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Special Edition Interview with NATO Allied Air Command, conducted by Editor in Chief

Interview with the NATO Air Command Spokesman conducted by Editor in Chief

Sir, we are delighted to have the occasion of this interview with you. Thank you very much indeed for accepting our invitation.

Q 1: Could you please tell us about the historical formation and the current architecture of NATO Air Command.

NATO Air Command spokesman: Headquarters Allied Air Command is located at Ramstein, Germany, within Ramstein Air Force Base, which has been home to a [NATO Airpower](#) headquarters since 1974. The headquarters is responsible for planning, exercising and executing Integrated Air and Missile Defence Operations within NATO's European area of responsibility from peacetime through to conflict.

The Headquarters includes the Operations Centre for Air Policing, Ballistic Missile Defence and operational control of NATO's Airborne Early Warning and Control Force as well as for NATO's Alliance Ground Surveillance Force. The Headquarters can also host a Joint Force Air Component to command and control allied air operations during crisis and conflict. More than five hundred dedicated military and civilian personnel, increasing to some 620 in support of the adapted structure, serve at the Headquarters, representing 25 NATO member nations.

The staff is permanently augmented by representatives from three of NATO's partner nations, Sweden, Finland and Azerbaijan. Subordinate units to the Headquarters are the two Combined Air Operations Centres at Uedem, Germany and Torrejón, Spain as well as the Deployable Air Command and Control Centre at Poggio Renatico, Italy.

Q 2: One of the pivotal missions of NATO Air COM is to protect the Alliance's fifth domain, by coordinating and supporting Allied space activities.

- **Could you provide us an overview of this mission and what it entails?**

NATO Air Command spokesman: NATO Air Power's core purpose is and always will be the control and exploitation of the air domain to deliver a military effect for the Alliance. While this fundamental purpose is enduring, the capabilities brought to bear are constantly evolving. Modern Aircraft are the latest manifestation of this continuing evolution. These Modern Aircraft with their unique combination of low observable signature, multi-spectral fused sensors, unmatched speed and maneuverability as well as advanced logistics support take [NATO Airpower](#) to an entirely new level. When integrated with the Alliance's existing fleets, these advanced machines provide NATO with a distinct advantage over any potential adversaries for the foreseeable future.

Q 3: Could you please comment on the role played by NATO Air Command in maintaining peace, security, and stability in Europe and beyond?

NATO Air Command spokesman: The airspace over Europe sees an average of about 35,000 air movements per day, making it one of the busiest airspaces in the world. Any aircraft flying inside or approaching European NATO airspace that are unidentified, either through loss or intentional omission of communication with Air Traffic Control creates an unsafe environment, which could lead to an air incident.

NATO ensures the integrity, safety and security of its airspace by maintaining a 24/7/365 [Air Policing mission](#), overseen by Allied Air Command.

In December 2019, NATO Heads of State and Government declared space as the Alliance's "fifth domain" of operations, alongside land, sea, air and cyberspace. NATO Defence Ministers subsequently agreed to the creation of a space centre at NATO's Allied Air Command in Ramstein, Germany during a meeting in October 2020.

Q 4: In mid-July NATO Air and Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) had a joint exercise in the Black Sea in the framework of enhancing joint cooperation.

- **What was the main strategic interest that formulated the combined cooperation as an essential aim?**

NATO Air Command spokesman: [NATO](#) Allies frequently integrate Allied Air and Maritime assets to improve interoperability, build trust and enhance readiness in the Black Sea region during combined joint training events. The activities on July 2 underlined the Allies' commitment to collective defence and to maintain peace and preserve security in this region both at sea and in the air.

Q 5: This year's annual exercise 'BALTOPS50' conducted June 16-18, involved the participation of 18 Armed Forces components of NATO member and partner nations.

- **Could you detail the specific operational contribution of NATO Air Power in this exercise?**

NATO Air Command spokesman: During the maritime-focused exercise [BALTOPS 50](#), NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) at Udem, Germany, is responsible for planning, coordinating and controlling Allied air forces. For several years now, Allied Air Command has entrusted NATO's northern CAOC at Udem with planning and executing air command and control of air activities during the BALTOPS exercise series. Participants in this multinational exercise create and sustain partnerships and practice a broad range of mission areas to strengthen the capabilities of the participating naval and air units. More importantly, this exercise strengthens their ability to operate as a cohesive joint and combined force and respond to emerging crisis.

Additional news: [NATO holds Air Defence Exercise in the Black Sea](#)

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U.S National Guard and its State Partnership Program-5 Vermont National Guard

Since its establishment in 1993 by the department of Defense, and implemented by the various State's National Guards, the State Partnerships program (SPP) has been a pivotal contributor to the world's stability, security and peace. Up to the recent times, the State Partnership Program has reached over 85 partnerships with 92 nations across the globe, creating the most comprehensive U.S military cooperation and partnerships with the world.

Vermont National Guard is among the five States National Guards which have three State Partnership Programs, by having its 'SPP' in two continents, three countries. From 1993 with the North Macedonia; from 2008 with the Republic of Senegal. And in October 2021 formed a new State Partnership Programs with the Republic of Austria.



“I am excited to see our new partnership with Austria facilitate cooperation across all aspects of international civil-military affairs and encourage people-to-people ties at the state level. And I of course look forward to welcoming our new friends from Austria to Vermont.” *Elaborated Lt. Governor Gray on the Vermont National Guard and the Republic of Austria State Partnership, October 15, 2021 ©Office of the Lieutenant Governor of State of Vermont*

“Vermont’s cooperation with North Macedonia, as part of the National Guard’s state partnership program, has been a long, challenging, and very successful journey for over 26 years,” *expressed U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Greg Knight, Vermont’s adjutant general. March 2020 ©Vermont National Guard*

In addition to the State Partnership Program, the Vermont National Guard has been part of the U.S deployment in support of U.S military and NATO operations including:

- In Romania, to support of Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan
- In Kosovo, in support of NATO-led KFOR operation
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, in support of NATO-led peacekeeping
- Horn of Africa Djibouti, in support of Combined Joint Task Force

Added to that, around the globe in different continents and regions—the Vermont National Guard has been simultaneously an indispensable contributor to the large number of humanitarian relief operations. Just to name a few in the recent epoch: building bridges, schools and assisting educational and economic development projects, hosting medical and military training and exercises, supporting Afghanistan evacuation, supporting the Department of State temporarily housing for the Afghan evacuees.

Additional:

- [State Partnership between Austria and Vermont, October 2021](#)
- [Vermont Guard delegation visits SPP partner North Macedonia, 2021](#)
- [Vermont, North Macedonia officials discuss expanding state partnership, 2021](#)
- [Vermont hosts SPP partner Senegal’s national fire brigade, 2021](#)
- [Vermont Army Guard hosts mountain warfare course, Djibouti, 2021](#)
- [Vermont National Guard supports Afghanistan evacuation, 2021](#)
- [Special Edition, Interview with the U.S KFOR Regional Command East \(Series-2\), 2021](#)

Sources: Vermont National Guard/ National Guard/ U.S Army.

By Editor in Chief

U.S Army and the National Guard in the Humanitarian Operations around the Globe-1

The U.S Army, Nebraska National Guard, and the [Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa](#) (CJTF-HOA) worked around the clock to help restoring the water supply and the drinking water pipe in Djibouti village in Horn of Africa. The project which started in December 2021 was completed in a short period of time with the helping hand of the locals from the Chabelley village in the Arta region of Djibouti.



***“Our effort is about much more than fixing a well. It is about demonstrating that we care about our partners and we want our relationship to last.”** expressed 1st Lt. Fortson, construction management officer, 712th ESC U.S Army.*

- News from: [U.S KFOR Regional Command East](#)
- [U.S Army Europe and Africa](#) [U.S Mission NATO](#)
- [US Naval Forces Europe-Africa](#)
- [U.S Air Force Europe-Africa](#) [The 7th Army Training](#)
- [U.S European Command](#) [U.S African Command](#)
- [Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa \(CJTF-HOA\)](#)

Sources: **National Guard**, Spc. Gauret Stearns/U.S Army/Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).

By Editor in Chief

Acknowledgments: Image 1: NATO Air Command HQ ©NATO Allied Air Command, NATO HQ Aircom 23/Cynthia Vernat, HQ Aircom PAO, January 15, 2016.

Image 2: senior leaders with the Vermont National Guard, Austrian Defence Attache staff and personnel from the Office of the Secretary of Defense outside the Pentagon on Oct. 15, 2021.©Vermont National Guard public affairs/Courtesy photo.

Image 3: U.S. Army Soldiers from the 712th Engineer Support Company (712th ESC), Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa in Chabelley Village, Djibouti, Dec. 22, 2021©U.S. Army National Guard/ Spc. Gauret Stearns.

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