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**GAO**

Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee  
on Military Forces and Personnel,  
Committee on Armed Services,  
House of Representatives

January 1974

# FOROPE STRUCTION

## Basis for Future Army Forces in Europe



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United States  
General Accounting Office  
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National Security and  
International Affairs Division

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January 14, 1994

The Honorable Ike Skelton  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Military  
Forces and Personnel  
Committee on Armed Services  
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This report responds to the former Chairman's request that we determine the basis for the size and composition of U.S. military forces planned for Europe at the end of fiscal year 1996 and the major U.S. military capabilities that will be affected by force reductions in Europe. A separate classified annex to this report discusses U.S. commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in more detail.

Unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report for 5 days. At that time, we will send copies to the Chairmen of the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations; the Secretaries of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others upon request.

Please contact me at (202) 512-3504 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix III.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Davis  
Director, National Security  
Analysis

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# Executive Summary

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## Purpose

U.S. military forces in Europe are being reduced to one-third their former size—from 311,000 positions in 1990 to about 100,000 positions by 1996. Despite these reductions, debate continues on the size and composition of these forces and whether further reductions could be made. At the request of the former Chairman, Subcommittee on Military Forces and Personnel, House Committee on Armed Services, GAO evaluated the Department of Defense's force reduction plans to determine (1) the basis for the size and composition of U.S. military forces planned for Europe at the end of fiscal year 1996 and (2) the major military capabilities that will be affected by the force reductions. GAO focused primarily on the size and composition of Army forces in Europe since they comprise about two-thirds of all forces there.

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## Background

Since the end of the Cold War, the Department has initiated three successive plans for reducing its forces in Europe, each having a lower projected force level for 1996. The first plan would have reduced military positions in Europe from 311,000 to 225,000. This plan was developed in July 1990 to meet the expected manpower limits of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaty and presidential imposed troop levels. Its implementation was overtaken by changes in the treaty that eliminated the manpower restrictions. Therefore, the plan was not approved or implemented by the Department. The second plan reduced military positions to 150,000. The latest plan calls for about 100,000 positions in Europe—60,000 Army, 34,000 Air Force, and 10,000 Navy—by 1996. Retaining an Army corps comprised of two heavy divisions has remained a central element of these plans.

The missions assigned to U.S. forces in Europe encompass a broad spectrum of both combat operations and noncombat endeavors. These are conducting combat operations in the European theater with allies or unilaterally; responding to out-of-theater combat operations; receiving and supporting reinforcements from the continental United States; conducting noncombat missions within or outside the European theater; and maintaining a forward presence that shows commitment to U.S. allies, is militarily credible, deters aggression, preserves regional stability, and promotes U.S. influence within the theater.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has concurrently developed a plan to restructure member nations' forces into more flexible formations, including multinational corps, to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War era. NATO's plan calls for immediate and rapid reaction

forces that can quickly respond to a crisis, main defense forces that could be employed during crisis management and early defensive operations, and augmentation forces that can be deployed as needed during a full-scale war.

The Department's bottom-up review developed new military strategies and plans to carry out these strategies. The review concluded that retaining about 100,000 troops in Europe was needed to protect and advance U.S. interests. GAO's analysis is intended to assist the Congress in evaluating this aspect of the new strategies and plans.

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## Results in Brief

The Department plans to retain about 100,000 troops in Europe to meet U.S. objectives derived from U.S. security directives and NATO commitments. Although these objectives support maintaining an Army structure such as a corps in Europe, the Department's decisions on the composition and size of this force are based on commitments and judgment. National security directives define broad missions and specify the need for a corps and two divisions. The United States has specific commitments to provide NATO with a level of forces within a short time frame. For the Army those specific commitments are for less than 60,000 troops. NATO has not specified time requirements for the remainder of U.S. Army forces in Europe. The United States, like other member nations, determined the extent of its commitments.

The Department's plans for Army forces in Europe have evolved from retaining a war-fighting force that could act on its own to a more streamlined force more dependent on reinforcement from the continental United States. Although the Army initially tried to retain maximum combat capability by sacrificing support elements, the latest plan cuts deeply into combat forces. Nevertheless, the Army force as currently planned contains remnants of the force that was to meet Cold War challenges.

The military capability that has been most eroded through force reductions is that of fighting independently as a corps in a major war without allies. However, the dissolved Soviet Union has diminished the likelihood of a conflict requiring such a capability, and recent smaller deployments of Army forces have not required that capability. Moreover, NATO is moving to smaller, mobile, more flexible forces and does not plan to deploy the U.S. corps as a unit. A question that remains is whether the U.S. Army force structure in Europe—primarily comprised of heavy forces—is appropriate to meet post-Cold War challenges given that the

principal mission for U.S. troops in Europe has changed, NATO is moving to smaller and more flexible forces, and a major conflict such as Operation Desert Storm that would require heavy U.S. armored forces would have to draw those forces from the United States.

According to the Department, the retention of heavy forces in Europe is under review within the Army at this time. However, the Department noted that several factors must be considered in any discussion of replacing heavy forces in Europe with light forces, including an uncertain and turbulent world. For example, the reversal of reforms and the emergence of ultranationalist authoritarianism, particularly in Russia, would substantially alter the security situation for the United States.

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## Principal Findings

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### Basis for Size and Composition of U.S. Forces in Europe

The U.S. decision to maintain an Army corps comprised of two heavy divisions and theater support troops forward deployed in Europe is based on a wide range of national security objectives that include (1) demonstrating U.S. commitment to European allies and NATO by providing combat-ready forces, (2) responding to a wide array of combat and noncombat missions, (3) preserving U.S. influence within NATO, and (4) providing visible deterrence against the spread of regional instabilities. Although national security directives have not specified the number of troops that the United States must forward station in Europe to achieve national security objectives,<sup>1</sup> the Department chose the Army corps as the centerpiece of its force structure in Europe because its forces could be tailored to respond to the full range of assigned missions.

As of August 1993, the United States had committed to NATO Army forces consisting of a corps command structure and one Army division to a U.S.-led main defense corps and a second division to a German-led main defense corps. One U.S. division and some corps-level support elements would have dual responsibilities in that they would also be committed to NATO's Rapid Reaction Corps. Troops located in the United States would also be provided to NATO in the event of a larger conflict. Under NATO's plans, the entire U.S. Army corps in Europe would not fight together as a single entity in a NATO contingency. This does not mean, of course, that

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<sup>1</sup>According to the Department, directives have not specified in recent years a troop level for the Europe-based force; however, the 100,000-troop level for Europe was included in the budget guidance for fiscal year 1994 and is included in the Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 1995-2000.

European-based U.S. forces could not be used together as a corps in a non-NATO operation, as in fact occurred in the Persian Gulf.

NATO does not dictate what forces member nations must provide nor how quickly they must provide them. These determinations, which later get translated into actual commitments, are made by the members themselves in conjunction with NATO military and political leaders. On the basis of current troop and time commitments to NATO, some U.S. Army forces would need to remain forward stationed since commitments could not be met by deploying all forces from the United States. GAO's classified annex to this report discusses U.S. commitments to NATO in more detail.

## Force Reductions Have Reduced Army Combat Capabilities

The Army had about 213,000 positions in Europe as of September 1990. By 1995 the Army plans to reduce its European force to about 60,000 positions. Although the Army initially tried to retain maximum combat capability by sacrificing support elements, the latest plan cuts deeply into combat forces. The Army was able to keep its two divisions intact under past reduction plans by sacrificing one of the armored cavalry regiments, the two separate combat brigades, and additional support elements. However, at the 60,000 level, the third brigade of each of the two divisions will be withdrawn and stationed in the United States, thus increasing response time to a major contingency. The major Army mission affected by the latest reductions is to fight independently in a major combat operation without allies.

It appears that forces planned for Europe are sufficient for a wide range of peacetime missions, based on the type and size of recent peacetime deployments. From January 1990 through May 1993, other than deployments related to the Persian Gulf War, U.S. troops in Europe were sent in relatively small numbers to a wide array of peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations. During the period, about 9,300 troops were sent to 13 deployments unrelated to the war.

The Department has adhered to its plan to retain a heavy Army corps in Europe despite subsequent improvements in the security environment, increased peacetime deployments of a noncombat nature perhaps requiring somewhat different skills, and force reductions that have now made it much more difficult for the Army corps in Europe to accomplish its major combat mission on its own. A heavy Army corps structure seemed appropriate at higher force levels and during the period when the threat of a major Soviet attack on the NATO alliance was plausible.

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However, given the changed security situation, a restructured force with a different focus might be better suited to the types of missions these forces may increasingly be called upon to execute in the future.

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## Recommendation

GAO is not making any recommendations in this report.

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## Agency Comments

The Department noted that GAO's draft report needed to be updated to reflect events that occurred after GAO completed its review. GAO has made changes to the report based on a careful analysis of this updated information. These changes, along with the Department's comments, are included in appendix II.

The Department agreed with the need to consider the changed world situation in determining the future Army force structure in Europe. It said that the Army is reviewing the retention of heavy forces in Europe. According to the Department, the following three factors must be addressed in any discussion of replacing such forces with light forces: mission requirements for the forces, perceived military value of the force, and the Army force structure in Europe in relation to the Army-wide force structure.

The Department said that the Army force structure in Europe is still evolving. However, were its current plan to be fully implemented, it would be a force deliberately designed to maximize the theater commander's operational capability and flexibility, while minimizing Army transition costs and turbulence. GAO does not disagree that the Army force structure in Europe provides the theater commander with a capable and flexible force. However, GAO believes that the Army heavy force structure in Europe contains remnants of the force that was to meet Cold War challenges.





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**Abbreviations**

DOD	Department of Defense
EUCOM	U.S. European Command
GAO	General Accounting Office
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
USAREUR	U.S. Army, Europe

# Introduction

The end of the Cold War and domestic budget pressures have led the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies to reassess how their military forces should be sized and structured to effectively provide for their collective security. The changed security environment has been accompanied by substantial changes in the size and composition of U.S. forces in Europe over the past 3 years. In its bottom-up review, the Department of Defense (DOD) developed new national military strategies and plans to carry out these strategies in force structure, weapons modernization, and defense initiatives. The review concluded that retaining 100,000 troops in Europe was needed to protect and advance U.S. interests.

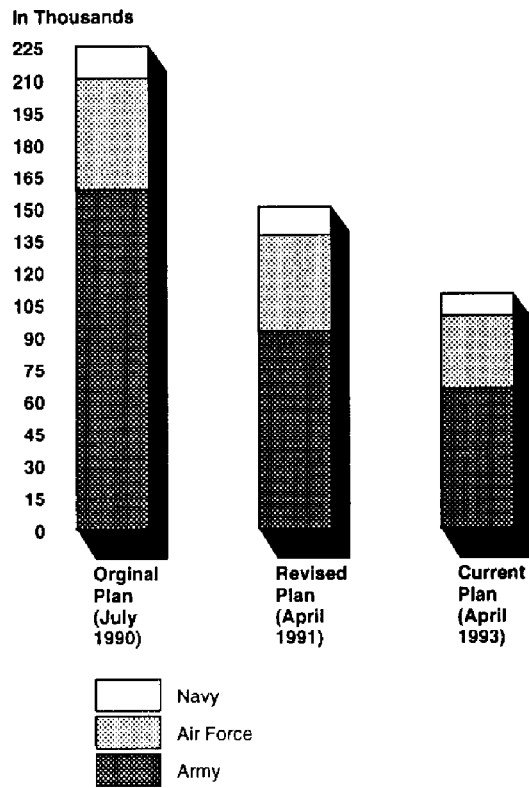
## Changed Security Environment Has Led to Substantial Force Reductions in Europe

The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s was precipitated by a series of unprecedented geopolitical events, including the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent unification of Germany; the signing of conventional, chemical, biological, and nuclear arms control agreements; the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact; and, ultimately, the demise of the Soviet Union itself. Along with this easing of the Cold War threat, however, have come economic and political turbulence throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics, the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, and continuing ethnic tensions, conflicts, and border disputes throughout the Baltic Republics and other areas within Europe.

As a direct result of the easing of East-West tensions, the United States and some of its major allies have chosen to substantially reduce their military forces in Europe. As shown in figure 1.1, over the last 3 years, the United States has initiated three major plans for its projected authorized military force in Europe, each with a successively lower projected level. The first plan would have reduced authorized positions from 311,000 to 225,000. This plan was developed in July 1990 to meet the expected manpower limits of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaty and presidential imposed troop levels. Its implementation was overtaken by changes in the treaty that eliminated the manpower restrictions. Therefore, the plan was not approved or implemented by DOD. The second plan reduced authorized positions to 150,000. The latest plan, which the Secretary of Defense directed in February 1993, would result in about 100,000 Army, Air Force, and Navy positions in Europe by the end of fiscal year 1996.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DOD expects to assign about 100,000 personnel to these positions—the target force level specified under section 1303 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993, Public Law 102-484.

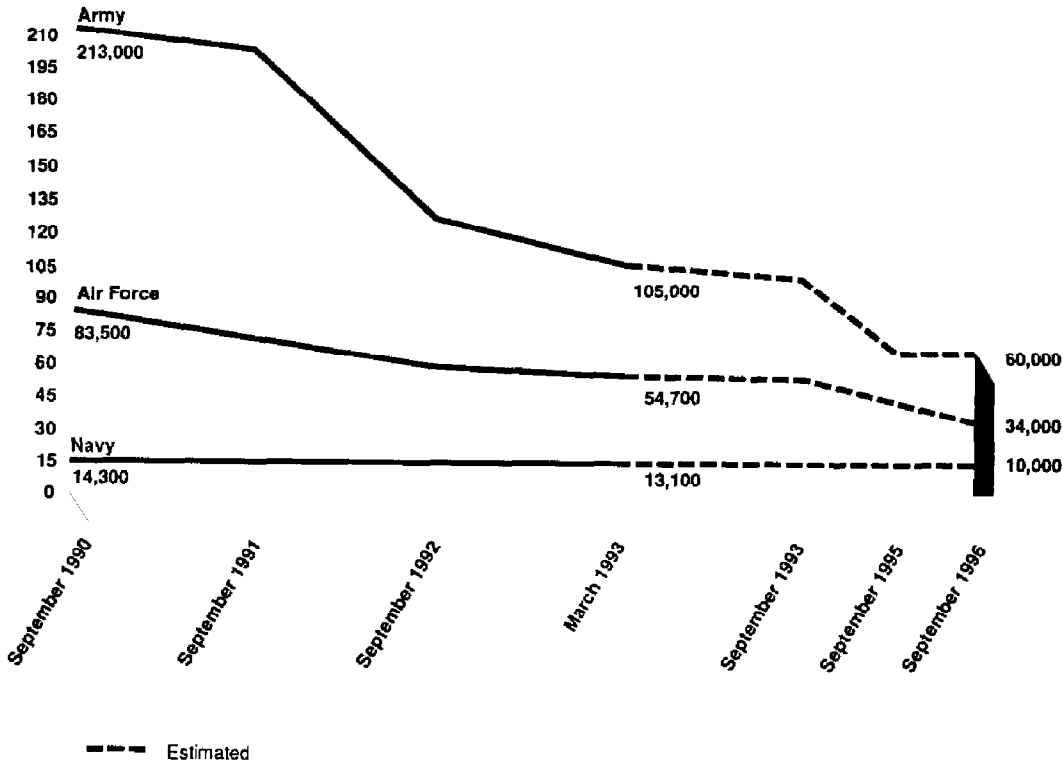
**Figure 1.1: Successive Plans for the U.S. Military Force to Remain in Europe at the End of Fiscal Year 1996**



Source: U.S. European Command (EUCOM).

DOD has made substantial progress in reducing authorized military positions necessary to meet the projected force levels. In the 3 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, U.S. positions in Europe have declined by 44 percent, from about 311,000 in September 1990 to about 173,000 in March 1993. As shown in figure 1.2, the pace of the reductions has been steady in the Air Force and Navy but has proceeded unevenly in the Army.

**Figure 1.2: Progression of the Drawdown of U.S. Military Positions in Europe, Fiscal Years 1990 to 1996 (Projected)**  
In Thousands



Source: EUCOM.

The Army's drawdown has been characterized by small reductions during fiscal year 1991, when Operation Desert Storm interrupted the planned drawdown, but with accelerated reductions in fiscal year 1992 to "catch up" to the plan after the Persian Gulf War. According to headquarters officials in EUCOM and the U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR), the Army now plans to achieve its projected 60,000-authorized position level a year earlier than planned—by the end of fiscal year 1995. The Air Force plans to achieve its 34,000-position level by the end of fiscal year 1996. The Navy, which has had a much smaller presence in Europe, will reduce to 10,000 positions by the end of fiscal year 1996. When these latest reductions are achieved, the U.S. force will be about one-third of its size in 1990, the year the drawdown began.

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## Bottom-Up Review Establishes New Military Strategy and Force Structure

DOD undertook the bottom-up review to select the right strategy, force structure, modernization programs, and supporting industrial base and infrastructure to provide for America's defense in the post-Cold War era. According to DOD, the bottom-up review identified the force structure required to maintain the capabilities to win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts. A series of budget initiatives for fiscal year 1995 and beyond are expected to flow from the bottom-up review.

The review recognized the need for continued U.S. leadership in NATO. To maintain that leadership position and provide "a robust capability for multinational training and crisis response," the United States will maintain a force of about 100,000 troops in Europe that will include two and one-third wings of Air Force fighters and substantial elements of two Army divisions, along with a corps headquarters and other supporting elements. Also, equipment for bringing these in-place divisions to full strength will remain prepositioned in Europe, along with the equipment of one additional division that would deploy to the region in the event of conflict. Moreover, U.S. Navy ships and submarines will continue to patrol the Mediterranean Sea and other waters surrounding Europe.

According to DOD, Army forces will focus on missions involving rapid deployment to conflicts outside of central Europe and on nontraditional operations, such as peace enforcement, in addition to their long-standing mission of stabilization of central Europe. These missions might lead, over time, to changes in the equipment and configuration of Army units stationed in Europe. However, DOD noted that several factors must be considered in any discussion of Army force structure changes in Europe, including an uncertain and turbulent world. For example, the reversal of reforms and the emergence of ultranationalist authoritarianism, particularly in Russia, would substantially alter the security situation for the United States.

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## Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

At the request of the former Chairman, Subcommittee on Military Forces and Personnel, House Armed Services Committee, we evaluated planned reductions in the U.S. military presence to be in place in Europe by the end of fiscal year 1996. Our objectives were to determine (1) the basis for the planned size and composition of the U.S. military forces to remain in Europe at the end of fiscal year 1996 and (2) the major military capabilities that will be affected by the force reductions. We primarily focused on the size and composition of Army forces since they comprise about two-thirds of all U.S. forces in Europe and are most heavily impacted by the

drawdown. We confined our analysis of the Air Force and Navy presence to their force reductions over the past 3 years and their projected force levels for fiscal year 1996.

To understand the basis for DOD's planned forces for Europe, we reviewed key national security directives to determine what roles and missions they assigned to these troops and whether they specified that these troops needed to be forward stationed in Europe to accomplish them. We also analyzed pertinent U.S. documents submitted to the NATO alliance outlining its specific commitments and key NATO documents outlining NATO's planned military strategy and force restructuring for the post-Cold War period. We discussed U.S.-force levels and the potential impacts of further reductions on the U.S. ability to achieve its mandated missions and its commitments to NATO with key officials at DOD headquarters in Washington, D.C.; Headquarters, EUCOM in Stuttgart, Germany; Headquarters, USAREUR in Heidelberg, Germany; and the U.S. Mission to NATO and the U.S. Military Committee at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

In tracing the changes in the planned size and composition of the U.S. military presence for Europe, we obtained numerical breakdowns of each force structure plan over the past 3 years from EUCOM and USAREUR. To obtain information about the significance of the individual elements of the force and potential impacts if these elements had to be withdrawn, we interviewed key officials at USAREUR, EUCOM, and the Department of the Army headquarters in Washington, D.C. Our profile centered on the plan for the 150,000-authorized positions, since the details of the lower 100,000-positions force had not been made public when we completed our review in August 1993. We believe that this breakdown provides insights into what constraints might exist in considering further reductions.

We discussed the results of our review and obtained the views of key officials on issues that should be addressed in considering further force reductions in Europe at all of the previously mentioned U.S. and European locations. These officials included, but were not limited to, the U.S. Ambassador to NATO, USAREUR's Army Chief of Staff, and EUCOM's Director of Plans and Policy Directorate. DOD provided written comments on a draft of this report. These comments have been addressed throughout the report and are reprinted in appendix II.

We conducted our review from May 1992 to August 1993 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.



# Basis for Size and Composition of U.S. Forces in Europe

DOD has decided to maintain a force of about 100,000 in Europe, including an Army corps comprised of two heavy divisions, along with smaller Air Force and Navy forces. These forces are intended to meet U.S. objectives derived from U.S. security directives and NATO commitments. Particularly influential on the structure of Army forces are the objectives of (1) having the corps able to fight as a unilateral force and (2) maintaining a significant presence and influence in NATO.

According to DOD, these objectives support maintaining an Army structure such as a corps in Europe. However, DOD's decisions on the composition and size of this force are based on commitments and judgment. National security directives define broad missions and specify the need for a corps and two divisions. While the United States has specific commitments to NATO, member nations determine the extent of their own commitment. Those specific commitments are presently less than 100,000 troops. However, U.S. officials believe that 100,000 troops stationed in Europe are needed to achieve important political objectives.

## Army Force Structure in Europe Intended to Achieve Diverse U.S. Objectives

The U.S. decision to maintain an Army corps comprised of two heavy divisions and theater support troops forward deployed in Europe is based on a wide range of national security interests. According to officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, retaining such an Army corps in Europe would provide the forces needed to achieve the full range of assigned missions.

USAREUR officials emphasized that retaining a corps was important because Army doctrine establishes the corps as the Army's basic fighting unit. According to these officials, individual Army divisions cannot sustain themselves without combat support and combat service support from the corps level. They explained that a corps contains all of the elements needed to provide the credible war-fighting, logistics, communications, and intelligence capabilities needed for U.S. military operations.

U.S. officials also emphasized that the presence of U.S. forces in Europe serves important U.S. political objectives. They cited preserving the role of NATO as the primary multilateral organization in Europe geared to the collective defense of Europe as a key U.S. policy objective. They noted that it was important for the United States to retain a leadership role in NATO and that retaining a U.S. representative in the role of NATO Supreme Allied Commander of Europe was critical to retaining this influence. Several officials believed that the best way to demonstrate U.S.

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**Chapter 2**  
**Basis for Size and Composition of**  
**U.S. Forces in Europe**

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commitment to the alliance was through a sizeable permanent presence of forward-stationed troops. They saw an Army corps on the ground in Europe as a visible sign of this commitment.

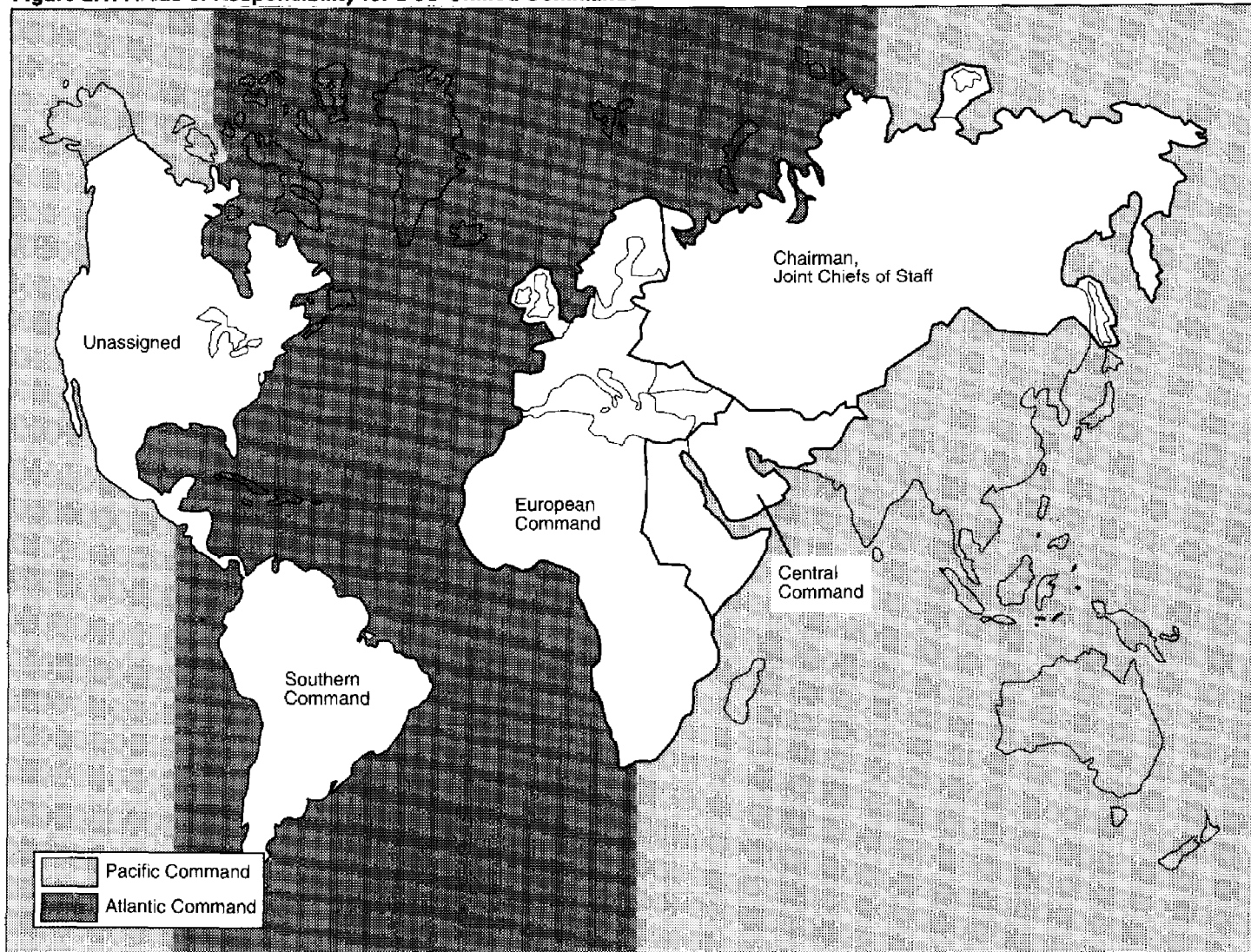
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**EUCOM Tasked With**  
**Widely Divergent Missions**

The wide array of missions that have been assigned to EUCOM reflects the diversity of U.S. objectives to be achieved throughout its area of responsibility, which extends to about 80 countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Figure 2.1 shows EUCOM's area of responsibility in relation to the other DOD unified commands.

**Chapter 2**  
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**U.S. Forces in Europe**

**Figure 2.1: Areas of Responsibility for DOD Unified Commands**



Source: DOD.

The major mission assigned to EUCOM has shifted away from defending against a massive attack by the former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact nations toward preserving U.S. interests and deterring or responding to conflicts in regional hot spots throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Some of these hot spots—such as ethnic conflicts and tensions in the

former Yugoslavia—are within EUCOM’s area of responsibility while others, such as the Persian Gulf area, are outside the European theater.

According to national security directives and EUCOM and USAREUR documents, the missions assigned to U.S. forces in Europe encompass a broad spectrum of both combat operations and noncombat endeavors, as summarized below:

- Conduct combat operations in the European theater. This mission requires providing combat-ready forces to the NATO alliance for combined operations or to U.S. commanders for a U.S. unilateral operation. EUCOM and USAREUR have consistently stressed the importance of designing and fielding a corps that could fight on its own with minimal support from forces based in the continental United States. This mission is the main reason for having two heavy armored divisions, rather than more lightly equipped and mobile forces.
- Respond to out-of-theater combat operations. This mission requires maintaining contingency forces and bases forward stationed in Europe that can deter or, if necessary, respond to a regional threat in the potentially unstable regions of Southwest Asia and Northern Africa—areas of the Atlantic region that lie partly within the Central Command’s area of responsibility.
- Receive and support reinforcements from the continental United States. This mission requires maintaining the infrastructure and other capabilities in Europe needed to reinforce deployed troops with forces from the continental United States or other areas of the Atlantic region during a protracted combat operation or a major war.
- Conduct noncombat missions within or outside the European theater. Noncombat missions include supporting friendly nations through security assistance, humanitarian aid or disaster relief, and military-to-military contacts; protecting U.S. citizens abroad through operations, such as noncombatant evacuations and hostage rescue; and supporting peacekeeping, counternarcotics, and counterterrorism operations.
- Fulfill “intangible” missions. Maintain a forward presence that shows commitment to U.S. allies, is militarily credible, deters aggression, preserves regional stability, and promotes U.S. influence within the theater.

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**Plans for EUCOM Force  
Emphasize Need for  
Flexible Employment**

The 100,000-member U.S. force that EUCOM plans to retain is intended to provide conventional deterrence and offensive capability through ground troops and conventional and nuclear air strike capability through Air

Force squadrons. In addition to the Army corps, the force includes air forces to support peacetime and initial crisis requirements, and naval forces ashore to support forces at sea that are based in the continental United States.

In designing its future force structure in Europe, EUCOM's intent has been to maintain military forces whose skills and equipment are flexible enough to meet the wide variety of missions mandated by national security documents. Accordingly, EUCOM is designing its forces to (1) possess strategic, operational, and tactical mobility sufficient to support a wide array of missions; (2) maintain an adequate infrastructure for a credible, rapid reinforcement capability; (3) secure U.S. participation in NATO's multinational air, ground, and sea forces; (4) provide adequate operational and support structures in EUCOM's southern region—an area with numerous potential hot spots; and (5) maintain a link between European nuclear weapons and U.S. strategic nuclear forces.

In addition, EUCOM and USAREUR maintain that a corps of permanently stationed troops in Europe will position the force “an ocean closer to hot spots” in Europe, Southwest Asia, and North Africa. According to DOD, significant training advantages and operational flexibility are also derived from having a corps forward stationed in Europe. For example, the in-theater availability of the various units in the U.S. corps and the capability of these units to train together as part of a U.S. or multinational combined force gives the theater commander the flexibility to organize an effective U.S. or multinational force appropriate to the mission. Moreover, the European-based U.S. force gives the theater commander the flexibility to respond to a European contingency without having to deploy troops from the United States, which could be viewed by others as an escalation by the United States.

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## Security Directives Offer Varied Means for Achieving Forward Presence

The broad missions assigned to U.S. troops overseas, including the European theater, are articulated in a variety of national security directives developed by the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These directives defined the broad composition of EUCOM's planned force and offered a variety of means to achieve forward-presence objectives.<sup>1</sup> For example,

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<sup>1</sup>According to DOD, in recent years its directives have not specified a troop level for the Europe-based force; however, the 100,000-troop level for Europe was included in the budget guidance for fiscal year 1994 and is included in the Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 1995-2000.

- The National Security Strategy of the United States, issued by the President in August 1991, stated that an important component of the U.S. security strategy is to exercise forward presence in key areas of the world, including the European theater. Stressing the compelling interest of Europe to the United States, the strategy called for permanently deploying an unspecified number of U.S. forces in Europe as long as they were needed and welcomed by U.S. allies. The strategy called for these forces to include a forward presence of a robust Army corps in Europe to include a corps headquarters, two divisions, and associated support forces; several Air Force wings; appropriate naval forces; and sufficient infrastructure to support a return of additional forces, if needed.<sup>2</sup>
- The Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 1994-1999, issued by the Secretary of Defense in May 1992, translated the President's national security strategy into defense policy goals. These goals were to deter or defeat attacks against the United States; honor treaty commitments and strengthen collective security arrangements against aggression; preclude hostile powers from dominating regions critical to U.S. interests; and deter conflict by reducing sources of regional instability. The guidance said that a "capable corps" would be retained in Europe to maintain the viability of the NATO alliance, promote peace and further democracy in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, permit the timely reinforcement of Europe, if needed, and support out-of-theater contingencies. This corps was to be comprised of two heavy divisions, an armored cavalry regiment, combat support capability, and a base for reception and onward movement of troops from the continental United States.
- The National Military Strategy of the United States, issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January 1992, defined how U.S. military forces would be employed to achieve the defense agenda spelled out in the National Security Strategy and the Defense Planning Guidance.<sup>3</sup> The military strategy committed the United States to a forward presence of an Army corps comprised of two divisions, three to four Air Force wings, and naval forces ashore to support the NATO strategy.<sup>4</sup> While the strategy did not specify the number of forces needed in Europe and the Atlantic region, it said that the United States would maintain both forward-stationed and rotational forces there, along with a capability to

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<sup>2</sup>The National Security Strategy does not provide any additional details on the level of Air Force, Navy, or reinforcement forces that should contribute to U.S. forward presence in Europe.

<sup>3</sup>The dates of these documents reflect the fact that these documents were not published in the intended sequence during this period.

<sup>4</sup>The National Military Strategy does not specify the level of naval forces that were planned as the U.S. forward-stationed presence in Europe.

rapidly reinforce them from the Atlantic region and the United States and the means to support deployment of larger forces when needed.

The national security directives stressed the importance of forward presence in showing tangible evidence of U.S. commitment to U.S. allies in the region, enhancing regional stability, providing a crisis-response capability through lines of communication and access agreements with host nations, and promoting U.S. influence and access abroad. However, these directives noted that such forward presence could be achieved through a variety of means, including the permanent stationing of troops overseas and afloat, periodic and rotational deployment of troops from the continental United States, host nation access and storage agreements, combined exercises, security and humanitarian assistance, port visits, and military-to-military contacts.

Forward stationing may not have been essential to the accomplishment of EUROMEDCOM deployments since 1990. Table 2.1 shows the varied nature of these deployments.

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**Table 2.1: Deployments of EUCOM Military Forces January 1990 Through May 1993**

Year	Location	Number of troops deployed	Type of mission
Deployments related to the Persian Gulf War			
1990-91	Persian Gulf	86,000	Combat
1990-91	Turkey	9,000	Combat
1991-93	Turkey and Iraq	18,905	Humanitarian aid and peacekeeping
1991	Israel	800	Air defense
1992-93	Kuwait and Bahrain	275	Peacekeeping
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>114,980</b>	
Other deployments			
1990	Liberia	3,800	Noncombatant evacuations
1990-93	Souda Bay	2,000	Peacekeeping
1990-93	Beirut	30	Peacekeeping
1990-93	Cyprus	240	Peacekeeping
1991	Zaire	64	Noncombatant evacuations
1991	Sierra Leone	154	Noncombatant evacuations
1991	Dushanbe	5	Noncombatant evacuations
1992	Angola	92	Election aid
1992-93	Croatia	450	Humanitarian aid
1992-93	Commonwealth of Independent States	427	Humanitarian aid
1992-93	Somalia	218	Humanitarian aid
1992-93	Kenya	25	Security operations
1992-93	Yugoslavia and Italy	1,784	Humanitarian aid
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>9,289</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>124,269</b>	

Source: EUCOM.

As shown in table 2.1, EUCOM deployed a total of 124,269 forces from all services, from January 1990 through May 1993 throughout the region to respond to diverse combat and noncombat missions. By far, the largest EUCOM deployments in recent years—totaling 114,980 troops—were related to the Persian Gulf War. Other than these deployments, EUCOM troops have been sent in relatively small numbers to a wide array of peacekeeping and



humanitarian relief operations within and outside the EUCOM area of responsibility. As shown by the table, about 9,300 EUCOM troops have been sent to 13 deployments unrelated to the Persian Gulf War during the post-Cold War period. Some of these were concurrent deployments.

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## NATO Has Reorganized Its Forces Into Smaller, More Flexible Multinational Corps

NATO member countries are determining how they will adjust their forces to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War era. Previously, NATO's defense strategy and force structure were designed to deter and defend against its primary threat—the former Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations. Recognizing the increasing unlikelihood that this would occur, NATO issued its London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance in July 1990. This declaration called for a new military strategy that would move away from forward defense and toward a reduced forward presence and less reliance on nuclear weapons.

To carry out its new military strategy and respond to the declining defense budgets of its member nations, NATO is restructuring its forces into multinational corps comprised of national units. Key features of this force structure include (1) smaller, more mobile and flexible forces that can counter the multifaceted risks facing the alliance; (2) fewer troops permanently stationed away from their home countries; (3) reduced readiness levels for many active units; and (4) increased emphasis on the capability to build up larger forces if needed. The new NATO force structure will consist of reaction forces that can quickly respond to a crisis, main defense forces that can be employed during crisis management and for early defensive operations, and augmentation forces that can be deployed as needed during a full-scale war.

The reaction forces will be the first forces deployed to a crisis and thus will be maintained at high states of readiness and availability. NATO's plans call for two layers of reaction forces—immediate and rapid. Immediate Reaction Forces will consist of army battalions, squadron-sized air elements, and maritime forces capable of responding on very short notice to developing crises anywhere within or outside NATO's territory. These forces—modeled after the existing Allied Command Europe Mobile Force—are primarily deployed to a threatened area to demonstrate NATO alliance solidarity.

Rapid Reaction Forces will consist of additional land, air, and sea elements with more combat capability than the Immediate Reaction Forces. The primary land component of the Rapid Reaction Forces is the

multinational Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps, which is designed for deployment NATO-wide.<sup>5</sup> It is required to deploy an operational force of up to four divisions tailored to the specific military and political requirement. These forces will be chosen from among 10 divisions committed to NATO by individual member nations.

The main defense forces will support more extensive operations. Main defense forces will consist of both active and reserve air, ground, and maritime forces. Their mission will be to deter, and if necessary, defend against an attack on the alliance. The main defense forces will include multinational corps formations. As of April 1993, NATO planned to base five corps for its main defense forces in the central region. All but one of the five corps will be multinational.<sup>6</sup> Augmentation forces, which will deploy from both Europe and North America, will be used to reinforce the main defense forces in an extended conflict. Augmentation forces will provide strategic and operational reserves capable of reinforcing any NATO region.

As of August 1993, U.S. commitments to NATO consisted of an Army corps and support troops forward stationed in Europe, along with other troops that would be deployed from the continental United States in the event of a larger conflict. The United States has committed a corps command structure and one U.S. division to a U.S.-led main defense corps and a second U.S. division to a German-led main defense corps. One of these two U.S. divisions and some support elements at the corps level would have dual responsibilities in that they would also be committed to the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps under certain circumstances.

According to an official at the U.S. mission to NATO, as most member nations' force contributions decrease due to the military downsizing occurring in NATO, all remaining active forces in the central region of Europe will probably end up being committed to the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps. This official also said that the impact of military downsizing on the main defense forces will be that the majority of these forces will come from mobilization of member nations' reserve forces.

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<sup>5</sup>This corps is currently led by the United Kingdom.

<sup>6</sup>One of the main defense corps will be totally comprised of German troops.

## Composition and Size of Forward Stationed Force Not Directly Tied to NATO Requirements

The national security directives acknowledge NATO's essential role in preserving Europe's collective security and the criticality of continued U.S. support for the alliance. In addition to the objectives stated previously, the directives note that the NATO alliance provides an enduring trans-Atlantic partnership between Europe and North America and fosters a forum through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council for integrating the former Eastern bloc nations into closer ties with the United States and its allies. Accordingly, the directives commit the entire force that DOD plans to retain in Europe to the NATO alliance.

However, NATO does not dictate what forces member nations must provide nor how quickly they must provide them. These determinations, which later get translated into actual commitments, are jointly determined by the members themselves in conjunction with NATO military and civilian leaders. Accordingly, NATO has not specified the number of U.S. forces that must be forward stationed but has requested the capabilities offered by the United States.

NATO determines its force goals and requirements through two concurrent and interrelated processes: (1) a biennial process for establishing force goals and (2) an annual process for verifying member commitments to meeting those goals. These two processes culminate in NATO's defense plan, which includes a firm commitment of forces for the first year and a 5-year plan that assesses future risks to alliance security and the forces needed from each member nation to support NATO's force structure.

The process for developing force goals defines NATO's military requirements. NATO commanders prepare force proposals for each member nation based on NATO ministerial guidance, command requirements, and input from the member nations. Although the NATO planning process attempts to influence the type of forces and equipment that the members contribute, the force proposals primarily reflect the capabilities that member nations have said they would be able to contribute. When NATO requires new military units or new equipment, they typically ask for those items that member nations will provide. The final outcome of this process is a consolidated package of the individual members' national force goals.

Concurrent with the force goal development process, NATO solicits detailed information from each member nation on its military commitments to the alliance. To do this, NATO sends each nation a Defense Planning Questionnaire to verify its commitment for the prior year, define its commitment for the coming year, and project future force levels over the

next 5-year period. After the questionnaires are completed, NATO military and civilian officials, along with the member nations, review the responses from each nation. Member nations then meet to critically examine each other's contributions. At the end of this process, NATO staff summarize and assess each nation's plans and commitments. The summary report—which is reviewed and approved by member nations—becomes the alliance's consensus view on national strengths and weaknesses and each country's plan to support the NATO force structure.

The U.S. commitment of Army forces to NATO is for individual divisions and elements of corps command structure and corps support that will participate in the multinational corps. NATO plans do not call on the United States to employ its forces together as an independent corps but rather as individual divisions and corps elements. U.S. military officials indicate that at the approximately 100,000-troop level, they are maintaining the two-division corps structure in Europe. Based on its current plans, the Army will retain two, two-brigade divisions in Europe with the third brigade of each division redeployed from the United States, if needed.

The size and composition of the future U.S. military force in Europe was not specifically tied to NATO requirements but rather represented the forces that the United States itself decided it would commit to the alliance during NATO's normal force planning process. Officials at the U.S. mission to NATO told us that although NATO requested certain U.S. military capabilities at a given level of readiness and availability based on what the United States said it could provide, it did not request a specific number and location for U.S. troops. Our review of key NATO documents confirmed that NATO did not specifically require any particular number of U.S. troops to be forward deployed in Europe to meet alliance requirements. Despite the lack of a specific requirement, the U.S. policy and practice, however, has always been to commit all forward-deployed troops in Europe to NATO and to supplement this commitment with other forces that would be deployed from the continental United States.

Although NATO documents do not require the United States to retain a specific number of troops permanently stationed in Europe, some U.S. Army forces would need to remain forward stationed if they are to be provided within the time frames NATO has set.<sup>7</sup> In response to recent changes in the European security environment and in view of the force reduction plans of many member nations, NATO has recently issued revised

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<sup>7</sup>The specific details on this issue, which are classified, are discussed in a classified annex to this report.

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readiness standards for the forces it has requested. Further, the NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe will present his assessment of the viability of NATO's current plans for its force structure as part of the normal force goals development process in light of individual members' actions to further reduce their forces.

# Combat Capabilities Have Declined as Forces Have Been Reduced

Over time, DOD's plans for its future forces in Europe have evolved from retaining a war-fighting force that could act on its own or in concert with allied forces—a "capable corps" with robust combat support, combat service support, and theater support forces—to a more streamlined force more dependent on reinforcement from the continental United States. Since the beginning of the drawdown in 1990, the Army's planned forces for Europe have been reduced from 158,500 to 60,000. Although the Army initially tried to retain maximum combat capability by sacrificing support elements, the latest plan cuts deeply into combat forces. Nevertheless, the Army force, as planned, contains remnants of the force that was to meet Cold War challenges.

The capability that has been most eroded through force reductions is that of fighting independently as a corps in a major war without allies. However, the dissolution of the Soviet Union has diminished the likelihood of a conflict requiring such a capability and recent smaller deployments of Army forces have not required that capability. Based on the type and size of recent peacetime deployments, it appears that, even at the 60,000 level, remaining Army forces would be sufficient for a wide range of peacetime missions. A question that remains is whether the U.S. Army force structure in Europe—primarily comprised of heavy forces—is appropriate to meet post-Cold War challenges given that the principal mission for U.S. troops in Europe has changed and NATO is moving to smaller and more flexible forces. According to DOD, the retention of heavy forces in Europe is under review within the Army.

## Profile of Army Force Reductions in Europe

Of the three services, the Army has taken the greatest share of the force reductions in Europe. At the start of the drawdown, the Army had about 213,000 positions in Europe, consisting of two corps with a total of four heavy divisions, three separate combat brigades, two armored cavalry regiments, and combat support and combat service support elements. During 1990, USAREUR designed a capable corps to remain in Europe. This force would have consisted of about 158,500 positions structured into two heavy divisions, two separate combat brigades, and two armored cavalry regiments. Over the next 3 years, budgetary pressures and changing political and military events forced USAREUR to reduce the size of its projected force first to 92,200 positions and more recently to 60,000 positions. Because the details on the 60,000-position structure had not been made public at the time we completed our review in August 1993, our profile of the Army is focused on the April 1991 plan for the 92,200-position structure.

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Comparing USAREUR's force structure before the drawdown and under each subsequent force structure plan illustrates some of the key principles that USAREUR followed in designing its post-Cold War force in Europe. Table 3.1 shows the detailed composition of USAREUR's force structure under each plan. Appendix I describes the roles and responsibilities of the force elements listed in the table.

**Table 3.1: Detailed Profile of Army Positions in Europe for 1996 Under Successive Plans**

Force element	Positions as of Sept. 1990	Goals for fiscal year 1996	
		July 1990 plan	April 1991 plan
USAREUR headquarters	1,112	2,002	650
2nd Armored Division (forward)	4,175	4,245	0
3rd Corps headquarters (forward)	75	231	75
1st Infantry Division (forward)	4,490	0	0
Corps headquarters	1,064	500	350
Divisions	73,777	38,500	34,760
Armored cavalry regiments	9,388	10,000	4,860
Corps combat support	33,574	23,800	16,530
Corps support command	15,552	17,100	7,180
Berlin Brigade	3,550	2,900	0
Echelons above corps	47,448	42,699	20,125
Non-USAREUR organizations	18,683	16,439	7,755
<b>Total</b>	<b>212,888</b>	<b>158,416</b>	<b>92,285</b>

While the two plans vary in size and thus in the degree of military capability they project, they share a common overall corps force structure and were planned for deployment in Europe to meet the same set of missions. According to a USAREUR official responsible for force design, a major difference in the Army corps designed under each plan is the amount of support required from forces in the continental United States to sustain combat and other noncombat missions.

As table 3.1 shows, USAREUR's plans for its future corps and theater support structure were significantly more robust under its first plan. Under the 158,500-position force structure, USAREUR would have had two armored cavalry regiments with over twice as many troops assigned to that element of the corps as under the plan for the 92,200-position residual force. Other significant force structure cuts from the 158,500 to the 92,200 force were made in certain combat support units. For example, aviation was reduced from two brigades to one, field artillery was reduced from three brigades

to one, and the Corps Support Command was reduced by nearly 60 percent. However, USAREUR maintained approximately the same level of combat troops in its divisions under each plan. As shown in the table, the number of division combat positions was reduced by 3,740 or 10 percent between the two plans.

In the face of successively lower projected force levels, USAREUR has attempted to retain corps combat positions while accepting proportionately greater reductions in support positions at echelons above corps. For example, USAREUR planned to retain a higher percentage of combat to support forces under the April 1991 plan than it had at the start of the drawdown. Further, the level of reinforcement and theater support troops remained in the same proportion under the April 1991 plan as before the drawdown. These forces are regarded as crucial to sustaining all combat forces in the theater and retaining a capability to reinforce with troops from the continental United States. The largest proportion of cuts come from other NATO-related support activities such as units responsible for the custody of tactical nuclear weapons.

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## **Latest Reduction Requires Major Adjustments**

While Army doctrine allows for variations in the size of its corps, the latest plan to reduce Army positions to 60,000 has required major adjustments in EUCOM's plans. Whereas the Army has been able to keep its two divisions and armored cavalry regiment intact under past reduction plans by sacrificing more and more support elements, major elements of the combat forces will now have to be withdrawn to meet the 60,000-troop ceiling. For example, the original force structure plan of July 1990 called for a corps structure with two divisions, two separate combat brigades, and two armored cavalry regiments. The 92,200-position Army force structure designed in April 1991 sacrificed one armored cavalry regiment and substantial corps support elements but left the two combat divisions intact. At that level, DOD officials in Washington and Europe stated that the planned corps had been reduced to the minimum level at which it could still fight effectively, respond to crises, retain its capability to accept reinforcements, sustain U.S. leadership and credibility in NATO, and carry out its other missions. Even then, USAREUR officials told us that although that corps in Europe could fight in battle, it would have a significantly degraded capability to sustain combat and receive reinforcements and thus would require substantial assistance from the continental United States.



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By going from 92,200 to 60,000 Army positions in Europe, the Army's combat and support capability is further reduced. When the third brigade of each of the two divisions is withdrawn as planned, response time to a major contingency will be affected since these forces will need to come from the United States. Withdrawal of the single remaining armored cavalry regiment will eliminate a self-contained unit intended to perform reconnaissance, security for vulnerable flanks, and defense of a division's territory for a short period of time.

Despite these reductions in capability, EUCOM officials believe that the forces that would remain in Europe after the latest reductions would still be capable of accomplishing U.S. missions. Based on the type and size of recent EUCOM deployments, it appears that, even at the lower force level, the remaining Army forces in Europe would be sufficient to be flexibly used for a wide range of peacetime missions.

EUCOM's mission of fighting as a corps in a major war without allies and without substantial support from forces in the United States is the only mission significantly affected by the latest reductions. At the lower force level, a substantial amount of both combat and support troops would probably need to come from the United States to achieve this mission, thereby lengthening the U.S. response time to such a contingency. However, two factors need to be taken into account in assessing the significance of this change.

First, as noted by USAREUR officials, at the 92,200 level, the Army in Europe would have had significant problems independently fighting as a corps in a major war. Therefore, although the Army will have greater difficulty accomplishing this mission at the 60,000 level, the added risk assumed at the lower level is incremental. Second, DOD's own plans include highly ready contingency forces that can be rapidly deployed to a crisis anywhere in the world from the United States. These forces include five Army divisions and the associated support forces, all of which are expected to be deployed within 75 days.<sup>1</sup> DOD's plans for these contingency forces call into question whether it is still appropriate to assign the mission of fighting independently as a corps to EUCOM's troops.

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<sup>1</sup>This assumes that DOD follows through with its plans to add both airlift and sealift assets to its inventory and enhance its prepositioned afloat program—enhancements flowing from DOD's Mobility Requirements Study.

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## Force Structure Changes May Be Needed

A key issue regarding the force structure currently in place is whether that structure is appropriate to meet post-Cold War challenges. When unveiling the new defense policy in his August 1990 speech in Aspen, Colorado, President Bush emphasized that

“The United States would be ill-served by forces that represent nothing more than a scaled-back or shrunken-down version of the ones we possess at present. If we simply pro-rate our reductions—cut equally across the board—we could easily end up with more than we need for contingencies that are no longer likely and less than we must have to meet emerging challenges. What we need are not merely reductions—but restructuring.”

Despite this pronouncement, Army force reduction plans for Europe appear to have led to what President Bush warned against—a smaller version of the Cold War force. For example, the corps continues to be primarily comprised of heavy forces although (1) NATO is moving to smaller and more flexible forces and (2) the principal mission for U.S. troops in Europe has shifted from deterring Soviet aggression to deterring or responding to far-reaching regional conflicts.

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## Conclusions

Over the course of the drawdown, DOD has adhered to its plan to retain an Army corps in Europe comprised of heavy divisions even though force reductions have rendered this corps less and less capable of operating as an independent force and despite the changing nature of the types of deployments required of these troops. While heavy Army divisions in corps formations may have been an appropriate focus for the forces in Europe during the Cold War period, a different structure may now be needed to meet forward-presence objectives in Europe.

Several factors raise questions about the continued validity of retaining a corps with heavy divisions in Europe. First, one of the major reasons for retaining the corps structure was to preserve the ability of the forces in Europe to fight together on its own as a corps in a war. At planned force levels, this unilateral capability is no longer possible because substantial combat and support elements of that corps would need to be deployed from the United States. Second, the United States is only bound by its NATO commitments to provide individual divisions and corps elements to NATO's multinational corps—not a corps that would fight on its own. Third, the existence of highly ready contingency forces in the United States that are intended to deploy anywhere in the world makes it questionable why contingency forces in Europe are also needed. DOD agreed with the need to

consider the changed world situation in determining the future Army force structure in Europe and stated that the Army is currently reviewing the retention of heavy forces in Europe. However, the DOD noted that several factors must be considered in any discussion of replacing heavy forces in Europe with light forces, including an uncertain and turbulent world. For example, the reversal of reforms and the emergence of ultranationalist authoritarianism, particularly in Russia, would substantially alter the security situation for the United States.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD said that our draft report needed to be updated to reflect events that occurred after we completed our review. We have incorporated updated information where appropriate.

DOD agreed with the need to consider the changed world situation in determining the future Army force structure in Europe. It stated that the new security environment is fraught with uncertainty that requires the capability to tailor a military response to the situation. Accordingly, this places a premium on operational flexibility, and the corps forward stationed in Europe provides that flexibility. DOD noted that although the Army is reviewing the retention of heavy forces in Europe, the most recent plan does not represent a Cold War anachronism. According to DOD, three factors must be addressed in any discussion of replacing such forces with light forces. First, mission requirements for the force must be assessed. DOD cited the example of the importance of armored vehicles to the survivability and mobility of British soldiers on United Nations duty in the Balkans. Second, perceived military value of the force must be assessed. According to DOD, U.S. credibility in Europe is enhanced by armored and mechanized forces, especially U.S. battle-tested, high-technology systems. Third, the Army force structure in Europe must be assessed in relation to the Army-wide force structure. According to DOD, swapping heavy and light divisions between the continental United States and Europe would create significant costs and turbulence for soldiers and their families and could cause facility shortfalls at U.S. installations. Moreover, in the event of lesser, non-European regional contingencies, the United States would probably first employ light forces. To avoid a dispute with European allies who may not agree with U.S. participation in such an operation, DOD believes the light forces should be based in the continental United States.

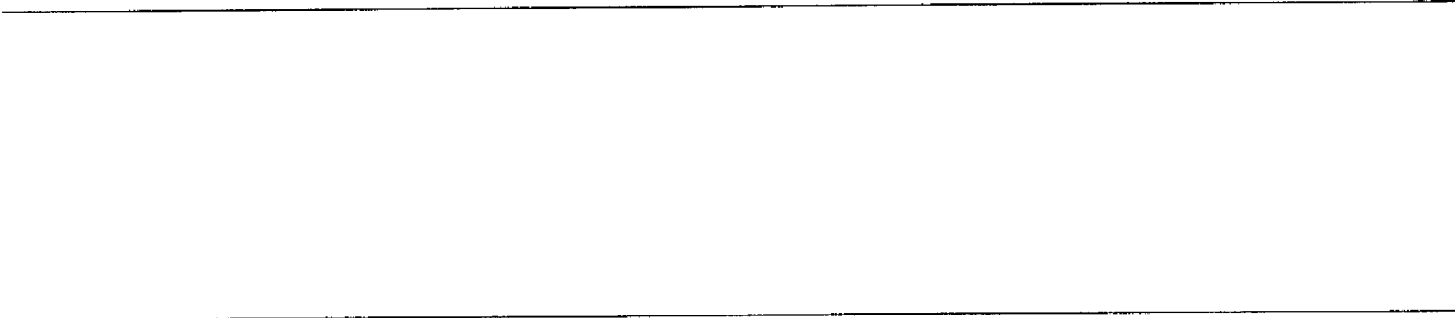
DOD said that the Army force structure in Europe is still evolving. However, were its current plan to be fully implemented, it would be a force deliberately designed to maximize the theater commander's operational

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capability and flexibility, while minimizing Army transition costs and turbulence. We do not disagree that the Army force structure in Europe provides the theater commander with a capable and flexible force. However, we believe that the Army heavy force structure in Europe contains remnants of the force that was to meet Cold War challenges.



# Roles and Responsibilities of Major Army Force Elements in Europe

The U.S. Army's planned 92,200-position forward-deployed force to remain in Europe consisted of an Army corps plus theater support. This structure was designed to provide an independent war-fighting capability in the European theater along with all of the adjunct forces needed to support that corps and other elements of U.S. presence in Europe.

## Corps Troops

At the center of the Army's plans for its future force in Europe has been the corps. The corps is the largest combat unit of the Army, providing the first level of organization that enables an Army to fight at the operational level. Although corps are tailored for the theater and the missions for which they are deployed, they generally contain all the organic combat, combat support, and combat service support capabilities required to sustain operations for a considerable time.

Army corps command, control, and support several divisions. Each corps is the primary command and control headquarters for the land battle within its area of operation. It has both tactical and logistical responsibilities and provides auxiliary combat arms and services such as artillery, corps support, air defense, aviation, engineering, intelligence, and military police to its divisions. Table I.1 describes the role of each major component of the USAREUR corps.

**Table I.1: Roles of Major Army Corps Elements in Europe**

Corps element	Description
Corps headquarters	Provides command and control to the corps, including commander, support staff, liaisons to host nations, and numerous specialists.
Armored/infantry divisions	Composed of headquarters, combat maneuver brigades, and support units providing field artillery, aviation, air defense, engineering, military police, military intelligence, logistical, and chemical support to the division's combat troops. Major tactical units in theater.
Armored cavalry regiment	Performs reconnaissance, provides security for vulnerable flanks, and provides "economy of force." <sup>a</sup>
Corps combat support troops	Provide aviation, air defense artillery, field artillery, engineering, military intelligence, signal, military police, and finance and personnel combat support/combat service support to the corps troops.
Corps support command	Provides combat support and combat service support to corps troops. This support includes maintenance, transportation, quartermaster, ordnance, and medical services.

<sup>a</sup>"Economy of force" is a function whereby the armored cavalry regiment—which is considerably smaller than a division—defends a division-sized territory for a short period of time.

**Appendix I  
Roles and Responsibilities of Major Army  
Force Elements in Europe**

The corps combat support troops represent many diverse functions that are integrated into a cohesive combat unit. Among these functions are

- field artillery support, which provides surface-to-surface fire support to prepare the battlefield and clear a path for the combat maneuver forces;
- air defense artillery, which provides surface-to-air fire support used against enemy weapons systems;
- aviation support, which includes attack helicopters for heavy firepower and support helicopters for carrying troops, fuel, ammunition, and cargo;
- engineering support, which is used to lay and clear minefields, build or improve roads and bridges, and develop maps;
- military police units, which provide traffic control and law enforcement services;
- chemical support, which is used to detect and eliminate chemical or nuclear contamination and to generate smoke that obscures the friendly forces from the enemy; and
- signal support, which provides telecommunications services.

## Echelons Above Corps Troops

Table I.2 summarizes the roles and responsibilities of USAREUR-assigned echelons above corps troops forward stationed in Europe. These organizations provide support to the entire European theater.

**Table I.2: Roles and Responsibilities of Major Echelons Above Corps Elements in Europe**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Description</b>
Headquarters, USAREUR and 7th Army	Provides command and control of the corps and theater support units assigned to USAREUR and reinforcing forces.
21st Theater Army Area Command	Provides theater's logistics functions, including receiving, deploying, equipping, transporting, and sustaining Army forces permanently stationed or passing through the European theater and provides the capability to receive reinforcing troops.
Southern European Task Force	Provides command, control, and communications support in the European theater's southern region. Includes an airborne combat team that can respond to crises.
Air defense artillery	Assigned to NATO-commanded air defense assets.
7th Army Medical Command	Provides medical services to troops and dependents in theater. Operates hospitals, evacuation units, dental clinics, and veterinary units. Sends combat support hospitals to the area of operations during wartime.
7th Army Training Command	Operates the European theater's major training centers.
Base operations	Provide community services during peacetime and assist in receiving and moving troops during wartime.

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**Non-USAREUR  
Entities**

As shown in table I.3, some Army troops provide services in the European theater and count against the Army's European end strength but are funded by organizations other than USAREUR.

**Table I.3: Roles and Responsibilities of Major Non-USAREUR Entities**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>
5th Signal Command	Provides such telecommunications services as linking tactical with command and control units, sustaining base signal operations, and relaying information from command and control units to national decision makers.
Intelligence Command	Provides imagery, signal, human, and counterintelligence services to the theater.
NATO positions	Assigned to NATO headquarters and other NATO activities and functions.
Joint positions	Assigned to joint organizations such as EUCOM headquarters and a few other joint commands.
Criminal Investigation Division Command	Conducts criminal investigations of Army troops in Europe.
Army Materiel Command, Europe	Oversees and controls all equipment and supplies in Europe.
Materiel Traffic Management Command	Runs the ports in the European theater and is responsible for moving all equipment from port to port within the theater.



# Comments From the Department of Defense

Note: GAO comments supplementing those in the report text appear at the end of this appendix.



THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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11 8 Oct 1993



Mr. Frank C. Conahan  
Assistant Comptroller General  
National Security and International  
Affairs Division  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, "FORCE STRUCTURE: Considerations in Deciding the Future Army Force Structure in Europe," dated August 26, 1993 (GAO Code 393516), OSD Case 9514. The DoD *partially concurs with the report.*

While the DoD agrees with the basic need to consider the changed world situation in determining the future Army force structure in Europe, the GAO draft report unfortunately does not reflect recent information developed by DoD. In August 1993, the DoD submitted the 1993 Defense Planning Questionnaire, identifying specific changes in the U.S. contributions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and forces that need to be established in the U.S., including deployment timeframes. The report also does not accurately and consistently identify the U.S. force presence in Europe.

The DoD also disagrees with several other conclusions and implications included in the report. For example, the GAO implies that a smaller overall force level in Europe raises a question as to whether the Army's decision to keep a corps in Europe is appropriate. It should be recognized, however, that the size of the European force is only one element of the determination process. Fundamental to the consideration is the ability of the corps to manage, plan, control, and execute a wide range of operations, from U.S. unilateral crisis management to full, multinational combat operations. It is the capability of the corps, and not the size of the residual force in Europe, that dictates the retention of a corps in Europe.

The GAO also implies that, based on requirements of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the U.S. could assign fewer forces to Europe. That view, however, does not recognize the valid additional requirements that serve U.S. national objectives and contribute to overall determination of the required forward based forces. The report also implies that the DoD forward presence strategy does not identify specific force levels reflecting recent changes in the international security environment. The most recent DoD plan, however, specifically identifies a target of 100,000 troops in Europe.

See comment 1.

See comment 2.

See comment 3.

See comment 4.

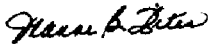
See comment 1.

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**Appendix II**  
**Comments From the Department of Defense**

Detailed DoD comments on the report findings and matters for congressional consideration are provided in the enclosure. The DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,

  
Jeanne B. Fites  
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Requirements and Resources

Enclosure  
As stated

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED AUGUST 26, 1993  
(GAO CODE 393516) OSD CASE 9514

"FORCE STRUCTURE: CONSIDERATIONS IN DECIDING THE  
FUTURE ARMY FORCE STRUCTURE IN EUROPE"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

\*\*\*\*\*

FINDINGS

**o FINDING A: Changed Security Environment Has Led to Substantial Force Reductions in Europe and a Reassessment of How Military Forces Should be Sized and Structured.**

The GAO reported that the end of the Cold War and domestic budget pressures have led the U.S. and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies to reassess how their military forces should be sized and structured to provide effectively for their collective security. The GAO observed that, over the last three years, the changed security environment had been accompanied by substantial changes in the size and composition of U.S. forces in Europe. The GAO noted that the DoD ongoing "bottom-up" defense review is expected to provide the basis for a new national military strategy and military force structure affecting the size and composition of the latest plan for retaining 109,000 military forces in Europe. The GAO explained that an understanding of the basis for the DoD previous 150,000 force level should assist the Congress in evaluating the new strategy and plan. (pp. 12-17/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 10-13.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. There are two points that require correction. First, the current plan for U.S. military presence in Europe is approximately 100,000, rather than the 109,000 figure cited by the GAO. Secondly, the details of the plan for the 100,000 troops in Europe were announced too late for consideration by the GAO. The "base force" plan of 150,000 in Europe, as reported by the GAO, has been overtaken by events, and is therefore of limited utility in evaluating the DoD current forward presence strategy.

See comment 2.

**o FINDING B: Security Directives Do Not Specify Force Levels and Offer Alternatives for Achieving Forward Presence.**

The GAO reported that broad missions assigned to U.S. troops overseas, including the European theater, are articulated in a variety of national security directives developed by the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. The GAO explained that, although the directives define the broad composition of the U.S. European Command planned force, they do not specify a troop level for the force and offered a variety of means to achieve forward presence objectives. The GAO reported that the national security directives stressed the importance of forward presence in:

- showing tangible evidence of U.S. commitment to U.S. allies in the region;
- enhancing regional stability;

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- providing a crisis-response capability through lines of communication and access agreements with host nations; and

- promoting U.S. influence and access abroad.

The GAO explained, however, that the directives noted such forward presence could be achieved not only through the permanent stationing of troops overseas and afloat, but also through (1) periodic and rotational deployment of troops from the continental United States, (2) host nation access and storage agreements, (3) combined exercises, (4) security and humanitarian assistance, (5) port visits, and (6) military-to-military contacts. (pp. 21-23/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. While it is true that prior DoD directives did not specify a troop level for the Europe-based force, that does not apply with respect to the latest planning target of approximately 100,000 troops in Europe. That guidance was included in the FY 1994 budget guidance, and is expected to be included in the FY 1995-FY 2000 Defense Planning Guidance. The GAO also implies that the various alternatives for achieving forward presence are equally effective in achieving the stated objectives. While periodic troop deployments, combined exercises, military-to-military contacts, and other alternatives may supplement a forward-deployed force in achievement of national security objectives, they neither carry the same impact, nor do they convey the same message of national intent and resolve as does the permanent stationing of forward-deployed forces.

o **FINDING C: The U.S. European Command is Tasked With Widely Divergent Missions.** The GAO observed that the wide array of missions assigned to the U.S. European Command reflects the diversity of U.S. objectives to be achieved throughout its area of responsibility, which extends to about 80 countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The GAO noted that the major mission assigned to the U.S. European Command has shifted away from defending against a massive attack by the former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact nations toward preserving U.S. interests and deterring or responding to conflicts in regional "hot spots" throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The GAO also noted that some of the "hot spots"--such as ethnic conflicts and tensions in the former Yugoslavia and other Baltic states--are within the U.S. European Command area of responsibility, while others--such as the Persian Gulf area--are outside the European theater.

The GAO reported that, according to the key national security directives and U.S. European Command and U.S. Army, Europe documents, the missions assigned to U.S. forces in Europe encompass a broad spectrum of both combat operations and non-combat endeavors, that include (1) conducting combat operations in the European theater, (2) responding to out-of-theater combat operations, (3) receiving and supporting reinforcements from the continental United States, (4) conducting non-combat missions within or outside the European theater, and (5) fulfilling intangible missions. (pp. 23-25/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Concur.

o **FINDING D: Army Corps Thought to Provide Forces Necessary to Achieve Diverse U.S. Objectives.** The GAO reported that, according to officials in the Office of the Secretary of

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Now on pp. 20-22.

See comment 1.

See comment 4.

Now on pp. 17-19.

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Defense in Washington, retaining an Army corps in Europe would provide the forces needed to achieve the full range of assigned missions. The GAO noted that an Army corps would provide the forces necessary to (1) fight within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance, (2) fight independently as a corps in a major war, (3) flexibly mix forces to carry out a wide range of combat operations and non-combat missions, (4) provide deterrence to potential aggressors, (5) demonstrate U.S. commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies, and (6) permit the United States to retain its leadership role within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO reported that, according to those same officials, a sizable U.S. force in Europe is needed to demonstrate commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies and, in their opinion, an Army corps on the ground in Europe provides a visible sign of such commitment. The GAO observed that, to carry out the objectives, the Army Plan for FY 1994-FY 2009, issued by the Secretary of the Army in October 1991, specified a goal of retaining a 2-division Army corps comprised of 92,200 troops in Europe by the end of fiscal year 1995. The GAO reported that the U.S. Army, Europe officials emphasized that retaining a corps was important because Army doctrine establishes the corps as the basic fighting unit of the Army.

See comment 4.

The GAO further reported that, while DOD officials agreed that a corps was needed, the timing of the decision should be considered. The GAO explained that, according to European Command officials, the decision to retain the corps was made in mid-1991—at a time when U.S.-Soviet relations were improving, but before the failed coup attempt by communist hardliners in the Soviet Union. The GAO noted that, before the coup attempt, U.S. military leaders believed that a hedge against a possible reemergent Soviet threat was needed in view of the formidable military capability of the former Soviet Union. The GAO pointed out that, despite the subsequent failed coup attempt and dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in late 1991, the DoD had not revised its plan for keeping a corps in Europe—although in February 1993, the U.S. responded to the legislative mandate to reduce U.S. troops in Europe to 100,000 by the end of FY 1996. (pp. 26-27/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 16-17.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The DoD disagrees with the GAO implication that the "failed coup attempt and dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in late 1991" should have resulted in a change to the decision to retain a corps in Europe. Several factors, outlined here and in the DoD response to Finding E, militate in favor of retaining a U.S. Army corps in Europe. As GAO noted on page 57 of the report, "The corps is the largest combat unit of the Army, providing the first level of organization that enables an Army to fight at the operational level." Residing at the intersection of the operational and tactical levels of war, the corps headquarters is responsible for translating broad, theater or campaign-level objectives into tactical success. Responsible for planning and executing training and tactical missions of any type, U.S. or multinational, a corps provides critical command and control for whatever size force is needed to accomplish the mission. Equally important as its role as an essential echelon in the U.S. chain of command, a corps is the minimum means of influence for access and influence in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

See comment 4.

**FINDING E: The U.S. European Command Troops Have Rarely Deployed as a Corps.** The GAO reported that the decision to retain an Army corps in Europe had been driven, in part, by the U.S. desire to maintain the capability to independently fight a war. The GAO also reported that the U.S. European Command and U.S. Army, Europe planning for its future force

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had consistently stressed the importance of designing and fielding a corps that could fight on its own with minimal support from forces based in the continental U.S. The GAO concluded, however, that most U.S. European Command deployments have been relatively small and have not involved an entire corps except for those deployments related to the Persian Gulf War.

See comment 4.

The GAO contended that, regardless of the size of the deployment, it could be argued that with sufficient lead-time the deployments could have been made from the U.S. The GAO pointed out in that regard, one of the arguments advanced by the U.S. European Command and U.S. Army, Europe--which calls for retaining a full corps of permanently-stationed troops in Europe because the troops will be "an ocean closer to hot spots" in Europe, Southwest Asia, and North Africa--is controversial. The GAO found that information reported by the military and the Congressional Research Service indicates that the time advantage in responding to a contingency operation from Europe, rather than the continental U.S., is only four or fewer days per trip. The GAO reported that, moreover, although troops in Europe may be closer to potential crisis areas, U.S. forces could not be rapidly deployed to some contingency operations without the support of host European governments. The GAO noted that the extent of their cooperation would depend on how supportive they were of a U.S. response to the particular crisis at hand. (pp 27-30/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 19-20.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The GAO overstates the importance of the U.S. corps as a fighting entity. Being "an ocean closer to hot spots" in Europe, Southwest Asia and Africa may not greatly reduce deployment time to a contingency, but significant training advantages and operational flexibility are derived from having a corps forward-stationed. A well-trained corps fighting force together is far more effective than the individual components. However, the in-theater availability of the various units in the U.S. corps and the capability of those units to train together as part of a U.S. or multinational combined arms force gives the theater commander the flexibility to task organize an effective U.S. or multinational force appropriate to the mission.

See comment 2.

o **FINDING F: North Atlantic Treaty Organization Commitments Do Not Require Army Corps to Fight Together.** The GAO reported that, according to national security directives, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance (1) provides an enduring trans-Atlantic partnership between Europe and North America, (2) fosters a forum through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council for integrating the former Eastern bloc nations into closer ties with the U.S. and its allies, (3) enhances peace and stability in Europe, and (4) provides a vehicle for U.S. political leadership and influence in the European theater. The GAO concluded that, despite the U.S. commitment of the entire Army corps to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, nothing in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization plans suggests that the two Army divisions in Europe would fight together as a corps in a North Atlantic Treaty Organization scenario. The GAO asserted that, according to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization plans, individual Army divisions would be employed together with other allied forces in separate multinational corps rather than fight together as a corps. (p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

See comment 4.

Now on pp. 26-27.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. See the DoD response to Finding E. Further, the contention that North Atlantic Treaty Organization plans do not envision the two U.S. divisions fighting together as a corps in a North Atlantic treaty Organization scenario overlooks possible uses of the U.S. forward based corps in a non-North Atlantic treaty Organization contingency.

See comment 2.

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The GAO acknowledges that point in Finding J.

o **FINDING G: North Atlantic Treaty Organization is Structuring Its Forces Into Multinational Corps.** The GAO found that the changes in the European security situation, coupled with the desire of member nations to reduce the size of their military forces, prompted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to move towards smaller, more flexible forces. The GAO found that the future force structure plans of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization call for multinational corps organized into reaction, main defense, and augmentation forces. The GAO reported that the reaction forces will be the first forces deployed to a crisis and thus will be maintained at high states of readiness and availability. The GAO explained that the plans of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization call for two layers of reaction forces—immediate and rapid. The GAO further explained that the Immediate Reaction Forces will consist of army battalions, squadron-sized air elements, and maritime forces capable of responding on very short notice to developing crises anywhere within or outside of the territory of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO reported that, as of June 1993, U.S. commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization consisted of an Army corps and support troops forward stationed in Europe, along with other troops that would be deployed from the continental U.S. The GAO explained that the U.S. had committed a corps command structure and one U.S.-led main defense corps and a second U.S. division to a German-led main defense corps. The GAO further explained that one of the two U.S. divisions and some support elements at the corps level would have dual responsibilities in that they would also be committed to the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps under certain circumstances. The GAO noted that additional troops located in the U.S. would also be committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the event of a larger conflict. The GAO reported that the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies are still working out the details of how U.S. forces would be integrated into the multinational main defense forces. (pp. 32-34/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. See the DoD response to Finding E. The increased deterrent effect of a multinational force should also be recognized, which was a critical factor in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization decision to organize multinational formations. The GAO finding is also misleading on two points. First, not all North Atlantic Treaty Organization member nations are planning significant force reductions, as the GAO implies. Second, while reaction and main defense forces will include multinational formations, that is not true for augmentation forces. It should be recognized that the "as of June 1993" statement remains valid through the latest U.S. Defense Planning Questionnaire reply dated August 1993.

o **FINDING H: The U.S. Commitments to North Atlantic Treaty Organization Stem From Its Own Assessment of the Forces It Can Provide.** The GAO reported that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization determines its force goals and requirements through two concurrent and interrelated processes— (1) a biennial process for establishing force goals and (2) an annual process for verifying member commitments to meeting those goals. The GAO explained that the two processes culminate in the defense plan of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which includes a firm commitment of forces for the first year and a 5-year plan that assesses future risks to alliance security and the forces needed from each member nation to support the force structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

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Now on pp. 24-25.

See comment 2.

See comment 1.

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Now on pp. 26-28.

The GAO reported that the process for developing force goals defines the military requirements of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO reported that concurrent with the force goal development process, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization solicits detailed information from each member nation on its military commitments to the alliance. The GAO explained that, at the end of the process, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization staff summarize and assess the plans and commitments of each nation. The GAO further explained that the summary report--which is reviewed and approved by member nations--becomes the consensus view on national strengths and weaknesses of the alliance and the plan to support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization structure for each country. (pp. 34-35/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Concur.

**FINDING I: Size of U.S. Force to Remain in Europe Not Specifically Tied to North Atlantic Treaty Organization Requirements.** The GAO reported that the size and composition of the future U.S. military force in Europe was not specifically tied to North Atlantic Treaty Organization requirements but rather represented the forces that the U.S. decided it would commit to the alliance during normal force planning process of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO reported that officials at the U.S. Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization indicated that although the North Atlantic Treaty Organization requested certain U.S. military capabilities at a given level of readiness and availability based on what the U.S. indicated it could provide, it did not request a specific number and location for U.S. troops. The GAO review of key North Atlantic Treaty Organization documents confirmed that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization did not specifically require any particular number of U.S. troops to be forward deployed in Europe to meet alliance requirements. The GAO noted that despite the lack of a specific requirement, the U.S. policy and practice, however, has always been to commit all forward deployed troops in Europe to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to supplement this commitment with other forces that would be deployed from the continental United States.

See comment 4.

The GAO reported that the United States has not yet formally changed its Army commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization following the latest downward revision of the planned Army force to 65,000. The GAO explained that, however, the U.S. did notify the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Defense Ministers in March 1993 of anticipated reductions in the size of the forward deployed U.S. Army presence in Europe. The GAO reported that the U.S. military officials are trying to maintain the two-division corps structure in Europe. The GAO determined that based on the current plans of the U.S. military, the Army will retain two two-brigade divisions in Europe with the third brigade of each division redeployed from the U.S., if needed. The GAO indicated that the U.S. response to the 1993 Defense Planning Questionnaire of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization--which is due in the summer of 1993--will reflect the specific changes in the U.S. contributions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including an assessment of what force will need to be stationed in the U.S. (pp. 35-36/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 27-28.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. Since the GAO completed its review, the DoD submitted the 1993 Defense Planning Questionnaire in August 1993. That information reflects the specific changes in the U.S. contributions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and forces that need to be stationed in the U.S.

See comment 1.

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See comment 2.

The DoD disagrees with the GAO implication that only that portion of the U.S. Army committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization reaction forces (which must be available on short notice), needs to be forward stationed in Europe. The GAO implication does not consider the U.S. force structure required to support the units committed to North Atlantic Treaty Organization reaction forces. Although the GAO acknowledges that the forces in Europe are assigned missions which encompass a broad spectrum of both combat and non-combat operations, the GAO does not adequately address the importance of the forward-stationed force to satisfy the other North Atlantic Treaty Organization and U.S. national security objectives.

o **FINDING J: The U.S. Commitments to North Atlantic Treaty Organization Predate North Atlantic Treaty Organization Restructuring.** The GAO reported that the April 1991 decision of the U.S. European Command to maintain a 92,200-member two-division Army corps and theater support troops forward deployed in Europe predated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization adoption of its multinational corps structure and, therefore, was based on a wide range of national security interests, not solely in response to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization requirements.

The GAO reported that the planned 92,200-member force was designed and developed by the U.S. European Command and the U.S. Army, Europe Commanders-in-Chiefs in early 1991. The GAO explained that the U.S. European Command officials informed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in April 1991 that the absolute minimum force level needed to maintain a credible forward stationed presence in Europe was 147,700 troops--ultimately rounded to 150,000--with the Army portion at 92,200 troops. The GAO noted that the U.S. European Command argued that the force would preserve a sufficiently independent combat and support force to meet U.S. interests and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance. The GAO reported that although European Command factored improved U.S.-Soviet relations into the planning of the force, it did not revise the 150,000-troop figure when the Soviet Union dissolved in October 1991. The GAO noted that according to a U.S. European Command official, the 150,000-troop level recommended by U.S. European Command was ultimately approved by the Secretary of Defense in June 1991. (pp. 36-37/GAO Draft Report)

See comment 4.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The DoD disagrees on three counts. First, it was a DoD decision, not that of the U.S. European Command, to maintain 92,000 Army troops in Europe as part of the "base force" plan. Second, the Soviet Union dissolved in December 1991, not October 1991. Third, the report incorrectly implies that the dissolution of the Soviet Union had no impact on internal DoD planning for U.S. forces in Europe. Actually, the U.S. forward based strategy was extensively reviewed in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and was revalidated in view of the rapidly changing and highly uncertain security environment facing U.S. and allied defense planners.

o **FINDING K: United States May Need to Revise Some North Atlantic Treaty Organization Commitments.** The GAO reported that although the North Atlantic Treaty Organization documents do not require the United States to retain a specific number of troops permanently stationed in Europe, some--but not all--of the U.S. Army forces would need to remain forward stationed if they are to be provided within the time frames the North Atlantic

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See comment 4.

Treaty Organization has set. The GAO reported that, however, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is currently developing revised readiness and availability criteria due to the actions of many North Atlantic Treaty Organization members to reduce the size of their forces over the past two years. The GAO pointed out that according to a official at the U.S. Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Supreme Allied Commander, Europe will present his assessment of the viability of North Atlantic Treaty Organization current plans for its force structure as part of the normal force goals development process in light of actions to further reduce the forces of individual members. The GAO assessed that based on the latest announced force level, the U.S.--along with other allies, which are also reducing their forces--will need to reassess what forces it can provide, where they will be located, and when it can deliver them. The GAO reported that will be done as part of the normal North Atlantic Treaty Organization planning process. (The GAO discussed U.S. commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in more detail in its classified annex.) (pp.37-38/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. Since the GAO review was completed, U.S. and allied revisions in force commitments and deployment timeframes have already been completed. Those revisions occurred with the submission of Defense Planning Questionnaire 93 replies in August 1993. In addition, the phrase "according to an official at the U.S. Mission" implies that what is stated is somehow a unique view, whereas in fact it is a routine element of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization defense planning process.

o **FINDING L: Size of Force Needed to Achieve Intangible Goals is Subjective.** The GAO reported U.S. officials in both Europe and Washington emphasized that the presence of U.S. forces in Europe serves important U.S. political objectives, geared to the collective defense of Europe. The GAO explained that, according to U.S. officials, it was important for the U.S. to retain a leadership role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO reported that the officials generally agreed that retaining a U.S. representative in the role of North Atlantic Treaty Organization Supreme Allied Commander of Europe was critical to retaining such influence.

See comment 4.

The GAO reported U.S. officials frequently expressed the view that the best way to demonstrate U.S. commitment to the alliance was through a sizable permanent presence of forward stationed troops. The GAO noted that U.S. officials tended to see an Army corps as the tangible evidence of that commitment. The GAO concluded, however, it is difficult to assess what impact continued force reductions in Europe might have on U.S. influence within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The GAO asserted that ultimately the number of troops that are sufficient to achieve that purpose is a subjective judgment. The GAO observed that was evidenced in the April 1993 hearings before the House Armed Services Committee, when the Deputy Commander of the European Command testified that the remaining 100,000 troops should be sufficient to achieve U.S. missions, despite previous statements that higher force levels were the bare minimum. (p. 38/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 16-17.

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The DoD disagrees with the GAO implication that the Deputy Commander of the European Command was not honest in statements he provided prior to his April 1993 testimony. It must be recognized that views on troop requirements have evolved in recent years based on revised intelligence estimates following events such as the

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"failed coup attempt and dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in late 1991" mentioned in Finding G.

o **FINDING M: Plans for U.S. European Command Force Emphasize Need for Flexible Employment.** The GAO reported that the U.S. European Command planned its future force for Europe-- in consultation with its Army, Air Force, and Navy components--to (1) support U.S. security strategy, (2) fulfill U.S. commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and (3) maintain U.S. influence in the U.S. European Command area of responsibility. The GAO explained that the 150,000-member U.S. force that it wished to retain was designed to provide conventional deterrence and offensive capability through ground troops and conventional and nuclear air strike capability through Air Force squadrons. The GAO noted that it called for the following: Army ground troops organized into a corps structure;

- air presence designed to support peacetime and initial crisis requirements; and

- naval forces ashore designed to support forces at sea that are based in the continental United States.

The GAO reported that, in designing its future force structure in Europe, the U.S. European Command intent had been to maintain military forces, whose skills and equipment are flexible enough to meet the wide variety of missions mandated by national security documents. The GAO noted that the aim of the U.S. European Command had been to maintain an infrastructure capable of supporting worldwide force projection and sustaining military operations within its area of responsibility. The GAO reported that, according to U.S. European Command officials, those forces would:

- possess strategic, operational, and tactical mobility sufficient to support a wide array of missions;

- maintain an adequate infrastructure for a credible, rapid reinforcement capability;

- secure U.S. participation in North Atlantic Treaty Organization multi-national air, ground, and sea forces;

- provide adequate operational and support structures in the southern region of the European Command--an area with numerous potential "hot spots"; and

- maintain a link between European nuclear weapons and U.S. strategic nuclear forces. (pp. 42-43/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Concur.

o **Finding N: The Army Has Taken the Greatest Share of the Force Reductions in Europe.** The GAO explained that, at the start of the drawdown, the U.S. Army, Europe had about 213,000 troops forward stationed in Europe--consisting of two corps with a total of four heavy divisions and two armored cavalry regiments. The GAO observed that, during 1990, the U.S. Army,

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See comment 4.

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Europe designed a "capable" corps to remain in Europe. The GAO noted that force would have consisted of about 158,500 troops, structured into two heavy divisions with two armored cavalry regiments. The GAO pointed out that, over the next 3 years, budgetary pressures and changing political and military events forced the U.S. Army, Europe to reduce the size of its projected force first down to 92,200 and, more recently, down to 65,000 troops. GAO reported that, because the details on the 65,000-troop structure had not been made public at the time the GAO completed its audit work in June 1993, the Army profile is focused on the earlier plan for the 92,200-troop structure.

The GAO comparison of the U.S. Army, Europe force structure before the drawdown and under each future force structure plan illustrated some key principles that the U.S. Army, Europe followed in designing its post Cold-War force in Europe. The GAO concluded that, while the two plans vary in size and, thus, in the degree of military capability, they share a common overall corps force structure and were planned for deployment in Europe to meet the same set of missions. The GAO reported that, according to a U.S. Army Europe official, the major difference in the Army corps designed under each plan is the amount of support required from forces in the continental U.S. to sustain combat and other non-combat missions.

The GAO analysis showed that the plans for the U.S. Army, Europe future corps and theater support structure were significantly more robust under its first plan. The GAO found that, under the 158,500 force structure, the U.S. Army, Europe would have had two armored cavalry regiments with over twice as many troops assigned to that element of the corps as under the plan for the 92,200 residual force. The GAO reported that other significant force structure cuts from the 158,500 to the 92,200 force were made in certain combat support units. The GAO analysis showed, however, that the U.S. Army, Europe maintained approximately the same level of combat troops in its divisions under each plan. The GAO determined that the number of division combat troops was reduced by 3,740 troops, or 10 percent, between the two plans.

The GAO analysis also showed that the U.S. Army, Europe planned to retain a higher percentage of combat to support forces under the April 1991 plan that it had at the start of the drawdown. The GAO reported that the level of reinforcement and theater support troops remained in the same proportion under the April 1991 plan as before the drawdown. The GAO noted that the forces are regarded as crucial to sustaining all combat forces in the theater and retaining a capability to reinforce with troops from the continental United States. The GAO explained that, consequently, the largest proportion of cuts come from U.S. positions at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization-related support activities. The GAO concluded, however, that non-U.S. Army, Europe organizations in Europe have held fairly steady as a percentage of the total force structure. (pp. 46-51/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The GAO states, "the largest proportion of cuts come from U.S. positions at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization-related support activities." That is not an accurate statement, and incorrectly implies that the Army in Europe force reduction plan erodes support to the alliance. In fact, positions at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were reduced proportionally less than virtually any other single sub-category, as shown by Table 4.4 of the GAO report. The preponderance of the reduction in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization support category can

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be attributed to withdrawal of U.S. Army tactical nuclear weapons from Europe and inactivation of the units responsible for custody of those weapons, and to a significant reduction of the U.S. contribution to the Central Region Integrated Air Defense System based upon the reduced threat of an enemy air campaign.

The Department also disagrees with the GAO discussion of U.S. force presence. Official Department figures provided to the Congress indicate that there were roughly 205,000 (not 213,000) Army troops stationed in Europe at the end of FY 1990. Furthermore, it should be recognized that the 158,500 Army troop force structure for Europe was never approved, adopted, or implemented by the Department.

**o FINDING O: The Latest Plan to Reduce Army Forces has Required Major Adjustments.** The GAO reported that, while Army doctrine allows for variations in the size of its corps, the latest plan to reduce Army forces to 65,000 troops has required major adjustments in the plans of the European Command. The GAO noted that, whereas the Army had been able to keep its two divisions and armored cavalry regiment intact under past reduction plans by sacrificing more and more support elements, major elements of the combat forces will now have to be withdrawn to meet the 65,000-troop ceiling.

The GAO concluded that (1) at the 92,200 level, the Army troops in Europe would have had significant problems independently fighting as a corps in a major war, and (2) therefore, the Army will have greater difficulty accomplishing that mission at the 65,000 troop level. The GAO pointed out that DoD plans include highly-ready contingency forces that can be rapidly deployed to a crisis anywhere in the world from the U.S. The GAO found that those forces include five Army divisions and their associated support forces--all of which are expected to be deployed within 75 days. The GAO noted that the plans for the contingency DoD forces call into question whether it is still appropriate to assign the mission of fighting independently as a corps to European Command troops. (pp. 52-54/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The GAO overstates the extent of combat reductions found in the latest plan, which cuts an armored cavalry regiment and two divisional combat brigades. The GAO implies that, until the latest reduction (from 92,000 to 60,000), combat forces had not been cut significantly. Prior to the latest plan, however, two full divisions, three separate combat brigades [1st Infantry Division (Forward), 2d Armored Division (Forward), and the Berlin Brigade], and an armored cavalry regiment were cut from the 205,000 level to the 92,000 level.

**o FINDING P: Force Structure May Need to Be Reassessed.** The GAO concluded a key issue that should be examined is whether the force structure currently in place is appropriate to meet post-Cold War challenges. The GAO noted that when unveiling the new defense policy in his speech in Aspen, Colorado, in August 1990, President Bush emphasized... "The U.S. would be ill-served by forces that represent nothing more than a scaled-back or shrunken-down version of the ones we possess at present. If we simply pro-rate our reductions--cut equally across the board--we could easily end up with more than we need for contingencies that are no longer likely and less than we must have to meet emerging challenges. What we need are not merely reductions--but restructuring."

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The GAO concluded that, despite the pronouncement, force reduction plans for Europe appear to have led to what former President Bush warned against--a smaller version of the Cold War force. The GAO also noted that, when compared to the force structure in place at the start of the drawdown in September 1990, each successive plan has called for roughly the same proportion of Army, Air Force, and Navy forces. The GAO reported that the Army, which has retained the corps as the centerpiece of its force structure, had 69 percent of the total forces in Europe at the start of the drawdown, 61 percent under the April 1991 plan, and 60 percent under the April 1993 plan. The GAO noted that the corps continues to be primarily comprised of heavy forces despite changes (1) in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to smaller and more flexible forces and (2) the principal mission for U.S. troops in Europe from deterring Soviet aggression to deterring or responding to far-reaching regional conflicts. (pp. 54-55/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. The DoD disagrees with the GAO implication that retention of a corps, particularly one comprised of heavy forces, is inappropriate to the post-Cold War security environment. The new security environment is fraught with uncertainty, which requires the capability to tailor a military response to the situation and places a premium on operational flexibility. As noted in the DoD response to Findings D-G, having a corps forward-stationed provides that flexibility. Again, the in-theater availability of the various units in the U.S. corps and the capability of those units to train as part of a U.S. or multinational combined arms force gives the theater commander the flexibility to task organize an effective U.S. or multinational force appropriate to the assigned mission. Retention of heavy forces in Europe is currently under review within the Army. However, three factors must be addressed in any discussion of replacing heavy forces in Europe with light forces:

See comment 2.

--Mission requirements. The GAO indicates that light, easily deployable forces are needed to respond to "far-reaching regional conflicts." That is not necessarily true, as strategic deployability is just one consideration in task organizing for a mission. For example, the survivability and mobility of their armored vehicles has saved the lives of British soldiers on duty with the United Nations in the Balkans and contributed to the accomplishment of their humanitarian mission.

--Perceived military value. European security culture places maximum value on armored and mechanized forces, especially battle-tested, high-technology systems. To illustrate that point, despite having one of the largest armies in North Atlantic Treaty organization, the value of Turkey's contribution to the alliance is discounted because it consists largely of light, low-technology infantry units. The U.S. leadership and the access and influence that it provides in other forums is greatly influenced by the U.S. committing high value forces to the allied security effort.

--Army-wide force structure. The bottom-up review established that the Army force structure would consist of ten active divisions. Simply converting the divisions in Europe to light divisions would unjustifiably increase the number of light divisions in the Army and could degrade the Army's ability to win two near-concurrent major regional contingencies. Further, swapping heavy and light divisions between the continental U.S. and Europe would create significant costs and turbulence for soldiers and their families, and could cause facility shortfalls at U.S. installations. In the event of non-European lesser regional contingencies, the U.S. would

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probably first employ light forces. To avoid a dispute with European allies who may not agree with U.S. participation in such an operation, the light forces should be based in the continental U.S. In short, Army force structure in Europe is still evolving. However, were the current plan to be fully implemented, it would not be a Cold War anachronism, but a force deliberately designed to maximize the theater commander's operational capability and flexibility, while minimizing Army transition costs and turbulence.

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**MATTERS FOR CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION**

o **SUGGESTION 1:** The GAO suggested that, as the Congress reviews the results of the DoD "bottom-up" review and deliberates on future Army forces, the Congress should consider whether a corps comprised of heavy divisions continues to be the appropriate Army force structure in Europe for post-Cold War environment and missions of today. (p. 56/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Nonconcur. While the DoD acknowledges the need for the Congress to be informed and consider future force requirements, any challenge to future European force structure and its mix should be reviewed in the context of total force requirements as opposed to component parts. The composition of components is best left to the Commander, U.S. European Command in the discharge of his authority as a unified Commander under the provisions of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act.

o **SUGGESTION 2:** The GAO suggested that as the Congress reviews the results of the DoD "bottom-up" review and deliberates on future Army forces, the Congress should consider whether U.S. national security objectives and commitments to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization can be achieved with fewer than 65,000 Army troops in Europe, if the DoD expands its use of other forward presence instruments such as military-to-military contacts and joint training exercises. (p. 56/GAO Draft Report)

**DoD RESPONSE:** Partially concur. In addition to those factors cited by the GAO, the Congress should also consider the additional North Atlantic Treaty Organization and national security objectives. Further, the use of a force structure number to refer to Army manning is technically incorrect.

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See comment 5.

See comment 5.

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The following are GAO's comments on the Department of Defense's letter dated October 18, 1993.

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## GAO Comments

1. We have updated the report with this information.
2. We have addressed this comment in the report.
3. We have modified the report to more clearly state this position.
4. We have deleted this material.
5. We have deleted the matters for congressional consideration because the Department agreed with the need to consider the changed world situation in determining the future Army force structure in Europe and stated that the Army is currently reviewing the retention of heavy forces in Europe. We believe that this report should help the Congress in evaluating the future Army force structure in Europe.



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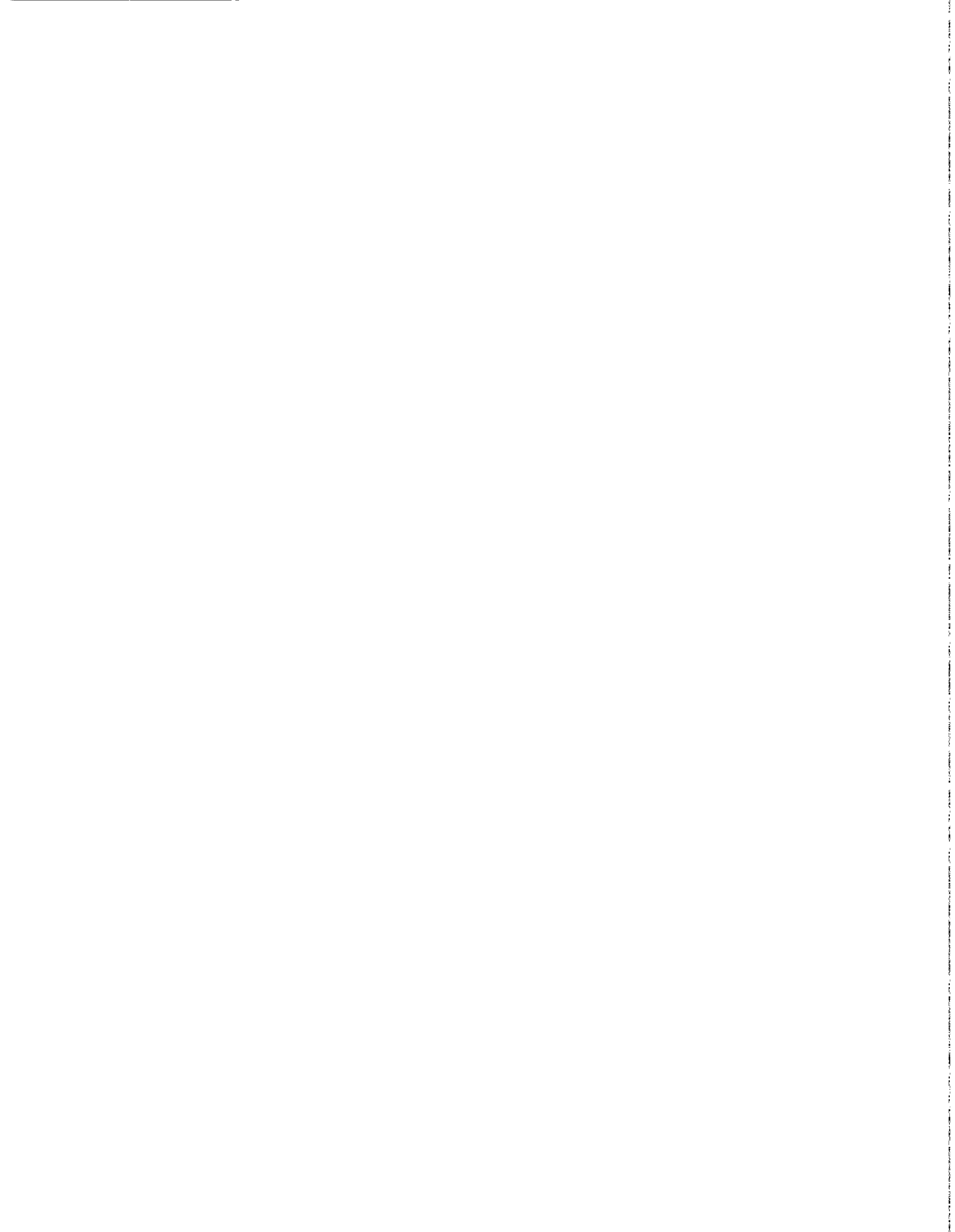
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