NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

Topic A: RADICALIZATION & DOMESTIC TERRORISM

Traditionally, NATO has focused solely on external threats to the security and prosperity of the Alliance. However, recent terror attacks in London, Paris, Istanbul, and other cities of member states have demonstrated that the greatest threat to the safety and security of the citizens of NATO may be internal. Whereas in the past, radical organizations would need to invest significant time and effort into infiltrating western countries, new forms of communication allow them to reach out directly to disaffected citizens. The rise of the internet and resulting ease of instant communication liberalized and democratized information, for better and for worse. Never before has it been so easy for those who wish to do us harm to reach into our populations and indoctrinate the most vulnerable. It does not matter how secure our borders or how thorough our security services, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of domestic terror and radicalization of marginalized citizens. Governments all over the world are just beginning to grapple with the threats that this represents.

One of the most popular countermeasures in recent years has been investment in "counter-radicalization", which can be loosely defined as activities designed to prevent vulnerable individuals from adopting and acting on extremist views, and ideally reintegrating them into mainstream society. The vagueness of this definition is telling, as there is no broad academic agreement on what exactly qualifies as counter or de-radicalization. Settling on what exactly the Alliance wants to do will be the first step for

NATO to combat this growing threat. There will also need to be considerations for the differences between preventing radicalization in the first place, and de-radicalizing those that may be returning from conflict in the Middle East, for example.

In addition, while NATO has always had to strike a balance between collective action and respect for national sovereignty, it may be worth evaluating what role, if any, the Alliance should play in the internal security of states. All the counter-radicalization initiatives in the world will not completely eliminate the risk of a homegrown terror attack, which have emerged with disturbing frequency in recent years. While NATO clearly has a role to play on securing the external threat environment for member states, does its position as a guarantor of security extend to internal events, either in a pre-emptive or emergency response capacity? So far, there has not been a situation that local security forces have been unable to contain, but this does not mean that something on a larger scale could not happen in the future. If so, what would this intervention or aid look like, and if not, what else can the Alliance do to improve the situation, or should it even be something to be concerned about?

Questions for Discussion:

1) What is the role of NATO, if any, in counter-radicalization and domestic security?
2) How should NATO balance allocating scarce resources to these efforts as opposed to its other commitments?
3) What should be done with former members of ISIL who are citizens of NATO countries, now that the conflict in the Middle East is winding down?
4) Looking forward, as this threat is unlikely to dissipate anytime soon, what activities or programs can NATO undertake to pre-emptively deal with radicalization and domestic terrorism?

Further Readings:

Homegrown failure: why the domestic terror threat is overblown:
https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2012/Threats-Within/Homegrown-Failure/EN/index.htm

Homegrown terrorism: how can NATO fight it:
https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2012/Threats-Within/Homegrown-Terrorism-NATO-fight/EN/index.htm

A Look at Anti-Radicalization Programs in Canada: http://natoassociation.ca/a-look-at-anti-radicalization-programs-in-canada/

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. The Responsibility to Protect: Synopsis (xi-xiii): responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf

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Topic B: ANTI-SMUGGLING & COUNTER-PIRACY

Europe is facing the greatest refugee and migrant crisis since the end of the Second World War. Subsequent consequences of this humanitarian crisis has proven knotty, moreover, migrant smuggling - particularly to Europe - has exploded. The conflict and instability on NATO`s southern borders are exacerbated with a growing number of migrant smugglers, human traffickers, and criminal networks. The Alliance now encounters an even-tougher challenge of not only smuggling of migrants but also weapons and drugs which emerged as offshoots of the crisis.

According to international law, all maritime vessels including NATO ships, must assist those in need and the obligation to help people in distress at sea is a general responsibility.[1] Currently, NATO has deployed, and expanded its people-smuggling patrols in the Aegean, in cooperation with Frontex – the EU`s external border management agency. More specifically, NATO commissioned a Standing Maritime Group and the three-ship-force comprising of warships from Canada, Germany, and Turkey to conduct reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance activities to provide critical information to relevant national authorities.[2] One of the main goals of these missions is to increase the cooperation between Frontex and the maritime authorities of Turkey and Greece. By doing so, NATO hopes to curb the migration flow and smuggling activities in the Aegean Sea.

In the Mediterranean, NATO broadened its operations to help the European Union stop criminals trafficking refugees from North Africa which could be a step toward NATO helping stabilize Libya by patrolling coastal waters. Bloc's maritime search-and-rescue operations serve as part of a plan to deal with migrants undertaking the perilous Mediterranean journey to Europe.[3] Besides, the Alliance intensified intelligence and surveillance activities along the Turkish-Syrian border. Moreover, to implement effective

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[1] NATO and Europe's refugee and migrant crisis
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_128645.htm
[2] Canadian warship part of NATO flotilla targeting deadly refugee smuggling in Aegean.
https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/canadian-warship-part-of-nato-flotilla-targeting-deadly-refugee-smuggling-in-aegean/article28712804/
[3] NATO calls for 'comprehensive response' to migrant crisis
https://en.tengrinews.kz/military/NATO-calls-for-comprehensive-response-to-migrant-crisis-260082/

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solutions, consultations with both member and other non-member countries on anti-smuggling and narcotics, such as in Afghanistan, continue to take place.

As delineated above, NATO has been taking measures with its resources and capabilities, putting forth its presence as a disincentive for smugglers, and conducting intelligence gathering activities. However, how effective are the measures that have been taken so far? Some of the criticism towards NATO and Frontex operations are the militarisation of borders and the lack of addressing root causes. Therefore, it is worth asking how comprehensively NATO should approach these challenges. The refugee-crisis-induced migrant-smuggling-problem is not only about Northern Africa, as people smuggled crossing the sea come from countries as far as in Asia, the Middle East and various parts of Africa.

At sea, NATO and its partners have been helping to prevent piracy activities in the Gulf of Aden, off the Horn of Africa, and in the Indian Ocean to maintain international humanitarian efforts in Africa and the safety of the Suez Canal, in and out of the gateway. With the main goal of deterring pirates from pursuing their activities and suppressing all kinds of piracy, an international naval force has been kept present in the region. However, NATO has recently terminated Ocean Shield mission in the Indian Ocean.[4] Subsequently, these capabilities in the Indian Ocean were moved to the Mediterranean to mitigate the workload of the forces already assigned to conduct duties related to refugee crisis and anti-smuggling.[5] Concerns have risen regarding the possibility that ending this mission will create power vacuum and lead to the emergence of new threats at sea.

Furthermore, a recent polemical issue in the battlefield has become the widespread usage of fentanyl lollipops which are fundamentally made out of synthetic opioid that is 100 times more potent than morphine. These can-be-deadly lollipops are put under the tongue, and the opiate is absorbed rapidly into the bloodstream. Consequently, pain is relieved within minutes. Fentanyl lollipops are currently given to wounded soldiers in the battlefield, especially in Afghanistan, to treat acute pain. NATO needs to consider both the strategies to counter smuggling of fentanyl and the issues related to the abuse of this potent narcotic as well as its prospective side effects such as addiction.

[4] Counter-piracy operations (Archived)
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48815.htm
[5] "Ocean Shield" Achieved its Mission
https://www.maritime-executive.com/blog/ocean-shield-achieved-its-mission

Questions for Discussion:

1) How appropriately has NATO been engaged in reacting to growing problems of migrant smuggling in the Aegean and the Mediterranean? Does NATO need to revise its strategy?
2) How would NATO ensure that shifting priorities from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean will not create power vacuum in the former, consequently leading to the emergence of new threats?
3) To what extend should NATO keep its counter measures effective against maritime piracy?

Further Readings:

NATO's Role in the Refugee Crisis: Building Bridges with the EU
http://www.europeanfutures.ed.ac.uk/article-3187

Assistance for the refugee and migrant crisis in the Aegean Sea
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_128746.htm

NATO Will Send Ships to Aegean Sea to Deter Human Trafficking
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/12/world/europe/nato-aegean-migrant-crisis.html

NATO agrees bigger Mediterranean mission to stop smugglers
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-foreign-libya/nato-agrees-bigger-mediterranean-mission-to-stop-smugglers-idUSKCN0YA1RO

Wilson, Jordan (2016) "The Rise, the Fall, and the Eventual Return of Modern Piracy: Addressing an Age Old Problem with Modern Solutions" *Journal of Maritime Law and Commerce* 47(3): 297-340.

Counter-piracy operations (Archived)
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48815.htm

Operation Ocean Shield: mission success?
http://www.naval-technology.com/features/featureoperation-ocean-shield-mission-success-5776043/

Topic C: CYBER SECURITY, BIG DATA & INFLUENCE WARFARE

If the 2016 United States Presidential Election demonstrated anything, it is that the bedrock institutions of western democracies are significantly more vulnerable to outside influence than previously thought. NATO was perhaps able to ignore the problem when Russian interference in other countries' domestic affairs was minor and subtle, but now that it has played an arguably critical role electing the President of the United States, can the organization afford to continue to ignore it? NATO, and the western world in general, has always been cognisant of the fact that it needs to fight and win the war of ideas in all spheres, but new fronts are opening every day, especially online. Long gone are the days where information and debate was governed by gatekeepers in the media and politics - any voice can be amplified and find an audience in the world today.

The well-documented rise of "fake news"[6] has proven particularly problematic, as opponents of NATO have used a variety of methods to undermine morale, sow discontent, and weaken support for NATO activities and goals. This has been seen particularly in Eastern Europe following the deployment of additional NATO forces into the Baltic member states. As of yet, the Alliance's counter-efforts have been limited to publicly and frequently correcting the record when certain falsehoods become particularly pervasive, but the jury is still out as to whether this is sufficient. It may be time for NATO to start taking this threat more seriously, and consider more drastic action. While there may be more obvious and immediate problems facing the Alliance right now, we have seen in the past how quickly the momentum can accelerate once a shift in public mood and opinion begins – can NATO afford to leave this up to chance?

On the other hand, keeping ahead of the state-of-the-art technologies, developments, concepts, and operational requirements regarding emerging technologies is at utmost importance. As the NATO Science and Technology Board rightfully highlights, it is required to exploit Big Data and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) means in NATO decision making.[7] The application of AI technologies for automated analysis, early warnings, guaranteeing trust in the Internet of Things (IoT), and distinguishing relevant from Fake Data is mandatory. How can NATO stay up-to-date without falling behind the enemies building these capabilities to the fullest?

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[6] Defined by Dictionary.com as: false news stories, often of a sensational nature, created to be widely shared online for the purpose of generating ad revenue via web traffic or discrediting a public figure, political movement, company, etc.
[7] IST-160 RSM on Big Data and Artificial Intelligence for Military Decision Making
https://events.sto.nato.int/index.php/upcoming-events/event-list/event/101

Questions for Discussion

1) How heavily should NATO emphasize influence warfare and fighting the propaganda war? Should any initiatives be purely defensive in nature (e.g. correcting falsehoods)?
2) What is the future of data collection and management for analysis in NATO operations?

Further Readings

Anti-Canada propaganda greets troops in Latvia:
http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/russian-fake-news-campaign-against-canadian-troops-in-latvia-includes-propaganda-about-litter-luxury-apartments

Countering propaganda: NATO spearheads use of behavioural change science:
https://www.stratcomcoe.org/countering-propaganda-nato-spearheads-use-behavioural-change-science

Schmitt, Michael N., Editor. Tallinn Manual on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Warfare (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 42-64; 75-76; 106-107.

Farwell, James P. and Rafal Rohozinski. "Stuxnet and the Future of Cyber War,"
Survival 53, no. 1 (February-March 2011): 23-36.