



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER
TRANSFORMATION**

SACT's REMARKS to

**JFTC
ALL HANDS**

Bydgoszcz, 23rd June 2016

Général d'armée aérienne Denis MERCIER

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION



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Dear Wojcieh,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been 8 months since my last visit and I am delighted to be here once again.

I want to begin by thanking you for your warm welcome and the enduring support you give to the adaptation of our Alliance.

As you know, this need for adaptation, across the political, institutional and military domains, will be a main theme of the next Summit in Warsaw in a couple of days.

At stake in Warsaw is the display of Allied solidarity and unity to preserve the democratic values and freedoms we share on both sides of the Atlantic.

But beyond this demonstration of solidarity, our political and military leaders will have to discuss how the Alliance can maintain a credible and coherent deterrence and defence posture...

...A posture based on the appropriate mix of conventional, missile defence and nuclear forces at the right level of readiness and responsiveness to cope with a rapidly changing and highly complex security environment.

A large part of the coherence and credibility of this mix of forces will depend on the high-quality training and exercises these forces received through the Connected Forces Initiative.

More than ever, the Alliance will rely on you for such qualitative training.



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I would go so far as to say that NATO has little choice when you take account of what you have accomplished over the last 12 years.

You have made real the idea behind the motto: “Transformation Through Training”.

You have prepared soldiers and headquarters for deployment in Afghanistan when the Alliance was mainly focused on expeditionary operations.

Then, over a very short timeframe, you managed the transition from preparing soldiers for a combat mission in Afghanistan to training advisers able to assist the Afghan National Forces, reflecting the Alliance’s shift from crisis management to cooperative security.

And I am not alone, current commanders in Afghanistan were equally complementary during my recent official trip to Kabul.

From this visit, I believe ACT should make the most of opportunities to support their difficult mission, including the following examples:

- [to be inserted after the trip]
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I know that some of these requirements were already part of the initiatives you pushed forward under the dynamic and vigorous leadership of BGEN Grabowski.

I am thinking in particular of a more **tailored** training:

- Training tailored to the requirements of the audiences

You set up very different packages in order to offer a wide range of training opportunities to headquarters.

- training tailored to the requirements of current operations

We need to build and capitalize on the experience gained to support our Afghan Partners as suggested by the Secretary General who has been promoting greater NATO involvement to support all our Partners.

Indeed, when they enhance their defence capabilities, it is the security of the Alliance as a whole which improves.

- You offer also tailored opportunities to conduct experimentations

Over the last three years, the Coalition Warrior Interoperability Exploration, Experimentation, Examination Exercise (CWIX) has grown in size and scope.

I want to thank you for your outstanding support and all you have done to make this event a great success.

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The growing participation of Nations reflects the needs associated with an operational environment which has become more integrated, more networked, more combined and more joint.

In such an environment, the responsiveness of our forces will depend on having the right Command and Control architectures to derive the necessary understanding and make timely decisions.

C2 will be a critical element in the Alliance's quest to maintain its edge.

This will require more experimentations like CWIX and we will have to train our Human Capital for these new C2 architectures. JFTC will definitely have a role to play.

In addition to this idea of tailored activities, I would like to emphasize JFTC's efforts to create a **team** spirit, not only within your Centre but also with many of the stakeholders of the Alliance's Transformation and Nations.

Henry Ford used to say that "*Coming together was a beginning, keeping together was progress and working together was success*".

I believe you have perfectly understood that it is through many interactions, working together with all the stakeholders that we will hopefully build multi-level exercises, representing the comprehensive environment in which our forces evolve.



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I can only encourage you to foster this team spirit as we implement the tasks that will follow the Warsaw Summit in the education, training and exercise domain.

I will conclude by speaking of the importance of all of you within a single unified team. A good team is more than the sum of its parts, but the strength of the team remains its individual members.

Which is why in a few minutes I will congratulate and award two distinguished members of JFTC – LTC Soroko, Dutch Army and LTC Patrick, Canadian Army who bolstered the reputation of the centre with their achievements.

Before I do just that, I would like to thank all those who will leave the JFTC over the summer to assume new responsibilities. You did an outstanding job and I encourage you to be, inside your own Nations, ambassadors of the Alliance and its Transformation.

I will take the opportunity next month of the change of command ceremony to salute all your many achievements and especially you Wojcieh.

But for now, make the most of your well-deserved summer break. I wish you all a safe trip and a wonderful vacation, wherever you go.

I'm looking forward to see all the team together at the end of the summer for another challenging yet captivating year for the Alliance's adaptation.

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Let's now move on to our award ceremony.