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SASC-HASC Written Statement  
April 13 & 15, 2021



## Introduction

- Through our strategy, we compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively. Standing alongside our Allies and Partners, USEUCOM remains ready, should deterrence fail, to fight now and win.
- USEUCOM strategy prioritizes supporting NATO's deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area, countering Russian malign influence, strengthening strategic relationships, and enabling U.S. global operations.

## Russia

- Russia's nuclear arsenal and strike capability provides Russia an opportunity to remain an enduring, existential threat to the United States, our Allies, and our Partners.
- Russia engages in malign activities across the globe, attempting to create instability, undermining the rules-based international order, and failing to meet obligations under international agreements.

## People's Republic of China (PRC)

- The PRC's aggressive economic and diplomatic activities in the USEUCOM AOR signal Beijing's desire to build influence in Europe and challenge the established rules-based international order with an alternative model. Beijing pursues economic leverage over targeted nations through bilateral deals to build infrastructure, and secures agreements to its advantage in global trade and market access.
- Seventeen Central and Eastern European nations participate in the China-led, *17+1 Cooperation Framework* though there are indications that participants are more skeptical about its merits. Many European countries, including the *17+1*, take part in China's *One Belt One Road* Initiative.
- The PRC's efforts to expand 5G networks into Europe through state-backed firms like Huawei and ZTE pose security risks.
- The ongoing 5G initiative, coupled with China's growing interest and investment in European ports and critical infrastructure, complicates steady state and contingency operations.
- European nations are becoming increasingly aware of, and concerned about, the risks associated with Chinese capital and investment from the PRC.

## Poland and the Baltics

- Poland and the Baltics remain a strategic focal point.
- Polish and Baltic geopolitical alignment with the West reminds the Kremlin of its limited sphere of control, isolation of its Kaliningrad exclave, and NATO's appeal to regional states.



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- Regional Allies continue to demonstrate their commitment to collective defense.
- Enhanced Forward Presence bolsters NATO's posture in the east with four multinational battle groups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. NATO air and missile defense forces reinforce collective security and stability through Baltic air policing operations and air defense exercises.
- Poland demonstrates resolve to meet Alliance commitments through defense budget increases, burden-sharing with the U.S. via the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, and ongoing modernization efforts, to include Patriot and F-35 weapon system acquisitions.
- Poland also hosts the U.S. Army's V Corps forward headquarters in Poznan, Poland, providing a needed level of command and control to synchronize U.S. Army, Allied, and Partner nation tactical formations operating in Europe.

## **Black Sea Region**

### *Ukraine*

- Russia and its proxies continue to undermine Ukrainian defense, economic, and political sectors, attempting to pull Ukraine back into the Kremlin's sphere of influence and obstruct its integration with Western institutions.
- Contrary to Russia's intent, these coercive actions energize Ukrainian society and reinforce aspirations to membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions.

### *Turkey*

- Despite political tensions and disagreements, Turkey remains a strategic U.S. Ally, critical to NATO and U.S. interests in Europe, Eurasia, North Africa, and the Middle East.
- Ankara continues to view the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) as security threats. U.S. support for the SDF remains an area of difficulty in our bilateral security relationship.
- Turkey's purchase of the Russian-produced S-400 air defense system ended Turkey's F-35 acquisition, further integration into NATO's IAMD Command and Control network, and resulted in sanctions for conducting significant transactions with Russia's defense industry through the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.
- Turkey retains a pivotal role in countering Russia.
- Russia maintains leverage over Georgia by occupying Abkhazia and South Ossetia, blocking free movement of people and goods within Georgia's territory, detaining and harassing civilians living in and near occupied areas, and undermining Georgia's NATO membership aspirations.

## **Balkans**



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- The Balkans remain a strategically significant region where Russian, and now Chinese, malign influence and existing ethnic tensions foster instability.
- North Macedonia's NATO accession in March 2020 is a regional success story.
- Kosovo and neighboring Serbia have yet to normalize relations. We encourage both parties to maintain dialogue towards a peaceful solution.
- China seeks to expand influence in this region primarily through economic means.
- Chinese investments focus on large-scale transportation, energy, and information infrastructure. USEUCOM is concerned about Chinese motives as these initiatives expose EU and NATO member states to coercion and adversely affect the security of critical infrastructure.

### **Central Atlantic and Arctic Region**

- The Atlantic Ocean must remain open and free to facilitate commerce between Europe, the United States, and other international markets.
- It is imperative that we maintain our competitive advantage in the Central Atlantic through bolstered U.S. and Allied presence to defend the Homeland forward and maintain free and open transatlantic sea lines of communication.
- We ensure these vital sea lines of communication remain open by securing the Greenland, Iceland, and United Kingdom gap, enabling access between the Atlantic and Arctic.
- In the Arctic, Russia continues to militarize the region by introducing offensive capabilities that pose risks to U.S. and Allied forces and limit regional access.
- The existing rules-based order benefits all Arctic nations by facilitating sustainable economic development, fostering cooperation, and ensuring a stable conflict-free region.
- In concert with our Allies and Partners, via a whole-of-government and whole-of-nations approach, USEUCOM must continue to maintain a credible Arctic deterrence to ensure that growing competition in this dynamic region does not lead to conflict.

### **Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO)**

- VEOs threaten to attack the U.S. and European Allies, including through weapons of mass destruction.

### **Israel**

- Israel remains a critical U.S. partner facing complex and evolving security challenges.
- In compliance with the 2020 Unified Command Plan, we continue close coordination within the Department of Defense to ensure an orderly and deliberate transfer of the operations,



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activities, and investments focused on Israel to USCENTCOM.

- Ongoing initiatives include a robust series of exercises, senior leader engagements with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), coordination with the IDF to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge over any military threats to Israel, and naval support to defend Israel against growing Iranian ballistic missile threats.
- This assistance demonstrates the United States' unwavering commitment to Israel, enhances regional stability to the Levant, and deters the Iranian ballistic missile threat.
- Ultimately, our focus on a seamless transition will support U.S. interests and assist in the defense of Israel.

## **USEUCOM OPERATIONS, ACTIVITIES, INVESTMENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Strategy Implementation**

- Along with Allies and Partners, USEUCOM confronts challenges by competing to secure long-term sustainable advantage, deterring potential aggressors, and preparing to respond decisively.
- USEUCOM advises the Secretary of Defense on force structure, resources, and synchronization of Department of Defense activities to deter Russia and counter its global malign activities.
- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we display vigilance in this complex security environment, and—should deterrence fail—remain ready to respond with lethal and resilient force in all domains.
- EDI enhances our theater posture to deter adversaries and compete in a contested logistics environment, while assuring Allies and Partners.
- EDI investments improve our response using more robust theater infrastructure and prepositioned stocks.

### **Support NATO's Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area**

- USEUCOM's primary mission is to compete, deter, and respond to aggression with the full weight of the NATO Alliance.
- NATO continues adapting to meet the challenges and complexities of our dynamic security environment.
- Together, we continue improving our speed, posture, transparency, and alignment.
- NATO nations continue to invest in critical military capabilities, contributing to common defense and supporting the Alliance.
- NATO is increasing interoperable combat power through major acquisitions to include cyber



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capabilities across the Alliance; High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) long range fires capability in Romania; fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in Bulgaria, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, and Poland; along with embarking the United Kingdom's aircraft carrier, HMS *Queen Elizabeth*.

- NATO members contribute to theater anti-submarine warfare operations and provide critical host nation support to forward-stationed U.S. forces across the region.
- Allies and Partners contribute forces to ongoing NATO and U.S.-led coalition missions advancing our common interests in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq, and Syria.
- We expect improvements by individual European nations and the EU to enhance military mobility, increasing their responsiveness and combat capability.
- USEUCOM plans to demonstrate joint capabilities during the upcoming U.S.-led exercises DEFENDER-Europe and ASTRAL KNIGHT. These multi-domain exercises directly complement NATO-led exercises such as STEADFAST JUPITER that maintain maritime air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime interdiction capabilities.
- The participation of USEUCOM forces in NATO operations and activities demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Alliance.
- Our soldiers serve in Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence mission in one of four battle groups deterring Russian aggression in Poland and the Baltics.
- U.S. Air Forces in Europe support NATO Enhanced Air Policing missions, safeguarding the sovereignty of Allied airspace against Russian incursions
- We plan to support Standing NATO Maritime Group Two in 2022 with U.S. naval capability to counter maritime challenges in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea.
- We leverage Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) to demonstrate operational unpredictability to adversaries, improve deterrence, and support our Allies.
- Each force presence and operation demonstrates our ability to generate significant combat power across the AOR, while improving posture and warfighting readiness. This operational flexibility enhances cross-combatant command coordination and resource sharing, allowing for seamless transition and handover across Unified Command Plan boundaries to quickly deploy forces for emerging requirements.

### **Counter Russian Activities and Malign Influence**

- Every day, USEUCOM and NATO compete to deter the increasingly capable military underwriting Russia's power and counter the malign behavior that guides efforts to enhance perceptions the Kremlin is a responsible actor.
- As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO must remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO's nuclear capability preserves peace, prevents coercion, deters aggression, and instills confidence in the transatlantic bond.



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- USEUCOM fully supports modernization and recapitalization of our nuclear forces. Sustained Congressional funding for these programs demonstrates commitment to our operations and solidarity with NATO.
- In the ground domain, we expect to establish a U.S. division-sized capability through the combination of forward-stationed forces, rotational forces, and Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS).
- In the maritime domain, Carrier Strike Group and amphibious presence are key elements of a lethal and agile theater posture.
- In the air domain, we are improving our mix of fighter aircraft to enhance Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD), support Allies' efforts to enhance their air defense systems, and increase long range strike capability for deterrence.
- We remain laser focused in space, a domain whose importance to USEUCOM, NATO, and the globe cannot be overstated. Leveraging U.S. Space Command capabilities, we ensure our ability to plan and execute multi-domain operations.
- In the cyber domain, USEUCOM's Joint Cyber Center coordinates with Joint Forces Headquarters Cyber and U.S. Cyber Command to counter Russian malign cyber activities and enhance our Allied and Partner capabilities.
- Recognizing the worldwide cyber capabilities of China, Iran, and North Korea, we work with other combatant commands and interagency partners to enhance global cyber defenses and our ability to impose costs on malicious adversary behavior.
- The U.S. supports the Ukrainian Armed Forces through mentorship and advice from the Joint Multinational Training Group- Ukraine and with military and civilian advisors embedded across Ukraine's defense sector.
- With Ukraine a recognized operational partner to NATO, Allies and Partners also assist Ukraine's defense efforts, including the U.K.'s Operation Orbital and Canada's Operation Unifier.
- The U.S., U.K., Canada, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden comprise the Multinational Joint Commission, which coordinates Allied and Partner FMF and USAI security cooperation funding.
- As part of a whole-of-government approach, our Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center supports interagency efforts to combat Russian malign activities, primarily by assisting federal law enforcement activities.
- Through these partnerships, USEUCOM leverages a range of interagency driven effects including criminal investigations and convictions, seizures, sanctions, and designations.

**Advance and Strengthen Strategic Relationships**



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- Our strong bilateral and multilateral ties with European Allies and Partners enable advancement of our shared interests.
- Our military-to-military relationships across the Euro-Atlantic area remain strong, signaling the resilience of our collective defense.
- Turkey remains a key U.S. and NATO Ally.
- We recognize Turkey's leadership role as a strategic NATO ally.
- Turkey hosts U.S. service members conducting a wide array of NATO, bilateral, and unilateral missions including radar and tanker support to ongoing operations.
- Georgia remains a steadfast partner and contributor to global security.
- We support Georgia's efforts to generate and sustain capable defense forces through the Georgia Defense Readiness Program, which enables Georgia to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- In the Arctic, changing environmental conditions present new opportunities for exploration, trade, and interaction. USEUCOM supports whole-of-government efforts to preserve the region, address shared challenges with other Arctic nations, and secure U.S. interests.
- We leverage close relations with European Arctic nations and our coordination with USNORTHCOM to build awareness while strengthening the call for open and non-invasive impacts in the region. These bilateral and multilateral strategic relationships enhance Alliance efforts to deter Russian aggression and advance shared interests.
- We strengthen our strategic relationships through security cooperation initiatives. U.S. National Guard forces maintain vibrant relationships and unique access with Allies and Partners through the State Partnership Program (SPP). With more than 500 engagements through 22 active programs annually, the SPP cultivates regional expertise and strengthens personal relationships to improve readiness and alignment across the AOR.

### **Enable U.S. Global Operations**

- Europe and the U.S. remain the foundation for upholding a free and open international order. Our unique geographic location enables global operations, including U.S. interagency and multinational operations, through synchronization and agreements for access, basing, and overflight permissions within Europe.
- We work within the whole-of-government approach to maintain these permissions under bilateral agreements and to resist Russian and Chinese strategic investments.
- The shared values, trust, civilian leadership of the military, and longstanding relationships we have in Europe enable the U.S. to generate coalitions for worldwide operations in support of shared national interests.

### **Conclusion**



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- Maintaining a capable U.S. presence in Europe strengthens our national security by encouraging peace, unity, and cohesion between Europe's individual nations.
- Competitors, notably Russia and China, present formidable, enduring challenges to preserving a Europe that is free and peaceful. U.S. service members in Europe continue to generate global peace alongside our Allies and Partners in the face of these obstacles.
- Our strategy addresses the dynamic security environment by ensuring we effectively compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively.
- We sit in a strategically significant part of the world and the dedicated men and women of the command continually remember the trust our nation places in us.