

**Remarks by Secretary of Defense Ash Carter
EUCOM Change-Of-Command Ceremony in Stuttgart, Germany
May 3, 2016**

STAFF: Ladies and gentlemen, the Honorable Ash Carter, the 25th secretary of defense.

(APPLAUSE)

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ASH CARTER: Good morning, everyone. Just take a look out there, how magnificent we look. How proud we are of you.

And ladies and gentlemen, excellencies who are here, Chairman Dunford, members of the EUCOM and NATO team, friends, family, it's a privilege to be with you as we pass this vital command between two of our military's most distinguished and accomplished leaders.

General Philip Breedlove, General Curtis Scaparrotti. I have plenty to say about the character and the contributions of these two extraordinary generals. Before I do, I want speak directly to you, the men and women of EUCOM, about the work you do every day and the challenges that we face together.

I'm proud of you for what you do to strengthen our partnerships with some of our most important allies and friends, and to confront a new generation of high-end threats to the security of this continent. You -- you are doing the noblest thing that one can do, dedicating your lives to the security of your country, the security of others, making a better world for our children.

And whether on the ground in the Balkans, or the skies over the Baltic, afloat on a Black Sea, helping deliver ISIL a lasting defeat, or enabling NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan. You -- you're advancing a proud and distinguished tradition, here.

And working shoulder to shoulder with many of our oldest and closest friends, you are helping to strengthen one of history's strongest and most capable alliances. And for nearly seven decades, the guarantor of prosperity and stability on this continent has been the NATO alliance.

For generations, our member nations have stood for enduring principles, including the peaceful resolution of disputes, non-aggression and the spread of freedom and democracy. We've helped ensure that countries can make their own security and economic choices, free from coercion or intimidation.

We've also help ensure that the door to the Euro-Atlantic integration remains open, so that countries that take on the challenge of building democratic institutions, making tough reforms, strengthening the rule of law also have a chance to join the alliance.

NATO has been so effective in doing so, because we share common values, reflected in the way we conduct ourselves. We know what each other stands for, how we do things and why. We treat each other as equals, and we take each other's interests into account.

It's clear that we do things better when we do them together. The strategic environment in Europe has changed dramatically to the end of World War II, to the end of the Cold War, to complex challenges Europe faces today from the east and the south. This requires changing how we do things, even as we seek to protect and achieve what remains the same.

The 20th century NATO playbook that helped create a Europe whole, free and at peace was effective in its time. But it's not a perfect match for the 21st-century challenges we face. And that's why, under General Breedlove's leadership, NATO forces have been writing a new playbook.

They've been innovating to counter new challenges like cyber and hybrid warfare, integrating conventional and nuclear deterrence, and adjusting our posture and presence so that we can be more agile in responding to new threats.

We and our allies are working together to develop answers to important questions, like how can we keep our posture and region resilient and effective in the face of fast-moving, technological changes and challenges?

How can we better integrate and distribute our capabilities and maneuvers across functions and in every domain to deter, and if necessary, defend against a high end aggression -- aggressor? How can we do more to train like we'd fight to stay prepared for even the most high threat scenarios? And what's the best way to leverage our unique strengths and global influence in order to de-escalate a crisis?

The NATO force that General Breedlove leaves behind is stronger than the one he inherited, as our allies recognized the need to continue investing and modernizing their capabilities, not only respond to current challenges, but stay ahead of potential, future threats. Our nation's pledge to the 2014 Wales Summit, to spend at least 2 percent of GDP on defense and 20 percent on capital investments. And I want to thank those nations that have met or will meet these critical benchmarks.

In our defense budgets, in our planning and in our capabilities and in our actions, we must demonstrate to potential foes that if they start a war, we have the capabilities and capacity to ensure that they regret it, because for a force to deter a conflict, it must show that it can dominate a conflict.

And we haven't had to prioritize deterrence on NATO's eastern flank for the past 25 years. While I wish it were otherwise, now we have to. Despite the progress that we've made together since the end of the Cold War, Russia has in recent years appeared intent

to erode the principled, international order that has served us, our friends and allies, the international community and Russia itself so well for so long.

Russia continues to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, and actively seeks to intimidate its Baltic neighbors. At sea, in the air and space and cyberspace, Russian actors have engaged in challenging international norms.

And most disturbing, Moscow's nuclear saber-rattling raises troubling questions about Russia's leader's commitments to strategic stability, their respect for norms against the use of nuclear weapons, and whether they respect the profound caution that nuclear-age leaders showed with regard to the brandishing of nuclear weapons.

In response, the United States is taking a strong and balanced approach to address Russia's aggression. We are strengthening our capabilities, our posture, our investments, our plans and our allies and partners, all without closing the door to working with Russia, where our interests align.

And we will continue to make clear that Russia's aggressive actions only serve to further its isolation and unite our alliance.

Since Russia began its illegal attempted annexation of Crimea a little over two years ago, the United States has made valuable investments in reinforcing our NATO allies.

For example, we're contributing to NATO's Very High Readiness Task -- Joint Task Force, and stepping up our training and exercises under Operation Atlantic Resolve.

Our recent budget submission builds on that significantly, investing in the work you do here at EUCOM in breaking new ground by re-envisioning and recommitting to deterrence, and if deterrence fails, defeating any aggression against our allies in the future.

To further reinforce our NATO allies and build our deterrence posture in the face of Russia's (aggression ?), this budget significantly increases funding for our European Reassurance Initiative, making a total investment of \$3.4 billion for this year, fiscal year 2017, which more than quadruples the amount we requested last year.

This will allow us to increase the amount of war fighting equipment, as well as the number of U.S. forces, including reserve forces, rotating through Europe to engage with friends and allies.

This increased support's heel-to-toe rotations that maintain the persistent presence of an armored brigade combat team, which will give us a total of three brigade combat teams continuously present in Europe.

It supports more training and exercises with our European allies and friends. It supports more war fighting gear, including forward stationing equipment for an additional armored brigade combat team by the end of 2017.

It also supports prepositioning equipment for a division headquarters and other enablers in Europe, such as this equipment, and along with assigned Army Airborne, and Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, and Marine Corps. heavy vehicles and equipment already in Europe -- all that will allow us to rapidly form a highly capable, combined armed ground force -- ground force of division plus strength that can respond theater-wide if necessary.

And it helps strengthen our regional air superiority posture, among other things, allowing us to keep an additional F-15C Tactical Fighter Squadron based in Europe, and also improve airfield infrastructure to enhance operations for Air Force fighters and Navy maritime patrol aircraft. All this to reinforce our enduring commitment to the security of our European partners.

Our budget also reflects our doing more in more ways with specific NATO allies. Given increased Russian submarine activity in the North Atlantic, it includes building towards a continuous arc of highly capable maritime patrol aircraft operating over the Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom gap. It's Norway -- Norway's North Cape.

It also includes the delivery of Europe's first stealthy F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft to our British allies. And given Russia's use of hybrid warfare, exemplified by the so-called "little green men" in Ukraine, we're investing in more rotational presence of U.S. Special Operations Forces, exercising and training here in Europe.

And as we look to address the threats of the future as well as today, we're making significant investment in important new technologies. And when coupled with revised operational concepts, these technologies will ensure that we can deter, and if necessary, win a high-end conventional fight in an anti-access area denial environment across all domains and war fighting areas -- air, land, sea, space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum.

These include new unmanned systems, enhanced ground-based air and missile defenses, new long-ranged anti-ship weapons, the long-range strike bomber and also innovation in technologies like the electromagnetic railgun, lasers and new systems for electronic warfare, space and cyberspace.

Finally, our budget also invests in modernizing our nuclear deterrent. With these commitments, we will continue to build on our capability to deter a potential adversary like Russia.

But the United States will also continue to hold out the possibility that Russia will assume the role of a constructive partner moving forward, not isolated and going backward in time as it appears to be doing today.

Much of the progress we've made together since the end of the Cold War we accomplished with Russia. Let me repeat that. Not in spite of Russia, not against Russia, not without Russia, but with it.

Russia worked toward the future before. I know that personally. For 1995, for example, I worked with the Russian minister of defense to create an agreement on how Russia could work with NATO in bringing peace to Bosnia.

I also worked in a very practical and successful manner with Russian defense officials to help limit the dangers of nuclear proliferation in the former Soviet space.

And more recently, as the logistician for the international effort in Afghanistan, I was the beneficiary of a Russia-hosted NATO supply route into Afghanistan.

So for the United States, as we stand strong with allies and friends, we'll also continue to reach out when and where our and Russia's interests align. And Russia can perceive that it's a -- as well, such as the recent nuclear agreement with Iran, the P5+1 talks on North Korea and some other issues.

People in the United States, here in Europe, and it should be clear in Russia, have all benefited from those moments of collaboration and progress.

So, that's why we'll keep the door open for Russian, but it's up to the Kremlin to decide. We don't seek a cold, let alone a hot war with Russia. We don't seek to make Russia an enemy. But make no mistake, we will defend our allies, the rule-based international order and the positive future it affords us.

And you, the men and women of EUCOM, will continue to play a critical role during this period of challenge and change, answering our country's call to defend our interests, our allies, the principled global order and the positive future it affords us all.

And you've performed magnificently under the command of one of the principled and visionary leaders we celebrate today, General Philip Breedlove. It was my great honor as deputy secretary to preside over the ceremony right here in Stuttgart three years ago, when General Breedlove assumed responsibility for this critical command.

For my work with Phil during his time as vice chief of staff of the Air Force, I had every confidence then that he was the right pick for the job.

Now I need to tell you my favorite Phil Breedlove story. And it goes like this -- one day I was sitting in my office and my daughter called me from college, and she said, "Hey, Dad, do you know General Phil Breedlove?" I said, "Yeah, honey, I do." And she said, "Well, he just gave the most amazing talk on leadership to us here." I said, "Well, I'm not surprised to hear that." And she said, "Do you get to meet with General Breedlove?"

(Laughter.)

And I said, "Well, you know, honey, if he has time for me, I get to meet with him."

I knew General Breedlove was a figure who would lead EUCOM with the highest standards of professionalism, and a leader who could adapt and respond and innovate and command effectively to a changing environment. And certainly, much has changed since General Breedlove assumed command of EUCOM and became supreme allied commander. He has been the first to show the way to responding to that change.

But what hasn't changed is the nature of Phil's strong, and steady and principled leadership. During his tenure as EUCOM commander, General Breedlove has drawn not only from all he has achieved as a senior officer, but from his years in Europe as a young American pilot.

From his service on this continent during some of those perilous days of the Cold War, he deeply appreciates how times of great challenge demand closer and stronger partnerships. He knows what it means to prepare and train each day to fly, to fight and to win alongside NATO counterparts.

And one of his most cherished memories over these past three years came during the 75th anniversary commemorations of D-Day, Carentan, a town in Normandy where allied forces established their first continuous line of defense.

The commemorations left a profound impression, especially as an American veteran of the invasion walked with General Breedlove for the final steps of the parade.

General Breedlove remarked and -- (inaudible) -- understood the significance of D-Day. But as he walked in the parade passing fields where so many have given their last full measure of devotion, and crossing the road now named Purple Heart Lane, he reflected upon what D-Day means to us as Americans and to our European brethren.

He said, "We honor the sacrifices and memory of those who have gone before us, by recognizing how far we have come as a community and by continuing to move forward together, striving for a Europe, whole, free and at peace."

Phil, you not only honored that commitment, you've dedicated your life to carrying it forward. But you and your wife Cindy, have been shining examples to our allies of all that is good and decent about the American military.

And Cindy, we are all grateful. And that includes Stephanie and myself, for your tireless dedication to the welfare of our troops. You and Phil are truly a wonderful team. And for your selfless service and leadership, on behalf of the Department of Defense and a grateful nation, you too have our deepest appreciation.

Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

And as Phil and Cindy transition from this command, they can do so knowing that the men and women of EUCOM are in the -- in good hand of another principled leader, who also had the good sense to marry a remarkable woman named Cindy.

(Laughter.)

General Curtis Scaparrotti, or Scap, as we all know him. I recommended Scap to the president for this critical command for three central reasons. And he easily approved that recommendation for those same reasons.

First, Scap has a proven track record to performance under pressure and in environments of significant complexity and uncertainty. Whether leading troops in the Balkans during a contentious and fragile moment in history, or in Afghanistan, where he led ISAF's joint command and 140,000 NATO troops. Or most recently, as commander of Combined Forces Command on the Korean Peninsula, a place where "fight tonight" is not just a slogan, but an ever present possibility.

Scap knows the practicalities of land and joint combat. He has been a tower of strength and deterrence, continually preparing his troops for evolving threats. And I have no doubt these skills will serve him well here in this environment, where preparedness and adaptiveness are going to be so critical.

Second, as his success with our Korean and coalition partners has demonstrated, Scap is one of the most skillful and accomplished warrior diplomats. He knows how to build solidarity with our allies. He has experience leading and enabling joint command and allied forces. And he knows how to prevent provocations from escalating.

And third, Scap's innovative approach to difficult challenges. Like Phil, he has an ability to think differently to address complex situations. For example on the Korean Peninsula, Phil showed creative thinking and developing a conditions-based approach that established the lines of command and control in a crisis.

I'm confident he will bring this kind of creative thinking to similar challenges here in Europe. From Scap's first days as a soldier, he has recognized the awesome responsibilities of command. These are lessons he began to appreciate even before he arrived at West Point.

Truths modeled for him by his father, who served in the second World War as a noncommissioned officer and for decades as a reservist. And as an officer, he has understood personally where so much of our strength lies, in an NCO corps that's well-trained, and trusted and empowered. Certainly, Scap has always been a soldier's soldier.

But in his leadership, and -- (inaudible)-- example, he has proven that he remains a soldier's general. In his hometown of Logan, Ohio, there's a bridge over the new river, named for both Scap and his father. And it's a fitting tribute.

General Scaparrotti's success has come from his ability to build bridges between allies and partners, between diverse elements within our joint force, between the pride we take in our past and the security imperatives of the future.

And today as we mark this change of command, we build another bridge between the leadership of two proven statesmen, two joint force warriors, two coalition builders. And as we mark a change in command, we also celebrate a remarkable continuity.

While these two men have lead in different domains and different theaters, they both understand the powerful responsibility of asking young people -- (inaudible) -- for me to enter extreme danger to accomplish a vital mission.

These are two leaders who appreciate deeply the weight of all we ask our troops and their families to carry. We cannot predict precisely how or when the men and women of EUCOM will be called to carry forward their mission in the months and years to come.

But we do know this. We know that General Scaparrotti will lead this team with certainty, clarity and with our total trust and confidence. And we know that the force General Scaparrotti inherits is ready to execute its vital responsibilities, thanks to General Breedlove's visionary leadership and unyielding commitment to our force.

So to General Scaparrotti, to General Breedlove, to their families, to all the men and women who have served under their strong and steady leadership to face the challenges of a complex world, thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

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