

## Marshall Center, Munich Security Conference Meet in Berlin Ahead of the NATO Summit 2018

By **Christine June**

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BERLIN (June 25, 2018) – The [Munich Security Conference](#) and the [George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies' Loisach Group](#) discussed priorities and deliverables ahead of the [NATO Summit 2018](#) during a meeting held June 20 and 21 at the [Robert Bosch Foundation](#) here.

“Our intent is to provide senior leaders with the results of our work to help guide their discussions when they meet in Brussels in July 11 and 12,” said Dr. Jack Clarke, the Marshall Center’s lead professor for the Loisach Group.

### **Enhancing the German and U.S. Partnership**

The Loisach Group is a partnership created by the Marshall Center and the Munich Security Conference in August 2017. Clarke said the group focuses on enhancing the security partnership between the U.S. and Germany while promoting an enduring strategic dialogue between these partners.

“Loisach Group meetings is where we can talk about different opinions in open and frank discussions with a mixture of U.S. and European academic professionals, and civilian and military practitioners in an international atmosphere,” said retired German army Brig. Gen. Johann Berger, Marshall Center’s German deputy director. “We try in friendship, which the United States and Germany has had for more than 70 years, to come to grips with and find out possible results for current security challenges facing this partnership of the transatlantic alliance.”



Ambassador Dr. Hans-Dieter Lucas, permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to NATO, talks about the upcoming NATO Summit 2018 to the participants of the Loisach Group the Representation of the State of Bavaria June 20 here. For more photos, visit the [Marshall Center Photo Gallery](#). (DOD photo by Christine June)

Each February, the Munich Security Conference brings together more than 450 senior decision-makers from around the world to engage in an intensive debate on current and future security challenges. The Marshall Center is a 25-year-old, German-American security partnership that has produced generations of global security professionals schooled in American and German security policies.

### **‘Important Step’**

This meeting was the fourth one for the Loisach Group and the first one held in Berlin. It was a meeting that Dr. Andrew A. Michta, dean of the Marshall Center’s College on International and Security Studies, said was “an important step in deepening American and German strategic dialogue and strengthening Marshall Center’s partnership with the Munich Security Conference.”

The name of the group refers to the Loisach River in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the fact that the water from that river flows into Munich. The first meeting of the Loisach Group was in May last year, and the second meeting was a few months later in December. Both meetings focused on German and U.S. engagement with Russia.

“It’s clear that the Loisach Group through our partnership with the Munich Security Conference is gaining significant amount of recognition,” Clarke said. “People understand that it’s an important forum for us to be able to discuss these issues, and as a result, we are starting to see some very senior officials speak to our audience, who can carry that message forward.”

### **Loisach Group ‘Really Matters’**

Ambassador [Dr. Hans-Dieter Lucas](#), Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany on the NATO Council, gave the members a glimpse of the topics to be discussed during the NATO Summit 2018. These include NATO’s role in the fight against terrorism, strengthening NATO’s Black Sea presence, stepping up efforts against cyberattacks and hybrid threats, and creating a more agile, ready, and deployable NATO.

Lucas said that the Loisach Group is “absolutely important” and “really matters” and that’s why he made the trip to Berlin with just a little over two weeks to go before the NATO Summit.

“These two organizations are working together to make major contributions to the transatlantic dialogue and cooperation in the field of security policy,” he said. “I think in these difficult times we need more than ever these types of dialogue between Germans and Americans.”

### **Policy Ideas to NATO Summit 2018**

A year ago, U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis and German Minister of Defense Ursula von der Leyen visited the Marshall Center for the 70th Anniversary of the foundation of the Marshall Plan. Clarke said that both defense leaders stated the need to establish a strategic dialogue between their countries.

“The Loisach Group is a forum for discussions between senior Germans and Americans on issues of national security that both binds and separates us,” he said. “The group was designed to focus on areas of disagreement between Germany and the U.S. so we can try to find some common ground.”

Clarke said that the members are now compiling the notes taken at the Berlin meeting and even with just two weeks to go before the summit, he said he is confident that officials in the German Ministry of Defense and the U.S. Department of Defense will get these policy ideas in time.

“I read them when I get them,” Lucas said, speaking about the [Loisach Notes](#) produced by group members that he has received from the previous three meetings.