



# Association of the United States Army

Voice for the Army—Support for the Soldier

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## Strategic Landpower in NATO

*Vital for U.S. Security*

*Allied Land Command is the leading advocate for soldiers and land forces in NATO, responsible for ensuring their effectiveness and interoperability.*

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Commander, NATO Allied Land Command\*

### Introduction

Today's global security environment is defined by its complexity, unpredictability and the increasing momentum of human interaction; it is the essence of the joint and combined force to remain trained and fully ready to meet any challenge. Strategic landpower—the application of land forces (Army, Marine Corps and special operations forces) toward achieving strategic outcomes across the range of military operations—provides a critical hedge against this uncertain future. The role of strategic landpower is to shape and prevail within the human domain, creating conditions that stabilize people's daily dealings with one another and generate momentum to bring about the nation's strategic objectives.

Even as the Department of Defense (DoD) rebalances its posture to the Asia-Pacific region, Europe will continue to require a strong commitment from the United States, including responsive, adaptive and regionally engaged forces to maintain security and stability. The European security environment is still unpredictable and uncertain, evidenced by the recent Russian seizure of Crimea. The long-standing partnerships developed through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will continue to play a vital deterrence role not only against further Russian aggression but also in the U.S. military's larger global strategy. The forward operating bases in Europe provide essential access in the eastern Mediterranean and the Levant, as well as in North Africa. In addition, about half of the world trade flows across the Atlantic between the United States and Europe; this trade is of vital importance to the U.S. economy.

The U.S. Army—globally responsive, regionally engaged—contributes by preventing conflict through credible capacity, readiness and modernization; shaping the international environment through sustaining strong relationships, building partner capacity and facilitating strategic access; applying mission command



and combined-arms capabilities to dominate the environment; and winning decisively when called. The Army is sustaining its commitment to maintain strong relationships and interoperability with its proven partners in NATO. A large part of this effort is ongoing by means of NATO's Allied Land Command (LANDCOM). Established in 2012, it is the newest single-service command of NATO's military arm and consists of more than 350 personnel billets from 23 nations. Located in Izmir, Turkey, its mandate is to ensure that multinational forces retain the hard lessons learned over a decade by NATO troops serving in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. On any given day, at least a third of the command's assigned personnel are regionally engaged on temporary duty across Europe, either in land forces operational capability, headquarters operational readiness and/or land advocacy.

### Background

Founded in 1949, NATO binds North America—the United States and Canada—and 26 European nations in an Alliance to safeguard the freedom and security of the Allied nations. Acting within the bounds of international treaty law, NATO efforts are focused on three core tasks: collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security. When NATO's politi-

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- ACO – Allied Command Operations
- AIRCOM – Air Command
- CFI – Connected Forces Initiative
- CGSC – Command and General Staff College
- CIS – Computer Information Services
- DoD – Department of Defense
- FOC – Full Operational Capability
- GRF-Ls – Graduated Readiness Forces for Land
- ISAF – International Security Assistance Force
- JFCs – Joint Force Commands
- JFC-BS – Joint Force Command–Brunssum
- JFC-NP – Joint Force Command–Naples
- JFC HQ – Joint Force Command Headquarters
- JMTC – Joint Military Training Center
- JTF HQ – Joint Task Force Headquarters
- LANDCOM – Allied Land Command
- LCC – Land Component Command
- L RTP – Long-Range Training Plan
- MARCOM – Maritime Command
- MTS – Mutual Training Support
- NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- NCS – NATO Command Structure
- NFS – NATO Force Structure
- NRF – NATO Response Force
- SACEUR – Supreme Allied Commander Europe
- USAREUR – U.S. Army Europe
- USEUCOM – U.S. European Command

cal decisions have military implications, LANDCOM contributes to implementation of these core tasks, acting within the NATO Command Structure (NCS). This command structure is based on functionality rather than geography, with three tiers of command: strategic, operational and tactical.

At the strategic level, Allied Command Operations (ACO) is commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). The SACEUR also serves as the commander of the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), as many of the responsibilities of the two commands overlap. The operational level consists of two joint force commands (JFCs): one (JFC-BS) in Brunssum, the Netherlands, and the other (JFC-NP) in Naples, Italy. Each is prepared to con-

duct comprehensive operational-level campaign planning and to deploy into theater as a joint task force headquarters (JTF HQ). At the component or tactical level, NATO has placed three single-service component command headquarters alongside the two JFCs: LANDCOM; Air Command (AIRCOM) in Ramstein, Germany; and Maritime Command (MARCOM) in Northwood, United Kingdom. When LANDCOM announces full operational capability (FOC) in December 2014, it will be the only deployable component in the transformed NATO structure and will be prepared to operate as the land component command (LCC) in the JTF HQ.

Before LANDCOM, there were two land force headquarters in NATO: Forces Command Heidelberg (Germany) and Forces Command Madrid (Spain). As part of ACO reformation, both of these headquarters were deactivated. The missions and resources of these two former land force headquarters were fully realigned into a single land force headquarters in compliance with the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept. This has greatly improved the NATO Force Structure (NFS) efficiency and effectiveness.

NFS consists of organizational arrangements that bring together the forces placed at the Alliance’s disposal by the member countries, along with their associated mission command structures. LANDCOM operations are conducted across all NATO nations (including the Baltic Nations: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) to ensure all are fully capable of conducting interoperable maneuvers. These forces are available for NATO operations in accordance with predetermined readiness criteria and with rules of deployment and transfer of authority to NATO command that can vary from country to country. Within this NFS, nine multinational Graduated Readiness Forces for Land (GRF-Ls) support NATO’s land forces requirements and look to LANDCOM for advocacy as well as evaluation and certification.

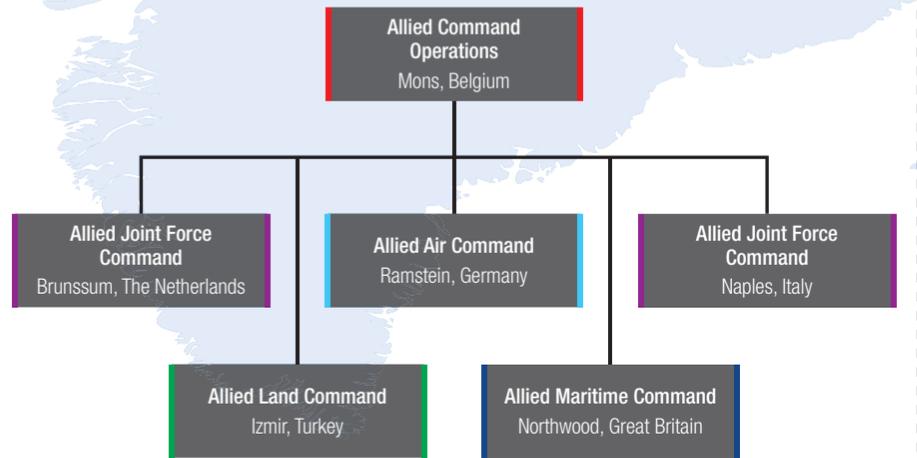
These GRF-Ls contribute land forces to the NATO Response Force (NRF) on a rotational basis, committing for a 12-month period. The NRF is a high-readiness, technologically advanced multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and special operations forces components that the Alliance can deploy rapidly. Leadership of the NRF rotates between JFC-BS and JFC-NP. The NRF comprises a joint force of about 13,000 high-readiness troops provided by Allies. NATO is also looking at adding a “high-readiness joint task force” or “spearhead force” to the NRF that would be instrumental in identifying the capabilities, equipment, personnel and doctrine of this new high-readiness NATO military unit, capable of deploying anywhere in the European region within 48 hours.

### LANDCOM Priorities and Initiatives

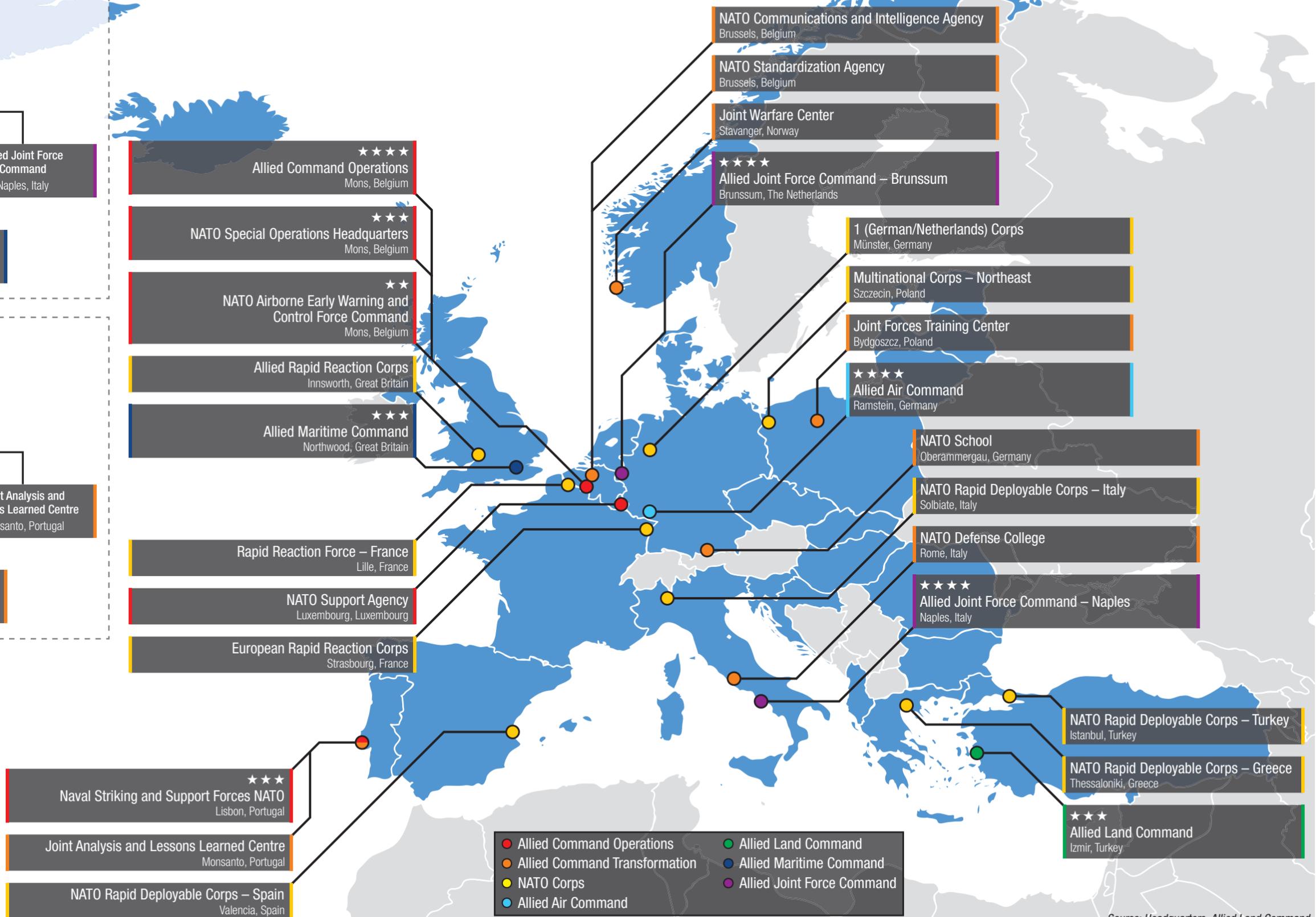
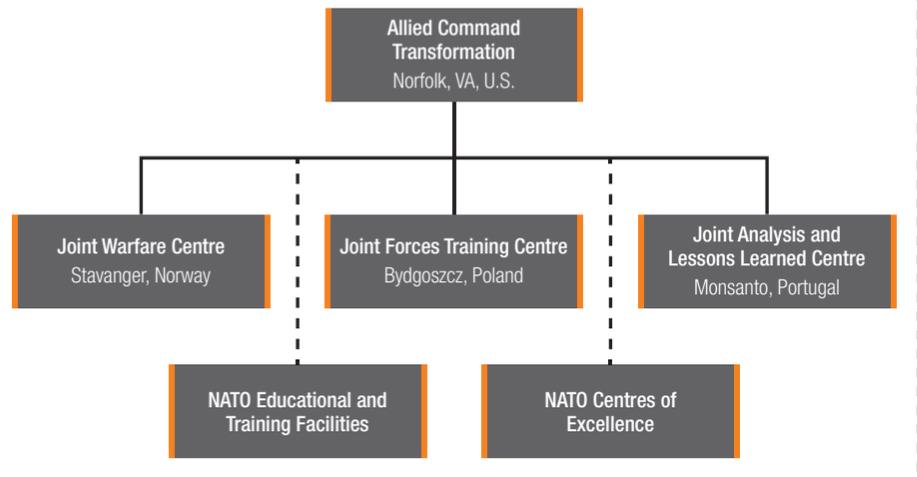
To deal with current threats in the security environment, NATO has transitioned to a new and more efficient preparatory model and has developed a new vision called

# Allied Land Command

## Allied Command Operations



## Allied Command Transformation



Source: Headquarters, Allied Land Command

NATO Forces 2020. The vision's goal is to ensure NATO has modern, tightly connected forces equipped, trained, exercised and commanded so that they can operate together and with partners in any environment. To achieve this, the NATO Secretary General created the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI).

CFI is an approach developed to maintain operational preparedness through expanded education and training, increased exercises and better use of technology. This concept addresses the need for a new and different model for getting the most out of shrinking forces, particularly in the absence of real-world battlefield training environments such as Afghanistan.

LANDCOM is using this approach to be the "connective tissue" for land forces and enablers across the Alliance and with partner nations. The command will connect land forces to one another, connect training centers with simulation centers and staff colleges with Centres of Excellence, all of which expands the capacity of the Alliance to train (joint and multi-echelon) and improve interoperability.

To do so, it must: enable the retention and expansion of interoperability for the land forces within the NATO Alliance; maintain the ability to be a deployable headquarters capable of providing a land planning capability; and serve as an enabling force that promotes the development of common doctrine and concepts. To achieve these goals, the command has developed three priorities to enhance strategic landpower.

**Land Forces Operational Capability.** As the main priority, LANDCOM is the headquarters responsible for the evaluation and certification of landpower exercises. As the ISAF mission ends, the command will compensate for the reduced operational experience by increasing the quantity and quality of exercises. These exercises are essential for forces to practice and develop tactics, techniques and procedures; they will cover the continuum of crises and promote interoperability. The headquarters, units and formations of the NATO Force and Command will be challenged and certified through high-intensity, large-scale exercises. Spain, Portugal and Italy have volunteered to host a major live exercise in 2015 with a significant number of deployed land, maritime and air forces. Starting in 2016, LANDCOM expects to conduct similar exercises regularly.

Operation Atlantic Resolve is an exercise designed, in light of the Russian intervention in Ukraine, to reassure NATO Allies and partners of the U.S. dedication to enduring peace and stability in the region. This includes the recent exercises conducted by paratroopers from the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team, who have, since April, been participating in multinational training in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. It will also include the deployment of United States-based troops from the 1st Brigade Combat

Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who will be arriving in October 2014 to begin training exercises with these nations' troops. These land training exercises, which came at the request of the host nations, help foster interoperability through small-unit and leader training and demonstrate the capability of NATO troops to gain strategic access and rapidly build and project combat power.

LANDCOM is also participating in the September 2014 annual exercise Rapid Trident in Lviv, Ukraine. Cohosted by Ukraine and U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR), its goal is to train and promote interoperability between NATO and nearly a dozen participating partner nations.

Multinational exercises in Romania will be overseen by LANDCOM in the fall when British landpower forces train with the Romanians at the Cincu training center. These exercises will not only enhance cooperation among NATO forces but will also show potential aggressors that the Alliance will react if Romania or other regional countries are attacked or threatened. To this end, the command is looking to expand these types of exercises in Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Trident Lance will be the first single-service, component-led exercise under the new NATO NCS since the end of the Cold War. LANDCOM headquarters will be the LCC for JFC-NP during this multilevel distributed exercise. By the time the exercise occurs in 2015, JFC-NP will be certified as a designated NRF.

The benefit of the Trident Lance exercise is its ability to connect multiple NCS corps to exercise their interoperability capabilities among Allied forces. By participating in this event, all forces—particularly the smaller corps—will be trained more frequently than at the current three-year intervals conducted as part of NATO's Long-Range Training Plan (LRTP) schedule.

LANDCOM's vision for Trident Lance will take on a number of significant challenges. The current capacity of the NATO joint training centers limits the availability and scale of the multinational and joint exercises that SACEUR envisions. After surveying all of NATO and national training centers in the U.S. European Command Theater, LANDCOM determined that the U.S. Army's Joint Military Training Center (JMTC) possessed the necessary space and infrastructure to simulate the operational conditions adequately for Trident Lance. The exercise will be controlled from NATO's Joint Forces Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Poland. Computer information services (CIS) interoperability will be crucial to the success of the experiment.

**LANDCOM Headquarters Operational Readiness.** Based on SACEUR guidance, LANDCOM's senior leadership made it a priority to develop a deployable capability. This land-centric joint task force will help lead a major joint operation with augmentation from integrated capabilities.



The December 2014 FOC date of LANDCOM HQ coincides with the deadline for NATO operations in Afghanistan in support of ISAF and the transition to Operation Resolute Support. When directed by the SACEUR, LANDCOM will provide the core of a joint force command headquarters (JFC HQ), responsible for the conduct of land operations and the synchronization of land forces' mission command to defend NATO interests. This includes maintaining a responsive planning capability to address an attack or threat made against a member of NATO. By being deployable, LANDCOM has the ability to establish a forward headquarters and provide flexibility for the SACEUR.

**Land Advocacy.** Moreover, LANDCOM continually advocates on behalf of the NFS and national armies. Its senior leadership serves as the lead for landpower expertise inside NATO and is working with military education institutions such as the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to ensure that the importance of landpower in joint and combined operations is integrated into curricula. Additionally, every effort is being made to assign personnel who have expertise in strategic landpower to the LANDCOM staff. LANDCOM also leverages national training capabilities, collaborates whenever possible and develops NATO-specific individual and collective training so that Allies can operate together effectively. In a changing and challenging security environment, the ability of Allies to work together rapidly through their interconnectivity will be an important element in demonstrating alliance cohesion and solidarity. LANDCOM also conducts coordination with nations in the European Union, Partnership for Peace, Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative to ensure they are all cognizant of NATO interoperability with their respective land forces.

### The Way Ahead

The Ukraine crisis and the resultant Russian aggression have changed the European security architecture. In the short term, NATO HQ has taken immediate decisive steps to demonstrate the collective resolve of the Alliance. Allies who consider themselves threatened can be assured that NATO stands by its collective defense obligations. NATO will demonstrate its defensive nature without escalating tensions and will deter Russia from aggression against NATO Allies. Longer-term strategic measures are being designed by Alliance nations to build an increasingly rapid and responsive NATO that is capable of meeting a range of threats, including those that come from hybrid warfare.

These strategic measures will embody the concepts of strong Alliance solidarity and cohesion and

an affirmed transatlantic bond. They will also build on partnerships, particularly with nations who have demonstrated strong support for NATO operations and activities. Interoperability and connectivity are central themes of this strategy. The Alliance will be more effective as Allies and partners increase their ability to communicate with one another, use niche capability to fill gaps and capitalize on capability in a streamlined way while adhering to common NATO standards. By doing so, the Alliance will interoperate effectively and use its resources wisely.

As a NATO member, the United States benefits just as much as every other Alliance member from these NATO interoperability strategic measures, but, more specifically, so does the U.S. Army. In the post-Afghanistan and post-Iraq security environment, the Army is capitalizing on its coalition experience and relationships to build a global foundation of national defense. NATO land powers and the U.S. Army have embraced the concept of using partnerships, interoperability and common connectivity. LANDCOM is the principal land force advisor for these issues. Under the NATO CFI, it provides expertise in support of NATO land forces' standardization, readiness and competency while creatively looking for measures to improve interoperability among NATO land forces.

Connecting Allies with compatible communication equipment illustrates one of the initiatives that the command is undertaking to try to better connect NATO land powers. Many Allies participate in NATO exercises, but they have only limited ability to communicate with one another because of national communication equipment and protocols. LANDCOM is working to improve this area so that nations can operate more effectively together; its goal is to have every major national training center and garrison headquarters in NATO connected by NATO compatible communication equipment so that nations conducting national exercises can connect to NATO through these centers.

Multi-echelon and distributed exercises could be a cost-effective solution to enable participation of multiple training audiences remotely located within NATO, across the services and with traditional contributing partners. LANDCOM intends to use the results of Trident Lance to convince the North Atlantic Council to invest in Mutual Training Support (MTS) communication network infrastructure for enhanced operational readiness within NATO.

By endorsing CFI—particularly interoperability and the MTS concept—LANDCOM will make NATO's vision of NATO Forces 2020 a reality and will reinforce the solidarity and cohesion of the Allies and their partners.