

# GENERAL CHARLES T. ROBERTSON, JR.

## 3 AUGUST 1998 TO 5 NOVEMBER 2001

Two terrorist events framed the tenure of Air Force General Charles T. "Tony" Robertson, Jr.: the simultaneous bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and the deadliest domestic terrorist attacks in US history that occurred on 11 September 2001.

General Robertson led the command during turbulent times. USTRANSCOM participated in several contingency operations, including two deployments of US forces to Southwest Asia in response to Iraq's noncompliance with United Nations directives; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization-led air campaign against Yugoslavia in response to Yugoslav oppression of the ethnic Albanian majority residing in Kosovo; and Operations Noble Eagle (homeland defense) and Enduring Freedom (combat operations against the Taliban regime and al-Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan) following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

USTRANSCOM also recovered the sailors killed and wounded by a terrorist attack on the *USS Cole* in Yemen in 2000 and transported the stricken ship back to the United States for repair. Other significant operations included deploying peacekeepers to Bosnia and Sierra Leone and providing aid to Kosovar refugees in Albania. The command also delivered relief supplies following earthquakes in Turkey, Taiwan, and India, floods in Venezuela, Mozambique, China, and Texas, Hurricane Mitch in Central America, and Hurricane Georges in the Caribbean and the Gulf Coast states of the United States.

Modernization and readiness efforts continued. Eleven of nineteen Large Medium Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ships ordered after the Persian Gulf War to enhance the capability of the surge and prepositioning fleets were delivered from the shipyards. General Robertson exercised the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore program for the first time in five years and ordered dozens of no-notice Ready Reserve Force activations to increase the readiness of that fleet.

The new 60,000-pound Tunner aircraft loader achieved initial operating capability, and delivery of the Halvorsen 25,000-pound loader began. The C-17 continued to roll off the assembly line on schedule, while General Robertson supported modernization of the avionics and the re-engining of the C-5 fleet. He also advocated the acquisition of defensive systems for large aircraft.

Finally, General Robertson oversaw improvements in the timeliness and accuracy of the command's primary in-transit visibility system, the Global Transportation Network.



In September 1999, General Robertson initiated a partnership with the Defense Logistics Agency known as the Strategic Distribution Management Initiative (SDMI) "to re-invent global distribution for our customers" by analyzing and measuring distribution processes, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing changes. General Robertson accurately predicted that "The work that the command did on SDMI in the last year and a half that I was CINC [commander in chief] will serve as the framework for the whole global distribution improvement process to follow."

Looking back over his challenging 39-month tenure, General Robertson assessed that "TRANSCOM and the components don't rest on their laurels. They just keep getting better feeding on their past successes."

