



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER
TRANSFORMATION**

SACT's REMARKS to

ALL HANDS in JALLC

Monsanto, 6 November

Général d'armée aérienne Denis MERCIER



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General MINDRESCU, dear Mircea,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm really delighted to have this opportunity to pay you a visit and address, in person, all the JALLC members of staff.

First of all, it offers me a chance to thank our Host Nation, Portugal, for the outstanding support it has given this centre for more than 13 years. We are grateful for the warm hospitality of the local population and the enduring commitment of Portuguese political and military authorities to NATO's Transformation.

Portugal hosted a significant part of our strategic exercise, TRIDENT Juncture 15, its maritime activities in particular. During this exercise, NATO forces demonstrated the broad spectrum of their skills, readiness, interoperability and the efficiency of their chain of command.

Two weeks ago, Portugal also welcomed the NATO Industry Forum, during which high-level NATO and Industry leaders discussed building NATO's capacity to cope with a rapidly evolving security environment.

Portugal has greatly contributed to the credibility of our Alliance's deterrence and defence, be it through its support to exercises, dialogue with Industry or appropriate strategic communication, and I must pay tribute to this faithful Ally.



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Turning to the Alliance as a whole, NATO must, in support of its posture, own and develop a baseline which I call its capacity. Indeed, we must focus on those areas which provide current and future NATO Forces with the ability or power to deliver the effect NATO requires to underpin Deterrence and a credible, flexible, resilient, and adaptable Defence Posture.

To implement such a capacity, we must definitely look ahead to anticipate future threats and opportunities; but we also have to focus on what currently exists in the Alliance inventory and what improvements we can make by identifying potential shortfalls, good practices or missed opportunities from our past activities.

Learning Lessons is therefore a starting point for our Transformation, which General Paloméros, my predecessor, described as the golden thread linking our past, present and future. Nevertheless, Transformation is not an end in itself but rather a process that delivers a tangible output: NATO's posture, in other words, the core posture to fulfil all the 3 core tasks defined in the strategic concept of the Alliance.

Therefore, it was always my intent to come here to Monsanto soon after I took command to explain your crucial role in supporting my emerging vision. This morning, I have three main messages for you:



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- First, to tell you that you can be extremely proud of what you have achieved over recent years. I want to stress the relevance of your products but also show you how I intend to build on this legacy to support my vision of “NATO’s posture”; a posture based on a military foundation that I call a “capacity”.
- Second, I want to explain to you how I envision NATO’s capacity along 6 focus areas.
- And third, I want to ask you to work with me – not for me – in linking all your initiatives and products to this approach. It will help ACT to speak with one strong, coherent, and consistent voice to other NATO entities or Nations. I want us to speak with one voice.

Since I took office on the 30th of September, I have seen a Command which possesses a wealth of experienced and innovative people who have raised ACT’s profile and credibility to a very high level.

I am not the only one to say so, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg mentioned it during his visit to Norfolk, and many of the Allies and Partners representatives I met in Norfolk or in Brussels were very positive about ACT’s contribution to the Alliance.

This success is because of you, because of the people who are committed to continuously implementing change to ensure the



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Alliance's success in operations. Whatever your position in the Command, you have contributed to this success and you should be extremely proud of that contribution.

It is also my belief that we can go further in ensuring that all of us are interconnected in order to better answer the Nations' concerns and help the Alliance meet its current and future challenges.

And I know it is part of your main objectives.

The expansion of your networking activities has been reflected in the growing audiences at the last three NATO Lessons Learned Conferences. More than 230 participants from NATO, Allies, and Partners came to the event to discuss issues with the Lessons Learned community:

- because you seek to elevate the lessons learned to a strategic level,
- because you are focused on tangible outputs to answer the concerns of strategic and operational commanders,
- and because you provide the means for this community to share lessons, such as the LL Portal, allowing any community of interest to be created across the range of military domains.

This is impressive work, but there is more.



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Having looked more closely at your programme of work, I was impressed by most of your “focus” areas:

- **Command and Control** with major reports on Ballistic Missile Defence, Maritime C2 and Cyber security awareness.
- Some work on **Logistics and Sustainment** such as the Redeployment from operations, the Joint Logistic Support Group project and first studies.
- **Training** with the creation of a single EXTRA (Exercise, training and report) Portal to share lessons more efficiently and build strong, collective remedial actions to issues observed during NATO exercises.
- **Partnerships** through the JATT (JALLC Advisory and Training Team) that promotes and facilitates sharing of Lessons Learned. JATT is a great ambassador to many Partners Nations, across the Globe, PfP, Enhanced Opportunities for Partners,...).
- **Manpower** Education in conducting 3 courses about Lessons Learned per year. This is how we will bring greater visibility to the added value of Lessons learned within our organization, within our Nations.



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- Many insights about NATO's **capabilities**, for instance in the two decades of lessons learned from operations and exercises.

I said impressed because, in my perspective, these six areas: Command and Control, Sustainment, Training, Partnerships, Manpower and Capabilities – are the six focus areas of our capacity, this military baseline of NATO's posture I have just mentioned.

So, I really intend to build on this legacy to adapt and strengthen our posture, to enable the Alliance to continuously fulfil its 3 core tasks at 360°.

At stake for our Transformation is the current and future credibility of this posture. And this is one of the main issues that are discussed in the IMS and the international staff in Brussels.

At a political level, there is a crucial need to:

- demonstrate the effectiveness of our strategic effects through an enhanced exercise programme. In our exercises, we have two objectives. The first is to train people. And the second is the demonstration of our credibility. That is STRATCOM, and we have a lot of job to do in this area.
- Second part of our credibility relies on the industry. We will be credible, and we will have a credible posture if we are sure that we



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are continuously linked with our industry. That will help us to face our future challenges.

- provide the appropriate level of resources, and the ability to prioritize and flex them to increase our agility and accelerate delivery of the capacity at the right pace.
- provide not only a clear and skilful narrative and demonstration but rather a consistent and comprehensive strategic communication.

And this strategic communication encompasses the second main aspect of a posture: its military component.

Indeed the posture relies on the right mix of conventional, nuclear and missile defence forces fielded at the appropriate levels of readiness and responsiveness with the ability to deploy rapidly at range and/or at scale. And this is where we can better understand current efforts to implement the Readiness Action Plan as a needed first step.

But above all, this posture needs a foundation, a strong base which is NATO's capacity.

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Therefore, let me shortly describe the 6 "focus" areas of this capacity in more detail.



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- **At the heart of things: Command and control: it is how we direct our Forces.**

From its beginnings, this has always been the main strength of NATO, embodied in the NATO Command Structure. We must capitalize on and strengthen it to be able to plan and conduct operations and to network forces.

A C4ISTAR structure must be designed to meet future operational requirements such as rapidly distributed command to create decentralized networks when the situation requires with appropriate connectivity at the different levels of the chain of command.

What is at stake is to go from connected forces to forces which are networked through C4I. Which is the overall idea of a cloud. We do not want to focus on the platforms, but on the systems, how they are part of this C&C network. We could have all forces, with a very high readiness level, if we do not have a strong C&C capacity, which integrates the ISR, we will have nothing.

- **2nd area: Sustainability. It is how we deploy and support the Forces.**

We must ensure that NATO forces can easily access their points of embarkation and debarkation as well as all necessary enablers to



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facilitate the integration of these forces in the theatres of operations as required.

We must learn from the private sector, how the do those things.

We I'm looking at DHL or AMAZON, I think we have probably many lessons to learn in logistic from these commercial entities.

We must take into account all the revolutions in this field, which is absolutely essential for our operations.

- **3rd area: training. It is how we prepare the Forces**

NATO's capacity can only be as efficient as its ability to train and exercise its capacity in a high intensity, joint warfare environment.

And NATO must train these forces taking into account new and emerging threats, such as cyber, hybrid, ballistic missiles...

Just to share something with you, I went to the 3 DV days of Trident Juncture 15. I had one concern, which was "Were we too ambitious?" And in fact, the feed backs I had from the different levels of the headquarters was that they were very happy, because they were changed. Which means that the more ambitious we are with our exercises, the better they are.

- **4th area: Partnerships. It is how we ensure the connection of forces for defence and deterrence purposes**

Partners contribute to our operations and sometimes offer peaceful strongholds in a wide arc of crises.



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We must then reflect on how Defence Capacity Building and other initiatives to enhance our common interoperability can operationalize our Partnership tools.

We need you to highlight how we could do better in involving Partners in our strategic exercises but also how we can enhance the sharing of lessons learned.

The last two areas underpin the previous four:

- **5th area: manpower**

The education of people is the responsibility of the Nations. But, in order to be sure that we have the appropriate manpower, we have to continuously assess how we can help, how NATO can help Nations to provide different levels the chain of command and forces with the right people. If I look at the first debriefings I had on the two decades of NATO's operations, this is an issue. Sometime there were people which had not the appropriate skills for their job.

In this area, I will expect JALLC to identify how we can continue to better educate our people and what NATO can offer.

- **6th area: capabilities**

NATO's capacity represents the sum of its capabilities, and we must then continue to support Allies to fulfil our main defence planning priorities.



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We must also analyse what capabilities we need next and how to improve current ones.

Therefore, we have to continuously look at the way we coordinate our capability development, in terms of outputs, which are the capabilities we field, as well as the process itself.

It is the big strength of NATO to have all these foundations. For instance, some other organizations, such as European Union, don't have command and control. So we must continuously focus on these areas. And my priority, in ACT, will be to use these focus areas as the main outputs of our headquarters. The main outputs are more focused on the processes, like smart defence, CFI. We will keep those processes, they are good processes, but the outputs will be shift from a process-driven approach to a focused area approach. And we will be able to justify how we use our resources, according to these focus areas.

That will force us, in ACT, to have a cross-functional view. If I'm asking, in Norflok, who is working on command and control domain, I can find people in all the directorates. But sometimes, they work in this issue but they do not talk to each other.



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These were the main things I wanted to tell you. Just one point, priority of the moment is the analysis on two decades of operations. We talk about that and this is a huge work, and my intent is to use your work for a presentation, mid-january, at the military committee conference, and February at the ministerial conference. We must be ready, because there is a big expectation from different nations to get this feedback. If I cannot present that in January and in February, we will be too late. We have one focus today, this is this analysis on two decades of operations.

I was very happy on the presentations I have been given this morning. That gave me a strong confidence of the relevance of your work. We must continuously show that to our nations and the other NATO command structures.

You will have no more resources, but we must be sure that we deliver the maximum regarding the PE and our capabilities. I am very confident in that and in your work.

Thank you for your commitment and attention. I'm looking forward to working with you and hearing from your projects.

Abrigado.