

Stenographic Transcript  
Before the

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF  
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES  
TRANSPORTATION COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE  
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 AND THE  
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON COURT REPORTING  
1111 14TH STREET NW  
SUITE 1050  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005  
(202) 289-2260  
[www.aldersonreporting.com](http://www.aldersonreporting.com)

1 HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF UNITED  
2 STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND AND UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION  
3 COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR  
4 FISCAL YEAR 2024 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

5  
6 Thursday, April 27, 2023

7  
8 U.S. Senate

9 Committee on Armed Services,

10 Washington, D.C.

11  
12 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 8:04 a.m.,  
13 in Room G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack  
14 Reed, chairman of the committee, presiding.

15 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],  
16 Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King,  
17 Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton,  
18 Rounds, Ernst, Cramer, Scott, Budd, and Schmitt.

1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM RHODE ISLAND

3           Chairman Reed: Senator Wicker is on his way, but  
4 indicated we should begin. Good morning. The committee  
5 meets today to receive testimony from General Christopher  
6 Cavoli, Commander of United States European Command and  
7 NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and General  
8 Jacqueline Van Ovost, Commander of United States  
9 Transportation Command.

10           Thank you for your service to the nation, and I thank  
11 the men and women serving under your commands at this  
12 critical time. The security challenges of European Command  
13 or EUCOM have never been clearer. For more than a year,  
14 Russia has waged a brutal, unprovoked war on Ukraine,  
15 inflicting terrible suffering on the people of Ukraine and  
16 threatening European stability.

17           Ukrainians have fought with incredible courage and  
18 skill to repel Russia's vicious assault, defending the same  
19 values and freedoms that we cherish. Ukraine has achieved  
20 some very notable successes, but there is hard fighting  
21 ahead and more to be done. Throughout this conflict, the  
22 NATO alliance has shown remarkable unity and resolve.

23           A formidable coalition of our allies has joined  
24 together to provide military and humanitarian support to  
25 Ukraine and impose severe cost on Russia's economy. If

1 Putin thought his war would drive a wedge between NATO and  
2 members, and within the international community, he was  
3 badly mistaken.

4 NATO unity has never been stronger, and many European  
5 nations are taking steps to invest greater proportions of  
6 their budgets and institutional energies to improve their  
7 military capabilities. Indeed, in a triumphant moment for  
8 NATO, Finland recently joined the alliance. This was an  
9 utter rejection of Russia's strategic goals, and I know the  
10 Finns will contribute significantly to the alliance.

11 And I hope we will soon welcome Sweden as well.  
12 President Biden deserves great credit for marshaling these  
13 efforts. His Administration continues to provide critical  
14 military equipment and training to Ukraine, including  
15 combat vehicles like Abrams tanks, Strykers, and Bradleys,  
16 as well as weapons like HIMARS, Howitzers, Patriot air  
17 defense systems, and various types of ammunition.

18 This equipment, in concert with contributions and  
19 training from across the alliance, has provided an  
20 important mix of capabilities to bolster Ukrainian  
21 effectiveness on the battlefield. Let there be no doubt  
22 the United States will continue to help Ukraine succeed on  
23 the battlefield. America's assistance to Ukraine is also  
24 an investment our own national security interest. Beyond  
25 repelling Putin, we know China is watching closely and we

1 must succeed.

2 General Cavoli, the NATO alliance has made important  
3 progress in its ability to generate and maintain the  
4 collective force posture, operations, and investments  
5 necessary to deter Russian aggression against its members,  
6 and the United States has played a key role in those  
7 efforts. At the same time, the security environment in  
8 Europe has experienced a tectonic shift.

9 I would like to know your views on plans for U.S.  
10 military activities and investment in the Ukraine area of  
11 responsibility in light of these changes. General Van  
12 Ovest, TRANSCOM is also playing a crucial role in our  
13 support to Ukraine.

14 American troops continue to operate forward logistics  
15 centers to receive, identify, and transport the majority of  
16 security aid intended for Ukraine and across, and from the  
17 international community.

18 This has been an enormous task, executed with  
19 impressive skill on little notice. I would appreciate an  
20 update on these efforts and any lessons learned that you  
21 may have to share. Keeping an eye to the future and the  
22 pacing threat of China, an important reality we are  
23 learning is that any potential adversary is going to attack  
24 our logistic support system.

25 This idea of contested logistics will include obvious

1 threats to our forward basis, as well as the aircraft and  
2 ship that resupply those bases. But it could also include  
3 cyber-attacks against information technology systems that  
4 support our deployments, both government and commercial,  
5 and possible kinetic attacks against ports and airfields  
6 supporting our deployments.

7 I am concerned that our thinking about logistics  
8 during conflict has too often defaulted to our uncontested  
9 military dominance since World War II. We have always  
10 owned the sea and air lines of communication, and have only  
11 had to worry about logistics efficiency, not effectiveness.  
12 General Van Ovost, I would like to know what steps TRANSCOM  
13 is taking to prepare for such threats to our logistics, and  
14 how the military services can alter their acquisition  
15 programs to take these concerns into account.

16 Thank you again to our witnesses and I look forward to  
17 your testimonies. As a reminder for my colleagues, at the  
18 conclusion of the open session of this hearing, we will  
19 recess for the joint session of Congress.

20 We will then reconvene for the closed session at 12:30  
21 p.m. in room SVC-217. We are committed to allowing all of  
22 our colleagues to ask questions, so if the assembly time  
23 arrives, we will continue in the open session until  
24 everyone has an opportunity to do so. And in lieu of  
25 Senator Wicker's arrival shortly, I will ask General Cavoli

1 to begin.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1           STATEMENT OF GENERAL CHRISTOPHER CAVOLI, USA  
2           COMMANDER, UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND/ NORTH ATLANTIC  
3           TREATY ORGANIZATION SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE

4           General Cavoli: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman  
5           Reed, to Ranking Member Wicker, of course, as well,  
6           distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege  
7           to testify before you today, and in many cases to see you  
8           again. On behalf of the men, women, and the families of  
9           USEUCOM first of all, I thank you for your steadfast  
10          support to their mission, to their safety, and to their  
11          well-being.

12          I would also like to recognize and thank my Command  
13          Senior Enlisted Leader, CSM Rob Abernathy, sitting behind  
14          me here, who accompanied me here today. He is representing  
15          our noncommissioned officers, our enlisted soldiers, and  
16          our families who remain America's asymmetric advantage  
17          against any adversary.

18          So, thank you, Rob, for being here. I am very pleased  
19          to appear today beside my good friend and colleague, Jackie  
20          Van Ovest, whose U.S. Transportation Command is unlike  
21          anything else on the globe and who works miracles every  
22          day. Thank you, Jackie, to your whole command.

23          So, this is, as the chairman noted, an unprecedented  
24          time in Europe-Atlantic area. 14 months ago, Russia's  
25          illegal, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine dramatically



1 shifted perceptions of European stability and our broader  
2 global security. It galvanized European governments'  
3 resolve. Last year's NATO summit in Madrid was a turning  
4 point for the alliance.

5 Nations committed to a new strategic concept that put  
6 collective territorial defense at the top of the alliance  
7 task list for the first time in 35 years. And for the  
8 first time since the Cold War, set into motion a series of  
9 efforts that will profoundly change the military structure  
10 and activities of NATO. We have been creating new plans.

11 That is, allied command operations has been creating  
12 new plans for the General defense of the alliance, and  
13 these will drive higher levels of readiness and more  
14 targeted national defense investments, especially on the  
15 part of our allies.

16 Nations agreed to accelerate defense spending  
17 increases, to establish enhanced force posture on the  
18 Eastern flank of NATO, to turn unprecedented numbers of  
19 troops and weapons over to NATO command and control, and  
20 critically, to bring two new members into the alliance.  
21 Happy to note, as the chairman did, that Finland has  
22 already joined and we hope soon to see of Sweden as a  
23 member as well.

24 Over time, these efforts inside the alliance will lead  
25 to significantly increased European military capabilities

1 and will continue to deter aggression against the alliance.  
2 That deterrent posture has allowed us to work intensively  
3 in the past year or so to assist Ukraine. In the past  
4 year, thanks to your support, U.S. donations of arms,  
5 ammunition, equipment, vehicles, and supplies have enabled  
6 Ukraine to halt Russia's invasion.

7 We have not been alone in this effort. The DOD and  
8 USEUCOM lead an international effort represented by the 50  
9 plus member UDCG, Ukraine Donors Contact Group. We have an  
10 effort together to identify transport and deliver equipment  
11 and ammunition to Ukraine, along with the training to use  
12 that equipment in combat.

13 This material support and the training provided by  
14 international donors has been huge and fundamental to the  
15 Ukrainian military's success so far. Over the winter, our  
16 coalition has enabled the Ukrainian military to generate  
17 the military capabilities necessary to defend and regain  
18 parts of their sovereign territory, and we are confident  
19 our Ukrainian partners are good stewards of donated aid.

20 Our embassy team in Kyiv, led by Brigadier General  
21 Garrick Harmon and the security assistance group Ukraine,  
22 located in Germany, worked diligently to monitor and keep a  
23 close eye on all lethal aid to ensure it is getting to and  
24 staying in the right hands. Although we remain optimistic  
25 for Ukraine's future and sovereignty, this war is far from

1 over.

2 Russia will remain an acute threat to Euro-Atlantic  
3 security, and the National Defense Strategy rightly calls  
4 our attention to that. But Russia is not the only problem  
5 in Europe. The People's Republic of China continues to  
6 increase its access and influence in our theater, and its  
7 activities pose risks to U.S. allied and partner interests.

8 The PRC uses foreign direct investment, government  
9 backed business ventures, and loans to gain access to  
10 technology and to gain control over vital European  
11 infrastructure and transportation routes.

12 Finally, Europe continues to face transnational  
13 challenges as well. Such as violent extremist  
14 organizations, uncontrolled immigration, organized crime,  
15 and even climate change. EUCOM trains and cooperates with  
16 allies and partners to help counter those challenges as  
17 well. Our strategic approach fortifies our allies and our  
18 partners.

19 It strengthens alliance interoperability and enhances  
20 our collective combat capability, which deters our  
21 adversaries. And as always, should deterrence fail,  
22 USEUCOM, alongside our allies and partners, is ready to  
23 fight and win.

24 Your continued support for our efforts, the  
25 authorities and the funding you give us, are critical to

1 our ability to do this. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you  
2 for having me here today. I look forward to your  
3 questions.

4 [The prepared statement of General Cavoli follows:]

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Cavoli.  
2 General Van Ovost, your statement, please.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL JACQUELINE D. VAN OVOST, USAF  
2 COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

3 General Van Ovost: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member  
4 Wicker, distinguished members of the committee, good  
5 morning. It is my honor to join you today with my Senior  
6 Enlisted Leader, Fleet Master Chief Donald Myrick, to  
7 represent the men and women of United States Transportation  
8 Command as we defend the nation, take care of our people,  
9 and succeed through teamwork.

10 I am extremely proud of our team of logistics  
11 professionals who lead the joint deployment and  
12 distribution enterprise, continually exceed expectations,  
13 and ensure hope, deterrence, and victory are assured as we  
14 contribute to our nation's defense.

15 From competition to crisis, the entire enterprise  
16 proudly delivers for our nation, our allies, and our  
17 partners. We know our success in the European theater and  
18 beyond would not be possible without the steadfast support  
19 of this committee and the whole of Congress.

20 To maintain the unrivaled strategic advantage, to  
21 project and sustain the Joint Force over global distances  
22 through natural disasters, pandemics, conflicts, peace and  
23 war, while defending our homeland, we must preserve our  
24 logistical dominance.

25 Our organic fleet, along with our commercial

1 transportation partners, must continue to present credible  
2 deterrence and requires proactive efforts to recapitalize  
3 and modernize. My highest concerns lie in reductions in  
4 capacity and readiness in both sealift and air refueling.  
5 We are a generation late in recapitalizing already sealift  
6 fleet to meet our national objectives.

7 The average age of our 44 roll on, roll off ships we  
8 use to surge from the Continental United States is 44 years  
9 old. In fact, 17 of the 44 ships are 50 years or older.  
10 TRANSCOM supports the Navy's strategy to acquire used  
11 sealift vessels from the commercial market, and further  
12 request to provide Secretary of Defense discretionary  
13 authority to purchase foreign built used ships under  
14 favorable market conditions without limitation on number.

15 I greatly appreciate your support for stabilized  
16 funding towards our sealift recapitalization effort, and I  
17 am heartened by the current progress on the first five  
18 ships. We have also taken steps to address the  
19 department's shortfall in meeting wartime fuel delivery  
20 demands and the vulnerable position of continued reliance  
21 on the use of foreign flagged, foreign crude tanker  
22 vessels.

23 We are working with MARAD to implement the tanker  
24 security program, which will provide assured access to U.S.  
25 flag tankers and begin to reduce risk in sealift tanker

1 capacity. In addition to the tanker security program, we  
2 fully support the Maritime Security Program, the Jones Act,  
3 and cargo preference that all work together to ensure we  
4 have the necessary U.S. flag capability and U.S. mariners  
5 during peacetime, and ready to move sensitive defense  
6 materials during a national emergency.

7 In every domain, American workers are critical to the  
8 Joint Force transportation and logistics. In particular,  
9 maritime stakeholders have been experiencing challenges  
10 with recruiting and retaining mariners. We support MARAD  
11 and industry efforts to identify strategies that address  
12 the Mariners shortage and ensure their readiness.

13 In the air, the air refueling fleet is the backbone of  
14 rapid global mobility and is our most stressed capability.  
15 TRANSCOM supports the Air Force's continued efforts towards  
16 focused modernization of the fleet, uninterrupted tanker  
17 recapitalization, and accelerated pursuit of the next  
18 generation air refueling system to ensure our capacity and  
19 readiness remains credible to cover simultaneous global  
20 requirements.

21 Future operations will also require high degrees of  
22 battlespace awareness and leveraging data to align scarce  
23 mobility resources with the greatest strategic needs.  
24 Integration into battle networks, resourcing cryptographic  
25 modernization, cybersecurity, and ensuring resilient



1 positioning, navigation, and timing are among my top  
2 priorities.

3 Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance  
4 Act expires at the end of this year, which provides  
5 essential and irreplaceable insights on the activities of  
6 critical foreign targets. The loss of this authority, or  
7 renewal and diminished or unusable form would profoundly  
8 damage the department's ability to see and mitigate some of  
9 the most profound threats against the United States and our  
10 allies and partners.

11 Therefore, reauthorization is a matter of utmost  
12 priority. Just as we are engaged globally in our flagship  
13 transformational effort, the global household goods  
14 contract will bring accountability that does not exist in  
15 the current program of dispersed vendors. We owe it to our  
16 members and their families to ensure that they have the  
17 very best relocation experience that we can provide.

18 I am honored to join General Cavoli today, where we  
19 are in lockstep to provide critical aid to enable Ukraine's  
20 national defense that in turn delivers success for the  
21 United States, our allies, and our nation. I would like to  
22 thank you once again for your leadership and for the  
23 support you provide our workforce, and I look forward to  
24 your questions.

25 [The prepared statement of General Van Ovost follows:]

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Van  
2 Ovost. Senator Wicker has suggested that we proceed with  
3 questioning, and when he is called upon, he will have  
4 opportunity to submit his statement and also ask his  
5 questions.

6 So let me begin. Both General Ovost -- Van Ovost and  
7 General Cavoli have absolutely critical positions. In  
8 fact, General Cavoli, the Ukrainian situation is the most  
9 pressing military situation in the world at the moment.

10 Unfortunately, here in the Senate, we have reached an  
11 impasse in terms of the promotion of noncontroversial  
12 General officers on a routine basis, usually by unanimous  
13 consent. Could you indicate what effects this will have on  
14 your operational capacity, but also on the morale and  
15 personal dynamics of families?

16 General Cavoli: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Yes, in an  
17 operational sense, if I have officers who are scheduled to  
18 retire, General officers who are scheduled to retire and do  
19 so, but I don't have somebody to replace them, I will  
20 suffer a gap in that. Some of those are in fairly critical  
21 positions right now.

22 For example, the Chairman's military representative to  
23 the Military Committee, General John Diedrich, is scheduled  
24 to retire this summer. His replacement hasn't been  
25 confirmed so we would have a gap in the Chairman's

1 representation at that rank at the military committee and  
2 NATO, which in my U.S. role is a vital connection between  
3 me and the Chairman to influence activities in NATO, and in  
4 my role as SACE, of course, it is very useful to have a  
5 line to the U.S. military representative. So that is one  
6 example, sir.

7 Chairman Reed: Well, thank you. And General Ovost,  
8 your perceptions?

9 General Van Ovost: Thank you, Chairman. Besides any  
10 operational impacts from not being able to rotate General  
11 officers into positions of significant responsibility, the  
12 United States Transportation Command is responsible for  
13 moving 311,000 families every year around the globe.

14 It is important to continue these movements so that  
15 the children can be enrolled in schools, they can find  
16 adequate housing, and ensure that they are ready to succeed  
17 in their new responsibilities.

18 So, these delays add additional stress to our military  
19 families who already sacrifice enough.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Ovost --  
21 Van Ovost. General Cavoli, there has been some discussion  
22 about the relative contributions of NATO countries and  
23 other countries to this fight.

24 If we look simply at the dimension of military  
25 equipment, military supplies, that is one measure. But

1 overall, in terms of accepting refugees, in terms of  
2 supporting those refugees, the Kiel Institute has analyzed  
3 that total input and indicates that the U.S. would rank  
4 12th in terms of the amount of GDP, the 11 preceding  
5 countries are European countries.

6 It raises the question of how important these  
7 contributions are to the battlefield, even though they  
8 don't represent military equipment or military advice.

9 General Cavoli: Mr. Chairman, thanks for the  
10 opportunity to comment on this topic. So, first of all,  
11 the United States can and should be extremely proud of the  
12 quantity of aid that we have given and the leadership role  
13 we have taken. I think that is absolutely imperative to  
14 note up front.

15 And in gross numbers, I think it is very fair by  
16 whichever mode of calculation we arrive at a gross number,  
17 that the U.S. clearly is the leader. In terms of  
18 proportion, though, you are right. I mean, more than half  
19 a dozen allies have given greater -- a greater share their  
20 GDP in military aid to the Ukrainians.

21 I can't speak to all the other types of aid, but maybe  
22 I can give a little bit of -- a couple of illustrations.  
23 514 tanks have been given by the West to the Ukrainians in  
24 the past few months. None of them have come from the  
25 United States yet. Our Abrams won't get there until later

1 in the year. 16 mid-level or high-level air defense  
2 systems have been given.

3 Two of those were given by the United States. So,  
4 there are some genuine donations. More than a third of our  
5 allies have given over half of their capacity in a given  
6 category to the Ukrainians. I would be reluctant to be  
7 really precise in public, but I would be delighted to be  
8 precise in closed session later today, if you would like,  
9 sir.

10 And then finally, in nonmilitary ways, there is a lot  
11 going on. Our allies have treated or are treating about  
12 2,400 wounded, grievously wounded Ukrainians in their  
13 hospitals, largely in their national defense systems --  
14 national health systems. We have treated four at -- so  
15 there are some genuine contributions being made, sir.

16 Chairman Reed: Well, thank you very much, General.  
17 Let me recognize Senator Wicker. Thank you very much,  
18 both.

19 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I do  
20 ask unanimous consent that my opening statement be included  
21 after yours in the record.

22 Chairman Reed: Without objection.

23 [The information referred to follows:]

24 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

25

1           Senator Wicker: And I thank the chairman for bringing  
2 up the point about burden sharing. And I think it is  
3 helpful to reemphasize the 5 million Ukrainian refugees  
4 that are being cared for by Europeans at some considerable  
5 cost, 1.5 million in Poland, 920,000 in Germany, 177,000 in  
6 the Baltic states, 500,000 in the Czech Republic.

7           And so, I am glad to see the chair bring that up in  
8 his first round of questioning. I think one thing that  
9 could really harm public opinion here in the United States  
10 would be if we found that there was some corruption and  
11 siphoning off of money or weapons sold or donated by the  
12 United States.

13           And I had a chance to ask you about that earlier. But  
14 would you give us your take and any assurance that you  
15 could give us that our friends who are actually carrying  
16 the fight in Ukraine are mindful of this possibility and  
17 how serious it would be if it were to occur?

18           General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. Of course.  
19 First of all, just with the General statement, my  
20 colleagues, my interlocutors in Ukraine assure me that they  
21 understand how important this issue is to the American  
22 people, and I believe it is sincerely so.

23           But as usual, military people put into action systems  
24 to try to verify things. So, we are doing enhanced end-use  
25 monitoring. And if you would permit me, I would like to

1 describe that for you for a second.

2 Senator Wicker: Please do, yes.

3 General Cavoli: The first thing we do is, whenever we  
4 receive U.S. equipment that is going to go into the  
5 country, it comes through one of a couple of ports of  
6 entry. The main one is in Southeastern Poland, and a  
7 number of the members have visited there.

8 At that location, we inventory everything by serial  
9 number so that we know exactly what is going into the  
10 country. A couple of months ago, about six months ago, we  
11 gave the Ukrainian military a NATO standard logistics  
12 tracking software system called LOGFAS. It is what we use  
13 to track our own system.

14 So, we ingest all of that inventory into LOGFAS, and  
15 then the Ukrainians use that to track and to distribute  
16 their equipment around the country, and we have access to  
17 that in real time. So that helps us to a certain degree.  
18 But then, of course, once you get inside the country, we  
19 have a responsibility to go lay eyes on things and check  
20 them.

21 And that enhanced end use monitoring is done by the  
22 defense attaché office in Kyiv, led by Brigadier General  
23 Garrick Harmon. They go out to sites and they inspect.  
24 They went to Odessa yesterday to inspect and to inventory,  
25 and they will go to another location next week as well.

1           When they can't get to a location, they have barcodes  
2 placed on things and Ukrainians self-report by clicking on  
3 the barcode, and then we ingest that information into  
4 LOGFAS so we can track it as well.

5           Senator Wicker: Perhaps you could supplement that  
6 answer on the record, but you have confidence that there  
7 are safeguards for our weapons and donations.

8           General Cavoli: Yes, I do, Senator.

9           Senator Wicker: General Van Ovost, you -- we are not  
10 where we need to be at all in the Pacific, if conflict  
11 breaks out there, aren't we?

12          General Van Ovost: Senator, we are not yet fully set  
13 in posture in the Indo-Pacific, I would agree.

14          Senator Wicker: And you mentioned on page 15 of your  
15 testimony, in particular the importance of the tanker  
16 security program. And in your verbal testimony, you  
17 mentioned the importance of the Jones Act.

18          Now, we are aware that in some circumstances the  
19 consumers pay more because of the Jones Act. But in a  
20 previous conversation with you, you were, I believe, very  
21 compelling in explaining why the Jones Act is so important  
22 to our national security in case conflict breaks out. So,  
23 if I might, Mr. Chairman, let General Van Ovost expand on  
24 that.

25          General Van Ovost: Certainly, Senator. Thank you.



1 The United States, we only have 85 U.S. flagged, U.S.  
2 crewed ships in international trade right now. We have  
3 less than 2 percent of the foreign trade that passes using  
4 U.S. flagged U.S. crewed ships.

5 In other words, 98 percent foreign flagged. Is not  
6 enough for our national security. So, we have actually  
7 already reserve force because there is not enough U.S.  
8 flagged U.S. crewed shipping.

9 So, it is very important that we have maritime  
10 security program, tanker security program, cargo preference  
11 laws, and the Jones Act to ensure that we keep U.S. flagged  
12 US crewed vessels available for our national security  
13 needs.

14 Senator Wicker: And what if we didn't have those?

15 General Van Ovost: Senator, if we didn't have those,  
16 we perhaps would have to grow our organic fleet of sealift  
17 ships requiring 100 percent of the burden being on the U.S.  
18 military.

19 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much. Appreciate  
20 that.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Mr. Chairman -- Ranking  
22 Member. Senator Fischer, please.

23 Senator Fischer: Shaheen.

24 Chairman Reed: Shaheen, I am --

25 Senator Shaheen: You know, I know we all look alike,

1 but --

2 [Laughter.]

3 Chairman Reed: No, Roger does not look at all like --

4 Senator Wicker: Like a chairman perhaps --

5 [Laughter.]

6 Chairman Reed: No, it is just -- I apologize. It is  
7 early, and my coffee has not yet taken hold. Forgive me.

8 Senator Shaheen of New Hampshire.

9 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank  
10 you, General Cavoli and General Van Ovost for being here  
11 this morning and for your service. General Van Ovost, I  
12 would like to begin with you because in your opening  
13 statement, you talked about the stressed capacity of our  
14 air refueling and the importance of that.

15 And I know you have been to -- we have been delighted  
16 to host you at the former Pease Air Force base where Pease  
17 Air National Guard 157th Air Refueling Wing has KC-46  
18 tankers to do refueling.

19 But can you talk about, when you talked about the  
20 stress capacity, how important the KC-46 is, and what else  
21 we need to do in order to address our needs?

22 General Van Ovost: Senator, thank you. As I  
23 mentioned, our ability to project and sustain the force,  
24 the foundation of that is our air refueling capability.

25 It makes us a global superpower. So, it is really

1 critical that we continue to recapitalize the KC-135s and  
2 KC-10s with KC-46. So, I appreciate this committee's  
3 support in continuing that recap and thinking about the  
4 next generation air refueling.

5 As far as the KC-46, it brings new capabilities to the  
6 fight, capabilities we have not had previously. That  
7 aircraft is what I call connected to the battlespace. It  
8 can see battlespace maneuvers and it can assist the Joint  
9 Force in ways that we haven't even fully explored yet.

10 So, it is very -- it is a force multiplier. It can do  
11 probe and drogue as well as boom refueling, and it can  
12 receive and it can take on gas in flight. So, it is a  
13 multi-capable airplane and we intend to use it that way to  
14 augment the Joint Force.

15 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. You also talked about  
16 the importance of Section 702 in terms of intelligence  
17 gathering. Senator Budd and I were with a number of other  
18 Senators in Latin America a couple of weeks ago, and at  
19 every stop we heard about the importance of reauthorizing  
20 702.

21 Can you and General Cavoli both speak to what that  
22 allows us to do when we don't have people on the ground in  
23 terms of collecting information that we need?

24 General Van Ovost: Yes, Senator. Signals  
25 intelligence is critical to my ability to understand the

1 threats around the world, where they are moving to, what  
2 their intentions are, and how we can mitigate those threat.  
3 So that is for the open session. I am happy to expound in  
4 a classified section.

5 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

6 General Cavoli: Senator, of course, a full answer is  
7 best done in closed session, but I can assure you that an  
8 enormous amount of the intelligence that I rely on in the  
9 current crisis is derived from the authorities under 702.

10 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you both. I  
11 think, General Cavoli, this question is probably for you  
12 because we see Iran continuing to supply Russia with  
13 critical support in this war against Ukraine.

14 There are reports now that Iran is providing artillery  
15 and ammunition to Ukraine as well as drones. Is -- has  
16 that been confirmed and how are we working with our  
17 counterparts in CENTCOM to track and respond to that  
18 Iranian equipment? And also, are we seeing other countries  
19 provide weapons and ammunition to Russia as well?

20 General Cavoli: First, more broadly, Senator, we see  
21 other countries considering it. We see precious few  
22 actually doing it right now, and we are gratified by that.  
23 But it is because of significant efforts on the part of the  
24 United States and our allies to discourage them.

25 And you have seen some of that in the open press. We

1 can discuss some more in closed session. With regard to  
2 the Iranian threat specifically, we have seen and the  
3 Ukrainians have reported to us the presence of Iranian  
4 drones especially.

5 That has been pretty well covered in open sources but  
6 I can go into some details in closed session with you if  
7 you would like. I am in significant contact with my good  
8 friend and colleague Eric Kurilla in Central Command, and  
9 some of the things we are thinking about in terms of  
10 handling this situation, I can address with you in closed  
11 session as well, if you will permit me.

12 Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you. And you may want  
13 to address this in closed session, but do we think they  
14 have an unlimited supply of the weapons that they are  
15 providing to Russia, or are we seeing challenges within  
16 their industrial base?

17 General Cavoli: They have a significant supply, but  
18 it is certainly not unlimited, ma'am.

19 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. And I have only a little  
20 time left, but could both of you speak to the importance of  
21 the air defender exercises that NATO is going to be doing?  
22 Again, I am pleased that the 157th from New Hampshire is  
23 going to participate in those. But how important are  
24 those? I understand it is the biggest exercise, that air  
25 exercise NATO has done.

1           General Cavoli:  If I could start, as the commander of  
2 allied command operations, Senator, extremely important.  
3 Air defense is one of the things that most of the nations  
4 in the alliance are challenged on in terms of capacity.

5           And then the integration is something that has to be  
6 done and repetitively exercised constantly because systems  
7 change and the technology gets updated and the soft, and  
8 then you have got to bring it back together.  These are  
9 absolutely vital exercises.

10          General Van Ovost:  And our teams are fully engaged.  
11 This is a critical exercise for us, for interoperability  
12 with our allies and partners, growing their capabilities,  
13 including command and control.

14          Senator Shaheen:  Thank you.  Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15          Chairman Reed:  Thank you, Senator Shaheen.  Senator  
16 Fischer, please.

17          Senator Fischer:  Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  General  
18 Cavoli, what do you assess to be the impact of Russia's  
19 assertions that it would deploy tactical nuclear weapons in  
20 Belarus, along with its handling over Iskander mobile short  
21 range ballistic missiles to the Belarusian forces?

22          General Cavoli:  Senator, thank you for the question.  
23 As a military matter, I do not think that it is a  
24 particularly concerning development.  And we can go into  
25 the specifics of that in closed session, of course.

1 Therefore, I think it is mainly a gesture, and --

2 Senator Fischer: Do you think it is more saber  
3 rattling again?

4 General Cavoli: I do. I think it is a gesture and it  
5 is a gesture that we will handle through our policy means,  
6 etcetera. And I have less to comment on in that regard.

7 Senator Fischer: Okay, thank you. Also, can you  
8 discuss what your demands are for both manned and unmanned  
9 ISR?

10 General Cavoli: Yes, absolutely, Senator. Of course,  
11 like all the combatant commanders, ISR is what we depend  
12 on, especially during peacetime, to maintain situational  
13 awareness. There is a demand for ISR, both manned and  
14 unmanned, aerial ISR, that far exceeds the supply across  
15 the Department of Defense, and we are grateful when we get  
16 our share of it.

17 Right now, it is extremely important for a variety of  
18 reasons. We can't do everything with other means. It is  
19 our ability to collect and analyze depends on using a  
20 layered approach with a variety of systems, and we depend  
21 on those.

22 We are grateful for the advances that the services are  
23 making, from the Army with its new Artemis system, which  
24 has been doing great work in Europe for the last couple of  
25 years, to the Air Force's advances, and to the Navy's P-8

1 program, all a very valuable, ma'am.

2 Senator Fischer: And how do you believe the threats  
3 are going to change in EUCOM in the coming decades? In  
4 your crystal ball, what do you see?

5 General Cavoli: Do you mean in General, Senator?

6 Senator Fischer: In General.

7 General Cavoli: Well, I think Russia is quite likely  
8 to remain the core security challenge in Europe for some  
9 years to come. Their military has suffered significant  
10 losses in this conflict, but they have mainly been in the  
11 ground domain.

12 The air force, the tactical air force has lost about  
13 80 fighters and fighter bombers, but they have more than  
14 1,000 of them left. The long-range aviation has not been  
15 touched. The navy has barely been touched, lost a ship or  
16 two. The strategic nuclear forces, the cyber, the space  
17 have not been touched.

18 So, I think Russia will continue to be the core  
19 security challenge. But there are others. China is  
20 gaining influence and China continues to press for  
21 influence. And then there is always instability in the  
22 Balkans. You know, we are not done with that. So, I think  
23 perhaps we will see more of the same, Senator.

24 Senator Fischer: You brought up where Russia hasn't  
25 touched many of their capabilities currently. And so, they



1 have those in reserve for the next decade. When we look at  
2 munitions that are being used, especially in the conflict  
3 in Ukraine, and the amount of munitions that are being  
4 expended, do you think that we need to increase our  
5 production capacity here in this country? And would you  
6 encourage our allies to do the same?

7 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator, to both. Our  
8 allies are very aware of the shortfalls that they have in  
9 munitions in certain cases, where they do exist.

10 Senator Fischer: You were talking about the number of  
11 tanks and the -- our allies have already shared with the  
12 Ukrainians.

13 General Cavoli: Right. And so inside NATO, in my  
14 other role as the Supreme Allied Commander, I have been  
15 responsible to deliver a new set of operational plans. And  
16 we turned them in on the 14th of April.

17 They are very specific regional plans for collective  
18 defense, and they have a level of specificity that is going  
19 to drive a force structure requirement, which will be the  
20 first time in 35 years that the alliance has a plans based  
21 force structure requirement. This will guide national  
22 defense investments across the alliance.

23 Senator Fischer: Thank you. General Van Ovost, you  
24 talked a little bit about the sealift and being able to  
25 fuel, have that fueling capability. And you mentioned, you

1 know, working with MARAD. Can you kind of focus in,  
2 especially on the MARAD point there, on how important that  
3 is?

4 General Van Ovost: Sure, Senator. We have a great  
5 relationship with the Maritime Administration who oversees  
6 our ready reserve force, those ships that are in reduced  
7 operating status. And when we need to activate them, they  
8 wake up and they come to TRANSCOM and we fight them.

9 So, it is really important that we keep that  
10 relationship going, and especially when it comes to our  
11 mariners, because the same mariners that crew ships that do  
12 foreign import and export, they are also the same mariners  
13 that are on our great haul ships. So, it is really  
14 important that we continue to support them.

15 Senator Fischer: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Fischer.  
17 Senator Hirono, please.

18 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you  
19 both for being here. General Cavoli, China is sending a  
20 special representative, an envoy to Ukraine and other  
21 countries for talks on regulating the Ukrainian crisis.  
22 Not sure what that means.

23 And the special envoy has been selected and Ukraine is  
24 sending a special envoy to China. Do you consider this a  
25 significant development, and what does that portend?

1           General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. I am not sure we  
2 know yet the significance of the development, but what we  
3 do know is that China should begin by condemning Russia's  
4 illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. That should be  
5 the first step in my mind to any productive role for China  
6 in the conflict or its resolution, ma'am.

7           Senator Hirono: I think that -- yes, well, this also  
8 signifies China's engagement in Europe. And so, I think  
9 that it remains to be seen, but to me, it is possibly a  
10 positive sign that perhaps there will be an end to this  
11 terrible conflict. General Van Ovost, we have spoken at  
12 length about Red Hill and your plan for the fuel currently  
13 stored there.

14           I understand there is a plan for where the fuel will  
15 go once de-fueling begins. And with over half the required  
16 repairs at Red Hill complete, de-fueling remains on track  
17 to be completed in June of 2024. Is your plan for fuel  
18 distribution in the Pacific complete?

19           General Van Ovost: Senator, we are lockstep with  
20 INDOPACOM and the Navy Task Force Commander on the de-  
21 fueling of Red Hill. We have assets ready to support and  
22 we are on track to meet all of their needs.

23           The posture in the Indo-Pacific is still under  
24 assessment. We are in our role as the global bulk fuel  
25 manager for the Department of Defense. We are looking very

1 closely at the posture requirements, the requirements to  
2 ensure that we can buy fuel or store fuel, and also what  
3 needs to be afloat and what should be in in various areas.

4 So, we are still doing that assessment. We are  
5 working with INDOPACOM on the Section 333 report that  
6 should highlight the key aspects of that posture.

7 Senator Hirono: So, as you are assessing how you are  
8 going to complete the safe de-fueling of the 100 million  
9 gallons or so that is that Red Hill, if you require  
10 anything further at this time to ensure that de-fueling  
11 happens in the way that we would want it to happen, will  
12 you let me and this committee know.

13 General Cavoli, in war, it is often the most  
14 vulnerable who pay the highest cost, the elderly, women,  
15 girls. And while it is vital that we continue to provide  
16 Ukraine with the military equipment it needs to continue to  
17 bulwark democracy in Europe, our support of the civilian  
18 population also speaks to our country's values and stands  
19 in sharp contrast with Russia and other malign actors.

20 What is the EUCOM doing to support and protect the  
21 people of Ukraine? And how is EUCOM working with Ukraine  
22 and other U.S. Government agencies to monitor human rights  
23 abuses by Russia?

24 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. First of all, we  
25 support NATO's and other European efforts in this regard.

1 The first one, of course, was the acceptance by our allies  
2 of large numbers of refugees who were in the main -- women  
3 and children. They have very successfully done that, and  
4 they did it spontaneously.

5 Our initial thought was we were going to have to help  
6 significantly, but the societies absorbed them. As they  
7 have done so, we have worked with them carefully through  
8 non-DOD entities, but advised by EUCOM -- to make sure that  
9 rights are established. And then as we talk to our  
10 Ukrainian colleagues, we do keep our gender advisers and  
11 everybody involved as we develop plans with them.

12 The Ukrainians are remarkably sensitive to civilian  
13 casualties, of course, because those are Ukrainian  
14 civilians who will be inadvertently wounded in their  
15 operations. And we routinely, in exercises here, even  
16 junior Ukrainian servicemen, saying, hey, wait a minute,  
17 you know, I know people in that town.

18 What are we going to do about this? So, it is a  
19 complex question, ma'am, but those are some of the things  
20 that we are doing to help. We do provide support to those  
21 organizations that are attempting to figure out war crimes  
22 as well, although we have not put people on the ground to  
23 do that.

24 Senator Hirono: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hirono. Senator

1 Cotton, please.

2 Senator Cotton: Thank you both for your service and  
3 your appearance today. General Cavoli, you testified  
4 earlier that 31 Abrams tanks would arrive in Ukraine later  
5 in the year. Estimates I have seen say that we are still  
6 about eight months away from that. Is that correct?

7 General Cavoli: No, Senator. The first thing we are  
8 going to do is put a training set in --

9 Senator Cotton: That starts next month in  
10 Grafenwoehr, correct?

11 General Cavoli: That is correct. And then the next  
12 set, the dates are moving right now. We are trying to  
13 accelerate as much as we can be --

14 Senator Cotton: The same tanks at Grafenwoehr are  
15 going to be the tanks that go to Ukraine?

16 General Cavoli: The first set will not. Those will  
17 be training tanks that we keep and then will send a  
18 different set in. We did the same thing with Bradleys  
19 earlier this year, sir.

20 Senator Cotton: Okay. General Van Ovost, have you  
21 received an order to transport that second set of tanks to  
22 Ukraine yet?

23 General Van Ovost: Senator, I worked very closely  
24 with European Command to meet all of their requirements in  
25 a priority manner. Certainly, we are in coordination on

1 the tanks, as well as all the other significant equipment.

2 Senator Cotton: Is that a, no?

3 General Van Ovost: We anticipate the movement. So,  
4 from an order perspective, we are ready to move it.

5 Senator Cotton: Sounds like a no. General Cavoli,  
6 you look like you have something to say here.

7 General Cavoli: Yes. My command has not issued a  
8 specific date for movement for those yet. As soon as we  
9 have the exact sourcing pinned down with the timeline, we  
10 will issue the actual order for the aircraft.

11 Senator Cotton: Why has your command not issued that  
12 order?

13 General Cavoli: You know, can I take that for the  
14 record, Mr. Cotton, because I would like to give you the  
15 exact --the exact status of it.

16 Senator Cotton: I mean, we our country has thousands  
17 of main battle tanks. It would seem like it's not that  
18 hard to find 31 and get them there.

19 General Cavoli: Senator, some of the reasons for that  
20 I could cover in closed session, but if I could --

21 Senator Cotton: I guess. But I mean, I think the  
22 main reason for that is the main reasons why we didn't even  
23 agree to supply the tanks for a year, which is that  
24 President Biden didn't want to supply them.

25 And again, I think we could supply them faster than

1 eight or nine months if there was the political will. It  
2 is not a decision for you or General Van Ovost to make. I  
3 think it is just reflected from the political decision to  
4 continue to drag our feet in what we are supplying to  
5 Ukraine. It is just a repeated story we have seen over and  
6 over again throughout the course of this war.

7 I want to get to one of the potential reasons for that  
8 as well. You talked earlier about submitting new OPLANS  
9 for NATO. It came to my attention earlier this year that  
10 we have not changed our OPLANS or our warfighting  
11 requirements in EUCOM for Russia. Is that correct?

12 General Cavoli: Senator, I am in consultation with  
13 the Secretary of Defense on that question right now. The  
14 question that has been posed to me and we are working our  
15 answer with the staff.

16 I believe I have a date with the Secretary of Defense  
17 later this month or next month to discuss in detail and to  
18 come to a conclusion on what timeline we will or will not  
19 adjust for the answers.

20 Senator Cotton: So that is a no then. Once again,  
21 that is a no, we haven't changed our requirements in the  
22 OPLAN to fight Russia.

23 General Cavoli: Could we discuss exactly what we have  
24 done with OPLANS in closed session, sir?

25 Senator Cotton: Again, we can, but I think the



1 question has been answered now. And the reason I  
2 highlighted is the committee is continuously told that, by  
3 the Administration, not by uniformed military officers,  
4 that we can't provide this, that, or the other weapon to  
5 Ukraine because we need it for our own requirements.

6 I understand that, special requirements in the Western  
7 Pacific against China, but if we still have the same  
8 requirements in place to fight Russia in April of 2023 that  
9 we had in February of 2022, after we have seen the  
10 performance of their military in Ukraine and after the  
11 known degradation of their military in Ukraine, then I  
12 think that is just a pretext that the Administration is  
13 using for not supplying more capabilities to Ukraine.

14 We can get into more detail in closed setting, but I  
15 think it is very troubling that the Administration is still  
16 stuck in the pre-Ukraine war mindset of what it would take  
17 for us to adequately deter or defeat Russia in a conflict  
18 in EUCOM.

19 One final point I want to raise is the flying of our  
20 MQ-9 drones in the Black Sea. Russia dangerously downed  
21 one a few weeks back. The reports I have seen and what I  
22 have heard from my sources is that we have now altered our  
23 flight patterns in the Black Sea, that we are no longer  
24 flying in the same airspace where we were flying before  
25 that negligent incident with the Russian aircraft. Is that

1 correct?

2 General Cavoli: Yes, Senator. So, it was not just  
3 negligent. It was not competent. The Russian pilot bumped  
4 into the MQ-9, which is not something pilots typically do  
5 on purpose. Again, on ISR operations, especially in the  
6 Black Sea, I would be delighted to answer you in detail in  
7 closed session.

8 Senator Cotton: Well, I asked the Secretary of  
9 Defense this recently, and he repeatedly said, we will fly  
10 the paths we felt necessary to collect intelligence  
11 information.

12 General Cavoli: And those have been his instructions  
13 to me.

14 Senator Cotton: I understand that. But again, that  
15 is not a -- that is not a no, when I was asking him that.  
16 That is -- to me, that is him saying we are not flying  
17 where we were anymore because we don't want to be  
18 provocative, which again, is a political decision, is not a  
19 military decision. And this is not some secret.

20 I mean, Russia knows where we are flying these  
21 aircraft like anybody here could find out we are flying  
22 them for the most part just by going on open-source  
23 information. And the fact that -- if we are flying those  
24 aircraft in certain airspace in the Black Sea before that  
25 incident, because that is where we thought we needed to get

1 intelligence, and now we are saying we can get that  
2 intelligence by flying them somewhere else, well we  
3 shouldn't have been flying there in the first place.

4 But if we needed to get in there to get that  
5 intelligence in the first place, then we should be back  
6 there, otherwise we are simply ceding that airspace to  
7 Russia. So, my time has expired. I guess we will address  
8 more of these in closed setting.

9 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton. Senator  
10 Gillibrand, please.

11 Senator Gillibrand: General Cavoli, last year we  
12 passed the Justice for Victims of War Crimes Act, improving  
13 the Department of Justice's ability to prosecute war crimes  
14 committed in Ukraine. However, prosecutors, whether in the  
15 U.S. or in an international tribunal, cannot proceed with  
16 cases without evidence.

17 How is EUCOM working with Ukraine and with our allies  
18 to preserve evidence of war crimes? If your personnel  
19 discover evidence of a war crime through classified  
20 systems, are you ensuring that the evidence is flagged for  
21 declassification and eventual used by prosecutors?

22 General Cavoli: Senator, thank you. So, we don't  
23 have the lead on this question, on this initiative,  
24 obviously. But we do support it, as requested. And when  
25 we find evidence of war crimes, whether in open sources or

1 any other way, we do refer those and we do keep track of  
2 them. Yes, ma'am.

3 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. The war in Ukraine  
4 has allowed the world to observe wartime operations in the  
5 cyber and space domains. As a combatant commander in the  
6 theater where this conflict is occurring, what have you  
7 learned from the conflict about the employment of military  
8 forces in the cyber and space domains?

9 General Cavoli: We have learned a ton, both in terms  
10 of adversary capability and capacity, Senator, as well as  
11 our defensive needs. We are working hard to improve where  
12 we need to improve.

13 Most of all, we are working to help our allies defend  
14 their networks and to help our partners who are vulnerable  
15 also to defend their networks. And we have a very tight  
16 cooperation with Paul Nakasone and his U.S. Cyber Command  
17 to do this.

18 There are some specific things, of course, that at a  
19 classified level would be interesting to talk about. But  
20 in General, we have seen a significant employment of cyber,  
21 both inside the conflict zone and outside the conflict  
22 zone, on the part of our adversaries, ma'am.

23 Senator Gillibrand: General Van Ovost, TRANSCOM is  
24 turning over responsibility for service members' permanent  
25 change of station moves to a private contractor. How will

1 the department ensure the service members' experience  
2 actually improves under this contract? How does the  
3 department intend to respond if military families'  
4 experience worsen rather than improve?

5 General Van Ovost: Senator, thanks for the question.  
6 We are focused on delivering the quality, service,  
7 transparency, and accountability that is not existent in  
8 the current series of contracts.

9 So, we are partnering with Home Safe, and we have a  
10 measured phasing plan with 28 separate metrics monthly that  
11 we will be reviewing for which we own the data. So, we are  
12 going to continue to watch them as they bring along the  
13 capacity, as they begin right after peak season, September  
14 23.

15 And we have a spouses group where we are getting  
16 feedback from, actively seeking from them their  
17 experiences. So, and our first sample rate is going to be  
18 about 50 percent. So, we are going to definitely be  
19 understanding how they are bringing on the capacity and are  
20 they delivering on the quality that we desire.

21 Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Part of your strategy  
22 for TRANSCOM has involved the increased use of commercial  
23 contracts for defense missions rather than military  
24 aircraft and crews.

25 Can you discuss how you are ensuring that these

1 contracts are implementing appropriate and aggressive  
2 cybersecurity protocols? How are you including  
3 cybersecurity in these contracts, and how are you verifying  
4 that these contractors are not endangering the security of  
5 our military personnel or allies?

6 General Van Ovost: Senator, cyber is a consistent  
7 discussion point amongst us and our transportation service  
8 providers. We are collaborating with industry. We have  
9 contract cybersecurity standards to safeguard defense  
10 information in those contracts. They annually assess them  
11 and we review those assessments.

12 And we are working throughout the department with Paul  
13 Nakasone on sharing and collaboration initiatives with our  
14 industry partners. And I appreciate Congress's support of  
15 the no cost cybersecurity offerings offered in the Cyber  
16 Collaboration Center and the defense industrial based cyber  
17 security program.

18 Our transportation service providers are taking  
19 advantage of these, and we are assessing them almost  
20 constantly.

21 Senator Gillibrand: General Cavoli, following up on  
22 Senator Shaheen's question and Senator Hirono's question  
23 about Iran and China, can you talk a little bit more about  
24 what the impact of Iranian involvement and Chinese  
25 involvement in the conflict create, and what

1 recommendations you have to the Administration?

2 General Cavoli: Yes, ma'am. So, the first  
3 complication is diplomatic and political, right. The fact  
4 that they don't condemn. The fact that in some cases they  
5 affirm Russia's position. Second, China -- Iran, as we  
6 noted a few minutes ago, has provided some material  
7 support, specifically drones.

8 Those have had an effect. Those do two things.  
9 First, when they succeed, they strike targets. And second,  
10 they have to be countered. And sometimes they are  
11 countered with air defense missiles.

12 And as Chairman Milley and Secretary Austin have made  
13 very plain, the primary requirement the Ukrainians have  
14 right now is ground based air defense to control their  
15 skies. So, it is a cost imposition strategy that should go  
16 after with that. Chinese aid has been non-material and it  
17 has not had a direct physical effect on the battlefield  
18 yet, ma'am.

19 Senator Gillibrand: Are there any other impact non-  
20 material?

21 General Cavoli: In closed session, I could discuss  
22 one specific one, ma'am.

23 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.  
24 Senator Rounds, please.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank

1 you to both of you for your service to our country and to  
2 your families as well. And thank you also for your teams  
3 that are with you today, and their families as well for  
4 their service to our country.

5 I just want to follow up a little bit. The line of  
6 questioning that Senator Cotton began here is one that I  
7 think I would like to understand a little bit more clearly.  
8 There -- I believe there were 31 Abrams tanks that were  
9 committed to by our country to Ukraine's defense. Are  
10 those -- in that 31, do those include the training tanks  
11 that are already in, you know, in Europe today?

12 General Cavoli: Senator, there will be 31 Abrams as  
13 of right now, donated to Ukraine. The training set will be  
14 a separate set.

15 Senator Rounds: Okay. And so, you have got some  
16 there in Europe right now. Do you have the 31 identified  
17 as being already in Europe or are they in the United  
18 States?

19 General Cavoli: Senator, if I could, I would like to  
20 take that for the record so I can give you the exact  
21 location.

22 Senator Rounds: I don't need the exact location. I  
23 was just curious if they were within your area of operation  
24 today in Europe.

25 General Cavoli: Senator, again, I would want to give



1 you an accurate answer, and I don't have it off the top of  
2 my head, sir.

3 Senator Rounds: It would seem to me that if we have  
4 committed for those tanks to be made available, what is the  
5 length of time from when you are notified that it is time  
6 to deliver them? How long does that take -- and perhaps  
7 this is a better question for General Van Ovost -- how long  
8 does it take to actually deliver the Abrams tanks once you  
9 have been notified or requested to deliver them?

10 General Van Ovost: Senator, we have multiple avenues  
11 to deliver Abrams tanks, by air or by sea. So, we  
12 consistently look not just at Abrams tanks, but the  
13 significant amount of aid that is being provided to  
14 Ukraine.

15 We source that from around the globe, not necessarily  
16 just out of CONUS or just out of Europe. And as we  
17 determine where the sources are going to be, we match it to  
18 the best resource to move it to meet the timelines as  
19 needed by the priorities set out by the European zone.

20 Senator Rounds: So, you are prepared to make that  
21 move as expeditiously as possible once you have been given  
22 the orders to transport the tanks?

23 General Van Ovost: Yes, Senator.

24 Senator Rounds: Where would those tanks be located at  
25 today if you were to do them? Can you share that in an

1 open session?

2 General Van Ovost: Senator, again, I don't know where  
3 all the tanks are and which ones would be viable for this  
4 donation. I would leave that up to Army Materiel Command  
5 and --

6 Senator Rounds: So, it hasn't gotten that far yet.

7 General Van Ovost: Not to my awareness, has gotten  
8 that far.

9 Senator Rounds: All right. Thank you. And, General,  
10 once again, the orders, or at least your authorizations to  
11 move tanks over. You will play a part in that, but you  
12 have not been given the authorizations yet to do that at  
13 this time?

14 General Cavoli: Right. When the exact tanks are  
15 identified and their location. So, they could come from  
16 stocks in Europe, as General Van Ovost just pointed out.  
17 They could be reconstructed.

18 When I have got the set identified, then I place an  
19 order with General Van Ovost, and it usually goes fairly  
20 quickly, sir. They can be moved by air or better by  
21 sealift.

22 Senator Rounds: I think it is fair to say that we  
23 probably have the best logistics capabilities of any  
24 country in the world, and that is a testament not just to  
25 the men and women that serve within that, but also because

1 we do a good job of planning.

2 I think the reason why I am following up on this, and  
3 I recognize this is not a line of questioning that you  
4 really want to go down, but I think it is important to  
5 point out that this is not a case of where we just simply  
6 can't deliver 31 Abrams tanks.

7 Bottom line is that this has been a policy decision  
8 that they are not prepared to deliver 31 Abrams tanks at  
9 this time. It is not within your authorization. General,  
10 would that be a correct statement on my part?

11 General Cavoli: Senator, there is an intention to  
12 deliver the 31 tanks. I think there are some technical  
13 things that we have to go through in terms of exactly which  
14 tanks, that we are working on.

15 Senator Rounds: But the bottom line is, is if we  
16 needed those tanks, it shouldn't take eight months for the  
17 United States Army to be able to access 31 Abrams tanks.  
18 If we needed them tomorrow, we would get them very, very  
19 quickly. If you needed them, you could get them.

20 Or if you were authorized to get them, you could get  
21 them. This is not a case of us not being able to get them.  
22 It is a matter that somebody has got to make a decision on  
23 when they want those tanks delivered. Is that a fair  
24 statement, General?

25 General Cavoli: Sir, I think the key is exactly which

1 tanks and which capabilities, and their levels of  
2 classification that the Army has to wade through on that  
3 question for releasability, sir.

4 Senator Rounds: Fair to say, though, sir, that should  
5 never take nine months. If you needed those tanks, you  
6 could get those tanks.

7 General Cavoli: Sir, if I needed those tanks for the  
8 U.S. Army, I certainly could.

9 Senator Rounds: Yes, okay. That is very helpful.  
10 Thank you, General. I recognize this was not the line of  
11 questioning that I wanted to go down today, but this, I  
12 think, is important to understand that those decisions need  
13 to be made and that this is not within your area of  
14 operation.

15 You are ready to go. You can get it done, but someone  
16 has got to tell you, it is time to go. And I want to thank  
17 you for those very frank answers. I also, I am mindful  
18 that my time is expiring, but I just have to also say, I  
19 want to take home just to thank you and your staff for  
20 resolving an issue that the South Dakota Army National  
21 Guard's 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment had in  
22 getting its meals paid for while deployed in support of  
23 Atlantic resolve.

24 It takes a total force to defend the nation. The  
25 Guard is a key component to that force, but sometimes the

1 pieces just simply don't fit together very well. And I  
2 want to thank you for going the extra mile to take care of  
3 these soldiers, even while tending to the strategic issues  
4 that you are responsible for. And I want to just publicly  
5 say thank you for getting involved and getting that fixed  
6 for these young soldiers.

7 General Cavoli: Senator, my command was wrong in that  
8 case. And we appreciate your care for your constituents,  
9 and for bringing it to our attention, and we are rectifying  
10 it.

11 Senator Rounds: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr.  
12 Chairman.

13 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds. Senator  
14 Kelly, please.

15 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you  
16 both for being here today. I have a question for each of  
17 you. First, I want to start with General Van Ovost on the  
18 tanker recapitalization plan.

19 The Air Force has modified this approach in order to  
20 accelerate the next generation air refueling system, NGAS.  
21 And having a modern and survivable tanker plan is critical  
22 to any future fight. It is also part of strategic  
23 deterrence.

24 And as you know, the Arizona National Guard provides a  
25 significant amount of support for rapid mobilization,

1 worldwide deployment, airlift, aeromedical evacuation, and  
2 sustained aerial refueling operations for both our Air  
3 Forces and the Navy, and partner nation air forces. The  
4 161st air refueling wing fleet is now more than 50 years  
5 old, and it remains in really high demand.

6 So, General, what can you share about the Air Force's  
7 plan to recapitalize Arizona's National Guard tanker  
8 mission, as well as the other Air National Guard units  
9 supporting this mission across the country?

10 And what I am getting at is what is the plan here, and  
11 for Arizona specifically to get either a KC-Y bridge  
12 recapitalization tanker, or to continue with the KC-46  
13 until NGAS comes online?

14 General Van Ovost: Senator, thanks for that question.  
15 You know, our ability to project and sustain the Joint  
16 Force without fail is a deterrent to our aggressors, and it  
17 assures our allies and partners we will be there, and air  
18 refueling is the backbone to that. Along those lines,  
19 thank you for your support.

20 The total force, we could not do our job in in  
21 logistics and mobility without the total force, the  
22 strength of the total force. I use them every day, so I  
23 thank them for their service. As far as the  
24 recapitalization, as we work with the Secretary of the Air  
25 Force, the Air Force staff, they are committed to a

1 continuous recapitalization program, because when we get  
2 the last KC-46 on the current contract, 179th aircraft, we  
3 will still have 287, 67-year-old KC-135s.

4 So, they have committed to a very targeted  
5 modernization program for the KC-135, which need to last us  
6 out into the 2040s, to ensure the safety of the airplanes  
7 and the survivability of those airplanes out into the  
8 future.

9 Meanwhile, they have committed to a continuous  
10 recapitalization program with capabilities that are  
11 relevant to the KC-46 Block 1, because as they accelerate  
12 next generation air fueling system to the left to the mid-  
13 2030s, we will have a gap of six or seven years there where  
14 we won't have any production of airplanes.

15 So, I look forward to their plan. They are doing an  
16 analysis of alternatives. I look forward to their plan to  
17 continue to seed and recapitalize with all of our air  
18 refueling units, because in the end, all of those KC-135  
19 need to be recapitalized.

20 Senator Kelly: Okay. Can I get your commitment to  
21 work with me to ensure that the Guard will receive  
22 modernized tankers in a timely fashion comparable with  
23 active-duty units?

24 General Van Ovost: Yes, Senator. I will work with  
25 you and the Air Force on that.

1           Senator Kelly: Thank you. Thank you. General  
2 Cavoli, good seeing you again. Saw -- we met in Munich and  
3 I just got back in Kyiv a couple of weeks ago, met with  
4 President Zelensky for over an hour. We had a very  
5 productive talk about what he thinks he needs to defeat  
6 Russia. And I am more than ever committed to support  
7 Ukraine.

8           We can't let Russia win this thing. You know, last  
9 week, Congress was notified of a presidential drawdown  
10 authority for more HIMARS, 155-millimeter artillery rounds,  
11 and a series of other equipment.

12           And but just for me to get to the point here, in your  
13 military assessment, is the equipment of the U.S. and our  
14 partners providing enough to pave the way for a decisive  
15 victory against the Russians by Ukraine?

16           General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. And thank you  
17 for the notes on your recent trip to Kyiv as well. They  
18 were very helpful to me. So, we went into a planning  
19 process with our Ukrainian colleagues last winter, and we  
20 developed with them a number of courses of action,  
21 wargaming them carefully.

22           And when we came down to the key courses of action for  
23 an offensive, we calculated the amount of equipment and the  
24 various types that they required, and we have fulfilled  
25 that. We have nearly gotten everything into Ukraine, and I



1 am confident they have what they need for the offensive  
2 that we have planned with them. And I can go into  
3 significant detail in a closed session with you, sir.

4 Senator Kelly: Okay. We will pick it up then. Thank  
5 you. Thank you, General.

6 General Cavoli: Sir, thank you.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kelly. Senator  
8 Ernst, please.

9 Senator Ernst: Thank you, gentlemen, very much for --  
10 or excuse me, ma'am. Thank you, sir, General Cavoli, for  
11 being here today. And General Van Ovest, thank you very  
12 much, ma'am, for coming in front of the committee today.

13 I am going to start with you, General Cavoli. And a  
14 number of my colleagues have raised the issue of Ukraine  
15 and Russia, and what we hear in the news, and this has been  
16 a hot button topic with the Administration as well, is that  
17 we are afraid of escalation. As the war continues to go  
18 on, we will escalate, Russia will escalate.

19 So, General Cavoli, how do you assess the prospect, or  
20 excuse me, the prospect of Russia escalating to a point of  
21 a nuclear weapons use in this conflict? Can you talk in  
22 open session just broadly about what you see, what you have  
23 heard, and what would that be that tipping point for  
24 Vladimir Putin?

25 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. It is nice to

1 see you again. And of course, this is a complicated and  
2 difficult question. There are an enormous variety of  
3 things that go into successful deterrence and successful  
4 escalation management. It is something we work on every  
5 single day.

6 I am in constant communication with the department as  
7 well as my subordinate commands, as well as our allies in  
8 terms of what we are doing, where we are located, what is  
9 happening inside of Ukraine, what is happening outside of  
10 Ukraine.

11 To include with my fellow combatant commanders, many  
12 of whom have Russian presence in their AORs as well,  
13 successful so far, right. We have managed to control every  
14 incident to the extent possible, and I think that is due to  
15 a lot of hard work and learning as we go along.

16 With regard to nuclear escalation specifically, ma'am,  
17 it is very difficult to talk about in an open session, but  
18 I have traveled back to the United States to deliver  
19 testimony, so I obviously have a certain degree of  
20 confidence that we, the United States and the alliance are  
21 in a good, strong position in deterring such things.

22 Senator Ernst: Yes, thank you very much. I  
23 appreciate that. And we hope that we continue on a strong  
24 path of deterrence in that area. And with the other  
25 assessments out there of President Zelensky's wishes to not

1 only expel the Russians from Eastern Ukraine, but also to  
2 retake Crimea, what is your assessment of their ability to  
3 retake Crimea, and what would the posture be coming from  
4 the United States and our partners and allies?

5 General Cavoli: Thanks. The question of retaking any  
6 specific piece of ground, you know, depends on a variety of  
7 things. Crimea is pretty tough. Crimea has got a  
8 mountainous center.

9 But, of course, Crimea is pretty hard to keep  
10 resupplied if you are the adversary as well. So, it really  
11 depends on the situation at the time. If Crimea were empty  
12 of Russian soldiers, it would be easy. If Crimea were  
13 defended at a certain level, it would be harder, and it is  
14 hard to see where things go.

15 What we do know is that any such question would be  
16 answered sequentially with the activities -- after the  
17 activities that the Ukrainians are planning to undertake in  
18 the next months. So, it is hard to say from here.

19 Senator Ernst: Yes. Thank you very much. And as we  
20 look to the future, and I know we don't know when this  
21 conflict will end, we hope it would be soon, but General  
22 Cavoli, would NATO's military requirements in EUCOM  
23 increase if there is a political decision to extend a  
24 security commitment to Ukraine?

25 General Cavoli: So, our posture, the U.S. posture has

1 shifted over time, of course, ma'am. In the initial  
2 phases, we went up about 103,000 uniform. We have adjusted  
3 that over time. We are about 82,000 in uniform right now,  
4 and that depends on what we see going in the AOR.

5 And it is a constant back and forth with the  
6 department and the situation. If we were to extend some  
7 form of security guarantee to Ukraine, it would clearly  
8 depend on exactly what the nature of the security guarantee  
9 was. It would also depend, importantly, on what approach  
10 our allies took to that.

11 Our allies are increasing their defense commitments.  
12 Many of our Eastern flank allies, such as Poland, have made  
13 massive investments, 3.94 percent of GDP right now, which  
14 exceeds U.S. expenditures on defense.

15 So, it depends on what role they would take as well,  
16 and that would certainly be our choice, our preference to  
17 have them lead in such a situation.

18 Senator Ernst: And I see that my time is expiring,  
19 but part of that equation as well, I would like to discuss  
20 further at another time, but our continued participation in  
21 the State Partnership program, especially with a number of  
22 our European partners.

23 Obviously, Iowa is partnered with Kosovo. There is a  
24 lot of concern with some of those nations as well with  
25 Russian influence. So, I think they can be an extremely

1 important part of that solution.

2 General Cavoli: Ma'am, I am the biggest fan of the  
3 State partnership program.

4 Senator Ernst: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chair.

6 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Ernst.  
7 Senator Blumenthal.

8 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you  
9 both for being here and for your extraordinarily service to  
10 our nation.

11 And to each of your teams, some of them behind you, my  
12 thanks as well. General Cavoli, I have been to Ukraine  
13 three times over roughly the last year, plus. I have also,  
14 by the way, visited the training area in Grafenwoehr, and I  
15 have been just immensely impressed not only by President  
16 Zelensky on the three occasions that I have spent time with  
17 him and everyday Ukrainians, but his military team, and our  
18 team training Ukrainians.

19 Their dedication, their bonding, in fact, in providing  
20 the hands-on skill they need to operate the Bradley and  
21 Stryker vehicles. And I think it is a great tribute to our  
22 military that we have committed in the way that we have,  
23 not just at the 30,000-foot level, but literally person to  
24 person, hands on in the way that we have.

25 I am deeply troubled as I view the assets they have

1 and the assets that we could provide. You know, you have  
2 just testified in response to Senator Kelly that your  
3 belief is that they have what they need to be successful in  
4 the counteroffensive this spring in the South and in the  
5 East. Is that correct?

6 General Cavoli: That is correct, Senator.

7 Senator Blumenthal: Our mantra is that we never want  
8 to see a fair fight. Do they have what they need to have  
9 an unfair advantage in this offensive going forward?

10 General Cavoli: Sir, they have to be better than the  
11 Russian force they face, and there are great weaknesses in  
12 the Russian force they face right now. Those weaknesses  
13 are temporary and the Russians will improve their posture  
14 and their capabilities over time. But time and the  
15 enemies, the Ukrainians' enemies' capabilities is an  
16 important factor in this.

17 Senator Blumenthal: But don't they need more?

18 General Cavoli: I believe that they will have what  
19 they need.

20 Senator Blumenthal: Sorry to interrupt -- don't they  
21 need more air defense? Couldn't they use planes? What  
22 about more of the armored vehicles, even more tanks? Where  
23 would you assess the platforms that we can do more to  
24 provide to give them greater strength at this critical  
25 moment, because I assume you agree that if this

1 counteroffensive is unsuccessful, it will be a significant  
2 setback for the Ukrainians.

3 General Cavoli: Sir, yes, of course, there are things  
4 we continue to give them and that we will need to continue  
5 to give them over time. I may have mischaracterized  
6 things. We haven't delivered a force, and then that is it.

7 We continue to build with them and we have plans to  
8 continue to build with them over the summer and into the  
9 autumn. And then eventually we intend to help them  
10 restructure their entire military.

11 In the short term, ground-based air defense remains  
12 important. We have made some important advances in the  
13 last couple of months. I could be very specific about them  
14 in closed session, of course, sir, but I feel pretty  
15 comfortable about where we are and I am comfortable about  
16 where we are going in the next couple of months, sir.

17 Senator Blumenthal: What about --

18 General Cavoli: An army can always use more.

19 Senator Blumenthal: Understood. What about planes?  
20 What is your assessment?

21 General Cavoli: Sir, they have just received a bunch  
22 of MiG-29s from two of our allies. They have begun to  
23 employ some of those MiG-29s. They have a few dozen  
24 aircraft right now. They are conducting offensive as well  
25 as defensive operations with them right now. I think they

1 are key to controlling their own airspace right now.  
2 However, it is ground based air defense, as you pointed out  
3 a minute ago, sir.

4 Senator Blumenthal: The Washington Post reported  
5 yesterday that leaked United States intelligence indicated  
6 that the Russians can fund the war in Ukraine for at least  
7 another year. Do you agree with that assessment?

8 General Cavoli: Sir, I can't talk specifically to the  
9 undisclosed -- to the unauthorized disclosures. Clearly,  
10 there are investigations going on and everything like that.  
11 However, it is important to note that, as General Milley  
12 has said on a number of occasions, the Russians have  
13 strategic depth, they have manpower, and they are not to be  
14 underestimated in terms of their ability to endure.

15 Senator Blumenthal: So, you don't disagree with the  
16 conclusion that they could fund the war for another year,  
17 which again heightens the importance of the counter  
18 offensive.

19 General Cavoli: As completely separate from what may  
20 or may not be in any documents --

21 Senator Blumenthal: Yes --

22 General Cavoli: Yes, no, I think they can fund for  
23 another year, sir.

24 Senator Blumenthal: And one last question, sir, just  
25 following up on Senator Cotton's question.



1           You may not be aware, but four of us wrote to the  
2 Secretary of Defense on March 21 asking that our  
3 warfighting requirements in Europe be updated to reflect  
4 the degradation of Russian forces, 200,000 or more of their  
5 troops killed, significant damage to their armored  
6 vehicles, and so forth, because obviously it is a different  
7 force than it was when those warfighting requirements were  
8 devised.

9           Putting aside the timing, wouldn't you agree in your  
10 professional capacity that those warfighting requirements  
11 do have to be updated?

12           General Cavoli: Absolutely. When we can assess the  
13 exact status, Senator, of the capabilities, the capacity,  
14 and the disposition of whatever Russian army emerges from  
15 this, absolutely, we will update that stuff.

16           And I am in contact, as I mentioned to Senator Cotton  
17 a moment ago, with the department about this. I would  
18 point out one or two things, though. You know, the Russian  
19 army inside Ukraine today is bigger than it was at the  
20 beginning of the conflict. So, we have to make sure we got  
21 the right-side picture, and that is what I am working on.

22           Separately, sir, I thank you for your visits to  
23 Grafenwoehr, your kind words about our soldiers and our  
24 NCOs who are absolutely putting the ball over the left  
25 field fence every day. All components, all three

1 components every day, and I invite all members to please  
2 come visit those soldiers at Grafenwoehr and see what they  
3 are doing for our country.

4 Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.  
6 Senator Scott, please.

7 Senator Scott: Thank you, Chairman. Thank each of  
8 you for being here. Thank you for what you do.

9 The -- I just had the opportunity to go to Greece and  
10 Cyprus a couple weeks ago, and that was with Admiral  
11 Sciretta and some other sailors. And you really have to  
12 admire what people are doing. Could you talk about --  
13 General, can you talk about the importance of Cyprus and  
14 the importance of making sure we continue to allow them to  
15 get the military equipment that they need?

16 General Cavoli: So, the Eastern Mediterranean in  
17 General, Senator, thank you for bringing it up, it is a  
18 complicated area and it is an area that has seen greatly  
19 increased competition, as well as Russian naval presence in  
20 the past few years.

21 You know, the establishment of the naval base in  
22 Tartus has been an important part of that. In my NATO  
23 role, we devote a lot of attention to that, and we have a  
24 couple of operations, maritime operations and air  
25 operations, that help us with that.

1           And in my U.S. role, Naval Forces Europe, work  
2 extensively down there. One of our requirements is to be  
3 able to project power into the Eastern-Med, and Cyprus is  
4 ideally located to do that, as you know, and does figure  
5 into some of our thoughts in that regard. We keep a strong  
6 military to military relationship with Cyprus, sir.

7           Senator Scott: And Cyprus -- it is in our best  
8 interest if Cyprus continues to buy American equipment  
9 rather than rely on Chinese and our Russian equipment.

10          General Cavoli: Sir, American equipment sharing and  
11 equipment set with another nation creates a strategic bond  
12 as well as a practical bond that is very useful.

13          Senator Scott: Yes. I want to thank you and  
14 everybody in Europe for all their efforts to make sure  
15 Ukraine wins.

16          You ever talking to just somebody that is not very  
17 political and doesn't really think about geopolitics? What  
18 would you tell them is a reason why we ought to be involved  
19 in the Ukraine more with -- as, and all the help we give  
20 them? How -- what would your pitch be?

21          I mean, just think about it for a second. Americans  
22 are saying, we have spent -- you know, I think we have  
23 committed, you know, \$100 billion plus to this, and that is  
24 clearly a lot of money. So how would you -- what would you  
25 say to people?

1           General Cavoli: Sir, thank you for the incredibly  
2 important question, right. The first thing I would tell  
3 just one of my cousins or something like that is that  
4 America does not like bullies and having bullies around  
5 does not help America.

6           And that step one, and Russia is a bully, and we need  
7 to deal with that. We need to help those who stand up to  
8 bullies to deal with that. Second, the United States  
9 doesn't let adversaries control things that are valuable to  
10 us, and that part of Europe is valuable to us, and so is  
11 Europe in General.

12           And if Ukraine loses, then more at Europe is at stake,  
13 and we don't let that happen. And then finally, I would  
14 say just in a self-interest sense, you know, when I was a  
15 lieutenant and came in the Army in the 1980s, we had more  
16 than 300,000 U.S. servicepeople stationed overseas because  
17 of Russia, because of the Soviet threat, and we don't need  
18 to return to that. We don't need to return to that.

19           And so, Ukraine deserves help so we don't have to.

20           Senator Scott: General, the -- when you look at, and  
21 like on this chart, do you see where your troops are, your  
22 servicemen and women are stationed, is there any logic to  
23 moving more people out of places like Italy and Germany,  
24 and closer to where there is more risk?

25           General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator. Yes, of course,

1 there is. And we have done that as the risk has gone up.  
2 We have shifted forces on temporary deployments out to the  
3 East, and all of the reinforcement just about that have  
4 come in have gone out to the East.

5 Moreover, in the past year, the department has  
6 announced the intent to station some new organizations in  
7 Europe, the Fifth Corps headquarters forward is in Poland.  
8 A new special logistics base has gone straight into Poland.  
9 We have shifted a combat aviation brigade on rotation out  
10 to Poland.

11 We have a permanent rotation -- we have an enduring  
12 rotational presence in each of the three Baltics. We have  
13 a division headquarters and a brigade combat team in  
14 Romania. So, we have done a significant shift to the East.

15 The forces that are left in places like Italy and  
16 Germany are well positioned for deployment to reinforce the  
17 correct location. The Got Good Readiness facilities,  
18 training facilities, and they have good infrastructure for  
19 deployment. So, they give us flexibility as we go forward,  
20 sir.

21 Senator Scott: Thank both of you.

22 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Scott. Senator  
23 King, please.

24 Senator King: Senator Scott, when people ask me that  
25 question, why are we there, my short answer is Google

1 Sudetenland, 1938. Hitler could have been stopped and 55  
2 million lives could have been saved.

3 To me, that is the most compelling argument. If Putin  
4 is successful in Ukraine, then we are going to be facing  
5 threats in the Baltics, Poland. He has said that he wants  
6 to rebuild the Soviet Union. General, I just want you to  
7 know that the concern about tanks is bipartisan. I am very  
8 frustrated that those tanks, they ought to be sitting in  
9 Chechlo, Poland right now, ready as soon as the training is  
10 done.

11 This counteroffensive that everybody is talking about,  
12 it is the longest wind up for a punch in the history of the  
13 world, is going to be trench warfare and it is going to  
14 involve tanks. That is why the tank was invented at the  
15 end of World War I. If our tanks don't get there until  
16 August or September, it may well be too late.

17 And so, I just want to urge you to urge -- I know it  
18 is -- you have done, you both have done an amazing job of  
19 logistics and working with the Ukrainians and integrating  
20 and supplying them with what they need. But this tank  
21 story is not satisfactory. The decision has been made,  
22 okay. Then let's get ready to execute it and cut through  
23 whatever the red tape is. I know we have got to do the  
24 training, but the tanks should be sitting there in the  
25 Polish border ready to go when those -- when that training

1 is done.

2 So, I just hope you will take back that this is a  
3 bipartisan concern on this committee that, you know, coming  
4 in at the end, after the counter offensive is just -- that  
5 will be looked on as a tragic mistake. I learned five  
6 years ago that the Russians have a doctrine called escalate  
7 to deescalate.

8 That they will use tactical nuclear weapons if they  
9 believe that they are about to have some kind of  
10 catastrophic loss on the battlefield. You were asked  
11 earlier, but I want to put a finer point on the question,  
12 isn't it at least within the realm of the thinkable, that  
13 Putin would use tactical nuclear weapons if indeed he felt  
14 that Crimea was at risk, or if there is a significant  
15 breakthrough by the Ukrainians in the South and East?

16 General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator. It has certainly  
17 been mentioned by members of the Russian government as well  
18 as by observers on the Russian political scene, that is the  
19 potential or the possibility for using nuclear weapons.

20 Senator King: And this is part of their military  
21 doctrine, going back before this invasion.

22 General Cavoli: Yes, sir. The exact conditions under  
23 which they would do that, I think, are not completely known  
24 and might not be completely known to them. They might look  
25 good on paper, but then when the moment comes, it might be

1 harder to decide.

2 We have some insights into it, Senator, that I would  
3 be, of course, eager to share with you in closed session.  
4 But again, as I said a few moments ago, our deterrence, our  
5 escalation management so far, as well as our deterrence,  
6 have held very well so far, and I feel comfortable where we  
7 are right now.

8 Senator King: Deterrence is the key. They have to  
9 understand that there will be a response that would be very  
10 costly to them. Deterrence is the heart of our, as you  
11 know, of our entire military strategy. Iron Dome.  
12 Wouldn't Iron Dome help? Why don't we have Iron Dome in  
13 Ukraine?

14 General Cavoli: Sir, Iron Dome clearly could help.  
15 And the things that we have provide help also.

16 Senator King: Oh, I agree. But Iron Dome seems to be  
17 particularly calibrated to the kind of low-level attacks  
18 that are coming in by drones and missiles.

19 General Cavoli: Yes, I can't speak to exactly why  
20 Iron Dome in particular is not there, sir. If I could  
21 defer that to the working group that develops those  
22 solutions.

23 Senator King: I would -- if you could take that for  
24 the record, I would really like to know. Because we  
25 certainly help to fund the development of Iron Dome, and it



1 just seems to me that it fits in this situation.

2 And we have moved Patriots in, and as you mentioned  
3 earlier, air defense is one of the most crucial things that  
4 the Ukrainians need. So, I would like if you could take  
5 for the record some thoughts on how we could move forward  
6 with Iron Dome.

7 General Cavoli: I sure will, Senator King. Thanks.

8 Senator King: And you have talked about China. It  
9 seems to me China can play either a useful role or a  
10 destructive role, and the jury is out on which direction.  
11 We have seen some hopeful diplomatic moves in the last 24  
12 hours, but if they start supplying significant material to  
13 the Russians, that also could tip the balance in the wrong  
14 direction. Would you agree to that?

15 General Cavoli: I absolutely agree with that,  
16 Senator.

17 Senator King: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. Senator -- I  
19 believe Senator Budd.

20 Senator Budd: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And again,  
21 thank you both for your service. And it is great to have a  
22 former deputy commanding General of the 82nd Airborne  
23 Division before the committee, so thank you for your  
24 service, especially in North Carolina. General Cavoli, I  
25 have a few questions I would like to ask about our foreign

1 military sales process.

2 And I have asked these questions, similar questions of  
3 other geographic combatant commanders, and I am hoping to  
4 finish this up with you. I would appreciate on the first  
5 part, just yes or no on each one.

6 And then at the end, I will have an opportunity for  
7 you to expand, if you would. So is the current foreign  
8 military sales process, is it fast and flexible enough to  
9 meet our foreign partners' security needs in your area of  
10 responsibility?

11 General Cavoli: No, Senator.

12 Senator Budd: Does the transfer of U.S. defense  
13 articles build our partners' capacity to provide for their  
14 own defense?

15 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator.

16 Senator Budd: Does the FMS increase the  
17 interoperability between the U.S. military and those  
18 countries we sell defense articles to?

19 General Cavoli: Absolutely, Senator. It is one of  
20 the most important aspects of our foreign military sales.

21 Senator Budd: Thank you. Given the outstanding  
22 performance of U.S. defense systems in Ukraine versus the  
23 lackluster performance of Russian systems, are you seeing  
24 an increase in FMS requests from our European allies and  
25 partners?

1           General Cavoli: Without a doubt, Senator, there is an  
2 enormous appetite around the world for U.S. armaments right  
3 now.

4           Senator Budd: Thank you. And what particular systems  
5 are in demand right now?

6           General Cavoli: Sir, the ones that have been on  
7 display. The HIMARS system, the GMLRS rockets, radar  
8 systems, the Patriot missile system is in high demand. But  
9 I would point out that just about all U.S. armaments are  
10 looked upon around the world with great desire. There is  
11 great appetite for them.

12          Senator Budd: Thank you, General. And from your  
13 view, how are these FMS challenges impacting strategic  
14 competition with China and Russia on the European  
15 continent?

16          General Cavoli: Well, sir, in Europe specifically,  
17 they don't impact too much because the Chinese and the  
18 Russians aren't selling too much war materiel inside  
19 Europe. Clearly not to NATO, for example.

20          And in fact, our European allies with our assistance  
21 are in the process of divesting their Soviet era stuff.  
22 However, as you may know, I used to be the Commander of  
23 U.S. Army Europe and Africa.

24          In places like Africa, it is very difficult for us to  
25 compete if it takes us a long time to deliver a set of

1 Humvees to a nation, but it takes China, you know, six  
2 months to put them on a boat and roll them in there. It  
3 gets hard to compete in that regard.

4 So, speed is, I think, your point, speed in foreign  
5 military sales is an essential part of delivering the  
6 influence that we seek when we conduct those sells.

7 Senator Budd: Thank you, General. General Van Ovost,  
8 in North Carolina, we couldn't be more proud of the  
9 military ocean terminal, Sunny Point, and I had a chance to  
10 visit recently, and the 596 Transportation Brigade, the  
11 unit who ever sees it.

12 In the past, there have been concerns about staffing  
13 and funding shortages at Sunny Point and the nation's other  
14 terminals. Can you please provide an update on those  
15 issues and what resources, if any, are needed to ensure  
16 these critical transportation nodes are prepared to support  
17 the nation's needs?

18 General Van Ovost: Thank you, Senator. And thank you  
19 for visiting MOTSU. It is a critical ammunition outlook  
20 location for America. And so, as we look at both MOTSU,  
21 and MOTCO in California, we are working closely with the  
22 Army and the Department of Defense to ensure that they have  
23 the resources they need so that we can protect and keep the  
24 capabilities there.

25 As you probably know, infrastructure. I think about

1 that, especially with contested logistics, that there --  
2 that those would be, you know, a point of interest for our  
3 aggressors to try to slow down. So, from a cyber  
4 perspective and infrastructure perspective, the berthing  
5 perspective, we want to make sure that they are working  
6 well.

7 And the 596, I couldn't be prouder of the work that  
8 they have done to support General Cavoli and the outload to  
9 Ukraine. That is a really critical point for us. And  
10 their readiness, again, when I think about day-to-day  
11 readiness and readiness to the future, the number one thing  
12 you can do for us to ensure our readiness is to pass an on-  
13 time budget, because that cedes both time and money to the  
14 enemy.

15 Senator Budd: Thank you, General. Chairman, just a  
16 question. I didn't see the time reset. Do I have time for  
17 one more question? Thank you. General Van Ovost, do you  
18 have any concerns about cyber-attacks that could slow down  
19 the flow of forces or material in crises or conflict? And  
20 if so, what is TRANSCOM doing about it?

21 General Van Ovost: Senator, cyber is one of the major  
22 concerns that we have because we have a large, what we call  
23 surface attack area, across the logistics network from end  
24 to end.

25 So, we are looking very closely at cyber hardening

1 practices, not just in the U.S., not just under Department  
2 of Defense systems, but our civilian systems within the  
3 defense industrial base, and with our allies and partners.  
4 So, it is critical that we stay focused on that, and we  
5 have.

6 The other thing is our ability to command and control.  
7 We must have secure command and control, secure  
8 communications, and updated cryptographic materials so that  
9 we can maintain a consistent flow of logistics at a time  
10 and place of our choosing.

11 Senator Budd: Again, thank you both. Chairman.

12 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Budd. Senator  
13 Peters, please.

14 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks  
15 to both of you for your service to our country. General  
16 Cavoli, nowhere in the world is the power of our alliances  
17 clearly more evident than what we are seeing in NATO right  
18 now.

19 And through the National Guard's bureaus State  
20 Partnership program, the Michigan National Guard has  
21 supported the alliance through our partnership with Latvia  
22 for now nearly 30 years.

23 One of the advantages of these State partnership  
24 programs is that it provides NATO an opportunity to utilize  
25 CONUS based facilities for training purposes. A complaint

1 that I have heard from other combatant commanders is the  
2 lack of suitable training facilities in their AOR, and how  
3 that is going to -- how oftentimes a complement or  
4 complicates partner force training. So, my question for  
5 you is, what is your current capacity for training in your  
6 AOR?

7 And given the renewed focus on our NATO allies, on  
8 defense issues, would you benefit from having a CONUS  
9 location that could be used for training similar to what  
10 the Latvians have been doing in Northern Michigan for many,  
11 many years?

12 General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator. And, you know,  
13 again, as I mentioned a couple of moments ago to one of the  
14 other members, the State partnership program is just  
15 invaluable to us in USEUCOM. I think the other geographic  
16 combatant commanders share my opinion.

17 Inside Europe, we have plenty of training capacity  
18 right now for the U.S. forces as well as for our allies.  
19 There is quite a bit in Western Europe of training  
20 capacity, training facility capacity, that existed for  
21 larger armed forces during the Cold War. In our Eastern  
22 European allies, however, there are some things that we  
23 need to get done.

24 As you know, Latvia has been building quite a bit, has  
25 been improving quite a bit. Throughout the Baltics, it is

1 necessary. It is necessary for a couple of reasons, not  
2 just for the host nation, but because in order to reinforce  
3 that host nation with NATO forces at a time of need, those  
4 forces would need to continue to train in place in the  
5 country to maintain the readiness necessary.

6 So, all three of our Baltic, as well as our Polish  
7 allies, are working hard on their training areas in that  
8 regard. Latvia's activities in the United States have been  
9 very useful to Latvia. They have other ones throughout  
10 Europe, and I think a good mix is a useful thing.

11 It is a useful thing, especially because it is useful  
12 for countries like Latvia to get a chance to go back to the  
13 states and to interact with their State partners on their  
14 State partner's home ground and see the way our systems  
15 work there as well. As a matter of strict capacity, not as  
16 necessary, but as a matter of benefit, it has been huge.

17 Senator Peters: Great. Thank you. My next question  
18 for you, sir, is in your opening statements, you mentioned  
19 EUCOM's efforts to conduct activities in the information  
20 environment, in cyberspace, and electromagnetic spectrum to  
21 counter Russian aggression and other malign activities in  
22 Europe.

23 So, my question is, as the Joint Force moves towards  
24 data centric concepts to synchronize common operation  
25 pictures for the Joint Force, are you comfortable with



1 DOD's current platforms for crowd management and the  
2 capacity to display an accurate common operations picture  
3 for not only our Joint Forces, but for our allies and our  
4 partners as well?

5 General Cavoli: Thanks for the question, sir. I  
6 don't think you would find any of my combatant commander  
7 colleagues who is anything but eager for the advances that  
8 we are working on inside the department right now,  
9 specifically the JADC2, the joint all domain command and  
10 control system, which is intended to link any sensor to the  
11 best shooter as quickly as possible.

12 In my case, being the Commander of European Command,  
13 as well as the Allied Command Operations Commander, it is  
14 imperative that that JADC2 be combined jADC2 so that we can  
15 share it with our allies.

16 In the allied space, no, sir, I am not satisfied. We  
17 have work to do. And I am eager for the efforts of the  
18 department to continue to bear fruit.

19 Senator Peters: Thank you. General Van Ovost, during  
20 your testimony to the House Armed Services committee and  
21 with me in our discussion in my office, you highlighted the  
22 ongoing challenges with contested logistics and the task to  
23 conduct air refueling missions within that contested and  
24 degraded environment.

25 So, given these challenges and persistent threats, how

1 are you working with the services to prioritize and really  
2 replicate training scenarios similar to potential threats  
3 from China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran?

4 General Van Ovost: Thank you, Senator, for that  
5 question. Contested logistics is first and foremost in our  
6 minds on all of our development, our requirements  
7 development, and our exercise development out into the  
8 future, especially in things like air refueling, which is  
9 my most stressed ability.

10 We are working to try to first understand ourselves.  
11 We are using, what we just talked about here, with JADC2 to  
12 understand where our data is, the ITV, to understand what  
13 is going on, what is in motion.

14 And we are beginning to develop predictive analytics,  
15 to understand what needs to be moved in a predictive manner  
16 so we can marry up our scarce resources with the highest  
17 priority, something that we are doing today with Ukraine,  
18 being agile enough to change out our priorities.

19 So, I think about the exercise, as we lay down the  
20 exercise, we are trying to get after those gaps, giving  
21 them hard problems to solve, you know, loss of command and  
22 control, loss of precision navigation and timing, trying to  
23 get understanding of commander's intent all the way down to  
24 the tactical echelon.

25 And we are doing this not just in Europe, but across

1 all of the continents. And with heavy, heavy emphasis in  
2 the Indo-Pacific.

3 Senator Peters: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Peters. Senator  
5 Schmitt, please.

6 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2014,  
7 after Russia moved into Crimea, NATO countries agreed to  
8 raise defense spending to at least 2 percent of their GDP  
9 by 2024.

10 Last year, eight years after that pledge, only seven  
11 of the 30 NATO countries met that goal. Prosperous nations  
12 like France and Germany still lag well behind that goal.

13 And I know there has been some discussion about when  
14 we are delivering tanks, but we are talking about over the  
15 course of that period of time, billions and billions and  
16 billions of dollars from NATO countries that seemingly  
17 refuse to ante up to protect themselves and Europe.

18 And so, General, I want to ask you a question. If  
19 those additional billions of dollars would have been  
20 designated for defense, wouldn't that have gone a long way  
21 in deterring Russian aggression?

22 General Cavoli: Sir, thanks for the question. You  
23 know, first of all, you would have to look pretty far to  
24 find somebody who was a bigger advocate than me of all our  
25 allies spending 2 percent. In fact, in my confirmation

1 hearings, I made clear that I consider 2 percent to be a  
2 floor.

3 Senator Schmitt: Right.

4 General Cavoli: There are shopping lists that have to  
5 be filled out there. There are readiness requirements that  
6 have to be filled out. And they are going to require  
7 money, and I believe 2 percent is a floor, not a ceiling.  
8 Where we are right now -- so in 2014, we had an average  
9 spending of 1.4 percent of GDP, sir, across the alliance.

10 Now we are at 1.8 percent, which is still short. We  
11 have got 10 allies, with the addition of Finland this year.  
12 We have got 10 allies who currently spend 2 percent or  
13 more. We have got 11 allies who have a credible plan to  
14 get there, some of them enshrined in law, to get there by  
15 '24, which was the goal. But that leaves 10.

16 Senator Schmitt: Yes. And I just, I have to tell --

17 General Cavoli: I encourage them to do --

18 Senator Schmitt: Yes. And I know you are in kind of  
19 a unique position with your role, but I have to tell you,  
20 you know, in the United States, I think it is like 54  
21 percent of the share of the GDP of all those NATO  
22 countries, and we provide 70 percent of the funding. I  
23 think the American taxpayer is getting a little weary,  
24 essentially, of subsidizing these Western democratic  
25 socialist states.

1           So, when they are not investing in their military to  
2 defend their backyard, they are using that money on social  
3 programs that we may or may not agree with. But yet the  
4 United States continues to have to hold the bag. And we  
5 are having legitimate questions today about delivery of  
6 weapons systems.

7           But I would argue that if they were actually meeting  
8 what they should be doing on their own continent, Russian  
9 aggression would have either been deterred or, you know,  
10 Ukraine would have what they need. And I want to ask about  
11 one country in particular, France.

12           You know, President Macron recently visited communist  
13 dictator Xi and said that it is not in Europe's interest to  
14 strongly support Taiwan and stand allied with the United  
15 States. I find this comment, by the way, totally insane.

16           Do you have a sense that France is on their way to  
17 meeting their NATO obligations, this amount of funding?  
18 Because that is a pretty bold statement for the president  
19 of a country that kind of refuses to live up to their own  
20 commitments.

21           General Cavoli: Senator, I, of course, you know, read  
22 the coverage of those comments and everything. And I think  
23 I will leave commentary on them to my civilian leadership.

24           Senator Schmitt: Fair enough.

25           General Cavoli: I am a huge advocate of burden

1 sharing, sir, and I believe the plans that we are working  
2 in NATO will create the blueprint to get to that.

3 Senator Schmitt: Well, that is probably a question  
4 more for Secretary Blinken. General Van Ovost, I want to  
5 ask you, after the disastrous withdrawal of Afghanistan --  
6 from Afghanistan by President Biden, what was left behind  
7 was \$48 million worth of ammunition, 80 aircraft, 23,000  
8 Humvees, 250,000 automatic rifles, 95 drones, 42,000 pieces  
9 -- 42,000 pieces of night vision, surveillance, biometric,  
10 and positioning equipment.

11 I mean, this is unbelievable. And of course, you were  
12 charged with scrambling and saving over 19,000 people from  
13 perhaps one of the most embarrassing moments in American  
14 foreign policy history. My question to you is, where did  
15 all that equipment go? Where is it? Do we know?

16 General Van Ovost: Senator, I am not familiar with  
17 where the equipment is, but I can tell you that the  
18 Afghanistan retrograde presented a really unprecedented  
19 situation. We had a rapidly evolving security  
20 deterioration there on the ground, and I am proud of how  
21 the U.S. service members were able to evacuate and take  
22 care of our Afghan citizens.

23 Senator Schmitt: No, I agree, and I applaud you for  
24 that. And in fact, a serviceman from Missouri, Jared  
25 Schmitz, lost his life that day. And I don't think we talk

1 about it enough. I mean, and I believe this would be  
2 bipartisan.

3 What happened there is inexcusable. And I just  
4 mentioned the equipment, not the loss of life, to compound  
5 all of that. And I know you were charged with that. And  
6 just finally -- well, I am out of time. I just --  
7 appreciate what you do, but the idea that we left all of  
8 that behind and lost those lives, and there is not a word  
9 of it.

10 In fact, I guess the most recent report was trying to  
11 blame a previous Administration and inject politics into  
12 this, which was just an abject failure by this  
13 Administration and we ought to -- we ought to get to the  
14 bottom of it and make sure it never happens again. Thank  
15 you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Schmitt. Senator  
17 Kaine. Excuse me. All right, Senator Rosen. Thank you.

18 Senator Rosen: Thank you, Chairman Reed. I  
19 appreciate you holding this hearing. I would also like to  
20 thank Generals Cavalier and Van Ovost for testifying today,  
21 and for your service to our country. We really appreciate  
22 you.

23 And General Cavoli, I want to talk a little bit about  
24 Ukraine, obviously, with both of you and a potential  
25 Ukrainian counteroffensive, because Russia has committed

1 significant manpower and equipment to launch offenses in  
2 Ukraine this past winter.

3 We know that. Their gains have been limited and their  
4 losses, we also know, have seemed to be significant.  
5 Nonetheless, the defense of these towns has not come  
6 without cost to Ukraine.

7 And so, my colleagues have been asking about sending  
8 equipment to Ukraine. Talking about the counter-offensive,  
9 you have been speaking about that. And I just want to  
10 build upon that for a moment.

11 So, let's just include drones in the conversation,  
12 right. So, what is your assessment of the use and  
13 effectiveness in the Ukrainian conflict of the short-range  
14 drones, the one-way attack anti-tank munitions that are  
15 being used right now?

16 And can you also speak to what lessons we have learned  
17 about these kinds of weapons for our own force going on in  
18 the future and our defense industrial base?

19 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. That has been  
20 one of the most interesting developments in this conflict.  
21 We -- it was prefigured a little bit during the Azerbaijan,  
22 Armenia war two years ago, when Azerbaijan used unmanned  
23 aerial vehicles extremely effectively. Both sides are  
24 using them very extensively.

25 Both sides are using surveillance drones, as well as



1 armed drones, as well as one way attack drones. They meet  
2 varying degrees of success. They can be shot down. They  
3 can be shot down with small arms.

4 They can be shot down with standard machine guns.  
5 They can mostly be shot down with missiles as well. They  
6 can also be stopped with electromagnetic interference, and  
7 we see that going both ways.

8 And those -- that is providing a very good learning  
9 experience for us as we consult with the Ukrainians, and we  
10 are incorporating those through our services and through  
11 our commands -- we are incorporating those lessons to stay  
12 ahead of that EMI interference, especially.

13 Some of them have been proven very effective and -- as  
14 weapons, and some of them have proven pretty effective. We  
15 have been in an area of improvement, a cycle with regard to  
16 U.S. supplied drones, ma'am.

17 Senator Rosen: Well, that is great. And I am glad to  
18 -- see, I like to follow up with you on being sure we have  
19 enough R&D and enough dollars in programs there for public  
20 partnerships, wherever that is, with Department of Defense,  
21 to expand these UAS programs. They are really important.

22 And that leads me into my next question about defense  
23 innovation, because in 2021, NATO launched the Defense  
24 Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic. We call it  
25 DIANA. And the goal of DIANA is to sharpen our

1 technological edge by working with the private sector to  
2 integrate emerging dual use technologies and rapidly scale  
3 these innovations, because things are happening right as we  
4 speak, right on the battlefield.

5 Lives are being lost and maybe these can help save  
6 that. And so, the U.S. Government doesn't have the  
7 authority to contribute to R&D initiatives which received  
8 funding from other nations, so we would need to provide  
9 specific authority to allow the U.S. to make contributions  
10 to NATO DIANA by this October for us to have the  
11 opportunity to be a full participant.

12 So, General Cavoli, again, would you support Congress  
13 providing the authority for us to contribute to DIANA and  
14 really be that innovator? And can you speak of the value  
15 for us to be part of this group with the entire NATO  
16 alliance?

17 General Cavoli: As you know, Senator, DIANA is  
18 emerging right now. So, so far, they have got about 54  
19 initiatives that they are working on, but the budget is  
20 fairly small. Defense innovation and then procurement is  
21 national business for the most part in NATO, but especially  
22 for allies without significant defense budget bases, it is  
23 useful to collaborate. I think the U.S. collaboration with  
24 them is great, and I would advocate such authority, ma'am.

25 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you. And I am going to

1 build on that, too, because we know things are happening  
2 technologically faster than we can keep up oftentimes.

3 And so, as the war in Ukraine obviously has  
4 progressed, we have seen proliferation of the relatively  
5 cheap, easy to use, all the commercial drones that are out  
6 there. You can just buy them off -- I mean, an internet  
7 website, right, for both intelligence, reconnaissance, for  
8 surveillance and kinetic missions.

9 Can you maybe expand on us working again in whatever  
10 sectors we can here, public, private, to deliver advanced  
11 capabilities using some of these technologies that are  
12 emerging in the private sector?

13 General Cavoli: Yes, ma'am, absolutely. I would  
14 advocate any way for us to innovate quicker and adopt  
15 things more quickly. You know, with regard to the  
16 commercial drones, they have been very, very present on the  
17 battlefield in Ukraine. They tend to have a fairly limited  
18 lifespan, however.

19 It is harder to find commercial drones that are  
20 adequately hardened against electromagnetic interference,  
21 for example. But they have been enormously effective at  
22 the lowest levels for squads and things like that, to spot  
23 things.

24 Senator Rosen: Well, thank you. I appreciate it. We  
25 will follow up with you on all of these. Thank you, Mr.

1 Chairman.

2 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen. Senator  
3 Kaine, please.

4 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to each of  
5 our witnesses for your service, I so appreciate it.  
6 General Cavoli, I want to sort of flag an issue that I  
7 don't really want you to answer.

8 It may be inappropriate. It could be appropriate in  
9 the follow up session that we will have that will be  
10 classified, but here is a concern. In my time on the  
11 committee, and particularly in the last couple of years, I  
12 have sometimes been struck by blue skies scenarios being  
13 painted that turn out not to be accurate.

14 A blue-sky case scenario about the capacity of the  
15 Afghan security force in the aftermath of the withdrawal  
16 turned out to be vastly overstated, and there was somewhat  
17 of an overestimation of the likelihood of Russia being  
18 dominant in the early days of the Ukraine investigation.

19 Thank goodness that proved not to be true. But in  
20 each instance, sort of what we were being told, the  
21 capacity of -- our intelligence about the capacity of  
22 another military turned out to be overstated.

23 The reason I am just flagging this now in the EUCOM  
24 domain is I have been part of three classified briefings  
25 about Ukraine one -- two, and one in Foreign Relations on

1 January 25th, two in SAS on February 2nd and March 2nd,  
2 where certain predictions or assessments were made about  
3 Ukrainian capacities' potential for the counteroffensive.

4 When the leaked documents have come out, I have not  
5 looked at those documents, but I followed the public  
6 accounts of it, a lot of the accounts of the documents  
7 suggest internally in the Pentagon, maybe more skepticism  
8 than we were being messaged in the meetings that we had.

9 And again, I don't think the right time is to talk  
10 about this now, but I hope during the next session that we  
11 have, we may dig into that a little bit because I want to  
12 make sure that the assessments being given to this  
13 committee are, you know, the best current information so  
14 that we are not led to believe one thing, when there may be  
15 a lot of folks in the Pentagon thinking something else.

16 And so, I just, I will leave that there, if I could,  
17 but I do think it is something we ought to discuss in the  
18 classified setting.

19 General Cavoli: I look forward to that, sir.

20 Senator Kaine: Great. General Van Ovost, I have got  
21 a couple for you. In the INDOPACOM, our ability to access  
22 logistics support is going to be absolutely critical. And  
23 there are some challenges because of distances across water  
24 that are not necessarily challenges elsewhere.

25 How is TRANSCOM considering supporting the Joint Force

1 in a contested logistics environment like the INDOPACOM?

2 General Van Ovost: Thank you, Senator. So, when you  
3 think of every day, you know, we are postured to operate on  
4 a global scale, but our adversaries are growing in their  
5 capabilities to disrupt, degrade, or deny our ability and  
6 our freedom of maneuver that we haven't so enjoyed around  
7 the globe.

8 In fact, as I think about European Command, in Europe,  
9 we enjoy very robust ground lines of communications and we  
10 are able to use essentially all of them, frankly, without  
11 impedance. As I think about the Indo-Pacific, we are going  
12 to be using more of fast sealift and air than we would be  
13 in ground like we are seeing.

14 So, we have to change our tactics, techniques, and  
15 procedures. We are working with the services on their  
16 concepts to ensure that we can integrate and end across the  
17 entire deployment distribution enterprise, so we can  
18 deliver where and when Admiral Aquilino needs it.

19 Senator Kaine: And then one other question in that  
20 space, global bulk fuel. And again, in the INDOPACOM, that  
21 can be particularly challenging. What are you doing to do  
22 planning around fuel accessibility to INDOPACOM missions?

23 General Van Ovost: Senator, U.S. Transportation  
24 Command has been designated the single manager for global  
25 bulk fuel in this latest unified command plan that just

1 came out. And so, what we are doing is we are taking a new  
2 approach of synchronizing end to end fuel so that we can  
3 assuredly deliver where and when we need it in a contested  
4 environment.

5 So, we are taking the very best of what DLA energy  
6 does to combine it with what we do for global command and  
7 control and prioritization and managing in this new  
8 environment. So, we are relooking in the posture of the  
9 fuel in the Pacific. That includes not only the stations,  
10 the places we are going to keep it both on land and on the  
11 water, as well as how we are going to maneuver fuel around  
12 that area.

13 And let me just to add to that, you know, we have  
14 robust fuel capability in the European theater, as we did  
15 in the Central Command Theater. And so, this is, you know,  
16 a concern we have right now.

17 We are getting right after it with our tanker security  
18 program, with movement of fuel, and also with our ability  
19 to really look and give feasibility assess -- a real  
20 feasibility assessment on the ability to do that war fight  
21 to the INDOPACOM Commander.

22 And I could not do it without your support for the  
23 Pacific Deterrence Initiative, which allows us the  
24 additional funds to do exercising interoperability, and to  
25 lay out the logistics posture that we are going to need in

1 the future.

2 Senator Kaine: Thank you both very much. I yield  
3 back.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Kaine. Senator  
5 Duckworth, please.

6 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. Good morning to our  
7 witnesses. General Van Ovost, thank you for your  
8 discussion last week highlighting all the great TRANSCOM --  
9 all the great work TRANSCOM is doing at Scott Air Force  
10 Base in Illinois.

11 TRANSCOM is a linchpin of projecting and sustaining  
12 the force, key to our strategic deterrent. I also  
13 recognize that Joint Force sustainment is a whole of  
14 Government and whole of nation effort.

15 TRANSCOM must coordinate and balance equities across  
16 multiple Government agencies, numerous industry partners,  
17 and diverse allies and partners in order to project and  
18 sustain combat power.

19 General Van Ovost, I don't think enough people realize  
20 how complex your mission really is and how critical that  
21 message is, and how critical the people in TRANSCOM are to  
22 tackle every day -- their everyday mission.

23 Can you speak just one example to the efforts that  
24 your Command is supporting right now, both at headquarters  
25 at Scott Air Force Base and around the world, just to paint



1 a picture of how complex your mission is?

2 General Van Ovost: Thank you, ma'am. We have  
3 discussed our key priority of supporting a European command  
4 in supporting Ukraine and their defense. But beyond that,  
5 we have we have supported down the State Department with  
6 Sudan, with the with the support for moving the diplomats  
7 out of Sudan in this recent crisis.

8 We were inside 24 hours of the devastating a series of  
9 earthquakes in Turkey. Our ability to launch out within 24  
10 hours, the urban search and rescue teams with the dogs and  
11 the cement breaking equipment to get to their rescue, as  
12 well as deliver a 100-bed field hospital.

13 We are doing extensive exercises around the globe in  
14 almost every continent to increase the interoperability  
15 with our allies and partners, and to ensure access basing  
16 and overflight and agreements that is going to keep our  
17 freedom maneuver into the future.

18 We are also, of course, doing the global bulk fuel  
19 mission. And of course, I can't forget our families. We  
20 are moving 311,000 families a year all around the globe to  
21 achieve our mission.

22 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. Your witness  
23 testimonies both underscore your combatant command's effort  
24 to exercise the Joint Force. In EUCOM Exercise Defender  
25 Europe 24, General Cavoli and General Van Ovost.

1 Defender Europe 24 assembled a division level  
2 formation on NATO's Eastern flank for the first time since  
3 the Cold War, and I quote your testimony, "TRANSCOM is  
4 regularly wargaming with partners and stakeholders to  
5 identify and close operational gaps, to strengthen  
6 deterrence, and develop new concepts to prevail."

7 If both of you could answer this question, can you  
8 explain how your combatant commands exercise with each  
9 other and other combatant commands? What is the  
10 relationship between geographic and functional combatant  
11 commands as the Joint Force looks to exercise, experiment,  
12 and integrate new tools and capabilities? I know I am very  
13 macro today.

14 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. That is a great  
15 question because it gives me an opportunity to talk the  
16 moment about TRANSCOM. So geographic combat commands are  
17 responsible for delivering military results in a specific  
18 AOR.

19 There are other commands that are in charge of a  
20 specific function, usually globally. General Van Ovost  
21 oversee obviously does transportation. Everything in  
22 USEUCOM depends on the reinforcement that Jackie's forces  
23 can provide from CONUS.

24 It is remarkable. We exercise it literally every day,  
25 ma'am, for routine movements, for rotational force

1 movements, as well as for exercises. I said in my opening  
2 statement, there is literally nothing in the world like  
3 U.S. Transportation Command.

4 General Van Ovost: Thanks, ma'am. We are  
5 participating in extensive series of exercises across the  
6 joint portfolio that allow us to increase our capabilities  
7 to test new concepts, and frankly, old concepts like convoy  
8 operations with not only the United States and our allies  
9 and partners.

10 And I appreciate the comments from General Cavoli.  
11 Functional combatant commanders do bring extensive  
12 experience in our specific areas of space, strategic  
13 nuclear deterrence, and in transportation, and it is an  
14 honor to work with them.

15 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. General Van Ovost, we  
16 had a good conversation about aeromedical evacuations, and  
17 I would like to expand on that a little bit, especially as  
18 it applies in a contested environment and the vast  
19 distances of our nation's Joint Force that we might be  
20 facing in the future, especially in the Indo-Pacific  
21 region.

22 Can you speak to efforts currently underway at U.S.  
23 TRANSCOM to bolster the critical aeromedical evacuation  
24 capability? And also, what are you doing to provide our  
25 wounded service members rapid access to medical care?

1           Because we talked about maybe they have to go  
2           someplace in between, especially when you are in a place  
3           like the South Pacific.

4           General Van Ovost: Thank you, man. This is a  
5           critical question. You know, we performed brilliantly over  
6           decades, with the golden --

7           Senator Duckworth: I know.

8           General Van Ovost: -- and countless people saved,  
9           ma'am, yourself included. But, you know, in a near-peer, a  
10          global power contest, we expect high casualty rates. In  
11          fact, I expect to be able to have to move the same amount  
12          of patients I moved in 2022, the entire year, on a weekly  
13          basis.

14          So, we have got to do something differently, and here  
15          is what we are going to do. We are working with other  
16          partner nations to try to understand what capabilities that  
17          they have, both in theater and their movement capabilities.

18          We are working with the services on a multimodal  
19          platform to move patients in mass form. We are working on  
20          innovative capabilities for patient movement items, and we  
21          are also looking at ability to have smaller crews of people  
22          work on larger numbers of patients via using wireless and  
23          talking to doctors that are on the ground while we are in  
24          the air.

25          So, we want to bring all of this together to try to

1 reduce the risk. And to your point on allies and partners,  
2 where there is capacity with allies and partners, we are  
3 looking into agreements to try and ensure that they will be  
4 able to support us as an interim location until we can get  
5 them back to the United States.

6 Senator Duckworth: Thank you.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Duckworth. Senator  
8 Manchin, please.

9 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Senator. Thank you all  
10 for your service, everybody here. I appreciate it very  
11 much. General Cavoli, I just had the pleasure of being  
12 able to go to Ukraine and speak with Zelensky, and I was  
13 with Senator Kelly and Senator Murkowski.

14 It was a great trip. We learned an awful lot about  
15 them, and we talked directly to them. Our main concern was  
16 transparency. For every dollar that we are sending in, for  
17 every bullet that we are sending, they are making sure it  
18 is being accounted for and used properly. And that was our  
19 biggest concern.

20 We took it to everybody we talked to in Poland. And  
21 also, you know, we went to the staging area in Poland and  
22 they told us that after it leaves there, that the tracking  
23 is not as good from once they leave it in Poland, put in  
24 the theater.

25 So, we are trying to work with our Ambassador there,

1 Brink. She has, and with a little bit of help there, some  
2 personnel, she will be able to track it much better, but  
3 they are staying on top of it. I left very satisfied  
4 knowing that we have good grasp, and they, knowing how  
5 sensitive this is, because the naysayers that we have, and  
6 you have them everywhere to a certain extent, but they are  
7 a minority.

8 I don't want to give them any credence whatsoever or  
9 credibility that something happened wrong. We shouldn't be  
10 sending equipment, we shouldn't be supporting, and we  
11 shouldn't be financing it. How do you feel about that?  
12 And you are, I am sure, tracking the same thing.

13 General Cavoli: Thank you, Senator. And thank you  
14 for your recent trip, and thanks to your staff for sharing  
15 your after-action review of your trip. It also was very  
16 useful to us. So, I feel confident that there has not been  
17 specific illicit transfer or pilfering of material.

18 I believe we are aware of one case reported to us by  
19 the Ukrainians of a couple of automatic rifles that were  
20 attempted to be diverted and those guys have been arrested  
21 there. So by and large, this is an extremely strong effort  
22 that we are putting out.

23 We recognize how challenging it is. However, a couple  
24 of things about the way we do it. So, when things go to  
25 the staging base in Uchanka, Poland there, we inventory all

1 of that at that point.

2 Senator Manchin: Right. I saw the clipboard. I saw  
3 those pasties on the board.

4 General Cavoli: And we ingest it into a computer  
5 software system that we have given to the Ukrainians that  
6 we maintain access to. So, we can track their tracking of  
7 it.

8 Senator Manchin: Where they are putting the  
9 equipment.

10 General Cavoli: Exactly. And, you know, so it -- we  
11 track it.

12 Senator Manchin: Let me just say -- I know our time  
13 is limited. I want to say a couple of things here. I  
14 truly believe that we are not telling our story. With the  
15 amount of support that we are putting in and all of our  
16 allies, there is always going to be a hiccup.

17 Something is going to go wrong. We haven't built a  
18 base of how well we are regulating and staying on top of  
19 this and monitoring and the transparency. And Zelensky  
20 said it once to me in an hour and a half we were there. He  
21 said that 10, 15 times. Bring a hundred people and observe  
22 what we are doing.

23 We are happy to share. Do whatever you want. And if  
24 you see something wrong, let me know, because we are  
25 looking for it, too. We are not telling that from our side

1 of it and it is not being -- and I just think that we need  
2 to get ahead of this because that way -- there is an old  
3 saying, tell your story before they tell one on you.

4 As soon as they see something wrong, they are going to  
5 blow it out of proportion. And there is so much good  
6 support that we are giving him and so much value fighting  
7 that they are doing, I just don't want to lose that.

8 General Cavoli: Thank you for giving me the  
9 opportunity to tell part of the story, sir. Our defense  
10 attaché office has been diligently going --

11 Senator Manchin: Tell the press -- tell your press  
12 people to start putting things out. We are happy to work  
13 with them. We are happy to coordinate with you all to put  
14 out what we saw firsthand. Any confidence we had, I put a  
15 statement out. I am happy to continue that.

16 General Cavoli: Thanks, Senator.

17 Senator Manchin: Let me throw this at you, too. I am  
18 concerned now about our Baltic allies and Albania,  
19 Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Romania,  
20 and Slovenia. They are all kind of tied into this  
21 TurkStream, okay.

22 The same as the Nord Stream is tied into Europe. They  
23 are tied in TurkStream. We know exactly what Putin will  
24 do. He used energy as a weapon. Are we doing anything so  
25 that they don't get caught in the same thing that our



1 allies did up in Europe?

2 General Cavoli: Sir. Thanks. So, of course, the  
3 closure of Nord Stream and the weaning off of Russian gas  
4 through much of Europe has been an incredible success story  
5 of the last year. It is not universal, however, as you  
6 point out.

7 Senator Manchin: We have got a lot of vulnerability  
8 down here and he will have the same playbook.

9 General Cavoli: And exactly, sir, it is the exact  
10 same playbook. So, we worked with them to wean off it. We  
11 are not the lead agency on that. I defer to the Secretary  
12 of State or the Department of State for specifics on what  
13 exactly they are doing. But we are operationally not  
14 dependent --

15 Senator Manchin: Okay. I will reach out to them  
16 because being chair -- I am chairman of their Energy  
17 committee --

18 General Cavoli: Yes, sir.

19 Senator Manchin: We want to do everything we can to  
20 basically back them up so they don't get caught exactly  
21 like how our European allies did.

22 General Cavoli: It strategically would be very  
23 welcomed by EUCOM and NATO.

24 Senator Manchin: Can you briefly comment on  
25 developments regarding Turkey's relationship with NATO? I

1 just can't believe that here they are holding up the  
2 Swedes, okay. Made it very difficult for the Finns and  
3 they are playing footsie with the Russians. It makes no  
4 sense to me at all.

5 General Cavoli: Sir, clearly there is a lot of policy  
6 wrapped in there and I will defer to my civilian leaders on  
7 those questions. I would point out, sir, that there is a  
8 sharp difference between our military relationships and our  
9 other relationships when it comes to some countries.

10 And I was just down in Antakya with the minister of  
11 defense in the Turkish charter a couple of days ago,  
12 looking at the humanitarian assistance that we have  
13 provided through the U.S. and NATO for the earthquake. And  
14 I would just point out there is a pretty distinct  
15 difference between our military relationship --

16 Senator Manchin: Well, they -- I am so sorry, Mr.  
17 Chairman. But they didn't they acquired the S-400 from the  
18 Russians?

19 General Cavoli: Oh, yes, sir.

20 Senator Manchin: And cancelled the F-35?

21 General Cavoli: That is exactly right.

22 Senator Manchin: Yes. So, you are saying I need to  
23 take this in a different direction? I got you --

24 General Cavoli: The policy issues, sir --

25 Senator Manchin: I got it, sir. I got it. I will

1 too. Thank you both and thank all of you for your service.  
2 I appreciate it more than you know.

3 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Manchin. General  
4 Cavoli, General Van Ovost, thank you for your testimony. I  
5 look forward to the closed session, in which will reconvene  
6 at 12:30 p.m. in SVC-217, after the address by the South  
7 Korean President, I am sure one of the issues that might  
8 come up is the Abrams tank.

9 I understand that there are some significant issues  
10 involving transferring Abrams tanks to any place in the  
11 world, one of which I think can be publicly discussed here  
12 is that it operates on something closer to jet fuel than  
13 diesel, which makes the creation of independent supply  
14 lines by the Ukrainians essential to use.

15 There is also the issue of training, and the fact that  
16 our European allies, I believe, just brought thousands of  
17 tanks which are more familiar to the Ukrainian forces,  
18 which obviates the training issues related to the Abrams  
19 tank.

20 So, I think all those issues have to be explored in  
21 the closed session. I think also, General Van Ovost, a  
22 real serious discussion about contested logistics,  
23 particularly in the Pacific, would be appropriate. So let  
24 me see if there is anything else. No, I believe that --  
25 oh, one other point, General Cavoli is that there has been

1 discussion about reevaluating, which you are, our plans for  
2 Europe, looking at the depletion of Russian forces.

3 But I think you are also considering the fact that  
4 many of our NATO forces have depleted themselves of  
5 equipment, and other factors that have to be included in  
6 the evaluation. So, it is not simply looking at Russia and  
7 saying, well, they are much weaker now than they were. Is  
8 that correct?

9 General Cavoli: Absolutely. And it is very difficult  
10 to speak about it in open session for operational security  
11 reasons.

12 Chairman Reed: I understand. Well, I think we have  
13 got a lot to talk about. So, I will adjourn this open  
14 hearing and look forward to seeing you at 12:30 p.m. in  
15 SVC-217. Thank you.

16 [Whereupon, at 10:20 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25