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**\*\*\*PUBLIC STATEMENT\*\*\***

**Statement of Lt. Governor Gray on the Vermont National Guard and the Republic of Austria State Partnership**

**Montpelier, VT** - Today, Lt. Governor Gray released the following statement on the announcement that the Republic of Austria will be partnering with the Vermont National Guard as the newest member of the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program:

"Today, I join the Vermont National Guard in offering a warm welcome to the Republic of Austria as the newest member of the State Partnership Program.

I also offer a hearty congratulations to our Vermont National Guard. This newest partnership will build upon the existing successful partnerships with North Macedonia and Senegal giving our Vermont Guardsmen and women opportunities to work in unique international environments alongside global partners while also showcasing the resources and training available to our partners here in Vermont.

In addition to vital military-to-military engagements in support of security goals, the new partnership with Austria will leverage whole-of-society relationships and capabilities to facilitate broader interagency and corollary engagements spanning military, government, economic and social spheres.

I am excited to see our new partnership with Austria facilitate cooperation across all aspects of international civil-military affairs and encourage people-to-people ties at the state level. And I of course look forward to welcoming our new friends from Austria to Vermont."

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