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## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army: A Model of Strategic Flexibility

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### Introduction

U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army (USAREUR/7A) is faced with a plethora of changes and new challenges as it enters its 66th year of service to the United States. As it acquires a new commanding general and continues to establish an expeditionary stance, USAREUR continues the transformational process that has been in effect, formally and informally, since its inception. As the Army service component command (ASCC) of U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), USAREUR continues to redefine its mission and purpose within the U.S. military structure.

As the command prepares for its future merger with V Corps, continues its global rebasing and restationing efforts and provides vital support to various ongoing missions in the war on terrorism, the relevance and importance of USAREUR within the context of its current phase of transformation is an issue that should be examined. While its missions have changed since World War II and the Cold War, USAREUR faces new challenges—the global war on terrorism and campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other regional challenges in the European theater—that ensure its position as a vital and necessary element of U.S. defense.<sup>1</sup>

### USAREUR Background

**Mission and Purpose.** USAREUR is a combination of United States Army, Europe (activated 8 June 1942) and 7th Army (activated 10 July 1943). The two entities merged on 1 December 1996.<sup>2</sup> As part of its core mission, USAREUR and its subordinate commands provide expeditionary force capabilities in support of the war on terrorism, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and coalition partnership missions, security cooperation activities and theater logistics support.<sup>3</sup> The USAREUR headquarters has amassed a list of its key objectives:

- to train tailored forces and headquarters for joint and combined operations;
- to rapidly project expeditionary forces prepared for joint and combined operations;
- to ensure force well-being;
- to operate theater sustainment and execute expeditionary logistics in support of Army, joint and combined forces;

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- to ensure regional security, access and stability through presence and security cooperation; and
- to provide command and control capabilities at echelon to enable joint and combined operations.<sup>4</sup>

On any given day, 20 percent of USAREUR's Soldiers may be deployed to more than 20 countries both within and outside its area of responsibility (AOR).<sup>5</sup> USAREUR headquarters provides planning guidance for Army units to be deployed in contingencies and for those units already deployed.<sup>6</sup>

While facing a reduction in endstrength, USAREUR has enhanced its abilities as an agile and responsive component of USEUCOM. This new posture is reflected in the statements representing the command. A senior military leader remarked on the strategic value of USAREUR's ability to respond to missions in a wide arrange of contingencies, observing that USAREUR is freedom's expeditionary force, a designation represented by the slogan "an Army forward—any mission, anywhere."<sup>7</sup> This flexibility will likely be an important asset to its AOR. USEUCOM commander General Bantz J. Craddock noted that modifications to a 2002 transformation plan take into account recent changes in the security environment: operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the new U.S. Africa Command and NATO transformation.<sup>8</sup>

**United States European Command.** The overall USEUCOM mission and purpose have been to support NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and to oversee and execute U.S. policies within the designated area of operations. This remained the primary focus until the 1990s, when the end of the Cold War and subsequent issues and events (such as the first Gulf War) ushered in a new operational environment.

While USEUCOM is still tasked with ensuring transatlantic security through support to NATO and with promoting regional stability throughout its AOR—through theater engagement activities such as Partnership for Peace and peacekeeping operations—the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 again altered the way in which the command executes its missions. Since 9/11 USEUCOM has acted as a supporting command to U.S. Central Command in both Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Operation Iraqi Freedom.<sup>9</sup>

**World War II to Post-Cold War.** Serving as the theater army in World War II, USAREUR was known then as the European Theater of Operations, United States Army (ETOUSA). Following the war, the command was redesignated first as U.S. Forces, European Theater (USFET) and then as European Command (EUCOM) on 15 March 1947. The establishment of the Department of Defense (DoD) and a separate Air Force led to the creation on 1 August 1952 of a joint-service command known as U.S. European Command. The remaining Army command was renamed U.S. Army, Europe.<sup>10</sup>

The onset of the Cold War in Europe modified the Army's role. It morphed from an occupying, constabulary force to what some referred to as a "sentinel of freedom." U.S. Army forces assigned to USAREUR were, for the most part, stationed in Germany. The importance of U.S. military commitment to the security of Western Europe was solidified when the United States joined NATO, created for collective defense against potential Soviet aggression. USAREUR modernized its capabilities and operational doctrine, and during the 1970s and 1980s focused on deterring the opposing force of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies.<sup>11</sup>

The end of the Cold War resulted in large reductions of American forces in Germany. The 1990s witnessed a fundamental restructuring and downsizing for USAREUR. During this period, USAREUR numbers declined from 213,000 Soldiers to fewer than 100,000—the lowest level in 47 years. During this drawdown period—marked by a comprehensive and well-planned repositioning of the USAREUR units and missions in Germany—the U.S. military presence in Europe shrank by more than 40 percent over the course of a few years.<sup>12</sup> In addition, in 1992, two of every three Soldiers in Europe, as well as units and combat battalions, had been relocated at least once.<sup>13</sup>

Several missions during the 1990s—Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm and missions in Bosnia and Kosovo—temporarily altered the general trend of downsizing that prevailed at USAREUR during that time.

**Area of Operations (AOR).** Headquartered in Heidelberg, Germany, USAREUR is the most engaged and deployed theater of operation in the world. Representing only about 13 percent of the Total Army, USAREUR provides command, control and Title 10 support for over two-thirds of the Army's deployed forces.<sup>13</sup> USAREUR is supported by forward-deployed communications and intelligence organizations.<sup>15</sup>

As the Army service component command of USEUCOM, USAREUR supports the largest AOR in the world. It includes 30 million square miles, three continents and 91 countries and territories. It also covers 35 percent of the earth's landmass, 60 percent of the earth's coastlines and 23 percent of the world's population.<sup>16</sup>

USEUCOM's AOR has shifted according to the geopolitical priorities of the time. In 1952, the joint command's AOR included the United Kingdom, Europe, Turkey and North Africa, and then Southwest Asia (as far east as Iran and as far south as Saudi Arabia). With the establishment in 1983 of United States Central Command (USCENTCOM)—which was assigned responsibility for the Middle East—the USEUCOM AOR included the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Mediterranean Sea and the Mediterranean Littoral (without Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Djibouti).<sup>17</sup>

The end of the Cold War brought even more changes to USEUCOM's AOR. The dissolution of the Soviet Union brought to the world stage an influx of "new" states, increasing USEUCOM's AOR to 91 countries. In 2002, with a change in the Unified Command Plan, USEUCOM's AOR briefly increased to 93, but a change to the plan in 2004 reduced the AOR to its current size of 91 countries.<sup>18</sup>

**United States Africa Command.** USEUCOM's AOR is set to shift once more, in October 2008, with the formal standup of United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM). As part of USEUCOM, USAREUR currently has 42 African countries assigned to its AOR. Responsibility for these countries will be transferred to USAFRICOM at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2009, reducing USAREUR's AOR by almost half. The February 2007 announcement of USAFRICOM marks a realignment of the Pentagon's regional command structure on the African continent. It is also a reflection of Africa's growing strategic importance to U.S. national security interests. Currently, USAFRICOM is positioned as a sub-unified command of USEUCOM.

At the beginning of FY 2009, USAFRICOM will become independent of USEUCOM, taking over responsibility for the African countries currently divided among United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), USCENTCOM and USEUCOM. Government officials, after a period of deliberation, have decided against basing the command on the African continent. For the moment, USAFRICOM will either remain at its current location in Stuttgart, Germany, or transfer to the United States.<sup>19</sup> While USEUCOM currently has majority oversight over the African continent,<sup>20</sup> all African countries with the exception of Egypt will be under the oversight of USAFRICOM later this year.

Currently, USAREUR is acting as the supporting Army service component command for USAFRICOM until the command receives its own Army component. The Army component has assigned forces only for selected capabilities in support of USAFRICOM theater security (TSC) operations; these capabilities range from planning and directing to oversight of operational intelligence.<sup>21</sup>

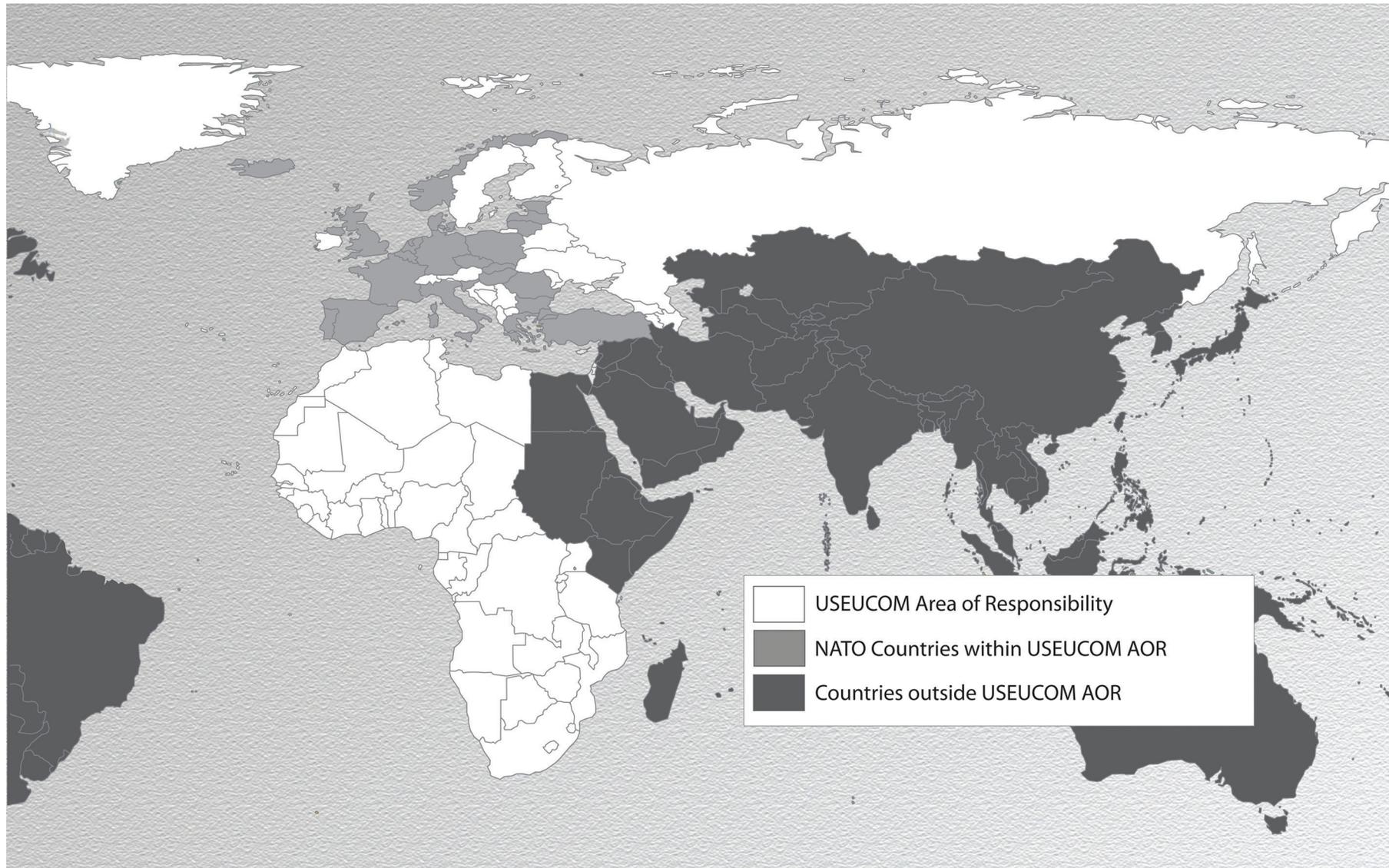
### **Contemporary USAREUR Missions**

In terms of current Army missions, it is believed that "USAREUR has become an innovator in the processes necessary to prepare a force for military operations other than war."<sup>22</sup> While the number of U.S. forces in Europe has declined since the fall of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War has not rendered the other areas within USEUCOM's AOR free of threats to U.S. security. According to General David D. McKiernan, who commanded USAREUR and 7th Army from December 2005 until May 2008, "Wild-card threats—a pandemic, a natural disaster or transnational crime—also contribute to the requirement for vigilance and established capabilities to deal with their effects as required."<sup>23</sup>

Issues that may increase in prominence in the future include the political situation in the Balkans, the revival of the Russian military and the impact of a growing Muslim population in Europe.<sup>24</sup> Several

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geographical areas are of particular importance for USAREUR day-to-day operations and merit greater examination.

**The Balkans.** While U.S. forces were quite active in the Balkans in the 1990s, in the past few years the number of NATO troops in the Balkans has declined. Nevertheless, USAREUR maintains a capability—from specialized units to specific training exercises—in the event that tensions in the region were to flare up. For example, USAREUR forces, as part of a strategic reserve force under NATO, maintain an active stance in the region.

One such example is 2002's Rapid Guardian 02-3 exercise, wherein U.S. forces tested their capabilities by deploying Soldiers and equipment from Germany and Italy to Kosovo.<sup>25</sup> Another exercise was conducted by a task force from the 173d Airborne Brigade assigned to USAREUR's Southern European Task Force (SETAF). The brigade staged an airborne reinforcement operation from its base in Italy, landing paratroopers at a Multinational Brigade-East (MNB-E) sector drop zone.<sup>26</sup>

While USAREUR supports stability operations in the Balkans, that commitment has declined over the last several years due to improvements in the political situations. For example, U.S. Enduring Mission (Bosnia) was completed in October 2006 and the mission transferred to the European Union.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, Camp Bondsteel was handed back to Bosnia in June 2007. Despite these changes, American contributions to NATO's KFOR in the form of Multinational Task Force East remain active.<sup>28</sup>

**Bulgaria and Romania.** USAREUR involvement with Bulgaria and Romania, neighboring countries adjacent to the Black Sea, has been a prime example of theater security cooperation activities aimed at building interoperability and maintaining relationships with NATO and Coalition partners.<sup>29</sup> These countries are of particular importance due to their airfields, ground training areas and seaports; both countries have 10-year agreements to let U.S. forces use some of their bases for training.<sup>30</sup>

In Bulgaria, one important exercise was Bulwark 2004. Taking place at Bulgaria's Novo Selo Training Area, the exercise was designed to strengthen interoperability between U.S. forces and Bulgarian soldiers. Within the exercise, new technologies enabled troops from both forces to learn from simulated combat and helped leaders to prepare units for potential deployment.<sup>31</sup>

In Romania, the exercise Joint Task Force-East is currently underway. The first part, the proof of principle (PoP) exercise, took place from 17 August to 22 October 2007, to build interoperability and military relationships with U.S. partners in the war on terrorism.<sup>32</sup>

**Liberia.** One mission—which took place just a few years ago in Liberia—serves as an important example of the flexibility and agility of USAREUR forces. During the summer and fall of 2003, SETAF commanded Joint Task Force (JTF) Liberia. U.S. Army SETAF is a “rapid-reaction, Army-led standing task force headquarters optimized for joint operations and capable of deploying within 24 hours.”<sup>33</sup> One former commander referred to the mission as a “truly expeditionary and transformational operation that helped bring security and stability to that nation in crisis.”<sup>34</sup>

**Iraq and Afghanistan.** Since 9/11, USAREUR's operational tempo has been continuously tasked, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan. Of the four priorities listed by the USAREUR commander, the first is “war-winning readiness for [war on terrorism] operations.”<sup>35</sup> For example, USAREUR has provided the joint task force headquarters to both Operation Enduring Freedom (SETAF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (V Corps).<sup>36</sup>

USAREUR commitment to missions in Iraq and Afghanistan is reflected in the high level of troop deployments to both countries. For example, in October 2007 approximately 88 percent of coalition forces in Afghanistan and 79 percent of the coalition in Iraq were from the European theater.<sup>37</sup> Thousands of USAREUR Soldiers have been deployed since 2003, with V Corps headquarters twice commanding ground operations in Iraq. Of the more than 4,000 U.S. Soldiers killed in Iraq, 311 were from Europe-based units; as of March 2008, 2,009 USAREUR Soldiers have been wounded in combat.<sup>38</sup>

In Afghanistan, for example, USAREUR's 21st Theater Support Command (TSC) has provided logistical support to U.S. Central Command's humanitarian and combat operations in that country. In support of relief efforts, the 21st TSC prepared 2.2 million humanitarian daily rations, 1.7 million pounds of wheat and nearly 69,000 blankets for air drop.<sup>39</sup> Late in 2007, USAREUR officials announced Iraq and Afghanistan deployments for approximately 4,200 Soldiers between March and November 2008; most of the units deployed will be from the 21st TSC.<sup>40</sup>

One mission in particular, organized around the 191st Ordnance Battalion, included U.S. active and reserve component Soldiers, civilians and German military members. These groups worked with or for Task Force Firepower, the USAREUR element providing logistical support such as packaging and shipping combat equipment to USCENTCOM.<sup>41</sup>

In Iraq, members of the 173d Airborne Brigade have been elements of the vital USAREUR contingent in the country. The brigade was able to complete an airborne assault in support of the Combined Forces Special Operations Component Commander (CFSOCC) just 12 days after it achieved initial operating capability (IOC). The assault into northern Iraq was to seize the airfield at Bashur and to deter Iraqi aggression against Kurds, as well as factional fighting in northern Iraq.<sup>42</sup> The 173d was especially important for the establishment of a stabilizing conventional presence in northern Iraq, since a ground line of communication through Turkey had been denied.<sup>43</sup> The brigade remained in Iraq until 2004, deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2005, and deployed again to Afghanistan in 2007.

Other combat formations have participated in Iraq under USAREUR. V Corps Headquarters and its separate brigades led the assault to remove Saddam Hussein from power, and the 1st Armored Division helped secure Baghdad before going on to secure Najaf, Diwaniyah, Al Kut and Karbala.<sup>44</sup>

### **Transformation: Past, Present and Future**

USAREUR has experienced various transformational processes since its inception. From the changes it made in Europe following World War II, to the transformation plans of recent years—affecting the command both operationally and organizationally—USAREUR has never remained static, opting to change simultaneously with the evolving international security environment. USAREUR is focused on ensuring continental security, transforming for future contingencies, and providing invaluable support in U.S. efforts in the war on terrorism.

USAREUR efforts to transform from a major Army command to an Army service component command are the latest in a series of transformational phases. Every decade in the Army command's history has featured a major transition or transformation that modified how the command operated in Europe as it responds to changes in America's security and economic situation.<sup>45</sup>

**Post-World War II and Cold War.** While transitional or transformational efforts have occurred throughout USAREUR's history, two phases should be highlighted. The first major transformation effort took place at the end of World War II in Europe, as the American Army in Europe was reduced from 2 million to 290,000 Soldiers. The postwar period was marked by important changes, such as the reorganization of the Army headquarters and the occupation of Germany in the late 1940s.<sup>46</sup>

Another sizable change for USAREUR took place after the Cold War. In October 1989, there were 859 installations, 213,000 Soldiers and 65,000 civilian employees under USAREUR's command. Just four years later, in 1993, USAREUR was staffed by 62,000 Soldiers and 17,000 civilian employees, a substantial change in a relatively short period. The drawdown in troops was accompanied by the inactivation of an entire corps and the transitioning of the garrison and community structure.<sup>47</sup> Prior to the current transformation period, this period was often cited as the one marked by the most significant changes to USAREUR's force structure and manning.

**Current Efforts: 7th Army Transformation.** Experts believe USAREUR is undergoing its largest transformation since the end of the Cold War, as well as the most significant and wide-ranging changes in the command's history.<sup>48</sup> The transformational process is quite extensive; in an effort to facilitate this endeavor, USAREUR logisticians have concentrated on three focus areas: synchronizing logistics plans and operations, equipping and sustaining the current and future forces, and transforming the logistics force of the Army in Europe.<sup>49</sup>

The goal for this latest round of transformation is to increase the agility and responsiveness of the forward-stationed expeditionary forces and exploit new technologies to support "effective engagement and response capabilities across the U.S. European Command's 91-country area of responsibility."<sup>50</sup>

The first announcements regarding the forthcoming transformational efforts were made in April 2007. In support of Army transformation and the Department of Defense's overall plan to increase strategic responsiveness in support of the war on terrorism, USAREUR announced plans to "convert, inactivate and relocate numerous units within Germany in FY 2008."<sup>49</sup>

These plans were modified when the Army announced on 19 December 2007 that it will restation more than 74,000 Soldiers as part of its plan to grow the active and reserve components over the next few years. The new plan also revises troop levels in Europe, essentially undoing previous orders to reduce Army forces in the region. It authorizes a temporary delay in the U.S. Army Europe drawdown, essentially freezing the command at its current level of 40,000 Soldiers and four brigade combat teams.

Two heavy brigades scheduled to come home from Germany will now remain until 2012 and 2013. The decision to keep two brigades stationed in Germany for several more years was based on two factors: 1) requests from commanders in Europe to maintain troop levels there, and 2) the need to ensure that troops returning to the United States would have proper housing and other facilities at their new bases. In Europe, the Army is consolidating its presence in four major German communities—Kaiserslautern, Wiesbaden, Ansbach and Grafenwoehr—and in Vicenza in Northern Italy.

The most critical task facing USAREUR transformation is the actual dissolution of USAREUR as an entity. While the command has existed since the presidency of Harry Truman, USAREUR is scheduled to merge with 7th Army by 30 September 2009, followed in 2012 or 2013 by relocation to Wiesbaden, Germany, which will serve as the command's future headquarters. That entity will supplant USAREUR as it stands now and will serve as the main land component for USEUCOM.<sup>52</sup>

Brigadier General David G. Perkins, USAREUR's operations officer, has acknowledged the enormous task facing the command. He has also noted that USAREUR is not prepared, as of now, to be a warfighting headquarters, enumerating the command's main tasks as forming training units and deploying units, as well as attending to quality-of-life issues of Soldiers and their families.<sup>53</sup>

In preparation for the 2009 dissolution and merger of USAREUR, the command is currently conducting a command-and-control exercise called "Austere Challenge." The exercise marks a milestone in the upcoming merger of USAREUR and V Corps, and is the first test of the 7th Army operational headquarters concept. Using an actual command post in Grafenwoehr, Germany, USAREUR and V Corps staff "will simulate a wartime environment from a headquarters' perspective."<sup>54</sup>

The first phase of Austere Challenge, conducted in February 2008, focused on technology. The second phase allowed sections to practice their roles in the command post function. The following phase was a deployment exercise in late March that confirmed the ability to set up a functional command post beyond the USAREUR and corps home bases in Heidelberg. The last phase will be an exercise simulating a full-fledged combined joint command post operating in a combat zone.<sup>55</sup>

Army leaders acknowledge the significant milestone marked by the exercise. According to Lieutenant Colonel Ransford A. Reinhard, V Corps deputy chief of operations, "It's part of the 7th Army transformation. We're bringing together the USAREUR staff and the V Corps staff into a single functional staff . . . .

It's a different paradigm than what we're used to."<sup>56</sup> Lieutenant General Kenneth W. Hunzeker, V Corps commanding general, observed that Austere Challenge "is more than an exercise; it's a means to demonstrate how a deployable, functionally aligned Army headquarters will operate in the 21st century."<sup>57</sup>

### **USAREUR and the Post-Cold War Security Environment**

**The Mission Shift.** Following U.S. Army engagement in World War II and the collapse of the Soviet Union, USAREUR experienced an overall shift in mission that has been ongoing for the past two decades. In the mid-1990s, USAREUR officials described "culture shock" within their ranks as the command shifted to a different type of mission. Europe was no longer regarded as a forward-deployment against a known threat; rather, it was viewed as a base for further deployments in response to unknown crises around Europe. One senior official described the mission shift and its attendant complexities as a "situation somewhere between peace and war."<sup>59</sup>

USAREUR's mission focus has been inextricably tied to European affairs. When Europe was at the center of political and military change, USAREUR was at the epicenter of change in the Army. Following the reduction of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, USAREUR entered a state of flux and uncertainty. One source observed, "For those Soldiers who were in Germany before but left prior to 1989 and those who have never been in Germany, USAREUR is an absolutely different world."<sup>60</sup> As USAREUR continues to address the implications of its continuously evolving mission, there comes the question of the command's relevance and necessity to the U.S. military force structure abroad.

The end of the Cold War and the shifting of U.S. security responsibilities abroad raised questions about USAREUR's role in the future. With the threat from the Soviet Union diminished, and the large fiscal demands emanating from the command, some questioned the necessity of maintaining forces abroad. For example, observed one author, "Why keep a heavy corps in Germany when the Red Army will not be marching west?" He went on to say that "many Europeans are reluctant to support U.S. military missions. (The Germans in particular expressed this reluctance during their September 2002 elections.)"<sup>61</sup>

In addition to the sentiment abroad, similar musings were heard at home. Department of Defense officials, for example, ranked the value of U.S. military forces in Europe and rated V Corps last in terms of power projection. Specifically, Army combat forces were rated less important than "Air Force aircraft and personnel, prepositioned equipment, and air bases."<sup>62</sup>

Financially, USAREUR facilities are quite costly. These facilities are among the most modern, and they are expensive. Growing, costly environmental standards limit the training value of many of the facilities. In addition, the cost of stationing Soldiers and their families in Europe is usually higher than at locations in the continental United States (CONUS).<sup>63</sup>

**Present and Future Security Environment.** These factors have led some to question the utility of continuing to have U.S. forces stationed in Europe. Nevertheless, despite some debate over the necessity of USAREUR in today's age of persistent conflict and unconventional security threats, USAREUR remains an important element of U.S. force projection abroad.

Some argue that the reduced threat level in Europe is not an indicator that U.S. Army forces should come home. On the contrary, some draw parallels between the security vacuum that emerged after U.S. forces left Europe following World War I to what would happen if the USAREUR were to leave Europe.

One major reason for maintaining USAREUR forces abroad is that Europe, in fact, is not entirely devoid of threats. While the Cold War ended more than 15 years ago, there are still security issues in the region. Renewed tensions in the Balkans, destabilizing elements in Trans-Caucasus, and the potential for other "wild-card" issues such as a pandemic, natural disaster or transnational crime require vigilance and established capabilities provided by USAREUR.<sup>64</sup>

Some specific security issues have arisen in the past few months. One area where conflict may be likely to resurface in the near future is Kosovo, which declared its independence on 17 February 2008, in defiance of Russia and Serbia. While the declaration has been accepted by several countries, including the United States, Serbia declared it illegal; moreover, Russia denounced the declaration and warned it could start a new conflict in the region a decade after a bloody war claimed 10,000 lives.

Another potentially thorny security issue is also manifesting in Georgia, another country in USAREUR's AOR. Georgia is seeking NATO membership, a move that has angered Russia and prompted the country to send extra troops to Abkhazia, a breakaway Georgian region seeking independence. President Bush has criticized the Russian government, calling its recent actions in Abkhazia "provocative."<sup>65</sup> An ex-minister for former Soviet Georgia believes that Russia's recent troop deployments have brought the prospect of war between the two countries "very close."<sup>66</sup> General McKiernan spoke last year about the dangers of a potentially resurgent Russia, claiming it was an important reason for maintaining 40,000 U.S. Army troops in Europe.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to the threats currently facing USAREUR, the future of conflict will be complex and difficult, taxing Soldiers across the full spectrum of operations. The security landscape will likely be characterized by both irregular and conventional warfare, fought in urban areas and cities. In a December 2007 briefing, Army Chief of Staff General George W. Casey, Jr., identified certain global trends that would provoke the environment of persistent conflict:

- globalization;
- demographics and population growth;
- resources demand;
- climate change and natural disasters;
- proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- failed or failing states; and
- terrorist safe havens.<sup>68</sup>

One scholar noted, "The U.S. will be challenged by a wider array of threats encompassing a mix of irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive threats emanating from the arc of instability."<sup>69</sup> Therefore, the combination of specific regional crises, as well as an overall international climate of insecurity and new challenges, will likely require the presence of USAREUR troops in Europe for the foreseeable future.

## **Conclusion**

General McKiernan characterized the current phase of USAREUR transformation and evolution as a construction of a bridge over a "raging river of uncertainty" while people are trying to cross to an unknown bank.<sup>70</sup> This phrase reflects the nature of the changes USAREUR is experiencing as it continues to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing missions and requirements under its authority while simultaneously undergoing its largest transformational effort to date.

The shift in security concerns for the U.S. government since the Cold War means that USAREUR is no longer at the forefront of Army efforts abroad. Nevertheless, USAREUR still plays a vital role on the European continent and for missions in adjacent regions. The potential for the regeneration of conflict in the Balkans, the rising hostilities between Georgia and Russia, and the likelihood of global instability in the future merit consistent U.S. military power projection abroad.

USAREUR has demonstrated great responsiveness in adapting and changing to meet the dynamic security challenges facing the United States. From its post-World War II stance to its current transformative phase, USAREUR has continuously displayed a great capability for evolving to meet U.S. military needs abroad. As USAREUR enters its newest phase of transformation in the next few years, it will likely continue to serve as an invaluable member of the U.S. military community.

## Endnotes

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