



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER
TRANSFORMATION**

SACT REMARKS to

SMPC

“Partnership as a new pillar of NATO”

Tbilisi, 09 June 2015

Général d’armée aérienne Paloméros



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Excellences', Admirals, Generals, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, It is a real pleasure and honour to join you all at this annual Strategic Military Partner Conference.

Thank you very much, Minister of Defence Tinatin Khidasheli for your words of welcome. We are very fortunate and grateful to Georgia for its invitation to host this year's conference and I want to express my heartfelt thanks to you and Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze for the very high-level of support you have provided us, which we gratefully appreciate.

I would also like to thank Mr Bill Lahue and his team in the NATO-Georgia Liaison office for all their support with this year's SMPC. The Office is helping NATO-Georgia cooperation achieve new levels of success each day. Bill, thank you for all your support and excellent work

We feel also deeply indebted to your President, Giorgi Margvelashvili for his presence and kind words yesterday in the evening's icebreaker and for the outstanding hospitality and solidarity of the Georgian people.

This solidarity is at the core of your Nation and is engraved in Georgia's motto, *Dzala Ertobashia*, which means "*Strength is in Unity*". I believe it is very inspiring and represents perfectly the purpose of our gathering today, evidence of NATO's success at reaching out to its numerous and diverse Partners, all committed to cooperate together in order to build and maintain security and stability in the world.

ACT is thus particularly honoured by the presence this morning of such a distinguished and large audience, Allies, Partner Nations but also International



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Organizations such as the UN and International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as Brazil as an observer Nation. (Colombia and Saudi Arabia did not register).

At the Wales Summit in September, our Heads of States and Government reaffirmed that Cooperative Security remains a key objective for NATO. Indeed, Cooperative security is crucial to all of us because our security environment is becoming so complex, so violent, and so unpredictable, that it is impossible for a single Nation or Organization to respond alone.

I would go further in saying that Partnerships are no longer an option but a vital requirement as our Nations are interdependent in their access to the global commons, in their economic relationships as well as in the management of many recent crises, from conflicts to flow of refugees.

It was already my conviction last year that Partnerships had become the third pillar of the Alliance, alongside with the NATO Command Structure and the NATO Force Structure. More than ever, I am convinced that this is part of the future of our Alliance.

Partnership is not Membership; but this difference in status acknowledged by all should not refrain us from exploring new ways to push further the boundaries as much as possible, for our mutual benefit, while remaining within the agreed frameworks.

It is thus essential to better take into account your perspectives on these common challenges and your expectations regarding what the Alliance can bring to you.



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1. The threats we are facing today are multi-faceted, complex, diverse and simultaneous. They challenge not only our stability and security, but also the international order, based on the rule of law that we, and the vast majority of nations in the world, want to preserve.

On the Eastern periphery of the Alliance, Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine have fundamentally challenged our vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. Russia has reinvigorated hybrid warfare threats with a mix of a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures employed in a highly integrated design.

The Alliance deliberate approach to addressing hybrid warfare includes enhancing strategic communications, developing and strengthening exercise scenarios to include the hybrid dimension, and reinforcing coordination between NATO, Partners and other organisations.

On its Southern periphery, across the Middle East and the North Africa region, NATO and its Partners in the area are deeply concerned by the growing instability and expanding transnational multi-dimensional threats.

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Daesh, has become a transnational issue that destabilizes the whole region and threatens as well our own nations. The allegiances of some African groups to Daesh are also a source of concern for the entire Sahel Saharan area.



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While Mali has re-established a constitutional order, terrorist acts and the trafficking of arms, drugs, and people across the region are a destabilizing factor for an area which is larger than Europe.

The robust and credible military commitment of Allied Nations and Partners in the Sahel-Saharan region, has contributed to the reaffirmation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the African countries concerned, as well as to the security of the Alliance.

And NATO is prepared to explore, upon request by the countries concerned, where it can contribute to address these challenges, in full coordination with UN, EU, regional organisations' and bilateral efforts.

Globally, terrorism poses a direct threat to the security of the citizens of NATO nations, as well as partner countries, and to international stability and prosperity more broadly. With the increasing movements of foreign fighters, it will remain a major threat for the foreseeable future acknowledging no border, nationality, or religion. This is a daily increasing challenge that the international community must fight and tackle together.

In this dangerous, volatile and unpredictable environment, we have a collective role to play, because we share an essential common interest. Military cooperation with Partners is crucial to help them build the capacity to face such threats, and also, to anticipate the evolution of the security landscape through enhanced information sharing.



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2. To address together these challenges, we can, we must capitalize on the solid ground of our past experiences, in particular common engagements in operations. We need also to capitalize on the partnership tools that we have developed to enhance our political consultations and forces interoperability, two critical prerequisites for any action against common threats.

As far as political dialogue and practical cooperation are concerned, we have built, together with our partners, a broad cooperative security network.

Already twenty one years ago, we created the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Alongside the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, they have forged political ties across Europe, through the Caucasus and into Central Asia.

In Wales, we have also reaffirmed our commitment to the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). It is today a critical place of exchange in a time when the Mediterranean region faces huge security challenges with wide-ranging implications for Euro-Atlantic security.

Therefore, we stand ready to continue working closely with the nations of those two partnerships to take the most of the opportunities offered by their partnership with NATO, including focused individual partnership and cooperation programmes.

It is also interesting to note the renewed willingness of the African Union (AU) to address transnational security threats, as well as the increased opportunities for our partners across the globe to work individually with NATO at the political and practical level.



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And more than ever, we look to further develop relations with relevant regional international organisations, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League, while remaining open to engage with others, including in the context of regional crisis situations.

The other crucial aspect to act together against common threats is the enhancement of the interoperability of our forces, especially in a context of decreasing combat operations.

We have to ensure that the bonds forged between our armed forces when fighting together remain as strong as ever. Therefore we must continue to focus on preparing and training together.

As a key component in delivering NATO Forces 2020, the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI). addresses the full range of missions, including the most demanding, in a combined, joint, and coalition environment with an emphasis on manoeuver, high intensity warfare. It is today more than 282 NATO and Nations exercises which demonstrate thereby the continued cohesion and resolve of the Alliance and its Partners. More than half of NATO exercises are now Open to Partners (55 of 92)

For instance, this year high-visibility exercise Trident Juncture 2015, which will be hosted by Spain, Portugal, and Italy will gather more than 30,000 personnel, including 12 Partner Nations and 2 other Nations as observer.

We are making significant progress to gain greater Partner participation and integration in the exercise program, and, when possible, we try to associate the Partners who request it as early as possible in the exercise planning process. Pending the Council's approval, all Partners may now take an active part in, or observe, the NATO Response Force exercises identified in our



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Education and Training Programme. Many of you have already grasped this opportunity this year, in 2015, since half of NATO's exercises will include the participation of at least one Partner Nation.

Partners involvement into CFI has largely benefited from the very constructive work of CFI Task Force now renamed Partnership Interoperability Advocacy Group.

It has provided NATO with information regarding partners' needs, have assisted partners in understanding the objectives of CFI and function and offered partners' lessons-learned and expertise that might simplify and speed their contribution.

In addition to CFI, NATO acknowledges the need to support Partners' demands in terms of education, training and exercise activities, through the Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM). We have today a real focus of PCM on interoperability, as among its 1260 activities, 90% of them relate to operational cooperation or interoperability improvement. Through the expansion of the Seat Allocation Proces we can even offer the capability to partners to make better use of this wealth of knowledge. Further we need to take advantage and capitalize on the investments of NATO and partners Nations in Center Excellences and Partner Training and education centers. One good example is to inform them on what they need to do in order to get accreditation for existing courses and have them approved in the PCM.

For Partners looking for operational cooperation and a stronger interoperability, the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) remains an essential tool. Through the OCC, we will continue to develop and train partner



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forces that are declared for NATO-led operations and the NRF, in accordance with NATO standards. OCC has an essential role to play in supporting Partners contribution to the enhanced NRF, the centrepiece of our current Readiness Action Plan.

Last, interoperability with Partners also depends on the interoperability of our equipment.

As the cost for developing and procuring capabilities is increasing and might even become prohibitive In the most advanced domains, the Alliance has been advocating and supporting many multinational solutions. And I support and stimulate the involvement of partner nations in these multinational approaches. Smart Defense as well as Multinational projects can help to mitigate risk and better prepare the future. But, the value to be derived from multinational projects is greater than just sharing costs. Such projects offer also great opportunities for investing in doctrine, logistic support and manoeuver, training, and overall readiness. In half of the 30 most promising projects, the so called Tier 1 projects, one or more partners are participating. All Enhanced operational partners are involved at least one of these promising projects. (Georgia in 3)

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3. We need now to ensure that we can take the most benefit from all these tools in pushing forward the new initiatives set at Wales.

Namely Interoperability Platform, EOP and DCB. These initiatives must be seen in the perspective of a global Partnership Strategy comprising three main lines of efforts:



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- First, improve NATO's role as a hub for interoperability in order to better support any type of ad hoc Coalition building in which Allies or Partners could lead or be involved;
- Second to develop defence capacity building packages to strengthen Partner's capabilities;
- Third to promote Innovation and sharing of best practices in order to optimize our current capabilities and develop those needed for the future. This global partnership strategy goes obviously well beyond the next summit in Warsaw but must be considered as a milestone to assess our progress on Wales initiatives. The *Interoperability Platform gathers today 24 partners, it providing a clear evidence of their commitment to reinforce their interoperability with NATO. 5 of them, offering particularly significant contributions to NATO operations were offered enhanced opportunities within the Partnership Interoperability Initiative.*

Through our first discussions within the Interoperability platform, we have confirmed our shared understanding for the need for a global vision, maximizing the use of resources dedicated to Partners, in what we could call "a comprehensive campaign plan".

In this plan, we could agree on shared interoperability goals, define a gap analysis and see where NATO could complement other bilateral initiatives. This work could then be translated into tailored individual partner roadmaps.

These roadmaps would include exercises as key milestones to evaluate interoperability and plan all education and training activities required to reach



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Allied standards. In addition, these exercises could also provide a form of deterrence or solidarity messages in specific regional context.

In this regard, ACT has just been tasked by the 28 Allied CHODs to develop a dedicated exercise programme for Partners.

Furthermore, ACT is an enduring supporter of the early involvement of Partners in NATO exercises. For instance, ACT has supported the request of Sweden and Finland to participate to our article 5 high visibility exercise Trident Juncture 2018. Both Nations will take part in exercise, design, planning and the entire process including key leader training, Crisis Response planning and obviously the execution phase. (yesterday 8 June the NAC also approved participation of Finland and Sweden in ex Noble Jump that focuses on the NRF and VJTF)

Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative aims at reinforcing our commitment to partner nations and to help the Alliance to project stability without deploying large combat forces, as part of the Alliance's overall contribution to international security and stability and conflict prevention.

This Initiative builds upon NATO's extensive expertise in supporting, advising and assisting nations with defence and related security capacity building.

Capitalizing on our close cooperation and following their requests, we have agreed to extend this initiative to Georgia, Jordan, and the Republic of Moldova. These efforts are done in complementarity and close cooperation with other international organisations, in particular the UN, the EU, and the OSCE, as appropriate.



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Some partner nations themselves can bring unique partner insight and contributions to NATO capacity building efforts and Allies are working on a Trust Fund to provide the necessary resources to support such endeavour.

Thanks to these initiative I believe that we will be able to look forward, beyond the next Summit in Warsaw, to ensure our common ability to fight together in the future security environment. Allies and Partners can accordingly foster innovation to maintain their military advantage over their adversaries.

Today, state and non-state opponents are innovating at a high pace, sharing their best practices through communication networks and developing cost-effective ways to overturn the key tenets of our Nations' forces superiority on the battlefield.

There are no more borders to threats or to innovation and we, Allies and Partners have to similarly unleash together the same creativity from our men and women to keep the edge, to keep the initiative on the battlefield and to surprise our opponents.

Innovation has to be part of a long-term strategy for the Alliance which will mitigate potential resources constraints and enable to spend more efficiently the reinvestment in their defence pledged by the Allies at Wales. This strategy will aim to connect all the initiatives, enabling experimentation of new concepts.



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Let me give just one example of how we are working to build interoperability with partners through innovation:

- Command and control aspects are key to responsiveness and adaptation to the changing security environment.
- Therefore, we want to integrate Partners in the design of new capabilities, from the early stages.
- Based on the experience we gathered through the ad-hoc Afghan Mission Network (including many partners), we are now designing the Federated Mission Networking (FMN) architecture, inviting partners to take their place in the federation, to be a full “FMN affiliate”, leading to their participation in all working groups up to the management group level. Five Partners¹ are already initial affiliates, which is very encouraging.

Our model of innovation will also make use of major venues that we organize to experiment and test new concepts and equipment.

- As an example, CWIX (Coalition Warrior Interoperability, eXploration, eXperimentation and eXamination, eXercise) tests and validates the interoperability of C2 communication systems.

NATO and its member nations, but also partners, can pool and share resources to achieve interoperability before deployment and collaborate on future initiatives, including Federated Mission Networking (FMN),

¹ Austria, Australia, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland



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Cyber Defence and Communication and Information Systems (CIS) capability development.

- The 2015 edition started yesterday in Bydgoszcz (Poland) and will include 19 NATO nations, 4 partner nations, Commands and agencies, which are bringing 186 capability configurations to conduct interoperability testing. 6 Further partner Nations and the EU have shown interest and asked to observe this exercise.

Conclusion

In closing, I firmly believe that, as we face together a very volatile world, through the Interoperability Platform and all the different existing partnership programs, with a common will we are able together to enhance our Partnerships for we know this is the only road for successful preparation of our forces to conduct operations side by side and connectivity from day 1.

This should remain our shared goal in building operational, effective, confident partnerships for the future, because you, our partners you are an integral part of NATO's future.

Therefore, I'm really looking forward to getting your insights so that we can continue to better prepare, train and win together.

I hope this conference will offer the candid and frank debates that our partnerships deserve.

Thank you