

**Statement of Douglas Lute**  
**Nominee for United States Permanent Representative to NATO**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**July 11, 2013**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Johnson and all the members of this Committee. I am honored to be considered for the position of Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). I am grateful for the confidence that President Obama has shown in me by this nomination. If confirmed, I pledge to work with all of you to represent faithfully America's interests in NATO, the alliance that since 1949 has served as the cornerstone of our security interests.

It is a privilege to appear alongside Victoria Nuland and Daniel Baer, two distinguished colleagues. If we are confirmed, the three of us will join the core of U.S. officials devoted full time to securing our interests in Europe and beyond. I could have no better teammates.

At the outset, I want to recognize and thank my wife, Jane, who joins me here today. Jane recently completed service as the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Her public service also includes work in several foundations and over six years in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Together we have served the federal government for a combined total of over six decades, with both of us beginning as Army officers right out of college. We both took initial assignments in Germany, Jane in Berlin and I along the East-West German border, at the height of the Cold War.

This opportunity for me to serve once again with NATO began with that first assignment and continues to this day. I was in Germany when the Wall fell in 1989. I saw Germans from the East walk across no-mans-land to buy fresh fruit in the West. I remember well that on September 11, 2001, NATO for the first time ever invoked Article V of the Washington Treaty in response to the terrorist attacks here in America, demonstrating that an attack on one is an attack on all. Later I commanded the U.S. forces in NATO's peace enforcement mission in Kosovo, a crisis response mission on the periphery of NATO. Most recently, I have spent the last 6 years in the White House focused on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where again NATO has played key roles. If confirmed, I look forward proudly to this opportunity to serve my country again in NATO.

Much has changed in Europe over the past several decades, but there has been one cornerstone for trans-Atlantic security – NATO. Large multilateral institutions like NATO do not adapt quickly or easily. Yet in the last 20 years we

have seen NATO adjust to the end of the Cold War, expand its membership to former enemies, extend its reach to threats on its periphery, and adapt its defense structures to emerging threats. No one would have believed in 1989 when the Wall fell that NATO would conduct operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya.

Serious challenges lie ahead for NATO. The key operational challenge is Afghanistan, where NATO leads a coalition of 50 nations. We are on a path to pass full responsibility to Afghan forces by the end of 2014, a path set by NATO and the Afghans at the Lisbon Summit in late 2010 and refined last year at the Chicago Summit. Several weeks ago the Afghans reached a strategic milestone along that path as they assumed the lead for security across the entire country, with NATO passing into a support and advisory role. But the military campaign is only one part of a complex equation to stabilize Afghanistan and ensure it is not a safe haven for al-Qa'ida. The outcome will not rely solely on NATO. Perhaps most important, Afghan political transition culminates next April in the presidential elections. Economic transition must adjust to the reduced presence of NATO forces. A political process that explores the possibility of Afghan government talks with the Taliban is struggling at its outset. Finally, Afghanistan lives in a tough neighborhood, and regional dynamics will play a major role. None of this work will be fully completed in the next 18 months, so NATO and the United States are planning for a military presence beyond 2014, with the mission to continue to train-advise-assist the Afghan forces. Such a post-2014 mission requires a political agreement with the Afghan government and our negotiators are making progress in advance of the Afghan election season. Afghanistan has been NATO's largest operation. Drawing it to a responsible close will be a significant challenge in the next several years.

NATO also faces a fundamental policy challenge – the growing gap between NATO's mission and the resources Allies commit to fulfilling that mission. This ends-means gap is centered on the imbalance between America's defense resources committed to the Alliance and those of other allies. All 28 members benefit from the Alliance; all 28 have to contribute equitably. This is especially true as NATO recovers from a decade of operations in Afghanistan and faces new challenges like missile defense and cyber security. There are ways to approach this challenge, including "smart defense," pooling and sharing high-end resources, exploring specialization among Allies, and nurturing partnerships beyond the core 28 members. This ends-means gap may be the most severe challenge the Alliance has faced since the end of the Cold War.

As we look to the future, the Alliance is committed to keeping open the door to NATO membership. Our position is clear: membership must be earned. Candidate nations must meet standards.

Beyond adding new members, NATO effectively extends its reach through partnerships based on reciprocity, mutual benefit and mutual respect. Today NATO's partners include countries from the Middle East, Africa, and from across Asia. These partnerships broaden and increase the flexibility of NATO-led coalitions, expand and diversify NATO's political influence, and are a vehicle to emphasize common values. Recent NATO operations in Afghanistan and Libya have benefited from significant partner contributions.

NATO's partnership with Russia -- the NATO-Russia Council -- provides an important venue for frank political dialogue and can lead to practical cooperation, as in Afghanistan today. Areas of cooperation include counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and nonproliferation. This partnership also faces challenges including missile defense cooperation and defense transparency. The NATO-Russia Council remains an important channel to address mutual interests and potential areas of cooperation.

NATO operates on a firm foundation of shared democratic values that bind together the 28 member nations. Because of these shared values, I am confident NATO can today fulfill its core tasks of collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security, while addressing the challenges of the future. If confirmed, I will do my best to represent American interests in the most successful, most durable alliance in history, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I ask for this Committee's support.