



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION
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NEWS RELEASE

NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Assumes Command in Norfolk

NORFOLK - French Air Force General, Denis Mercier was appointed Supreme Allied Commander Transformation during a change of command ceremony held today in Norfolk, Virginia (USA). In the presence of the NATO Secretary General, Mr Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Ambassadors and the Military Committee, the ceremony marked the official transfer of command from French Air Force General Jean-Paul Palomeros to General Mercier. Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim and several senior NATO and partner nation officials were also in attendance.

“I am very pleased to extend a warm welcome to General Mercier to this important and prestigious NATO command position.” Said Mr Stoltenberg during his first official visit to Norfolk as NATO Secretary General. “General Mercier begins his tenure with a remarkable operational and leadership record. I thank General Palomeros for his outstanding service to NATO and look forward to the continuation of the excellent work started under his strong leadership. ACT plays a crucial role in continually improving NATO capabilities, ensuring we remain fully prepared to address contemporary threats and challenges facing the Alliance.” He said.

As the leading command for managing the planning and execution of NATO military training and exercises, Allied Command Transformation's near-term focus is on supporting Exercise Trident Juncture 2015, which is scheduled to be the largest NATO exercise in more than a decade. Exercise Trident Juncture 2015 is designed to improve the speed in which NATO forces respond to a crisis, and demonstrate that the Alliance can respond to a variety of threats. Approximately 36,000 service personnel, from over 30 nations will participate in the exercise which will take place throughout Italy, Portugal and Spain during October and November.

One of two NATO Alliance Strategic Commands and the only permanent NATO headquarters in North America, ACT plays an essential role in maintaining and strengthening the vital transatlantic link between Europe and North America, leading the transformation of NATO's military structure, forces, capabilities and doctrine.

For more information about Allied Command Transformation, please visit:

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_89456.htm or contact Navy Lieutenant Commander Karen Eifert by calling **757-676-2610** or emailing karen.eifert@act.nato.int in the Public Affairs Office.