

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UPDATE
October 1 - 9, 2014

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1. [Obama Meets at Pentagon with Hagel, Military Commanders](#) (10-08-2014)

By Nick Simeone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8, 2014 – President Barack Obama today discussed a series of pressing issues affecting U.S. security, including the battle against Sunni terrorists in the Middle East as well as U.S. efforts to stop the spread of Ebola in Africa during a meeting at the Pentagon with Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and the military's top commanders.

“I think at a time when there’s so much turbulence in the world, never during my presidency has it become more apparent how good our military is,” Obama said after holding what he called a “periodic check-in” with Pentagon leaders, including the commanders of the combatant commands.

Obama called the U.S.-led effort to degrade and destroy Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists in Iraq and Syria a difficult mission that will take time.

“The good news is, there is a broad-based consensus not just in the region but among nations of the world that ISIL is a threat to world peace, security and order, that their barbaric behavior has to be dealt with,” and he said he is confident progress in the fight against the group which holds a large swathes of territory spanning the Iraq-Syria border will continue.

Obama said discussions also included the U.S. effort to stop the spread of Ebola in West Africa. As many 4,000 U.S. military personnel are expected to be deployed in Liberia as part of Operation United Assistance, the military mission supporting U.S. and international efforts to stop the spread of a virus that has already killed more than 3,300 people across the region.

“Our military is essentially building an infrastructure that does not exist in order to facilitate the transport of personnel and equipment and supplies to deal with this deadly epidemic,” he said, and emphasized that the safety of U.S. military personnel remains his top priority.

Obama said today’s discussion also included the defense budget, hard hit by cuts mandated by the budget sequester which is set to return in 2016 if current law is not changed, cuts he described as “draconian.” At the same time, he said the military has worked to make itself “leaner, meaner, more effective, more tailored to the particular challenges that we’re going to face in the 21st century.”

2. Chollet: U.S. Committed to Europe’s Stability (10-08-2014)

By Jim Garamone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8, 2014 – Russian threats to Ukraine are one example of how the security landscape in Europe has changed, and the United States will remain involved and engaged in events on the continent and beyond, Derek Chollet, the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs said today.

Chollet, who addressed the International Institute of Strategic Studies here, emphasized that the United States will continue to work with European allies as needed.

NATO, of course, remains America’s bedrock security alliance, Chollet said. Last month’s alliance summit in Wales reiterated the importance of setting goals for the future. The Russian threat to Ukraine heightened the necessity of collective defense on the continent.

More than a North Atlantic organization

But NATO has become more than a North Atlantic organization, he said. The alliance still commands the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and will maintain an advise-and-assist mission in the country beginning in January 2015.

Such out-of-area conflicts, including NATO’s intervention in Libya, and other instability in North Africa suggest new importance to the alliance, he said.

But in Europe itself, Chollet said NATO and the United States are working to shore up Central and Eastern European alliance partners and allies and are also working with non-NATO partners in the Balkans and Ukraine where the U.S. is working to build and sustain capabilities.

The United States will provide troops for “a robust program of rotational deployments, pre-positioned equipment and exercise programs to ensure that their capability is as robust as it can be” for Eastern Europe, he said.

The United States is also working with European allies to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, he said.

“The great accomplishment of the Wales Summit was the unity that the alliance showed in the fight against ISIL and the willingness of many NATO allies to step up and contribute in a meaningful way to that fight.”

Biographies:

[Derek Chollet](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Operation Atlantic Resolve](#)

[NATO](#)

[NATO International Security Assistance Force](#)

[Special Report: Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists in Iraq](#)

[3. Ambassadors Show Support for Ukraine on Visit to Kyiv, Odesa \(10-07-2014\)](#)

Vienna — U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE Daniel Baer is joining 34 other ambassadors to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on a visit that has brought the majority of the OSCE’s Permanent Council to Ukraine.

"This is a way to show our support to the people and the government of Ukraine," Baer said, "and to hear firsthand about the challenges they face in terms of responding to externally driven violence, seizing the opportunity to elect a new parliament, and moving quickly on reforms that will deliver results."

In a meeting with President Petro Poroshenko on October 7, Baer congratulated him on the vote in support of anti-corruption legislation on the first reading in the Verkhovna Rada earlier that day. The ambassadors voiced unwavering support for Ukraine’s unity and territorial integrity. Poroshenko underscored the need to move quickly to secure and monitor the international border between Ukraine and Russia, consistent with the Minsk protocol of September 5.

The ambassadors also met with a dozen human rights activists and NGO leaders, as well as with representatives of the government and coalition and opposition members of parliament.

After meeting with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and, separately, with civil society activists, Baer remarked that "it's striking that both the prime minister and the activists zeroed-in on the core elements of rule of law — both highlighted need for reform in the prosecutor, the judiciary and law enforcement."

With parliamentary elections less than three weeks away, Tana di Zuleta, the head of OSCE ODIHR's long-term election observation mission, reported that around 3,500 candidates and 29 parties are competing. OSCE ODIHR has 80 long-term observers and will have another 600 short-term observers on election day. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will also send observers for the upcoming elections.

The ambassadors also had wide-ranging discussions with the chair of the "Trilateral Contact Group," Heidi Tagliavini, and the chief monitor of the special monitoring mission, Ertuğrul Apakan. They will visit the Odesa team of the special monitoring mission to learn more about how the SMM works in the field.

"Our discussions underscored the tenuous situation in the parts of Donetsk and Luhansk plagued by violence. The OSCE special monitoring mission has an important role to play on the ground — and it can only play that role if Russia and its proxies in the East abide by all parts of the September 5 Minsk Protocol and September 19 Minsk agreement. The ceasefire requires heavy weapons and fighters to go back to Russia, and for the Ukraine-Russia border to be secured," Baer said.

4. Airstrikes Pound ISIL in Syria, Iraq (10-07-2014)

From a U.S. Central Command News Release

TAMPA, Fla., Oct. 7, 2014 – U.S. and partner-nation military forces continued to attack Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists in Syria yesterday and today, using attack, bomber, fighter and remotely piloted aircraft to conduct nine airstrikes, U.S. Central Command officials reported.

Separately, officials added, U.S. military forces used attack and remotely piloted aircraft to conduct four airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq.

In Syria, two airstrikes west of Hasakah successfully struck multiple ISIL buildings, including an air observation building and staging areas, officials said, and another airstrike northeast of Dayr az Zawr successfully struck an ISIL staging area and an IED production facility.

An airstrike south of Kobani destroyed three ISIL armed vehicles and damaged another, and another strike southeast of Kobani destroyed an ISIL armed vehicle carrying anti-aircraft artillery. Two airstrikes southwest of Kobani damaged an ISIL tank, and another strike south of Kobani destroyed an ISIL unit.

In addition, an airstrike southwest of Rabiya struck a small group of ISIL fighters.

U.S. forces employed Air Force attack, fighter and bomber aircraft deployed to the Centcom area of operations. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also participated in these airstrikes, Centcom officials said, and all aircraft safely left the strike areas.

In Iraq, an airstrike destroyed an ISIL armed vehicle firing on Kurdish Peshmerga forces northeast of Sinjar. Three more airstrikes northeast of Sinjar destroyed three ISIL armed vehicles and struck a small group of ISIL fighters.

To conduct these strikes, U.S. forces employed Air Force attack and remotely piloted aircraft deployed to the Centcom area of operations, officials said. Belgium also participated in these airstrikes, officials added, and all aircraft left the strike areas safely.

Related Sites:

[U.S. Central Command](#)

[Special Report: U.S. Central Command](#)

[Special Report: Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists in Iraq](#)

5. EU, U.S. Decry Backsliding on Human Rights in Russia, Azerbaijan (10-06-2014)

Vienna — Russia once again found itself isolated at Europe’s largest human rights conference, when diplomats and activists gathered in Warsaw for the OSCE’s annual human rights meeting.

At the closing session on October 3, the U.S. delegation called upon OSCE participating states to fulfill their commitments related to security, prosperity, and human rights in the closing session of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting held in Warsaw against the backdrop of threats to the fundamental precepts and core values upon which European security and the OSCE itself were founded.

U.S. Head of Delegation Brian Atwood criticized governments that have become adept at rationalizing their suppression of human rights: “When one member of the OSCE backslides on their commitments, it pulls all of us backwards as an OSCE community.”

For the past two weeks the U.S. delegation has welcomed good-faith efforts and concrete progress by many participating states in implementing their commitments. The exchange of best practices among NGOs, ODIHR, and government representatives works to further dialogue on addressing challenges to the human dimension.

Regrettably, steps have also been taken in some participating states that widen the gulf between their commitments and their practices. Russia has shown continuing disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of one of its neighbors, Ukraine. The space for civil society and freedom of expression in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is increasingly closing. Laws and policies aimed at restricting religious freedoms are being applied in a discriminatory way. The United States will be watching closely to see that the brave human rights activists who have participated in HDIM do not face retribution when they return home.

Atwood emphasized, “Comprehensive security is the backbone of the OSCE. The human dimension becomes all the more important given the current tensions surrounding violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity. We should all strive to resurrect the integrity of the Helsinki Final Act.”

6. Biden Outlines U.S. Foreign Policy for Rapidly Changing World (10-03-2014)

By Bridget Hunter
Staff Writer

Washington — “The world has changed,” Vice President Biden said October 2 at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government in Boston. “The sheer rapidity and magnitude, the interconnectedness of the major global challenges demand a response — a different response, a global response involving more players, more diverse players than ever before.”

Citing “immediate crises ... from ISIL to Ebola to Ukraine,” Biden said that the “international order that we painstakingly built after World War II and defended over the past several decades is literally fraying at the seams right now.”

In response, the United States is strengthening its core alliances, building relationships with emerging powers, defending and extending the most vital international rules of the road, and confronting the causes of violent extremism.

The United States continues to cooperate closely with its European allies on regional security, but also on “everything from trade to counterterrorism to climate change,” including pursuing a final agreement on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

The vice president highlighted the U.S. approach to specific policy challenges.

- Ukraine: “Each of the 28 NATO allies has now committed to providing security assistance to Ukraine, including over \$115 million from the United States. And as we respond to the crisis in Ukraine, we are determined that NATO itself emerge stronger from the crisis thrust on us by Russia.”
- East Asia: “America today has more peacetime military engagements in the Asia-Pacific than ever before” with 60 percent of its naval assets and air power stationed in the Pacific by 2020. It is strengthening its ability to deter North Korea’s nuclear ambitions, expanding the U.S.-Vietnam partnership, and pursuing “an historic opportunity” to build a new relationship with Burma.
- Middle East: “Alliances are also crucial ... and we’re working alongside a coalition of Arab partners and countries from around the world to confront ISIL.”
- Africa: The United States is organizing the international response to the largest Ebola outbreak in history and deploying more than “3,000 American soldiers to West Africa to support regional civilian responses.”
- Western Hemisphere: With North America “the energy epicenter of the world today,” the continent is on track to be energy independent by 2020. Trade relationships remain critically important with 40 percent of U.S. export remaining in the hemisphere. On regional security, the United States will maintain and expand cooperation with key partners like Colombia, Mexico and Central American nations.

To more effectively manage its relationships with the emerging powers of the 21st century, the United States will strive “to realize the potential of America’s friendship with emerging democratic partners like Brazil and President Dilma, President Peña Nieto in Mexico, Prime Minister Modi in India, who just made a historic visit to the United States this week,” Biden said.

“The world in which emerging powers and responsible stakeholders promote common security and prosperity has yet to arrive, but it’s within our grasp to see that happen. That’s why we’ve embraced the G20 as a model for economic cooperation. That’s why it’s also important that we fully support international institutions like the IMF, fund them and reform and modernize them to better serve all nations.”

CHINA

Biden singled out the U.S.-China relationship as “the single most essential part” of improving U.S. relations with emerging powers. “Even as we acknowledge that we will often be in competition, we seek deeper cooperation with China, not conflict.”

The vice president reminded his audience that President Obama plans to visit China later this year, and that Obama’s recent meeting with President Xi in California resulted in a historic agreement on curtailing hydrofluorocarbons.

Biden also reiterated the United States' commitment to maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. "We'll also never stop standing up for the principles we believe in that are universal: democratic freedoms and human rights."

The U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region also depends on completing the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Biden said.

Once completed, the trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific trade pacts "will encompass nearly two-thirds of the global trade in the world, and can shape the character of the entire ... global economy."

On international peace and security, the United States and its partners must "defend and extend the international rules of the road and deal with asymmetrical threats that are emerging." That means upholding "longstanding, important international norms like nonproliferation and territorial integrity" through actions like removing Syria's chemical weapons stockpile and defending Ukraine's sovereignty.

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

ISIL is the latest example of the rise of violent extremism that pre-dated the Obama administration and likely will last beyond it, Biden said. "Our comprehensive strategy to degrade and eventually defeat ISIL reflects the lessons we have learned in the post-9/11 age about how to use our power wisely. ... It's focused on building a coalition with concrete contributions from the countries in the region."

"Ultimately, societies have to solve their own problems, which is why we're pouring so much time and effort into supporting a Syrian opposition and Iraqi efforts to re-establish their democracy and defend their territory."

The United States recognizes that it cannot solve problems like ISIL alone, Biden said, and knows that military force alone will not resolve the situation.

But the United States can and does "seek to empower the forces of moderation and pluralism and inclusive economic growth. We can work with our partners to delegitimize ISIL in the Islamic world and their perverse ideology."

7. Partnership Helps Bosnia and Herzegovina Step Up to Peacekeeping (10-02-2014)

This blog post by Mike Smith appeared on the State Department website on October 1. Smith serves as the director of the Office of Plans and Initiatives in the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

U.S. Partnership Helps Bosnia and Herzegovina Step up to the Challenge of International Peacekeeping

By Mike Smith

Nearly 20 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina was at the center of one of postwar Europe's most horrific conflicts. But over the past decade, it has become a regional leader in training military, police, and civilian personnel to serve as international peacekeepers. I recently travelled to Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina's capital, for a truly special event: we're celebrating Bosnia and

Herzegovina's reaching Full Training Capability, a "graduation day" of sorts for one of our most important partners in the State Department-led [Global Peace Operations Initiative](#) (GPOI).

The Global Peace Operations Initiative is a U.S. Government-funded security assistance program started in 2005 working to meet the growing global demand for specially trained personnel to conduct international peace operations by building the capabilities of U.S. partner countries to train and sustain peacekeepers; increasing the number of capable military troops and police units available for deployment; and facilitating the preparation, logistical support, and deployment of peacekeepers. GPOI promotes international peace and security, saving lives while reducing the burden on U.S. military forces, and helping set the stage for post-conflict recovery around the world.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was among our first GPOI partners in 2005, and brought a great idea to the table: they wanted to develop a Peace Support Operations Training Center. This Center would not only train Bosnian armed forces, but also those of other countries in the region, to effectively contribute to international peace and security. With a \$5.8 million investment from GPOI, as well as support from other international partners, Bosnia and Herzegovina has turned the Center into a major hub for peacekeeping education, and has trained military, police, and civilian personnel from 48 countries in accordance with current UN standards. Bosnia and Herzegovina is only the third of 66 GPOI partner countries to mark the milestone of Full Training Capability, and the first of our 11 GPOI partners in Europe.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has also been a leading voice in efforts to integrate more women into peacekeeping forces. GPOI and the U.S. military's European Command (EUCOM) provided a U.S. Military Advisor to the Center, who helped develop a specialized course to increase training attention to protecting women and girls in conflict zones. Earlier this year, the Center built on this success with the hosting of a major international conference that brought more than 150 international experts together to discuss this important aspect of peacekeeping operations, and establishing Bosnia and Herzegovina as a regional training expert for women, peace, and security.

We know that now more than ever, there is a growing global demand for trained peacekeeping personnel. International stability requires peace operations, and peace operations require well trained, effective peacekeepers. Like any graduation, Full Training Capability does not mark an end, but the beginning of a new peacekeeping partnership with GPOI. We applaud Bosnia and Herzegovina's continued national investment in peacekeeping and look forward to building on our partnership through GPOI to save lives and help set the stage for post-conflict recovery around the world.

[8. Hagel Praises Historic Bonds, Current Coalition Ties With France \(10-02-2014\)](#)

By Amaani Lyle
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2, 2014 – Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel welcomed French Minister of Defense Jean-Yves Le Drian to the Pentagon to reaffirm their mutual resolve to address a spectrum of issues, from terrorism to infectious disease control, the two leaders said in a joint news conference today.

The secretary lauded Le Drian for France's leading role in the international coalition to degrade and destroy the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, noting that France was the first

nation to join the United States in conducting airstrikes against the terrorist network. The coalition has since grown to include 40 nations.

The fight against ISIL

“American and French forces will continue to work side by side to support Iraqi forces on the ground as French aircraft patrol the skies over Iraq and provide valuable intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance on ISIL targets,” Hagel said.

These efforts, he added, enable Iraqi and Kurdish security forces to take the offensive against ISIL.

The two leaders also discussed ways to continue building and strengthening the coalition and supporting the new government of Iraq.

“The United States and France recognize the grave threat that ISIL poses to our shared regional interests and our citizens,” Hagel said.

He recounted the recent murder of a French hostage in Algeria, an incident he described as a “stark reminder of the deadly threats ISIL presents” to France and its allies.

Challenges in Africa

During their meeting today, the secretaries also focused on security challenges in North and West Africa, two regions Hagel said now face surges of violent extremism, instability and deadly infectious disease.

“France’s leadership in confronting extremist threats in the Sahel is particularly important as the United States continues to provide support to French operations in Mali, including airlift, refueling and intelligence cooperation,” he said.

Hagel also noted that the two nations will continue to coordinate efforts across the region in response to the Ebola crisis.

NATO a cornerstone of security

The defense secretary said that in discussions at the NATO summit in Wales last month, the two nations agreed on the importance of reinforcing NATO partnerships in Eastern Europe and strengthening the readiness and capabilities of the NATO alliance.

“A strong and united NATO will be critically important to assuring a Europe whole, free and at peace,” Hagel said. “That goal remains a cornerstone of America’s approach to global and transatlantic security.”

Biographies:

[Chuck Hagel](#)

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