

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

SD-G50 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

*To receive testimony on United States European Command and United States Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2022 and the Future Years Defense Program
(As Prepared for Delivery)*

REED: This morning, the Committee will receive testimony from General Wolters, Commander, United States European Command (EUCOM) and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and General Lyons, Commander, United States Transportation Command (TRANSCOM). Thank you both for the many decades of military service, and please extend our appreciation to the men and women serving under your command. General Lyons, this is likely your last hearing before this committee and on behalf of my colleagues, I want to thank you for a lifetime of dedication and service to the nation.

The security challenges in the EUCOM area of responsibility grow more complex each year. Russia continues to subvert the rules-based international order, including using military force to intimidate and coerce its neighbors and to undermine their sovereignty. Russia is also engaged in an ongoing hybrid warfare campaign just below the threshold of conflict that would provoke a military response, including disinformation campaigns targeting democratic processes and fomenting discord, extensive cyber espionage efforts, and the continued use of proxy groups to further Russian interests in numerous countries around the world. Combating the Russian hybrid threat requires a whole of government effort. General Wolters, I will be interested to hear your views on the military means required as part of that whole of government effort, as well as what support we can provide our allies and partners as they seek to counter Russian malign influence.

Last week EUCOM raised its watch condition level in Ukraine from “possible crisis” to “potential imminent crisis” in response to significant Russian military activity in Ukraine and across Europe. The Committee will benefit from your assessment of the current security situation and an update on EUCOM’s engagements with partners and allies in response.

Consistent with the 2018 National Defense Strategy, EUCOM continues to refine the operational concepts, plans, and programs necessary to counter Russia in the strategic competition that defines this theater. The U.S. must ensure a combat-credible military deterrent against Russia’s ambitions to threaten the sovereignty of our allies and partners. General Wolters, the Committee would like to hear your views on the posture and investments necessary to attain and maintain deterrence.

Turning to TRANSCOM, the men and women of TRANSCOM perform duties that sustain the whole Department of Defense effort in protecting our nation’s security. With the competitive edge in its ability to deploy and sustain America’s armed forces, TRANSCOM provides DOD

with unique capabilities that we have come to expect and, perhaps too frequently, take for granted. TRANSCOM forces are busy supporting all of the combatant commanders every day, and without them, the United States would be at a significant disadvantage almost everywhere in the world.

General Lyons, last year you were adamant about retaining air refueling capability because you felt that TRANSCOM was at the minimum acceptable levels for meeting peacetime demand for tanker capacity. This year, I understand the Air Mobility Command believes that TRANSCOM can rely on some contribution of the KC-46 tankers even though the KC-46 is not able to conduct unrestricted operations. I would be interested in any information you can share on this situation.

Our global transportation capability, owned or managed by TRANSCOM, has been one of our asymmetric advantages for many years now. However, we cannot assume that potential adversaries will allow us free rein in this area in the future. Two years ago, the Committee decided that the Department needed to continue the analytical effort to identify requirements because the study presented at that time did not reflect implementation of the National Defense Strategy. General Lyons, perhaps you could give us an update on where TRANSCOM stands in updating this analysis.

General Lyons, you have initiated a program to contract out management of the Defense Personal Property Program (DP3) that handles the movement of household goods for DOD. Under this plan, a contractor team would be responsible for issuing contracts to individual movers and carriers, rather than the U.S government.

After a competition last year, TRANSCOM awarded the contract, but the losing bidders protested the award, and GAO upheld the protest. General Lyons, I would be interested in hearing about the status of this program.

Finally, TRANSCOM also faces a unique set of cyber threats because of the command's extensive work with private-sector entities in the transportation and shipping industries. General Lyons, the Committee would appreciate an update on TRANSCOM's effort to improve its cyber security posture.

I want to thank you both again for being here this morning and I look forward to your testimony. Before I turn to Senator Inhofe, I would just note, for my colleagues, that there will be an informal classified briefing immediately following this session in the Office of Senate Security.

Senator Inhofe.