

In the jigsaw puzzle of initiatives and processes to build the future of the Alliance, Smart Defence emerges as a symbol of rationalisation that sticks to contemporary crisis mind-set. This successful concept is more precisely explained in this edition of The Transformer.

The 2010 Strategic Concept articulates a vision of the Alliance for the next decade. This includes a commitment to ensuring that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to undertake its three essential core tasks: collective defence and deterrence, crisis management, and cooperative security. Article 5 continues to be the cornerstone of the Alliance and it will remain critical that NATO retains the requisite capabilities to deter and defend against any threat to the safety of Allied populations and the security of Allied territory. With the above in mind, a Lisbon package of NATO's most pressing capability needs was also identified in 2010, and Allies committed themselves to seeing them addressed.

Allies have made progress since Lisbon in key long-term capability initiatives, in agreeing a new NATO Command Structure and in streamlining NATO Agencies, all supporting the intent of the

Strategic Concept. However, given the constraints of an increasingly austere economic environment, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen launched the Smart Defence initiative at the 2011 Munich Security Conference. His intent was to identify conceptual and practical measures to help nations more efficiently maintain and develop required capabilities, by working together.

A Reachable Goal

The Smart Defence initiative has generated momentum and encouraged thinking and new ideas across the Alliance that have, in turn, helped to coalesce a capabilities goal: "Capabilities for NATO 2020 and Beyond." While the Strategic Concept focusses on what NATO will do in the next decade, this is an enabling goal to help define what NATO should look like from a capabilities perspective. It also serves to bring together related strands of supporting work. Key to the capabilities goal is its primary means, a Defence Package comprised primarily of Smart

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Defence and the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI). The former element proposes how Allies might implement the goal in terms of efficient multinational capability development and the latter, which was launched by the Secretary General at the 2012 Munich Security Conference, proposes how Allies might continue to effectively use capabilities together in view of a

decreasing operational tempo. Specifically, CFI aims to ensure that the Alliance retains the valuable gains in interoperability achieved in recent operations. To do so, it will focus on three inter-related elements; expanded education and training, increased exercises and better use of technology.

The challenge is to help align nations' priorities with NATO collective priorities.

The capability goal and Defence Package are being developed for the May 2012 Chicago Summit. This will enable Alliance leaders to articulate how NATO will ensure it has what it needs to 2020 and beyond. In addition to Smart Defence and CFI, the vision also incorporates the continued adaptation of Alliance structures and procedures, partnership and industry considerations and, most importantly, sets the scene for enhancing the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) to carry all of these elements into the future.

Sticking to Allied Nations' Priorities

Smart Defence is first about cooperation between nations bilaterally and multilaterally. By coming together, nations can achieve significant economies of scale, avoid costs and gain capabilities they could not afford alone. Cooperation can encompass the many layers of capability delivery. It can include research and development, production, maintenance, logistic support, training, weapon stockpiling, and even multinational forces.

Smart Defence is also about focusing on priorities. Effective and valuable cooperation is focussed cooperation – so prioritisation is really an enabler of cooperation. The challenge is to help align nations' priorities with NATO collective priorities. Finally, Smart Defence is about specialisation. It touches on the issue of sovereignty, but due to budget cuts, some Allies are

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cutting capabilities. We need specialisation by design whereby nations coordinate any cuts with other Allies, so that we ensure we have a balanced set of capabilities across the Alliance. Specialisation could be described as an attempt for nations or groups to build specific strengths in capability sets. The combination of these capability sets enables NATO to achieve its essential core tasks. A number of practical implementation measures are being pursued to achieve the capability goal. For Smart Defence, these measures are largely focused on the development of capabilities:

A New Capabilities Mind-set

On one hand, through an initial package of agreed multinational projects grouped according to the critical capability shortfalls that they address, these new capabilities provide benefits such as economies of scale, improved operational efficiencies and enhanced interoperability. Additionally, there are proposals being considered by NATO committees that could be moved forward in the near future. The intent is to agree at Chicago to implement the first ones and incorporate them as appropriate into the NDPP, while continuing to develop the others.

On the other hand, NATO has been working on many of its most important and complex priorities in a cooperative manner for some time. These focus areas are consistent with and support meeting the Capabilities for NATO 2020 and Beyond goals. Other areas including those identified in recent operations, like Air-to-Air refuelling, a critical enabler to operations, are being pursued through European Union efforts to bolster European requirements. This work will clearly benefit both the EU and NATO. The ideas and principles associated with Smart Defence and cooperation underpin and support these key longer-term focal projects.

There is a clear requirement to integrate the different capability initiatives into a coherent package containing pragmatic, achievable, and tangible initiatives in line with ongoing capability development efforts in the NDPP. The "NATO: Towards 2020 and Beyond" is the basis for a positive long-term vision for capability development that is backed by action. Allies' strong support at Chicago represents a starting point for a new capabilities mind-set.

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