

Statement of Chairman Adam Smith
House Armed Services Committee Hearing on:
“U.S. Military Posture and National Security Challenges in Europe”
April 26, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank the witnesses for being here today, Dr. Celeste Wallander, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, and General Christopher Cavoli, the Commander of U.S. European Command (EUCOM).

We are just over a year since the unlawful further invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces. It is fair to say that the Ukrainians have inspired the world with their tenacity and commitment to freedom. Ukraine has not only withstood an unrelenting barrage from Russian forces, but they have re-taken territory in critical areas. This would likely not have been possible if it hadn't been for the assistance provided by allies and partners around the world. Since February 2022, Ukraine has received \$49 billion in security assistance from the international community. It is, however, important that we not just focus on military contributions but also recognize the contributions allies and partners have made on the humanitarian side. There are many European allies and partners who have accepted thousands of Ukrainian refugees into their countries and more importantly into their communities. There are also countries that have not had the capacity to provide security assistance but have been able to provide humanitarian supplies such as medical equipment, food, and clothing. This is a crucial moment for Ukrainian forces, and it is vital that the international community continue to do all that it can to provide continuous support.

The conflict has also bolstered the NATO alliance and the cohesion of its members. While Vladimir Putin may have believed that his aggression would challenge the resolve of NATO, in reality, it had the opposite effect. As a direct result of the invasion, NATO has expanded. In May of last year Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership. Today, Finland has officially joined the alliance and Sweden is awaiting final accession. Both countries bring significant military capabilities to the alliance.

I am interested in hearing from the witnesses what our long-term posture in Europe is projected to look like. Our current heel-to-toe rotational presence with the headquarters element of V Corps permanently in Poland has certainly contributed to our ability to quickly provide security assistance and training but, we also determined that increased presence was required. Will that rotational posture continue, or will we move for a more permanent structure?

Further, what additional investments are required through the European Deterrence Initiative? What adjustments must be made to prepositioned stocks and exercises as we learn from the conflict in Ukraine? How does the fiscal year 2024 President's budget request support the requirements of EUCOM and meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy?

Finally, we must continue to leverage the power of our alliances and partnerships to address shared security concerns across the world and defend the rules-based international order. Our European allies and partners have taken significant steps to address the People's Republic of China's predatory investments in Europe and to engage in the Indo-Pacific through efforts like

AUKUS. These relationships are powerful tools to counter Russian and Chinese malign activity. It is essential to continue to build on those efforts.

I look forward to your testimony.

###