VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

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November 2, 2024 – November 8, 2024

Meetings

- The National Commander and National Security staff met with the Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) to discuss several strategic opportunities for The American Legion to support Army and national defense initiatives. Key ideas were exchanged on collaborative efforts to enhance the Legion's contributions to the Army's mission and bolster national security.

- The National Commander and National Security staff engaged in a meeting with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, during which they conveyed several key proposals on how The American Legion can support access to high-quality healthcare for servicemembers and their families, including those in the reserve component, regardless of their location.

- The National Commander and National Security staff met with representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) of Taiwan to discuss the Commander's upcoming visit to Taiwan and planned high-level engagements. These discussions focus on fostering strong relations with the government of Taiwan and its veteran community, reinforcing our shared commitment to collaboration and mutual support.

- NS Staff attended a Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) event titled "China in the Middle East" to evaluate the impact of Chinese involvement on US operations in the region.

- NS Staff attended a CSIS event titled "The Past, Present, and Future of AI and Autonomy at the DOD with the Honorable Dr. Will Roper." Former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology Dr. Will Roper, will discuss how DOD's approaches to AI and autonomy programs will affect our posture in the future.

- NS Staff met with the Hickam Air Force Base Public Affairs Officer to coordinate details for the National Commander's upcoming visit.

- NS Staff attended a webinar titled "Advocated for Our Allies: An Update with No One Left Behind and Congressional Champions" featuring Rep. Miller-Meeks.

- NS Staff attended a webinar hosted by the Carnegie Endowment featuring a conversation with former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, which can be viewed here.

- NS Staff met with Repatriate our Patriots to discuss improving the path to citizenship for servicemembers.

- NS Staff attended the "China and Transnational Crime: Fentanyl and Beyond" webinar hosted by the Georgetown University Initiative for U.S.-China Dialogue on Global Issues. The event reviewed how China has agreed to help the US counter fentanyl and paths for further cooperation.

Policy

- NS Staff completed a preliminary assessment of President-Elect Trump's potential foreign policy direction, which is currently speculative, grounded in analysis of his prior public statements and policy remarks.

- NS Staff has comprehensively analyzed the commission's legislative priorities in preparation for the upcoming 119th Congress. This detailed evaluation aims to align our objectives with current legislative developments, ensuring our priorities are strategically positioned for advocacy and impact.

- NS Staff prepared with USINDOPACOM for the National Commander's trip overseas.

- NS Staff has comprehensively reviewed the recent BRICS summit held in Kazan, Russia. This analysis covers key discussions, decisions, and outcomes from the summit, providing insights into its strategic implications and relevance for our ongoing international engagement and policy initiatives.

- **From the Department of the Air Force**: A review of the future of the Next-Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) combat aircraft is expected to finish by the end of the year. "We intend to have that by December. We also want to be able to influence the Department's Presidential Budget Submission in February," said Gen David Allvin (CSAF). "As we are analyzing this, we need to understand, 'Is this the best for the cost of what we think the threat is going to be?' and 'Is this the best way to be able to achieve air superiority?'"

Programs

- NS Staff continued drafting the BASE Program Report for the Shaw Air Force Base visit.

The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment

- Items requested: Ammo- 3720; Rifles-4; Clips-50
- Requests submitted by: Posts-3; Departments-3

POW/MIA

Oct. 31, 2024

- **Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Colby, W.)**
- **Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Godwin, H.)**
- **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Ulrich, E.)**
- **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Cook, B.)**

DPAA has identified/repatriated 211 service members this year.

Be The One

The White House has issued a Proclamation recognizing November 2024 as National Veterans and Military Families Month. This year's initiatives focus on addressing the critical issue of suicide prevention within the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The proclamation underscores a national commitment to supporting veterans and military families through targeted actions aimed at reducing suicide rates, enhancing mental health resources, and providing comprehensive care for those who have served. These initiatives reflect a dedicated effort to foster resilience and improve well-being among service members, veterans, and their loved ones.

Focus Topic:

Read out from the President of UAE's trip to Washington, DC.

On September 23, 2024, President Biden hosted President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the first sitting president to visit the United States since the UAE's founding. The key readout from the official meeting was the announcement that the UAE would become a major defense partner of the United States. This designation, shared only by India, creates opportunities for joint military training exercises, regional stability, and enhanced cooperation between the two states.

The United States and the UAE have maintained military cooperation since the 1990s, with the placement of US troops at the Al Dhafra Air Base located near Abu Dhabi. Current US troop assignments to the air base include the Air Force's 380th Air Expeditionary Wing, whose primary mission is to carry out combat operations, reconnaissance, and aerial refueling for military operations against ISIS, and the Army's 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, which maintains a battalion of MIM-104 Patriot air defense missiles. These Patriots missiles were crucial in defending against a Houthi Zulfiqar ballistic missile attack launched in January of 2022 in retaliation against the UAE for its support of the Yemeni civil war.

Aside from the defense partnership, the two leaders also discussed their mutual commitment to a ceasefire and hostage release amid the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an agreement to bring more stability to the tumultuous region. Additionally, the two leaders discussed the continuing violence against the civilian population in Sudan and the current famine that has

displaced millions of individuals in the country. Absent from the discussion on Sudan was the mention of the UAE's alleged clandestine involvement in the conflict, which includes the supply of advanced drones to the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Meanwhile, in Congress, Democratic lawmakers wrote to President Biden, imploring him to discuss with the Emirati President reports from a UN Panel of Experts on Sudan of credible allegations that the UAE has covertly supplied military support to the RSF through Amdjarass in northern Chad. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to delivering humanitarian aid to civilians in Sudan. They implored both parties in the conflict to reduce restrictions on aid and agree to a lasting ceasefire.

Apart from the discussions on global conflict and regional stability, the two nations agreed to champion innovations in artificial intelligence technologies and shared mutual interests in economic initiatives.