**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION**

**SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER TRANSFORMATION**

# SACT's opening remarks at

# Tide Sprint

# Virginia Beach, 23 Oct 2017, 0845-0900

## As delivered

**Général d'armée aérienne Denis MERCIER**

Generals, Admirals,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,


I'm very happy to address these few words to you this morning, before starting with a very busy Fall 2017 Tide Sprint agenda.

I'm also very pleased to welcome a growing group of participants, from NATO nations, Partner nations, industry and academia. Especially coming from the industry world we welcome a considerable number of 1st time attendees.

While the "core group" ensures continuity, I welcome the new participants for further stimulating and encouraging collaboration, to develop new ideas and concepts to support existing work strands as well as emerging future requirements.

Together with our sister Strategic Command, Allied Command Operations, other participants from the NCS, NFS, Agencies, and COEs, and our partners, it is important that the ideas and concepts we develop here are linked with the requirements of today's and tomorrow's operations.

These operational requirements must be seen within the context of the strategic security environment.

Our strategic environment today is characterized by complexity. Complexity means that there are so many factors interacting with each other that it is impossible to comprehend all the possible outcomes, thereby making surprise more possible, decision-making based on imperfect information more commonplace, failure an option and resilience a necessity. This complexity is the new norm of our security environment.

In this environment we must build resilient operational architectures that are robust, well protected and able to cope with the most demanding operational scenarios.

Through these architectures, we will federate the capacities of our nations by connecting national systems with the NATO command structure.

This brings me to the main focus of this week's Tide Sprint, namely: federated interoperability by design. Interoperability is not something that you should add to your capabilities after they have been designed: it's too late and couldn't accommodate the pace of innovation. The federating architectures that we define must encompass all the needed hooks to ensure that future systems will naturally, natively be created interoperable.

This week, through a combination of "show and tell", workshops, brainstorming sessions and demonstrations, you will work on 12 inter-related disciplines that support the improvement of interoperability. The outcomes will allow better alignment of the roadmaps, further development of concepts and adjustment of priorities.

This will take forward much of the work undertaken at the previous TIDE Sprint held in St-Malo, in France, in April, and it will also explore the outcomes from the last CWIX held in June. CWIX is the largest annual NATO interoperability event held at the Joint Forces Training Centre, located in Bydgoszcz, in Poland, designed to support the continuous improvement of interoperability through testing and experimentation. In CWIX we can test the ideas developed in TIDE SPRINT and experiment federated networking architectures that enable our nations to connect and work together.

This federation requires the use of common standards.

This brings me to the first of three of this week's tracks I would like to highlight: the FMN Track. I remind you that FMN stands for Federated Mission Networking.

Leveraging the works of past Tide Sprint events, FMN today sees concrete application as part of the Enhanced Forward Presence: Canadian and Polish battlegroups in Eastern Europe are deploying their network much faster than what could have been achieved before FMN.

Spiral 2.0 of the FMN is now available and will be formally approved next month, but there is still some work to be done. You will work this week on

the future, Spiral 3, and even some parts of the Spiral 4. That discussion will not be limited to the dedicated FMN track. It will also permeate in every other tracks such as Cyber Defence, Logistics, or Modelling and Simulation. Indeed we shall associate all tracks to support and de-risk their delivery, specifically focussing on technical and procedural service instructions.

In this process it is very important for operational users to give their requirements as we move forward.

As we define new architectures, we must acknowledge that data is one of the key strategic resources.

How we collect, fuse, exploit and re-distribute data is at the heart of the decision making process and it drives the design of operational architectures.

Interoperability by design architectures, as already mentioned, is critical, yet not sufficient. We must also think the protection of data from the onset, as the assessment of the reliability of data drives the development of the Cyber domain.

This brings me to the second track I would like to mention:  the Cyber Track.

This week's aim is to focus on the federation of cyberspace defence and on education and training. Cyber and FMN requirements must be aligned to make the federation of systems cyber resilient from the onset. This is why we develop a roadmap for Cyber specifications in the FMN.

At last June's CWIX, we federated for the first time national security centres on a NATO network, connecting with the Cyber Range located in Estonia.

We must continue on this path. In the NATO Command Structure adaptation, we have decided not to create another cyber command but to federate the cyber competencies of the nations and the effects voluntarily provided by them. This requires education and training.  Contributions from the European Defence Agency, the NCIA and ACO will be very useful to draft a concept for the Federated Cyber Defence Training.

Finally, I would like to mention the last track I want to highlight with you: the Logistics Track.

As we shift from national logistic responsibilities to shared logistics across the Alliance, data is here again a strategic resource to manage logistic services, maintenance, supplies, transport, medical support and even Host Nation Support, within a network of logistic clusters, including Governmental, non-Governmental and international organizations.

To make this effective and persistent, the exchange of national logistic data into one network is essential.

This track is a driver for logistic innovation building on previous Tide Sprints and outcomes from CWIX and it focuses on Big Data, Modelling & Simulation, Autonomous Systems and 3D printing.

In this context, it will be very interesting to hear different communities of interest across NATO, industry and academia discuss about the potential of emerging technologies for future NATO logistics capabilities.

This brings me to my conclusion. "Bringing it all together" is a necessity, not a choice. As we adapt our Alliance and strengthen our military posture in a federated approach, our common efforts will reduce costs and ensure our forces remain interoperable and capable to work together now and in the foreseeable future.

Across this week's tracks, we will continue to lay out the principles necessary to build credible operational architectures. I encourage you to share your work between the different Tracks.

We will use the outcomes and align them with upcoming events, such as the Tide Hackaton as well as the next Tide Sprints, CWIX and NATO Industry Forum in 2018.

Thank you for working all together on these objectives. I wish you a lot of success and a lot of relevant outcomes to improve and continue the work that has already been started.