

General Frank Gorenc
"USAFE-AFAFRICA Update"
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General Gorenc: Thank you, General McKinley. I did want to offer up my thanks in this forum for all of the things that AFA does for us, particularly on the education and all of that area, and having an opportunity like this to talk about the mission.

What I'd like to do today is run through a couple of thoughts with respect to USAFE-AFAFRICA, give you a little bit of an update, hopefully inspire some questions. I failed miserably in my moderator tasks during the last one, so I'll be fairly brief. But I have a set of slides that describe some things that I've learned over the last year that I want to share with you because they're telling.

USAFE-AFAFRICA is an interesting command because we are the only MAJCOM that actually provides competency to two combatant commanders. I'll talk a little bit more about that and I'll talk about some of the challenges that come with that.

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I already described what we are, but the bottom line is we are forward presence in an expeditionary Air Force construct. We provide forward presence for missions in Europe and Africa, and we are also part of the AEF construct, and we actually are full participants in the AEF construct with respect to other operations that are going on in locations outside of Europe and Africa.

Right now in Europe the challenges are the two that are listed right there. The first one is ambiguous warfare. I made these slides before the summit in Wales. The verbiage now is hybrid warfare. But ambiguous warfare was used to describe what I thought Ukraine crisis represented. If you were in the previous panel, Ukraine crisis has been interesting for us because in the end Mr. Putin has found a way to basically limit the asymmetrical advantages in NATO. So ambiguity seems to be the word of the day in the coverage for Ukraine, and here's what I mean.

When Crimea happened, there was this concept and this discussion of little green men. You know, these are people that look like they're in the military but have absolutely no insignia and masks on and they're running around doing things that look awfully military, but the thing that we couldn't make out with these little green men is evidence and attribution to who they are. Were they separatists or Ukraine citizens that don't like being in Ukraine? Were they Russians? Who are these people and why are they in Crimea and why did they aid in the annexation?

There was a second ambiguity that I want to highlight here just for your thought, and that is the issue of advanced Surface-to-Air Missile systems in the hands of who, being fired from where? I would remind everybody, we still, we have an airliner that was shot down. We still don't really attribute who did that and why they did it. And by the way, just for your information, the Ukraine has, as described by my Estonian Air Chief friend, given the Russians a bloody nose but in the process they have lost, up to this point, almost a squadron's worth of airplanes flying sorties in their own airspace. And who are those people operating that system? Are they separatists, or are they Russian? Who are they? This is the air domain equivalent to little green men and it's going to hinder our ability to do operations, and this ambiguous warfare is going to hinder us.

I would offer and postulate a scenario where what would we do if in fact in Northern Iraq there were SA-11 systems running around in the hands of people that we don't know and don't know what their skills are. I mean it would change the way that we were applying combat power from the air. So I offer that up. Ambiguous warfare.

Contested airspace. Today one-third of Poland is under Russian IADS coverage. Today and there are other parts of NATO airspace where that is also true. And so this idea of contested airspace is not exclusive to any particular area of the world, and we're going to have to account for this contested airspace and make tactics, techniques, procedures, and do deployments in order to make sure that we have what our Air Force is working for, and that's air supremacy, air dominance, the ability to do anything we want from the air. That's the American and coalition and

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alliance way of war. I don't see it changing. But Ukraine offers us a very valuable opportunity to look at a problem that we're going to have to deal with in that area and they're both present in Europe.

In Africa, the tyranny of distance. Once again, the tyranny of distance in my AOR is enormous. I put the continental United States in there in Africa, the bottom line is you could put three United States in Africa and that's what we have to deal with. And if you know anything about Africa, it's not like there are a lot of airports or roads that allow you to truck stuff or put stuff on a train. It just does not exist. It has to go by air when we make a decision to move it. So the tyranny of distance in the Africa AOR is alive and well.

Then there's transnational threats. Drug trafficking, human trafficking, all kinds of illicit activity is happening there that has become a national security threat to the countries of Africa, and there's lots of activity that we are supporting and we're supporting our partner countries and their operations down there.

So that's what USAFE-AFAFRICA is. These are the challenges that we have specific to each AOR, and those are the joint commands that we support using infrastructure in Europe.

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Here are my roles as a commander. I report to General Welsh in my MAJCOM business of organize, training and equipping an Air Force. Our biggest challenge is uncertainty. The Secretary talked about that in her speech. It's uncertainty about a lot of things, primarily driven by sequestration and the potential for fiscal austerity that will require us to make some pretty tough decisions.

I already mentioned the fact that I provide an air competency to two combatant commanders. The biggest challenge in Europe is the ambiguity that I talked about; and the biggest challenge in Africa is emerging requirements, particularly in light of the transition in Afghanistan between combat operations and train, advise and assist mission, you can imagine many combatant

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commands have limited their appetite for air power stuff in support of that particular other engagement that we're doing. And the thought of the possibilities of using some of those assets that are coming out of Afghanistan are alive and well in Africa.

The interesting thing, as a note, is General Breedlove is the European Command Commander, General Rodriguez is the Africa Command Commander. Because of the way those commands were built they operate completely different. So in the end, we have to accommodate that difference, which we do, but it's not easy, and up to this point our staff has been doing a fantastic job of it.

Then of course we are the air proponent to SACEUR. That's my role. But the biggest challenge there is what General Breedlove talks of things that came out of the summit that are pretty fresh to absorb, don't really know what they mean. If you have any questions on that I'll be happy to do that. But on a day to day basis these are the things that we're dealing with in USAFE-AFAFRICA.

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One of the most important things that an overseas command brings to joint and coalition and alliance warfare is basing. It was mentioned in the previous panel, but bases are our combat platforms. That's where we generate precise combat power to be used by those that need air power, and these are the big installations that we have over there.

I want to say this up front. USAFE since 1989 has decreased by all measures in all areas of 75 percent. I say that often. I want to share that with you, because in the addressing of the sequestration, you know, oftentimes we run into people who think there's 450,000 Americans in Europe and that's just not true. By every measure -- bases, people, aircraft, budget not so much, but it's almost 75 percent. That's the number you can quote me on. That's the reality. So we're starting from a reduction of 75 percent.

And this is what we provide. The only thing I want to highlight in here, actually there are two things. Pápa, Hungary, Actually

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I only have administrative control of that unit, but that is the unit that is a Memorandum of Organization Agreement among 12 countries, and together they operate three C-17s, and the business cases they share and buy into a certain number of hours of strategic airlift. It's a fantastic model for the future because it allows countries that cannot afford their own C-17 to actually become involved in strategic airlift and the things that are required to do strategic airlift. So that's a unique wing.

Then we have the Air/Ground Ops Wing at Ramstein. That is the conglomeration of our CRG, our JTACS and some other elements, and they are really focused on opening bases, defending expeditionary locations. So that's kind of the operation that we have there.

So that's what's left as a major operating base.

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We also have 90 geographically separated units of groups roughly from 12 to 150 people. They're geographically separated out of necessity, because they have to be where they are to meet their mission. And we have interesting arrangements that we're continuing to tweak, but in England the 501st CSW basically takes care of all of the geographically separated units.

On the continent, some of these geographically separated units are actually commanded by the big mobility operations. So Spangdahlem, the commander and the chief there take care of some geographically separated units, same at Aviano, same at Incirlik, and so that's kind of what we're doing.

As I mentioned, we're small by every measure with respect to where we were at the end of the Cold War, and you can see roughly about 34,700 military and civilian folk are left there. With their dependents basically we're serving roughly about 57,000 people.

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We have a saying in Europe, and after much deliberation our group came to the moniker of, "Why is Europe important? Because we're forward, we're ready, and we're ready now." We enable much of the movement and much of the ability of our United States Air Force to do expeditionary operations because we have infrastructure and force structure in Europe that allows us to meet the mission.

I'm not going to go through every one of these except to say there are some interesting missions that are popping up. And how they're executed is interesting.

I have a list of things there but the one that I want to really draw your attention to is the Libya Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation. This is basically the evacuation of the embassy in Tripoli. What we were tasked for was to support that movement, and that movement went by vehicle. And that movement in the concept of operation required F-16s, tankers, C-130s, and a C-17. It required five tankers, three F-16s. Each one of those F-16s flew from their home station as did the tankers. The F-16s logged a 12.5 in executing that mission. Those are the kinds of things that we're dealing with. Remember the tyranny of distance? So we're doing things and sharing force structure between two combatant commands, and we're doing it from home station. And that's really what I wanted to highlight. And I can answer questions on all of these things. But what I really wanted to do with this slide is basically kind of throw out the proposition of what if we would have to do this mission with rotating forces? We certainly couldn't be as responsive. And the bottom line is, roughly it would cost you three-to-one on the force structure. That's the reality of it. That's the decision that we have to make.

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Here's some of the equipment. The good news is, for force structure in Europe we have full spectrum capability. I just have these pictures. Obviously we can do personnel and recovery. We have F-16s doing the SEAD, DEAD mission, CAS mission. We have the mighty F-15E and the F-15Cs, and then of course we have the refueling. We have a very robust and very

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used opening the base, wiring the base and fighting the base with the 435th AGOW. And those are the tools that we use.

We support operations in both AORs through the 603rd AOC located at Ramstein. So we have a single AOC.

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Here are some interesting pictures. We're also supporting Baltic air policing. I thought I'd share this with you. It's a robust activity at this point. So this is something that both the United States and our partners are doing as required. We're in partnership with a lot of countries. I thought I'd share that with you.

Up to this point everything has been pretty professional. And we're going to continue to do it.

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We also exercise. The strategy requires partners. Our mission is to help build partnership capability, and this is how we do it. We've been doing reassurance measures in accordance with General Breedlove's desires inside of his SACEUR hat. On his EUCOM hat we do things like the Polish Aviation Detachment. That's basically an arrangement that we have where we have PCS'd people to Poland that basically coordinate exercises in both the C-130 and the F-16 area. It's systematic but it's periodic, except for those that are forward.

So I just wanted to show all of you the list of things that we're doing to meet the aspiration and the requirements of the strategy to build partnership capacity so that if something happens we have the ability to be as interoperable as possible with respect to the ability to execute.

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I added this just to show you some pictures. We're doing all kinds of good stuff.

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One of the things, I wanted to put this slide up and I almost took it out, but the bottom line is I wanted to put this slide up there and give you a couple of things that our Airmen are doing to be as efficient as possible with the resources that we have. As you know, our Air Force vision that General Welsh put out, what's our aspiration? We want to be the world's greatest Air Force. We're powered by Airmen and we're fueled by innovation. These are innovative ways to get a dollar's worth of service or product for a dollar. And these are little gains, and I want you to know what the Secretary said this morning. Our Airmen are absolutely spectacular. Where the rubber meets the road they know what to do and they know how to make it better. And in our ability to meet the Chief's vision of being the world's greatest Air Force and using our Airmen to do it and inspiring innovation, we've challenged all of the leadership in USAFE just like all of us have challenged our Airmen, is to find ways to make it better. These are some examples.

\$93,000 in the big scheme of things is not a lot of money, but you know what? They made it happen and it's money that we can use.

\$1 million per year on something as benign as visa applications.

Then of course \$708,000 per year just by making sure that we accommodate the schedule and use of our personnel, both civilian and military, inside of that unit.

And our Airmen are stepping up big in the innovation area. Obviously along with other innovations inside of acquisition, now we're talking about something really good. But the important part is not how much we save; the important part is inspiring an environment where Airmen can feel empowered and where they're working to offer up ideas to save money. Sometimes we can do it, sometimes we can't, but the important part is that they tried. That's what we're trying to do across USAFE and of course across the United States Air Force.

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I wanted to throw this up there. Again, I mentioned by every measure USAFE is 75 percent smaller than it was in 1989. I wanted to put this in terms of budget.

The bottom line is, we use four percent of the Air Force O&M budget to do things in USAFE. We're full partners with the idea that there's infrastructure that we can save money on. We're full participants in the European Infrastructure consolidation Initiative. But the bottom line is, given the massive downsizing that we've already accomplished, you can see with this slice of the budget that in the end there's not a lot there. And I think we get a lot back with the option of having forward based infrastructure and forward based force structure. So about four percent is what we use.

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I told you I would push it up and offer you the opportunity to ask questions, and I'd be more than happy to answer any question you have.

Moderator: Thanks, Frank. I've got some great questions from the audience, and then we've got a couple from the staff.

Frank, will you be able to meet tactical ISR requirements in EUCOM and AFRICOM when the MQ-1/MQ-9 CAPs are being reduced from 65 to 55? It seems like ISR requirements are growing, not shrinking.

General Gorenc: Let me address the first part. Yeah. I mean in the end one of the good things about remotely piloted aircraft and all of that infrastructure is, there's a lot of good use for it. The persistence of the ISR that's provided by remotely piloted aircraft are well documented. That persistence, quite honestly, was important, is important in Afghanistan as it was in Iraq, but it's also important in other parts of my AOR. But the specific question with respect to the reduction of 65 to 55 is, it depends. That's the Weapons School answer. I learned that a long time ago.

But the bottom line is, in the end, as we make this adjustment, there will be requirements. We have been well beyond our

ability to fulfill all of the ISR requirements out there with the current structure and we're having to make choices on what we do and where we go. So my answer to that is, I really don't know until I see what the effect of going and transitioning from combat operations in Afghanistan to train, advise and assist. And then with respect to the requirements of the combatant commander, we're not there yet. But I can assure you that the demand for persistent ISR will remain very very high and there will have to be a prioritization and there will have to be somebody who decides exactly what we go after and what we don't go after.

Moderator: General Gorenc, to enhance strategic capabilities and efficiency, what are your thoughts on expanding deployed air refueling detachments throughout USAFE and Africa Command? Incirlik, Djibouti, places like that.

General Gorenc: In essence we actually do that already. Oftentimes we move refueling assets to where the fight is. In the end, as you know, we are supporting our partner, the French, down in Africa with air-to-air refueling. Those aircraft don't operate out of Mildenhall, they operate from a forward location, so we're already doing that to optimize and meet the requirements for the refueling.

Moderator: What's your outlook with regard to aiding the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the accompanying security concerns as the outbreak spreads?

General Gorenc: Up to this point the requirement for us has not been high. However, I can honestly say that there are things that we do that given a task we could look into helping address some of the things that want to be done with respect to the Ebola virus. But at this point there's really nothing concrete out there for us. But as you know, one of the feathers in the hat of the counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism business is in fact we've developed a very robust ability to move patients. Certainly we weren't focused on moving patients with the Ebola virus, but in the end the infrastructure, the basic infrastructure is there. The expeditionary equipment that we would use to set things up in expeditionary environments or underdeveloped environments is there. So we stand ready to

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address some of those requirements in a way that would make sense.

Moderator: Here comes your National War College question.

What's the status of the European force posture study vis-à-vis congressional demands for conclusions ahead of any CONUS BRAC debate?

General Gorenc: I won't be answering that in any detail.
[Laughter].

Moderator: You learned your lessons well.

General Gorenc: Well, let me just say, honestly, we have been full participants in that initiative. Our mantra for the longest time was infrastructure, not force structure. And we have made our inputs to that effort. It's not official yet, but I am completely satisfied with the inputs that we were able to make. We're hopeful that our inputs are accepted. And I believe for the ones that, for what we developed and what we put into that process, I think there would be very little degradation in the ability to do our mission.

And by the way, I showed all those bases and all that kind of stuff, and bases are important. But in the end I didn't really have to be a big advocate for infrastructure in Europe because the fact of the matter is the infrastructure in Europe is being used to enable worldwide operations. So I've had a lot of help from a lot of organizations describing the requirement for the infrastructure that we have. But up to this point I'm completely satisfied with our inclusion into the process. We have a plan and we'll see what comes out of it.

Moderator: Great. And I know you appreciate all the help.

General Gorenc: Yeah.

Moderator: Given Ukraine, how does NATO need to refocus on high end threats like the SU-30, the S-400, et cetera?

General Gorenc: That's really, that's not specific to USAFE. We have to face it, that up to this point we've spent almost a decade in this counter-insurgency/counter-terrorism fight, 24 hour ATO at relatively low OpsTempo, sometimes with not a lot of weapons expenditures, all of those kinds of things. And that's okay. We've done a spectacular job with that.

But the fact of the matter is, we're an Air Force that is designed to address a holistic spectrum of threats. And I'm implying that there's a low end spectrum over here, but that means there's also the high end spectrum. So the ability to meet the contested environment, as they say, is very important. So I think it's absolutely critical.

But let me answer that question with respect to NATO in a different way.

On the NATO side, one of the unintended consequences of -- Well, not an unintended, an obvious consequence of Ukraine is the fact that now, and you can see it with some of the results inside the Wales summit. All of our NATO alliance partners are basically bringing up this requirement for collective security under the Article 5 construct.

Up to this point there was a real push to develop capabilities inside of NATO to go out of area. That's what Afghanistan represented first, and then of course the Balkans before that. But now everybody is focused on Article 5. And contested environments are starting to become thought of again in the context I mentioned in my last briefing, one-third of Poland is under Russian IADS coverage. You know? That's an interesting concept, particularly with respect to the fact that there's one airliner that's already shot down in the Ukraine. So these are things that we have to start thinking about.

The focus on collective security, the focus on high end threat I think is a healthy thing to do. It will identify capabilities gaps that we need to address. And with Ukraine, it will have to identify and will have to talk about how it is we would address this ambiguous threat that's out there, both on the ground and in the air.

Moderator: At the Congressional Staffer Luncheon there was a lot of talk about sequestration, full-blown sequestration, in '16. What were some of the effects of the readiness stand-downs this past summer based on the initial sequestration blush? And then put it forward to full-blown sequestration in '16 in your AOR.

General Gorenc: The effects of the sequestration in FY13 were, we had to sit some squadrons down. And of course over time they lost their readiness level. Then when the money did come, we spent a lot of time rebuilding that readiness.

Let me just highlight something here, this is kind of an unintended consequence of sequestration for us. But to rebuild one month's worth of non-flying, you have to fly about three months. That's an argument. Could be four, could be six. It depends on the readiness state of the Air Force. But what we can't fix with sequestration with respect to flying is the development of our force. Those opportunities that are lost because a three level can't get upgraded to a five level, a five level can't be upgraded to a seven level, a fighter pilot wingman can't become a flight lead, flight lead can't become a four-ship flight lead, and on and on and on. Those opportunities are all lost to history because we're not flying airplanes.

So what that means to full-blown sequestration up to this point? You know, the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force has focused us on Air Force 2023. What do we want our force to look like in 2023? Assuming that we do not get relief from sequestration. That's where we're at. And I can say this much, we're going to have some hard choices.

But what we do have a commitment to is making sure that we have a balanced force that won't create a hollow Air Force. That's our goal.

I don't know what that sequestration will mean, but if we're using the balanced approach, I think we're going to miss the opportunity, and I think the biggest thing that will hurt is the ability to develop and nurture our force like we need to on a day-to-day basis. A full spectrum high end Air Force needs to

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fly airplanes every single day just to sustain itself. And when we lose those opportunities it takes a long time to recover.

Moderator: One last question and then we'll let you wrap up.

What do you think our Africa partners, their air forces in particular, need the most and how can we help them from a United States Air Force perspective?

General Gorenc: I think the biggest way that we help with our African mission is we help them to gain an understanding of what it means to develop and nurture people. Full spectrum. Enlisted force, officer force, flyers, maintainers.

My view of things in the AFRICOM mission is the ability to have a pool of people developed enough with English-speaking skills enough to be able to sustain an air force.

Up to this point the biggest needs that I see -- Remember the picture with big Africa and three little United States in there? They need mobility. Some elegant mobility solutions would allow the services of those countries to do some really good things with respect to some of the challenges that they have across the board.

Then of course the other thing that I think would be very useful for many of our African partners, is the ability to have some intel, surveillance and reconnaissance. I'm not talking about 45 CAPs of Predators. It's not going to happen. But the ability to have basic intel, surveillance, reconnaissance to be able to understand the nature of the challenges that are present in, particularly in the border areas.

I think it's those two things.

Of the five things that a full spectrum air force would provide, ISR and mobility were the most applicable inside of Africa.

Of course gaining and maintaining air superiority in Africa, they don't think about that a lot. Honestly, it's not really required at this point. Global strike or strike, you know, not a high priority. But the bottom line is mobility and ISR and

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the ability to command and control it at a rudimentary level I think is where they need most capability.

Moderator: Frank, this has been a top notch presentation. We expected no less from you. You and your brother have been close personal friends for a long time. You're doing a great job making us very proud.

General Gorenc: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. It's a privilege.

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