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UNITED STATES SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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

27 April 2023

UNITED STATES SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Wicker, and distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, on behalf of the dedicated men, women, and their families preserving stability in the European theater, it is a privilege to testify before you as the Commander, United States European Command (USEUCOM). It is my distinct honor to serve alongside our Allies and partners, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen, civilians, and defense contractors as we work to deliver peace and secure U.S. interests.

This is an unprecedented time for Euro-Atlantic security. Russia's illegal, unprovoked, brutal invasion of Ukraine upended many aspects of European security. It has forced us to recognize the imperative of collective territorial defense, which has altered North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) force posture requirements. In this dynamic and uncertain environment, U.S. leadership remains indispensable; our actions must signal strong and unwavering resolve. We must maintain and build upon our existing commitment to NATO and ensure the Alliance remains the foundation of European security and deterrence.

Russia is not the only challenge in the USEUCOM AOR, however. The People's Republic of China is working to weaken democratic processes and undermine the rules-based international order. Violent extremist organizations also foster instability, while transboundary challenges, such as climate change, affect the operational environment. To address these challenges, we campaign in all domains—air, sea, land, space, and cyber—to deter aggression and build enduring strategic advantage.

The National Security Strategy states that a free and prosperous Europe, defended by NATO, remains fundamental to U.S. national security. Further, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) describes mutually-beneficial alliances and partnerships as the United States' greatest strategic advantage. The NATO Alliance is more unified now than it has been in its 74 years of existence. The combined response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated this.

USEUCOM's strategic approach strengthens Alliance interoperability, fortifies Alliances and partnerships, and thereby enhances all-domain combat credibility. Should deterrence fail, USEUCOM, alongside our Allies and partners, is ready to fight and win.

Congress has provided authorities and funding for security assistance to Ukraine on an unprecedented scale. Presidential Drawdown (PD) Authority and the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI) have proven key to Ukraine's success. Coupled with the bravery and ingenuity of the Ukrainian people—and robust support from our NATO Allies and other partners—security assistance has changed the course of the conflict. We remain committed to supporting Ukraine's urgent needs and increasing their combat capabilities over the long-term. Specifically, USEUCOM supports Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to transition Ukraine towards a western-style military with advanced and interoperable equipment. We appreciate the supplemental funding from Congress that has enabled our progress towards this goal. Ensuring accountability of U.S. security assistance remains a top priority and we continue to work with Ukrainian authorities to ensure appropriate end-use monitoring.

Congress has also provided critical support to the full range of investments in our posture and activities in Europe. We will continue to build on successes funded by the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) as associated operations, activities, and investments are rolled from the former Overseas Contingency Operations budget to the base budget. These operations, activities, and investments allow us to deter Russia, assure our Allies, and strengthen NATO interoperability. Congressional appropriations support rotational forces, infrastructure, and prepositioned stocks, all of which increase operational efficiency and speed. These investments improve U.S. and NATO readiness by enabling exercises, training, and building partner capacity across all domains in the Euro-Atlantic area. We appreciate continued Congressional support for our posture and activities in Europe; this funding is critical to the deterrence and defense of U.S. interests in Europe.

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

The USEUCOM AOR encompasses 50 countries, each with varying strategic aims. The theater contains vast maritime and air domains, including a large part of the Arctic region; the north and central Atlantic Ocean; the Mediterranean, Black, and Baltic Seas; and multiple strategic chokepoints. The European Union (EU) is the world's largest trading bloc and accounts for over 16 percent of global imports and exports. We continue to address security challenges across the AOR through force presence, pre-positioned stocks, and engagement and exercises with Allies and partners.

Russian Federation

Russia remains Europe's core security challenge. Russia continues to wage its brutal war on Ukraine, target critical infrastructure, and threaten escalation. The Kremlin seeks to outlast the West by manipulating energy markets and influencing states to curb support to Kyiv. Due to the resilience and heroism of the Ukrainian people, with assistance from like-minded nations, Russian ground forces have suffered significant losses in Ukraine. Despite these setbacks, and their diminished stockpiles of equipment and munitions, Russian ground forces still have substantial capability and capacity, and continue to possess the ability to regenerate their losses.

Russia remains a formidable and unpredictable threat that will challenge U.S. and European interests for the foreseeable future. Russian air, maritime, space, cyber, and strategic forces have not suffered significant degradation in the current war. Moreover, Russia will likely rebuild its future Army into a sizeable and more capable land force, all while suspending its implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, as it has done since 2007. Russia retains a vast stockpile of deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons, which present an existential threat to the U.S. Homeland, our Allies, and partners,

and is failing to comply with several of its legal obligations under the New START Treaty. President Putin's dangerous nuclear rhetoric introduces strategic uncertainty. All of these factors indicate that Russia remains an immediate and persistent threat to American interests in Europe and around the world.

Russia pursues a military modernization program that prioritizes a range of advanced conventional, hybrid, and nuclear capabilities to coerce the West. Its primary focus is on development of six specific systems: a nuclear-powered cruise missile; a nuclear-armed hypersonic boost glide vehicle; a more capable heavy Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (Sarmat); a nuclear-armed, nuclear powered underwater drone (Poseidon); hypersonic cruise missiles; and lasers. These weapons provide Russia asymmetric threats to NATO and present new challenges to Western response options.

Russia employs a range of tools to advance its foreign policy objectives to coerce neighboring states, divide the Alliance, and expand its global influence. Beyond its war of aggression in Ukraine, Russia also retains a military presence in 20% of Georgia's sovereign territory, and in Moldova against the will of those states. Russia also uses disinformation, cyber operations, and energy supply manipulation to coerce our Allies and partners. Russian private military contractors operate in Syria, Ukraine, and multiple African nations, working to advance Russian state interests.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

The PRC seeks to increase its access, presence, and influence in Europe to refashion the international system to suit its interests and authoritarian preferences. The PRC threatens enduring U.S., Allied, and partner interests in Europe through its foreign direct investment, government-backed business ventures, and infrastructure deals. Of particular concern are the PRC's investments in European ports, transportation nodes, and other critical infrastructure,

which provide potential dual-use functions for the PRC. The PRC pursues bilateral engagement in these ventures through PRC-led forums such as the 14+1 Cooperation Framework with Central and Eastern European nations. These and other PRC activities have created dependencies and sources of leverage to influence our Allies and partners.

PRC leaders remain focused on using both licit and illicit means to seize a dominant position in critical and emerging dual-use technology sectors—artificial intelligence, advanced robotics, quantum technologies, directed energy, and hypersonic systems—and using that dominant position to advance their authoritarian agenda. To increase adoption of PRC developed technology, the PRC is pursuing acceptance of its national technology standards across the globe. The PRC's efforts to expand Huawei 5G networks throughout Europe via PRC state-sponsored firms pose security risks to our Allies and partners. These activities allow the PRC to access and exploit intellectual property, sensitive information, technology, and private personnel information. Beyond economic impacts, these technology-related activities provide the PRC a military capacity that put U.S. national interests in the USEUCOM AOR at risk. We must remain vigilant, and work with our Allies and partners, to combat the PRC's activities related to critical and emerging technologies.

We are also concerned about the destabilizing effects of deeper alignment between the PRC and Russia. Beijing's continued diplomatic support for Russia's illegal war against Ukraine is detrimental to European peace and stability. The PRC's amplification of Russian disinformation on the war in Ukraine undermines trust in Europe's democratic institutions. There are indications that Beijing is considering materially supporting Russia's war effort, while at the same time, Beijing and Moscow are deepening their defense engagements and interoperability, including joint maritime and air patrols. This increased cooperation has implications for European security as both Beijing and Moscow seek to change the existing rules-based structure in their favor.

USEUCOM coordinates with our European defense counterparts to establish a common understanding of PRC actions and the associated risks. We support the U.S. whole-of-government effort to highlight the Trans-Atlantic shared values, interests, and transparent business practices of the current rules-based international order. NATO's Strategic Concept recognizes that the PRC's ambitions and coercive policies challenge NATO's interests, security, and values. Several European countries have removed Huawei from their networks, imposed investment screening mechanisms, reversed investment authorizations, and avoided investments by PRC-based companies due to the threats to European security. Together, the U.S. and Europe must continue to call out and work to counter the PRC's predatory and unfair practices.

Eastern Flank

NATO's Eastern Flank—which USEUCOM defines as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary—remains a strategic focal point. The closer cooperation of the “Bucharest Nine”—Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia—has been a welcome outcome of the current crisis. Many have provided both lethal and non-lethal assistance to Ukraine, opened their borders to refugees, closed airspace to Russia, and supported economic sanctions against Russia. We remain encouraged by the positive actions of our Allies along the Eastern Flank, but these countries remain at risk for Russian coercion and aggression.

The Baltic States continue to face a chronic threat from Russia. Russian ground forces from the Western Military District retain a size advantage over regional military and NATO forces on the eastern flank. Furthermore, Russia has substantial air and maritime capabilities in the region. The Baltic States lack the geographic depth of Ukraine—meaning these states cannot trade space for time in the event of a Russian attack. These factors underline the

importance of maintaining the capability to get timely indications and warnings, and of posturing combat-credible forces, joint capabilities, and stocks to support the Eastern Flank.

The NATO Alliance is renewing its focus on collective territorial defense. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, NATO bolstered its posture on the Eastern Flank by establishing four new Battle Groups in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia. NATO also expanded air policing operations and air defense exercises. NATO continues to assess the distribution of forces along the Eastern Flank to identify the appropriate posture for collective defense.

Poland is a critical Ally in deterring and responding to Russian aggression. Poland has annually increased its defense budget and is undertaking a significant modernization program. This Ally is buying Abrams tanks, Patriot air defenses, and F-35s. Poland contributes critical infrastructure and logistics support to the joint force through an Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. Additionally, Poland hosts the U.S. Army's Fifth Corps forward headquarters. This first-ever permanent basing of U.S. forces in Poland provides command and control for U.S. and multi-national tactical units in Europe. Our continued close collaboration with Poland strengthens NATO activities along the entire Eastern Flank.

EUCOM has also built U.S. capacity in the AOR to support deterrence of Russian aggression. The United States deployed fourth and fifth generation aircraft, a carrier strike group, a Corps and Division headquarters, and two additional Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) to assist in NATO's defense at the outset of this conflict. In addition, we deployed our USEUCOM organic forces to the Eastern Flank, including the 2d Cavalry Regiment, 173d Airborne Infantry BCT, Patriot forces and 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. Collectively, these forces bolstered the Alliance and demonstrated the United States' commitment to collective defense.

Black Sea Region

The countries of the Black Sea Region—which USEUCOM defines as Bulgaria,

Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine—have long pushed back against Russian aggression. NATO Allies Romania and Bulgaria invited NATO Battle Groups to their territories, increased defense spending, and invested in military and logistics infrastructure. USEUCOM continues to work with Bulgaria and Romania to increase regional security, including the improvement of maritime domain awareness. Important work remains to strengthen regional security, increase economic prosperity, and reduce vulnerabilities to Russian manipulation. Moldovan President Sandu called for the withdrawal of the 1,500 Russian so-called “peacekeepers” in the Transnistria region who have been present on Moldovan land without consent or a United Nations mandate since 1990. We support peaceful resolution to the Transnistria conflict without Russian interference.

Türkiye

Türkiye’s military capability and unique geographic location make it a key member of the NATO Alliance and vital to U.S. responses to regional events. We applaud Türkiye’s strong support to Ukraine during Russia’s invasion and will continue to increase our cooperation with Türkiye bilaterally and within the Alliance. We recognize Türkiye’s critical leadership role in hosting U.S. service members who conduct a wide array of NATO, bilateral, and unilateral missions including missile defense. Türkiye contributes forces to NATO missions in Iraq, Kosovo, Baltic Air Policing, and Standing NATO Maritime Group Two in the Mediterranean Sea. Additionally, Türkiye supports U.S. Bomber Task Force missions in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean regions with tanker and fighter assets. Our longstanding relationship enabled USEUCOM to respond to Türkiye’s devastating earthquakes this year with humanitarian assistance and disaster relief forces. USEUCOM continues to execute valuable security cooperation activities with Türkiye such as Professional Military Education, exercises, and F-16 Fleet Modernization and F-16 Viper acquisition via Foreign Military Sales. These actions will

strengthen NATO interoperability and enable U.S. force projection.

South Caucasus Region

In the South Caucasus Region—which USEUCOM defines as Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia—Putin’s military and political failures in Ukraine have spurred states to reassess their relationships with Russia. Moscow has long employed economic levers, pervasive information activities, and “frozen” military conflicts to exert influence over South Caucasus countries. However, we have observed a marked shift in the relationships of Armenia and Azerbaijan with Russia. Both Yerevan and Baku appear to be making progress—albeit uneven—toward a peace settlement in the decades-old Nagorno-Karabakh conflict . Armenia has criticized Moscow’s and the Collective Security Treaty Organization’s failure to come to their aid against Azerbaijani attacks in September. In Georgia, however, we are concerned about the pace of Euro-Atlantic integration. Moscow continues to use domestic political division between the population at large and powerful oligarchs to its advantage. However, we continue to see the benefit of strong military-to-military relations in Georgia and support the Embassy’s efforts to showcase the benefits of transparent governance. As these states take action to pursue independent goals, we will continue to foster positive momentum in this region.

Western Balkans

In the Western Balkans we continue to see Russian malign activities and observe emerging PRC influence among our Allies—Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Slovenia. Our regional partners—Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia—remain most at risk. Russia continues to fan existing ethnic tensions to impede Euro-Atlantic alignment and integration. The PRC has emerged as an alternative for economic and defense cooperation. PRC loans and investment in the Western Balkans focus on large-scale

transportation, energy, and information infrastructure, which contribute further to disruption in the region. Despite these vulnerabilities, Balkan nations have joined Western efforts to provide support and assistance to Ukraine. The Western Balkans will require our continued commitment to address these vulnerabilities to Russian and PRC malign influence.

The security environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains unstable. Russian influence fuels political and ethnic instability. Ethno-nationalist politics prevent Bosnia and Herzegovina from adopting much-needed political, rule of law, and economic reforms that would advance its Euro-Atlantic integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb-majority entity, Republika Srpska, seeks to weaken state authorities and prevent further alignment with the EU and NATO while maintaining close ties to Russia. We will continue to work with Bosnia and Herzegovina to counter Russia's malign activities. The United States maintains robust ties with the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the country progresses towards NATO-standard capability targets.

In Kosovo, Russia promotes uncertainty and seeks to block Kosovo's path to joining international organizations. Since 2008, Russia, the PRC, and other regional states have not recognized Kosovo's independence. We support the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia to work towards the normalization of relations and enable enduring peace and stability. NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR), a peacekeeping effort since 1999 under a United Nations Security Council mandate, retains a small but significant U.S. contribution that bolsters deterrence on the Southern Flank. KFOR enhances security, which helps set the conditions for a political solution and normalized Serbia-Kosovo relations. USEUCOM continues security cooperation activities that assist the Kosovo Security Force's transition to a limited territorial defense force, which will allow Kosovo to assume responsibility for its own territorial security.

Serbia maintains its strategic goal of joining the EU and trending towards stronger Euro-Atlantic relations. Serbia joined 140 other nations of the United Nations General Assembly in

condemning Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Serbia historically seeks to balance between East (Russia and the PRC) and West, so its willingness to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a positive step. However, Russia continues to foster malign activity and leverage tensions between ethnic Serbs and other groups in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The PRC is expanding its influence into the defense and security sectors through arms sales and exercises. Economic challenges in the region render nations vulnerable to the PRC's predatory lending practices, which put at risk critical strategic infrastructure security for EU and NATO member states. The United States and our Allies have improved bilateral defense ties with Serbia in recent years, and increased cooperation in military exercises, training, and international peacekeeping to combat Russia's influence. Serbia's movement away from Russia towards our European Allies and partners is promising.

The Arctic Region / High North

In the Arctic Region—which USEUCOM defines as the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Canada and Russia—we use operations, activities, and investments to support the U.S. National Strategy for the Arctic Region. Collaboration with adjacent combatant commands and our Arctic Allies and partners is critical to Homeland defense and NATO collective defense. USEUCOM coordinates with U.S. Northern Command on Homeland Defense threats originating in or transiting through the Arctic region. USEUCOM co-chairs the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable with Norway, a forum where the Arctic nations plus the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and Germany discuss Arctic challenges. These meetings enable shared understanding, and demonstrate Arctic nations' resolve to commit capable and credible forces to deter aggression. We also train alongside our Allies in this region to enhance NATO's ability to operate in cold environments. For example, U.S. Marines train in the Arctic and High North with our NATO Allies, and the Army's 11th Airborne Division

deployed forces from Alaska over the North Pole to Finland. The accession of Finland and potentially Sweden to NATO would bring added capabilities and experience to the Alliance.

Climate Change

Climate change presents a growing challenge to U.S. national security interests and defense objectives in the AOR. Climate change affects states with already strained governments, which increases the probability for internal instability and conflict. It exacerbates security risks due to additional stress on populations and infrastructure. Climate hazards can displace people and increase the number of refugees seeking asylum in Europe. We are observing the effects of the warming Arctic, from thawing permafrost to fish migration further north. Europe is already affected by climate change—increased wildfires, reduced agricultural production, and flooding—which could worsen over time. Widespread droughts in Europe last summer elevated cross-border wildfire risks, depleted fresh water supplies, and limited inland river mobility. The changing climate may impact access to training areas vital to readiness due to flooding or erosion. Along with our Allies and partners, we continue to monitor these changes to assess the impacts in the security environment.

USEUCOM collaborates with our interagency partners to enhance Ally and partner resilience to climate change, reduce the requirement for military assets during humanitarian emergencies, and ensure access to critical training areas. In Southwestern Europe, USEUCOM partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to address regional firefighting vulnerabilities, improve regional emergency response, and deliver first responder training. In partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Army Geospatial Center, USEUCOM analyzes the climate impacts and resiliency of key routes needed for troop and material mobilization. To ensure long-term access to training areas in Poland, Romania, Albania, Slovenia, and Croatia, USEUCOM is partnering with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Construction Engineering Research laboratory

(CERL) to analyze climate impacts and environmental management options. These efforts will pay long-term dividends to regional stability and Ally and partner ability to generate credible combat readiness.

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO)

NATO Heads of State codified terror groups as a threat to the Alliance in the newest NATO Strategic Concept. With decentralized command and control and facilitation networks, VEOs spread from conflict zones into Europe. Isolated refugee and migrant communities increase the possibility for VEO recruitment. VEOs capable of external operations threaten to attack the U.S. from Europe. The actions of lone actors inspired by VEO ideology present the primary terrorist threat in Europe. Successful VEO-inspired or organized attacks in Europe complicate NATO integration efforts; these attacks force our Allies and partners to focus on internal security, driving resource competition for domestic security forces instead of NATO collective security force commitments. USEUCOM supports U.S. interagency counter-VEO initiatives and those of our NATO Allies and partners. Through security cooperation events such as key leader engagement and foreign military sales and financing, we help our Allies and partners balance domestic security requirements and meet NATO capability targets.

USEUCOM STRATEGY

USEUCOM deters aggression in the AOR and—should deterrence fail—we remain ready to respond alongside our Allies and partners to prevail in conflict across all domains. Our strategy strengthens the Alliance's interoperability, fortifies Alliances and partnerships, and enhances all-domain combat credibility. We advance NDS priorities by implementing integrated deterrence, campaigning, and building enduring advantages in Europe. As the coordinating authority for the Russia Problem Set, the Commander of USEUCOM advises the Secretary of

Defense on force structure, resources, and synchronization of DoD activities to deter Russia and counter its global malign activities. Through collaborative planning, we contribute to NATO's ability to respond in crisis and conflict. Ultimately, USEUCOM's strategy supports national strategic guidance and advances U.S. policy goals.

Enhance All-Domain Combat Credibility

USEUCOM's combat credibility in all domains is the foundation of our deterrence of Russia. In the land domain, improvements in key capabilities, posture, and partnerships improve our ability to deter future Russian aggression. USEUCOM ground forces are serving in NATO Battle Groups on the Eastern Flank, and rotational Brigades have led Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE since 2014. USEUCOM posture additions include a forward Corps headquarters (HQ), an air defense artillery brigade HQ, an engineer brigade HQ, and a combat sustainment support HQ. These forward headquarters provide command and control of assigned and rotational forces in the USEUCOM AOR, and also serve to integrate Allies' contributions to large scale operations. Additional enablers such as a short-range air defense battalion, U.S. Army Garrison Poland, and the 405th Army Field Support Battalion Poland provide key defense, force protection, and sustainment capacity. Continued investment in Army Prepositioned Stocks equipment and facilities enables rapid integration of rotational combat units into USEUCOM and NATO operations.

USEUCOM exercises ground forces to demonstrate combat credibility. During Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 21, U.S. Army Europe and 26 participating nations demonstrated the ability to conduct large-scale operations at the battalion and brigade levels. In Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 24, we will assemble a division-level formation on NATO's eastern flank for the first time since the end of the Cold War. USEUCOM's enhanced posture with combat credible forces are essential for theater deterrence and our readiness to respond to crises alongside our Allies and

partners.

In the maritime domain, we execute integrated, all-domain naval operations and theater security cooperation alongside our Allies and partners. In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, USEUCOM conducted the unprecedented Transfer of Authority of two carrier strike groups from the U.S. to NATO in support of NATO enhanced Vigilance Activities. In addition to our Forward Deployed Naval Forces, we continue to leverage Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Units to contribute to the maritime force. The U.S. Sixth Fleet provides maritime command and control capability while the U.S. Second Fleet complements and contributes to reinforce NATO's western flank. With exercises FORMIDABLE SHIELD, NORTHERN CHALLENGE, and BALTOPS, we enhance partner capabilities and further deter Russian aggression. Additionally, we are committed to a robust prepositioning program in coordination with our Allies to build agility and resilience for the combined and joint force. Our operational maritime forces provide an essential capability in strategic competition.

In the air domain, we continue to improve our sensors, fighter aircraft, and ground-based air defense systems. These advanced systems enhance Integrated Air and Missile Defense, support Allies' collective air defense, and increase long-range strike capability. The Aegis Ashore program highlights a key U.S. contribution to NATO's missile defense. With a site in Romania and one under development in Poland, this capability protects the continent from Iranian ballistic missile attack. U.S. Air Force bombers launched from bases in the U.S. and Europe integrate with Ally and partner forces in Bomber Task Force missions. USEUCOM continues to build the first U.S. multi-role 5th Generation F-35 capability in-theater at RAF Lakenheath. Our air component is implementing the U.S. Air Force's Agile Combat Employment concept which, supported by Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control, demonstrate a credible, networked combat force from potential airfields across the continent. Through this model, we enhance posture, complicate adversary decision-making, and impose

costs. This expansion of European air operations and deployable air bases enhances our forces' survivability. These capability enhancements are critical to our deterrence posture.

In the space domain, maintaining assured access to space capabilities is vital to USEUCOM and NATO operations. USEUCOM coordinates with U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) to leverage space capabilities that ensure our ability to execute multi-domain operations and protect Allied space capabilities from malign actors. We host a USSPACECOM Joint Integrated Space Team and coordinate USSPACECOM posture initiatives at five locations in Europe. USEUCOM coordinates space-related activity with our Allies and partners to expand space partnerships within our AOR and integrate space capabilities into joint and combined operations. We reinforce the Secretary of Defense's Tenets of Responsible Behavior in Space and continue work with the U.S. Space Force, Joint Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense to establish a space service component to USEUCOM. A networked joint, combined space architecture is critical to all-domain combat credibility for the Alliance.

In the cyber domain, USEUCOM coordinates with Joint Forces Headquarters - Cyber and U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) to counter malign cyber activity and enhance Allied and partner capabilities. Recognizing the worldwide cyberspace capabilities of Russia, the PRC, Iran, and North Korea, USEUCOM works to enhance global cyber defenses and impose costs on malicious adversary behavior. USEUCOM identifies cyber options for USCYBERCOM to complement operations, activities and investments, and support response operations. USEUCOM also invests in sharing information on foreign malign and cyber activities with the interagency, Allies, and partners to improve our collective cyber defense. Persistent USCYBERCOM engagement activities, synchronized with USEUCOM operations, enhance warning of adversary actions, enable defense, and build trust with Allies and partners.

Enhance All-Domain Combat Credibility: Functional Areas

As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance. The nuclear capability of NATO-member Nuclear Weapons States deters aggression, prevents coercion, preserves peace, and instills confidence in the Trans-Atlantic bond. The U.S. continues to make available its strategic nuclear forces to defend NATO, serving as the Alliance's supreme guarantor of security. With key Allies, we maintain the capability to deploy strategic nuclear forces that support Alliance security. In addition to strategic forces, the United States forward deploys nuclear weapons to Europe. These weapons, combined with U.S. and Allied dual-capable aircraft and supporting infrastructure, demonstrate Alliance cohesion and resolve. NATO continues to adapt its nuclear posture to ensure these capabilities remain credible, resilient, and adaptable. USEUCOM supports modernization and recapitalization of our nuclear forces. Sustained Congressional funding for these programs demonstrates commitment to our operations and NATO solidarity.

USEUCOM conducts activities in the information environment to promote both deterrence and assurance, contest Russian malign narratives, and build resilience among foreign audiences to counter disinformation. We coordinate with interagency and regional partners to execute targeted messaging activities in NDS-prioritized countries. USEUCOM leverages industry-leading assessment techniques to monitor and analyze malign foreign influence across the AOR, including tracking areas where Russian and PRC narratives converge. The Russia Influence Group, co-led by USEUCOM and the State Department, is a key enabler of our Information Operations and focuses on countering Russian malign influence. Through the Russia Influence Group, we synchronize U.S. government efforts to challenge adversary malign narratives and disinformation. Congressional funding enables several efforts for unique cybersecurity and hybrid warfare programs (i.e., electromagnetic warfare, special operations, and operations in the information environment) through the State Department's Countering Russian Influence Fund - Foreign Military Financing. USEUCOM continues to work

across Allies and partners to build capability and capacity to gain better understanding and deliver effects in the information environment.

Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) provides a persistent special operations presence throughout Europe that works with European Allies and partners to build capacity; identify, attribute, and counter malign activity; and improve resilience. SOCEUR leads and participates in bilateral and multilateral exercises to improve interoperability with Allies, build partner capacity and resilience, and strengthen deterrence messaging. AOR-wide exercises like TROJAN FOOTPRINT set conditions for better integration between SOF and conventional forces during combined, joint, and multi-domain warfare. Our Special Operations personnel also provide invaluable sensing capabilities in the operational environment, which enhances our ability to deter through indications and warnings. Our SOF delivers exquisite capabilities that provide unique options to counter malign activity and increase our Allies' and partners' resilience.

Our Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center supports whole-of-government efforts to combat Russian malign activities by assisting federal law enforcement activities. USEUCOM leverages a range of interagency-driven efforts—criminal investigations, convictions, seizures, sanctions, and designations through these programs. These actions help vulnerable Allies and partners resist Russia's malign activity, reinforce the rule of law, and strengthen self-governance without Russian influence. We appreciate Congress and the Department for the continued support of the counter-narcotics funding that supports this activity.

Strengthen Alliance Interoperability

NATO's approved strategic framework for Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area, abbreviated as "DDA", has sparked the largest transformation of the Alliance's military in the post-Cold War period. DDA resets the Alliance for Collective Defense after two decades of

out-of-area deployments by our Allies. Domain-specific plans are being developed to better organize Alliance forces for multi-domain collective defense against Russia and terror groups. DDA also calls for geographic-specific regional plans to describe how and where the Alliance will defend. These plans together will drive force structure and readiness requirements—the first time in over 30 years that the Alliance will have an objective, plans-based guide for national defense investments.

The Alliance continues to invest in critical military capabilities contributing to collective defense and support. For the past seven years, Allies have increased their total defense spending, and future projections remain positive. Although munitions stocks have decreased with donations to Ukraine, Allies and partners are increasing interoperable combat power through major acquisitions. These acquisitions include cyber capabilities; M1 Abrams and Patriot missiles in Poland; fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and Switzerland; Patriot air defense batteries in Switzerland and Sweden; and High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) capability in Romania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Ultimately, these capabilities are the key to combat credibility. Going forward, national governments will face competing priorities, but the importance of the capabilities required for collective defense cannot be overstated.

Military exercises with Allies develop NATO's interoperability and remain essential elements of deterrence. USEUCOM deployed assigned Army forces to the Eastern Flank during exercises SABER STRIKE, SWIFT RESPONSE, and DEFENDER beginning in February 2022. U.S. Marines trained alongside 26 militaries during COLD RESPONSE in Norway to enhance NATO's ability to operate in cold environments in March 2022. USEUCOM deployed naval forces to the Baltics Sea to train on maritime security operations during exercise BALTOPS in June 2022. Additionally, enhancements to multinational information sharing

systems enable our coordination with our Allies and partners. These exercises provide a key deterrent effect in our dynamic security environment and demonstrate Alliance combined and joint interoperability.

The proposed increase in funding for the Joint Training, Exercise, and Evaluation Program (JTEEP), both in the near-term and across the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), are a key enabler of USEUCOM campaigning. USEUCOM's joint exercise program integrates advanced capabilities, demonstrates freedom of maneuver, and increases interoperability with our Allies and partners to showcase the Alliance's strength. Additional JTEEP resources allow USEUCOM more flexibility to campaign, enhance integrated deterrence, and demonstrate U.S. commitment to Euro-Atlantic security.

USEUCOM participation in NATO operations directed by the North Atlantic Council demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Alliance. The U.S. "dual hatted" the U.S. Army Europe-Africa Commander as Commander, NATO LANDCOM. This change allows for seamless Transfer of Authority of U.S. Forces in support of NATO operations. U.S. ground forces are serving in Battle Groups in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria. U.S. Air Forces in Europe support NATO Enhanced Air Policing and Icelandic Air Surveillance missions to safeguard the sovereignty of Allied airspace against Russian incursions. A U.S. Navy Rear Admiral has commanded Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, with attached U.S. naval capabilities, to counter challenges in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea since July 2022. Operation ATLANTIC SENTRY—conducted by U.S. Aegis destroyers based in Rota, Spain and the Aegis Ashore system in Romania—provides the foundation of NATO's ballistic missile defense (BMD) capability. Participating in NATO operations demonstrates USEUCOM leadership and commitment to the Alliance.

Additionally, rotational Army, Marine, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) further demonstrate United States commitment to NATO interoperability. These forces work alongside

Allies and partners to deter aggression, counter malign activities, build host nation defense capabilities, and enhance interoperability. In Eastern Europe, three rotational Brigade Combat Teams and a Combat Aviation Brigade lead land force efforts to support ATLANTIC RESOLVE. Deliberate deployments of U.S. Marines to Norway reinforce the Alliance's northern periphery and provides exceptional training opportunities. Force commitments outside USEUCOM assigned forces enhance deterrence and hone the Alliance's warfighting skills.

Fortify Alliances and Partnerships

Europe and the United States remain the foundation for upholding a free and open international order. The shared ideals, values, and longstanding relationships we have in Europe strengthen integrated deterrence and enable worldwide operations in support of shared national interests. USEUCOM's unique geographic location enables global operations, including U.S. interagency and multinational operations. We work within a whole-of-government framework to maintain essential access, basing, and overflight permissions under bilateral agreements and resist Russian and PRC strategic investment. These agreements enable the United States to protect our vital national interests and meet treaty obligations.

Allies and partners bolster U.S. initiatives through national contributions and provide critical host nation support to U.S. forces operating across the region. Allies and partners contribute forces to ongoing NATO and U.S.-led coalition missions in order to advance our common interests in Kosovo, Iraq, and Syria. Allies underwrite infrastructure investments and defray costs of U.S. military construction through the NATO Security Investment Program. The EU, in consultation with NATO, committed to invest 1.69 billion euros over the next seven years for civilian and military dual-use transportation infrastructure improvements. This infrastructure investment will enhance military mobility, increase individual nations' crisis response, and improve Alliance combat capability. Our Allies and partners continue to be critical in supporting

USEUCOM while we defend U.S. interests in Europe.

U.S. National Guard forces maintain vibrant relationships and unique access with Allies and partners through the State Partnership Program (SPP). USEUCOM now has 25 active programs with the addition of the Cyprus—New Jersey and Norway—Minnesota partnerships. The SPP conducts over 500 engagements a year in USEUCOM's AOR. These engagements cultivate regional expertise, strengthen personal relationships and improve readiness across the AOR. Programs such as the Black Sea Maritime Domain Awareness Initiative and enhancing Baltic Integrated Air and Missile Defense represent potent, regionally-focused components of a resilient theater posture developed from SPP relationships.

The accession of Finland and potentially Sweden to NATO would represent the most significant expansion of the Alliance since the 1990s. The U.S. Senate backed the expansion by an overwhelming 95-1 vote and President Biden signed instruments of ratification endorsing Finland and Sweden's accession. Finland's accession to NATO brings added capabilities and experience to the Alliance, and so would Sweden's. The U.S. and Sweden have a long history together in training, bilateral and multilateral security cooperation, and operations. USEUCOM recognizes the significant capability this nation would bring to NATO and we look forward to deeper planning and coordination in the future.

CONCLUSION

U.S. leadership in Europe remains indispensable, and our commitment to NATO ensures the Alliance continues to serve as the foundation of Transatlantic security. Russia remains a chronic threat to European security despite its losses in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the West is more united than it has been in years. We have demonstrated our commitment to European stability through our collective support to Ukraine in response to Russia's brutal war of aggression. Maintaining an all-domain combat credible U.S. presence in Europe is the

foundation of our deterrence of Russia, strengthens Alliance interoperability, and supports NATO's collective defense.

The PRC also challenges Transatlantic security. The PRC aims to supplant the rules-based international order to suit its interests and authoritarian preferences. Such efforts threaten enduring U.S., Allied, and partner interests, security, and values in Europe. PRC investment in critical infrastructure, and acquisitions in emerging technology sectors, allows access to our Allies and partners and provides the PRC a military capacity that places U.S. and Alliance interests in the AOR at risk. USEUCOM, alongside our Allies and partners, will continue to resist the PRC's malign influence and activity to preserve a secure, prosperous, and free Europe.

We appreciate Congress' active engagement and support to address these challenges through funding and authorities. European Deterrence Initiative-associated investments supported the U.S. response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The United States reinforced NATO members' security more quickly than any other Ally because of our forward presence, repositioning of theater forces, and prepositioned stocks. Your continued support for our posture investments in Europe, the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, Presidential Drawdown Authority, Foreign Military Sales and Financing, and International Security Cooperation Programs remains critical to USEUCOM's strategy. These authorities and funding enhance U.S. and NATO and strengthen our ability to respond in crisis or conflict. Together with the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, Coast Guardsmen, civilians, and defense contractors of USEUCOM, your support demonstrates our Nation's continued commitment to defend the Homeland and protect the peace for the one billion people living in the Euro-Atlantic region.