

INTERVENTION DE SACT au NAC

5 Février 2012

*[Monsieur le Secrétaire Général, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, Mesdames et Messieurs,*

*Alors que l'OTAN prépare activement son prochain sommet, je suis particulièrement heureux de mettre en perspective les travaux d'ACT avec les attentes de cet important rendez-vous. Ce sommet marquera, j'en suis certain, la volonté de l'Alliance de poursuivre sa transformation en s'adaptant au nouvel environnement géostratégique, en préservant sa crédibilité militaire. Celle-ci, plus que jamais, est fondée sur le comblement de capacités déficitaires, sur l'interopérabilité de nos forces et sur leur disponibilité en particulier pour notre NRF]. (In french in the original speech)*

Secretary General, Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While NATO is actively preparing its next summit, I particularly appreciate having the opportunity of putting into perspective the work of ACT with the expectations of this major event. I'm convinced that this Summit will enable the Alliance to express its will to continue its transformation by adapting itself to the new geo-strategic environment, by maintaining its military credibility. The latter is more than ever based on the filling of capability shortfalls, on the interoperability of our forces, and their availability, especially concerning our NRF.

In that perspective, today I wish to touch upon three main topics: the initial findings of Capability Review, Smart defence and CFI development and prospects. In conclusion I will also describe ACT's potential contribution to Resolute Support Mission and more widely to Capacity Building.

Concerning the Capability Review that is still in progress under International Staff leadership, a Bi-Strategic Commanders Suitability Risk Assessment should be delivered by mid-April. At this stage, I will be cautious but still, despite real progress in training, and the prospect of a future Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAVs project announced recently by some European Allies, still major shortfalls for Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) remain. On Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD), as we are approaching the expected Initial Operational Capability, many national contributions have been delayed, increasing the gap with the United States. This is why these two critical capability areas, JISR and BMD, are targeted as capability flagships. While we also anticipate persisting gaps in terms of deployment and sustainability, in deployable Command and Control (C2) and Medical support, we see good news; encouraging improvements in Cyber. A particular area of concern, that will need thorough examination, is the operational readiness of a number of Land Combat Brigades. In addition to this reduction of tactical training capability at brigade level, days at sea and flying hours have been cut to save money. In short, we can see a clear imperative for nations and NATO to continue to invest in both our key capability shortfalls and the activity and training that underpins our interoperability and readiness.

Obviously, these are the main objectives of Smart Defence and CFI.

Smart Defence, we must be clear, is certainly not a magic recipe against enduring investment cuts, but it is a precious tool, a unique tool, in our inventory. During the last MCCS, I provided your Chiefs of Defense with an update on our numerous Smart Defense projects. I stressed that we have learnt from previous experience that multi national cooperation needs a steady and strong will to succeed, but it proved to be worthy, and today I would say indispensable.

While major acquisition programs will produce results only on the long term, we have also a lot of short and mid-term projects that can significantly improve our deployment and sustainability capacity, reduce capability gaps and strengthen interoperability. We propose for instance, to foster complementarity between BMD assets and other conventional air defence units, in the maritime domain for instance, in training them together; we propose to develop a network of national contribution for JISR training; we propose to optimize training, employment and support of existing capabilities such as UAVs and common user groups, or theatre air mobility platforms. Our joint SD team is ready to help promote all the projects and to try to aggregate them under Capability flagships in order to mitigate some of our major capability shortfalls.

We must remind ourselves as well that Smart Defence is also about innovation and finding new solutions to our capability challenges. Cyber Multinational projects are a good example of that. At the end, we need to use all the tools available in our inventory to achieve our aim: the Science and Technology organisation, closer relationship with industry, Centres of Excellence and we must carry on a close coordination with European initiatives like "Pooling and Sharing".

I stated earlier that we have to reinvest in the education and training of our men and women in uniform. This is crucial to maintain the credibility and readiness of our forces, and this will be achieved through the Connected Forces Initiative. Today CFI is on a very good track, thanks to the support and commitment of the nations.

We are actively preparing the 2015 major Crisis management exercise, Trident Juncture 2015 (TRJE15) as a visible manifestation of NATO preparedness, as well as a highly valuable training experience. While the force generation is very promising (more than 22000 soldiers) we still miss critical assets if we want TRJE15 to be the most valuable and visible event that we are looking for. Among those missing assets I would point out artillery, attack helicopters, UAVs, amphibious shipping or from the sea joint operations, capability and force protection units as well as a Special Operation Component Command and a Psy Ops Task Force headquarters.

We are as well promoting a smart approach to collective training and exercises in linking National, Multinational and NATO activities, which present a great potential for optimizing scenario, checking Command and Control interoperability and capitalizing on common lessons learned. On this question of lessons learned, I have tasked JALLC to prepare a report on two decades of operations focussing on military strategic and operational perspectives. It will be presented to NMAs for comments and should be available for our SACT Seminar (7, 8 & 9 April in Paris).

I would like to conclude in stressing that support to operations is a key priority for my command. Therefore, we are working very closely with ACO on the requirements for Resolute Support Mission in the widest scope of

Capacity Building. During the last decade ACT has fully supported the training of ISAF and Afghan Forces. It has as well contributed to new nations' integration in NATO, and built strong partnerships, including with the UN, in particular on Gender, on building integrity, and other strands as well. So, in summary, we stand ready to support the Capacity building initiative.

In term of collaboration, I would stress again that I see a great potential reinforcing NATO / EU efforts as it was established in Chicago and by the last European council as well. As far as transformation is concerned, I consider that we have the opportunity to take the benefit of the interdependency of the two organizations to cooperate for mutual benefit on Smart Defense, but also Capability development, CFI and even on strategic works.

*[Monsieur le Secrétaire Général, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, Mesdames et Messieurs,*

*Vous l'avez compris, j'ai élaboré la feuille de route d'ACT en soutien de sommet de l'OTAN, mais je tiens aussi à réaffirmer que la transformation de l'Alliance s'inscrit dans la durée et dans la continuité. L'entraînement des forces de l'Alliance, le développement de leurs capacités, le maintien d'une politique dynamique avec nos partenaires représentent des efforts de long terme. Mon commandement est déterminé à y contribuer dans une démarche collaborative et constructive. En ce sens, j'attends beaucoup du séminaire que nous organisons à Paris au mois d'avril prochain. Le programme de principe est prêt, en phrase avec les travaux de votre conseil et bien sûr il sera adapté en fonction des orientations de la*

*prochaine réunion des ministres de la défense]* (In french in the original speech).

Secretary General, Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have understood that I developed the ACT roadmap in support of the NATO summit, but I want to reiterate that taking forward the Alliance transformation requires time and consistency. Training of the Alliance forces of, developing their capabilities as well as maintaining a dynamic policy with our partnerships are long-term efforts. My staff is committed to contribute to these strands of work through a collaborative and constructive approach. In this sense, I expect a lot from the “ACT Seminar” which we will be organizing in Paris in April. The broad agenda is set, consistent with the work of the Council and it will obviously be adjusted in accordance with the outcome of the next meeting of the defence ministers.