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Good morning and thank you so much for that kind introduction. I'm humbled to be in such esteemed company, and honored to share some views on a topic which is KEY to the credibility of both NATO and EU collective defense efforts.

On behalf of Secretary Mattis, who arrived last night, and who I'll meet with immediately following this address, I would like to thank the Bulgarian EU Presidency and the EU's European Defense Agency for hosting this conference and inviting me to speak.

Yesterday was the 74th anniversary of the D-Day landing at Normandy, and it's worth reflecting on the truly colossal logistics effort associated with the movement of over 300,000 troops, their vehicles, and sustainment over those beaches in just six days. While pondering the magnitude of this operation, I thought about the timeliness of this forum on Military Mobility, and how important it is that like-minded nations can come to the aid of each other. While thinking about my message today, I recalled a former U.S. President's message that I thought worth sharing.

On the evening of 17 DEC, 1940 – with parts of the world, and especially Europe in turmoil -- Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the American people in a recurring evening radio program called the "fire side chat." In this message, he, through an analogy, conveyed the importance of neighborly assistance as a way to inform the nation about the pending Lend Lease program with Great Britain.

Roosevelt's message was: "Suppose my neighbor's home catches fire, and I have a length of garden hose four or five hundred feet away. If he can take my garden hose and connect it up with his hydrant, I may help him put out his fire...

This analogy resonates with me on the topic of Military Mobility, because of the large number of parallels to our current environment. Let me explain it this way.

Imagine that your homes are threatened by fire, or your homelands threatened by aggression.

If metaphorically, your garden hose is in disrepair or the fittings incompatible, you cannot assist your neighbor. Today, we have similar issues. Some equipment is obsolete, in poor repair, not interoperable, or there is too little of it to make an impact.

If likewise, all of the property in the neighborhood has signs stating no entry or trespassing, your aid will be delayed while awaiting permissions to transit. US ARMY Europe briefed me a few months ago, relaying that there are over 600 laws governing border crossings in Europe. USAREUR has a separate set of procedures for each nation, and for multiple scenarios like routine sustainment, peacetime exercises, and NATO's Article V. If responding to an emergency today, it would take all of us, an unacceptably long time to arrive with our garden hose.

Continuing with the analogy, it is natural to have fences and gates for safety. Any prudent homeowner would. However, if the surrounding properties have extreme physical barriers like high fences with spikes and multiple, reinforced locks on the gates, the goodwill of all your neighbors is meaningless, because they cannot overcome the laws of physics to aid you. Today, we have infrastructure which is largely unassessed for its capacity, and we lack the ability to route and expedite military traffic in support of one another.

Today, all Alliance and EU members are faced with the tangible threat of aggression, and we cannot afford to be indifferent to each other's plight. Since 2008, we have witnessed Russian aggression in Georgia and again in 2014 in Ukraine – each time undermining the sovereignty and independence of its neighbors.

Every day, I read in newspapers and journals about the hybrid capabilities of Russia, and what seems like an endless number of unprovoked cyber-attacks against the west. More alarmingly, I continue to hear about the testing of western air and maritime capabilities by Russian forces, often times, in a manner that is unprofessional, provocative, and dangerous. We've heard how the Russians are refining their doctrine and training, based upon lessons learned in Eastern Ukraine and Syria, and especially about the increased national investment in their defense industry. Russian arms, according to their boasts, are growing in sophistication and include new submarine launched ballistic missiles, hyper-sonic combat aircraft, improved anti-aircraft capabilities, reactive armor for ground vehicles, and modernized nuclear weapons, to name just a few.

Weighed collectively, I would suggest that these are not the acts of a benign nation, and we must be prepared to signal to this potential adversary, and any

others, that we are PREPARED to move our forces RAPIDLY and impose an unacceptably high cost for aggression.

There was a time when we had all hoped Russia would be a constructive partner in the world. Their aggressive actions, particularly post-Crimea have proven otherwise. That is why NATO is undergoing the largest buildup of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War. The United States supports these efforts and we are undertaking additional national measures under our European Deterrence Initiative.

For example, in order to shorten our response time, the US has pre-positioned additional defense material composed of vehicles and supply stocks at a high level of readiness in multiple sites. The US has postured additional land combat formations, headquarters elements, and even additional war ships within Europe, though not at Cold War levels.

Additionally, some of our most advanced fighter aircraft have been deployed to Europe for training exercises, enhancing interoperability and familiarizing the crews with operations here, in case they are called upon to help maintain vital air corridors.

Since 2015, We have invested resources in excess of \$8.5 Billion to pre-position equipment and upgrade military infrastructure in support of mobility, conducted surface movements at the Platoon through Brigade echelons using a wide variety of transportation nodes like air ports and sea ports, exercised the modes of air, rail, highway, inland waterway and sea, contributed to the training of transit nations as we traverse their sovereign territory, and generated demand signals to commercial partners for contracted lift capability, so that we will know how to work together if needed – all the while, sharing our lessons learned with both NATO, and more recently, the European Union.

The US is doing this because we understand that a credible and rapid response serves as the best deterrent, and deterrence maintains greater decision-making latitude, or results in additional options for our political leadership during a crisis. In short, an effective deterrence and defense helps ensure peace for the benefit of all our citizens.

So enough about what the U.S. is doing. Even though this talk is titled “The American Experience,” in Europe, the experience it is anything but. The United States does not, and could not stand alone in Europe. We recognize the shared roles of our partners and allies in the European Union and in NATO, who, like us,

have equities in a peaceful and prosperous continent, and encourage all to contribute to making Europe an easier place for the movement of forces from both EU Member States and NATO, or, if you'd like, a more distasteful place for the practice of aggression. We also recognize that keeping Europe at peace requires ease of movement to address potential threats within and outside of the continent.

To that end, and the reason we are here today, EU member states and NATO allies are now prudently re-evaluating their ability to move forces, and planning improvements to address their shortfalls, so that further belligerence on the part of Russia or ongoing challenges to the south can be rapidly responded to. For example:

We applaud NATO's ongoing planning efforts, the refining of military requirements for readiness to address emerging threats, the building of their capabilities database, the creation of formations designed to synchronize movements, the sharing of military movement requirements with the EU, and acknowledge the work underway to standardize process, while reducing the time and administrative burden for border crossings. Additionally, we compliment NATO for their work on the related and complimentary threads of Command Structure Adaptation, Speed of Decision Making and developing a Culture of Readiness.

Further, we support and watch with keen interest, several European Union initiatives in support of military mobility. We appreciate the EU's interest in incorporating dual-use/civil military specifications into proposals to improve European transportation infrastructure. Further, we are glad to see that military mobility is one of the most active projects in the EU's PESCO initiative, and remain hopeful that these projects yield the desired effects. Additionally, we are confident that NATO and the EU can leverage the ongoing analysis of the TEN-T corridors and multi-modal transport hubs to help enable the collective defense of Europe.

Finally, and probably most importantly, we recognize the important role of individual nations on this issue. EU member states and NATO members alike are sovereign decision makers. In the years ahead, our respective institutions will likely make collective decisions that would require or encourage nations to alter legislation to speed the processes required for border crossing, purchase lift assets like trucks and maintain their crews, build stouter bridges, ensure 24 hour staffing of a movement coordination cell, or stand in solidarity with another nation – by rapidly assisting their neighbor.

Several nations have already made great strides in reducing the bureaucracy required for the transit of forces, are considering the purchase of strategic lift assets and are engaging in consortiums like the Movement Coordination Center Eindhoven, or collective contracting efforts like Multi-Role Tanker Transport, or Strategic Airlift Capability /Heavy Airlift Wing. However, we still have a lot of work to do if we desire to display a posture that will guarantee a peaceful co-existence with would be adversaries.

Collectively, we must resolve to address the issues associated with Military Mobility. Because we, as a group of peace loving nations, must be enabled to timely assist one another in times of crisis. The insurance industry in America has a saying..."it is always cheaper to avoid a disaster than respond to one."

Finally, I'd like to thank our Netherlands ally for showing resolute leadership on military mobility.