



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER TRANSFORMATION

SACT Remarks to
The US Independence Day Flag Raising,

Norfolk,

3rd of July 2019,

Général d'armée aérienne André LANATA

As Declared

Préparé par LCL Philippe BAILLOT d'ESTIVAUX



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Congresswoman Luria, Dear Elaine,

Mayor Dyer, Dear Bobby,

Mayor Alexander, Dear Kenneth, who will join us soon,

Dear Guests of Honor,

Generals, Admirals,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for our NATO command, ACT, and a personal pleasure to take part in the United States of America's National Day celebration by raising the American flag, the glorious Star Spangled Banner.

NATO members and their families feel immense privilege and pride, sharing this moment with the men and women serving a country which has always preserved the heritage of the universal principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence on the 4th July 1776.

As a matter of fact, since the American Revolutionary War, the United States has remained faithful to its **founding values** and committed with its Allies, in preserving them.



A couple of weeks ago, I had the chance to attend the D-Day 75th anniversary ceremony in Normandy along with the US and French presidents, amongst others.

True to these values, how many young soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice on these beaches of Normandy to free Europe from tyranny?

This is one symbol of the vital US contribution to the fight, which drew the Second World War to an end.

75 years ago, Europe was recovering from the most devastating conflict causing the deaths of almost 70 million people, including 45 million civilians. 70 million people ! These figures are simply unimaginable today !

Nowadays, the witnesses of this period are less and less numerous.

For the youngest generation it could appear today as just a date in a History book.

It is our responsibility to let them understand what guided our political leaders, at that time, in their determination to ensure we « *live in peace with all people and governments* », by maintaining an Alliance that serves as the shield for our freedom, prosperity, and peace.



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The fates of the United States of America, Canada and Europe are inseparable!

Today, Allied airmen, sailors and soldiers from both sides of the Atlantic are still fighting shoulder to shoulder.

In Afghanistan we shed the same blood, in the same valleys to build a fair society, a society where young women have right to education for example and prevent safe heaven for terrorist organizations.

In the Middle East, hand in hand, we are defeating ISIL from the sea, the air and land.

As former Chief of Staff of the French Air Force, I am in a good position to bear witness to the success of these operations. And as a French citizen, being in Paris at that time, I know pretty well what a terrorist organization like Daesh is able to perform.

In the Sahel, we are fighting close together to support our African friends in their war for progress against those who profess obscurity. Let me remind you that last year some French fighters intervened for the benefit of US Special Forces seriously engaged by terrorists.

The blood of our soldiers has not been spilled in vain. Our fight prevents the appropriation of this enormous desert region by the terrorist groups such as Al Qaida or ISIL.



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In Europe, we are deterring, as we have done for the last 70 years, willing to protect the same core and universal values that founded this wonderful country. And we are contesting together all the destabilizing actions of all of the actors searching to weaken our Alliance and our unity.

Everywhere in the world, we are defending the same ideal; the one consisting of living in peace, free and independent, as almost originally declared in the United States Declaration of Independence.

Today, we are facing a very challenging environment with threats that disregard recognized state borders, with threats that none of our countries are able to deal with by themselves.

I am deeply convinced that the only effective way to defend our liberty and our independence is to do so together and united.

United States of America,

I have the utmost respect for your Nation which has never stepped back, which has asked so many of its sons and daughters to pay the ultimate price in enduring battles for freedom along with their Allied Band of Brothers.



In raising the US flag today, we are paying tribute to American men and women, currently deployed in overseas operations, protecting these cherished values, to those we have lost in the battles for peace, to those who have been hurt in their body or their mind, and to all our military families who support our service members in their duties.

God bless them.

Today, NATO's Allied community wants to wholeheartedly thank you for the opportunity to join you on this day of remembrance, to celebrate together our common heritage, a legacy that we will continue to protect at the highest price and pass on to new generations.

Long live these values !

Long live our Alliance !

and long live the United States of America, Land of the Free and Home of the Brave !