



Remarks by U.S. Air Force General Tod D. Wolters
Commander, U.S. European Command
Prepared for OSCE High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar
Feb. 9, 2021

It is an honor to spend time with you today, even if virtually. We'd like to begin by thanking Ambassador James Gilmore for the invitation as well as Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian, and the Forum for Security Co-operation for putting on such a world class event. We wish we were together in Vienna, but like many things over the past year, COVID-19 forced a change of plans. We remain grateful for the technology that enables important events like a High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar in the midst of a pandemic. Our condolences to all those impacted by COVID-19. As the battle against COVID continues, we remain vigilant to ensure this health crisis does not transform into a security issue. Because of your efforts, those of your Chiefs of Defense, and your nations' mitigation measures, our forces are protected, operations and activities continue...and deterrence is a reality. Thank you for support in this endeavor.

For the last eight decades, Europe has been a key Ally and partner for the United States and today serves as an exporter of global peace and security. Maintaining a free and prosperous Euro-Atlantic area, defended by Allied nations and a credible NATO Alliance, remains foundational to our security in a competitive geopolitical environment.

We live in an increasingly complex and contested world. Political uncertainty, energy competition, and diffusion of disruptive technology are stressing the established rules-based international order. Threats and challengers seek to take advantage of these conditions through aggressive action using all instruments of national power and are backed by increasingly capable military forces. Adversaries amplify these malign activities and foment instability with disinformation and destructive cyber campaigns... testing



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national governments and multinational institutions. If left unchecked, these activities could escalate into more aggressive behavior. Meeting these threats and challenges require us to take meaningful steps away from a binary model of peace or war...and towards a gradient that includes one of competition with a military dimension below armed conflict. We are in an era of great (global) power competition...winning in this era is ensuring great (global) power competition doesn't become great (global) power war, keeping America and Europe safe, and protecting our democratic values.

For the United States, the European theater remains incredibly important. It houses the cradle of democratic values, built from a rich history and culture. It is home to more than one billion people, and is the number one trading partner for the U.S. Building and solidifying our bilateral and multi-lateral partnerships enhance our collective posture.

Across Europe and increasingly throughout the world, it is our responsibility as military leaders to maintain laser-focus on our on comprehensive readiness in all domains...continue to improve transparency and alignment of our operations, activities, and investments...and be able to employ our capabilities faster than our threats and challengers.

We must address disinformation when we see it, so nothing comes between those steadfast commitments and relationships we've worked so hard to preserve.

We must continue...collectively, to let democratic values and fact-based communication lead our actions in order to avoid any misunderstanding or misperceptions. In our vision of this security environment...each day we collectively generate more peace...and deter and defend better tomorrow, than we did today.



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Every day USEUCOM and NATO work together to deter attacks against the U.S., our Allies and partners. We leverage unique capabilities by coordinating with the U.S. Government agencies and our multinational partners.

As part of its biggest initiative since the Cold War, NATO published an updated military strategy of comprehensive defense and shared response...and developed the strategic to operational link...what we call the concept for the deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area or “dda.” Together with the U.S. National Defense Strategy, these documents highlight the agreed security challenges we face, and articulate enduring vigilance activities the alliance must embrace to sustain peace through comprehensive deterrence and defense...in all domains...across the area of responsibility and beyond...360-degrees, 24/7. It’s vital we maintain positive momentum as we operationalize these strategic documents to compete...diligently prepare for crisis or conflict...but most importantly...sustain peace. We continue to enhance our support to NATO’s dda. Our strong bilateral and multilateral ties with European Allies and partners enable advancement of our shared interests and our competitive edge. Collectively we possess great capability across all domains...land, sea, air, space, and cyber...to deter our adversaries and defend our partners and our interests. We must maintain momentum with respect to our efforts to strengthen indications and warnings to see the environment, improve command and control...plus feedback, mission command, and logistics. We strengthen these 21st century warfare pillars as we develop future capabilities, field new forces and formations...improve transparency, alignment, interoperability and convergence of what we already have...and by placing speed relative to our potential adversaries as an



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imperative for everything we do...this increases the likelihood of obtaining favorable outcomes...save lives...and preserve peace.

We must always focus on deterrence...should deterrence fail, however, we must be prepared to win...together.

Collectively, it is the combined strength of NATO and its partners and the United States' commitment to nations across Europe and Eurasia that enables us to remain postured for threats now and in the future.

Through alliances and security relationships, we help one another to stay focused on the mission...we remain vigilant. We accomplish a great deal together. We are ready, we are steadfast, and we are committed to helping one another face common challenges head on. And like this virtual event today, we find ways to come together...a testament to our adaptability.

COVID-19 reminds us all how historically strong relationships are a force multiplier...and even in crisis there are opportunities to emerge stronger and more unified. Institutions such as OSCE provide opportunities for honest and open dialogue, and are vitally important to create the conditions for peace, security, cooperation, and democracy. Operating under higher common standards, we are more prepared, more responsive, and more resilient than ever.

Thank you so much for taking the time to focus on the issues we discussed. Remain steadfast to our shared democratic values, beliefs, and genuine desire to promote peace, freedom, and prosperity for our children and our children's children...we are stronger together.