

**OPENING STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR JACK REED
CHAIRMAN, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**ROOM SD-G50
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
Thursday, May 26, 2022**

*To conduct a nomination hearing for
General Christopher Cavoli to be Commander, U.S. European Command and
Supreme Allied Commander, Europe*
(As prepared for delivery)

REED: Good morning. The Committee meets today to consider the nomination of General Christopher Cavoli to be the next Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. General, your nomination is well-deserved, and I thank you for your willingness to lead in this important position. We welcome your wife, Christina; parents, Ivo and Rita; brother, Stephen; and sister-in-law, Michele, who are with us today. We thank them for their continued support of your service, and I would also thank your father and brother for their own distinguished service to the nation.

Your current role as the Commanding General of U.S Army Europe and Africa has no doubt provided you with critical experience and insights which will serve you well if confirmed in this new role. Your career spans nearly 35 years with distinguished service across multiple theaters and in close collaboration with allies and partners across the globe.

Further, you have studied our challenges in Europe from numerous vantage points, including your current leadership in assisting our Ukrainian partners and reassuring our NATO allies. You have also served as Russia Director on the Joint Staff and studied these issues in academia, including earning a master's degree in Russian and East European studies and serving as a fellow at the George C. Marshall Center for Security Studies in Germany.

If confirmed, you will take command in the midst of the greatest test of the NATO alliance since World War II. The alliance has shown remarkable unity and resolve in the face of Russia's unprovoked and illegal attack on Ukraine. A formidable array of our allies have joined together and, in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the U.S. and our NATO allies and partners have mobilized with impressive speed to bolster Ukrainian resolve, reinforce credible combat power

along the eastern flank, and impose severe costs on Russia's elite. Putin's actions have drastically altered the European security landscape – NATO unity has been solidified, countries like Sweden and Finland have officially applied to join the alliance, and others, like Germany, are taking steps to invest greater portions of their national budgets and institutional energies to improve their military capabilities.

Ensuring the alliance is able to generate and maintain the collective force posture, operations, and investments to deter Russian aggression will be a primary responsibility for the next EUCOM Commander. General, with NATO set to announce a new strategic concept at its summit in Madrid in June, I would like to know your views on the current plans for U.S. military presence and posture in the EUCOM area of responsibility. I also hope you will share your thoughts on how the U.S. and our allies should begin to reassess the security environment fundamentally altered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Unlike the threat from Russia—for which there is little disagreement among our European partners as to the size and scope of the issue—our allies have a range of views on the challenges posed by China. Beijing's growing economic influence and diplomatic presence in Europe, coupled with its growing military relationship with Russia, may have serious implications for transatlantic economy and security. In 2019, the NATO allies agreed to mention China for the first time in a NATO declaration, stating that, "China's growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges that we need to address together as an Alliance." The next EUCOM Commander will have to work with the interagency and across the alliance to address Chinese malign influence within the region. General, I hope you will share what expectations you have with regard to NATO's developing China policy and what steps can be taken to mitigate this growing threat.

Finally, as we reflect on the realities of 21st century warfare on display in Ukraine, the committee would benefit from hearing what lessons you would bring to prepare our forces for any potential future conflict. We would also benefit from insights from your current post at U.S. Army Europe and Africa, particularly in areas such as military mobility, large-scale multilateral exercises, and engagements with partners and allies across the theater. I hope you will share how you would intend to use such insights if confirmed as the next EUCOM Commander.

Thank you again, General, for your continued willingness to serve. I look forward to your testimony.

Let me now recognize Ranking Member Inhofe.