

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

June 22, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Republican Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, we write today to express our concern over your administration's plans to significantly reduce the number of American servicemembers stationed in Germany.

The U.S. forward presence in Germany serves as a cornerstone of NATO's deterrent against Russian aggression. The Obama Administration oversaw the withdrawal of thousands of troops from Germany in 2012. Two years later, Russia invaded Ukraine and illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula. That drawdown has since been reversed and the U.S. military presence in Europe has increased, in large part thanks to the efforts of your administration. However, the Putin regime has yet to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and its malign activities across the continent have continued unabated. Meanwhile, key frontline NATO allies and partners on the Baltic and Black Seas see their security as intrinsically linked to the support of the United States and the NATO alliance. As such, this is not the time to take any action that might cause the Putin regime to question the credibility of the NATO deterrent or might lead our NATO allies and partners to doubt the U.S. commitment to our collective security.

The U.S. military footprint in Germany also serves our strategic interests by enabling U.S. power projection beyond Europe and into the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Operated by the U.S. Army, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany provides critical care to American soldiers wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also, Stuttgart, Germany is home to U.S. Africa Command, which has been sounding the alarm regarding the dangers of Russia and China's growing influence in Africa. We are concerned that a partial withdrawal from Germany could endanger efforts to reverse this trend as well as hinder efforts to counter terrorist organizations that pose a threat to the security of Africa, Europe and the United States.

Moreover, with the return of great power competition, the United States once again finds itself squaring off against authoritarian regimes in Russia and China which actively seek to sow division between the United States and its allies and partners. Our adversaries understand that the American alliance network is at the heart of the U.S. comparative advantage and will seek to exploit any cracks in transatlantic ties. Therefore, we are troubled that many of our allies had not been consulted on U.S. force re-posturing. To ensure that free and open societies triumph over the likes of Vladimir Putin's regime and the Chinese Communist Party, the United States must continue to build and maintain a united coalition of likeminded allies. The withdrawal of thousands of troops from Germany will only complicate this crucial effort and in turn place U.S. national security at risk.

We commend your administration's efforts to encourage our NATO allies to contribute more to our common defense as burden sharing is critical to alliance cohesion. We recognize that Germany has yet to meet the 2014 Wales Pledge to spend at least 2 percent of its gross domestic product on defense. However, we fear this partial U.S. withdrawal from Germany will fail to convince Berlin to spend more, while putting U.S. strategic interests at risk.

We therefore urge you to reconsider this decision. Instead, the United States should continue to lead by example and remain fully committed to the NATO alliance, which has successfully deterred the outbreak of another costly world war on the continent since its formation. It is irrefutable that a peaceful and prosperous Europe is in the interests of not just our European allies and partners, but also the United States.

Mr. President, we thank you for your leadership and look forward to working with you to strengthen America's role as global leader.

Sincerely,



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Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress



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Michael T. McCaul  
Ranking Republican Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



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Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress



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Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



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Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



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John Curtis  
Member of Congress