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Defense Writers Group

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DWG: Welcome to the Defense Writers Group. General, thank you very much for coming. This is funded primarily by Carnegie Corporation of New York which does it because they believe it's in the national interest, it's basically for the country and I believe so too, which is why I took it over a couple of years ago. But the Defense Writers Group has existed for 40 years and has been a place where the military and the media can get together and chat over what's usually a white tablecloth. This time it's yellow. And I think it's led to a lot of good, deeper understanding about the issues that you work on among the public. We do a question and then usually a follow-up which often turns completely off to another subject, and that includes me and I start.

My question I think to start with is, we have a generation of young voters now who were born after the Cold War, and I think that there are quite a few Americans who may no longer remember or maybe never even knew why NATO matters to them. To them specifically. To U.S. national security. It's fairly obvious why it matters to Lithuania. But to the United States, why should -- from a military point of view, I wonder if you could give us maybe an example or two. It's up to you how you want to phrase it, of why you think NATO is so important to Americans and American national security. Are there military examples of why?

General Wolters: David first, thanks for hosting. I deeply appreciate all of you taking the time to spend time with me to allow me to talk about my favorite subject which is actually the generation of peace. And David, that gets to the center of gravity of your actual question with respect to the efficacy and the value of NATO over time.

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It just so happens I serve as the Commander of USEUCOM and in that hat one of my basic priorities is to make sure that we support NATO, and we do so because we feel like we're perpetual peace generators, and the more that NATO can lead from the front with respect to generating peace, the more we can proliferate that peace throughout planet earth.

As we go forward what you see that exists right now in Europe is a NATO that is very concerned about the 29 that exist in Europe and the periphery and also a very, very caring NATO that's concerned about the defense of the North American continent as well as in sharing that we can proliferate our democratic values all the way to the Pacific, to include all the way to Iraq, to include all the way to Afghanistan.

And David, a classic example of what you're alluding to with respect to why is NATO so important as we speak today, there is NATO Mission Iraq. We have wonderful uniformed members in NATO who are in the country of Iraq working on the governance to assist Iraq to become stronger and stronger over time, to help perpetuate that peace. And as we speak, many of you know we have NATO military members in Afghanistan that are doing everything within their power to continue to neutralize external ops planners that can create havoc against our nations in Europe as well as the United States.

So NATO is important for the security of North America and the United States and Canada; and obviously the United States is important to us at NATO.

The world is becoming very, very small, and when you start talking about the world you start to miss a portion of it. The universe is becoming very, very small. So we're going to do everything we can within our power in Europe to ensure that we can deliver force elements globally that understand peace and understand what it takes to perpetuate peace.

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DWG: AS EUCOM Commander you have I think it's 41 countries that you're in charge of the military relationship. What are some of the, what other issues are there that come to the top of the pile a lot and cause concern or you occasionally maybe lose sleep over? What are the key issues outside of NATO and the Russian --

General Wolters: The threat that international terror groups present. So as many of you have heard, the NATO Secretary General is keen to point out that the more that we can thwart those threats abroad the less the opportunity that they can exist on the continent in Europe and with our allies and partners. So I spend a lot of time, David, ensuring that we're not just focused on near peer competitors and the one that happens to exist to the east, but we're focused on international terror groups and the damage that they can do to our nations.

That response typically surprises most from a military perspective, but international terror groups and their impact on Europe is something that's very important.

DWG: Yasmin?

DWG: General, I was wondering if you could talk to us about some of the technology gaps, technology needs that you are seeing in your area of responsibility. Maybe more ISR equipment, certain vehicles, certain weapons.

General Wolters: Yasmin, I would contend that every good military commander would look you in the eye and tell you that whatever resources they currently have, they want resources that allow them to be faster and they want resources that allow them to see the entire battle space so that they can better defend, and they want resources that allow them to command and control and have feedback from their troops to the commander, and they want resources that allow their operators who are at the tip of the spear to execute with great speed. Everything that we

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attempt to acquire in USEUCOM and everything that I acquire as the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe is with the intent to improve our indications and warnings, improve our command and control, and improve our mission command.

When you get into the category of indications and warnings, it typically involves intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance hardware and software that allows you to see the battle space as deep as you possibly can, and to be able to get the returns of those views as quickly as you can, interpret what they mean and be able to take action.

So when we talk about speed and effectiveness and resources and all the things that we have to do to effectively deter in NATO, I am always looking for ISR assets that allow me to see with clarity in the battle space, that allow me to quickly get a return on the view, and be able to take action.

So there's thousands and thousands of toys and trinkets out there that we attempt to use, and we make sure that all those toys and trinkets are aligned with the 29 nations in NATO so that there is interoperability, so that all 29 nations can use those.

And as we speak, one prime example that we've been working very, very hard to get is the NATO alliance ground station Global Hawk Block 40. It is a remotely piloted aircraft that will soon come to us in Europe that will increase our ability to better surveil in Europe and better defend and better deter,.

But that's a classic example in the ISR realm of something that is NATO interoperable, that allows you to better see the battle space, that is also connected to the entities on the ground to be able to receive the data and better deter.

DWG: And how many of those are you looking for? And when do you want to get them by?

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General Wolters: I want an infinite amount and I want them yesterday. But we're going to start off with a set of five, and the first is going to arrive very, very soon and there will be more to follow with the [DB Day] that will be executed and the Secretary General will be involved in that from NATO.

DWG: Dmitry?

DWG: Thank you for doing this, sir.

I wanted to ask you, you and General Gerasimov already have plans to meet face to face. When do you think will be the earliest opportunity to do this? You've spoken [inaudible] in July or something like that. And would you mind also speaking about how as the SACEUR you see your further relations with Russia and the Russian commanders.

General Wolters: I've had the opportunity to meet with General Gerasimov face to face in the fall, and we anticipate that we'll have the opportunity to meet face to face in the early part of calendar year '20. The purpose of our gathering is to increase the deconfliction dialogue discussion from the safety standpoint, to make sure that we know where our troopers are in all of the domains, to ensure that we have professional military deconfliction. Our conversations are in the military lane and they are for the purpose of improving our safety deconfliction dialogue to make sure that as we execute operations, activities and investments, in vicinities to where our uniformed military members are close, that we have the appropriate safety deconfliction so that we don't have any unprofessional activity.

Our previous conversation was very constructive and I look forward to our next conversation that again should occur in the early part of calendar year '20.

DWG: Are you mostly focused on Syria when you are talking about deconfliction? Or deconfliction in general, in all parts of the world?

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General Wolters: Comprehensive deconfliction, air, land, sea, space and cyber on the periphery of the European continent and global.

DWG: Thank you, sir.

DWG: Otto?

DWG: Sea Power Magazine. I bring in the naval issue.

What are you seeing as far as the Russian fleet in your area, the Med and the Baltics? And how are they behaving these days? There were some incidents when, particularly in the Black Sea, where they've gotten a little pushy at time and engaged other flags as well. So what are you seeing in increased Soviet activity? How do you assess the quality of those forces?

General Wolters: I see Russian activity in the Arctic, I see it in the Baltic, I see it in the Black Sea, I see it in the Mediterranean. And since my last conversation face to face with General Gerasimov, we have had zero unprofessional incidents at sea and zero unprofessional incidents in the sky.

I see Russia doing everything they can to expand their coverage, to see as much of the space as they possibly can. And as you can well imagine, it's something that we'll continue to dialogue about to make sure that our Sailors and their Sailors are appropriately deconflicted so that we don't have any future unprofessional incidents at sea or in the sky.

DWG: There were some reports of particularly increased Soviet submarine activities. Has NATO been doing anything recently to increase your ASW capabilities?

General Wolters: We're always looking at exercises and operations and investments to improve our view of the maritime. We're heavily engaged in the Arctic. We're heavily engaged in

the Central Atlantic. We're heavily engaged in the Western Med and the Eastern Med and every single day we're looking to do anything that we can possibly do to improve our ability to see the maritime, command and control the maritime, and we do so comprehensively, all 360 degrees around the European continent. And we've been very, very busy over the course of the summer and the early portion of the fall period so the activities are robust.

DWG: You have a standing NATO maritime force. Are they focused primarily on ASW or on the surface?

General Wolters: They're focused on both.

DWG: Laura?

DWG: Hi, sir. Thanks for being here.

I wanted to ask you about New START first of all. Can you tell us what the advantages would be of extending that treaty the way that President Putin wants to right now, no preconditions extension. And then conversely, what are the limits right now on what we can do to improve the [inaudible]?

General Wolters: I will say that as of this morning I believe from a congressional standpoint both the House and the Senate have agreed that we would have to have 120-day notification in the event if there's a decision that our U.S. government has made with respect to New START. I think that's an illustration that our Congress views it as important. We're paying very, very close attention. It is an opportunity to force dialogue, and as a military member in my military lane, anything that affords me the opportunity to increase dialogue is probably of assistance. But again, the specifics on the parameters I'll allow OSD to be able to dive into that more so. I will tell you as an operational commander forward as we speak right now, it is an activity that affords dialogue and deconfliction, and from that standpoint there is a degree of good that exists inside of

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it and I believe that our Congress has just recognized that and I know that our administration is looking very, very closely at that and there will be more to follow.

DWG: On Turkey, is there anything at this point that Turkey could do to get back into the F-35 program?

General Wolters: They can get rid of the S400.

DWG: Is that the only thing?

General Wolters: That's a start. I will tell you, as you and I have talked before and as many of you have experienced before, the S400 and the F-35 are not compatible. They don't speak the same language, they aren't sustained by the same group of people that have a common understanding. So with respect to F-35 and S400, they can't coexist in Turkey, and that's exactly the place that we are right now.

DWG: So just deactivating or storing the S400, would that be enough to get back into the F-35 program?

General Wolters: We're not going to have the S400 coexist with the F-35 in Turkey.

DWG: Jeff Seldon.

DWG: Thank you very much for doing this.

The Finnish Defense Minister was in town yesterday and talked a little bit about how Finland was seeing efforts to degrade not only the military will but the will of the nation to defend itself against adversaries with influence or information operations. I'm wondering if that's something that you've seen, primarily the culprit might be Russia, but is it just Russia? And if not, who else is doing it and to what extent have you taken measures to guard against that?

General Wolters: Can I go back? I didn't quite catch the first part of your question with respect to the concerns that Finland has in not being defended.

DWG: He was talking about influencing information or influence operations designed to degrade the nation's will or its, the will of the population, or to defend itself so that the population didn't make it as much of a priority perhaps. And we know that Russia's been very good at influencing and very heavily invested in influence operations. Are you seeing any sorts of influence operations like that or in other ways directed at the troops [inaudible]?

General Wolters: We do. The maligned influence is of great concern, specifically in the information domain. And as you probably know, a comprehensive defense involves air, land, sea, space and cyberspace which are the five domains that we recognize in NATO, but on the fringes are hybrid activity and part of hybrid activity happens to be information operations that take place, and from a maligned influence standpoint we see that often from Russia. We see it in the vicinity of what takes place in the Ukraine, what takes place in Georgia, what's taking place in Crimea, and as you can well imagine, to have a good, comprehensive defense you have to be willing to deter in all domains, to include the information domain. So we have ongoing activities, as the Minister of Defense probably pointed out in Finland, that involve what we do in USEUCOM with the NATO nations and what we do in USEUCOM with all the partner nations, and then SHAPE, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, we have information operations, deterrence activities that take place with the 29 to include the NATO partners which is Finland.

And as a matter of fact, I just had the golden opportunity to meet with the Northern 12 which are 12 nations that are particularly focused in the Arctic. We just had a deep dive discussion on this very subject, and it was the maligned influence from an information ops perspective about the

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integrity of sea lanes that exist in the Arctic, and here's a classic case where we have to make sure that we have the facts as they exist from an international order with respect to what you can and can't do in international airspace and at sea. So very, very active in those regards. I had a recent opportunity to visit Finland and we had a deep dive discussion on this very subject.

DWG: Is there anything that you're doing with the troops in particular as opposed to just working with other countries or cyber deconfliction with Russia? Is there anything you're doing to train the troops so they're more weary or more alert to what the Russians or others may be trying to do in contacting them or influencing them directly?

General Wolters: We have information ops training that is ongoing, and for an infantry soldier that's part of the battalion sized battle group that's currently operating in Poland, they receive information ops training and they know that that info ops training is just as important as the training to shoot a 9mm pistol.

So from that standpoint, we ensure that we counter with the facts and we don't hesitate to call out when truths are not being told in public with respect to the activities that are taking place in NATO and on the continent in Europe.

DWG: Chris Woody and then Jeff Shelton.

DWG: Good morning, sir.

Just quickly to follow up on that question on naval ops. Are U.S. troops and U.S. personnel and their families, are they also being targeted while, in your area of operations? I know there have been reports of that previously.

General Wolters: I don't know what you mean by targeted.

DWG: So in 2017 the Wall Street Journal reported that personnel, NATO personnel in the Baltics were having their cell phones infiltrated. Earlier this year Dutch media reported that while Dutch pilots were deployed to the Baltics their families at home in the Netherlands were receiving threatening phone calls and things like that. Are U.S. personnel and their families, are they experiencing that as well?

General Wolters: U.S. personnel and families have not experienced those examples of targeting but they have experienced misinformation with respect to what is put out on RTTV. So if they have the opportunity and they're part of USEUCOM and they're in Europe and they happen to see RTTV, this is a classic example of misinformation. Probably not to the severity that you're talking about from a targeting standpoint, but it is another example of exposure of misinformation from a maligned influence perspective on behalf of Russia in the info ops sphere against citizens that exist in Europe.

DWG: And regarding NATO, I know NATO's been working with the EU, with European countries regarding their ability to resupply and reinforce across the continent. At EUCOM, how do you feel about the ability to do that? And are there areas or modes of transportation or parts of Europe where you still see the need for improvement?

General Wolters: Chris, that's a great question, and I will tell you that when I go to sleep at night it's probably the last thought I have, that we need to continue to improve upon, and we are. From a road, rail and air perspective, in getting large quantities of hardware and software from west to east on the continent, we're improving. But I will tell you as the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe and the Commander of USEUCOM, I'm just not satisfied. It's got to continue to get better and better and better, and we are dedicating tremendous energy to this very issue.

In USEUCOM we have directors which are flag officers that work

for me. They're called [JCoats], and our J4 is our logistician. He's a Navy flag officer and he is probably one of the busiest human beings on the European continent. He gets to sleep about one hour a day, and his whole life exists from a standpoint of finding ways to improve our ability to move large quantities at speed from west to east in road, rail and air, across the European continent from a U.S. perspective.

We've also recognized the need in NATO to improve in this area. And through NATO command structure adaptation, which is code for what are you going to do in NATO in the future that's different from the past with your personnel to improve your ability to deter? And through NATO command structure adaptation, we elected to stand up an entire new command called Joint Support Enabling Command, JSEC. It's run by a flag officer, a NATO flag officer. That commander's sole purpose in life is to nest with all the nations to find ways to improve our ability to move large resources at speed from west to east across continent for the purpose of better deterring.

So it's very, very important. There will be a USEUCOM commander sitting at this table 10 or 20 years from now, and I suspect that person will sit right here and tell you that we still need to get faster, we still need to improve. And part of it is recognizing the right stuff to be in the right place at the right time to deliver the appropriate effect to effectively deter. And it's challenging. We're working very, very hard to align with the EU to make sure that we can benefit from the resources that they possess and the resources that we possess to solve that problem set of getting that hardware and software moved as fast as possible.

So great question. We'll get better, and we are getting better.

DWG: Would that be easier if you had more forces in Poland and in the Baltics for example?

General Wolters: Not necessarily, David, because you have to

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have the right forces, the right bandwidth, the right training. So the actual force piece is not necessarily aligned with speed to move.

DWG: Jeff and then Gina.

DWG: General, can you talk about the latest about the so-called [For Trump] in Poland?

General Wolters: There is consultations taking place between the U.S. Department of Defense and their Polish counterparts to look at pieces and parts of headquarters segments to align and place in Poland. The location, the size and the function are still to be determined. We want to make sure that we get it right for the short range and the long range. And at this very point the consultations are ongoing. That's where we stand right now. I suspect there will be several locations where we have the ability to put infrastructure to be able to receive resources on a temporary and on a permanent basis for the future, but the final determination is still TBD.

DWG: And during the Cold War, the NATO defense relied largely on the liberal use of cluster munitions. Of the new members of NATO, only Lithuania has signed the treaty banning cluster munitions. Are cluster munitions part of NATO's defense for stopping Russians say in the, I can't pronounce it, Suwalki Gap?

General Wolters: Here's what I will say. Precision munitions are part of the equation with respect to what we'll do from a NATO perspective and a U.S. perspective to better deter and defend on continent, so precision is the key.

DWG: Gina?

DWG: Thank you. The Army's about to launch Defender Europe '20. I'm sure you're familiar with it. Can you talk about the importance of this giant movement and heavily promoted power projection, and why it's also important to deliberately show

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that they're leaving Europe? A division-sized movement, and they've said that it's important to show everyone that they're also leaving. That they're not staying. So why is that important?

General Wolters: First of all, Defender Europe '20 is a fantastic exercise and one of the questions I often get is General Wolters, when does Defender Europe '20 start? And as you know from your experience, it's already started because the benefit of a large exercise is all the planning that takes place beforehand.

Let me jump up to 70,000 feet to adequately discuss why this is important to move those capable soldiers that distance and redeploy effectively those capable soldiers that distance. And this goes back to the National Defense Strategy.

President Trump and Secretary Esper need as many options as possible to make sure that they can globally secure and we can defend our interests. And for Secretary Esper, he wants to be able to demonstrate that he can lift and shift a large force element like a division-sized force from the U.S. long distances, watch those troops effectively employ, and then as important as deploying those troops is effectively redeploying those troops, reconstituting back in CONUS and being ready to go someplace else on planet Earth to adequately defend. That's the beauty of what our great U.S. DoD does, and this exercise is a classic illustration of what we did decades ago, for example, with Reforger exercises in Europe, and we're going to do the same.

As you well know, it's Defender Europe '20. We had a little bit of a name change. It's U.S. Army Europe led. It's going to involve all of the U.S. military entities that exist in Europe. It's going to involve approximately 20,000 U.S. soldiers coming from the continental United States, marrying up with about 8,000 or 9,000 U.S. military members on continent, marrying up with another 8,000 or 9,000 NATO military members on continent.

It will have distinct phases. There is a deployment phase, there's a joint forcible entry phase, there is a command post exercise phase, there is a live exercise phase, and as importantly with what you just alluded to, there is a redeployment phase. And in each one of those areas we scrutinize everything that we do. It is not just a ground domain exercise. It involves air, land, sea, space and cyber, and we will look for the maximum amount of alignment on all those domains and all those functions to make sure that we can adequately and effectively demonstrate our ability to deter.

It's the largest exercise I think we've had from a U.S. perspective with respect to troops movement for 25 years. And all of the planning that's gone into it has been worked heavily for the last year at least, and that planning in itself is great deterrence because it teaches our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines what's involved when you start to embrace an activity of this magnitude and what you have to be prepared to do to successfully pull it off, which is to include an effective redeployment back to CONUS so that that division can reconstitute as quickly as possible.

I don't mean to go too far, but I can't resist saying this. One of the beauties of NATO is this. Because of the maturation of the environment, because of what you can do from a military perspective, air, land, sea, space and cyber with the great nations that exist in NATO, when you take a large swath of military members and you bring them to Europe what you get is a training environment that is very, very mature. And what actually happens for those 20,000 U.S. soldiers that come over is as they are training for Defender Europe '20, their actual readiness should improve over time. So when they go back to reconstitute at the end of the exercise, you should have a division that is more fit for purpose to deliver security than it was before it started. And that's the beauty of a mature security environment that we actually have in NATO.

DWG: By the time from their readiness to get back and be ready for something, is it also not a strategic message to say hey, we're going back home. We're not staying. Don't be scared. I mean, I'm trying, I didn't allude to it, I wanted to know what it means to show that we are not staying.

General Wolters: The strategic message is we can demonstrate our flexibility and adaptability to lift and shift large forces to any place on planet Earth to effectively deter, and that's deterrence, and that's incredibly valuable.

DWG: Ashley, Jane's.

DWG: Just sticking on Defender Europe for a second. You had also previously talked about all the logistical challenges within Europe. So as they deploy, redeploy, what do you see as the biggest obstacle and some of the examples that you're expecting to encounter from this exercise?

General Wolters: Probably in the logistical area. Making sure that from a border crossing perspective and from a policy perspective we've done all of our homework.

As you probably know, Defender Europe 20 involves 18 European nations and we're actually going to touch the soil of 10 actual nations in Europe. And each one of those nations, I've had consultations already with their Chiefs of Defense and consultations with their Ministers of Defense and General Cavoli who is the U.S. Army Europe commander has had consultation with all of his Army commander counterparts in those ten nations. And we want to make sure that from a border crossing perspective, and from a capability perspective in those ten nations in particular, that we've got it right with respect to our ability to lift and shoot and move and communicate with an exercise at speed. That's of a concern.

And there will be some snags along the way. We will find things that we're not happy with. We will after-action review those.

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We will find remedies in the future . And when we have another large-scale exercise we'll demonstrate an ability to get through those snags that we discovered in a previous exercise and we'll just be that much quicker and that much faster in the future, and that's exactly what we want.

DWG: Great, thanks.

And I also wanted to ask about INF. It's been a few months since it's disappeared or the U.S. withdrew. What feedback are you getting from your counterparts and within NATO about potentially positioning these weapons within their borders?

General Wolters: From a NATO perspective, NATO was in agreement with the United States that Russia was in violation of the INF. NATO and the United States were in agreement. And from that point to the present, I have had no concerns and nothing has been submitted to me as the operational commander for NATO of concern about INF.

DWG: Can you talk about just the general within the partner nations, if there's a concern about the U.S. position?

General Wolters: Nothing has been elevated to my level of concern with respect to the INF from any of the NATO nations.

DWG: Courtney, NBC.

DWG: On Ukraine, can you update us on whether all of the military aid has been delivered to Ukraine? And is it your assessment that the level of corruption in the government of Ukraine is such that another tranche of military aid can be delivered in the future?

General Wolters: With respect to Ukraine since 2014, I believe we as a U.S. have contributed \$1.6 billion. As we speak, we have a Ukraine mission that is sponsored by the U.S. We cycle in on a temporary basis, military training teams that cover down

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on a myriad of areas. And since I've been in command since May 2nd, the pace of our mil to mil activity in support of doing the things that we need to do to allow Ukraine to better defend themselves, the pace has been consistent and the pace has been very, very rich.

As we speak, all those activities remain. There are still dollars and resources being poured into Ukraine to ensure that they can better defend themselves.

And obviously we had a significant meeting in Paris that occurred yesterday. We'll see what the outcome of that actually is. I haven't seen anything codified in print. I know as part of those consultations there was a discussion of ceasefire, and a discussion of prisoner swap. In my mil to mil lane, I'm doing everything I can to promote engagement from a NATO perspective for interoperability with Ukraine to make sure that they can do all the things to adequately defend themselves. And I'm doing so in air, land, sea, space and cyber, and I'm doing so from a hybrid perspective.

I'm really excited about this issue that you may not be aware of. Just several days ago from a USEUCOM perspective our Women in Peace program is very, very important. We actually had a keynote speaker in Ukraine discuss Women in Peace. It was well received, and this is something that we are doing in every domain and every function to improve Ukraine's ability to better defend. And part of Women in Peace from a security perspective is very, very important, and I was pleasantly surprised to hear about that.

DWG: Is it your assessment that the level of corruption in the Ukraine government is such that another tranche of money could be delivered in the future? Is that why the mil to mil relationship is so strong?

General Wolters: I'm a military commander so I work the mil to mil lane. You're talking about corruption in government and I

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don't have the lens in that that I think you're alluding to. I can tell you that from a mil to mil perspective, what I see is a Ukraine military that is sincerely doing all the things that they can possibly do to better defend and deter on their soil. From a corruption in government perspective, that's a question that's better asked and answered to probably the Secretary of State.

DWG: But in your mil to mil relations is it your assessment that they will continue to need more military aid going forward? Do you expect they will continue to ask --

General Wolters: I expect that they will, for the purpose of increasing their ability to defend and deter on their soil.

DWG: Brian [Inaudible].

I was hoping to get back to the ISR conversation [inaudible]. It's now been a few months since your small RPA couldn't [inaudible] Romania. Can you talk a little bit on what you've learned through having that capability there?

And the recently signed agreement with Poland I think allows for more RPAs inside that country. Can you talk about that?

General Wolters: Those are great questions and it goes back to the recently approved NATO military strategy which is the first NATO military strategy that we've had approved by NATO in over half of a century. In that strategy it talks about our comprehensive approach to more effectively deter and defend.

We just recently approved an initial concept for the deterrence and defense of the EuroAtlantic area and it alludes to a comprehensive approach in all geographical quadrants in all domains to improve our indications and warnings, our command and control, and our mission command. And part of what we have to do is make sure that when we talk about effectively and comprehensively deterring and defending in Europe, it's not just

the Baltics, it's not just the Arctic, it's 360 degrees. And we've done some very elegant maneuvering with respect to resources to make sure that our indications and warnings in the Baltics are as strong as they can possibly be, and we've improved our ability to do the same in the vicinity of the Black Sea which goes back to what we're talking about with respect to resources that can temporarily pump in and out of Romania and be more effective to have eyes on what takes place in the vicinity of the Black Sea. That's been very, very effective.

As you well know, there's an Aegis Ashore in Romania, and that gives us better eyes on the environment to make sure that we can adequately deter and defend and we will continue to manipulate the resources to comprehensively defend and deter in all quadrants around Europe. So I'm excited about the Black Sea. I'm excited about the Southern Hub. I'm excited about the Balkans. I'm excited about the East Med and the West Med. I'm excited about the Straits of Gibraltar. I'm excited about the Central portion of the Atlantic area. I'm excited about [Jiwuki Gac]. I'm excited about the Arctic North. But every single time that I talk about deterrence and defense, I have to cover down on all 360 degrees, to include what takes place from a NATO mission perspective in Iraq and in Afghanistan. But the ISR improvements in the vicinity of the Black Sea have been notable and they'll continue.

DWG: And on the [inaudible] in Poland, is there a time line? What are you looking for in number of tails?

General Wolters: Those consultations are ongoing as was discussed with the previous question, and once we can get a clear understanding of exactly where the administration and the Department of Defense will allow us to put those resources and have those force elements, we'll have a clearer picture with respect to what we're doing with the ISR assets.

But they will be put somewhere in the vicinity to improve our indications and warnings from a comprehensive perspective on

continent.

DWG: Defense News and then Defense Daily.

DWG: The EU has been trying to do more to be more involved in the defense [care]. They've got a number of projects ongoing to [inaudible] infrastructure that [inaudible]. I was wondering from your view, there was recent reporting that the U.S. wanted better access to those projects. How do you see those efforts generally speaking aligning with your role at NATO, and are you working with or are those efforts somehow happening in a silo?

General Wolters: David, I have keen access to those. As you well know from an architecture standpoint for leadership, we have a NATO Chairman of the Military Committee, Sir Stu Peach. And from an architecture standpoint with respect to the EU, we have an EU Chairman of their Military Committee, Claudio Graziano. He used to be the CHOD in Italy. I've known him for the last five years. I probably consult with General Graziano as much as I consult with the Chairman of the Military Committee for NATO, and all those consultations have to do with improving our transparency and alignment in all domains, from a military perspective about the things that we need to do to better deter and defend on the European continent.

So the conversations are rich. The alignment is improving. And from a mil to mil perspective in NATO and EU we're doing everything we can to improve the effectiveness of what the EU does to enhance security, and obviously what NATO does to enhance security. And we're trying to make sure that we don't have duplicity on both sides to where we have euros that potentially go to waste.

And I would tell you that it's a never-ending journey. We're never going to be perfect. But each and every morning I think there's better military alignment and transparency that exists across NATO and across the EU from a military perspective to get better from a security perspective.

DWG: [Inaudible] recently had some very high-profile comments [inaudible] about NATO and about its future and about better aligning its future. I'm wondering, what do you think NATO can do to address that, or the recurrent concerns about the brain power [inaudible]?

General Wolters: We need to do exactly what we've been doing for the last 70 years. As you know at the leaders meeting in London we celebrated NATO's 70th anniversary. That's seven decades of peace. President Macron is extremely pleased with that, and I know he wants more peace and we'll continue to [inaudible] peace, and from a military perspective it's my job to find ways to make sure that it's more foolproof and that's exactly where we'll continue to head and as long as we do that we'll be in productive business.

DWG: Vivienne?

DWG: Good morning, sir. Defense Daily.

My questions involve space. U.S. Space command was stood up in August, and I'm wondering if you can describe, if you've spoken with General Raymond about areas of partnership, what sorts of things you see in the near future that you two can do together, and then also with our European allies. I know for example France is planning to stand up a Space Command sort of thing. UK, it's very prominent there. Where do you see areas of partnership and cooperation in space there as well?

General Wolters: Vivienne, great question. The first thing I'll tell you is I talk to General Raymond on a very regular basis. I would say probably once a week. And as you well know, because I think you were there, we invited him to speak at Brussels and he did a fantastic job. It was so fantastic we were allowed at the recent leaders meeting in London to announce that NATO has now accepted space as a domain. That is a huge step in the right direction.

So we have a long ways to go on this journey. Number one is to recognize the domains that impact security and space is obviously one of them, and NATO has done that, so that's a step in the right direction. From a USEUCOM perspective, we have space componency that General Raymond extends to us to allow us to better defend and better deter. And with each passing day we're going to find ways to align the assets that exist in space to better deter and to better defend.

And as I mentioned to you before in the conversations General Raymond and I have, in our security campaign from a USEUCOM perspective and from a NATO perspective, we always have to improve in indications and warnings. We always have to improve in command and control and feedback. And we always have to improve in mission command. And we have to do that in space.

Obviously there are things that take place in space at speeds and with a degree of precision that are very, very attractive for deterrence. And space to surface ISR is one of those key areas. And those are the big issues that General Raymond and I keep discussing and we will keep discussing in the future. It all has to do with seeing the potential battle space, seeing the environment, and being able to have quick feedback on what is taking place in that environment, and if you can obviously utilize the resources that exist in space you can probably do so at a speed that makes commanders happy because they have information superiority.

Lots of work to be done in the future, but lots of consultations back and forth with General Raymond and I. And as you well know, in Congress we had some announcements this morning with respect to a Space Force that will be underneath the United States Air Force and that emphasis is exciting for all of us.

DWG: And the interactions with European allies as well?

General Wolters: Growing. And it starts with the fact that

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NATO has now recognized space as a domain.

DWG: Do you see, for example do you see kind of [inaudible] space as sort of the top areas of interactors right now? Or are there other countries that you see might be able to bring something to the table in the near future? Your main people --

General Wolters: I think that many of the nations have the opportunity to enhance our ability to take advantage of what exists in space. Obviously France and UK have capability that exists today, as do other nations. But we want to get all the nations involved. There's an academic journey that has to start and that's ongoing as we speak.

DWG: Thank you very much.

DWG: Richard Sisk and then Lee Hudson.

DWG: Sir, what's the status of the Javelins that were part of the military aid package to Ukraine? Have any of them been delivered? Will the Ukrainians need more training on their use? Or can they be put into the field?

General Wolters: Rich, I think you well know we have delivered Javelins. The feedback has been very positive. There's always going to be new soldiers in the Ukraine military that have access to a Javelin for the first time, so the training is ongoing. The military training teams that we rotate back and forth will persist.

I can't give you specifics on numbers right now, but I will tell you that the feedback with respect to the soldiers utilizing the Javelin has been incredibly positive. It gives them a sense of better purpose in their ability to more effectively deter the soil that they live on, and from that standpoint that's very positive for the soldiers.

So the feedback has been very good, and I suspect with our Joint

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Military Training Group Ukraine that we will continue to rotate military training teams on a temporary basis to make sure that the Ukrainians that use the Javelin are well versed in its capabilities and all the TTPs that are involved -- the tactics, techniques and procedures.

DWG: Have any of them been fielded to the east, to the [inaudible]?

DWG: Or fired in anger?

General Wolters: I won't comment on that. I will just tell you that at this time I know that we have Javelins in Ukraine.

DWG: Can you not say? It's not classified is it?

General Wolters: We have Javelins in Ukraine and I won't speculate on the rest of his question.

DWG: Lee.

DWG: I wanted to go back to the question about the INF, and kind of drill in a little bit on the ground-launched cruise missile that the U.S. has begun developing since the exit from the INF.

Have you decided whether that's going to be deployed in Europe and when that might take place?

General Wolters: Let me rewind the tape a little bit. Whose ground-launched cruise missile?

DWG: The U.S. ground-launched 00

General Wolters: And your question is?

DWG: Have you been talking about when and if that will be deployed in Europe?

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General Wolters: First of all, you prefaced this with an INF discussion. What part of the INF discussion are you concerned about?

DWG: Well, the INF, once we exited from that treaty --

General Wolters: Again, you understand from an INF perspective why it came off the way that it did.

DWG: Yes.

General Wolters: Okay. Because Russia was in violation.

DWG: I understand that.

General Wolters: Okay, so Russia's in violation of the INF and your next question is, --

DWG: Is that going to be deployed into Europe?

General Wolters: We are going to make sure that from a United States nuclear perspective our triad is as strong and as powerful as it can be. As you well know, we have an ongoing modernization and recapitalization program going in every quadrant of the triad. That activity will continue to improve. At this time we have nothing on the books or any questions or any concerns about adding any additional elements of a nuclear triad to the European environment. And you know that there is a capability that exists on continent from a DCA perspective and we intend to keep that posture the same.

General Wolters: Did that answer your question?

DWG: Yes.

A second question about the European allies and how they're doing with modernization. Where do you think they could use

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some more air assets?

General Wolters: I'm a fighter pilot so I can't have enough air assets. When you say air assets are you talking about manned aviation, unmanned aviation? Are you talking about conventional air surface [at] 70,000? ? Are you talking about air assets above 70,000?

DWG: Any and all.

General Wolters: We're in a position from an air domain perspective to where our posture is more than adequate to do the things that we need it to do from a conventional air domain perspective. There are areas that have to do with the air domain from an indications and warning standpoint that I would like to see improvement. So that goes back to what I'll call elegant ISR assets that improve our indications and warnings and that allows us to better see the battle space so that we can better defend at a quicker pace.

So in the traditional air domain, a couple of additional ISR assets would be of benefit.

DWG: High altitude?

General Wolters: Of all altitudes.

DWG: -- expensive?

General Wolters: Elegant means assets that are a little bit harder to see and operate at environments that are a little bit harder to get to. And that operate with a degree of speed and precision that we haven't seen before. That's my term of art, elegant, that kind of defines all that into one.

DWG: -- chandeliers. [Laughter].

General Wolters: Very good. You said that. I didn't.

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[Laughter]. That's good. I hadn't heard that before.

DWG: Nick Shiffrin, then Glen Carry.

DWG: Thank you. A couple of questions, one to zoom out, one to zoom in related to Ukraine, but the zoom out is really about EDI in general.

I remember being in Crimea when the Russians invaded; in the Donbas, when violence erupted there; and talking to your predecessors about the point of the European Defense Initiative.

Five years later, can you point to specific examples that you think EDI, your deterrence mission now, has actually deterred Russia? That's the zoom out.

The zoom in is, have you felt any impact at all on your work on the 55 day hold to Ukraine? And obviously the politicals from --

DWG: Let me reverse order, Nick. No impact on your reference to a 55-day hold. Like I said, the mil to mil activity that exists with Ukraine is very robust.

Going back to EDI, I will just tell you that from a USEUCOM perspective having a predictable, stable and adequate U.S. budget has been worth its weight in gold, and EDI has been very consistent for the last three years.

So General Breedlove, who was a previous USEUCOM/SACEUR commander several commands ago, transitioned USEUCOM and SACEUR out of assurance into a deterrence phase, and then General Scaparrotti took over, Nick, and you've met with him a thousand times, and he dramatically improved our posture with respect to where the forces are. Mike Scaparrotti was able to do that because he had the funding in place to be able to exercise and train to enhance that posture.

I've been afforded the luxury to be given a command that's on good glide slope with respect to posture to be able to improve indications and warnings, command and control, and feedback. The number of operations activities and investments that we've been able to execute from a U.S. and NATO perspective for the last three years from a standpoint of the scene of the exercise, the scope of the exercise, the criticality of the exercise to improve the functions that we need to improve upon so that we can better deter and defend, it's been a huge shift, a huge shift.

I can give you a visible example of what deterrence has meant. In the last 90 days we've had zero incidents at sea or incidents in the air with Russia with respect to unprofessional behavior. That's because we're deterring better. That's because we're deconflicting better. That's because we can see the battle space better as a result of having more ISR assets to see where activities are taking place and where potential conflict points could occur.

So the professionalism has improved; the safety/deconfliction has improved; and what we're doing now with this large Defender Europe '20 exercise, Nick, is getting into graduate level work to make sure that we can bring together all the pieces and parts to lift and shift a large ground force a very, very large distance and redeploy that ground force.

We can do that today and it's been 25 years because the environment is mature enough and smart enough and has enough sensors in it to be able to get past the trouble spots, and that's worth its weight in gold.

So I believe those are tangible examples of what EDI has done for us and what we've been able to do with the forces from a posture perspective to better deter and defend on the continent.

DWG: Sir, just a very quick follow-up. The 90 days you picked, why did you pick that time frame?

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General Wolters: Because I know for a fact, just because every single day, two times a day I check these specific incidents. At least in the last 90 days minimum, we've had no unprofessional acts at sea or in the skies, and it's longer than that, Nick. I just don't have the specifics.

DWG: Did something change a few months ago? Because obviously we've seen Russian actions in the last year.

General Wolters: This was a key military topic in my consultations with General Gerasimov and he was concerned about it, I was concerned about it, and that's a classic illustration to where we were afforded the opportunity to have a face to face safety deconfliction dialogue, and the result of that dialogue was zero unprofessional behavior that occurs in the maritime or in the air.

DWG: And what was the date of that talk?

General Wolters: Somebody can get the date for you, Nick. It was in the early fall time frame.

DWG: Was that unsafe and unprofessional, just to be clear?

General Wolters: That's unprofessional.

DWG: Not unsafe?

General Wolters: I believe unsafe and unprofessional. Zero unsafe and unprofessional incidents at sea and incidents in aviation.

DWG: Over to Bloomberg News.

DWG: Hi, General. Thanks for attending this breakfast this morning.

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This is a question about Poland. There was a delay in the completion of the Polish section of the U.S. defense shield to 2020. That was reported. Do you see that defense shield being implemented by 2020? Do you expect further delays? And is it having any impact on mil to mil relationships, the relationship with Poland?

And just sort of broadening out the question because we're running out of time, it's pretty clear that Turkey is charting its own path. How concerned are you that Erdogan is pulling Turkey out of NATO's orbit now more than it ever has in its past, in the 70 years of that relationship?

And I understand that there is the conflict or the disagreement over the S400 and the F-35, but how do you move the mil to mil relationship forward from NATO's perspective with Turkey from this point?

General Wolters: Let me start with the Turkey question. The mil to mil convergence far outweighs the mil to mil divergence with the U.S. and Turkey and with NATO and Turkey. And as you well know, as we speak we have NATO military members and U.S. military members on soil in Turkey. One of the bonds that exist is how a nation receives another nation's forces and how sincere that nation is to apply the requisite force protection considerations for those forces.

And I will tell you that as you've heard before from Secretary Esper and as you've heard before from General Milley, the Chairman of the JCS, the mil to mil alignment, U.S. to Turkey is very strong, and it starts with how well they force protect our U.S. forces and our NATO forces that are on their soil conducting mil to mil business.

So that's the foundation.

Certainly what we saw at the leaders meeting in London, what I was able to witness firsthand was the Turkish President more

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than willing to endorse what NATO is doing, and I saw no cracks in the armor with respect to Turkey's willingness to work side by side as a NATO partner with us.

So that's what I know from my foxhole in the military lane.

With respect to the S400 and the F-35, I will tell you that those two systems aren't compatible. And from a policy perspective, if Turkey continues down the path to embrace use, endorse the S400 and have it on its soil, we, the U.S., as long as my bosses continue to reflect this, we won't put the F-35 there. I don't see any break in that policy stance from a U.S. perspective and I suspect that will continue in perpetuity until we can get resolution divorcing the two.

I'll have to apologize, you started off with a Polish discussion about a defense shield. I didn't hear the first part.

DWG: Missile defense shield that is being extended into Poland and it's been delayed by two years. Is that, to 2020. Is it still on target to be deployed in 2020 or do you think there can be further delays? And is it having any impact on mil to mil relations with Poland?

General Wolters: No impact on the mil to mil relations except for the fact that the military commanders that are involved are, as you would expect, logically frustrated with an expected initial operational capability and it continues to get pushed to the right. But Aegis Ashore in Poland is a very complex, complicated system. We've had great cooperation from our Polish counterparts. We are having some contractual issues with respect to technical specifics. I won't and I can't get into those details, but I will tell you that the dialogue with the executive agent for fielding the Aegis Ashore in Poland is the MDA, that they're working it very very hard. I get a weekly report with respect to the status. I wanted it here five years ago and if you would have given it to me five years ago I would have told you that you didn't give it to me fast enough.

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So you can expect that we'll continue to be very, very, vigilant with respect to the arrival of that system and working very, very hard on the contractual side of the house to cross the T's and dot the I's and get Aegis Ashore in Poland as quickly as we can.

Obviously in the meantime it's a concern, but the good news is we have other assets in theater that we are lifting and shifting and maneuvering to make sure that we can cover down and offer the appropriate eyes in the battles space so that Poland can effectively deter and defend.

DWG: General, thank you very much for coming. I don't want to hold you up. I know you're headed for the State Department.

General Wolters: Thank you all very much for what you do. We sure appreciate it.

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