

## COVID-19, Multinational Security Cooperation, and the PfPC.

Since the completion of this report, COVID-19 has dramatically challenged the business and operational models of institutions engaged in security cooperation—especially those engaged in multinational educational programs. In this regard, there will likely be a lasting, long-term change to operational modalities.

In response, the PfPC is aggressively using this opportunity to reform its former operational vivendi to become more relevant, robust, and resilient. Emphasis is shifting to hybrid delivery methods that utilize technology, new pedagogical methods, and increased written content.

One cannot predict the future security landscape, but robust and dynamic multinational cooperative education programs can better prepare us to respond to it.



Annual Report  
2020

# PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes

STUDY GROUP INFORMATION

Raphael Perl (Ed.)



09/2022  
Vienna, May 2022

Copyright, Production, Publisher:  
Republic of Austria / Federal Ministry of Defence  
Rossauer Lände 1  
1090 Vienna, Austria

Edited by:  
National Defence Academy  
Command  
Stiftgasse 2a  
1070 Vienna, Austria

In co-operation with:  
PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes  
Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

#### Study Group Information

Copyright:  
© Republic of Austria / Federal Ministry of Defence  
All rights reserved

May 2022  
ISBN 978-3-903359-52-9

Printing:  
ReproZ W 18-0477  
Stiftgasse 2a  
1070 Vienna Austria



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> - Keith W. Dayton	07
<b>Foreword</b> - Erich Csitkovits	09
<b>Foreword</b> - Raphael Perl	11
<hr/>	
WORKING GROUPS	
<b>Advanced Distributed Learning / Technical Standards Working Group</b> Dr. Greta Keremidchieva, Co-Chair	12
<b>Euro-Atlantic Conflict Studies Working Group</b> Dr. Carmen Sorina Rijnoveanu, Co-Chair And Major Jakob Brink Rasmussen, Co-Chair	18
<b>Combating Terrorism Working Group</b> Dr. Sajjan M. Gohel, Co-Chair And Dr. Peter Forster, Co-Chair	24
<b>Partnership For Peace Consortium Editorial Board</b> Prof. Sean S. Costigan, Editor-In-Chief	28
<b>Education Development Working Group</b> Dr. Alan Stolberg, Chair	34
<b>Emerging Security Challenges Working Group</b> Mr. Michael F. Gaul, Co-Chair, Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli, Co-Chair And Prof. Sean Costigan, Senior Advisor	40
<b>Regional Stability In The South Caucasus Study Group</b> Mr. Frederic Labarre, Co-Chair, And Mr. George Niculescu, Co-Chair	50
<b>Regional Stability In South East Europe Study Group</b> Dr. Filip Ejodus, Co-Chair, Dr. Predrag Jurekovic, Co-Chair And Dr. Sandro Knezovic, Co-Chair	56
<b>Security Sector Reform Working Group</b> Ms. Antje Fritz, Chair, Dr. Grazvydas Jasutis, Co-Chair	64
<b>Transatlantic Security Jam</b>	78
<b>Annex</b>	102





## Foreword from the Chairman

Keith W. Dayton  
Director, George C. Marshall Center

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

This year, the Partnership for Peace Consortium marked 22 years of security cooperation. The environment in which the Consortium was conceived was a very different one, where Europe was still in the early stages of adjusting to the political and security changes of the 1990s. Many of the original goals were accomplished. Despite this, the PfPC remains a remarkable organization. It continues to allow a unique approach to multinational collaboration—one that demonstrates successes which, quite frankly, other organizations wish to emulate.

At the same time, it is amazing to think that the Consortium's activities are sustained through a model of volunteer experts, coming from world-class defense and security institutes, each with their unique strengths and invaluable perspectives.

The result is a network of motivated experts, exhibiting both a breadth and depth of professional expertise not easily duplicated. As the world's security environment continues to change in unexpected ways, these expert networks—and the perspectives that can be shared through them—help to sustain security and mitigate threats for both stakeholder nations and partners.

As the Chairman of the PfPC Senior Advisory council for the last eleven years, I can attest that security cooperation through education works. The lessons shared generate mutual understanding and trust, develop lasting relationships in which partners can operate together, and strengthen a shared foundation for peace and stability.

LTG (ret.) Keith W. Dayton  
Director, George C. Marshall Center  
Chairman Senior Advisory Council PfPC





## Foreword from the Commandant

Erich Csitkovits, LTG  
Austrian National Defence Academy

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

The year 2020 marked an exceptional phase in the long-standing and successful cooperation between the Austrian National Defence Academy and the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes (PfPC). Never before in its more than two decades of existence had external factors so heavily influenced and hampered the joint projects of the PfPC. But especially in times of crises, the ability of members to adapt to stakeholders' and partners' needs as well as to identify new ways of action showcases the particular quality of an institution and justifies its existence.

The two Study Groups on Regional Stability in the South Caucasus and South East Europe constitute the main, but not the only part of the cooperative work between the Austrian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the PfPC. Due to the COVID-19 crisis which hit Europe in the spring of 2020, the workshops of the two study groups could not, as usual, take place in Austria or regionally. Despite the challenging circumstances the pandemic caused and continues to cause, it was possible to conduct several productive meetings in the virtual space. The study groups therefore had the ability to deal with a wide range of region-related issues such as the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the Western Balkan countries or the consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the second half of 2020. Looking at the fragile situation in these two regions, it is obvious that virtual meeting are only the second-best option. It is therefore vital to return to face-to-face-

formats as soon as possible in order to keep up the momentum.

Austria is a strong supporter of NATO's and the PfP Consortium's Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) and is convinced of the importance of joint activities in defence education. In this area we also witnessed setbacks and postponements and look forward to more tangible results in 2021.

Experts of the Austrian MoD participate in PfPC working and study group activities and profit from the invaluable network of expertise. The output of these projects over the course of two decades allow an optimistic outlook on future cooperation as well as the certainty that stakeholder's expectations will be more than fulfilled.

As Commandant of the Austrian National Defence Academy, I am very pleased to support the PfP Consortium in the editing and printing of the Annual Report 2020. I look forward to the year 2021 and hope that the members of the PfP-Consortium community will again be able to meet in person to continue their valuable work with further contributions by Austria.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erich Csitkovits', written in a cursive style.





## Foreword from the Executive Director

Dr. Raphael Perl  
Executive Director

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

The Partnership for Peace Consortium (PfP-Consortium) of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes is proud to present its annual report for 2020. Each of our eight working groups and the editorial board of our Connections journal shares information on their mission, goals, and accomplishments for the 2020 calendar year, as well as their plans and priorities for the future.

Despite COVID-19, the year 2020 opened strongly in terms of Consortium activities. The changing business landscape connected to COVID-19 provided an opportunity for the PfP-Consortium to re-validate the breadth and depth of its network and challenged its ability to engage with partners. In response, the Consortium adapted remarkably well, adopting virtual and so-called hybrid events in lieu of traditional conferences. From our Swiss-led Security Sector Reform (SSR) group that works on the parliamentary level, to our Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) group that brings together technical experts, the Consortium continued building upon its security-enhancing partnership activities at both working and policy levels. Impressive strides were also made in the Emerging Security Challenges Group through our German-funded Hybrid Warfare Curriculum as well. Throughout the year, the Consortium produced valuable training materials, to include reference curricula as well as research products such as our special edition of Connections Journal on the National Security Implications of COVID-19. In total, the PfP-Consortium executed 17 Defense Education Enhancement (DEEP) events and over 28 events, an

achievement of which the Consortium can be very proud.

Looking to the future, the focus of the PfP-Consortium should center on responding to great power competition with a special emphasis on regional areas such as the Balkans and greater Black Sea Area. As changes to the security landscape continue to accelerate and become more difficult to predict in these regions, multinational, cooperative institutions like the PfP-Consortium have much to offer in terms of engagement and knowledge production. We should leverage the multinational approach, and its unique strengths to target particular security issues involving multiple states or regions.

Key to the challenge facing us is to accurately analyze complex multinational issues, and then correctly apply the appropriate multinational approach—with full honesty about what things can and cannot be changed. To this end, the PfP-Consortium will continue to excel by applying its network of experts in a way that brings added value to nations that participate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raphael Perl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Raphael Perl  
Executive Director







# Advanced Distributed Learning/Technical Standards Working Group (ADL)

Greta Keremidchieva, Chair

## MISSION AND GOALS

The Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL)/Technical Standards Working Group's mission, as defined in the Strategic Vision for Further Development of the PfP-Consortium, is to leverage education technologies as a tool to support and promote a collaborative network of defense academies and to facilitate defense education interoperability.

The Group has been working to accomplish its specific tasks:

Implement partner nation use of technology and communication capabilities in both education and training.

Support and develop national ADL capabilities and skills.

Investigate and support the use of modern classroom training, to include virtual classrooms and "blended" learning solutions.

In terms of goals, the ADL/Technical Standards Working Group seeks to ensure that all interested PfP-Consortium countries and institutions know and understand the

benefits of using ADL as an alternative/supplementary approach to both education and training; that they have access to free content that focuses on defense and security policy education; that they have access to free open source tools to support content production and distribution; and that they have the opportunity to collaborate in the fields of content production and tool development, primarily with a view to lower the individual investments they have to make.

Finally, the efforts of the ADL/Technical Standards Working Group are specifically focused on "ADL capability building"

in countries and organizations for whom this area of knowledge is new. Providing the required infrastructure and expertise is a prerequisite to spreading e-learning and mobile learning content to meet PfP-Consortium and Partner learning objectives.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020**

The ADL/Technical Standards Working Group continued to implement its mission under the new conditions of COVID-19 pandemic. In-person workshops were replaced with monthly virtual meetings to share best practices regarding the most effective platforms and methods of teaching. Distance learning became the primary education tool; hence, the ADL WG maximized efforts in support of military schools. Isolation became an incentive for close online collaboration and increased level of creativity and inventiveness.

A number of Train the Trainer Program sessions with instructors from different nations were held online. These tutorials intended to create a certified pool of experts to popularize the functionalities and use of new platforms for education. Part of this training was conducted in collaboration with the DEEP ADL Team.

On 24-25 September 2020, the PfP-Consortium ADL WG sponsored and organized a hybrid physical/virtual event that brought together about 40 experts from over 15 countries, as well as NATO ACT and US Government ADL Initiative representatives from Washington DC. Agenda topics included Lessons learned from transforming residential learning programs to distance learning programs; Evaluation of training collaboration tools – efficiency, usability, security; Opportunities for ADL in exercises with a focus on VIKING 22; Leverage ADL capabilities to reach partners in Central Asia and Africa, among others. Participants reviewed modern e-learning standards and technologies, shared their national accomplishments and discussed opportunities for defense education and defense institution building cooperation under current COVID-19 situation.

The Advanced Distributed Learning Working Group in conjunction with the NATO International Staff coordinated and supported an online conference called “COVID-19 Defense Education/Virtual Best Practices and Lessons Learned” with almost 200 registered participants. The event revolved around a series of smaller “break-out” working groups which addressed particular disciplines or areas of interest and presented themes and lessons to the larger group. This conference was a part of an important effort for Consortium stakeholders to not only advance the capabilities within their own institutions but to export expertise to military institutions within Partner nations in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa.

The PfP-Consortium ADL/Technical Standards Working Group also supports a 10-day Advanced Distributed Learning “Design, Develop, Deploy” course organized by the NATO School, Oberammergau, Germany. NATO School Oberammergau offered two hybrid iterations of the ADL Working Group-instructed course in 2020. The course covers all aspects of ADL generation from initial review meetings to loading onto a server for deployment. The course is offered to all NATO Allies and Partner nations and cooperates with the NATO Defense Education Enhancement Program.

Besides the key events mentioned, members of the ADL Working Group participated virtually in the Annual NATO Training Technology Conference (NTTC), the ADL Global Partnership Directors’ Meeting, iFEST, eLSE Conference in Romania and many others.

#### **OUTCOMES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS**

The mission of the ADL/Technical Standards Working Group is to assist Partner nations to incorporate modern technologies and ways of delivering education. Under the pandemic circumstances in 2020, this became more important than ever before. The entire training and education process, all conferences, meetings and workshops were held online.

The ADL WG sent out questionnaires to identify national ADL capacity and to provide support where needed. It is encouraging to see that many of the participating nations have developed robust ADL capabilities, established their own ADL centers and are now assisting other nations. ADL WG representatives participated as presenters or panel moderators in the national ADL Conferences of Ukraine and Georgia.

Ongoing cooperation with the ADL Communities of practice is growing. Relationships with NATO Training Group for Individual Training & Education Development (NTG IT & ED) are maturing based on common goals, common projects and synergy for the benefit of both parties. One such project is, for example, the ADL Handbook, available through NATO ACT.

PfP-Consortium ADL Working Group experts are part of ongoing multinational collaborative projects focusing on Language Testing in accordance with STANAG 6001

and Computer Adaptive Language Testing with the National Defense University, Ukraine. These are of crucial importance since testing affects the Armed Forces of Ukraine on a large scale. This was the first time tests were moderated online. It is an excellent example of leveraging ADL technology for testing purposes, and an example of multinational and inter-institutional partnership with a tangible product.

Cooperation with the NATO International Staff in Brussels continues to grow. PfP-Consortium ADL WG experts provide support to NATO DEEP e-Academy “E-teacher and e-instructor within a new learning environment caused by COVID-19” program (ongoing project).

Based on the Training Needs Analysis, conducted at NATO ACT, experts from the ADL WG developed a NATO Writing Strategies online course which focuses on NATO writing styles and genres, and would target Level 3 writing proficiency IAW STANAG 6001.



---

## THE WAY AHEAD

---

The PfP-Consortium ADL/Technical Standards Working Group was established in 1999 and will continue to work with NATO and Partner nations to implement its mission. Under the framework of the Partnership for Peace Consortium, the ADL Working Group unites e-learning specialists and subject matter experts from various NATO and Partner institutions to work towards a common objective – the enhancement of defense education capabilities.

A strategic goal for 2021 will be the ongoing support to military schools in terms of distance learning technology, familiarization of faculty and students with its usability, and training on how to effectively teach distance learning courses.

### **PRIORITIES FOR 2021 AND BEYOND**

Integrate interested members and Partner nations into the ADL Community of practice, help them develop and expand their own national e-learning capabilities.

Support the Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) with ADL expertise.

Execute two CDT-Training courses and organize two ADL/ Technical Standards Working Group workshops per year.

Engage in multinational exercises within the five-year Roadmap for implementing blended learning.

Continue ADL capability building efforts in more countries and organizations.

Continue work on ongoing English language testing projects with NDU Kiyev, Ukraine.

Participate in DEEP conference on 12-14 April 2021 to develop a NATO publication containing best practices and lessons learned.

Collaboration with other PfP-Consortium Working Groups.

The PfP-Consortium Advanced Distributed Learning WG is part of a five-year Roadmap for implementing and improving blended learning across a series of multinational exercises – Maturing ADL Exercises FY 19-22. The simulation and training activities in VIKING prepare future partners to perform contemporary staff operations, as well as to participate in coalition operational environments. The involvement of the PfP-Consortium ADL WG in these activities can invigorate new approaches to exercise and training that increase performance and reduce costs—an effect true for both PfP-Consortium stakeholders, Allies and Partners.

PfP-Consortium ADL WG supports interoperability with NATO, and cooperation in the arena of ADL provides a medium through which to develop strategic outreach to developing nations in Europe, Asia, and Africa. The ADL WG also cooperates with the US ADL Initiative and continues to disseminate new developments, as well as to promote innovation through the latest approaches of its diverse members, resulting in benefits for the entire Community of practice.

The ADL WG is chaired by Dr. Greta Keremidchieva (Rakovski National Defense College, Bulgaria) and Mr. Paul Thurstall (NATO ACT).

## **APPENDICES**

### **KEY INSTITUTIONS PARTNERED WITH IN 2020**

Armenia Ministry of Defense · Bulgaria Rakovski National Defense College · Estonian Defense Forces · Estonia National Defense College · Georgia National Defense Academy DIB School, Tbilisi, Georgia · George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies Latvian National Defense Academy · Lithuanian Armed Forces · Moldova Military Academy of the Armed Forces · Romania “Carol I” National Defense University · Sweden Military Academy · Ukraine National Defense University · NATO Allied Command Transformation NATO School Oberammergau · NATO Defense College





# Euro-Atlantic Conflict Studies Working Group (CSWG)

Carmen Sorina Rijnoveanu and Jakob Brink Rasmussen, Co-chairs of CSWG

## MISSION AND GOALS

The CSWG was created in 1999 to establish, maintain and enhance a regular, multilateral, and open exchange of information, viewpoints and ideas between official military history and defense institutions through annual thematic conferences that examine historical determinants of national military strategy, policy and objectives, as well as the historical context of current international and regional affairs.

Secondly, the CSWG improves and strengthens defense and military education and research, by enhancing cooperation between institutions and nations.

Thirdly, the CSWG helps create a community and network of experts in the fields of military history, defense and security studies by providing historical background to common issues and practices from an official history perspective.

Fourth, the CSWG helps produce academic curricula aiming at supporting professional military education and increase greater intellectual and professional interoperability

within and between NATO members and partner countries.

Military historians as well as experts on foreign affairs from participating nations come together to share ideas concerning important events, and to gain an appreciation of differences in national perspectives with respect to them. This open sharing of opinion and historical research assists the different nations in building trust and moving away from confrontation and toward a lasting peace and stability.

As a Central Europe representative wrote in 2003, this working group has played “a



pioneering role of driving the Central Europeans back to a multilateral forum, facing their own controversial military and political history. I think that if this working group does not do it, nobody will do it.”

#### HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020

- According to the agreed agenda, the CSWG planned to organize its 20th annual conference in May 18-22, in Košice, Slovakia. The event was to be organized jointly by Center of Military History and Social Science from Potsdam, Germany and the Institute of Military History, Ministry of Defense of Slovakia.
- Due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic crisis, the group leadership together with the co-organizing institutions decided initially to postpone the conference, and later on to move it to 2021.
- It is for the first time in 20 years since the CSWG was established as part of the PfP-Consortium, when the annual conference was cancelled for safety reasons despite the efforts made by our colleagues from Germany and Slovakia to keep the conference even in conditions of emergency.
- The cancellation was considered the only option and all members of the group expressed their consent.

#### OUTCOMES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS

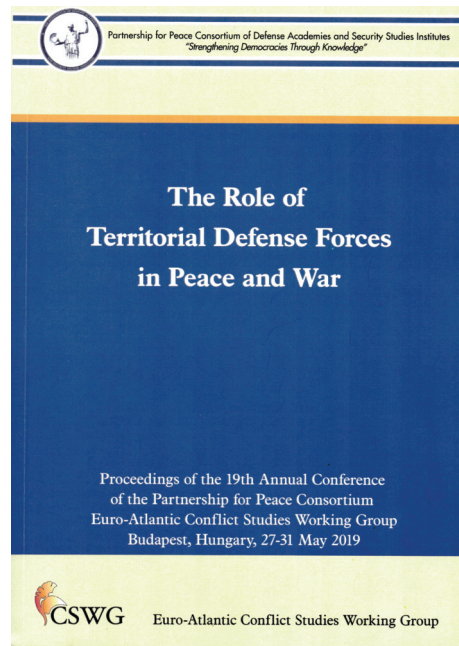
##### Conference Volume

- The proceedings of the 19th annual conference of the CSWG was published: Zoltan Jobbagy, Viktor Andahazi Szeghy, Fredrik Erikson, Peter A. Kiss (eds), *The Role of Territorial Defense Forces in Peace and War*, Budapest, 2020
- The volume includes 18 papers published by authors from 15 countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, United States of America
- The conference volume has been published with the financial support of Swedish Defense University

- The online version is available on the PfP-Consortium website

#### Reference Curriculum

- The CSWG is willing to contribute, based on request, to the development of Hybrid Warfare Reference Curriculum under the coordination of ESCWG by providing inputs on specific historical case studies
- The CSWG has developed the Counterinsurgency (COIN) Reference Curriculum (finalized in 2017) which is currently available on both the PfP-Consortium and NATO websites, with planned translation into Russian, French and Arabic. The Curriculum can be accessed at <https://www.pfp-consortium.org/index.php/PfP-Consortium-products/education-curricula/item/324-counterinsurgency-coin-reference-curriculum>. and [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2017\\_09/20170904\\_1709-counterinsurgency-rc.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_09/20170904_1709-counterinsurgency-rc.pdf) ;





---

## WAY AHEAD

---

Following a series of discussions with our partners from Slovakia and Germany, responsible of organizing the CSWG annual conference in 2021, and with our partners from Netherlands and Poland, responsible of organizing the CSWG annual conference in 2022, it was decided to change the schedule of planned activities as follows:

### **I. CSWG 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 20th CSWG annual conference will take place May 2021, in Slovakia. The exact date will be further settled in accordance with the evolution of the pandemics situation.

The theme of the conference is: Peace to War, from War to Peace/Conflict Initiation and Termination: implications for Policy Makers.

Draft concept: The conference research goal is to look deeper into the dynamics that influence decisions for entering and quitting armed conflict. Both military and non-military factors are to be considered (societal culture, propaganda, military traditions, resilience capacity, etc.). Historical experiences can provide relevant examples and lessons that may help to better adapt the national defense systems to cope with current and future challenges.

Recent military developments have highlighted new trends in warfare that requires new perspectives and approaches that may help to get a better understating of the nature of war, its features and its management prospects. Looking back at the last two centuries, the key questions are: Is war terminated or just prolonged with other means, tactics and strategies? To what extent can war be prevented and how can it be terminated in order to generate peace? How can peace be managed to avoid war?

The key thematic areas to be addressed will include the following and other connected topics:

Great power competition as a driver of war. Why do wars start and why do they end?

The role of alliances and coalition warfare in the initiation and termination of war;

The impact of non-military factors in shaping the decisions of policy makers concerning war and peace: propaganda and disinformation; role of archetypes in conflict initiation; the role of public opinion, national resilience, etc.

Public support for war - how does society influence the political and military decisions? The impact of military culture and societal approaches to war and peace;

Economy and war – forecast vs reality;

Changing typologies of war, reshaping peace and building resilience (e.g. hybrid war, cyber warfare, internal disturbances, etc.);

War endings and challenges of peace: from the major conflicts of the 20th century to current military interventions. Factors to be considered: army demobilization, post-conflict reconstruction (military and non-military factors), re-integration of the military, etc.;

Resources, damages, population changes, migration, ecology.

Co-organizing institutions/countries:

Center of Military History and Social Science from Potsdam, Germany

Institute of Military History, Ministry of Defense, Slovakia

Financial arrangements:

The overall costs of the conference will be covered by Germany and Slovakia, as co-orga-

nizing countries. The two partner institutions will be also responsible with coordinating the administrative/logistical arrangements of the conference.

As with the previous conferences, there will be also a registration fee worth 100 EUR to be paid by all participants. This will be used to cover additional conference costs.

The costs of international transportation and accommodation will be covered by the participants/sending institutions.

For participants from partner countries, support will be provided on a case-by-case basis.

## **II.CSWG 2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 21st CSWG annual conference is planned to take place in Gdynia, Poland.

The theme of the conference is: „Special Operations in Past and Present. Implications for policy makers”

Draft concept: The conference research goal is to exchange of views and provide inputs, based on military history case studies, on the role and significance of special operations in the history of warfare. Issues to be addressed: role of special operations in counter-insurgency, covert operations, intelligence and mobility operations, unconventional warfare, etc. an important research goal is to provide inputs on the topic-related issues that may have relevance for decision-makers: what role SOF could play to meet the challenges of an increasing unpredictable environment?

Target audience: There are approximately 35 participants expecting to attend the annual conference from both NATO and PfP countries.





# Combating Terrorism Working Group (CTWG)

Dr. Sajjan M. Gohel, Co-Chair, Dr. Peter Forster, Co-Chair and Mr. Tyler Zurisko, Deputy Chair

## MISSION AND GOALS

The CTWG supports international security by: Developing customized ctrc programmes as a hands-on professional military education (PME) learning tool; Training cadres of pme instructors from defence colleges and security studies institutes; Assisting pme institutions with the development of tailored counter-terrorism curriculums; Implementing pme instructional courses and workshops focused on improving counter-terrorism capacity; Conducting defence capacity building (DCB) and increasing interoperability with allies and partners.

The CTWG's diverse membership consists of international security experts, seasoned ct and defence practitioners, and scholars from across eurasia and north america. This is unique in the CT and professional military education (PME) communities.

## COUNTER-TERRORISM REFERENCE CURRICULUM (CTRC) OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES:

### Objectives

Define terrorism in theoretical & practical contexts;

Describe the impact of terrorism from current perspectives;

Promote effective tools for developing combating terrorism strategies.

### Outcomes

Improve national capacity to develop/implement effective ct strategies;

Enhance international cooperation in combating terrorism;

Develop cadre of ct specialists with applicable skills.



## OUTCOMES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ ACHIEVEMENTS

On 12 June 2020, at an online event, NATO launched its first ever *Counter-Terrorism Reference Curriculum* (CTRC). It supports interested allies and partner countries in enhancing their capacities to develop national skills and improve counter-terrorism strategies.

The goal was to produce a nuanced and broad approach to understanding the concepts of terrorism and counter-terrorism with the intention to anticipate future challenges.

This curriculum aims to address terrorism and counter-terrorism with sufficient depth that will enable all partners, regardless of experience, to develop a more complete picture of the issues and challenges.

The CTRC takes into full consideration national, regional and international security policy implications. The CTRC, whether it is from a block, module or theme level, provides a multidisciplinary approach and can be tailored to suit the specific needs of any defense institution or academy.

The Curriculum will also serve as a reference document to address partner nation defence educational institution requirements and

will provide helpful guidelines for relevant existing NATO courses. Drawing on historical examples, the CTRC provides an overview of terrorist ideologies, motivations and methods, as well as contemporary counter-terrorism practices and potential future projections.

The NATO Counter-Terrorism Reference Curriculum is the result of close cooperation between the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) and NATO's Counter-Terrorism Section, as well as the CTWG. Over 100 experts from nations across five continents, including from Tunisia, Jordan and Mauritania, as well as multiple international organizations contributed to the writing, drafting, and editing of the final product.

The CTRC is a unique collaborative effort as it involved academics and researchers, as well as practitioners from governmental bodies, law enforcement and the armed forces to create this document. Despite COVID-19, it was successfully published in June 2020.

Dr. Antonio Missiroli, NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges and Dr. John Manza, NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Operations both launched the CTRC online along with the CTWG Co-Chair Dr. Sajjan M. Gohel

and Colonel Firas Karadsheh of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

NATO's Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) will work in tandem with the CTWG to help partners who request support in implementing tailored versions of the curriculum for their professional military education institutions. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and reflecting other longer-term trends,



NATO and the CTWG have begun work to implement the Counter-Terrorism Reference Curriculum as a distance course, available to all partners who wish to use it in their institutions. The curriculum reflects both the PfP-Consortium and NATO's innovative best.

Between 8 to 9 September 2020, the CTWG hosted a symposium in Berlin, Germany along with participants from across the Atlantic. Attendees included NATO, OSCE, Interpol and Germany's defence and security communities. The purpose was to discuss and exchange ideas on how the CTRC could be utilised by defence institutions during the pandemic.

The main takeaways were for enhancing opportunities for cooperation on intelligence, criminal investigations, defence

capacity building, as well as increasing collective understanding of how terrorist propaganda effects the internet and the radicalisation process. Also of importance, was the need to see how COVID-19 had affected the ability of terrorists to plot, plan and recruit, and how terrorist organizations were taking advantage of the lockdowns across the world.

The key target audiences for the CTRC were also identified as:

[Mid- to senior-level military officers](#)

[Security services](#)

[Intelligence community](#)

[Border security](#)

[Civilian governmental officials from foreign, defence and interior ministries](#)

[Law enforcement.](#)

---

## THE WAY AHEAD

---

Partner with NATO's DEEP to make the CTRC an effective online tool providing distance learning courses. This is especially valid in the COVID-19 period but has long-term uses too.

Work with the National Defence University of Ukraine, Odessa Military Academy, ADA University and the Royal Jordanian National Defense College.

Focus on programmes and policies to build allies and partner countries CT capacity and interoperability.

Develop and deliver customized CTRC programmes as an applied Professional Military Education (PME) learning tool to enable comprehensive counter-terrorism Defence Capacity Building (DCB).

Support the delivery of the CTRC in collaboration with Defence Colleges and Security Studies Institutes through SMEs familiar with the curriculum's content, structure, and learning objectives.

Ensure hands-on applied learning tools for Professional Military Education (PME) serve as a vehicle to teach the CTRC and enable a comprehensive CT defence capacity building (DCB) operational approach.

Work with NATO to organise and teach PME that embrace a CT DCB operational approach, such as the Defense Against Terrorism (DAT) course at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany.

### CTWG POINTS OF CONTACT

Sajjan Gohel, CTWG Co-Chair, Asia-Pacific Foundation, [sm@apfoundation.org](mailto:sm@apfoundation.org) • Peter Forster, CTWG Co-Chair, Pennsylvania State University, [pkf1@psu.edu](mailto:pkf1@psu.edu) • Tyler Zurisko, CTWG Deputy Chair, U.S. Department of Defence, [tyler.j.zurisko.civ@mail.mil](mailto:tyler.j.zurisko.civ@mail.mil)







# Partnership for Peace Consortium Editorial Board for Connections: The Quarterly Journal

Sean S. Costigan, Chair

## MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the PFP-Consortium Editorial Board (EB) is to produce high quality scholarly, policy-relevant publications that represent and inform members of the PFP-Consortium and its partner nations. To meet that end, the EB's goal is to publish the best research from and for the Consortium through our quarterly journal, Connections.

---

Connections is the most widely circulated physical product of the Consortium. Additionally, Connections is also available in digital form via <https://connections-qj.org> and other online presences. Usage of the journal's website has increased. Returning site visitors hail from over 130 countries. The Russian edition of the journal is downloaded at roughly half the rate of the English version, which is an excellent indication of how well the EB and the PFP-Consortium are reaching key target audiences. Online readership has increased in China, which now has the second largest national readership of Connections. Russia and The Philippines have also

seen a marked increase in readership.

Each print run of Connections produces 1,400 copies of the journal (1,000 in English, 400 in Russian), which in turn are sent to over 800 institutions in 58 countries. The work of the editorial board is done around the world, with coordination and management in Germany and the United States and publishing of Connections in Bulgaria. The editorial board thanks EUCOM for its continued and gracious support.

**The PfP-Consortium Editorial Board is a working board comprised of the following members:**

Sean Costigan  
Executive Editor, George C. Marshall Center

Torsten Stauffer  
Managing Editor, George C. Marshall Center

Aida Alymbaeva  
Intl University of Central Asia, Kazakhstan

Pal Dunay  
George C. Marshall Center, Germany

Philipp Fluri  
Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Switzerland

Piotr Gawliczek  
Cuiavian University, Poland

Hans-Joachim Giessmann  
Berghof Foundation, Germany

Dinos A. Kerigan-Kyrou  
Joint Command & Staff Course, Military College, Ireland

Chris Pallaris  
i-Intelligence GmbH, Switzerland

Tamara Pataraiia  
Civil Council of Defense and Security, Georgia

Todor Tagarev  
Bulgarian Academy of Science, Bulgaria

Eneken Tikk  
Cyber Policy Institute, Finland

Juergen Kotzian  
Austrian Armed Forces

Thomas Wood

**HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020**

All four editions of 2020 have been published:

Winter 2020 – National Cyber Defense Policies

Spring 2020 – The Security Impacts Of The COVID-19 Pandemic

Summer 2020 – The Evolving Concept Of Resilience

Fall 2020 – Security Implications Of The Concept Of Resilience

All formerly delayed editions from the past have been published PfP-Consortium

The Editorial Board Meeting took place virtually on December, 10th 2020.

Connections maintained its standing in SCOPUS, JSTOR and CIAO, placing it among the best security journals in the field.

Started in 2019 and continued in 2020, the Connections content is being syndicated on the PfP-Consortium's main website.

LTC Marcel Szalai (Germany) left the staff of the PfP-Consortium Secretariat end of June 2020 and was replaced by LTC Torsten Stauffer.

---

## WAY AHEAD

---

**PLANNED PUBLICATIONS FOR 2021 ARE:**

Winter 2021 – Intelligence Reform

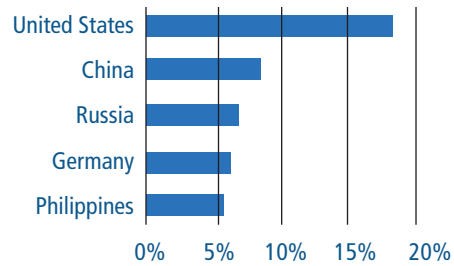
Spring 2021 – COVID-19 and International Security

Summer 2021 – Cybersecurity after Summer 2021 – Hybrid Threats Edition, Security Edition and Leadership Edition

#### TOP 10 USERS BY COUNTRY

1	United States	9026
2	China	4173
3	Russia	3366
4	Germany	3074
5	Philippines	2755
6	United Kingdom	2586
7	Ukraine	2150
8	India	1385
9	Bulgaria	985
10	Canada	848

#### SESSIONS BY COUNTRY



#### USERS FROM 178 COUNTRIES ACCESSED CONNECTIONS, COMING FROM:

11	Turkey	819
12	France	814
15	Poland	648
18	Azerbaijan	602
21	Pakistan	549
24	Kazakhstan	430
25	Georgia	370
26	Romania	366
31	Belarus	326
32	Ireland	296
37	Switzerland	263
39	Czechia	254
40	Hungary	246
46	Austria	215
47	UAE	204
48	Kyrgyzstan	202
49	Iran	195
52	Finland	180
53	Algeria	176
54	Egypt	172
55	Serbia	168
58	Uzbekistan	160

#### THE MOST VIEWED ARTICLES IN 2020

Article	Author	Views
The Role of Teaching History for a Nation-Building Process in a Post-Conflict Society: The Case of Macedonia	Biljana Popovska	2955
The Structure and Function of Communication in Society	Harold D. Lasswell	1791
Terrorism and Organized Crime	Sam Mullins; James K. Wither	1089
Конфликт в Косово, рассмотренный в концептуальных рамках заинтересованных сторон	Анета Новаковска-Кристман; Марзена Жаковска	675
Relevance Lost: The Rise and Fall of Management Accounting	Thomas H. Johnson; Robert S. Kaplan	594
Применимость теории войны Клаузевица к разрешению современных конфликтов	Ясмин Чаич	510
The Relevance of Clausewitz's Theory of War to Contemporary Conflict Resolution	Jasmin Čajic	482
The Digital Universe in 2020: Big Data, Bigger Digital Shadows, and Biggest Growth in the Far East	John Gantz; David Reinsel	445
Hybrid War: High-tech, Information and Cyber Conflicts	Yuriy Danyk; Tamara Maliarchuk; Chad Briggs	383
Beyond Propaganda: Soviet Active Measures in Putin's Russia	Steve Abrams	331

#### PRIORITIES FOR 2021 INCLUDE:

Improving the use of online assets and social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, GlobalNet, videos, ebooks, and podcasts).

- Promote the increased use of the journal for teaching.
- Increase the participation of GCMC Alumni, NATO Centers of Excellence and equivalent Partner Nation Institutions.
- Extend the reach of the journal through improved academic citation and ranking through services such as Google Scholar and SCOPUS.
- Promote Connections at international security conferences and to research libraries.







# Education Development Working Group (EDWG)

Alan Stolberg, Chair

## MISSION AND GOALS

The EDWG contributes to the professionalization of the officer corps, NCO corps and civilian defense officials of NATO Partner countries with the intent to make their defense education institutions compatible with Euro-Atlantic standards and values. The EDWG currently supports sixteen nations. The Working Group's efforts are framed within the context of NATO's Partnership Cooperation Plans (Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP), Annual National Programs (ANP), Individual Partnership Cooperation Programs (IPCP), the Education and Training for Defence Reform Initiative (EfR) and the U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense's priorities for Building Partner Capacity and Institution Capacity Building.

The working group focuses on three core elements of partner needs in defense education:

Development of curricula utilized in the education and training of modern armed forces.

Teaching and learning methods that match best practices in use in Euro-Atlantic Defense Education and training institutions.

The organization and administration of military education institutions and systems.

The EDWG conducts three programs with-

in the framework of the country specific Defence Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) for the defense education institutions in each supported country to execute these elements:

Defense educator workshops to assist faculty development with modern teaching methodologies,

The crafting of reference curricula in a variety of subjects that can be utilized by any of the defense education institutions, and NCO edu-



cation support specifically designed to assist the implementation of the nco professional military education reference curriculum and other associated nco professional development activity.

For each participating country currently supported by the PfP Consortium (Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan), the Working Group has established a Defence Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) executed by Euro-Atlantic defense education experts in a variety of fields. Each DEEP program is based on validated, demand-driven requirements from the partner nation. At the same time, the DEEP program will endeavor through dialogue and encouragement to influence supported partner educators in the direction of the following DEEP objectives:

Guide and mentor reforms in professional and military education, both in individual defense education institutions and in a defense-wide holistic approach to professional military education.

Promote learner-centered education to support critical thinking skills and innovative use of instructional technologies.

Encourage and enable the use of modern learning methods that promote both depth of learning and ready application through practice and experience.

Assist in the development of curricula where these methods can be employed in support of partner objectives contained in their Partnership Cooperation Plans with NATO or bilateral programs with the U.S.

Support administrative and managerial reform in partner schools.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020**

The following list demonstrates the success of the EDWG's efforts.

- Despite the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID pandemic that began in March 2020, the EDWG was able to continue much of its

work virtually with the technical support of both the NATO International Staff and the PfPC Operations Staff. This included the conduct of traditional DEEP curriculum and faculty development workshops, initial DEEP site survey scoping visits, annual DEEP program reviews, reference curricula drafting sessions, and the annual Defence Education Clearing House and EDWG meetings.

- The recently published Cyber Security reference curriculum is being fully introduced in Iraq, Morocco, North Macedonia, Poland, Tunisia, and Ukraine. A new Counterterrorism reference curriculum was published and is being introduced in Ukraine. Decisions were also made to draft three new reference curricula components, two complete reference curricula, one on Leadership and Ethics and the other on Hybrid War, and a module on Officer/NCO Relations as an update of the Generic Officer Professional Military Education Reference Curriculum; all beginning work in 2020. In addition, a decision was made to update the existing "Cybersecurity Reference Curriculum" with work to begin in 2021. "The Counterterrorism Reference Curriculum" will also be the first reference curriculum that is transformed into a distance/on-line learning course.

- The Defense Educator faculty development effort remains the most requested component of DEEP. The Master Instructor Program, designed to develop DEEP-partner school pedagogy specialists that will have the ability to train their own incoming faculty with the most modern teaching methodologies, is being developed or has been requested in a number of DEEP countries (Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iraq, North Macedonia, Tunisia, and Ukraine).

- Partner nation defense education institutions are continuing to request DEEP support for the creation or expansion of entire new DEEP-supported courses oriented on specific subjects. These multi-hour courses are either being taught for the first time or newly under development: Strategic Leadership and Strategic and Defense Planning (Afghanistan); Building Integrity, Defense Planning and Management and Strategic Leadership (Armenia); Information Warfare and Cyber Security (Georgia); Civil-Military Relations, Leadership and Ethics, Logistics, Strategic Planning, and Western Operational Art (Kazakhstan); Operational



Planning (Mauritania); Cyber Security, Counterterrorism, and Leadership (Serbia); Cyber Security, Leadership, and Peacekeeping (Tunisia); Cyber Security, Leadership, and Logistics (Ukraine); Leadership (Uzbekistan).

- The DEEP NCO Education support program continues to expand with the development of new courses and faculty development in Afghanistan, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine.
- Additional PME faculty personnel from partner countries (e.g., Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Republic of Moldova, Tunisia, and Ukraine) are continuing to serve as DEEP activity providers in greater numbers.
- The ninth NATO Defense Education Clearing House was executed virtually in 2020 and the long-term clearing house process remains fully institutionalized.
- All DEEP country monitoring and evaluation analysis and country Strategic Plans continue to be updated and published on an annual basis.

#### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION: SPECIFIC 2020 OUTCOMES AND IMPACT**

**AFGHANISTAN:** Master Instructor Program near complete. NCO Academy program ongoing.

**IMPACT:** Supports the transition of the Afghan Armed Forces to a military framed by NATO standards.

**ARMENIA:** Armenian instructor team trained to teach Building Integrity (BI) at 4 different PME schools (National Defence Research University, Military Institute, Aviation Military Institute, NCO School). NCO support became key request for DEEP support. Curriculum development support continues for National Defence Research University. No activity since Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was reinitiated.

**IMPACT:** Supports policy to shift Armenia from a total Russian reliance towards Euro-Atlantic standards and support.

**AZERBAIJAN:** Master Instructor Program near complete, Distance Learning capacity created, Higher Military School support continued.

**IMPACT:** Reinforces efforts to align the

Azerbaijani Armed Forces with Euro-Atlantic doctrine and processes, to include the concept of critical thinking.

**BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA:** Command and Staff Course curriculum review completed, Master Instructor Program planned, NCO Advanced and Intermediate courses curriculum reviews completed, NCO instructor training ongoing, NCO Leadership curriculum development, English Language Training instructor development, distance learning education development all ongoing.

**IMPACT:** Supports the policy goal to professionalize the Armed Forces of Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFBiH) and catalyze the three factions to work closer together.

**GEORGIA:** Mission Command concepts integrated into Leadership curricula, NCO education curriculum and faculty development continued. Will support DEEP development of a new Hybrid War Reference Curriculum.

**IMPACT:** New curriculum implementation reinforces efforts to align the Georgian Armed Forces with Euro-Atlantic doctrine and processes.

**IRAQ:** Curriculum Review for Defence College complete, MOD Security Sector Training School Basic Faculty Development/Master Instructor Program support beginning, Defence College/War College exploratory meetings with allied counterpart schools complete, NCO development planned, English Language instructor training programmed.

**IMPACT:** Supports the policy goal to make the Iraqi military interoperable and move them closer to NATO standards.

**JORDAN:** New DEEP program being initiated to support the NCO Training Center.

**IMPACT:** Supports professionalization of the Jordanian Armed Forces and ability to be interoperable with the Euro-Atlantic militaries.

**KAZAKHSTAN:** DEEP-supported multi-hour NDU courses on Western Operational Art, Logistics, and Civil-Military Relations being expanded and a new course on Strategic Planning being developed.

**IMPACT:** New curriculum supports efforts to align Kazakh Armed Forces with Euro-Atlantic doctrine and processes, reinforces democratic principles, and supports capacity to deploy on UN peacekeeping missions.

**MAURITANIA:** Planning for additional Staff College curriculum and faculty development, and DEEP expansion to the G5 Sahel Defence College.

**IMPACT:** New curriculum supports desire for Mauritanian Armed Forces adherence to NATO standards and greater ability to counter regional insurgent threats.

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA:** Military Academy PhD programme near complete, training of distance learning personnel underway, and continued development of NCO Intermediate Course.

**IMPACT:** Continued utilization of transformed curriculum and intent to professionalize the NCO Corps advances Euro-Atlantic standards for the Armed Forces.

**MONGOLIA:** Planning completed for virtual NCO education support; NCO Leadership Courses Curricula Review initiated.

**IMPACT:** Support Mongolian Armed Forces transition to a military framed by NATO standards.

**MOROCCO:** Cyber Security continued. NCO education support initiated.

**IMPACT:** Supports desire for Moroccan Armed Forces adherence to NATO standards.

**NORTH MACEDONIA:** Support for Senior NCO course curriculum development continues after March 2020 accession to formal NATO membership.

**IMPACT:** Supports requirement for North Macedonian Armed Forces conformity to NATO member standards.

**SERBIA:** Distance Learning instructor support initiated; previous Serbian suspension of military cooperation has been recently removed.

**IMPACT:** Continued professionalization of the NCO Corps and other PME processes furthers adaptation of Euro-Atlantic standards in the Serbian Armed Forces.

**TUNISIA:** War College curriculum development continued for Cyber Security and Post Conflict Stability Operations, Basic Faculty development, and Distance Learning support ongoing. Staff College Contingency Planning curriculum development initiated.

**IMPACT:** Will contribute to adaptation of NATO doctrine and procedures for the Tunisian Armed Forces.

**UKRAINE:** Remains the largest of all DEEPs; to varying degrees involves multiple Ukraine PME institutions. NDU war college and staff college level course transformation remains ongoing. First time Basic Officer Courses for officer-candidates with a university degree and Career Courses for captains being taught or developed. New MOD Defence Management School for ministry personnel/other security sector ministries now operational. NATO-standard Troop Leading Procedures being taught to every land forces cadet and the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) for every Ukrainian captain and above. U.S. West Point Leadership program being adapted by the Land Forces Academy. Multiple new distance learning courses created and being taught by the NDU and provided to other Ukraine military schools. Significant English Language Training emphasis. All NCO leadership courses continue to be refined.

**IMPACT:** Will contribute to adaptation of NATO doctrine and procedures for the Ukraine Armed Forces.

**UZBEKISTAN:** Support for development of new Leadership course remains ongoing for the Armed Forces Academy (AFA - war college/staff college-equivalent).

**IMPACT:** The willingness to request Leadership curriculum development support provides the most significant opportunity to date to support reducing reliance on Russian education approaches and expanding Uzbek adaptation of NATO doctrine and procedures.

---

## THE WAY AHEAD

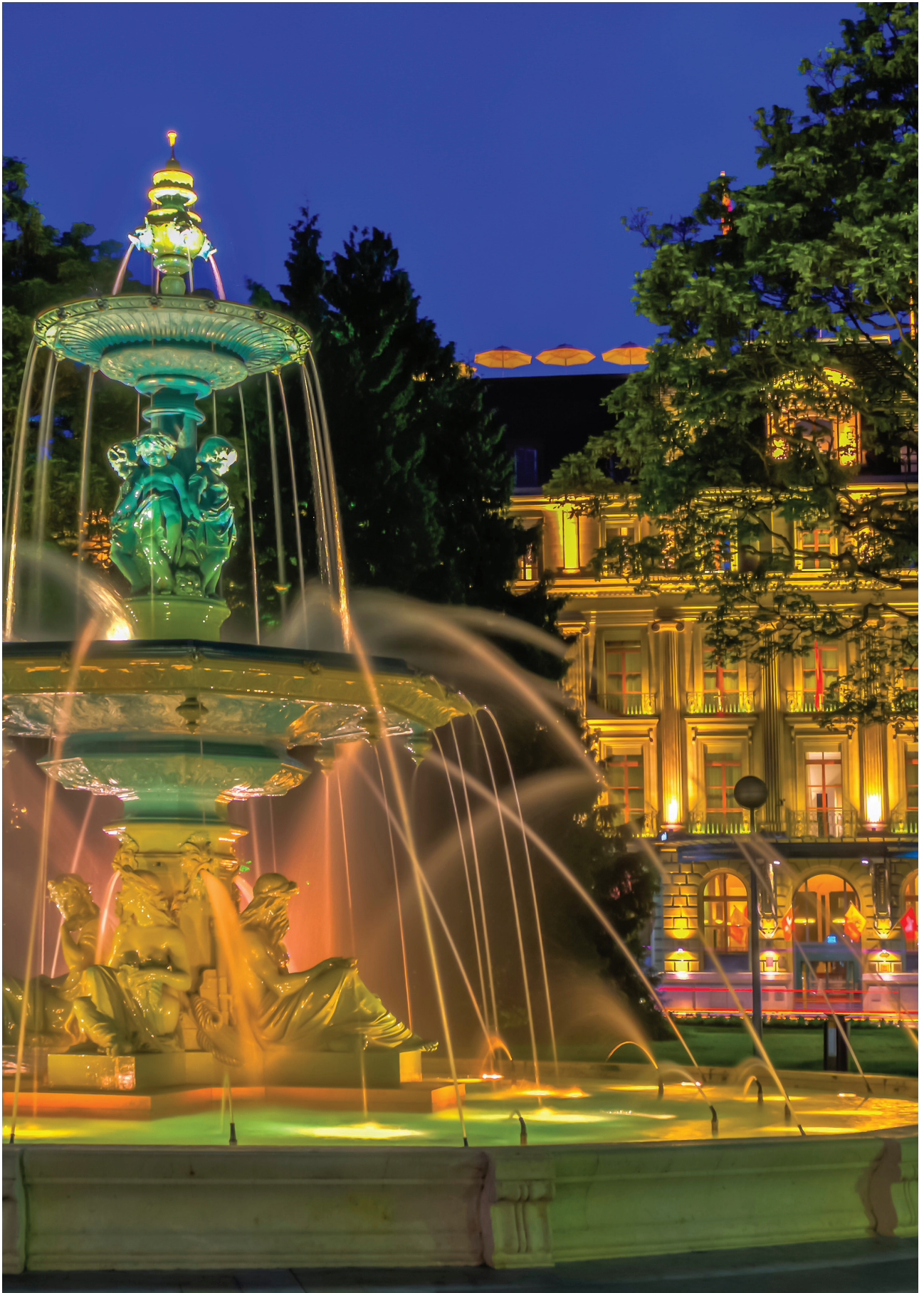
---

As with previous years, the deep concept is continuing to mature and expand its appeal throughout Europe and Eurasia, and beyond into additional parts of North Africa and the Middle East. Modernization compatible with Euro-Atlantic defense education standards remains a goal worth pursuing. The management and orchestration of sixteen different deep programs must be conducted very carefully to ensure that strategic objectives combined with analysis of monitoring and evaluation will continue to drive the direction of each program of cooperation as it matures. As the number of DEEP programs increase, so too does the administrative burden. In this time of more austere resources, each of the more mature programs must be constantly monitored for determination when it is time to begin reduction or elimination – based on when a particular defense education institution has absorbed all that it can from the deep process and demonstrates an ability to be self-sufficient for its own faculty and curriculum development.

### KEY PARTNER DEFENCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Marshal Fahim National Defence University, Kabul, Afghanistan · Armenak Khanperiyants Military Aviation University, Yerevan, Armenia · V. Sargsyan Military Institute, Yerevan, Armenia · National Defense (Research) University, Yerevan, Armenia · Nco School, Yerevan, Armenia · Military College Of The Armed Forces, Baku, Azerbaijan · Higher Military School, Baku, Azerbaijan · Personnel Development Centre, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina · National Defence Academy, Gori, Georgia · Nco Training Center, Kojori, Georgia · Combined Arms Center, Tbilisi, Georgia · Iraq National Defence College, Baghdad, Iraq · Iraq National War College, Baghdad, Iraq · Iraq Ministerial Training Development Center, Baghdad, Iraq · Jordan Nco Training Center, Jordan · Army Defence Institute, Almaty, Kazakhstan · National Defence University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan · Nco Academy, Schuchinsk, Kazakhstan · Partnership Training And Education Center, Almaty, Kazakhstan · National Staff College, Nouakchott, Mauritania · Moldovan Military Academy, Chisinau, Republic Of Moldova · Mongolian National Defence University, Ulaanbattar, Mongolia · Moroccan Cavalry School, Meknes, Morocco · Moroccan Department Of Information Systems Security, Rabat, Morocco · North Macedonia Nco Academy, Skopje, Macedonia · Nco Academy, Pancevo, Serbia · University Of Defence, Belgrade, Serbia · Tunisian War College, Tunis, Tunisia · Tunisian Staff College, Tunis, Tunisia · Air Forces University, Kharkiv, Ukraine · Army Academy, Odessa, Ukraine · Ground Forces Academy, L'viv, Ukraine · Military Institute Of The National Law University, Kharkiv, Ukraine · Military Institute Of The National University Of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine · National Defence University, Kyiv, Ukraine · Ukraine Tank Academy, Kharkiv, Ukraine · Naval Academy, Odessa, Ukraine · Nco Academies, L'viv – Yavoriv, And Desna, Ukraine · Military Technical Institute, Zhytomyr, Ukraine · Armed Forces Academy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan





# Emerging Security Challenges Working Group (ESC)

Michael F. Gaul And Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli, Co-Chairs; Prof. Sean Costigan, Senior Advisor

## MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the emerging security challenges working group (ESC WG) is to provide a collective professional framework to assess new and complex developments that may impact the security environment. A key objective is to enhance the capacity of decision-makers and policy shapers to identify and respond to emerging security challenges.

In terms of goals, the ESC working group pursues: education of military and civilian leadership.

**AWARENESS RAISING:** Enhancing the awareness and understanding of the character of “emerging security challenges” among nato nations and partner countries so that commonly perceived threats can be jointly addressed.

**NETWORKING:** fostering engagement between nato nations and partner countries to arrive at common analyses of the challenges and collaborative policies to address them, thereby enabling the exchange of ideas leading to an academic-political esc network.

**OUTREACH:** developing products such as policy papers and modules for curricula of

## OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2020

The year 2020 was overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic which impacted the full implementation of the intended work programme and resulted in slow downs. However – given the circumstances – the esc working group had a productive year with very good outcomes. It engaged in the following activities:

Countering hybrid warfare: “Hybrid Threats And The COVID-19 Crisis” 29.-30. September 2020, munich and online (in cooperation with the nato-ukraine platform on counter-



ing hybrid warfare).

The conference began with opening remarks describing the predominance of the subject and the timely role of the conference. As the global COVID-19 pandemic situation is currently not improving, this crisis has added new dimensions to the phenomenon of hybrid threats.

One of the most obvious short-term consequences is the severe economic fallout. The toll it will take on economies will be staggering, reducing GDP and rise of unemployment. This could in turn have direct pressures on defense budgets as priorities have shifted to health spending.

Moreover, countries are dealing with an increase in vulnerability from external political and economic influence. Russia and China are blurring the landscape with a deliberate power projection through vaccination campaigns and “Mask diplomacy” - a term that can be employed to describe its style of soft power.

The lockdown experienced globally has accelerated the shift to numerical/digital means. The unprepared acceleration of such means raises the risk of vulnerability. Cyber security is becoming one of the most predominant domains of hybrid threats.

The crisis has been increasingly subjected to attempts of politicization through disinformation and misinformation campaigns – one of the recurring themes of the conference.

One speaker strongly focused on the importance of communication during this difficult time and demonstrated how the pandemic situation is closely linked to the hybrid spectrum.

The speaker described the active measures used by actors such as Russia and China, with a strong focus on dominant technologies as being overwhelmingly linked to communication and the credibility issues; regarded as NATO’s “invisible pillar”. The speech listed clear communication responses such as: keeping promises in the main messaging, focus on rendering the message as

appealing to emotions, creating influential narratives – as we are currently noticing a “battle of narratives”.

Cyberthreats are constantly evolving in order to take advantage of online behavior and trends. One of the panelists presented these threats as being predominant in the private sector, up to 90 percent. The major challenge for multilateral organisations such as NATO is to learn to deal with them and provide clear responses.

Moreover, he strongly argued that European governments lack cyber capabilities to mitigate such threats and lack the ability to find measures to decrease negative impact. A concrete example of the lack of competitiveness is directly linked to the annual salary averaged at 60 000 Euros for European government hackers compared to 300 000 Euros for a “good hacker” (can reach up to 1.2-1.5 million Euros for “end game” hackers) employed by a private actor such as Amazon. The financial cost and impact of cyber activities is most relevant due to the ongoing waging economic war, surged by the global economic fallout during the COVID-19 crisis.

Insights were given on the Russian activities in Georgia during the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has been used as a political instrument, in Georgia and beyond, and technological progress has been highlighted as an effective tool to advance Russia’s political agenda. The global pandemic situation shows that disinformation campaigns have increased in order to increase the distrust towards the government. Russia has been constantly inventing new policies trying to identify and target vulnerable populations. Based on official governments, cultivation of proxy sources like NGO’s, cultural centers and the use of trolls in Social media.

A panel’s focus was placed on Russian contemporary proxy or surrogate warfare being considered as the most effective in this domain. Despite the end of the Cold War, the use of proxies has increased due to two main reasons:

Non-western militaries have understood since the first gulf war that it was pointless to fight western states in conventional ways.

Proxy operations in western countries have a growing importance, reducing the political and economic risk for the governments in charge.

The overarching goal of surrogate warfare is to disrupt and deny adversaries' clear objectives. The risk associated with surrogate warfare is the lack of control – it will depend on their alignment with your own objectives. Surrogates' objectives, interest and alliances can shift over time. A clear example of surrogate warfare is what happens in libya where different countries are using different surrogates in the country. This provides them with political deniability while disrupting the situation in the country.

The next speaker provided an overview of the matter of trust and the abuse of trust in foreign affairs. The discussion focused on trust in ourselves and towards our institutions. These are the means through which proxies pare psychologically and physically able to amplify their messages.

The speaker demonstrated how proxies alter our thinking at a cognitive level. Cognitive interference (phrase from psychology and cognitive science) occupies a territory between personality and intelligence. He argued that proxies depend on cognitive interference – referred to as “disturbing thoughts that intrude on people’s lives”. These types of thoughts increase anxiety and decrease people’s ability to function. Looking at social media as an example, the effects are not to bring the world together, but rather to amplify and perceive differences. We need to get deeper in the negative effects of social media – one of which is that individuals fall into “biased thinking-traps” amplified by the views of individuals confirmed by existing beliefs.

Panelists have often highlighted the importance to shift to a more proactive approach in the struggle against disinformation; instead of trying to act re-actively. Most of the time adversaries are trying to get into

the decision-making cycle, resulting in the importance to have a clear and credible narrative.

To this end, targeted campaigns need to increase to educate audiences, through joint efforts of governments and civil society to build mutual trust and improve communications. In a time where populations are experiencing a wider sense of panic and fear, this is becoming more and more crucial.

Regarding improvement of communications to the public, one of the panelists described the concrete and direct implications of the lack of communications from an administrative border security point of view. Recently, the ukraine-belarus border has been the scene for thousands left in limbo as COVID-19 upends hasidic pilgrimage. The situation worsened between the two countries, when the office of ukraine’s president said belarus was spreading false hope that the pilgrims could cross. The speaker clearly demonstrated that a lack of strategic communication at the government level can have effects on border security and hybrid threats.

Disinformation campaigns were highlighted as not only discrediting and dividing the west, but as a wider strategy. The actions of the chinese and the russians is not just about creating narratives but amplifying what is already there. One of the major objectives is to discredit scientists and block any rational discussion about policies related to scientific issues – by disrupting institutions and politics, in order to push their own narratives.

One of the speakers, focused on chinese efforts of disinformation as being predominant in asia. With an increase of chinese diplomatic means in social media by 40 percent, the underlying goal is to shy away from responsibility and highlight chinese effectiveness to mitigate the virus. In comparison, india was blamed for not mitigating the virus and blaming the us for spreading disinformation – arguing that the spread of the pandemic is the fault of western democratic countries. Such disinformation campaigns were aimed at using the diplomatic

strategy to confuse the populations on the origins of the virus.

A chinese constant criticism is that democratic countries cannot deal effectively with the pandemic as they cannot control their own population. Such disinformation campaigns can be dangerous. The chinese embassy in paris also argued that the health-care workers did not care about the old and vulnerable population.

We therefore witnessed a transformation of the narrative in europe being exploited as a political tool against european states. China has increasingly become a strategic actor with a rise in aggressive diplomatic behavior notably through its embassies in europe. One of the panel experts, demonstrated that chinese embassies in europe extensively used twitter and other social networks (reminding that these tools are forbidden in china) in order to discredit western states.

The second day of the conference begun by mentioning that the eu's focus on hybrid threats accelerated during the 2014 annexation of crimea. As a result of this, the eu called for 22 actions in 2016 to counter hybrid threats. Much of the focus of pandemics looked at man-made threats. Even though the issue of pandemics is not a new one, the COVID-19 changed the dynamics.

The eu shifted to a much stronger focus on the disinformation aspect of hybrid threats. The broad focus shifted with a new joint communication "tackling COVID-19 disinformation: getting the facts right" indicating the new direction the eu is taking. The speaker highlighted that the shift occurred from a foreign policy perspective to a domestic one, with the mention of sending messages to the third category of countries, referenced as the ones sitting on the fence."

With respect to the COVID-19, the speaker mentioned the importance to look at the difference between liberal democracies and more authoritarian countries. A useful reference to this is the "varieties of democracies institute" (based in sweden) with a democracy report being published every year. In this

year's report, numbers showed that for the first time since 2001, there is a majority of 92 autocratic countries representing 54 percent of the global population.

Other speakers argued that non-democratic regimes are currently using the crisis as to reduce human rights.

With these numbers in mind, there is a human-rights dimension that has popped up recently. The COVID-19 digital rights tracker demonstrated that measures taken by countries to slow down the spread of the pandemic were introduced in 23 countries, including 6 eu member states. Moreover, it demonstrated that there is an advanced physical surveillance for 9 countries (of which 2 eu states) reaching out to the use of drones for domestic tracking.

Looking ahead, the use of new digital technologies and ai will be magnified. There are possible risks that misinformation will take more space in the digital domain leading to further disruption (especially with the increase of smart cities and the internet of things).

The conference transitioned to means that help building enhanced national resilience to hybrid threats during the pandemic, with a focus on how hybrid threats have been mitigated during the COVID-19 crisis.

Still from an eu perspective, one of the panelists recommended that the eu strategy should impose resilience as a new paradigm (from an external and internal perspective). Eu policymakers should stretch the concept as to find means and put in place adequate measures.

The speaker also mentioned the eu strategy to strengthen the link between external and internal threats. Looking at the domestic policies, the COVID-19 was dealt with different policies from eu member states – the panelist called for more unity as to strengthen the eu.

Panelists also discussed the importance of developing resilience for domains such as critical infrastructure, disinformation, inter-

national regulations and compliance.

Critical infrastructures are becoming more complex environments and demand an increase in learning on how to apply resilience where no singular actor can act. Collaboration and working together outside traditional organizations are key to achieving critical infrastructure resilience. The speaker also described the importance of innovation for resilience and coming up with new ideas to form a coherent and protective strategy.

The 9/11 commission report is considered by one of the speakers as being one of the most important documents about resilience. It widely understands that more incentives for information-sharing and moving away from silos should be designed.

An important aspect mentioned during the panel was the lack of understanding of the human domain to counter hybrid threats. The complexity of human beings merges multifaceted psychological, emotional, social and cultural identities.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the speaker demonstrated a worrying trend that is the increasing lack of trust in science by the general population. Once survey showed that only a median of 36 percent has “a lot” of trust in scientists. It was argued that we are at a critical time where science is being increasingly discredited, especially as population are more vulnerable to panic and fear. Scientific facts do not change the mindset, regardless of the amount and quality of facts. Psychology is therefore essential to understand the emphasis put on individuals linked to the issue of trust – focusing on narratives from external actors.

Examining the current pandemic is useful for reviewing our understanding of resilience as well as national, nato and eu preparedness along these three lines:

The COVID-19 situation presents a threat to the health, economy and social fabric of societies on a global level, generating a crisis response.

The pandemic increases our understanding of

how governments and populations respond to such a widespread crisis over time.

It is a crisis that is increasingly subjected to attempts to politicization through disinformation and misinformation campaigns.

The overarching goal of the conference was met, with close examinations of hybrid threats and their recent evolution during the COVID-19 crisis. The way forward on the development of a “hybrid threats reference curriculum” was presented with a focus on the exploration on emerging technologies and how they are increasingly used to destabilize countries.

The conference was structured in four sessions:

1. Overview of the development of hybrid threats during the COVID-19 crisis
2. Hybrid threats and disinformation during the COVID-19 crisis:
3. Delegation of violence? The use of technological and human surrogates and proxies as hybrid threats during the COVID-19 crisis;
4. Building enhanced national resilience to hybrid threats during the pandemic.

The event was organised in cooperation with the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid Warfare.

There were 23 speakers of which three Keynote Speeches by Dr. Gustav Lindstrom, Director, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris; Mr. Mark Laity, Director Communications Division SHAPE, Mons, Belgium; and Dr. Antonio Missiroli, Assistant Secretary General, Emerging Security Challenges Division, NATO, Brussels.

The workshop was attended by more than 80 people from the Euro-Atlantic area both online and on site. The co-chairs of the ESCWG Mr. Michael Gaul attended the workshop physically in Munich while Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli attended online.

The proposal by the chairmen of the ESCWG on creating a new curriculum on hybrid threats was agreed in 2020 and work started the same year. Germany is fully funding this project which is due to be completed

in 2022. Additional funding would be welcome.

#### **ESC-WG DEEP CYBERSECURITY REFERENCE CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION WORKSHOPS**

Over the course of 2020 the ESC WG supported proactively cybersecurity course development in Tunisia and Iraq.

DEEP Cyber Tunisia 25-28 Jan 2021.

A DEEP-PfP-Consortium sponsored team consisting of Professor Michael A. Hennessy, Professor Sylvain Leblanc, and Professor Scott Knight (all from the Royal Military College of Canada), and Dr. Dinos A. Kerigan-Kyrou (Republic of Ireland), Prof. Sean Costigan (George C. Marshall Center, USA), completed a series of online lectures for the Tunisian Ecole de Guerre. This team delivered lectures in and observed the delivery by local subject matter experts on cybersecurity.

This visit marked the continuation, meeting particular needs during the pandemic, of DEEP/PfP-Consortium's effort to support the Tunisian War College senior joint staff course. Previous visits had agreed on the scope and detail of the cybersecurity education the College thought appropriate for their students and this visit executed that plan.

The next step is for the Ecole de Guerre to more fully support their own delivery on this subject when they run the next serial of their course. The DEEP-PfP-Consortium team will be asked to attend that delivery and deliver two lectures, scheduled for January 2022. In 2023 the objective will be for observers only and no lectures from the DEEP Cyber team.

Execution of the effort on site was challenged by various technical and scheduling challenges. The hosts experienced difficulties with the Big Blue Button hosting technology, causing time shifts and forcing compressions of the lectures. The final delivery schedule was not adhered to, in large part due to technical challenges. Delivery suffered, as lecturers either waited for their talks to begin (sometimes as long as 45 minutes) or saw their presentation time dwindle by

significant time (in one case, 50 minutes). Despite those challenges, the presentations were delivered and well received.

To the extent possible for this virtual visit, it was evident that the Tunisian SMEs were of high quality, addressed all the key issues and demonstrated that Tunisia has a very good grasp of the issues, has established effective legal and administrative frameworks at the national level and is developing sufficient resident expertise to deliver future cybersecurity courses with reduced outside assistance. ESG noted that they do not want further focus on technical matters in the lectures. They much prefer the lectures to focus on strategy.

The Team agreed the following steps with the TN War College: The War College requests support for a small exercise on cybersecurity that they could use to integrate Cyber Operations into the COPD process, using the concepts presented and exercising within the cyber domain of military exercises (red team / blue team). An interim in person visit of the DEEP cyber team to the Tunisian War College was requested, with the goals of reviewing course materials, SME guidance, and incorporation of exercises.

#### **DEEP WORKSHOP FOR IRAQI WAR COLLEGE DEFENCE UNIVERSITY FOR HIGHER MILITARY EDUCATION, 30 NOVEMBER – 02 DECEMBER 2020**

A three-day online workshop was held to build capacity for cybersecurity education for the Iraqi War College. The program was led by the Royal Military College of Canada, with Prof. Michael Hennessy in the lead. Professors Scott Knight, Sylvain Leblanc from the RMC also presented. Prof. Sean Costigan served as an observer.

The Iraqi War College requested support from DEEP on the following topics:

1. Understanding the concept of cyber security.
2. Defensive measurements against cyber-attacks (defense strategy).
4. What are the best teams / institutions that can be formed to work in the field of cybersecurity, their duties, responsibilities,



tasks, etc?

5. What are the most common methods of threats that may exposed information and communications systems and networks?  
What are the best means of protection?
6. What are the most effective means, programs, tools we could use to facing cyber threats and to mitigate these threats?

The *Generic Reference Curriculum on Cybersecurity* was shared with the Iraqi War College several weeks prior to the workshop, serving as a basis for the creation of a program of study. The workshop covered discussions about aims, design, structure components and intent of the RC, followed by taking a deep insight in how IRAQ should use it to meet their needs. Two other topics in focus of the WS were challenges in cybersecurity and cyberresilience by using Canada as an example. The workshop was considered a success by the Iraqi War College and the DEEP Team and follow-on workshops have been requested.

#### **FURTHER DEEP CONTRIBUTIONS**

Jean-Marc Rickli remained part of the DEEP delegation for Tunisia. He advised the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre (ESG) on their curriculum on strategy and geopolitics. He was supposed to give a lecture on emerging technology and warfare in March 2020 but due to the pandemic, the course was cancelled.

#### **HYBRID THREAT REFERENCE CURRICULUM**

In line with the guidance received by the CSC the ESC WG has been actively continued to pursue preparatory work for the creation of a Hybrid Threat Reference Curriculum.

The events held in 2018, 2019 and 2020 have been used to further the knowledge of the group and to expand the network of experts in this area.

The group has continued to experience substantial offers of support from key stakeholders which underscored show the board interest and need in developing the curriculum.

Germany has officially announced during the

Oct 2020 PfP-Consortium SAC/CSC Meeting, that their intent is to fund the Hybrid Warfare RC (HRC). In 2021 we received the official approval by the German MoD.

Official DEU FMoD approval from the Policy Director was needed and integration in the official GCMC FY 21 has to be done.

#### **MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

As noted by the PfP-Consortium Steering Committee and senior stakeholders, there is wide understanding that full-spectrum hybrid warfare is currently underway, with clear negative effects for the security fabric of Europe, NATO Allies and NATO partner nations. These full-spectrum challenges run the gamut of security risks, with particular effects felt through technologies and the exposure of systemic insecurity in democracies. With the ESC Working Group's enhanced focus on hybrid warfare, resilience and cyber security, it is positioned to address the most relevant issues on NATO's agenda and the challenge of the expanding impacts stemming from the mix of conventional and unconventional challenges.

The WG uses NATO standards-based Results-based Self-Assessment Questionnaires to be filled in by the participants. The results of the evaluation of the questionnaire were so far outstanding in all categories such as relevance, speaker quality, programme, mix of participants, quality of discussions and overall organisation.

All events were co-organized with major stakeholders and achieved multiplier effects with regard to outcomes, outreach, visibility and the pooling of resources.

As perhaps the only fully free and comprehensive cybersecurity curriculum, the ESC Working Group's Generic Reference Curriculum on Cybersecurity gained wide exposure. In addition, at least eight countries are integrating a module or more into their respective national cyber training.

---

## THE WAY AHEAD

---

The ESC WG is planning to implement the following activities in the future (tentative, may be subject to changes):

- 2021 - Launch of the development of a Hybrid Warfare Generic Curriculum
- 2021 - Special Issue of Connections on Emerging Security Challenges
- 2021 - Workshop: "The Changing Global Polarity – consequences and Responses for Partner Countries"
- 2021 - Workshop: "The Militarization of Artificial Intelligence beyond Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems"
- 2022 - Athena Paper from one or more of our group members
- 2022 - Workshop: "Drones and Swarming – the Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Future Conflicts"
- 2022 - Workshop: "Brain computer interfaces (BCI) and the future implications for soldiers"
- 2023 - Workshop: "The Security Implications of the Democratization of Synthetic Biology"
- 2023 - Hybrid Threats Generic Reference Curriculum to be finalized
- 2023 - Launch of the update to the Cybersecurity Curriculum

### KEY INSTITUTIONS ENGAGED WITH IN 2020

NATO, Brussels, Belgium · Stakeholder Delegations and Missions to NATO · German Federal Ministry of Defence, Bonn, Germany · Austrian Ministry of Defence, Vienna, Austria · Bulgarian Ministry of Defence, Sofia, Bulgaria · US Department of Defense, Washington, DC, United States · Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr, Hamburg, Germany · Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva, Switzerland · George C. Marshall Center, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany · Kings College, London, United Kingdom · National Security Council, Kiev, Ukraine · National Defence Academy, Vienna, Austria · NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, Tallinn, Estonia · PfP-C Education Development Working Group · PfP-C Combating Terrorism Working Group · Rand Corporation · Verkhovna Rada Committee on National Security and Defence, Kiev · Centre of Excellence for countering Hybrid Threats, Helsinki · George Mason University, Manassas, USA · Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway · NATO International Military Staff, Brussels, Belgium · George Marshall Centre, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany · Defence Reform Advisory Board for Ukraine Member, Poland · Northeastern University, Boston, US · Ministry of Education, Paris, France · NATO Stratcom Centre of Excellence, Latvia · NATO Integration Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia · European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, Helsinki, Finland · Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany · NATO Representation to Ukraine & Director, NATO Liaison Office, Ukraine · Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine · Ministry for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine · Parliament Committee on Integration to the EU, Chairman, Ukraine · National Institute for Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine · Centre for International Security, National Institute for Strategic Studies, Kyiv, Ukraine · Hybrid Warfare Analytical Group, Kyiv, Ukraine · National Defence University of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine · Communications Division SHAPE, Mons, Belgium · Digital Society Institute, ESMT, Berlin, Germany · Aca Media, Prague, Czech Republic · Futures Lab, Montgomery, Alabama, US · French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), France · University of Alaska, Anchorage, USA · George

Mason University, Fairfax VA, USA · Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies and PhD student in Military Studies at the National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary · Georgian Mission to NATO, Brussels, Belgium · American University, Washington DC, USA · EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, France · Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History, Romanian MoD, Bucharest, Romania · EU/Europe, SWP Berlin, Germany · University of Žilina, Faculty of Security Engineering, Department of Technical Sciences and Informatics, Bratislava, Slovakia · US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Centre and School, Washington DC, USA · University of Oxford, UK · European Expert Association, Kharkov, Ukraine







# Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Study Group (RSSC)

Frederic Labarre and George Niculescu, co-chairs

In this unusual year, the Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Study Group (RSSC SG) has pressed forward with a modified agenda of activity. The RSSC SG has been able to do so thanks to the stellar support of the PfP-Consortium's Operations Staff, particularly LTC Olaf Garlich (DEU) and Mr. Jürgen Eise. Their input was instrumental in helping the co-chairs with remote workshops, and we thank them heart-warmingly.

The co-chairs had prepared a lively workshop, to be held in Tbilisi, 26-29 March 2020. This would have been the RSSC SG's second visit to Georgia in less than a decade. Among all the South Caucasus destinations, Georgia is undoubtedly the most welcoming and most conducive to conflict mediation. Any citizen of the neighbouring countries will feel at ease at this venue. However, for obvious political reasons, it is prohibitive to individuals hailing from unrecognized

or partially-recognized territories in the region. For this reason, the co-chairs, with Mr. Niculescu in the lead, had prepared a workshop entitled "Peacebuilding through Economic and Infrastructure Integration in the South Caucasus."

This topic had been on the agenda for a long time, and had been delayed by a slew of developments in the region since at least 2016. This sort of subject – expansive and inclusive – is usually entertained during regional workshops because they are less controversial. It nevertheless followed the conclusions of the preceding (20th) workshop which had been held in November 2019 in Reichenau (AUT). It sought to explore the suggestions made there by long-standing members of the RSSC SG; like a "South Caucasus Public Chamber". The workshop also aimed at reaching back to previous meetings for inspiration. Panel 1 sought to explore the EU



vs Eurasian Economic Union dilemma. The second panel would have been a stock-taking exercise which mirrored the geopolitical discussion that took place in Berlin in Spring 2019 during the Study Group's 19th workshop. The third panel would have looked at practical ways to leverage economic integration for peace in the South Caucasus. Together, the panels would have provided fodder for interactive discussions aimed at creating "regional economic project baskets". Had it taken place as planned, this would have been the 21st Study Group workshop.

#### **EXTRAORDINARY VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS**

The Coronavirus prevented the accomplishment of our regular agenda. The co-chairs, with the support of the Austrian National Defence Academy and the PfP-Consortium Operations Staff, resolved to achieve the maximum possible remotely – with the help of technology – while remaining committed to hosting a workshop in Tbilisi as soon as was feasible. This is how the idea of the "Extraordinary Virtual Workshop (EVW)" emerged. The epithet "extraordinary" was chosen to underline the fact that face-to-face meetings were not to be superseded by remote video meetings. This annual report explains why in a later section. The first such EVW was held on 25 June 2020 and the second on 4 December 2020.

The June EVW sought to evaluate how a global pandemic could stimulate constructive regional cooperation. The participants (representing every country in the South Caucasus, plus Russia and Turkey) expressed the fear that the perceived gravity of the pandemic may steer attention away from the South Caucasus, with detrimental effects on stability. This EVW provided the opportunity for Georgia to showcase the excellent job it had done of containing the pandemic with far fewer resources than so-called "great powers". Familiar themes nevertheless percolated up, such as Russian disinformation and the endemic problem of trust in the media. The third panel of that EVW focused on the (then apparent) rapid

progress and breakthrough in the negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. This latter panel gave the co-chairs particular pride and hope because it was then perceived as a natural follow-through from earlier successes (the "emergency hotline", see Annual Report 2019) for which the RSSC SG could partially take credit for. Alas, as the summer crept on, it appeared that rejoicing was premature. The outcome of this first EVW was a four-page document of policy recommendations (for download see [www.bundesheer.at/publikation-1032](http://www.bundesheer.at/publikation-1032)).

What made 2020 exceedingly unusual for the RSSC SG was the sudden resumption of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, during what is now commonly-called the 44-day war. On 27 September 2020, Azerbaijan launched its forces with all its might on the Armenian-occupied positions in Nagorno-Karabakh. By the time a ceasefire was agreed to, Azerbaijan had practically recovered sovereignty over the territory which had been recognized as Azerbaijani in February 1992. The silence of the international community was thunderous, and essentially cemented the outcome.

The co-chairs are saddened by the loss of life among the ranks of the belligerents, and deeply regret that the voice of the guns prevailed over formal negotiations and that other recommendations from the RSSC SG were not implemented. The 44-day war unfroze the conflict very rapidly and imposed a new dynamic in regional relations. This is not the place to make a detailed evaluation of the effect of the conflict on regional politics. However much it may be a sad way to underline the fact that the relevance of the work of the RSSC SG is made manifest by the outcome of the war, and on the future of the peace process in Karabakh. Indeed, the Stability Track approach sponsored by the Austrian National Defence Academy certainly is, within the PfP-Consortium network, a highly important and valuable effort for the stakeholders as well as for the South Caucasus.

On 4 December 2020, the RSSC SG undertook the delicate task of hosting a second EVW dedicated to the dynamic situation in Karabakh. The participants were carefully chosen, and their number was limited to regional experts and professionals. The outcome was a set of practical recommendations in the short, medium and long term. In addition, and exceptionally, the RSSC SG published detailed recommendation papers submitted by particular participants. These figure in a shortened version of the usual Study Group Information booklets (SGI) which are usually produced from the workshops held face-to-face. The general recommendations were intuitive; halt aggressive rhetoric, end displays of triumphalism, and to both sides; assess the situation realistically. The RSSC SG emphasized the need to seriously consider the humanitarian dimension post-conflict and to seize upon this occasion to re-build constructive regional relations. Finally, the sad state of international involvement in this conflict was also assessed. The OSCE Minsk Group, the EU and the UN all figure lamentably in the RSSC SG verdict, particularly in their ability to produce effective policy for the region. Detailed recommendations are downloadable at [www.bundesheer.at/publikation-1063](http://www.bundesheer.at/publikation-1063).

Successfully hosting an EVW meeting scarcely less than a month after the cessation of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan is a testimony to the quality of the participants, who are always carefully chosen to participate in meetings. This outcome has been purchased at the cost of entertaining less-than-constructive participants in the past, but such are the risks to be run in this context, and in the format of the RSSC SG. This is much to the credit of the co-chairs' networking and canvassing abilities, but it is also due to their skill in having established trust over a period of eight years among core participants, in developing engaging workshop topics, and ensuring that decorum is maintained throughout.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY INFORMATION LANDSCAPE: A HANDBOOK**

Following the 16th RSSC SG workshop in Reichenau, in November 2017, the decision to launch a "best practices manual" on strategic communications was made. On 23 October 2020, the project was officially launched under a schedule previously agreed during the year between the co-chairs and the Austrian National Defence Academy. Once again, the PfP-Consortium Operations Staff in Garmisch gave stellar support for that separate remote meeting as well.

The 23 October 2020 project launch meeting met all its milestones;

The title was defined as "Understanding the Contemporary Information Landscape: A Handbook" (UCIL Handbook)

The topic was also narrowed down, leading to specific tasks to the core group of contributors (those who had generated the recommendation in 2017).

Deadlines were generated for core contributions (nearly all were met at time of writing this Annual Report)

A Table of Contents was agreed

A schedule for future management meetings was also agreed

The preferred audience was selected

The UCIL Handbook project is being handled to be a reflection of the current informational disjunction in the media. It will provide the contributors with the option to produce their contribution in English or in Russian, to facilitate production as well as to generate two (2) manuscripts. One manuscript will be in English (ostensibly produced by the Austrian National Defence Academy), and the other will be in Russian. Translation is being carried out by nearly two-dozen volunteers.

At time of writing, the first milestone had been met on 22 January 2021, and nearly all the chapters for the first part had been written and edited, and sent to their respective translators. New translators were being recruited as well as complementary contribu-

tors to fill the gaps. Each phase of the project is punctuated by a remote meeting where the contributors present their chapters, ensuring that there is no overlap among chapters. This ensures that each remote meeting is not cluttered by too many people having to join in online at different hours and time zones. The next milestone is June 2021. The complete manuscripts are expected in November 2021.

#### **EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EVW**

The RSSC SG is a Track II diplomacy effort which links the voluntary input and work of its members (now numbering as many as 250) to face-to-face interaction in regional venues, and in Reichenau-on-the-Rax, Austria. The product of that effort is concrete and far-reaching; two policy recommendations per year, and two SGIs per year, distributed widely (some 800 addresses in nearly 50 countries) and 400 hardcopies distributed to international organizations, regional capitals and academic institutions.

As such, the format of the workshops is practical, and aimed at actionable policy. It is not a purely academic workshop, although an academic outlook is encouraged to produce useful brainstorming. It may be that the Track II diplomacy vocation of the RSSC SG may change to a purely academic orientation in the future, but until formal guidance is issued, the co-chairs intend to continue with the original direction of the workshops which is:

Develop a network of academics and policy-makers from the South Caucasus willing to work together on regional stability – eventually yielding the chairmanship to regional participants

Develop an integrated strategic persona for the South Caucasus

Gradually focus on ever-narrowing topic of discussion (which means, more controversial) over time to produce actionable recommendations

Some of these objectives have been met, while others are appearing over the horizon. However, it is evident that in the context of Track

II, remote meetings cannot achieve these goals. This is important to underline because in situations of budgetary constraints, it may be tempting to suggest that all face-to-face meetings should move online, and that desired outcomes will be met anyway. Track II cannot be carried out – and no success, however defined, can be expected – without meeting face-to-face. When people – even adversaries – meet, share a meal, and engage in the exchange of ideas, they need to exercise some discretion, display good manners, and be willing to listen to the other side. This is how the RSSC SG managed to build trust among its participants over nearly a decade. The “efficiency” of remote-meeting in this – but certainly not only in this – context is a myth.

Discretion is impossible when co-chairs have no visibility on what the remote participants do in addition to the workshop they are participating in. For instance, trust is built upon respect for Chatham House rules. We don’t know how participants might be recording remotely convened workshops. In addition, it is evident that some participants’ behaviour is influenced by where they are broadcasting from, and by their fear of official eavesdropping.

Good manners are also difficult to enforce. Participants are separated by hundreds of kilometers, and are effectively shielded by that distance and their computers. Participants can mute themselves and others out. The co-chairs, in both EVW, would have had a great deal of difficulty in enforcing decorum without shutting out participants electronically, hadn’t it been for the high level of trust already established.

The willingness to hear each other out is impossible to generate due to the fact that participants are rendered extremely busy by simultaneous tasking (itself created by the illusion of remote-working and meeting efficiency). In other words, it is not because they don’t want to hear the other side, it is because their attention is being called on to other things. Their attention divided, they cannot convince, and be convinced through

any virtual workshop. The fact that people spend more and more of their time in front of a computer screen also has this effect. We are not speaking of the medical effects. Finally, it is nearly impossible to have agreement on meeting times because of the differences in time zones. Feeling jet-lagged without having flown is not pleasant for anyone.

Finally, the RSSC SG cannot expect volunteer work to take place without some form of quid pro quo. The appeal of meeting fellow participants, colleagues and friends face-to-face once or twice a year in an attractive setting like Vienna or Berlin is a reward in itself. Everything else might easily affect the willingness to contribute in a voluntary network – and in the end the quality of the volunteer's contribution.

This is why the EVW must remain an exceptional measure until things turn back to normal, and should be discarded as soon as feasible and never spoken of again.







# Regional Stability in South East Europe Study Group (RSSEE)

Filip Ejodus, Predrag Jurekovic and Sandro Knezovic, Co-Chairs

## MISSION AND GOALS

In December 1999, Austria initiated the establishment of the working group 'crisis management in south east europe (SEE)' during the second annual conference of the partnership for peace consortium of defense academies and security studies institutes held in Sofia. The study group, conceptually conceived within the Austrian national defence academy, has been co-sponsored by the Austrian ministry of defence with the aim to create a confidence-building platform that will facilitate the exchange of different views in a sensitive post-conflict environment. While in the first two years the group was in the process of soul searching, it acquired its current name and shape in 2002. The change reflected wider developments in the region and the birth of a nascent security community in the Western Balkans (WB). The term 'crisis management' was replaced with 'regional stability' because the risk of military crises was minimized if not entirely overcome.

## PARTICIPANTS, PARTNER INSTITUTIONS AND TOPICS

Since 2000, the Study Group "Regional Stability in South East Europe (RSSEE SG)" organised 39 workshops, two per year, one of which traditionally takes place in Reichenau/Rax in Austria and one in the Western Balkans region. In 2020, the RSSEE SG had to adapt to the COVID-19 crisis and

important topics were covered in the format of two web seminars. Over the years, the Study Group gathered more than 500 scholars, policy makers from state institutions, EU, NATO, OSCE and UN representatives, media professionals and civil society activists. The Study Group has three co-chairs, one from Austria and two from the region, Serbia and Croatia, thus increasing the sense

of regional ownership. Core partner institutions that contribute permanently and/or act as co-organizers of workshops are:

Institute For Development And International Relations (Zagreb, Croatian Co-Chair),  
Faculty Of Political Sciences/University Of Belgrade (Serbian Co-Chair),  
Austrian National Defence Academy (Vienna, Austrian Co-Chair),  
Albanian Institute For International Studies (Tirana),  
Centre For Security Studies (Sarajevo),  
Belgrade Centre For Security Policy,  
Institute For Security And International Studies (Sofia),  
Kosovar Institute For Policy Research And Development (Pristina),  
Institute For Development Policy (Pristina),  
Ngo Aktiv (Kosovska Mitrovica),  
Eurothink (Skopje),  
Analytica (Skopje),  
Atlantic Council Of Montenegro (Podgorica),  
Center For Democracy And Human Rights (Podgorica) And  
Bahcesehir University (Istanbul).

Topics of the workshops cover the widest scope of issues relevant for security-community building including democratization, multi-ethnicity, institution building (defence sector and others), state weakness, regional cooperation, conflict transformation and peace-building, organized crime, economic security, reconciliation, international presence, transformation of armed forces, human trafficking, security sector reform, NATO and EU accession, post-conflict reconstruction, best practices & lessons learnt (intra-regional processes and international support), security challenges and threats, open political issues with a security dimension, geopolitical influences, frozen conflicts, transitional justice mechanisms and many others. Over the years, the focus of discussions within the Study Group gradually switched from NATO intervention to EU accession. Geographically, the interest narrowed down from wider SEE to the WB

region, tied by security-political interdependence related to the unresolved issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo as well as burdened intra-regional relations. As Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia joined NATO and the EU, the only remaining part of the Balkan Peninsula which has not been completely integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security community is the WB (Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia are NATO members).

## OUTCOME

The study group produces two types of publications: longer conference proceedings and shorter policy papers with recommendations consensually reached during the workshops. The Austrian Ministry of Defence publishes all the conference proceedings and conclusions within its Study Group Information series ([www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/doktyp.php?id=7](http://www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/doktyp.php?id=7)). The aim of these publications is to diffuse the ideas produced within the Study Group and influence policy making.

Workshops are attended by 35 to 45 participants, out of whom at least around one third is always new to the Consortium and the Study Group. Approximately one third of the participants are state or international organisation officials, one third are scholars and one third work for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Each meeting ends with the drafting of policy recommendations that are being published shortly afterwards ([www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/doktyp.php?id=44](http://www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/doktyp.php?id=44)). Workshops are held under the Chatham House Rule and are structured in a similar way with keynote lectures at the beginning followed by panel discussions and ending with interactive debate on policy recommendations.

## ADDED VALUE, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

The Study Group makes a unique added value to regional stability in a number of important ways. To begin with, it provides the Euro-Atlantic defence and security policy community with a continuous source of expert insight into a region of strate-

gic importance through regular meetings, reports, policy papers, publications and personal contact. The Study Group is a forum in which high-ranking international representatives of missions from the WB get a valuable feedback from the region. The Study Group's publications also attract attention of different state and non-state actors in the region and are informing policy-making processes in NATO, EU and the US.

Second, the Study Group has proved as an invaluable confidence-building forum. Several aspects are relevant here. Firstly, prejudices between national actors can be reduced. Members of civil society organisations regularly communicate at our workshops with representatives of state institutions, especially police and military personnel on an informal level. This should not be underestimated in terms of its medium-term consolidating significance, since the process of democratic transformation in several states of SEE has recently experienced setbacks. Thus, for example, the various challenges in SEE with regard to migration issues have been discussed in an informal and constructive atmosphere in past meetings between representatives of the police and human rights organisations. Against the background of the recent deterioration in intra-regional relations, this second aspect, the maintenance of good contacts between governmental and non-governmental institutions stemming from all WB states, remains important.

Thirdly, the Study Group has served as a very flexible and inclusive track-two diplomacy mechanism. To give an example: since its foundation in 2000, the Study Group has served as a meeting place for politicians from Kosovo and Serbia who are open to discourse, as well as for representatives of think tanks from these two countries, who are often active in political consulting for both their governments and international actors. The continuous presence of representatives from Belgrade, Pristina and also moderate representatives of the Kosovo Serbs at the meetings of the Study Group makes it possible to explore the possibilities

for win-win situations in this still difficult conflict constellation in 2021.

This insider knowledge of social developments and moods also enables the Study Group to make profound assessments of proposals towards decision makers and to submit its own proposals to international stakeholders. For example, the Study Group, including its representatives from Belgrade and Pristina as well as Serbian representatives from Kosovo, has been very critical of "solution proposals" of recent years, which believe that the normalization of relations between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians could be achieved by territorial exchange and ethnic shifts. Instead, the Study Group argues for a European solution with strong measures to bring Serbia and Kosovo closer to the EU, including a profound economic development plan, in order to prevent discrimination and further uprooting of individuals and national communities.

Additionally, the Study Group has also served as an instrument of promoting young and coming decision makers, activists and academics from the region sharing liberal values and "Western" security policy views. This role will be further developed in future workshops of the RSSEE SG by giving special attention to the possibilities of the EU and NATO to support young key actors in the region in reform processes.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020**

For a study group like the rssee sg, which has had a very productive exchange of views over the past twenty years through continuous workshops with physical presence of experts from different fields, the COVID-19 crisis created a very challenging situation. However, it was in the corona year 2020 that the reliability and quality of this study group and the outstanding cooperation of key actors became apparent. With excellent technical support from the Pfp-Consortium, study group web seminars were held on 28 may and 25 november so that the annual rhythm of two workshops – albeit with fewer participants than for workshops with

physical attendance – could be maintained.

Compared to workshops with physical presence, the web seminars had specific challenges for a structured process. Due to the short time slot of about 2 hours available for the web seminars, recommendations on the regional challenges were not – as is tradition in this study group – the result of presentations and discussions lasting several days. Instead, the experts were asked in advance of the web seminars to prepare recommendations on very specific issues of the consolidation process in see. These were then presented and briefly discussed in small time slots based on thematic focal points. Through these short presentations and short discussions, the recommendations were “sharpened” and joint policy recommendations of the study group were issued after the web seminars.

Even though, from the point of view of the co-chairs, it was possible under these adverse circumstances to again produce high-quality advisory products of the study group with two policy recommendation briefs, web seminars are not an adequate substitute for workshops with direct human contact in the medium term. Especially in this study group, which strives to make contributions to the replacement of partially still existing concepts of an enemy with cooperative relations and of conflicts with win-win solutions in a not fully consolidated region, a comprehensive exchange of views is irreplaceable. This also includes break talks between individuals, in which new friendships have often been formed and ideas for joint projects have emerged.

At the first virtual workshop of the rssee sg, held on 28 may 2020 and titled “the western balkan countries in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic”, the 11 participants addressed in particular the following aspects of the corona crisis:

State resilience toward the pandemic;

External support during the crisis and rivalry;

Impact on democratization issues and civil rights;

Impact on regional cooperation and conflict solutions;

Impact on the security situation.

The recommendations formulated by the participants ([www.Bundesheer.At/publikation-1031](http://www.Bundesheer.At/publikation-1031)) addressed among others the following players:

**WB GOVERNMENTS AND EU:** health systems should be supported with funds from the eu’s announced € 3.3 Billion support package and other western sources.

**WB GOVERNMENTS:** public funds dedicated to the crisis to be used transparently and any opportunities for corruption to be curtailed.

**WB GOVERNMENTS, EU AND REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL (RCC):** the less nationalistic regional climate should be used as starting point for structured regional cooperation in the fight against the pandemic, which should also be promoted by the EU Commission and the RCC in Sarajevo.

**WB GOVERNMENTS:** the clear separation of executive and legislative powers should be restored. Decisions by the constitutional courts relating to COVID-19 measures should be implemented and the monitoring role of ombudspersons and ngos respected.

**EU AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS:** the independence of the judiciary should be further strengthened, with special attention given to the use of public funds during the crisis. Any misuse of public funds by politicians during the crisis should be publicly condemned, as should any other individuals involved.

**EU AND OSCE:** election monitoring should be intensified as well as the commitment to free media coverage in light of upcoming parliamentary or local elections.

**EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE WB:** the eusr should engage proactively in order to demonstrate serious interest in the region’s democratic development and to contribute to constructive conflict resolution within and between the individual wb countries.

**EU:** a more accountable and dynamic integration policy vis-à-vis the entire wb should be started. A visa-free regime should be granted to kosovo without further delay.

**EU:** contradictory signals within the eu on

important issues of peace consolidation should be avoided (e.g. Josep Borrell and Miroslav Lajčák on Kosovo).

**EU AND US:** a clear common eu-us line on the belgrade-pristina dialogue and other core topics of regional consolidation should be restated.

The opportunities to support consolidation policies toward the WB countries amid the COVID-19 pandemic were discussed at the second virtual workshop of the SG RSSEE, which was conducted on 25 November 2020 and titled “Chances and Challenges in South East Europe in Times of and beyond Pandemics – Situation Analysis and Recommendations”.

The workshop participants analysed and discussed the following questions:

Benefits vs. disadvantages of the “reformed” EU enlargement process.

Real changes and significance for (potential) candidate countries.

Croatian balance sheet of and initiatives for the WB during the EU Presidency.

Necessary future measures of Croatia in the regional context.

Social and economic trends in the Western Balkans in the context of the “reformed” EU enlargement process and the COVID-19 development.

Impact of EU support programmes.

The possible start of EU negotiations with Albania and its impact on intra-state and intra-regional relations.

Continuities and discontinuities in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s (BiH) political process.

Perceptions/interpretations in BiH about BiH’s implementation of NATO’s Membership Action Plan.

National and international cooperation/lack of cooperation to solve the migration crisis in BiH.

The new political constellation in Montenegro after the parliamentary elections and its implications for reforms and interethnic relations, for neighbourhood relations and Montenegro’s relations with EU and NATO.

Belgrade views and views from Pristina on the “Washington Agreement” and EU’s mediator

role in the normalization dialogue.

Recognizable goals in dialogue from a Belgrade and Pristina perspective.

Indictments of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers & Specialist Prosecutor’s Office and their possible impact on Kosovo’s political stability.

North Macedonia on a more stable political path.

Upcoming EU negotiations and Bulgaria’s constructive/deconstructive role.

Following this topical outline, the 20 workshop participants drafted concrete recommendations to regional and international decision makers ([www.Bundesheer.At/publikation-1064](http://www.Bundesheer.At/publikation-1064)), e.g.:

**EU/US:** To ensure a common Western consolidation policy, the EU-US alliance on the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue as well as on other important WB issues should be renewed.

**EU:** All EU member states should be engaged to prevent a new long-term blockade in the enlargement process and should advocate for an imminent start of negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania.

**EU:** A phased economic integration of the WB-6 into the EU should be made possible, also to increase their resilience toward non-Western influence .

**EU:** Investigative media and civil society organizations should receive more generous financial support so as to be able to fulfil their watchdog role, e.g. in the sensitive political transition phase in Montenegro.

**EU/US:** Successful candidates in the last BiH local elections with a credible anti-corruption agenda should receive increased support.

**KOSOVO PARLIAMENT:** Constructive work should be done to overcome the current political instability in Kosovo and to find a common Kosovar position on dialogue with Belgrade.

**SERBIAN GOVERNMENT:** Realistic core interests of Serbia vis-à-vis Kosovo should be defined pursuant to President Boris Tadić four principles defined in 2012.

**MONTENEGRO GOVERNMENT:** Confidence-building measures should allay the opposition’s and national minorities’ fears of the transition process.



## **OUTCOMES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS 2020**

Two expert workshops in the format of web seminars bringing together 31 experts on WB issues.

Supported by the Austrian National Defence Academy in Vienna, the RSSEE SG produced concise and comprehensive policy recommendations oriented towards more than 800 decision makers in the US, European governments, NATO, the EU External Action Service and OSCE as well as to national and local governmental and non-governmental institutions.

---

## **THE WAY AHEAD**

---

If the development of the pandemic makes it possible, the RSSEE SG will make up for the cancelled 2020 events. In our first meeting, we plan to focus our policy and research orientation on “The Key Role of the Young Generation for the Consolidation of South East Europe. Political, Socio-Economic and Security Implications” in the 40th Austrian-based workshop (with physical presence) from 6 to 9 May 2021 in Reichenau/Rax.

The Study Group’s cooperation with a local partner will focus on “Regional Security Cooperation in South East Europe in the aftermath of North Macedonia’s NATO Accession” at the 41st RSSEE regional workshop in September 2021 in Skopje, North Macedonia – if the European travel regulations allow it.





# Security Sector Reform Working Group (SSR)

Antje Fritz, Chair, Dr Grazvydas Jasutis, Co-Chair

## CORE OBJECTIVE

The Security Sector Working Group (SSR WG) seeks to strengthen the governance of national security sectors in accordance with international norms and good practices, and in response to local contexts and challenges. Its ultimate goal is to improve the security of states and people within a framework of democratic governance, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. To this end, the SSR WG contributes to achieving the overall vision of the Partnership for Peace Consortium to empower partner nations' capacity to assess, prevent and address common transnational threats and challenges by contributing to common stability and the prevention of conflict through strengthening the effectiveness and accountability of security and defence sectors.

---

## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THE CORE OBJECTIVE?

In order to strengthen the governance of national security sectors, the SSR WG:

- Contributes to efforts of the international assistance community to empower national key stakeholders to effectively implement and/or support inclusive and participatory security sector reforms;

- Facilitates cooperation in joint research, outreach, and expert training initiatives; and

- Encourages collaboration among international information networks and fosters the exchange of ideas, insights, expertise, knowledge, and best practices of security sector reform processes between consolidating and consolidated democracies in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The SSR WG is supported by the Swiss Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, and chaired by DCAF - the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance.



## **WITH WHOM DO WE WORK? – OUR KEY TARGET GROUPS**

The SSR WG works with members and staff of National Parliaments, executive branches, security sector institutions, independent oversight institutions, and civil society organizations.

SSR WG programming: Addressing framework conditions for sustainable reforms.

Which framework conditions need to be in place in order that key national stakeholders can reform their security sectors in line with international norms and standards?

Key stakeholders for reform need to develop their capacities and skills in order to contribute to reform processes within their institutions.

Security sector institutions and their line ministries need to be governed and coordinated in a way that they can undertake or support enhanced efforts to improve security sector governance.

Civil society, media, the private sector, and other non-governmental bodies need to be empowered in order to contribute, in a well-informed manner, to efforts to reform security sectors.

Key stakeholders for reform – including security sector and oversight actors – need to be empowered to develop their legal and policy frameworks and take policy decisions in line with guiding norms and good practices for improving security sector governance.

Key stakeholders for reform require access to, and the ability to actively draw on, internationally recognized research and guidance products when they engage in and/or support activities aimed at improving security sector governance.

In order to ensure societal buy in into international norms and standards for security sector reform on the local, regional and international level, key reform stakeholders need to be empowered to actively engage in the promotion of norms, standards and good practice for improving security sector governance.

## **OUR RESULTS-FRAMEWORK**

Enabling the effective implementation of inclusive and participatory security sector reforms.

SSR WG activities contribute to four main

outputs, which together help strengthen framework conditions for reform. Enhanced framework conditions enable the effective implementation by national stakeholders of inclusive and participatory security sector reforms in line with international norms and standards.

The SSR WG provides capacity building at the individual, institutional, and societal level. As a result of SSR WG activities, security sector and oversight actors have enhanced capacities and skills to contribute to reform processes. Activities also address institutional structures and processes as framework conditions for reform. A dedicated strand of SSR WG activities provides civil society, including non-governmental organizations, with access to independent expertise and information.

The SSR WG provides legal and policy advice to key reform stakeholders. As a result, policy makers have enhanced knowledge and expertise in order to develop their legal and policy frameworks and take policy decisions in line with guiding norms and good practices for improving security sector governance.

The SSR WG develops research products and guidance material which fill knowledge gaps and inform conceptual debates. Research and guidance products are made freely accessible and translated into various local languages. As a result, key reform stakeholders have access to independent information and guidance to engage in reform processes.

SSR WG activities facilitate the transfer of norms and good practices. As a result, key stakeholders have increased awareness of guiding norms and good practices as well as the importance of democratic security sector governance; enabling them to engage in norms promotion and act as multipliers on national, regional, and international levels. By doing so, they also contribute to confidence-building.

## **USE OF SYNERGIES: COOPERATION WITH PFPC WORKING GROUPS**

The SSR WG closely cooperates with other PfPC Working Groups, in particular the Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Working Group (RSSC WG) and the Regional Stability in Southeast Europe Working Groups (RSSE WG) to address needs and achieve the above-mentioned results.



## APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The SSR WG applies the following approach:

### Local Ownership

Beneficiaries contribute to needs assessment and the conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation of activities.

### Coordination And Synergy

Dialogue and cooperation with other assistance providers to make use of synergies and avoid overlap.

### Provide long-term sustainability

Inclusion of civil society organizations, parliamentary staff, and independent organizations ensures sustainability of knowledge-transfer.

### Mainstreaming gender equality

Input provided in a gender sensitive way, putting gender-specific issues and implications onto the agenda.

### Co-Learning Approach

Peer development and transfer of knowledge among counterparts from consolidating and consolidated democracies in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

## THE SSR WG ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING DEFICITS AND NEEDS FOR SUPPORT

### Remaining deficits:

Democratisation of security sector governance and oversight still contested.

Security sector reform remains sectorial. Holistic approaches to SSR still need to be developed.

Parliamentary scrutiny of the security sector not sufficiently developed (most often linked to narratives of national security priorities).

Post-Soviet legal frameworks still prevail. Need to further harmonize legal frameworks with international norms and standards.

High turnover of members and staff of parliamentary committees after elections, entailing loss of expertise.

No systematic approach to integrity building in the security sector.

Weak protection mechanisms of human rights in the Armed Forces.

Limited career development for women in security sector institutions.

Involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in policy debates, law drafting, and

oversight processes still limited. CSOs focus on sectorial elements rather than on SSR in a holistic way.

### Needs for support:

Need for continued capacity development of key security sector and oversight actors.

Need for continued support to parliaments in law drafting and review, as well as oversight processes.

Need to encourage political will and commitment to advance reforms.

Need to involve security sector and oversight actors in regional and international exchange and knowledge-transfer.

Need to further empower civil society organizations to engage in an informed exchange with security sector actors.

Need to support gender mainstreaming in the security sector.

Need to support integrity building in the security sector.

Need to reinforce human rights in the Armed Forces.

## SSR WG – FOCUS OF ENGAGEMENT IN 2020

In 2020, the activities of the SSR WG continued to focus on two support strands:

- 1) Empowering civil society organizations to foster an informed exchange between security sector actors and citizens at the national and regional level.
- 2) Empowering parliaments to play a more effective role in the democratic oversight of their security sectors and to engage in regional exchange and knowledge-transfer.

### EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO FOSTER AN INFORMED EXCHANGE BETWEEN SECURITY SECTOR ACTORS AND CITIZENS AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

This support strand addresses one of the key above-mentioned needs and foresees multi-year assistance dedicated to informal oversight actors, with a particular focus on civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in security sector reform processes in the post-Soviet space.

At the output-level, the objectives of SSR

WG engagement under this strand are to:

Enhance capacities of CSOs to advocate for and support security sector reform (SSR) processes;

Enable CSOs to identify entry points for SSR programming in their countries and to identify challenges to SSR in the post-Soviet space; and

Enable CSOs to build a network of like-minded institutions for future regional cooperation in the field of security sector reform and governance.

The expected long-term outcome is to enable CSOs to foster an informed exchange between security sector actors and citizens with quality research and advocacy at national and regional levels.

In order to achieve the objectives under this strand, in 2019 the SSR WG launched a platform for regular exchange and dialogue with key CSOs. The inaugural conference of the Civil Society Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight was held in Kyiv, Ukraine in July 2019. It revealed the following main needs and deficits, which were agreed to be addressed jointly in annual Forum meetings:

The need to move away from sectorial approaches to SSR, and towards whole-of-sector approaches;

The need to better institutionalize SSR into educational programs and facilities across the post-Soviet space;

The need for enhancing regional dialogue on SSR; and

The need for knowledge-transfer on SSR, particularly as regards reform of the intelligence sector.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 the SSR WG moved the Civil Society Forum online and thus hosted a series of events via virtual conferencing platforms. The target group proved to be flexible and appreciated this new format – although it was agreed that face-to-face exchanges and in-person conferences will remain the preferred format once international travel is possible.

#### **CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM IN 2020**

Addressing Challenges in Security Sector

Reform.

From 30 June to 2 July 2020, the SSR WG organised in the frame of the Civil Society Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight a series of three webinars under the title: “Addressing Challenges in Security Sector Reform - Role of Civil Society”. The webinars brought together more than 30 representatives of leading civil society organisations (CSOs) working on security sector reform and governance in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

The main objectives of the 2020 Civil Society Forum events were to:

Identify the human rights instruments and legal systems in place to protect the rights of conscripts, and to explore the role that civil society can play in improving these;

Build the capacities of CSOs to monitor parliamentary performance in security sector oversight; and

Provide a platform for regional exchange on the consequences of COVID-19 for security sector governance, and identify good practices developed by CSOs to address these as well as priorities for future engagement in this area.

#### **CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM WEBINAR 1**

The Rights of Conscripts

##### **Who participated?**

30 participants, representing 23 leading civil society organizations (CSOs) from nine different countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

##### **Why cover this topic?**

Many CSOs represented in the Civil Society Forum address human rights in the armed forces as a priority topic in their research and advocacy work. As perhaps the most vulnerable section of the military community, special attention needs to be paid to their rights, with consideration of national and international jurisprudence. Further, there exists no legally binding document that protects the rights of conscripts. In its absence, states often refer to national legislation instead, which can serve as a pretext to restrict the rights of a conscripts beyond that justified by the specific circum-

stances of military service or by the need to maintain military discipline. In addition, national legislation does not always correspond to good practice and internationally recognized standards, creating grey zones in which the rights of conscripts can be unduly curtailed. The webinar intended to fill a knowledge-gap on this topic and initiate discussion on the role that CSOs can play to strengthen conscripts' rights in their country contexts.

#### **Knowledge-transfer:**

In the frame of this webinar, participants were introduced to the key findings of the Legal Handbook on the Rights of Conscripts, a study produced by DCAF - the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance in 2020. The Handbook presents international legal instruments and norms for ensuring the protection and enforcement of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of conscripts, and addresses the following key areas: restrictions on the freedom of speech; distinctions in dealing with conscripts' rights in their private capacity; forced labor; alternative military service and how can the freedom of thought, belief and religion be exercised by conscripts who change their beliefs during military service; problems of violence and 'dedovschina'; and legal frameworks addressing the rights of conscripts in the context of national emergencies.

During the webinar, local experts provided insights on national conscription systems, and the types of legal protections these afforded conscripts in both theory and practice.

The following challenges in post-Soviet countries were identified: the absence of ombudspersons in some countries; the use of conscripts for 'forced labor'; living conditions in military barracks; disproportionate restrictions on freedom of speech; the absence of clear policies as regard vacation and leave; limited access to medical examinations, limited quality of medical care and availability of doctors (especially during the COVID-19 pandemic) and violations of confidentiality; collective and arbitrary punishments and detentions; hazing and racketeering; and extensive cases of hospitalizations in psychiatric facilities as a result of post traumatic syndrome and physical traumas.

Participants actively exchanged views in the frame of plenary as well as group discussions. It was agreed that any solutions must be holistic in nature — considering also local mindsets

and systemic problems such as corruption — and that in general, there is a need to improve cooperation between governments and civil society in addressing the issue of conscripts' rights.

#### **Recommendations and conclusions:**

Two key findings of the webinar can be mentioned:

The absence of a declarative human rights instrument for conscripts rights or a document containing best practices on protecting the rights of conscripts, and its consequences for the protection of the rights of conscripts; and

The absence of a standardized approach to monitoring conscripts' rights at the regional level.

In order to address the aforementioned, it was agreed that the following is needed:

Awareness raising on the human rights challenges facing conscripts;

Reviews of national legislation, their implementation and conformance with International Human Rights Law; and

The identification and collation of good practices in the area of conscripts' rights for dissemination to practitioners and policy-makers; and

The provision of policy and legal advice to relevant state authorities on improving their regulatory systems and policies for protecting the rights of conscripts.

#### **Contextual information on the substance matter can be found in three DCAF knowledge-products:**

The "Legal Handbook on the Rights of Conscripts"

"Conscripts' Rights in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Review of National Legislation and Practice"

Some of the case studies compiled in this publication have been authored by representatives of the Civil Society Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight. The publication is forthcoming in 2021.

E-learning course on the Rights of Conscripts

In support of the webinar, DCAF also developed an E-learning course on the Rights of Conscripts, which is available in English and can be accessed through DCAF's website.

## CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM WEBINAR 2

Civil Society Engagement in the Monitoring of Parliamentary Performance in Security Sector Oversight.

### Who participated?

40 participants, representing 23 leading civil society organizations from nine different countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

### Why cover this topic?

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are important informal oversight actors. In a constructive and collaborative relation with parliament they can provide meaningful contributions to security sector oversight and facilitate an informed public debate on security policy matters. Local research institutes and independent think tanks can also satisfy parliament's constant need for expertise in the realm of security and defense. But what is required for CSOs to perform as a partner to national parliaments? CSOs need to be familiar with the mandate of parliamentary oversight committees; they need to be aware of which oversight activities are conducted; which law-initiatives are in development or review, and which deficits parliamentary defense and security committees face. Only with this information at hand, CSOs can become credible and respected partners to national parliaments and, by extension, contribute to the strengthening of security sector transparency and accountability. Monitoring parliamentary performance in security sector oversight requires strong methodologies for data compilation and analysis. In the frame of the Civil Society Forum webinar, the SSR WG therefore aimed to build capacities of CSOs to apply those methodologies in regular locally owned and locally conducted monitoring processes.

### Knowledge-transfer:

A survey conducted ahead of the event displayed a rather uneven dispersion of knowledge and expertise among participants. Only few CSOs engaged in monitoring parliamentary performance on security sector oversight. Some collected data on an ad-hoc basis or relied primarily on anecdotal evidence, but few conducted monitoring in a systematic, regular, data-driven manner. In light of this, the webinar was used to: a) introduce DCAF's approach to monitoring parliamentary performance in

security sector oversight; b) invite as guest speaker a CSO representative from the Western Balkans, who has long-standing expertise on monitoring parliamentary performance in a transition country context (Montenegro) and c) facilitate peer-learning amongst participants. CSO representatives from Armenia provided insights and lessons learned on their engagement in monitoring parliamentary performance in security sector oversight. Their respective engagement was embedded in DCAF capacity building support to strengthen security sector governance and oversight in Armenia.

The expert presentations provided insights on the scope of monitoring (legal mandate, legislative and oversight functions; budget oversight; interaction of the parliament with the government, the security sector and other stakeholders for security sector reform) as well as insights on the use of qualitative and quantitative indicators and data collection methods. Amongst others, detailed lists were provided of sample quantitative and qualitative indicators for parliamentary performance in security sector governance and oversight in various dimensions (law-making; practicing oversight; accountability towards the public at large etc.). The webinar also included a discussion on information sources and on monitoring approaches allowing for collaboration with parliamentary defence and security committees. The exchange also allowed for a discussion on major challenges, such as limited access to information exacerbated by post-Soviet legal frameworks for information classification.

### Recommendations and conclusions:

In view of lessons learned from successful monitoring initiatives, it was concluded that monitoring should be participatory and conducted in close collaboration with points of contacts at the parliament. It should also be combined with capacity-building to address the identified deficits. Members of parliament should be involved in both the development of the methodology as well as in the conceptualization and implementation of capacity-building.

Outlook and Access to customized DCAF knowledge-products.

Parliamentary security sector oversight remains a topic of high relevance for organizations represented at the Forum. It was agreed to



address and expand the topic in the frame of future Civil Society Forum events. In the meantime, the SSR WG provides Forum members with customized knowledge products on parliamentary oversight, translated into local languages. These include DCAF SSR Back-grounders, Parliamentary Briefs, Handbooks and monographs, all accessible via the DCAF website.

### **CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM WEBINAR 3**

#### **Security Sector Governance in the Context of COVID-19.**

##### **Who participated?**

35 participants, representing 23 leading civil society organizations (CSOs) from nine different countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

##### **Why cover this topic?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been and is still challenging human and state security. How governments respond to COVID-19 will have long-term implications for governance and eventual reforms of the security sector. In many countries, the pandemic is revealing and exacerbating existing gaps and continues to highlight new areas for reform. The risk of abuse of power due to the extended scope of duties and power consolidation of the executive remains a concern in many countries, not only those in transition. It is important to ensure that hard-won gains in governance and human rights are not undermined by responses to the pandemic. In such times, it is of particular importance that security providers be held accountable. Security sector and oversight actors continue to operate in difficult, unprecedented circumstances, which may also provide opportunities for positive change. Lessons learned are important for building resilience to respond to future crises. The decision was thus made to provide in the frame of the Civil Society forum a platform for regional exchange on the consequences of COVID-19 for security sector governance and to identify good practices developed by CSOs to address these as well as priorities for future engagement in this area.

##### **Knowledge-transfer:**

The webinar was conceptualized as an interactive workshop and peer-learning event. It included discussions on the effects of COVID-19 on security sector governance in

Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia and facilitated the identification of good practices on part of CSOs to address these consequences. Participants addressed a variety of key aspects, such as crisis management policies; regional relationships; practices to monitor security sector governance during 'lockdowns' and confinement, as well as the oversight practices of parliaments, ombudspersons and independent institutions; access to information; crisis management in democracies; and measures and methods to protect the human rights of citizens and military conscripts during national emergencies.

##### **Conclusions:**

Exchanges during the webinar confirmed that the pandemic has created numerous challenges. While the immediate effects of COVID-19 have mostly been seen as challenges for government institutions and civil societies, the long-term perspective has been largely perceived as an opportunity. Among immediate consequences, CSO representatives identified a democracy deficit as the key concern, with governments often unable to answer the challenges and using "health" as a pretext to impose restrictions on various freedoms, including freedoms of movement, speech, and association. According to the participants, security sector governance has deteriorated in their country contexts since the pandemic began, with issues related to communication between government structures and between the government and regions also impacting accountability. While the immediate consequences of COVID-19 on security sector governance vary from country to country, in general CSOs have become more dependent on international support. In several contexts, CSOs opted to remain out of the public "eye", while in more restrictive environments, CSOs chose to work in small groups, relying on trust-relationships in which they could engage in a more open dialogue.

##### **Access to further reading on the substance matter:**

A rich collection of resources and reading material related to security sector governance and COVID-19 can be found on the DCAF website at: <https://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/SSR-in-Practice/Thematics-in-Practice/Security-and-Justice-Reform-Response-to-COVID-19-Crisis>

## CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM - ACTIVITY EVALUATION

Evaluation questionnaires were used to assess the series of three webinars held under the Civil Society Forum. Participants indicated that they particularly appreciated the interactive format of the webinars, and the opportunity to meet and exchange with their regional counterparts on these key topics. The participants were actively engaged in plenary discussions and working group activities. More specifically, the participants confirmed that the webinars:

- Increased their knowledge on the human rights instruments and legal systems in place to protect the rights of conscripts;

- Enhanced their capacities to monitor parliamentary performance in security sector oversight;

- Provided a platform for regional exchange on the consequences of COVID-19 for security sector governance and allowed them to learn about good practices developed by CSOs to address these.

Participants highly appreciated the related knowledge products developed by DCAF and made accessible via the PfPC SSR WG in the frame of the Civil Society Forum. Some participants also indicated that they have applied the knowledge acquired during the event in their professional capacities. For example, participants from Georgia stated that the indicators presented by DCAF for monitoring parliamentary performance in overseeing the security sector have now been integrated into their respective projects. The methodology is also being applied by CSO representatives from Armenia.

### **Empowering parliaments to play a more effective role in the democratic oversight of their security sectors and to engage in regional exchange and knowledge-transfer**

This support strand addresses another major need as described in the “deficits and needs for support” section, and foresees multi-year assistance dedicated to members and staff of parliamentary defense and security committees.

At the output-level, the objectives of SSR WG

engagement under this strand are to:

- Familiarise parliamentary delegations with the concept of democratic security sector governance;

- Enhance knowledge of the key target group on norms, standards, and good practices for parliamentary security sector oversight;

- Increase knowledge on topics of particular relevance for the target countries: in particular intelligence governance, human rights in the security sector, prevention of violent extremism, regulation of information classification, amongst others;

- Provide access to guidance material produced by DCAF and the PfPC to support the target group when undertaking or supporting activities to improve security sector governance; and

- Increase trust and confidence among parliamentary delegations from states currently in conflict.

The expected long-term outcome is to enable parliaments to play a more effective role in the democratic oversight of their security sectors by harmonizing relevant legislation with international norms and standards; applying best practices in security sector oversight; monitoring the implementation of legal and policy frameworks, and to facilitate regional parliamentary dialogue through knowledge-transfer across parliaments and by doing so, contribute to confidence and peace-building.

In order to achieve the objectives under this strand, in 2019 the SSR WG launched a platform for regular exchange and dialogue between national parliaments. The inaugural conference of the Parliamentary Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight was held in Geneva, Switzerland in September 2019. Parliamentary delegations in attendance expressed their wish to continue cooperation under the PfPC SSR WG format and underscored the need to examine various topics in future Forum meetings, in particular access to classified information and oversight of intelligence services.

In 2020, the SSR WG had intended to organize its second conference under the Parliamentary Forum, entitled “Parliamentary

Oversight of the Security Sector in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia”.

The conference was planned for 1 to 3 December 2020, with a focus on three key topics:

[Access to and protection of classified information;](#)

[Parliamentary oversight of the intelligence sector;](#)

[The role of parliament in overseeing military operations abroad and the deployment of foreign troops on domestic territory.](#)

Due to travel restrictions related to COVID-19, as well as elections and civil unrest in some target countries, the conference had to be postponed. We hope to be able to implement the activity in the course of 2021.

Based on the needs and interests identified by the target group DCAF developed several knowledge products on intelligence accountability, parliamentary oversight, as well as an E-learning course on classified information customized for the target group. This material will also facilitate SSR WG activities in 2021 and beyond.

E-learning course on “Handling and Protection of Classified Information in Parliaments.”

The E-learning course on “Handling and Protection of Classified Information in Parliaments”, which is primarily addressed to parliamentary members and staffers, provides an overview of international standards and good practices related to the protection and handling of classified information. The e-tutorial is available in local languages and can be accessed via the DCAF website – upon registration, here:

Handling and Protection of Classified Information in Parliaments | DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance.

Study on “Insights and Lessons Learned from Croatia’s Intelligence Reforms.”

The paper on “Insights and Lessons Learned from Croatia’s Intelligence Reforms” provides insights into intelligence reform efforts

in Croatia, and recommendations for reform efforts in countries in transition. More specifically, the paper provides insights into the main challenges faced during the reform processes, starting from the adjustments of the legal frameworks to the implementation of the reform agenda. This paper is addressed to practitioners, policy makers, and researchers in the field of SSG/R and is available in local languages. It can be accessed via the DCAF website here:

*Insights and Lessons Learned from Croatia’s Intelligence Reforms | Dcaf – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance.*

Please find a list of additional knowledge products, which have been developed and/or translated into local languages in the context of SSR WG activities in the Annex below.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020 AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

Support to security sector reform processes in countries in transition requires long-term, multi-year engagement. In recent years, key reform stakeholders participating in the activities of the SSR WG have:

[Increased awareness of guiding norms and good practices concerning security sector governance;](#)

[Increased levels of expertise in security sector legislation and oversight;](#)

[Increased participation in regional exchange and norms promotion;](#)

[Increased focus on oversight in committee deliberations and in the use of oversight tools;](#)

[Enhanced capacities on the part of civil society organizations to participate in policy debates relating to the security sector; and](#)

[Increased access to and use of customized guidance material and knowledge-products.](#)

In 2020, progress monitoring focused in particular on substance areas addressed by SSR WG activities in the course of the year. Information was collected in the frame of participant questionnaires, informal exchanges with key beneficiaries of support, and via monitoring mechanisms linked to DCAF progress monitoring in selected key target

countries.

### **HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

We would like to particularly highlight the following results achieved in 2020:

Members of the SSR WG's Civil Society Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight actively engaged in regional dialogue on the rights of conscripts' and contributed to the development of a forthcoming DCAF publication on the Conscripts' Rights in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Review of National Legislation and Practice.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) from Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia enhanced their capacities to monitor parliamentary performance in security sector oversight and to apply monitoring methodologies in locally owned and locally conducted monitoring processes. As a result of the SSR WG's respective capacity building activities, CSO representatives from Georgia have integrated performance indicators for monitoring parliamentary progress in overseeing the security sector into their respective projects. The methodology presented by the SSR WG is also being applied by CSO representatives from Armenia. Regular, systematic and data-driven performance monitoring will help CSOs to become credible and respected partners to national parliaments and, by extension, contribute to the strengthening of security sector transparency and accountability.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only been challenging for human and state security, but also for all those that engage in security sector oversight, including parliaments, independent oversight bodies and informal oversight actors, such as CSOs. The risk of abuse of power due to the extended scope of duties and power consolidation of the executive remains a concern in many countries, not only those in transition. In such times, it is of particular importance that security providers be held accountable. The SSR WG's Civil Society Forum provided a platform for an exchange on the consequences

of COVID-19 for security sector governance and on lessons learned. Together, these provided the basis for the identification of good practices developed by CSOs to address the effects of COVID-19. These insights will help build resilience and provide guidance for future response to crisis.

In addition, the SSR WG has developed and/or translated into local languages a series of knowledge products, which provide background information, contextual analysis, comparative insights, and customized guidance for key national stakeholders for security sector governance, and oversight. A selection of publications is listed in the Annex below.

---

## WAY AHEAD

---

In 2021 and beyond, the SSR WG will continue supporting security sector reform and good governance programming in NATO Partner states, mainly by capitalizing on the platforms created in 2019. The SSR WG will continue supporting regional parliamentary dialogue and empower CSOs as informal oversight actors by addressing priority topics for each target group as defined at the 2019 launch events. By doing so, it will work towards the achievement of outputs and long-term outcomes by addressing identified deficits and needs mentioned above.

### **OUTLOOK: CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM IN 2021**

In light of the positive feedback on the Civil Society Forum, the SSR WG is committed to providing continued support to this target group. It will deliver its third Civil Society Forum in the first quarter of 2021, which, based on the findings of the needs assessment conducted in 2019 and 2020 by the SSR WG, will address: 1) human rights in the armed forces with a focus on conscripts rights in the context of national emergencies; 2) civil society and intelligence oversight; 3) collaboration between civil society and parliament in security sector oversight.

### **OUTLOOK: PARLIAMENTARY FORUM IN 2021**

The SSR WG is committed to organizing the Parliamentary Forum in 2021, most likely covering the topics that had been originally foreseen for the 2020 Forum (see above). Depending on developments as regard COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum may be delivered online. At the time of drafting this report, the SSR WG is exploring options to complement the Parliamentary Forum with a technical skills training customized for parliamentary staff experts serving the Defence and Security Committees of Parliaments in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia.

The SSR WG will continue coordinating and cooperating with PfPC working groups, in particular the RSSC Working Group. In the spirit of the PfPC, the SSR WG will continue consolidating its community of practice, build networks, foster regional dialogue, and build institutional and societal resilience, thereby contributing to the preservation of peace and stability in the Eastern Neighbourhood.



## APPENDICES

### Meetings in 2020

PfPC SSR WG Civil Society Forum on Security Sector Governance and Oversight: “Addressing Challenges in Security Sector Reform - Role of Civil Society” – Series of three webinars, held from 30 June to 2 July 2020 · Virtual PfPC CSC Meeting, 29 April 2020 · Combined virtual PfPC SAC/CSC Meeting 27-28 October 2020;

### Institutions Partnered with in 2020

Caspian Defense Studies Institute, Azerbaijan · Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies, Ukraine · Center for Innovations in Open Governance, Armenia · Center of Research Initiatives Ma’no, Uzbekistan · Central Eurasia Analytical Group, Uzbekistan · Civil Council on Defence and Security, Georgia · EMC Human Rights Education and Monitoring Centre, Georgia · Human Rights Matter, Germany · Institute Alternative, Montenegro · Institute for Peacekeeping and Conflict Management, National Defense Academy, Austria · Institute for Public Policy, Moldova · Interbilim Osh, Kyrgyzstan · International University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan · Legal Initiative, Belarus · NGO Donbas Gates, Lithuania · Office for Civil Freedoms, Tajikistan · Peace and Conflict Resolution Center, Azerbaijan · Peace Dialogue, Armenia · Promo-LEX Association, Moldova · Protection of Rights without Borders, Armenia · Public Engagement, Serbia · Soros Foundation, Kyrgyzstan · Statewatch, Ukraine · Women’s Association for Rational Development, Azerbaijan

### Knowledge Products

The SSR WG has developed and/or translated into local languages a series of knowledge products, which provide background information, contextual analysis, comparative insights, and customized guidance for key national stakeholders for security sector governance and oversight. These knowledge products are accessible via the DCAF website at: <https://www.dcaf.ch>

#### Parliamentary Oversight:

E-learning Course on Handling and Protection of Classified Information in Parliaments, DCAF, 2020, available in English, Armenian, Russian, Albanian, Serbian and Macedonian.

Parliamentary Oversight of Military Intelligence, DCAF-NPA, 2020, available in English and Ukrainian.

Legal Compendium on Belarussian Security Sector Legislation, DCAF, 2020, available in English.

Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry, DCAF, 2020, available in English, Armenian and Russian.

Parliamentary Oversight in Central Asia, DCAF 2020, available in English and Russian.

Working Paper on Parliamentary Oversight Committees, DCAF, 2019, now also available in Russian.

Parliamentary Powers in Security Sector Governance, DCAF, 2011, now also available in Armenian.

Parliaments – Roles and Responsibilities in Good Security Sector Governance, SSR Backgrounder Series, DCAF, 2015, now also available in Armenian.

Security Sector Governance, SSR Backgrounder Series, DCAF, 2015, now also available in Armenian.

Security Sector Reform, SSR Backgrounder Series, DCAF, 2015, now also available in Armenian.

Security Sector Governance and COVID-19:

Briefing Note: COVID and Security Sector Governance, DCAF, 2020, now also available in Russian.

Additional resources on SSG/R and COVID-19 available on the DCAF website.

**Conscripts Rights:**

Legal Handbook on the Rights of Conscripts, DCAF, 2020, available in English, Russian and Ukrainian.

E-learning Course on the Rights of Conscripts, DCAF, 2020, available in English and Russian.

Case Studies on Conscript Rights, DCAF, 2020, English, Russian and Ukrainian.

**Intelligence Governance and Oversight:**

Insights and Lessons Learned from Croatia's Intelligence Reforms, DCAF, 2020, available in English, Albanian, Armenian, Macedonian and Serbian.

Intelligence Oversight, SSR Backgrounder Series, DCAF, 2017, now also available in Armenian and Russian.

Intelligence Services, SSR Backgrounder Series, DCAF, 2017, now also available in Armenian and Russian.

The recommendations contained in this report are the outcome of an online virtual transatlantic security brainstorming event designed to look at securing the future post COVID-19, flag issues and develop recommendations for policymakers. Leading think tanks and defense educational institutions hosted the discussions on six main topics, featuring 2,750 registered representatives from government, international organizations, academia, and the private sector. This number included over 160 VIP's, many at the ministerial and ambassadorial level.

## Recommendations and courses of action

### How to secure the post-COVID future

Todor Tagarev, Raphael Perl, and Valeri Ratchev

The COVID-19 pandemic had a swift and severe impact on our societies. In the midst of this pandemic, many of us are facing new challenges and are asking what comes next. This report is designed to highlight outcomes of an online Transatlantic Security Jam event that focused on how to secure the post-COVID future.

Despite the lack of a clear picture of what will eventually happen with COVID-19, the Jam provided a unique opportunity to start learning, thinking and discussing how to prepare better not only for future disease outbreaks, but also for various threats that may have global source and coverage. Nations can emerge stronger and more secure if they learn from the COVID-19 experience that genuine safety and security are not possible without international cooperation and coordination.

In the words of Jam participant United States Assistant Secretary of Defense, Kathryn Wheelbarger:

“Given the nature of our adversaries’ actions, success going forward will require whole-of-government and whole-of-society solutions, which highlights the need for greater integration between the efforts of NATO and the European Union, a more comprehensive approach to operations and activities, and a transatlantic investment strategy that rewards innovation, relevance, and the rapid fielding of cost-effective solutions.”

The 11 theme summaries that follow were extracted by the authors from the proceedings of the event. Highlights of the themes are positioned in a roadmap (Figure 1). Each theme summary has been formatted into three components: (1) findings, (2) policy challenges and (3) response options. The findings, challenges and response options contained in this report summary are the outcome of Jam discussions and are not necessarily endorsed by all Jam participants.

### Key recommendations:

- The transatlantic community should initiate an in-depth leadership discussion (using G7, NATO and US-EU formats) on leveraging and strengthening historically established strategic advantages.
- Achieving “strategic complementarity” between NATO and the European Union is a strategically desirable goal. Both NATO and the EU should initiate comprehensive reviews of the US-Europe strategic dialogue on all topics from trade to security with the goal of reaffirming and enhancing transatlantic solidarity.
- NATO and the EU should establish task forces to examine balancing allocation of resources devoted to traditional external threats with those devoted to emerging global threats.
- NATO and the EU should establish and formalize mechanisms to examine and develop comprehensive response strategies to Chinese global efforts to expand influence. Beijing’s European policy during the pandemic provides strong evidence that the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation should be seriously overhauled. It is important to scrutinize Chinese geo-economics through a security prism, with resulting guidance to the EU Members and aspirants on a unified strategy for their relations with China. A similar approach guiding relations with Russia is also warranted.
- The timing of catastrophic events is often not predictable – but effective responses to such events have much in common. NATO and the EU should formalize mechanisms to develop and robustly coordinate all hazards response capabilities to catastrophic events with the pandemic experience as a driving force. Important here is to ensure supply chain continuity. Resilient, dependable and diverse supply chains, involving trusted allies and partners, are essential for effective national and regional responses to pandemic-like threats.
- The EU should create a Strategic Communications Task Force dedicated to countering hostile competitor campaigns designed to undermine EU public opinion; e.g. Chinese, Russian, Iranian, Islamist, and others.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) has much to offer in enhancing readiness and response to pandemic-type events, but often not without potentially far reaching implications for individual freedoms and civil liberty. Creating EU or NATO task forces or advisory/study groups charged with enhancing compatibility of legal and ethical frameworks with the use of AI in military applications is an option worth considering.



## 1. International Order: Will the COVID-19 pandemic turn into a systemic shock?

“This pandemic will alter aspects of world order and its full consequences remain to be seen.”

-General Tod Wolters, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe

The pandemic did not create new global power conflicts; however, neither did it result in enhanced cooperation and solidarity needed to limit human and economic losses. Its spread along the China–Russia–Europe–United States axis exacerbated the processes already threatening the international order, compromising rules-based trade and interdependence, neglecting multilateral cooperation and coordination, and eroding democracy with disruptive populism. The pandemic's scale, speed and consequences sharpened mutual suspicion, inflammatory rhetoric and general concerns for the future of the world. If the pandemic turns into a global economic recession with concomitant de-globalization and rise in nationalism, it may severely challenge the international order. China, Russia, and other adversaries already regard it as a constraint on their power and as a factor promoting and institutionalizing transatlantic leadership to their disadvantage.

The systemic effect of the pandemic is still unclear; it could drive national attitudes and international actions towards either reinforcing or weakening the international order. If the latter dominates, the geopolitics of control may broaden and deepen fragmentation. Those who see in the pandemic an opportunity for improving the global arrangements must unite along the principles of freedom, prosperity and democracy.

### Courses of action for policy makers:

The transatlantic community needs an in-depth leadership discussion (using G7, NATO and US-EU formats) on:

- Modernizing and strengthening the historically established strategic advantages;
- A common approach to prevent an authoritarian turn worldwide;
- Pragmatic principles of constructive multilateralism.

## 2. Allied Militaries during the Pandemic: Supporting civilian authorities, maintaining readiness

“Now more than ever we must be vigilant, we must maintain our readiness to act and to react, and we must demonstrate our solidarity, our resolve, and our commitment to protect and defend our populations, our economies, and our political systems.”

- Mike Ryan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, USA

Allied militaries play a crucial role in national responses to COVID-19, supporting civilian authorities with logistics and planning, field hospitals, transport of patients and supplies, disinfection of public areas, border control, or by establishing checkpoints and patrolling streets under lockdown. Military hospitals and laboratories are part of the first line of response, and military medics share their unique know-how of working in a bio-hazardous environment. On the other hand, COVID-19 demonstrated the fragility of present armed forces and alliance capabilities, and the challenges of maintaining cohesion and operations in a pandemic.

In the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, the squadron of C-17 Globemasters of the Strategic Airlift Capability, operated by seven NATO allies and EU partners Sweden and Finland, as well as SALIS An-124s, delivered critically needed diagnostic kits, medical supplies and equipment, while the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) managed the support on the request of the United Nations, allies, and partners from four continents. Since military personnel are not immune to infections, armed forces had to scale back operations and exercises following the COVID-19 outbreak. Some units and ship crews required quarantine. This impacted readiness, particularly for troops deployed in operations or as a forward presence.

During a pandemic, the safe and rapid movement of military personnel and equipment is crucial to support civil exigencies, while maintaining deterrence and defense capabilities:

“Military mobility ... in the European theatre is essential ... for collective defense purposes or for crisis management. It calls for improving NATO's logistical capabilities by adjusting legislation and procedures to facilitate border crossing; upgrading infrastructure (e.g., roads and bridges with the right parameters for heavy military equipment) ... Many of those elements are to some extent within the scope of the EU regulation and funding.”

Amb. Tomasz Szatkowski, Permanent Representative of, Poland to the North Atlantic Council



*A C-17 Globemaster from the NATO-supported Strategic Airlift Capability squadron delivers protective equipment and medical supplies to Bulgaria.  
Image source: NATO*



*The NATO-supported Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS) has played a key role enabling NATO nations to airlift urgent medical equipment and respond to the crisis.  
Image source: NATO Support and Procurement Agency*

### **Courses of action for policy makers:**

- Enhance allied capabilities to support civilian authorities in a pandemic, e.g. by introducing a pandemic scenario in the NATO defense planning process, conducting exercises in simulated biohazardous environment, developing online training courses, etc.;
- Develop a robust all-hazards response capability with the pandemic experience as a driving force;
- Better equip and train the military for action in bio-hazardous environments;
- Improve the resilience of Allied forces by promoting common health standards, assessing critical material dependencies, and pooling stocks of medications and vaccines for troops;
- Speed up the flagship initiative of NATO-EU cooperation for establishing a “Military Schengen Zone” by adapting legislation and procedures and upgrading dual-use transport infrastructure to facilitate military mobility in Europe;
- Improve resilience of supply chains and stockpile availability of vital equipment and supplies;
- Exercise innovative ways to enhance deterrence and demonstrate solidarity during a pandemic (e.g. B-1s flying over the Black Sea).

### 3. The Future of US-Europe Strategic Alliance - An invaluable pragmatic partnership for rule-based international order

“The basic argument for NATO is so obvious it is often ignored. Western security depends on cohesion and solidarity of like-minded states to use collective power for the common good.”

- Harlan Ullman, *Atlantic Council, U.S.A.*

The US–Europe alliance established rule-based international order, turned democracy into a global trend, and created the most attractive socio-economic space in the world. Failing to sustain this historic achievement would be a recipe for a historic defeat. However, both sides currently oppose significant internal and strategic challenges, leading to disagreements and emerging rifts between Allies. To oversimplify the roots of friction would be a mistake. The tragedy of COVID-19, along with increasing confrontation with China and Russia, is challenging the resilience of the Transatlantic Alliance. But this will also help the Alliance focus on foundational principles and values.

Nearly 80 % of the polled participants disagree with the statement that COVID-19 may result in the termination of transatlantic security relations (see Figure 2).

Consolidated and effective transatlantic leadership is both desirable and indispensable for preserving the prosperity, freedom and democratic perspectives of the world. More rigorous cooperation is necessary to maintain global influence beyond COVID-19 and to cope with multiple threats – nuclear, kinetic, pandemic, cyber, hybrid, and space.

#### Courses of action for policy makers:

US-Europe strategic dialogue on all topics from trade to security is indispensable; it must be re-invigorated on leadership, bureaucratic, military and intellectual levels to reaffirm and enhance transatlantic solidarity.

- This dialogue must support the aspirations of both NATO (political/military) and the EU (political/economic);
- Promising areas for NATO-EU cooperation include counter disinformation, crisis management, cyber security, hybrid threats, contingency planning, and cooperative, comprehensive resilience;
- Possible defense budget cuts may provide an incentive for cooperation and collaborative projects in bilateral and multilateral formats.



## 4. Nuclear Deterrence: Unyielding commitment to non-proliferation and arms control

“The role of nuclear deterrence in the security of Europe has not changed because of COVID-19. The fact that a lot of domestic attention is turned elsewhere does not change its relevance.”

- Marjolijn van Deelen, Ambassador for the, Non-Proliferation Treaty

During the expanding pandemic, most nuclear armed governments declared the situation would not affect the combat readiness of their nuclear forces. However, President Putin exploited the world's diverted attention and announced new political guidelines for Russia's nuclear deterrence policy, which already includes several new missile systems. Moreover, China is rapidly fielding a nuclear triad for the first time. Unilateral disarmament initiatives do not appear to be trending positively. Transatlantic nuclear capabilities remain critical for global stability, the security of the NATO area, and the defense of Allied nations.

In the civil nuclear sector, China and Russia dominate the export of nuclear power to both developing and developed countries. This gives them substantial influence through control of energy-related supply chains and leverage over the use of nuclear technology dissemination for military purposes.

The ongoing negotiations on nuclear arms control are necessary and promising, especially if China joins. However, until achieving a mutually binding agreement, measures should be undertaken by the US and NATO Allies not to hand the initiative and advantage to Russia or China.

In the civil sector, allowing foreign government companies to build and operate a dangerous piece of energy infrastructure in Europe carries serious risks.

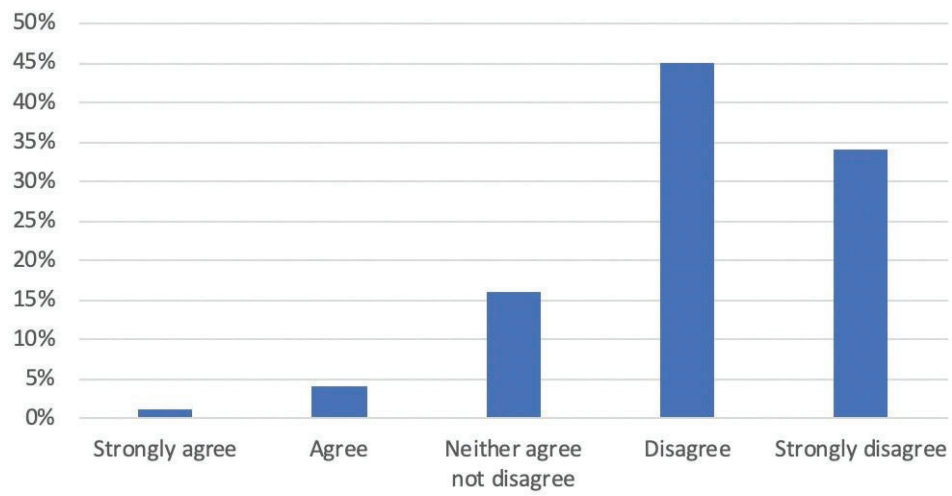
### Courses of action for policy makers:

Allied nations should coordinate a three-layered approach to tackle the nuclear issue:

- The progress on nuclear arms control and disarmament should continue to be highly prioritized;
- Allied nations may support intensive diplomatic efforts to reduce risks at regional levels;
- In the civil nuclear sector, the US and EU should continue working to enforce safety regulations at the production lines and with purchasing states to reinforce their security.



*The NATO-supported Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS) has played a key role enabling NATO nations to airlift urgent medical equipment and respond to the crisis.  
Image source: NATO Support and Procurement Agency*



*Figure 2: Is COVID-19 the beginning of the end of Transatlantic cooperation?*  
*Source: Transatlantic Security Jam poll (N=538)*

## 5. China's Role in Europe: The end of illusions

*“In Central and Eastern European member states and Eastern partner countries, the EU could do a much better job.... The EU's support of these states still far outweighs that of China, but public and political leaders in these countries sometimes don't realize this.”*  
- Andrew Cottey, University College Cork, Ireland

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a communist dictatorship with giant production capabilities based on European and American technologies. The regime is oppressive at home and economically aggressive abroad. PRC leadership sees a global Pax Sinica based on production, demography, superior military, and “Wolf Warrior” foreign policy. This strategy has already impacted Europe, raising concerns about the use of direct investments, trade and aid as a platform for interference in the political, economic and security decision-making in Europe. During the pandemic, Europe has depended on China for medical supplies and this gave Beijing another opportunity to get a foot in the door of many European capitals. At the same time, in Europe, there is an increasing distrust of China.

PRC activities are targeted to undermine cohesion and promote fragmentation between NATO and EU member states. China's economic largesse ruins democratic ideological scruples in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and other financially fragile nations. Beijing has initiated the “17+1” initiative with the East European countries as “supplement” to China's relationship with the EU that actually led to growing trade deficits and Chinese Communist Party “dialogue” with selected political parties. While there is shared concern over PRC's overall strategy and immediate actions during the pandemic, there is less agreement on strategies for confronting China, despite its designation as “systemic rival.” It is time to discuss whether Europe wants to continue to see its cutting-edge technologies and critical infrastructure sold off with the consequent political, social, and security repercussions.

### Courses of action for policy makers:

Beijing policy in Europe during the pandemic provides strong evidence that the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation should be seriously revised to scrutinize Chinese geo-economics through the security prism and provide clear guidance to the members and aspirants for their relations with China (as well as with Russia).

- The EU needs to secure and expand its investment and trade interest in China – a comprehensive investment agreement should precede a possible free trade agreement;
- China's supply lines, international commerce research and development, and financial markets contain vulnerabilities that joint EU-US pressure might encourage Beijing to follow the international norms more closely;
- The transatlantic community should more closely control and monitor third parties' investments in critical sectors and assets.

## 6. EU Security and Defense Goals: Strategic autonomy or stronger transatlantic partnership?

“Nobody seriously believes that the crisis should produce less Europe rather than more Europe. The crisis has shaken multilateralism while demonstrating that multilateralism is our only viable exit strategy.”

- Jamie Shea, Senior Fellow, Friends of Europe

The EU Global Strategy announced the goal to achieve strategic autonomy through Europe’s ability to promote peace and security within and beyond its borders. The strategy was followed by introduction of capability planning and review mechanisms, launching PESCO projects and the multi-billion European Defense Fund, as well as other practical steps.

Strictly national responses prevailed in the first days of the pandemic, showing how fragile European solidarity actually might be. However, the European Commission and member states, with NATO’s important participation, fairly quickly introduced measures to reinforce national healthcare systems, contain the spread of the virus while assuring cross-border mobility, and a plan to support an economic recovery from the crisis.

Future developments will depend on the hitherto unclear impact of the recession and recovery funding on defense expenditures. Most Jam participants expect that defense budgets will come under strain and warn that slashing defense expenditures would be a “cardinal mistake.”

Still, 60% of the participants think that the COVID-19 crisis will not infringe on the EU’s strategic autonomy aspirations.

In the opinion of Jiří Šedivý, Chief Executive of the European Defense Agency, COVID-19 may turn to be the wake-up call that will unleash Europe’s extraordinary potential, by engaging member states in “real, deep and sincere cooperation, at all levels, including on defense policies and capability development.”

Some see the drive to strategic autonomy, and in particular technological and industrial autonomy, as long-term insurance in a turbulent world. Others, including Raimundas Karoblis, Minister of National Defense of Lithuania, state that strategic autonomy can be pursued as a transatlantic endeavor by NATO and the EU, and not just by the EU.



### Courses of action for policy makers:

- A number of participants underlined that, at least in the foreseeable future, the European Union would not be able—and should not aim—to deploy the full spectrum of required security and defense capabilities autonomous from NATO;
- Not surprisingly, in response to a poll, 51% of the Jam participants stated that EU security policy should be defined in cooperation with NATO, 45% called for EU-wide coordination, and the remaining 4% consider security policy a national responsibility;
- The current lack of definition of the purpose of strategic autonomy (see Figure 3) and its scope (e.g. in terms of geographic areas, domains of conflict, capability types, technologies and industrial capacity) hinders the transatlantic debate. Better specificity and exchange of information concerning shared goals would facilitate the identification of most relevant and mutually accepted solutions;
- Ralf Roloff, Deputy Dean for Academics of the George C. Marshall Center, wraps up this debate well stating that instead of “strategic autonomy” we should rather aim at “strategic complementarity” of NATO and the European Union.

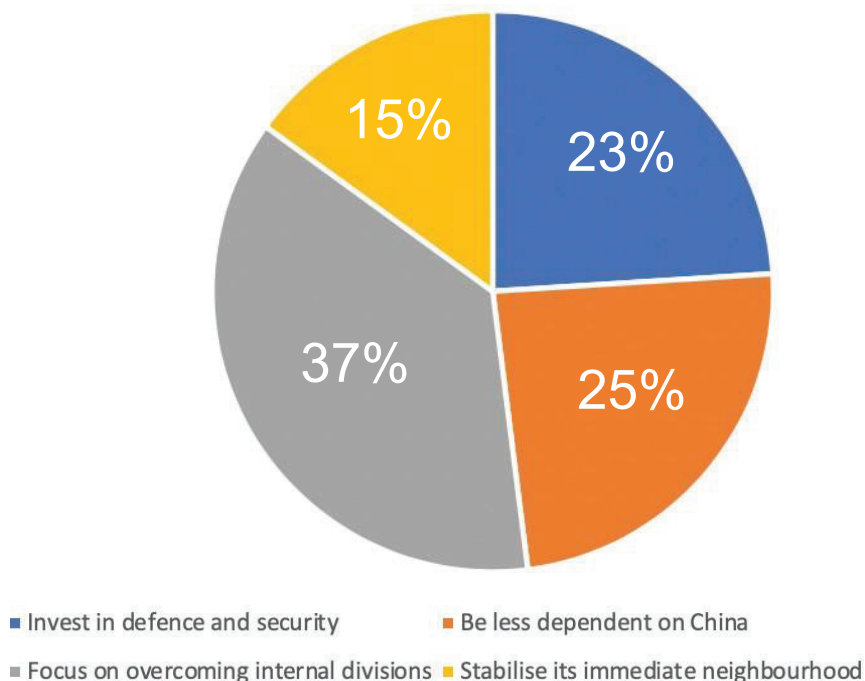


Figure 3: What is the best approach for the EU to achieve strategic autonomy?  
Source: Transatlantic Security Jam poll (N=251)

## 7. The pandemic information battleground

“There’s definitely a deliberate element of using this pandemic to destabilize our democracies by means of information operations, but we’re also seeing many homegrown conspiracy theorists emboldened to spread disinformation. They are creating a sort of co-production of disinformation pieces that recycle and transform Chinese and Russian propaganda.”

- Nathalie Van Raemdonck, *EU Institute for Security Studies, Belgium*

The tensions between Russia and NATO, and the US and China, created another front during the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing a long-running information war. China and Russia sought to take advantage of the early lack of solidarity in the EU through disinformation campaigns, efforts to showcase their modest contributions, and attempts to exert diplomatic and economic pressure on the EU and member states.

Russia generated propaganda in a traditional KGB manner – Sputnik News launched the false information that the virus was produced by a US laboratory and followed with a comprehensive campaign aimed at increasing the psychological impact of the pandemic, creating panic and sowing doubts. Meanwhile, China engaged in a classic propaganda campaign by sending messages of false solidarity, criticizing the EU crisis management, promoting China’s own success, and suppressing dissident voices at home.

Massive disinformation and false attributions targeted against the West and coupled with the opportunistic delivery of aid during a global human tragedy demonstrates Russian and Chinese exploitation of the crisis. The propaganda campaigns aim to create an impression of the overwhelming importance of China as a primary actor in the post-COVID-19 response, with Russia a close second. Nevertheless, these countries were not able to increase their prestige and respect in the eyes of Europeans; instead, excessive propaganda amplified current fractures and may complicate future relations.

### **Courses of action for policy makers:**

- The EU should create a Strategic Communications Task Force dedicated to countering hostile competitor campaigns designed to undermine EU public opinion; e.g. Chinese, Russian, Iranian, Islamist, and others;
- It is mandatory to initiate positive public diplomacy to promote the EU story and build solidarity among member states;
- EUvsDisinfo and the US Global Engagement Center should enhance their cooperation and prevent the creation of a Russian-Chinese “ecosystem” and further boom of disinformation.

## 8. Artificial Intelligence: Cooperation opportunities or the “new battleground”?

“AI is ranked with fire and electricity in its power to transform the world.”  
- AFCEA Technology Committee

Seeking to optimize enterprise operations and supply chains, the private sector rapidly adopts Artificial Intelligence (AI). In the military domain, AI applications can improve intelligence analysis, decision-making, logistics, the operation of autonomous vehicles and swarms, and weapon systems. Most participants in the Jam believe that in no more than five years AI will be widely used in military operations (Figure 4).

Of particular interest is the concept of “Mission Command 2.0” establishing decision-making faster than that of adversaries. A new AI will enable leaders to oversee complex operations, while allowing decentralized execution by human-machine teams.

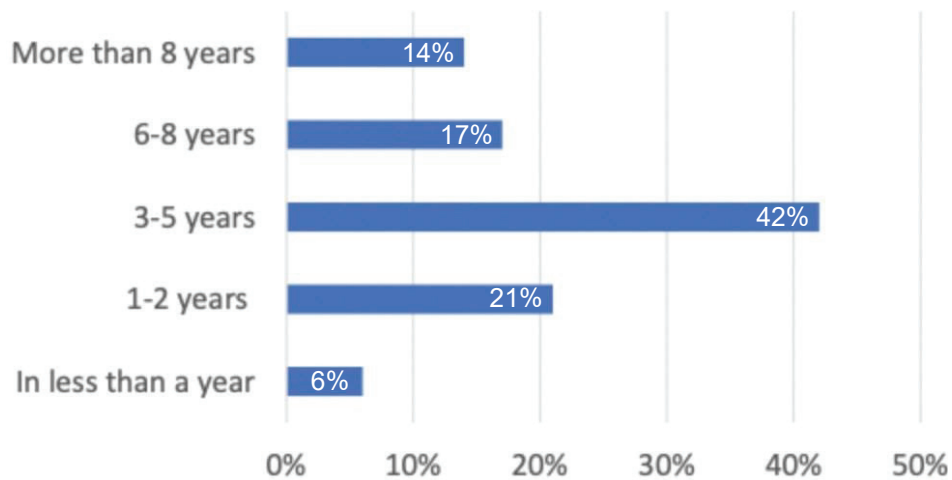
This concept is applicable also to COVID-19 and other emergencies, where AI will equip lowest tiers of decentralized institutions to manage safety net programs, community health, logistic supplies, and funding.

AI offers much faster and potentially more accurate assessment of enemy actions. For example, AI-based predictive analytics hold the promise of anticipating cyberattacks and the best counter actions.

The competitive advantages of AI are understood by leading powers. China pursues global technological supremacy, aiming to become the global leader in the development of AI theory and technology by 2030.

The use of AI in mission critical tasks faces considerable challenges. AI can be hacked, might be biased, could make dangerous mistakes, and is hard to understand and control.

The integration of AI into mission command, e.g., in the use of armed drones, may be politically controversial, even among allies, due to differing legal and ethical frameworks. Furthermore, Dr. William Wieninger from the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies stated: “We don’t fully understand how AI processes information, and it is very possible that in a crisis AI could misinterpret the data – believing an attack was imminent – and thus starting a war that nobody wants.”



*Figure 4: When will AI be used widely by the military for stability operations?*  
Source: Transatlantic Security Jam poll (N=539)

### **Courses of action for policy makers:**

Closer collaboration between industry, government and academia, as well as between NATO and the EU, is essential to maintain a technological and industrial edge.

Allies must determine how to incorporate AI into defense readiness and response systems. It is important to clarify:

- The mission critical tasks that preserve the indispensable human role in decision-making;
- The best platforms to exchange data, validate, and certify mission critical AI applications; how to make legal and ethical frameworks on the use of AI in military applications compatible;
- How to select AI systems and evaluate their efficacy;
- How to engage with China to avoid—or win—a new arms race in the field of AI.



## 9. Accelerating innovation

“The solid basis of transatlantic cooperation in the field of innovations lies in complementarity and synergy of our economies.....We have the same competitors, we need our markets and we need our investments.”  
- Krzysztof Szczerski, Chief of Staff to the President of the Republic of Poland

Allies need to innovate continuously to preserve a technological edge and maintain the ability to get the latest technology to the warfighter faster than anyone else.

Multi-year capability development projects, driven by requirements defined by military planners, will increasingly be seen as an exception, rather than the norm. Much of the expertise in today's new technologies rests in the civilian sector.

Further, the private sector is more willing to introduce innovative solutions, even if they are not fully configured and tested, and then make necessary adjustments along the way. China uses a similar approach to speed up AI-based innovation.

Through the Allied Command Transformation Innovation Hub and the NATO Innovation Network. Allies already leverage open innovation by providing mutual support, sharing best practices, and identifying issues to solve and proposed solutions.

### Courses of action for policy makers:

To enhance agility, maintain a technological edge and field superior capabilities rapidly, NATO Allies, partners, and the EU should consider the following:

- Provide a robust platform for exchange of information and ideas between the requirements-definition community and solution providers;
- Increase flexibility of the defense acquisition processes, allowing contractors and non-defense companies to contribute knowledge and expertise to requirements definition and experimentation;
- Expand the opportunities for exchange of personnel between the military and industry;
- Increase funding for innovative government research laboratories and projects;
- Create an International Security Innovation Network to amass a knowledge base and identify promising technologies, while promoting a new culture innovation.

## 10. Over the Horizon... Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity

*“The whole point of NATO’s breadth and (I hope) flexibility will be its capacity to adjust to new threats and new ways of thinking.”*

*- Cameron Munter, Consultant, New York/ Czech Republic*

The shape of international conflict is evolving in cyberspace, failed societies, human health, climate change, space, transportations system, technological competition, financial systems, and in other areas. Each threat may have amplifying effects on some other non-conventional security threat, creating a chain of mutually reinforcing risks. As much as Allied nations are experiencing greater vulnerabilities across various domains, the number of threat actors is also on the increase. COVID-19 provides a real-life sense of what bioterrorism could look like. It is a grim illustration how complex and poorly understood the contemporary security landscape is, and how unprepared we are for threats.

The main point of NATO’s breadth and flexibility will be its capacity to adjust to new ways of thinking and to find its place in the broad resilience debate. The dilemma is whether the Alliance should broaden its mandate to embrace a spectrum of new security threats or to focus on its traditional core defense mandate; it may be difficult to do both. The former may mean an enhanced civilian role, or for NATO to develop standing defense plans for response to various non-military threats, and therefore may come at the expense of NATO’s cutting edge military capacity; while the focus on the core defense mandate runs the risk of being inadequate for a large portion of conceivable threats.

### **Courses of action for policy makers:**

- The lessons of COVID-19 should be used to establish a process of analysis and response to new threats’ ecology, to allow NATO to augment its capabilities and response options;
- The allied strategic thinking should find a way to balance the resources devoted to traditional external threats versus emerging global threats.

## **11. The Increasing Importance of Resilience**

The particular experience of COVID-19 demonstrates a number of general vulnerabilities to a pandemic. Health services lack adequate protective clothing and specialized equipment. Of particular note, institutions are functionally more vulnerable in delivering their objective when facing aggregate stressors, as demonstrated in the case of the Brno University Hospital, Czech Republic, which underwent simultaneous cyberattacks. Under stress, our societies are more vulnerable to the spread of fake news, disinformation, and propaganda campaigns. Western nations are currently exposed to international supply chains for critical materials (e.g. protective clothing, medical supplies, food, raw materials, chemicals, minerals, semiconductor chips, etc.).

Many participants in the Jam focused on resilience as the most important response to these security risks.

NATO considers resilience as an essential basis for credible deterrence and defense, as well as for the effective fulfillment of the Alliance's core tasks, such as cybersecurity, critical infrastructure protection, and civil preparedness. Increasing resilience against a broad and evolving spectrum of threats requires the capacity to anticipate and continually improve preparedness through better requirements analysis, contingency planning, foresight, and a whole-of-society approach. 91 % of participants in the Jam support the idea of increasing NATO's ability to foresee unfamiliar threats.

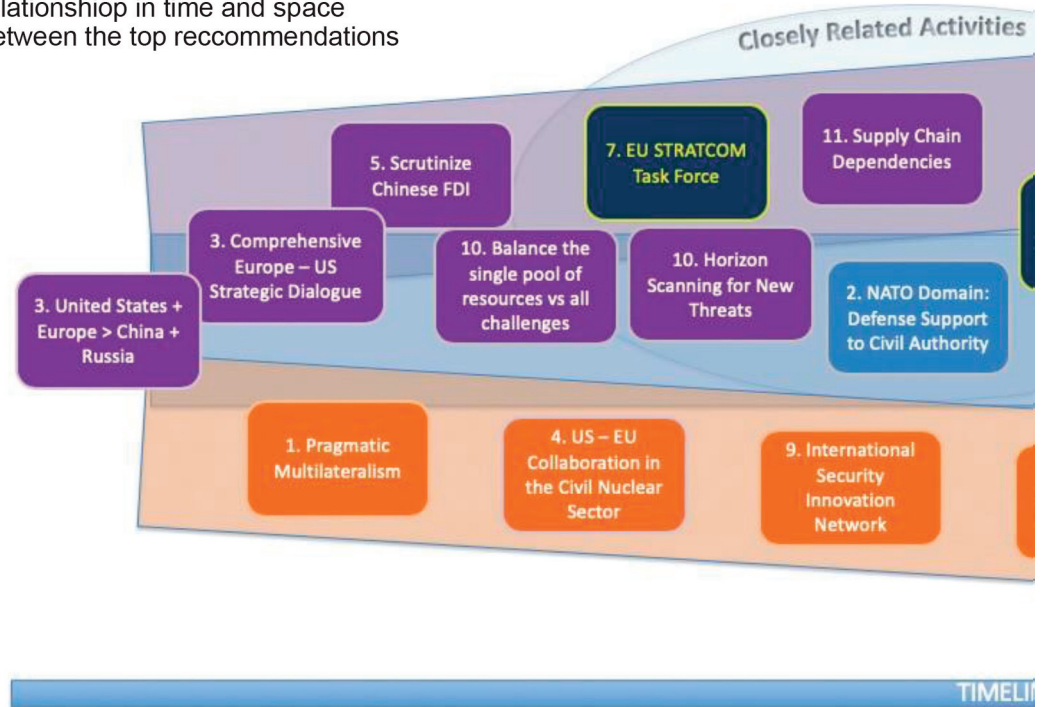
### **Courses of action for policy makers:**

- Expand the understanding of resilience and defense to also include health systems, public trust, and cohesion;
- NATO and Allies, in close cooperation with the EU and Enhanced Opportunities Partners, should continue to invest in resilience against a full spectrum of threats, including asymmetric, hybrid, and low probability/high consequence threats;
- Study and build on the experience of Israel and Nordic-style civil preparedness, for example the organization of civilians in the Cyber Defense League of Estonia;
- Prepare for the long-term effects of COVID-19;
- Decrease reliance on China for supply chains of critical items; shift from “faster, cheaper” strategies to more resilient and diverse supply chains that involve trusted allies and partners;
- Determine optimal equipment stockpile levels and locations; formulate management strategies for pooled resources;
- Reduce response times through periodic drills;
- Enhance NATO-EU collaborative efforts for forecasting and early detection of future threats and potential crisis.

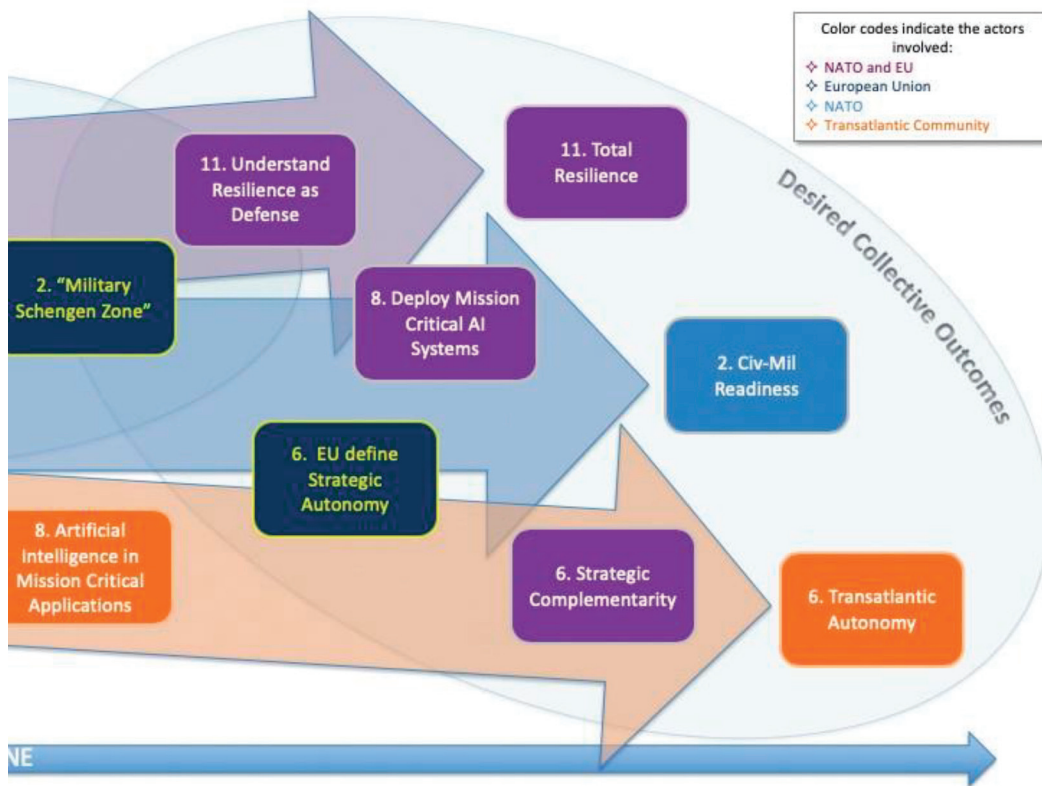
COVID-19 affects the political habits and atmosphere in individual countries differently, and the Jam reflected diverse cultural specifics and professional experience. Yet, the open and professional discussions during the Jam highlighted security issues of the highest concern for the transatlantic community, while also outlining response options for policy makers on both sides of the Atlantic.

## Transatlantic Security Jam

The road map shows the relationship in time and space between the top recommendations







### Strategic insights:

- The pandemic's scale, speed, and consequences sharpened our understanding of the challenges of global interdependencies and the requirement for transatlantic cooperation.
- COVID-19 has brought home to us that each threat may have amplifying effects on other non-conventional security threats, creating a chain of mutually reinforcing risks; hence a holistic (big picture) approach to pandemics is indispensable.
- An important positive outcome of the tragedy of COVID-19 is a heightened awareness that the Transatlantic Alliance needs to focus on foundational principles and values and to enhance its resilience to Chinese and Russian influence.
- The pandemic once again underscores that cross-border military mobility in Europe must be accorded a top priority in NATO-EU cooperation not only for defense purposes, but to confront and mitigate pandemic-like events effectively.

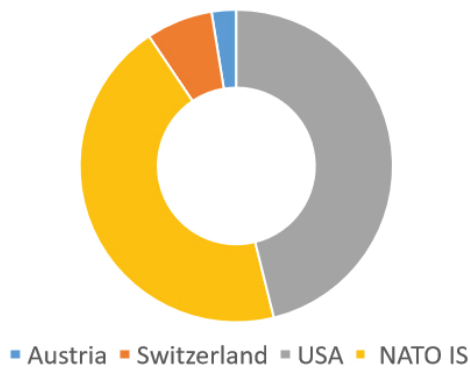
# PfPC Budget 2020 (US Fiscal Year)

**Funds Allocation by Activity (FY20)**  
(\$1,171,400 USD)



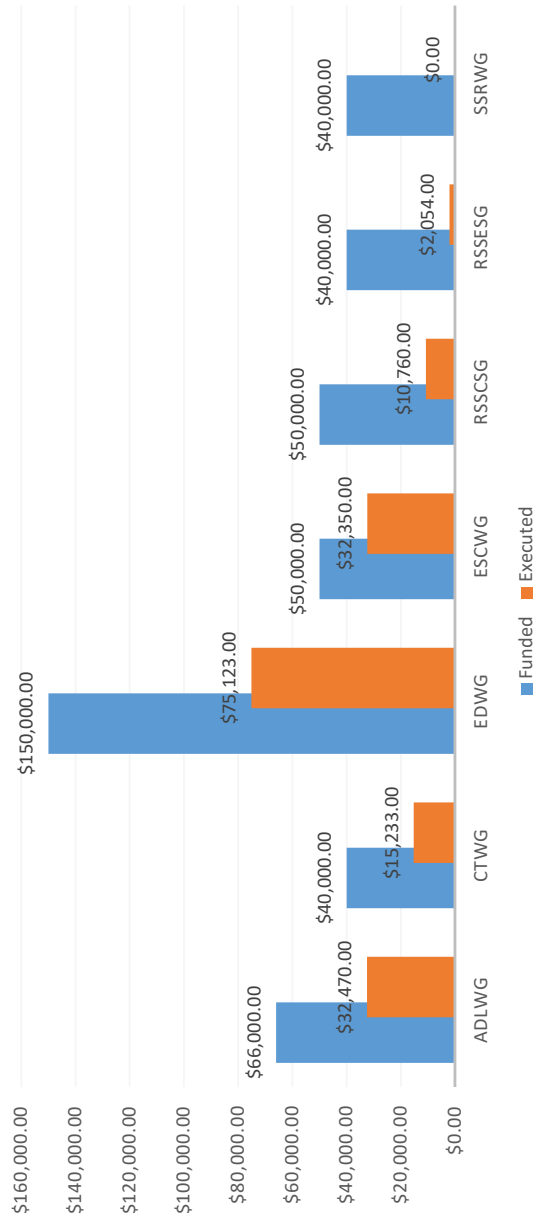
Funds Allocation by Activity (FY20)	DEEP	Conferences	Staff & Publications	Total
(\$1,171,400 USD)	49%	24%	27%	100%
	\$570,000.00	\$286,000.00	\$315,400.00	\$1,171,400.00

**Contribution by Member (FY20)**



Contribution by Member (FY20)	Austria	Switzerland	USA	NATO IS
	\$24,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$436,000.00	\$420,000.00

## Funded vs Executed (FY20 U.S. Contribution)



FY20	Funded	Executed
ADLWG	\$66,000.00	\$32,470.00
CTWG	\$40,000.00	\$15,233.00
EDWG	\$150,000.00	\$75,123.00
ESCSG	\$50,000.00	\$32,350.00
RSSCSG	\$50,000.00	\$10,760.00
RSSESG	\$40,000.00	\$2,054.00
SSRWG	\$40,000.00	\$0.00

# SAC, CSC & PfPC Operations Staff Members

---

## SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### SAC Chairman

LTG (Ret) Keith Dayton  
George C. Marshall European Center for Security  
Studies

### Representative of Austria

LTG Mag. Erich Csitkovits  
Austrian National Defence Academy

### Representative of Bulgaria

MG Grudi Angelov  
Rakovski National Defence College

### Representative of Canada

RADM Luc Cassivi  
Canadian Defense Academy

### Representative of Germany

Col (GS) Martin Krüger  
Federal Ministry of Defence

### Representative of Poland

RADM Tomasz Szubrycht  
Polish Naval Academy

### Representative of Sweden

Dr. Malena Britz (05/20) and BG Fredrik Ståhlberg  
Swedish Defense Academy

### Representative of Switzerland

Col (GS) Christian Bühlmann  
Geneva Center for Security Policy

### Representative of the United States

Mr. Robert Helfant  
Defense Security Cooperation Agency

### Representative of the NATO

Mr. Marc Di Paolo  
NATO International Staff

### Secretary of the SAC

Dr. Raphael Perl  
Partnership for Peace Consortium

## CONSORTIUM STEERING COMMITTEE

### CSC Chairman

Dr. Raphael Perl  
Partnership for Peace Consortium

### Representative of Austria

Mr. Andreas F. Wannemacher  
Federal Ministry of Defence

Mr. Benedikt Hensellek  
Austrian National Defence Academy

### Representative of Bulgaria

Dr. Greta Keremidchieva (Also ADL Co-chair)  
Rakovski National Defence College

### Representative of Canada

Dr. David Emelifeonwu  
Royal Military College of Canada

### Representative of Germany

Mr. Oliver Schmidt (10/22) and Mr. Paul von Salisch  
Federal Ministry of Defence

### Representative of NATO IS

Mr. Mariusz Solis  
NATO International Staff

### Representative of Poland

Capt (N) Mariusz Misikowski  
Polish Naval Academy

### Representative of Sweden

LTC Jan Eldeblad  
Swedish Defense University

### Representative of Switzerland

Ms. Antje Fritz (Also ADL Chair)  
DCAF - Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance

### Representative of USA

Mrs. Laura Alami  
Defense Security Cooperation Agency

## WORKING AND STUDY GROUPS

### Advanced Distributed Learning/Technical Standards Working Group (ADL WG)

Ms. Greta Keremidchieva (Co-Chair)  
Rakovski National Defence Academy

Mr. Paul Thurkettle (Co-Chair)  
NATO ACT

### Combating Terrorism Working Group (CTWG)

Dr. Sajjan Gohel (Co-Chair)  
Asia Pacific Foundation

Prof. Peter Forster (Co-Chair)  
Pennsylvania State University

**Conflict Studies Working Group (CSWG)**

Dr. Carmen Sorina Rijnoveanu (Chair)  
Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military  
History

Maj Jakob Brink Rasmussen  
Royal Danish Defence College

**Editorial Board (EB)**

Mr. Sean Costigan (Editor in Chief)  
George C. Marshall European Center for Security  
Studies

Lt Col Marcel Szalai and Lt Col Torsten Stauffer  
George C. Marshall European Center for Security  
Studies

**Education Development Working Group  
(EDWG)**

Dr. Alan G. Stolberg (Chair)  
RAND Corporation

**Emerging Security Challenges Working  
Group (ESC WG)**

Mr. Michael Gaul (Co-Chair)  
German Delegation to NATO

Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli (Co-Chair)  
Geneva Center for Security Policy

**Regional Stability in the South Caucasus  
Study Group (RSSC SG)**

Mr. Fred Labarre (Co-Chair)  
Royal Military College of Canada

Mr. George Niculescu (Co-Chair)  
The European Geopolitical Forum

**Regional Stability in South East Europe  
Study Group (RSSEE SG)**

Dr. Predrag Jurekovic (Co-Chair)  
Austrian National Defence Academy

Dr. Sandro Knezovic (Co-Chair)  
Institute for Development and International  
Relations

Dr. Filip Ejodus (Co-Chair)  
University of Belgrade

**Security Sector Reform Working Group (SSR  
WG)**

Ms. Antje Fritz (Chair)  
DCAF - Geneva Center for Security Governance

Dr. Grazvydas Jasutis  
DCAF - Geneva Center for Security Governance