

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UPDATE
November 5 - 13, 2014

1. [Obama Calls on Russia to Respect Ukraine Cease-Fire \(11-13-2014\)](#)
2. [Hagel: ISIL Degraded But Remains Dangerous \(11-13-2014\)](#)
3. [USAID Administrator Praises DoD Effort in Ebola Fight \(11-13-2014\)](#)
4. [Work Gives Operational Update at Global Security Forum \(11-12-2014\)](#)
5. [Russia's Putin, Obama Meet amid Tensions \(11-11-2014\)](#)
6. [Obama Urges Americans to Honor Vets through Care, Support \(11-08-2014\)](#)
7. [China, U.S. Would Benefit from Stronger Relationship, Kerry Says \(11-06-2014\)](#)
8. [U.S., U.K. Security Concerns Closely Linked, U.S. Official Says \(11-07-2014\)](#)
9. [U.S. General Praises Afghan Government, Security Forces \(11-06-2014\)](#)
10. [Russia Pushing Limits of International Order, Dempsey Says \(11-05-2014\)](#)

1. Obama Calls on Russia to Respect Ukraine Cease-Fire (11-13-2014)

Washington — President Obama has called on Russia to honor a September cease-fire between Kyiv and Moscow-backed rebels in eastern Ukraine.

White House Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes said President Obama delivered the message to Russian Vladimir Putin during informal conversations at a summit this week in Beijing.

Rhodes also told reporters that Obama will discuss the Ukraine crisis with European leaders on the sidelines of next week's G20 summit in Brisbane, Australia.

NATO and European monitors have reported Russian tanks, troops and weapons crossing the border in the past few days.

Moscow has repeatedly denied any official military involvement in Ukraine, and has described Russian troops fighting alongside rebels as volunteers.

UNSC EMERGENCY SESSION

At an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on November 12, Ukraine's ambassador to the world body said Kyiv's restraint was the only reason war has not erupted. Yuriy Sergeyev questioned whether the Kremlin was planning an armed invasion in eastern Ukraine.

U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said Russia and the separatists have not lived up to any of the conditions of the September 5 Minsk cease-fire agreement, including pulling out all foreign fighters from Ukraine.

Power said at the same time, Ukraine has made a genuine effort to stick to the deal, calling on the U.N. to tighten the pressure on Russia.

Deputy Russian Ambassador Alexander Pankin told the council it is Ukraine that is concentrating its forces along the front lines after Kyiv and the separatists agreed to pull them back. He accused European monitors of failing to take note of this and called reports of a Russian military buildup propaganda.

The Ukraine conflict has severely strained ties between Russia and the West, with the U.S. and the EU imposing a series of sanctions against Moscow, with Russia retaliating with its own punitive measures.

On November 13, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said it was up to the U.S. to improve relations.

"In order to overcome existing problems, sanctions need to be simply abandoned, relations should be returned into a [level] playing field; normal, peaceful, productive negotiations should be restarted, then everything will stabilize," said Medvedev.

2. Hagel: ISIL Degraded But Remains Dangerous (11-13-2014)

By Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jake Richmond
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13, 2014 – United States and coalition forces have made progress in recent months against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, but the campaign will be “a long and difficult struggle,” Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told Congress here today.

“We are three months into a multi-year effort,” Hagel said in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee. In some parts of Iraq, ISIL's advance has been stalled and even reversed by Iraqi, Kurdish and tribal forces supported by U.S. and coalition air strikes. But ISIL still represents a “serious threat” to American interests, Hagel said.

The secretary stressed the importance of sustaining the regional and global coalition, which includes 16 more countries since Hagel's last congressional testimony in September. More than 60 nations are now contributing to the fight against ISIL, Hagel said, with assistance ranging from air support to training to humanitarian aid.

“Coalition partners have carried out 130 airstrikes against ISIL in both Iraq and Syria,” Hagel said. “Coalition nations have also pledged hundreds of personnel to support our mission to train, advise, assist, and help build the capacity of Iraqi forces.”

Methods and Results

The comprehensive strategy to stop ISIL also focuses on supporting inclusive governance, undercutting ISIL's flow of resources, countering ISIL's messaging, and constricting the flow of foreign fighters, Hagel said.

The combined effort has yielded results in degrading and destroying elements of ISIL's warfighting capacity and denying safe haven to its combatants. The secretary said that ISIL fighters have been forced to maneuver in smaller groups, hide their large equipment, and change their communication methods.

"Sustaining this pressure on ISIL will help provide time and space for Iraq to reconstitute its forces and continue going on the offense," Hagel explained. "And as Iraqi forces build strength, the tempo and intensity of our coalition's air campaign will accelerate in tandem."

Governmental Factors

However, ISIL "will not be defeated through military force alone," Hagel said. In Iraq, he said, "much more needs to be done to achieve political reform." And in Syria, since there is no partner government to work with, Hagel said, military strategy will demand time, patience and perseverance to deliver results.

"The position of the United States remains that [Syrian President Bashar] Assad has lost the legitimacy to govern," Hagel said. The U.S. and coalition goal, he explained, is to ultimately create conditions for a political settlement in Syria.

"We are still at the front end of our campaign against ISIL," Hagel told the House panel. "Congressional support -- your support -- is vital for this campaign to succeed."

Biographies:

[Chuck Hagel](#)

Related Articles:

[Dempsey Urges 'Strategic Patience' in Anti-ISIL Campaign](#)
[Airstrikes Continue Against ISIL; Centcom Holds Meetings](#)

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[Special Report: Operation Inherent Resolve - Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists](#)

3. USAID Administrator Praises DoD Effort in Ebola Fight (11-13-2014)

By Cheryl Pellerin

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13, 2014 – Against the largest and most protracted Ebola outbreak in history, the U.S. military has made a Herculean effort and helped accelerate the critical response in Liberia, Administrator Rajiv Shah of the U.S. Agency for International Development told a House panel today.

Shah joined officials from the Defense and State departments who testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

Across the three most-affected West African countries, more than 14,000 people have been infected and more than 5,000 have died of Ebola virus disease.

A ‘Crisis of Epidemic Proportions’

“In Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone we are facing a crisis of epidemic proportions, and President Barack Obama has directed us to lead a whole-of-government response in West Africa that can help ensure America's security and safety from this tragic disease,” Shah said in his opening statement.

The administrator said he was proud to address the committee with members of the interagency team who have offered “extraordinarily important leadership.”

For its part, he said, the Defense Department has been responsible for “the really Herculean efforts the military has taken” in its contribution to the U.S. response.

It has been critically important, Shah added, “to have, amongst other things, the Navy labs in place, greatly accelerating the time it takes to do diagnostics, from seven or eight days down to 5 or 6 hours.”

Mobile Laboratories

Of the nine mobile labs in and near Monrovia, seven are DoD labs, one is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-National Institutes of Health lab, and the other is a European Union-donated lab. All make it possible to determine quickly whether someone has Ebola or another infectious disease so they may be prevented from infecting others.

Also this week, a 22-member team from the expeditionary 1st Area Medical Laboratory, part of the Army’s 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Command, arrived in Monrovia to set up mobile diagnostic labs in four locations outside the capital.

During a press conference yesterday at the Pentagon, Army Maj. Gen. Gary J. Volesky, Operation United Assistance Joint Force commander, called the increase in mobile diagnostic labs in and around Monrovia a “game-changer.”

Whole-of-Government Endeavor

During his testimony today, Shah said the State Department, as part of the whole-of-government team, has helped encourage more than \$800 million in commitments from other countries so the United States is not pursuing the Ebola response alone.

All team members, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, operate “in an absolutely integrated manner,” he said, “and in fact the deputy director of our Disaster Assistance Response Team, [or DART team,] which is leading the effort on the ground, is a member of the Centers for Disease Control.”

Shah said Obama is requesting \$6.18 billion in emergency funding to enhance U.S. efforts to urgently address the crisis now and for the coming year.

‘Resources Are Essential’ in Ebola Fight

“These resources are essential to rapidly scaling up activities to control the outbreak at its source, to support recovery in West Africa in health, agriculture, food and other sectors of work to prevent civil unrest and governance collapse,” he said.

The funds also will help strengthen global health security in the region, the administrator added, “so, as we just saw yesterday, cases appearing in Mali don't get beyond that area and are effectively controlled.”

On a recent trip to the three Ebola-stricken West African nations, Shah said he had a chance to meet first responders and see “the extraordinary results of American investment and effort.”

Dignified, Safe Burials Help Prevent Ebola Spread

One example involved 65 burial teams that have tackled the crisis at its most aggressive point of transmission. He said 70 percent of all cases are transmitted through bodies and the handling of bodies.

“Today,” he said, “more than 95 percent of dead bodies are disposed of in a dignified manner but in a safe manner with the proper burial team handling the disposal. That's just one example but it has clearly helped bring down the number of new cases, so that today we believe the transmission rate has been greatly reduced in Liberia.”

In Sierra Leone, Shah visited with trainers who are training hundreds of healthcare workers, mostly African and mostly local, in the effective use of protective equipment so they can be on the front lines of the response.

“Together with the World Health Organization and other countries we will train thousands of local health care workers who are on the front line ... and who will be the legacy we leave behind ... for global health efforts throughout the region,” the administrator said.

Reaching Out to Rural Communities

In Guinea, which has the fewest number of Ebola cases at between 500 and 600, the whole-of-government USAID-led team is working aggressively to scale up efforts in hard-to-reach forest regions and rural communities.

As the lead for the U.S. response in West Africa, USAID is also finding new ways to respond to the largest outbreak in history.

“We've had to invest in real innovation and science,” Shah said. “In the next two days we will be reviewing proposals for new protective suits that can help reduce the infection risk when health workers take them off and put them on because the current protective equipment is not designed for tropical disease control.”

Data-Collection Team

USAID is also sending a real-time data-collection team that has received more than 8,500 ruggedized Android hand-held devices to collect better real-time data about where cases are, allowing a more rapid response.

USAID is also using its efforts in agriculture, especially food production, Shah said, to make sure the agriculture-based backbone of the rural economy in all three countries gets up and running again as soon as possible.

Shah said these efforts, taken together and led on the ground by DART Team Leader Bill Berger in Monrovia, are “making a tremendous difference in changing the path of this epidemic.”

He added, “If we continue to provide support at the level the president is requesting, we believe we can overcome this crisis by tackling it at its source.”

Biographies:

[Rajiv Shah](#)

Related Articles:

[Ebola-zone Troops’ Health Remains Top Concern, Official Says](#)

[DoD Brings Unique Capabilities to Ebola Response Mission, Official Says](#)

[1st U.S.-Constructed Ebola Treatment Unit to Open in Liberia \(11-12-2014\)](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: DoD Helps Fight Ebola in West Africa - Operation United Assistance](#)

4. Work Gives Operational Update at Global Security Forum (11-12-2014)

By Jim Garamone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 12, 2014 – Deputy Defense Secretary Robert O. Work gave a rundown of U.S. military operations around the world as part of a wide-ranging speech he delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies here today.

Work’s discussion of current operations at the think tank described the U.S. military’s worldwide commitment and reach.

The topics of Iraq and Syria dominated Work’s remarks. The coalition bombing campaign in Iraq and Syria, he said, is degrading the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

“But airstrikes are just one element of our campaign,” Work said. “Teams of U.S. and coalition advisors are helping Iraq regenerate and restructure their security forces so they can take the offensive.”

U.S. Observes Events in Iran

America also continues to watch events in Iran, the deputy secretary said. He reiterated that America’s first priority with respect to Iran is that the country does not obtain nuclear weapons.

In West Africa, he said, President Barack Obama has ordered American troops to support the U.S.’s civilian-led contributions to another comprehensive international effort to fight Ebola at the source.

“DoD is deploying up to 4,000 troops to provide command and control, engineering, training, and logistics support” in combating the Ebola virus in West Africa, Work said.

Meanwhile, he said, the U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan is ending and American troops there are transitioning to an advise-and-assist role.

“Going forward, we will continue to disrupt the threat posed by al-Qaida there, train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces and ministries, and give the Afghan people the opportunity to succeed as they stand on their own,” Work said.

Russian Actions in Ukraine

Russian aggression in Ukraine is the focus of American and partner efforts in Europe, the deputy defense secretary said. Americans are working closely with NATO allies and other partners, he said, to dissuade further Russian aggression in Ukraine, promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and deter future Russian intimidation or military action against its neighbors. U.S. forces are active in the Baltic republics and Poland. American ships patrol alongside NATO allies in the Baltic and Black seas. And U.S. fighter jets are part of the Baltic Air Policing Mission.

“As President Obama has made clear, our collective defense commitments to our NATO allies are absolutely unwavering,” Work said. The president, he added, has requested funds for American forces on the continent.

Meanwhile, territorial disputes and sometimes-heated maritime claims are causing tensions in the Asia-Pacific region, Work said.

“We’re also dealing with threats from North Korea’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs and its continued provocations against our close ally, South Korea,” he added.

The Asia-Pacific “is a region of ever-increasing importance and a growing focus for the entire U.S. government, as reflected in the president’s strategy of rebalancing our political, economic and military engagements in the region,” Work said.

Biographies:

[Bob Work](#)

Related Sites:

[Center for Strategic and International Studies](#)

[Deputy Secretary of Defense Speech at CSIS Global Security Forum](#)

Related Articles:

[U.S. Security Challenges Not Insurmountable, Work Says](#)

5. Russia’s Putin, Obama Meet amid Tensions (11-11-2014)

Washington — U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin have met briefly on the sidelines of a conference in Beijing, covering a few of the key global issues on which their governments do not agree.

Obama and Putin flanked Chinese President Xi Jinping and exchanged comments about the room as leaders walked into the venue for Tuesday's Asia-Pacific summit.

THREE MEETINGS

But away from the main talks, the White House said U.S. and Russian leaders met three times throughout the day for a total of about 15 to 20 minutes.

U.S. National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan said the topics included Iran, Syria and Ukraine, but did not provide additional details. Mr. Putin's spokesman gave a similar summary of the discussions.

The Associated Press quotes Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes as saying “the U.S. wants Russia to be a stabilizing force on issues that we care about,” adding that Russia is not going to be able to do that if it is “violating the sovereignty of a country next door.”

Rhodes says Mr. Obama will not be seeking a meeting with Mr. Putin while in Beijing or in Brisbane, Australia, where the two attend a Group of 20 economic summit this weekend.

The U.S. and Russia have been part of a combined effort with the other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany to try to negotiate a deal with Iran ensuring its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes.

SYRIA, UKRAINE

But in Syria, the United States has aided Syrian opposition fighters and declared that President Bashar al-Assad is not a legitimate leader, while Russia has sold arms to Mr. Assad's government and vetoed multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions that would sanction him.

The two countries have also been at odds over the situation in Ukraine, where the U.S. has accused Russia of aiding separatist fighters and imposed economic sanctions in response.

Obama and Putin last met face-to-face for a brief sideline encounter in June. That meeting came a day after Mr. Obama and the other leaders of G8 nations met without the Russian leader, canceling their planned summit in Russia because of the government's response to the conflict in Ukraine.

6. Obama Urges Americans to Honor Vets Through Care, Support (11-08-2014)

By Amaani Lyle
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 8, 2014 – As the Nov. 11 Veterans Day observance approaches, President Barack Obama used his weekly address today to commend service members throughout the nation's history for their dedication and to encourage all Americans to honor their sacrifices by helping them succeed and get the support they've earned.

Noting that he soon will visit Asia, Obama credited America's enduring commitment and its generations of uniformed service members for continued growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

“We salute that Greatest Generation, who freed a continent from fascism and fought across Pacific Islands to preserve our way of life,” the president said. “We pay tribute to Americans who defended the people of South Korea, soldiered through the brutal battles of Vietnam, stood up to a tyrant in Desert Storm and stopped ethnic cleansing in the Balkans.”

End of War Means Beginning of Nation's Obligation to Vets

Obama also lauded the 9/11 Generation, veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, who next month will see America's longest war come to what he called a responsible end. But the end of a war, he added, marks only the beginning of America's obligations to those who serve.

In addition to imparting thanks and respect to veterans and their families, he emphasized, Americans should ensure they get the care and benefits they've earned whenever they need them.

“It means continuing to reduce the disability claims backlog, and it means giving our wounded warriors all the care and support they need to heal, including mental health care for those with post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury,” Obama told the nation.

Some of his most moving moments as commander in chief have been with wounded warriors, the president said. “Some have to learn how to walk again, talk again, write their names again,” he added. “But no matter how hard it is, they never give up, they never quit, and we can't ever quit on them.”

Veterans Deserve Opportunity for the ‘American Dream’

Ultimately, Obama said, veterans deserve their opportunity for the “American Dream” they risked their lives to defend. Facilitating job placement worthy of veterans' skills and talents, and making sure the Post-9/11 GI Bill stays strong to provide veterans with a college education will yield success for all Americans, he added.

“When our veterans have the opportunity to succeed, our whole nation is stronger,” the president said. “Let's work together to end the tragedy of homelessness among veterans once and for all -- because anyone who has defended America deserves to live in dignity in America.”

But the responsibility to honor veterans far exceeds the boundaries of government, the president stressed.

“It's a job for every American,” he said. “We're all keepers of that sacred trust that says, ‘If you put on a uniform and risk your life to keep us safe, we'll do our part for you. We'll make sure you and your family get the support you need. We'll have your backs, just like you had ours.’”

Related Sites:

[Weekly Address, Nov. 8, 2014](#)

[7. China, U.S. Would Benefit from Stronger Relationship, Kerry Says \(11-06-2014\)](#)

Washington — “This could not be a more important moment in China-U.S. relations, and there could not be a more important relationship than the relationship with China for the United States,” Secretary of State John Kerry told a group of business executives in Beijing November 8, and predicted this relationship could define the history of the Asia-Pacific region in the 21st century.

The secretary said that foreign policy and economic policy are inextricably linked and that “there is no greater antidote to today's fragility, to the challenge we face with respect to terror, the ISILs of the world, the Aral Sharams, the Al-Shabaabs, Boko Harams” than creating a full set of economic opportunities in areas where terrorist groups have found a foothold.

The private sector is both a driver of growth and a key contributor to global development, Kerry said, adding that the U.S. government wants to work hand-in-hand with the business community to open new opportunities and build a more productive future.

The Obama administration's rebalance to Asia is a very real thing, the secretary said, and cited President Obama's planned eight-day visit to Asia — for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

(APEC) Leaders' Meeting, bilateral meetings with Chinese leaders, the East Asia Summit, and G20 Summit in Australia — as proof of the importance the United States attaches to its relationships in the region.

“[T]he relationship out here begins with our key allies, obviously, with Japan, South Korea, Australia, but we are focused on building a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with China, a relationship that can manage our differences effectively, and harness our energies to cooperate effectively wherever we can find that ability to be able to cooperate,” Kerry said.

“Right now we're engaged in discussions on climate change, which began last year at a ministerial level. And we are engaged deeply together in the P5+1 talks, in an effort to try to deal with Iran's nuclear program, which will have a profound impact on global stability and on the future.”

Both nations have much to gain from sustaining long-term economic growth, ensuring U.S.-China trade and investment policies are productive and equitable, and completing negotiations on a U.S.-China bilateral investment treaty.

In addition, the United States seeks engagement with China on issues such as cyberpolicy, Internet governance, and protection of intellectual property.

President Obama is deeply focused on cooperating with China on developing clean energy sources and mitigating climate change, Kerry said.

“The solution to the problem of climate change is ... energy policy. Make the right choices about energy policy, and we can eliminate the problem.”

Switching to energy sources that do not contribute to global warming yields benefits in human health, environmental protection, security, and energy independence, Kerry said.

“This is a moment of great opportunity,” Kerry said, ... “because we believe there should be a race to the top, not a race to the bottom. Because when you have transparency and accountability, and when you have fair norms that everybody is operating by, everybody benefits more. You have greater stability, greater assurance in the business world, greater capacity to attract capital. You have more investment, and better outcomes for the populations, as a result.”

8. U.S., U.K. Security Concerns Closely Linked, U.S. Official Says (11-07-2014)

London — On November 6, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas concluded a two-day trip to London, where he met with United Kingdom counterparts to discuss counterterrorism efforts, aviation security, and efforts to stem illegal immigration and global human trafficking.

Mayorkas, participating in the U.S.-U.K. Joint Contact Group Plenary, highlighted the importance of bilateral collaboration on a wide range of common priorities related to homeland security, including counterterrorism efforts, collaboration in law enforcement, and information sharing.

The deputy secretary also discussed enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program's Electronic System for Travel Authorization that his department announced November 3. The enhancements were designed to address terrorism threats from overseas sources and provide added security for the

continued facilitation of visa-free travel to the United States from our closest friends and allies, according to Homeland Security.

Mayorkas also met with U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Matthew Barzun and U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May to underscore the inextricable link between the security of the United States and that of the United Kingdom.

On November 5, Mayorkas spoke at the London School of Economics, where he discussed the importance of international collaboration to combat terrorism, human trafficking and cybercrime, while facilitating lawful trade and travel that supports the global economy.

After departing London, Mayorkas traveled to Paris for the G6 Ministerial to meet with his international counterparts to discuss efforts to counter violent extremism and extremist travel to and from Syria. G6 nations are Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and Poland.

9. U.S. General Praises Afghan Government, Security Forces (11-06-2014)

Washington — In a November 5 videoconference, U.S. Army Lieutenant General Joe Anderson, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan since January, briefed reporters about the security situation in Afghanistan, the status of the U.S. troop drawdown, and the achievements of Afghan forces during the past year.

Since Anderson assumed command, Afghanistan has gone through tremendous changes, conducting its first democratic transition of power and inaugurating a new president. The new Afghan government has signed the bilateral security agreement with NATO that will make it possible for allies and partners to solidify their plans to contribute to the Resolute Support mission in 2015.

“The Afghan national security forces [ANSF] are winning [the fight against the Taliban], and this is a hugely capable fighting force who have been holding their ground against the enemy,” Anderson said. “The Afghan national security forces remain about 352,000. ... They have secured all of the election process and maintained a steady operational tempo throughout this fighting season.”

The general added that the Taliban “have failed to achieve tactical superiority over the ANSF” and that Taliban-initiated attacks dropped to 18,000 in 2014 compared to 24,000 in 2013.

Anderson recapped the downsizing of U.S. forces in Afghanistan: “We started off with 54,000 service members here when I took over in January, from 48 nations. We’re now down to 38,000 soldiers from 44 nations, 27,000 of which are American. We’ll get down to 12,500 here by the end of the year, which will be the 9,800 U.S. commitment.”

He said that about 26 other nations will also be contributing forces, with those personnel being a mix of advisers, force-protection soldiers and “enabler providers” like close-air support.

As it draws down U.S. troop levels, the United States has been “retrograding, redeploying, destroying and transferring equipment to the ANSF.” About \$620 million worth of equipment has been transferred, the general said.

“What Resolute Support is all about is trying to get the Afghans above the tactical level to the operational and strategic level,” he summarized. “The advisers will focus on the ministerial and institutional levels to work systems, processes and professionalize the force.”

The future of the Afghan economy is directly tied to the success of the Afghan government and the Afghan military, Anderson said, adding that trust in Afghanistan's institutions and security environment is essential to attracting international investment.

The general said the transition to the new president has been accompanied by an improved relationship between the Afghan military and the Afghan central government, and "the generals have all been engaged with their new leadership."

Anderson praised Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's ongoing outreach to the Afghan military and police forces, including trips to hospitals to visit the wounded.

The ANSF's first priority is re-establishing its recruitment efforts to bring forces up to full rosters, the general said. He estimated current police strength at about 89 percent and the army at about 81 percent.

Other ANSF priorities are improving procedures for how they protect themselves with their personal protective equipment to counter improvised explosive devices, he said.

A [full transcript of the briefing](#) is available on the Defense Department website.

10. Russia Pushing Limits of International Order, Dempsey Says (11-05-2014)

By Lisa Ferdinando
Army News Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5, 2014 – Russia is "pushing on the limits of international order," the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said today.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russia in general are pushing the limits because they don't believe the international order was crafted in a way that met their national interests, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey said during a question-and-answer session at an event on hiring veterans in New York.

Putin and Russia express a sense of victimization following the collapse of the Soviet Empire, the chairman said. Noting that the Russian president recently delivered a speech on that narrative, Dempsey characterized it as "an anti-Western soliloquy that literally lasted for about three hours."

NATO Commitment is Principal Responsibility

"Our principal responsibility here, of course, is our NATO commitment, notably the Article 5 responsibility, which says an attack on one is an attack on all," he said. "Twenty-eight nations of NATO are committed to living up to that."

Dempsey said the difficulty is in Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine -- the nations located between NATO allies and Russian aggressiveness. To help in meeting that challenge, he said, the U.S. military needs to do different things with rotational presence.

"We probably need to do some things in every domain -- air, sea and ground," he said. "It's going to, I think, require us to put forces back into Europe that we had taken out."

The chairman said he doesn't expect the American forces in the region to be "dramatically big," but he added that "they'll be substantial enough to allow us to deter Russian aggression against our NATO allies."

Russia is creating an unstable situation, Dempsey said, and it has also "kind of lit a fire of nationalism."

"Once you light that fire, it's not controllable," the general said. "I am worried about Europe."

For about 20 years, Dempsey said, Europe has been complacent with its security. "I don't think they can afford to be complacent any longer," he added.

Other International Topics

The chairman also touched on other international topics, including making the point that U.S. service members fighting Ebola in Liberia are "making a real difference."

Separately, when asked about whether the United States should have kept residual forces in Iraq, Dempsey said he was in favor of such an arrangement.

He said the United States did not finish some things in Iraq, such as logistics and intelligence architecture for Iraqi forces and in providing them with close air support and lift capabilities. But the U.S. capability couldn't remain there without an agreement that protected U.S. forces, the chairman said.

"History will be the judge," Dempsey said. "To my satisfaction, we tried to get them to a place where they could provide us the protections and immunities we need." However, he said, he did not want to leave U.S. forces there with Iraq's "particular judicial system at the time without protections and immunities."

The general said he thinks that over the next several years there will be a requirement to help Iraq with an operations center "so that we can share intelligence better and we can watch how they are executing their campaign plan."

"I think we're going to have to rebuild pieces of the Iraqi army at secure bases," he added, "and we've got about three or four of them identified that we think we need to stand up."

Biographies:

[Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey](#)

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