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#### **LHA re-purposing-Project Excelsior by Coalition of Hope Foundation**

I am pleased to add my support to this innovative project whose purpose is to provide world-wide medical response by a self-sustaining team of personnel and equipment, trained and ready to treat patients in-place or aboard ship as judged most appropriate in coordination with local needs.

I have spent over 55 years in aviation and logistics, to include the last dozen years as a partner in a fixed wing air ambulance company that transfers patients between hospitals in the US, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

As a fighter for over 25 years I served combat tours in the F-4 and F-111, and was later fully qualified in the F-15 and F-16. I observed first-hand the destruction that remains in the aftermath of combat.

As an aircraft maintenance officer I was in charge of base level maintenance and supply for 135 F-15s and F-5s plus two helicopters at two neighboring bases and flew with all of them. I learned the myriad complexities of maintaining readiness of people and equipment for rapid response.

Over a 31 year career, the U.S. Air Force selected me for command at squadron, wing, air division and numbered air force levels. As commander of 21st Air Force, flying the C-141, C-5, C-130, KC-10 and KC-135 aircraft I was responsible for over 500 aircraft at 70 locations over the Atlantic half of the globe with aerial support units scattered across the eastern USA, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle-east and Africa. These airports were often closely connected to a sea or river port. I therefore became even more appreciative of how well airborne and waterborne assets resolve the complexities of personnel and logistics support to operations, especially when urgent response is required. The ability to fly or sail independently capable groups of specialized people and equipment over and around impediments multiplies the success of our responses by magnitudes.

It is truly the difference between life and death—on an enormous scale.

The LHA concept provides this capability in a realistic manner whereby multi-national funding and support can keep the unit fully ready by sequenced training with various countries at risk of calamities needing such services, culminating such training with exercises scaled to fit local absorption capabilities and needs. This training process should improve the local capabilities to help themselves immediately, as well as coordinate effectively in applying the LHA capability once it arrives. I strongly support LHA.

Sincerely,

 11/19/2020  
Malcolm B. Armstrong  
Lt General, US Air Force, Retired