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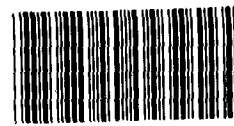
Testimony

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Army's Ability To Support Initial
Combat Operations in Europe

Statement of
Richard A. Davis, Senior Associate Director
National Security and International
Affairs Division

Before the
Subcommittee on Readiness
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives



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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss the Army's ability to support its M+10 essential force in initial combat operations in Europe, in terms of the Army's stated support requirements. The term "M+10 essential force" refers to the approximately 10 divisions and required non-divisional support forces the United States has committed to assemble in Europe within 10 days of NATO mobilization.

The M+10 essential force requires (1) European-based U.S. forces, (2) forces in the United States that are to deploy to Europe upon mobilization, (3) European host-nation support forces, (4) prepositioned equipment and supplies in Europe, and (5) strategic lift capability to transport U.S.-based forces and equipment to Europe. The term "essential" is included in reference to this force because the force is not the ideal size needed to carry out the mission but, according to the Army, is the minimum size necessary to meet force objectives. We did not independently assess what was needed to carry out the mission or the support requirements for that mission.

To meet military objectives in the early phases of a NATO conflict, the Army has fewer personnel than it says are required, has less prepositioned equipment and lift capability than it says are needed, and has significant numbers of units that are reported not-combat-ready. These conditions raise questions about the

Army's ability to meet military objectives in the early phases of a NATO conflict. In fact, some operational commanders believe that should a conflict occur, the impact of support force shortages would be severe. However, since we did not independently validate either the Army's mission or the resources to accomplish it, our observations are based on an assessment of the resources the Army has versus what it says it needs to accomplish the stated M+10 essential force mission.

The Army has undertaken several initiatives to address an overall problem with support forces throughout the Army, and the M+10 essential force should benefit from them. While there are currently large personnel shortages, it appears that planned host nation support and expected unit productivity improvements from new equipment that the Army plans to buy over the next 5 years should help to alleviate this condition. However, personnel shortages will remain as long as the Army continues its peacetime policy of staffing M+10 essential force support units at less than their wartime requirement.

Equipment shortages affecting the readiness condition of M+10 essential force support units and the adequacy of prepositioned equipment are also likely to remain long-term problems. The Army is projecting substantial funding increases to implement its equipment initiatives. However, in light of the limited funding available for support force equipment in recent years and little

prospect for growth in the defense budget in the near future, the Army's current funding projections to implement its equipment initiatives may be too optimistic.

More detailed information on the condition of the M+10 essential support force is contained in a classified statement which has been provided to the Subcommittee. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to respond to questions.