VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

Ariel A De Jesus Jr, Acting Director
adejesus@legion.org

October 26, 2024 – November 1, 2024

Meetings

- NS Staff met with Public Affairs Officers from Air Force Base Andersen in Guam to coordinate the National Commander's upcoming visit to the base.

- NS Staff participated in an MSO/VSO roundtable hosted by the Secretary of the Army, which provided updates on military quality of life initiatives and the Army's recruiting goals for the coming years.

- NS Staff attended an online webinar by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)titled "Crossing the Rubicon: North Korea Sends Troops to Russia." The webinar discussed the potential impacts of North Korea's involvement on the tactical landscape in Ukraine and what North Korea will gain from this partnership.

- NS Staff participated in an MSO/VSO roundtable hosted by the Secretary of the Army, which provided updates on military quality of life initiatives and the Army's recruiting goals for the coming years.

- NS Staff attended a private virtual event sponsored by the Women's Foreign Policy Group called "Civil War in Sudan: Humanitarian Crisis and the Role of Women." NS Staff hoped to round out their research on the conflict in Sudan with a social and humanitarian lens.

- NS Staff met with base leadership at Shaw AFB for an out brief with the Commanding Officer for a close-out of the BASE visit.

- NS Staff virtually attend an event hosted by the Center for New American Security featuring The Honorable Ronald Keohane, who previously spoke during the National Security Commission meeting during the 105th National Convention. The topics included military quality of life, access to childcare, and the all-volunteer force.

- NS Staff attended a roundtable hosted by "We Are Veterans and Families," focused on the recent increase in targeted misinformation campaigns directed at servicemembers and veterans. The discussion centered on how nefarious actors are using fake online propaganda to sow discord in the lead-up to the presidential elections.

- NS Staff met with the Executive Director to discuss National Security legislative priorities for the upcoming 119th Congress to establish a robust and aggressive agenda.

- NS Staff met with Senator Shaheen's team to discuss the Bring Our Heroes Home Act, seeking clarification on its implications for the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

- NS Staff participated in an Ad-Hoc Committee roundtable hosted by Past National Commander Seehafer, focusing on plans to celebrate America's 250th birthday.

- NS Staff attended an all-hands briefing on security and safety for the upcoming election.

Policy

- NS Staff continues to prepare for the upcoming virtual meeting on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty, featuring guest speakers Retired Admiral Abbott and Former Ambassador Moore.

- NS Staff reviewed the White House Memorandum on U.S. leadership in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the role of AI in our national security.

- NS Staff began drafting the BASE Program Report for Shaw AFB.

- NS Staff is preparing for the Veteran's Day ceremony at the Vietnam Wall and the Women's Memorial.

- NS Staff began reading information and compiling an analysis of the recent BRICS Summit in Russia.

- NS Staff participated in a working group on the Richard Star Act, focusing on strategies to encourage Congress to pass legislation that supports full retirement pay and VA disability compensation for medically retired servicemembers with fewer than 20 years of service.

Programs

- NS Staff continues to fulfill TACOM/JMC requests to help local posts with Military Surplus items.

The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment

- Items requested: Ammo- 3720; Rifles- 35; Clips- 50; Static Displays- 2
- Requests submitted by: Post- 10; Department- 7

POW/MIA

October 24, 2024

- Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Mahoney, J.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 207 service members this year.

Focus Topic:

North Korea and Russia

North Korea has been providing military materials and, most recently, about 10,000 troops to Russia in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, including the supply of artillery shells and munitions. This collaboration highlights a significant geopolitical shift, as both nations are increasingly isolated from the West and facing economic sanctions. By bolstering Russia's military capabilities, North Korea aims to strengthen its position on the international stage, potentially seeking to leverage its support for strategic gains, such as reduced sanctions or increased diplomatic recognition. This alliance could embolden both countries to pursue more aggressive military strategies, threatening stability in Eastern Europe and beyond.

This relationship warrants close attention due to its implications for global security dynamics. The collaboration between two authoritarian regimes could signal a broader trend of military and political cooperation among nations that oppose Western influence. Such a development could lead to more sophisticated military tactics in Ukraine and potentially embolden North Korea to escalate its military ambitions, particularly concerning South Korea and Japan. Monitoring this relationship is crucial, as it may necessitate a reevaluation of defense strategies and diplomatic approaches to counteract the growing influence of these regimes and protect international norms against aggression.