, and expecting that we would be able to execute at a very high level because of that interoperability. I think that's very important.

Not to highlight the bad, but there are some bad things. What we did learn is that the depth of some of our partner nations and especially their sustainment to the fight is not very deep. We have work to do in weapons and the amount of weapons. We have work to do in very critical enablers that are going to be required for any force—air to air refueling capability and others.

I think probably the most glaring thing we need to work on as an alliance is intelligence and surveillance and reconnaissance. You can be very, very proud of your joint force. There is no one that does it like us. What we don't want to do is be the only supplier of that superb capability. We want to bring others along.

If confirmed, Senator, those are going to be center in the heart of the shot pattern for what I'll do in NATO.

Senator KAINE. One of the expectations that I would have as a Senator from Virginia, obviously, is the Allied Command Transformation is in Norfolk and so the working relationship with General Palomeros is something we would care deeply about as well.

The Aegis ballistic missile defense system also has a Virginia tie to Dahlgren, where much of the research and work is done. That's a critical part of EUCOM's ability to address the ballistic missile defense issues. Could you give us just a quick update on the Phased Adaptive Approach?

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Senator. Yes, sir. Right now, as I mentioned earlier, the announcement that Phases 1, 2, and 3 are firmly on track is a good one. The investments required to start Phase 2 are on track for putting in that first Aegis Ashore, as we call it. I believe that right now on Phases 1, 2, and 3 I have positive reports on how we're proceeding.

Senator KAINE. Finally, I'll just comment that I agree with comments you've made earlier. I think the U.S.-Turkey relationship is one of the most strategically important right now, both because of the region, but also because of Turkey's important role in NATO. I was heartened to hear your comments and heartened to hear other reports that suggest that the Turkey-Israel relationship, which has been quite frosty—for a long time the mil-to-mil connection has been quite positive, but it's been quite frosty—seems to be getting better.

Your testimony about Israel is also welcome. I'm going to be with Ambassador Oren, the Israeli Ambassador to the United States, tonight, introducing him to a large group of people in Richmond. He

will be happy to hear of the importance you accord that relationship in your testimony.

Thank you for your service and I look forward to supporting you.

General BREEDLOVE. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

We will have just—I just have one question. Senator Inhofe has a question or two that he'll ask in round two, and then we'll be able, I think, to leave here in time to get over to vote at 11:00.

General, you and I have spoken in my office about what are called residual value payments. We recently completed a committee report regarding the expenditures which we've made in certain facilities overseas that are being returned to a host nation and the improvement in those investments and the payments which are made by those host nations for those improvements.

Under our law, those payments must be directed towards offsetting O and M costs and they must be directed according to law towards military construction projects which are identified in the fiscal yearDP, and they've got to be used for Department priorities that are specified.

Will you take a look at this issue and read this report when it comes out, because there's been some real significant problems in terms of the use of those payments, which are identified in our report. So you can get back to us after you have read that. Will you do that?

General BREEDLOVE. I will, sir. I did some work with this last night. I'm much smarter now about it. I understand that our staffs have cooperated to get this report out and I do commit to you to get to that report early if confirmed and get back to you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wasn't going to ask another question until Senator Kaine asked a question. In fact, I'd say the only answer that you gave during the course of this hearing that I would disagree with is your answer to Senator Kaine. We all know and I don't think anyone questions now that our assessment, intelligence assessment, going way back to 2007, that Iran would have the capability along with a delivery system by 2015—that's been consistent. I've often said that it's probably going to be earlier than that, judging from the miscalculation our intelligence made way back in 1998 on their ability to—on North Korea's ability to fire a multi-stage rocket, when they were off by five years.

So anyway, I think that we can say that 2015's a critical time. Then of course I disagree with the changes that took place four years ago in terms of the ground-based interceptor in Poland. But assuming that we are where we are right now—and you talk about Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3. I understand that in the SM–3 Block 1A, we're already there, then 2015 for the 1B.

But then the SM–3 Block 2A, which would be necessary for the protection of our allies, our NATO allies, is not until, scheduled until 2018. So we've got a 3-year period that concerns me. I'd like to have you tell me how you think you'd like to address that 3-year period, if that concerns you, if that increases risk, and of course risk means lives.

General BREEDLOVE. Senator, you got—you're absolutely right about my answer. My answer was not about the timing in relation to the threat, let me make that clear. What I was trying to answer, Senator Kaine, was that the program and the schedule to accomplish the things that we are doing——

Senator INHOFE. Is on course?

General BREEDLOVE.—is on course.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, I understand.

General BREEDLOVE. It was not a——

Senator INHOFE. But I'm suggesting the course is wrong.

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir. I understand that question completely now, and there are concerns about getting the appropriate coverage at the appropriate time. I think that one of the things we are having to do right now is talk to our fellow European nations about their contribution to EPAA and their bringing some capability to the task early.

I am encouraged by the fact that we have our Dutch friends upgrading four of their cruisers to Aegis-class capability to help us in this battle. I am also encouraged by the fact that several of the Nations, France, Germany, and others, are looking at voluntary national contribution of not only their short-range capability, but some of their radars.

So I don't want to take too much of your time, but I do see positive movement in the Nations leaning forward now to be a contributing part both kinetically and as basing nations in this effort.

Senator INHOFE. You know, I know this is not directly in your new position. but you're the expert in this and I appreciate your background and knowledge. I would think that we would have—if you're looking for that three-year gap to be filled by more assertive progress from our NATO allies, they're the ones that are at risk. Is there any reason they would not do everything they can to help fill that three-year gap?

Now, obviously the chairman wouldn't want me to get into the third site discussion and I'm not going to do that. But on this one, I would think that they would be the ones that would want to go out of their way and do what is necessary, specifically looking at that three-year gap.

General BREEDLOVE. I agree with you, Senator, and I think Admiral Stavridis has said in the past that the store is open, we're ready for your contributions. If confirmed, I will continue the pressure that he's already started on our allied nations to help us bring that capability to the table.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Kaine, you all set?

Senator KAINE. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. We have standard questions which we ask of our military nominees, which I'll ask you now, in order to make sure that this committee and other committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information. Here are the questions:

Have you adhered to applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest?

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power?

General BREEDLOVE. I do.

Chairman LEVIN. Have you assumed any duties or undertaken any actions which would appear to presume the outcome of the confirmation process?

General BREEDLOVE. I have not.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you ensure your staff complies with deadlines established for requested communications, including questions for the record in hearings?

General BREEDLOVE. I will.

Chairman LEVIN. Will you cooperate in providing witnesses and briefers in response to Congressional requests?

General BREEDLOVE. I will.

Chairman LEVIN. Will those witnesses be protected from reprisal for their testimony or briefings?

General BREEDLOVE. They will.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear and testify upon request before this committee?

General BREEDLOVE. I do.

Chairman LEVIN. And do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted committee or to consult with the committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

General BREEDLOVE. I do.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Just one comment. Of the questions the chairman asked you, the most difficult one is the second one. I would hope that—you have answered that correctly, but that's the most difficult one because you still have a Commander in Chief. We understand the line of command. And yet there are some things that we'll need to know, particularly with the upcoming activity we'll have, for your honest answer, and we'll be looking forward to that.

General BREEDLOVE. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. And those are the answers we received today even before you were confirmed. So we know you'll continue in that same vein after you're confirmed, which we would hope and expect will be very, very promptly.

We thank you. We thank your family and those many folks who have come here today to support you.

We will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:59 a.m., the committee adjourned.]