

**OPENING STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR JIM INHOFE  
RANKING MEMBER, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**ROOM SD-G50  
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING**

**Thursday, May 26, 2022**

*To consider the nomination of General Christopher Cavoli for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe*

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

*Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Gen. Cavoli, for your willingness to continue your distinguished service to our nation.*

*I understand that your wife, your parents, and other family members are with us today, and I welcome you all. I also want to thank your father, Ivo, and brother, Stephen, for their service to the country in the U.S. Army.*

*And I'll note that you were born in Europe during one of your father's tours there—so it's clear that you were destined to fill this role we're discussing today.*

*We are considering your nomination to lead U.S. and NATO forces in Europe at a pivotal moment.*

*Russia's unprovoked, unjustified invasion of Ukraine has been a wakeup call to the free world that we need to deter Putin, not accommodate him or appease him.*

*But it was not a surprise to many of us here today, who also understand that protecting America's interests means supporting Ukraine's defense and working to deter further Russian aggression against NATO.*

*I am encouraged that Europe is now stepping up investment in its own defense. With Finland and Sweden now seeking NATO membership in response to Putin's reckless acts, we must keep up this momentum to strengthen our shared security.*

*That's why I have long advocated that we invest more in our own defense. We don't have the luxury of choosing between dealing with Russia and China when it comes to our national security.*

*I don't want anyone to forget that China has not only failed to denounce Putin's brutal acts in Ukraine, but in fact conducted military exercises with Russia earlier this week. And China's long been involved in malign activity in Europe itself.*

*General Cavoli, you are the right man for the job during these exceptional times.*

*Once confirmed, I look forward to working with you on bolstering U.S. security interests with our European allies and partners.*

*Thank you. Mr. Chairman.*

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