

ANNEX A TO  
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**Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA) North Africa and the Sahel Regional Perspectives  
Workshop Report  
2-4 April 2019  
Madrid, Spain**

## 1. Workshop Overview:

- 1.1 NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT) is pleased to report the findings of the Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA) Regional Perspectives Workshop on North Africa and the Sahel held at the Centro Superior de Estudios de la Defensa Nacional in Madrid, Spain, 2-4 April 2019. Building on the discussions at the previous SFA workshops in Cadiz and Budapest, the aim of this workshop was to develop an understanding of the trends, issues, and implications both within and emanating from North Africa and the Sahel regions. The workshop examined three key overarching themes: the future of migration from and within North Africa and the Sahel, the future of governance, and power competition in the region.
- 1.2 The workshop opened with welcoming remarks by Spanish Joint Staff Chief, Admiral Javier Gonzalez-Huix and ACT ACOS SPP, Brigadier General Jan Blacquiere. The opening remarks were followed by a presentation of Spanish Defense Policy in North Africa and the Sahel by Spain's Office of the Secretary General for Defence Policy, Brigadier General Alfonso García-Vaquero Pradal.
- 1.3 Over the course of the workshop, each major theme was divided into two topics that were discussed during individual sessions. Each topic was explored through use of a plenary session, with a moderator and presentations by a panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The plenary session then transitioned to a question and answer session that allowed workshop participants to directly interact with the panellists. Each plenary session was followed by syndicate level breakouts for more focused discussions to explore and capture the views and ideas of the workshop participants.
- 1.4 At the beginning of the second day of the workshop, Colonel José Luis Pontijas Calderon (ESP Army) provided a presentation on North Africa entitled "Panorama of Geopolitical Tendencies: Horizon 2040." At the end of day three, the Strategic Foresight team provided a brief summary of the workshop findings and conducted a survey to gather feedback from participants about the usefulness and organization of the workshop. Finally, the workshop concluded with closing remarks provided by Colonel Tibor Szabo, Strategic Foresight Branch Head.

## 2. Participants:

The Regional Perspectives Workshop on North Africa and the Sahel attracted 152 participants from a diverse array of 29 different countries and numerous military and non-military organizations. Aside from participants from 25 NATO Member and Partner Nations, workshop participants also included people from African nations and Mediterranean Dialogue members Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia. In addition to representatives from NATO commands, centres of excellence and other national military organizations, there were participants from a wide variety of international organizations, academic institutions, and industry including the United Nations, European Defence Agency, Austrian Institute of Technology, Kindred Spirits, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Leonardo Company, and Three Stones International.

## 3. Workshop Presentations:

SME presentations were provided by Dr. Carlos Echeverria, Ms. Victoria Rietig, Dr. Stephen Smith, Colonel Ignacio Fuente Cobo, Dr. Beatriz Mesa, Ms. Anna Jacobs, Dr. Sergio Altuna Galán, Dr. Geoffrey Jackson, Dr. William Lawrence, Lieutenant Colonel Manuel González Hernández, Ms. Yousra Hamdaoui, Ms. Mary Fitzgerald, Dr. Julie House, Mr. Francis Ghilès, Mr. Michael Smith, and Dr. Owen Greene. Additionally, Spanish authorities provided briefs on their interpretation of North African and Sahelian policies.

Excerpts from SME presentations along with some presentations from the workshop are available on the NATO ACT Strategic Foresight website at <https://www.act.nato.int/futures-work>

## 4. Key Findings:

### 4.1. Migration.

- 4.1.1. Apart from episodic surge events, migration will most likely increase – intra-continental more than inter-continental migration. Drivers will continue to be population growth, climate change, corruption, economic opportunity, sectarianism, disenfranchisement, and youth desire for adventurism. Achieving a threshold of prosperity and access to technology will incentivize movement;
- 4.1.2. Migration within and from North Africa and the Sahel will continue to have both positive effects such as balancing aging populations, and negative effects such as creating more fractured and polarized societies;
- 4.1.3. In order to leverage the opportunities presented by migration, NATO nations must develop smart policies for structural and episodic surge movement of people from North Africa to Europe, individually and collectively where applicable. Smart, tailored policies can make migration safe, orderly, legal, and promote integration;
- 4.1.4. NATO has limited leverage to address concerns regarding migration and should coordinate with other actors such as member and partner nations, EU, UN, AU, Arab League, and other regional organizations (G5, NGOs).

### 4.2. Governance.

- 4.2.1. North Africa and Sahelian economies are likely to improve but high levels of corruption, fragile institutions, and polarized societies will still represent enduring challenges;
- 4.2.2. Competition for power between urban and rural, traditional and modern, local and central, young and old (gerontocracy), and between competing ideologies, is expected to continue;
- 4.2.3. Governance effectiveness and legitimacy will continue to be closely linked to development, security, and governments' ability to control its territory and population;
- 4.2.4. Democratization will not necessarily bring political stability; vice versa, authoritarian governments may provide a degree of stability in some countries;
- 4.2.5. Disenfranchisement, lack of opportunity, and failure to deliver basic services will continue to provide opportunities for radicalized groups and criminal organizations to infiltrate and influence societies.

### 4.3. Power Competition.

- 4.3.1. Power competition will be increasingly more complex than simplistic adversary or ally relationships;
- 4.3.2. Distrust towards former colonial powers and the United States will increasingly be exploited by China and Russia and emerging powers/influencers such as Turkey, India, and Gulf nations;
- 4.3.3. Chinese and Russian presence in the region will continue to be based on their respective ambitions in both geostrategic positioning and resource extraction. North Africa and Sahel states will likely attempt to seek smarter deals with external powers to preserve commerce and economic benefit;
- 4.3.4. China's Belt and Road Initiative has a huge potential for Chinese economic expansion and is expected to flourish over the next two decades. However, China's current mercantilist approach

in North Africa and the Sahel is likely to give way to increasing political involvement, use of soft power, and military expansion;

**4.3.5.** Russia will continue to seek positioning of capabilities at strategic choke points, increasing A2AD, ISR, sea control, and military posture;

**4.3.6.** Increased demand for resources and the basic means to sustain life (food, water, electricity, etc.) will increase potential for conflict in the region.

## **5. Way-ahead:**

The Madrid workshop provided a valuable understanding of the important trends and implications in North Africa and the Sahel. This workshop also provided a forum for open and frank discussions on the key trends, concerns, and issues related to these regions. It is clear from the workshop discussions that there are numerous diverging views and interests on these trends, their implications, and potential outcomes for the foreseeable future. Therefore, this workshop report should be read as a reflection of the discussions held during the workshop and should not be perceived as the views of the Alliance or ACT on any particular subject.

The results of the workshop will serve as a foundation for the Regional Perspectives Report on North Africa and the Sahel scheduled for release in the summer of 2019. During the report development process, we solicit national input and collaboration. This regional report, along with other separate regional reports to follow, will serve to inform the next SFA scheduled for release in 2021 and Framework for Future Alliance Operations scheduled for release in 2022.

Should there be any questions, the ACT points of contacts are COL Tibor SZABO, [tibor.szabo@act.nato.int](mailto:tibor.szabo@act.nato.int), Branch Head or LTC Richard PLEIJISANT, Staff Officer, [richard.pleijisant@act.nato.int](mailto:richard.pleijisant@act.nato.int).