Strategic Military Partners Conference 2015
TO WARSAW AND BEYOND: PARTNERSHIP—A CRITICAL ENabler IN A WORLD OF CHANGE
Tbilisi, Georgia | 8-10 June 2015

READ AHEAD | QUESTIONS

STRUCTURE
This read-ahead is provided to promote discussion. It consists of three sections:
- Questions that are related to each discussion area
- Executive Summary
- Annex, which highlights the most important points in each discussion area

OVERVIEW
This year’s Strategic Military Partners Conference (SMPC) focusses on five themes that are shaping cooperation between allies and partners: Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII), Education Training Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE), Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB), and Defence Innovation. The overall theme of SMPC 2015 is “To Warsaw and Beyond: Partnership— a Critical Enabler in a World of Change”.

INTRODUCTION
The character of NATO’s partnership community is defined by its diversity and reach. It spans, throughout the international community, and covers the spectrum of NATO’s operations.
- Is NATO’s partnership network optimised to tackle mutual security challenges today and tomorrow? If not, then how can we maximise the value of partnership for both allies and partners?
- What types of partnerships are most important in a complex era?
- How can partners help NATO to offset perceived vulnerabilities in the Alliance’s defence posture and situational awareness?
- What else can ACT and partners do to support the development and innovation of partnership relationships for NATO?
- What does a best-case relationship look like between NATO and the European Union?

STRATEGIC CONTEXT
NATO’s strategic context includes volatility along NATO’s flanks; crisis driven by Russian aggression in Ukraine; increased military activity in the Nordic, Baltic, and circumpolar regions; and, barbarism at the hands of Daesh in Syria and Iraq.

- Are NATO and partners witnessing the globalisation of regional security challenges? If so, then what are the implications for strategies, force postures, and allocation of resources?
- What are the military implications of the recent changes in international security, particularly with regard to those along Europe’s borders?
- How can allies and partners provide relevant military interoperable capabilities to defend shared principles and values against mutual threats?
- Recognizing the shifting points of stress in the current security setting, and addressing the strategic challenges and opportunities facing us, what should the role of partnership be, both now and in the future?
- What role, if any, should ACT play above and beyond its current efforts to bolster training, education, and exercise participation that enables partner involvement in Smart Defence efforts to promote interoperability within the Alliance?

A COMPLEX WORLD
These regional concerns help to understand the spread of NATO’s partnership community over the past two decades and why both Strategic Commands are investing in the military support and transformation of partnerships over the long term.

- How can NATO and the European Union optimise military cooperation to safeguard allies and partners from Russian provocation?
- What are the military implications of a hybrid security environment in along Europe’s borders?
- What are the military implications for NATO and partners vis-à-vis increased activity in the North?
- What does military partnership look like in the North?
- How can ACT support ACO to maximise the value of partnerships for allies and partners alike over the long term—and vice versa?
- Should ACT focus on military partnerships over the long term? If so, then in what areas beyond current activities should it direct efforts?
- What types of military forces need to be developed to counter the security challenges of a complex world? What types of partnerships should support these forces?

CONNECTED FORCES INITIATIVE (CFI)
CFI, along with the Smart Defence projects, helps NATO to focus on military efforts that bolster interoperability amongst allies in order to support the goal of ‘NATO Forces 2020’.

- What does ‘interoperability’ mean for partners?
- Are NATO/ACT’s efforts to promote interoperability between allies partners achieving results?
- Are allied priorities for CFI the same as those for partners?
• Do you agree on the ideas mentioned in Annex where NATO and partners can optimise efforts.

PARTNERSHIP INTEROPERABILITY INITIATIVE (PII)
At Wales, Allied Heads of State and Government adopted the PII to enhance NATO’s ability to tackle security challenges together with its partners.
• One year after its introduction, how is PII viewed by allies and partners?
• Where are the roadblocks to success?
• To find synergies and maximize the use of resources; do you support the idea that the Alliance needs a multilateral overview and build a kind of ‘Recognised Partner Picture.’
• Could a comprehensive campaign plan based on partners interoperability goals and objectives streamline efforts.
• Would Partners potential individual roadmaps help to generate and prioritise these common lines of efforts between Nations and NATO to reach the interoperability goals;
• Does NATO need a PII-like framework for international organisations and non-governmental organisations?

DEFENCE AND RELATED SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING (DCB)
At the Wales Summit, allies agreed to conduct DCB efforts in selected nations with the core aim of bolstering security in regions in need of NATO’s expertise.
• How do partners view DCB efforts taking place in Jordan, Georgia, and Iraq?
• What specific needs are required to improve DCB militarily in order to achieve maximum potential?
• How can NATO/ACT optimise its support for DCB efforts?

EDUCATION TRAINING EXERCISE AND EVALUATION (ETEE)
NATO plans and conducts education and collective training, exercises and evaluation at the strategic, operational and tactical level.
• How can NATO/ACT institutionalise relevant training amongst allies and partners to meet the challenges of the future, e.g., urban operations in a contested environment?
• Should ETEE efforts focus on realistic scenarios for partners to prepare forces for inclusion in the NATO Response Force? If so, then how?
• How can ACT leverage best practices resident within allied and partner states to build and develop expertise in key military capacities, e.g., information, operations and civil affairs, intelligence, reconnaissance, military police, and explosive ordnance disposal?
• Are the training programs in ACT sufficient for partners? Do partners have the right access to NATO’s ETEE programs?
• New NATO ETEE policy is in effect since 2014. Are there any blind spots in NATO’s new ETEE efforts that ACT should address?
DEFENCE INNOVATION
Partners and allies alike are working to innovate and adapt to rapid changes in the security domain.

- How can allies and partners bolster innovation efforts by working together?
- What are some areas where cooperation can be improved? How can European allies and partners work with North American allies, particularly with regard to the United States’ Third Offset Strategy?
- What strategies should be employed for allies and partners to innovate together in the military domain?
- What are the priority areas for innovation?
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year’s Strategic Military Partners Conference (SMPC) focuses on five themes that are shaping cooperation between allies and partners: Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII), Education Training Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE), Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB), and Defence Innovation.

The overall theme of SMPC 2015 is “To Warsaw and Beyond: Partnership—a Critical Enabler in a World of Change”. It reflects the shifts in NATO’s strategic context on the road to the Warsaw Summit, as well as the character of NATO’s partnership community. Besides the NATO Command Structure and the NATO Force Structure, Partnership has become the third pillar of NATO. It is defined by its diversity and reach. It spans a range of efforts that extend beyond the military domain, throughout the international community and covers the broad spectrum of NATO’s activities throughout the global community.

NATO’s strategic context includes volatility along NATO’s southern flank; crisis driven by Russian aggression in Ukraine; increased military activity in the North; and barbarism at the hands of Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Along NATO’s southern flank, continued instability has unleashed security challenges that span from Afghanistan to the west coast of Africa. While the Alliance looks forward to an era of more fruitful relations with Moscow, Russia’s hybrid actions in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region exploit vulnerabilities, undermine the democratic rule of law, and attempt to sow seeds of doubt and insecurity to challenge the cohesion of the alliance.

A shared necessity to counter the instability created by these regional concerns helps to explain the spread of NATO’s partnership community over the past two decades—and describes a clear argument for ACT’s continued investment in the transformation of military partnerships over the long term.

CFI—with support of the Partnership Interoperability Advocacy Group (PIAG)—NATO engages with partners to determine new ways of cooperating built upon partner and allies needs across a range of activities so that allies and partners can focus on interoperability from “Day One.”¹

PII enhances NATO’s ability to tackle security challenges together with its partners through cooperation across five areas: 1) Enhanced Opportunities Partners; 2) the Interoperability Platform; 3) incentives for partners to do more; 4) increasing cooperation with International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations; and 5) improvement of existing interoperability tools.

¹ The CFI Advisory Task Force Working Group has been renamed the Partner Interoperability Advocacy Group to broaden its scope on all aspects of interoperability related to NATO-Partnership efforts.
ACT, alongside Allied Command Operations (ACO), plays a significant coordinating role in the execution of Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) activities. In its role as the DCB Military Hub, the Bi-Strategic Command Military Partnerships Directorate (MPD) supports DCB efforts by: helping to coordinate assessments, building network support, supporting individual training and education, conducting Mobile Training Team visits for in-country training, and coordinating partner participation in DCB related activities, like Counter Improvised Explosive Device (CIED) training.

Exercises provide a major catalyst for NATO’s interoperability, connectivity and engagement with partners. While there has been significant progress made towards increasing the participation of partners in NATO’s exercises, there are still areas for improvement. Today, all partners now have a 3-year view of the Military Training and education Programme (MTEP) in which to prepare and, with NAC approval can take part in or observe NRF-related exercises. ACT, together with ACO, the International staff and the International Military Staff want to work with partners and use this expanding horizon to make sure that interoperability activities across the spectrum of our engagements including, Education and Individual Training (E&IT); MTEP, and, the Electronic Military Training and Exercise Program (eMTEP), are more focused, more coordinated and better exploit the synergies with other actors and organisations.

ACT is committed to fostering a constructive dialogue among allies and partners, and providing NATO’s leadership with the best advice for enabling innovation throughout the Alliance. In order for innovation to be successful amongst allies and partners, ACT has continued to promote changes in mindset that foster the introduction of new ideas through concept development; training and education; and capability development; and generates ideas through strategic events, lessons learned, foresight analysis, and policy formulation.
ANNEX

BACKGROUND
The purpose of this read ahead is to provide a baseline of information for participants in this year’s Strategic Military Partners Conference (SMPC) in Tbilisi, Georgia. SMPC is an annual Chief of Defence-level event that encourages focussed discussion on some of the most important themes that shape cooperation between the Alliance and its partners, and to elicit from the CHODs knowledge and expertise on matters pertaining to the transformation of military partnerships. This year’s theme, *To Warsaw and Beyond: Partnership—A Critical Enabler in a World of Change*, takes stock of a series of shifts that compel the Alliance and its partners to re-assess some core assumptions about security in the Euro-Atlantic area, namely that Europe is whole, free, and at peace.

Building on the outcomes of recent ACT-led events—NATO Transformation Seminar and the Transatlantic Forum and the considerable work in the International Staff and International Military Staff, five thematic areas appear to be shaping cooperation amongst allies and partners. First, the CFI helps allies and partners to be interoperable in new areas. Second, the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII) incentivises partnerships with NATO and, in the process, changes the character of partnership from being focussed on geography to a more functional orientation. Third, DCB enables the Alliance to engage partners that require intensified cooperation to bolster defence and security capacities. Fourth, ETEE provides partners with a wider range of opportunities to train alongside the forces of the Alliance. Fifth, defence innovation taking place in Europe and North America has the potential to re-shape military forces and partnerships over the coming decades.

When viewed together, these five thematic areas re-affirm NATO’s approach towards increased interoperability, incentivised partnerships, greater training and education opportunities, and long-term innovation. The above outlined topics will be discussed on Day One and explored in greater detail during the Syndicate Sessions on Day Two.

INTRODUCTION
The character of NATO’s partnership community is defined by its diversity and reach. It spans, throughout the international community and covers the spectrum of NATO’s operations. Partnerships reflect the trend of rapid advances in almost every aspect of human civilisation that have enabled the globalisation of regional security. What happens in one part of the world can and will affect others with relative ease and speed. This trend is expected to continue and intensify in the coming decades.

Therefore, partnership in the Alliance, especially with NATO’s Strategic Partner the EU, is strong and evolving to the needs as set by the strategic context. NATO remains committed to Afghanistan through the Resolute Support Mission. It is conducting Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) initiatives in Jordan, Georgia, and, when NAC approved, Iraq. Moreover, in response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict,
NATO has reinforced its support for capability development and capacity building in Ukraine, particularly regarding hybrid threats.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT
NATO’s strategic context includes volatility along NATO’s flanks; crisis driven by Russian aggression in Ukraine; increased military activity in the Nordic, Baltic, and circumpolar regions; and, barbarism at the hands of Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Security challenges along NATO’s periphery are varied and numerous.

SOUTHERN DIRECTION
Along NATO’s southern flank, continued instability has unleashed security challenges that span from Afghanistan to the west coast of Africa. Mass migration is at levels not seen since 1945. The rise of Daesh and affiliates throughout the Greater Middle East and North Africa (GMEMENA) is fuelled by its control of natural resources, speed of operations, and recruitment of foreign fighters and “child brides” from multiple countries. Through Daesh, state boundaries are less meaningful and national identities are fading along sectarian lines. This shift from national identities has the potential to push the region to the brink of chaos. Turkey alone contends with the largest influx of refugees since its founding—an influx caused by the instability that Daesh has created throughout the GMENA region.²

Africa is beset by a persistent mix of tribal, religious, and economic divides that enable Daesh and its affiliates, like Boko Haram, to cause widespread damage across the continent. Terrorism is a regional issue in Africa that extends beyond state borders. This leads to a tendency for states to use the threat of terrorism to gain security support from abroad without addressing the causes of instability domesticaly, which often includes tribal and ethnic elements.

EASTERN DIRECTION
Mindful that NATO and its Strategic Partner the EU work together to bolster security in the region, there is a clear need to reassure allies and engage partners that are increasing civil-military capacity in Eastern and South-eastern Europe. Using the Hybrid Warfare model to advance its goals, Russia is causing instability throughout the region. This instability in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region is built around the exploitation of vulnerabilities in nations that undermine the democratic rule of law and sow seeds of doubt and insecurity to challenge the cohesion of the Alliance. To counter these complex hybrid challenges, allies and partners alike are determining how best to promote democracy, human rights, and rule of law; emphasise transparency and due

² This group is 18-54 years old and consists mostly of women and children without any income. Despite historical affinity for Syrians, the demand placed along Turkey’s southern periphery is staggering: 1.7 million refugees have fled into Turkey in the past two years, 35,000 children have been born in the 25 established camps, and Ankara is spending USD $5 billion per year, which is equivalent to the budgets of eight federal ministries in Turkey combined.
process across all elements of society; and strengthen cooperative regional approaches that build support for like-minded partners.

For some states of the Black Sea region, NATO membership remains a goal; others seek partnership with the Alliance to modernise military forces, or still see partnership with NATO as part of a broader effort to build a functional state. Some states in the region are balancing ties with NATO and Russia. Over the course of a last decade, relations with Russia transformed and current dialogue, cooperation and trust is at a minimal level. As a result the concept of “Europe whole, free and at peace” is not in close range.

THE NORTH
The North is an area of strategic importance to NATO and Russia. Strategic deterrent forces and associated infrastructure play a dominant role in the Alliance’s strategies to bolster deterrence and defence. Russia is investing in new bases and materiel, boosting its military capabilities, and operating training and test areas across the region.  

A COMPLEX WORLD
These regional concerns help to understand the spread of NATO’s partnership community over the past two decades and why both NATO Strategic Commands are investing in the military support and transformation of partnerships over the long term. The complexity of the challenges across these diverse regions compels NATO to engage with partners that span a range of activities throughout the International Community, and cover the spectrum of NATO’s operations. Partnership is in part NATO’s response to the globalisation of regional security. From ongoing tensions beyond the Euro-Atlantic region akin to those in the South China Sea, to large-scale humanitarian disasters as seen in Nepal, external events have the potential to affect the safety and security of allied nations to an unprecedented degree. As seen in the work of ACT’s Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA) and Framework for Future Alliance Operations (FFAO) efforts, these trends are expected to continue and intensify in the coming decades.

CONNECTED FORCES INITIATIVE (CFI)
CFI, along with the Smart Defence projects, helps NATO to focus on military efforts that bolster interoperability amongst allies in order to support the goal of ‘NATO Forces 2020’.  

3 For the forces of the Alliance, increased commercial activity in the region may add Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Search and Rescue (SAR) capability requirements to NATO, allied, and partner strategic calculus. Icebreakers are required for year-round presence in the Arctic. UAV and manned aircraft require bases in the North, which require long supply chains. Moreover, ground forces are limited by the vastness of territory of patrol, as well as limiting factors associated with cold weather operations.

4 CFI serves as the basis for a coherent set of deployable, interoperable and sustainable forces equipped, trained, exercised and commanded so as to be able to meet NATO’s level of ambition. It ensures that
interoperability. The aim and goal is to sustain, develop, diversify, and enlarge the pool of partner forces and capabilities that are certified and ready to contribute to future NATO and NATO-led operations and, where applicable, the NATO Response Force (NRF).

CFI has interoperability at its core. In order to achieve interoperability between partners and allies, CFI supports Education, Training, Exercises, and Evaluation (ETEE) efforts, high-level engagement in the “+IP” format at the political level, especially in the Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) and Military Committee Cooperation Working Group (MC COOP). CFI—with support of the Partnership Interoperability Advocacy Group (PIAG)\(^5\), can use experiences from clustered partners, notably the Enhanced Opportunities Partners (EOP) cohort and the seven Non-NATO Nations to help maximise the value of partnership for allies and partners alike.

There are several areas in CFI where NATO and partners can optimise efforts.

First, partners and allies can improve cooperation by sustaining focus on ETEE policy and help linking it with PII, national training schedules, and work taking place in other areas of NATO and partner states. In doing this, PIAG can help to improve the user experience for partners participating in ETEE efforts.

Second, gap analyses can help to identify partner requirements by: examining the requirements set by partners through keystone partnership and cooperation documents, comparing this with the individual ETEE activities available in the Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM), and analysing the exercise programme in the Military Education and Training Plan (MTEP) open to partners. Another tool under consideration could be an assessment of the degree to which partners have met or can meet NATO interoperability requirements.

Third, CFI can help partners increase access and predictability to ETEE efforts. One key question remains: Can the increased predictability now available in the MTEP, with an approval horizon of three years, be replicated for individual education and training offers? Possible approaches might include: longer PCM approval windows and linking certain PCM event series to specific partnership interoperability activities, e.g., Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process (PARP), Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC), and exercises. These could include events linked to a specific political guidance, and/or connected to an exercise or containing valuable training opportunities that are relevant to the exercise.

\(^5\) The new title of the former CFI TF is now the Partner Interoperability Advocacy Group or PIAG.
Fourth, CFI can help to align national and NATO ETEE efforts. Possible proposals include: linkage of national exercises through the MTEP and a more targeted contribution to exercises by Allies and partners for linkage in MTEP.

**PARTNERSHIP INTEROPERABILITY INITIATIVE (PII)**

At Wales, Allied Heads of State and Government adopted the PII to enhance NATO’s ability to tackle security challenges together with its partners. PII consists of five areas:

1. Enhanced Opportunities Partners (EOP) (five such partners have been recognised);
2. the Interoperability Platform (IP) (24 partners were recognised as members);
3. incentives for partners to do more;
4. increasing cooperation with International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations, notably the EU;
5. improvements, where necessary, to interoperability instruments.

To fulfil its mandate, PII draws upon existing initiatives including Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC); NATO Response Force (NRF); Education, Training, Exercises, and Evaluation (ETEE); Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Lessons Learned (LL). The strategic intent is to optimise the complementary nature of these tools in a way that prioritises resources to fulfil a mandate for increasing interoperability between allies and partners.

PII is designed to preserve the connections forged during the ISAF mission and builds on the political decisions taken at the last three NATO Summits. It supports the ambition of the Berlin Partnership Policy of 2011 that attempts to operationalise partnerships through, inter alia, the Partnership Cooperation Menu and Flexible Formats.

To reach the ambition set at Wales to foster our common interoperability, partnership tools need to coherently address and aggregate all the features of interoperability: doctrine, standards, capabilities, lessons learned, as well as education and individual training. NATO should be able to respond to each Partner’s different expectations. To be able to do that the Alliance needs a multilateral overview of all the requests, requirements, gaps and surpluses provided by various Partnership tools, a kind of ‘Recognised Partner Picture.’ Such a Recognised Partner Picture could help NATO and

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6 The Interoperability Platform (IP) consists of 24 partners that seek closer cooperation with the Alliance. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) selects IP states based on clear criteria of commitment to operations, NRF, or interoperability programmes such as PARP and OCC. The IP is intended to replicate the standing engagement with operational partners witnessed during ISAF and KFOR, and serves as a format in which Allies and partners can jointly discuss and shape policy on a range of interoperability-related issues. The benefits of IP status may extend beyond regular politico-military consultation to include measures in support of likely commitment to future NATO operations. NATO may grant greater access to OCC evaluations and NRF certifications for IP states, as well as provide opportunities for participation in exercises open to partners. By extension, IP states could be included during earlier stages of NRF planning efforts, and corresponding exercises and operations. The initiative recognises the potential benefits of deeper cooperation with IP partners in other areas which could include tailored access to Lessons Learned and intelligence sharing systems.
partners to find additional synergies between the different stakeholders and maximize the use of resources dedicated to partnership efforts NATO-wide.

Therefore, the Interoperability Platform should include a comprehensive campaign plan that includes interoperability goals for our Partners. These interoperability goals could be divided in three main categories to offer to Partners. The first should be focused at enhancement of the defence capacity of partners to meet their regional security requirements, leveraging current efforts of the Defence Capacity Building initiative. Second, these efforts should be focused at enhancement of forces’ interoperability to support partners to take part in coalitions with some NATO countries as the one against ISIL. A third goal would be participation in Alliance operations, with some partners willing to contribute to the NRF through the Operational Capability Concept tool and the TRIDENT strategic exercises.

These goals should then be analysed against current partner activity and prioritised requirements could be then set for partner Nations. The result would provide clarity through potential individual roadmaps that would complement, coordinate if not replace the numerous documents and processes already published. It would help to generate and prioritise common lines of efforts between Nations and NATO to reach the interoperability goals; these roadmaps could support better long-term planning. Focusing only on the exercise and training portion of interoperability, they should cover a three-year basis, aligning today’s yearly planning cycle for education (PCM) to the 3 to 5 years for exercises. Roadmaps support delineation between Nations’ and NATO responsibilities in terms of interoperability.

First, ACT with support of PIAG will help improve the connection between partners and allies by helping link CFI and ETEE efforts with PII and work taking place in other NATO entities, notably in the NATO C&I Agency. Doing so can improve the user experience and understanding of the breadth of existing initiatives across the Alliance open for partners participating in ETEE efforts. On the technical side, the NCI Agency and other NATO-related bodies can foster interoperability through the introduction of communication and information partnerships platforms that enable joint and multinational use.

Second, allies and partners need to continue to meet and engage with one another on a regular basis at various levels, including the ministerial level, to preserve the trust and shared awareness built during operations. Sustaining such a high level of partnership without the forcing function that a large military operation provides is difficult. ACT is working with partners, most notably in the area of training and exercises, to improve access and dialogue whenever and wherever appropriate.

Third, ACT supports NATO HQ to make the IP work for partners as well as Allies. Enhanced political and operational level dialogue improves perception and understanding of a regional security environment and enables a collective vision that promotes both bottom-up and top-down initiatives.
In addition to the IP, NATO recognised five partners that continue to make, particularly significant contributions to NATO operations. Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan, and Sweden form the initial Enhanced Opportunities Partners (EOP) states.

EOPs are considered more likely to become operational partners in future operations. As such EOPs are offered specific opportunities to help better plan and develop their contributions. These may include access to pre-crisis consultations and operational planning, updates and assessments. There is a clear need to better understand the gaps that partners may have in their interoperability with NATO. In determining these and helping where necessary to fill them, priority access to OCC evaluations and NRF certifications, assured participation in exercises open to partners and, as appropriate, NRF exercises including early stage planning can be considered. Extra efforts should be made to support EOP’s access to lessons learned as well as relevant intelligence sharing as part of an enhanced intelligence dialogue (in accordance with agreed procedures).

ACT is helping to enhance the participation of partners in concept development and experimentation; how to bring the EOP closer to the lessons learned process and the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre; and, how it can offer enhanced education and training. Moreover, ACT is working with EOP nations on how best to connect with Centres of Excellence (CoE) and partner training and education centres. Opening access to transformational lines of work, including development of strategic issues, futures work, and academic outreach are methods which ACT could use to deepen cooperation with partners.

DEFENCE AND RELATED SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING (DCB)
At the Wales Summit, allies agreed to conduct DCB efforts in selected nations with the core aim of bolstering security in regions in need of NATO’s expertise. These nations are Georgia, Moldova, and Jordan. The Wales Summit declaration also confirmed DCB support to Iraq subject to an official request by the Iraqi government and to Libya when security conditions permit. In December 2014, NATO added Iraq to the list of DCB recipients. DCB will remain a priority for the Alliance, especially as the Southern and Eastern Directions of the Alliance present challenges, threats and opportunities that can be addressed in part through DCB efforts.

ACT, alongside Allied Command Operations (ACO), plays a significant role in the execution of DCB activities. The Bi-Strategic Command Military Partnerships Directorate (MPD) as prime custodian for NATO’s military partnerships supports DCB efforts. With its new structural element the DCB Military Hub, MPD is helping to coordinate assessments, building network support and individual training and education, conducting Mobile Training Team visits for in-country training, and coordinating Partner participation. At present, the Military Hub is at Initial Operational Capability (IOC) and is expected to achieve Full Operational Capability (FOC) in December 2015.
Since the Wales Summit, NATO has developed three active and one potential lines of DCB effort.

First, NATO delivered the “Substantial NATO-GEO Package (SNGP)” that includes a NATO core team that will be staffed by summer 2015, a strategic advisory team and eight DCB project teams. Georgia’s Substantial Package includes the establishment of a Joint Evaluation Training Centre (JTEC), Logistic Facility and a Defence Institution Building School; developing intelligence sharing, securing information and periodic NATO exercise. Supporting the air defence project has prompted MPD to identify potential air defence experts in NATO command structure. The Core Team and Strategic Advisors are expected to be established in the Georgian Ministry of Defence by summer 2015. Georgia has been invited to participate in the US/NATO Exercise AGILE SPIRIT 15. Other military cooperation activities and events continue between NATO and Georgia through existing NATO partnership programs.

Second, NATO approved a DCB package for Jordan and subsequent guidance that includes provisions to request common funding for execution phases of exercises Tridents Juncture and Joust 2015. ACT leads the efforts to implement DCB-related tasks within the following areas: Military aspects of cyber defence; military exercises; counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED), communication, command, and control; military aspects of harbour protection; and defence-related border security. Jordanian authorities are encouraged to use existing partnership tools and activities within the Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM) to the maximum extent possible including programs in NATO education and training centres.

Third, NATO drafted a DCB package for Iraq and is working with Iraqi authorities to refine the package and identify the status of Iraqi capabilities. The aim is to have the package approved by the North Atlantic Council not later than July 2015. ACT and ACO are implementing tasks within the following areas: military training, enhancement of intelligence capabilities, military medicine and medical assistance as well as border security. NATO will ensure the complementarities of effort with partners including the EU—which is conducting police training—and the United Nations. NATO is engaged with the United States Central Command (US CENTCOM) regarding the Coalition Campaign Plan to Defeat Daesh. US CENTCOM identifies DCB support to Iraq as a long term effort that depends on the security conditions in-country and urges NATO and the International Coalition to de-conflict its efforts with current bilateral/international DCB activities.

Fourth, NATO has a potential DCB package for Moldova under development, which is a response to Chisinau’s request for assistance to NATO in March 2015. Negotiations are ongoing and will proceed when and where conditions permit.

DCB will remain a priority for the Alliance and could be extended to other partners. Along these lines, NATO is developing DCB Trust Funds for recipient countries. The Readiness Action Plan and the recent Secretary General food for thought paper propose enhancing DCB support to countries on NATO’s Southern and Eastern flanks.
EDUCATION TRAINING EXERCISE AND EVALUATION (ETEE)
NATO plans and conducts education and collective training, exercises and evaluation at the strategic, operational and tactical level. Policy documents exist to provide a guideline to all ETEE related activities. NATO’s new ETEE policy (MC 458-3) makes it easier for partner participation in such activities. Nevertheless, ACT is working to find ways for partners to be more proactive and plan further ahead, as well as use training for identified interoperability shortfalls. Planning timeframes, approval processes, and resources are presenting challenges to NATO as partner participation in exercise execution currently is not eligible for NATO common funding.

The main path for Partners seeking interoperability with NATO should be via participation in the NATO Response Force. This might be achieved best through the Operational Capability Concept (OCC) and subsequent participation in the TRIDENT exercise series.

NATO’s training establishment is based on the principle of “over and above”, meaning that individual training and unit training are national responsibilities. It is based on SACEUR’s requirements and directions from allies. Partners’ ambitions for ETEE support are to be evaluated in this context. Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE (TRJE) 18, for example, is an area of specific interest for partners. ACT staff will begin the planning phase upon conclusion of TRJE 15. The planning phase will include lessons identified from TRJE 15 and other relevant activities. In November 2014 and April 2015, the North Atlantic Council approved TRJE 2018’s Initial and Enhanced Design Aspects, respectively. As part of the design aspects, partners have been part of the planning and execution phases. TRJE 18 will be an Art 5 exercise and consist of two parts: either a Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX) or a Command Post Exercise (CPX) and a Live Exercise (LIVEX).

ACT works with partners to bolster interoperability through a series of activities.

First, Education and Individual Training (E&IT) focuses on the instruction of personnel to enhance their capacities to perform specific functions and tasks. Commanders, staffs and augmentees need information on educational and individual training requirements related to their assigned posts within current and future operations. The E&IT management system Individual Training and Education Programme (ITEP) and its electronic version (e-ITEP) can identify and classify Education and Training Online Catalogue (ETOC) priorities, as well as manage all education and individual training requirements within NATO. E&IT is provided to personnel through Education and Training Facilities (ETFs) and Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL).

Second, The Military Training and Exercise Programme (MTEP) is a five-year collective training and exercise programme directing NATO’s military commands to conduct exercises in direct support of SACEUR’s Annual Guidance for Education, Training, Exercises and Evaluations (SAGE). It provides detailed information on collective training
activities, exercises, and related activities scheduled for the next two years, and outlines information for the following three years. The MTEP is critical for preparing NATO to accomplish assigned missions.

Third, the Electronic Military Training and Exercise Program (eMTEP) is a web-based programme designed to assist exercise programmers and planners in the development of NATO Collective Training, operational and strategic level exercises. Planners insert all exercise details including budget information on the eMTEP; therefore it is visible to other planners. This allows concurrent planning.

ETEE is an area of critical importance for promoting interoperability amongst allies and partners. Mindful that partners choose the level of cooperation desired with the Alliance, ACT’s ETEE tools are becoming more flexible and inclusive for partners. Therefore, ETEE activities should be coordinated between NATO and partners as part of a comprehensive road map with all other relevant means to bolster interoperability in the mix, e.g., policy, doctrine, and capability development.

DEFENCE INNOVATION
Partners and allies alike, especially the EU, are working to innovate and adapt to rapid changes in the security domain. The dynamism with which NATO has fulfilled its treaty obligations is in part a by-product of the investments allies have made in technological innovation since its inception. This investment in technological innovation has offset adversarial capability. Yet, while allies and partners have enjoyed this military edge to the present day, there are no guarantees that this edge will be sustained over the long term. If allies and partners want to stay ahead of potential adversaries, working together offers the greatest chance for success.

ACT is at the forefront of innovation for NATO. Its focus on interoperability has enabled allies and partners to cooperate in ways unthinkable over a decade ago. Combined with significant operational experiences that allies and partners have shared, ACT’s tools of training, capability development, and strategic engagement serve as force multipliers for partnerships. ACT is committed to fostering a constructive dialogue among allies and partners, and providing NATO’s leadership with the best military advice for enabling innovation throughout the Alliance.

In order for innovation to be successful amongst allies, the EU, and partners, ACT has continued to promote changes in mindset that foster the introduction of new ideas. NATO and allies might change cultures and business practices to embrace innovation, namely by increasing the tolerance for short-term failure in pursuit of long-term success. ACT is improving how it communicates the elements of innovation and why it matters for allies and partners alike. It underscores the value of partnerships with a diverse and global range of partners that can maximise information exchanges on issues of common interest. Moreover, ACT continues to create spaces for innovation where inventors and industry can partner up with NATO to develop capabilities in multinational frameworks.
Some key areas where allies and partners might work together include: long-term futures, cyber defence, power and energy security, force survivability and mobility, modelling and simulation, and Modular Open Systems Architectures (MOSA). That demonstrates the underlying assumption that technological superiority is dependent on the effectiveness of research and development that span science and technology, component development, early prototyping, full-scale development, and technology insertion into operational capabilities.

ACT is working with allies, EU, and partners to promote interoperable forces that are fit-for-purpose and possess the right mix of flexibility and agility for a complex strategic environment. The Command is taking a longer-term view to ensure that the Alliance can plan today with sufficient foresight to suffer the fewest regrets possible in the future. ACT is promoting linkages across allies and a range of partners, academia and private sector. By promoting a mix of military and industry talents to solve common challenges in allied and partner states, ACT is enabling transformation to succeed at an unprecedented rate.

Innovation is not limited to technology alone. It includes training, policy, and capability development - the essence of ACT’s work. It includes improvements how allies and partners conceptualise ideas, plan, operate, and train together. Through its network of Centres of Excellence and Partner Training and Education Centres, ACT is promoting research development whenever and wherever possible.

CONCLUSION
The shifts in NATO’s strategic context are forcing allies and partners alike to re-assess some longer standing assumptions about European security, notably that the Continent is whole, free, and at peace. On the road to the Warsaw Summit, the time is right to examine ways and means to further build and strengthen NATO partnership cooperation through a comprehensive partnership campaign plan and possibly individual partner roadmaps. The five thematic areas that appear to be shaping cooperation amongst allies and partners: CFI, PII, DCB, ETEE, and defence innovation will help guide the discussions. When viewed together, these areas show a shift in NATO towards increased interoperability, incentivised partnerships, greater training and education opportunities, and long-term innovation.