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**Statement for the Record**  
**Rep. Devin Nunes**  
**Hearing before the House Armed Services Committee**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**On**  
**The FY15 National Defense Authorization Act**  
**April 9, 2014**

Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Before I begin, I'd like to submit a GAO report for the record, titled "Defense Headquarters DoD Needs to Reassess Options for Permanent Location of US Africa Command."

Amid the challenging budgetary situation now facing the U.S. military, opportunities for significant cost savings have been identified in AFRICOM's operations.

I am proposing the relocation of AFRICOM headquarters stateside. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that the transfer would save \$60 million – \$70 million annually. Additionally, the GAO estimated that the move would create more than 4,300 U.S.-based jobs and infuse \$350 million – \$450 million into the local economy. The office found no substantiating evidence or rationale for the DoD's decision to keep AFRICOM headquarters in Germany.

In fact, the placement of AFRICOM's headquarters in Germany was supposed to be temporary, and was done merely out of convenience since it was spawned out of EUCOM. My proposal would move AFRICOM stateside and have it operate much like CENTCOM and SOUTHCOM, which have their headquarters stateside with forward operating locations near the theater of operations.

In conjunction with this transfer, the Lajes Field air base should be designated as AFRICOM's forward operating base. Located on Portugal's Azores island chain in the mid-Atlantic, Lajes would be an exceptional staging ground for troop movements and training. Crucially, terrorist hot-spots in western Africa can all be reached from Lajes in less than five hours with few if any over-flight concerns, and ten of the eighteen African counties that hold State Department Travel Warnings can be reached within six hours.

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To achieve additional consolidation and cost savings, the Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response should be transferred to Lajes from Moron Air Base, Spain. In its current location in Moron, Spain, the readiness and effectiveness of the Task Force's troops is hindered by the lack of infrastructure to house, train and equip them. The base would likely require hundreds of millions of dollars in upgrades to make it a suitable location. By contrast, Lajes Field has implemented more than \$150 million of major infrastructure upgrades over the past 12 years to improve the quality of life, upgrade communication capabilities, bolster security, and enhance military operations.

It is in the national interest of the United States to save tens of millions of dollars annually and to bring thousands of jobs to the United States by moving AFRICOM headquarters from Stuttgart to the continental United States, and to create a dedicated forward operating base at Lajes that ensures the strategic reach required for AFRICOM's operations.

Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.