



MILITARY COMMITTEE

Topic A: SECURITY ASSURANCE AND ADAPTATION MEASURES

Dangers encroaching on Europe's peripheries (such as increased Russian aggression and illegal migration), in addition to the threats emanating from the Middle East and North Africa, prompted the launch of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) at the 2014 NATO Wales Summit. Allied leaders approved this comprehensive initiative as a commitment to increase military exercises, reorganize the NATO Response Force (NRF), reposition logistical equipment in Central and Eastern Europe, and address other critical defensive measures as needed. Ultimately, RAP is a comprehensive package of measures that ensures the Alliance is ready and capable to respond to new security challenges. Since RAP's implementation in 2014, the defence initiative has continued to evolve in response to the changing security environment on the Alliance's borders.

"The Readiness Action Plan is the biggest reinforcement of our collective defence since the end of the Cold War. And it is my top priority to implement this plan in full and on time."
– NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, 20 November 2014¹

The two pillars of RAP are its assurance and adaptation measures. *Assurance measures* are aimed primarily eastwards, to the Baltic region, such as Poland

¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO's Readiness Action Plan Fact Sheet [online]. February 2015 [cit. 31. 7. 2015]. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_02/20150205_1502-Factsheet-RAP-en.pdf>

and other eastern allies (Bulgaria, Romania). These measures serve to reassure regional Allies with continuous air, land, and maritime presence through regular military exercises. Furthermore, through this reinforcement of the Alliance's collective defence, assurance measures also act as a means of deterrence against various forms of attack. *Adaptation measures*, in contrast, reflect more long-term goals of the Alliance.² In order to improve the Alliance's ability to react swiftly and decisively to sudden crises, these adaptation measures include:

Making the NRF more responsive and capable through:

- Increasing the size of NRF (in 2015, the NRF nearly tripled in size from roughly 13,000 to 40,000 troops);
- Improving NRF capabilities by land, air, sea; as well as Special Operations Forces to identify, deter, and respond to crisis scenarios;
- Implementing a fully operational quick-reaction "Spearhead Force" (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force – VJTF) that can be deployed within days (Noble Jump in Poland, June 2015, marked the first deployment of VJTF);
- Strengthening interoperability in deployment (while Spearhead and NRF elements are based in home countries, each can be deployed wherever needed);
- Ensuring NRF and VJTF remain adaptive and capable for action in security and humanitarian crises; and
- Alternating leadership and composition of VJTF and NRF annually (in 2016 the Spearhead land force was led by Spain and will be led by the UK in 2017).³

Establishing small multinational NATO headquarters – known as "NATO Force Integration Units" (NFIUs) - that are:

- Located on the territories of eastern Allies (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia);
- Staffed by approximately 40 national and multinational specialists;
- Tasked with improving cooperation and coordination between NATO and national forces; and
- Responsible for preparing and supporting NRF exercises and deployments.⁴

Through various assurance and adaptation measures, RAP seeks to ensure NATO can readily and effectively address hybrid warfare's fusion of conventional, covert military, paramilitary, and disinformation campaigns from any adversary that seeks to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. Institutional factors and internal

² Ibid.

³ NATO Response Force.Nato.int [online]. 11. 5. 2015 [cit. 31.7. 2015]. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm>

⁴ The Readiness Action Plan.Nato.int [online]. 25. 6. 2015 [cit. 31.7. 2015]. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_119353.htm>

politics within NATO countries, however, raise concern regarding the operability of the measures proposed within RAP. Due to NATO's consensus structure, all members must agree before the force can be deployed.⁵ Furthermore, financial support continues to be a concern for the RAP. Although NATO members pledged at the 2014 Wales Summit to spend at least 2% of their GDP on defence, many members remain far from the target, potentially threatening the RAP's ability to respond to evolving threats.⁶

A concern regarding the success of the RAP is that NATO countries perceive resurgent Russia and threats from the Middle East and North Africa with different levels of concern. Issues remain surrounding the establishment of permanent NATO bases on the territories of the new member states in Eastern Europe due to different interpretations of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act. On one hand, critics assert the establishment of new members in the East violate the Founding Act, which lays down the Alliance's promise that it will not engage in "additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces" in the areas of the former Eastern Bloc.⁷ Others, however, argue that the concern is irrelevant since the Founding Act is not a legally binding treaty and the conditions under which it was applied are no longer relevant.

In sum, credible defence and deterrence measures must be adaptive in order for NATO to respond to a security environment in which state and non-state actors are increasingly conducting conventional and non-conventional methods of warfare. With conflicts becoming more decentralized⁸, the Military Committee's work on translating political decisions proposed in response to evolving security threats into practical military strategic guidance in this complex security environment is increasingly becoming important. Emphasizing this importance of

⁵ NATO Response Force. Nato.int [online]. 11. 5. 2015 [cit. 31.7. 2015]. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm>

⁶ Erlanger, Steven. Europe Begins to Rethink Cuts to Military Spending. The New York Times [online]. 26. 3. 2014 [cit. 31.7. 2015]. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/27/world/europe/europe-begins-to-rethink-cuts.html?_r=0>

⁷ Blome, Nikolaus et al. Failed Diplomacy: NATO Hardliners Push for Firmer Stance against Russia. Spiegel Online International [online]. 1. 9. 2014 [cit. 31.7. 2015]. Available at: <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/pressure-mounts-for-more-aggressive-stance-against-russia-a-989216.html>>

⁸ Decentralized conflicts reflect the increase of smaller localized attacks rather than large-scale targets. For example, consider 'centralized' top-down terrorist organizations with ambitious targets like the US (think al-Qaeda and 9/11). The increase of technology and ability of the US to target even the most remote locations leaves these centralized terrorist organizations ineffective. As war is adaptive in nature, terrorist organizations must be flexible and responsive to contextual pressures and operational necessities. Terrorist groups, such as ISIS, are increasingly becoming decentralized in response to the increase of counter-terrorism strategies and initiatives. What this means is that groups such as ISIS (as well as al-Qaeda post 9/11) are shifting away from planned direct attacks from a centrally located command post. These groups instead disperse their operations through ideas and ideology as means to inspire attacks at its desired targets, while making the organization itself much more difficult to target within counterterrorism initiatives.

the Military Committee's work now and in the future was the President of Croatia's opening remark at the 2016 Military Committee Summit:

"In Wales, the NATO Heads of State and Government gave the initial guidance in an impressive show of unity among Allies and managed to maintain the momentum to Warsaw. Now it is the NATO Military Committee's task to take us one step further in facing the challenges ahead of us. And those challenges are many."⁹

Questions for Discussion:

- 1) Have financial, logistical, and strategic efforts to date by NATO and its members been adequate in meeting the needs of the strategic guidance proposed by the MC in regards to RAP?
- 2) Are assurance measures implemented through the MC adequate to the current and evolving security context facing the Alliance and its Allies?
- 3) Is NATO's establishment of permanent bases in the East of the Alliance still a problem to resolve?
- 4) Has the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force and the comprehensive Readiness Action Plan provided the MC with a clear, multifaceted approach to address current and future challenges? Does the role of the MC provide assurance to the Alliance and its Allies that the collective defence initiative will deter and protect against threats?
- 5) Does the MC need to reconsider future force structure planning for RAP?

Further Reading:

Factsheet – NATO's Readiness Action Plan:

Provides basic information on RAP, such as assurance and adaptation measures.

http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_05/20150508_1505-Factsheet- RAP-en.pdf

Allied Command Operations:

⁹ NATO Military Committee conference [online]. 22. 9. 2016. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_135166.htm?selectedLocale=en>

<http://www.aco.nato.int/operations.aspx>

Portal with many pages containing in-depth information about individual parts of RAP, including news and up-to-date information. Since the situation will probably change to some extent, it is recommended to check regularly.

<http://www.shape.nato.int>

Portal with various links and fact sheets pertaining to RAP, NRF, VJTF, and other general information regarding NATO assurance measures.

NATO-Russia Founding Act:

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm

Full text of the 1997 agreement.

“The Myth that NATO Committed to Having No Permanent Troops in Eastern Europe”:

<http://www.atlantic-community.org/-/the-myth-that-nato-committed-to-having-no-permanent-troops-in-eastern-europe>

One of the viewpoints on the controversy surrounding the NATO-Russia Founding Act and on the permanent stationing of NATO bases in Eastern Europe.

“The Baltic Balance: How to Reduce the Chances of War in Europe”:

<http://www.rand.org/blog/2015/07/the-baltic-balance-how-to-reduce-the-chances-of-war.html>

An article published in the Foreign Affairs discussing, besides other things, recommendations for the NATO member countries.

Topic B: REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

One of the most important interests for Western Balkan countries is maintaining regional security through increasing political stability, security and economic prosperity. However, the ability for countries in the Western Balkans to achieve this necessary growth is undermined by intensifying levels of organized crime, corruption, nationalism and irregular migration in the region. While increasing threats to regional security is a pressing concern facing countries in the Western Balkans, the ramifications of these threats are of grave concern for the NATO Alliance as well.

The Yugoslavia Wars of Secession in the 1990's reaffirmed the importance of the region's geopolitical position to the Alliance and marked the first severe security crisis to test the endurance of the NATO Alliance.¹⁰ Since the beginning of the

¹⁰ Lomtadze, Tamta. NATO Missions and Operations: Response to the Crises. Atlantic Treaty Association [online]. Feb. 2015[cit. 5.2.2015]. Available at: <<http://atahq.org/atlantic-voices/>>

crisis, NATO was the major force that contributed to the settlement of conflict in the region. The first major crisis response operation conducted by NATO's Military Committee was in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), which was based on the mandate described in the Dayton Peace Accord. Although the NATO-led stabilization force (SFOR) operation was completed in 2004, the Alliance did not end its presence in the region. Since 1999, NATO has been a leading peace supporter in Kosovo and today almost 5,000 troops remain under the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR).¹¹ KFOR continues to maintain a safe and secure environment, freedom of movement of people, contributes to the reconstruction of the country, and helps maintain security and public order.¹²

Overall, there has been significant progress made by Western Balkan countries to improve regional security. Most notably are the recent improvements in the bilateral relations between Serbia and Kosovo, internally in BiH and with regard to the EU integration of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. However, despite the positive developments in regional security cooperation, many security challenges remain. General Pavel highlighted a number of mounting security challenges threatening stability in the region at the 2016 Military Committee Summit.¹³ Of particular concern is the vulnerability of BiH to potentially become the next frontier not only for Islamic extremism but also for Russia and Russian influence. Regional stability is further threatened by increased tensions between Croatia and Serbia. Contributing to these tensions was Croatia's recent efforts to purchase ballistic missiles.¹⁴ Due to the history of conflict in the region and Cold War allegiances, the purchase of ballistic missiles by either state would shift the balance of power in the region significantly – particularly if Serbia was to join the NATO alliance.

Ultimately, long term peace and security in the Western Balkan region continues to be undermined by a number of factors: increasing incidences of organized crime; heightened levels of national, political and religious extremism; and a growing number of safe havens for extremists and criminal networks. The necessary measures to tackle these threats exist, but are not always implemented due to the weakened state institutions, high levels of criminality, and the lack of human and financial resources. Aside from the seeming resurgence of Cold War tensions, attendees of the 2016 Military Committee Summit expressed grave concern regarding the potential destabilizing factor that increased levels of extremism and organized crime will have on the region, the Alliance, and Allied members. Recognizing the multifaceted issues and relations to consider between Alliance members and its Allies, the Military Committee

¹¹ NATO's role in Kosovo [online]. 9. 11. 2016. Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_48818.htm>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ NATO Military Committee conference, op. cit.

¹⁴ Jankovic, Daniel, and Nenad Dumanovic. "Balkan Chess: Serbia, Croatia, and the Second Cold War." *Foreign Policy Journal*. 7. 11. 2016. Web. 08 Jan. 2017.

must critically evaluate the next steps that it will take to maintain security in the region.

Questions for Discussion:

- 1) In what ways could the Military Committee's continuing and expanding presence in the Balkans impact the already strained relations between Russia and NATO? Do current security concerns necessitate NATO risking further tension with Russia by expanding into the Balkans through membership and operations?
- 2) What are potential threats to the Alliance emanating from Croatia and Serbia's intent to acquire ballistic missile systems? What should be the range of possible responses by the Military Committee to these potential threats?
- 3) In light of escalating tensions between NATO member states and Allies, in addition to external threats due to increased extremism, in the Balkans – what ways should NATO's Military Committee evolve its operations within the region to deescalate tensions and prevent a confrontation with NATO?
- 4) KFOR, which is overseen by the Military Committee, has been widely recognized in NATO as a stabilizing force in the Western Balkan region and any change to the force posture should be conditions-based. What anticipatory conditions should be considered if there is a change in KFOR?

Further Reading:

KFOR Mission:

<http://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor>

NATO Military Committee Conference – Spilt, Croatia (16-18 September 2016):

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/events_135053.htm?selectedLocale=en

Includes transcripts from the conference and links to relevant NATO news sources.

Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia

Direct links to Croatia's military purchases and industry magazines:

<https://www.morh.hr/en/>

<https://www.morh.hr/en/news/press-releases/11858-pzh-2000-howitzers-for-the-croatian-armed-forces-presented.html>

<https://www.morh.hr/hr/zakoni-i-strategije/cromil/book/25.html?page=7>

<https://www.morh.hr/hr/zakoni-i-strategije/cromil/book/31-croatian-military-magazine-no-14/1-publikacije.html>

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- Batt, Judy, 2004, Introduction: the stabilization/integration dilemma, in: The Western Balkans: Moving on, Chaillot Paper no.70, Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 7 – 19.
- Batt, Judy (ed.), 2004, The Western Balkans: moving on,(Chaillot Paper no. 70, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.
- Batt, Judy, 2005, The question of Serbia, Chaillot Paper no. 81, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.
- Batt, Judy (ed.), 2008, Is there an Albanian question?, Chaillot Paper no. 107, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.
- Blank, Stephen J. (ed.), 1995, Yugoslavia's wars: The problem from hell, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, Pa., Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, pp. 47-86.
- Clément, Sophia, 1997, Conflict prevention in the Balkans: case studies of Kosovo and the FYR of Macedonia, Chaillot Paper no. 30, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.
- Clément, Sophia, 1997, The International Community Response, in: Conflict Prevention in the Balkans, Chaillot Paper no. 30, Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 46-74.
- Delevic, Milica, 2007, Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, Chaillot Paper no. 104, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 31-72.
- Grahovac, Blagoje, 2012, Geopolitics & Organized Crime and Corruption in the Early 21st Century with Reference to the Balkans, in: European Perspectives – Journal on European Perspectives of the Western Balkans, Vol. 4, No. 1(6), Centre for European Perspective, Loka pri Mengesu.
- NATO, 2011, Strategic Concept, Brussels, p. 31.
- NATO, 20 May 2012, Chicago Summit Declaration.
- Rupnik, Jacques, 2011, The Balkans as a European question, in: Rupnik, Jacques (ed.) 2011, The Western Balkans and the EU: The Hour of Europe, Chaillot Papers no. 126, EUISS, Paris, 17-30.
- Van Meurs, Wim (ed.), 2003, Prospects and Risks Beyond EU Enlargement, Southeastern Europe: Weak States and Strong International Support, Leske & Budrich, Opladen.

Topic C: STABILITY IN THE BLACK SEA

The Black Sea Region is of primary concern for NATO as one of the major bodies of water linking Europe and the Mediterranean as well as Central Asia and the Middle East. Furthermore, it is a strategically significant stronghold from which Russia attempts to exert its military strength against NATO and its allies. The annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia in 2014 has led to a significant expansion of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. According to estimates, over the course of the past year, Russia has added approximately 200 units of military equipment, including 40 ships, 30 aircrafts (multi-role SU-30SM's), and Crimea was delivered more than 100 modern armored vehicles.

Of all the vessels deserving special attention, there are the three latest diesel-electric submarines of the 636 "Varshavyanka" project and two ships armed with "Kalibr" cruise missiles, which represent the new generation of Russia's naval technology.¹⁵ Currently, NATO does not possess the military capability in the region to counter the threat posed by the Russian missiles. The President of Turkey, a key NATO member in the region, has labeled the Black Sea as "Russia's lake." The drastic expansion of Russia's military in the region indicates its desire to shift the regional balance of power in its favor vis-à-vis NATO.

One of the primary strategic incentives for Russia's increased military presence in the Black Sea is associated with access to the Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East region via the Bosphorus.¹⁶ Following the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stressed the importance of increasing NATO's presence in the Black Sea. Following the Summit, several nations indicated their willingness to contribute to the presence in the Black Sea region including Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United States.¹⁷

¹⁵ <http://www.globalresearch.ca/russias-lake-the-black-sea-fleet-vs-the-new-ukraine-turkey-naval-coalition/5526310>

¹⁶ "Turkey's Blockade of Russian Naval Vessels' Access to the Mediterranean, Russia's Black Sea Fleet Completely Cut Off: The Strategic Role of the Bosphorus Straits and the Dardanelles Linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean." Global Research: Centre for Research on Globalization. December 1, 2015. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/turkeys-blockade-of-russian-naval-vessels-access-to-the-mediterranean-russias-black-sea-fleet-completely-cut-off/5492688>.

¹⁷ Nato. "Press Conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the Level of NATO Defence Ministers." NATO. Accessed November 29, 2016. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_136581.htm.

As a response to Russia's increased activity in the Black Sea, NATO member states have conducted the Sea Breeze Naval Exercise in which 1,700 personnel and 25 vessels have participated in July of 2016.¹⁸ Concurrently, NATO, led by the US, has deployed naval and air patrol missions in the northern Black Sea region near the Crimean Peninsula.

Although verbal solidarity among NATO states is clear regarding the strategic importance of counterbalancing Russia's military buildup in the Black Sea Region, significant challenges and a relatively ambiguous policy may cause a potential eruption of armed conflict between NATO and Russia.

*"From the Baltic to the Black Sea, we see a worrying increase in the number of close military encounters between warships and jets belonging to the Russian Federation and NATO Allies"*¹⁹

On 7 September 2016, US authorities were alarmed at the "dangerous" interception of an American aircraft patrolling above the Black Sea by a Russian Air Force fighter. A US Department of Defense representative was quoted saying that the Russian plane had flown within 30ft of the P-8A before closing to just 10ft.²⁰ Considering Russia's actions in the Black Sea, there is considerable fear of accidental escalation or triggering of armed engagement between NATO and Russian forces in the region. Thus, with the high level of tensions vis-à-vis Russia, and an ambiguous regional doctrine, it is currently a primary concern of NATO to develop a harmonized regional-level strategy to counter Russia's increased presence in the Black Sea.

Questions for Discussion:

- 1) What strategic or tactical steps can NATO take in the Black Sea Region to increase its relative military potential vis-à-vis Russia?
- 2) Should NATO continue with the naval Sea Breeze exercises? If so, should they be adapted? How?
- 3) What should NATO's policy, strategy and tactics be in the Black Sea region to avoid potential accidental triggering of armed engagement between NATO and Russian forces?

¹⁸ "Black Sea Breeze: 1,700 Personnel, 25 Vessels Take Part in NATO Naval Drills." RT International. Accessed November 29, 2016. <https://www.rt.com/news/350642-nato-breeze-black-sea/>.

¹⁹ "How Can the OSCE Help to Reduce the Risk of Hazardous Military Incidents?" NATO Review. Accessed November 29, 2016. <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2016/Also-in-2016/OSCE-help-reduce-risk-military-incidents/EN/>.

²⁰ "US Says Russian Jet Flew 10ft from Plane over Black Sea." BBC News. Accessed November 29, 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37303247>.

Further Reading:

The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom – (Imperative Read)

[http://leader.viitorul.org/public/214/en/125AsmusJacksonE\[1\].pdf](http://leader.viitorul.org/public/214/en/125AsmusJacksonE[1].pdf)

Changing Tides: Russia's Growing Stronghold in the Black Sea

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2016-02-08/changing-tides>

Why is the Black Sea so important to Russia if its access is controlled by Turkey at the Bosphorus?

<https://www.quora.com/Why-is-the-Black-Sea-so-important-to-Russia-if-its-access-is-controlled-by-Turkey-at-the-Bosphorus>

Russia and Black Sea Threat

<http://www.newsweek.com/russia-warns-nato-it-will-neutralize-any-threat-black-sea-464940>

Why patrolling the Black Sea Just Got More Dangerous

<http://www.nato.int/docu/Review/2015/Ukraine/patrolling-black-sea-ukraine-odessa-crimea/EN/index.htm>

U.S. Destroyer Enters Black Sea for First Time in 2016

<https://news.usni.org/2016/06/06/video-u-s-destroyer-enters-black-sea-first-time-2016>.

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Cross, Sharyl. (04/03/2015). NATO-Russia security challenges in the aftermath of Ukraine conflict: managing Black Sea Security and Beyond. *Journal of southeast European and Black Sea studies*. (15)2. p.151 - 177.

Alexandrova-Arbatova, Nadia. (04/03/2015). Security relations in the Black Sea region: Russia and the West after the Ukrainian crisis. *Journal of southeast European and Black Sea studies*. (15)2. p.129 - 139.