

**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION**



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**Preliminary report FFAO workshop Amsterdam**

**NATO Framework for Future Alliance Operations (FFAO) Workshop  
11-12 June 2014  
Amsterdam, the Netherlands**

### **Preliminary Report**

The Amsterdam Workshop has produced valuable input in that is being analysed to produce Strategic Military Perspectives (SMPs).

First step of this analysis is to generate Common Challenges to all the Instability Situations. This step has been finalized.

In the second step these Common Challenges are used to generate draft SMPs. These draft SMPs will be staffed by ACO to produce Coordinated Draft SMPs. This step is being worked on.

This Preliminary Report gives the initial output of the analysis of the data produced during the Amsterdam Workshop, specifically the findings of the first step: the Common Challenges.

### **Final Report**

The Final Report of the Amsterdam Workshop will include the findings of the second step: the Coordinated Draft SMPs.

**Results from the Strategic Military Perspectives Workshop (Amsterdam 11-12 June 2014)**

**Participants**

The Strategic Military Perspectives Workshop consisted of 68 participants from across a community of interest:

<b>Attendees</b>	
ACT (including SEE & STRE)	18
ACO	3
NATO HQ	5
9 COEs	11
17 Nations	31
Partners (including 4 States)	-
Think-tanks, Academia	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Member Nations</b>	BEL, BGR, CAN, CZE, DEU, DNK, ESP, FRA, GBR, HRV, HUN, ITA, LTU, NLD, POL, ROU, TUR, USA
<b>Partner Nations</b>	
<b>COEs</b>	Civil-Military Cooperation, Combined Joint Operations from the Sea, Command & Control, Cooperative Cyber Defence, Defence Against Terrorism, Energy Security, Joint Air Power Competence, Joint CBRN Defence, Military Engineering, Military Medicine

**Foundational Documents**

The work completed at the Strategic Military Perspectives Workshop built upon the 15 trends identified in the Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA) 2013 Report and the subsequently derived and Bi-SC approved 10 Instability Situations. Here is a review of these two inputs, the 15 trends and the 10 Instability Situations:

**Strategic Foresight Analysis:**

The Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA) 2013 Report builds upon the principles described in NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept as the basis for ensuring Alliance security in the future. The SFA is based on national and international studies that address the timeframe out to 2030 and beyond. The SFA found the following 15 trends:

1. **Shift of Global Power:** Rebalance of power from the west to other regions will present political and economic challenges to NATO members.
2. **Shifting Political Structures:** The transition of autocratic / theocratic regimes towards democracy will continue.
3. **Polycentric World:** The world is becoming increasingly interconnected and polycentric.
4. **Changing Demographics:** Future demographics will be driven by diverse effects such as youth bulges, aging populations, and imbalance in proportions of male to females in society.
5. **Urbanisation:** Cities will contain 65% of the world's population by 2040, and 95% of this urban population growth will occur within developing nations' mega-cities.
6. **Human Networks / Transparency:** Human networks are expanding at an exponential rate with many varying effects.
7. **Fractured Identities:** Several contributing factors may lead to a fracturing of national identity.
8. **Technology Accelerates Change:** The accelerating cycles of exploration, discovery and exploitation of technologies along with the innovative fusion of existing, emerging and new technologies will combine to bring about change rapidly in the future.
9. **Increased Access to Technology:** Commercial research and technology has begun to outpace that of governments in the development of new technologies.
10. **Centrality of Computer Networks:** A globally connected and networked world creates a universal availability of information.
11. **Globalisation of Financial Resources:** The financial networks and communication systems that manage the world's critical resources are increasingly intertwined.
12. **Increased Resource Scarcity:** Nations need increasing amounts of energy and raw materials to sustain growth and maintain an advantage in the globalised economy.
13. **Decreasing Defence Expenditures:** Governments faced with slow or non-existent growth, rising unemployment and increasing debt burdens will continue to have many competing priorities.
14. **Environmental / Climate Change:** Global environmental change and its impacts are becoming readily apparent and are projected to increase in the future.
15. **Natural Disasters:** The effects of natural disasters will become more devastating.

**Instability Situations:**

Instability Situations describe possible instances of conflict where NATO could become engaged in the future. They provide a background against which to develop perspectives on conflict that may drive future military and other requirements. The Instability Situations cover a broad spectrum of crisis and conflict that NATO could face in 2030, from the low end consisting of large-scale disasters (either natural or man-made), disruptive impacts of migration, political and economic attacks, or assaults on critical infrastructure, to the high end of state-versus-state warfare. The spectrum of potential opponents that NATO may encounter includes non-state actors working alone or in collaboration and coordination with states or other non-state actors.

Below are the ten Instability Situations approved by the Strategic Commanders:

- 1) **Access and Use of Global Commons Challenged:** substantial increase of threats to global flows, increasing lack of resources and climate change create new contested areas, lines of communication/commerce threatened, access to global commons is threatened.
- 2) **Conflict in Euro-Atlantic Region:** expansionism at NATO borders, large-scale insurgency within NATO borders, decreasing defence expenditures encourage challenges to the alliance, imbalance of military power, breakdown of a NATO member caused by internal factors or external actors, war-like situation in Europe, NATO alliance weakened or ineffective, imbalance between availability of defence resources and security challenges, testing of NATO/partner territory.
- 3) **Disruptive Impact of Migration:** Massive migration causing instability, uncontrolled refugees, displaced persons and economic migration.
- 4) **High-Impact Cyber Threat:** large-scale cyber-attack on NATO member or affecting NATO, cyber challenges, cyber warfare, false identity.
- 5) **Large-Scale Disaster:** large-scale disaster occurs; opportunistic actors take advantage of chaos, pandemic strikes NATO Nations, natural disasters, weak state challenge, and disaster relief in a world financial centre.
- 6) **Megacity Turmoil:** turmoil in a megacity, inability of the nation state to provide security / basic needs in megacities, rising urbanisation and resource competition.
- 7) **Non-State Actors Rival State:** attack on critical infrastructure, virtual organisations, climate change, competition in gaining the best security policy/market positions, changes in society which conflict with the national position, decline in existing systems – establishment of new ones, dependence on critical infrastructure, failing/shifting political structures, state versus non-state actors, use of disruptive technology by groups with different mind-sets.

- 8) **Space Capability Disruption:** loss of space use, space resilience and vulnerability
- 9) **State-versus-State Conflict:** spillover of conflict from neighbouring countries along NATO borders, interstate conflict over access to resources, state-on-state conflict, resource wars, frozen conflict, new spheres of influence.
- 10) **Weapons of Mass Destruction/Effect use/threat: attack from** terrorist groups possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction/Effect (WMD/E) affecting NATO, using WMD/E to create a crisis on the edge of NATO.

## Workshop/Post Workshop Findings

### Common Challenges of the Future Security Environment of 2030:

1) Empowered non-state actors, including single individuals or groups, are organizations with the ability to influence change within international relations without formal control by an institution of state. These groups may seek to engage NATO by operating around Alliance policy and by eluding international law. Such actors, working by themselves or within collaborations of similarly structured groups, will challenge NATO most critically when functioning as state sponsored proxies. States may use these proxies to avoid the clear legalities of war and peace and to challenge the Alliance in ways that evade NATO's current advantages in conventional military capabilities. These groups may employ a range of activities like kidnapping, smuggling, propagandising, economic and political disruption, as well as a wide range of violent acts intended to create fear in a new, revived and expanded form of asymmetric or hybrid warfare. Such threats may challenge the ability of NATO to achieve consensus on missions. Whether called hybrid threats<sup>1</sup>, ambiguous attacks, hybrid warfare or non-linear warfare, these types of threats may find gaps in existing policies delineating Alliance responsibilities. Soft-entry into conflict by a state proxy may decrease NATO awareness at the early stages of a crisis. Legal systems may face a growing number of operations that, because of plausible deniability, are not directly attributable to nation-states.

2) NATO will be engaged in non-traditional domains outside of territorial defence, such as in the energy, space, cyber, information, and economic domains, where the Alliance may not have the necessary or appropriate capabilities or authority to respond. NATO policies and international legal frameworks in many areas lag behind advances in technology and the rapidly changing security environment (i.e., hybrid warfare, access to global commons, strategic communication, cyber and space operations).

3) NATO's technological edge will be decreased by the rapid proliferation of sophisticated military capabilities and through the innovative use of civilian technologies (e.g., exponential increases in computing power, popular activism via social networking) to achieve military and/or political objectives. These new capabilities and technologies may be available both to developing nations and

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<sup>1</sup> Hybrid threats are those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives. IMSM-0292-2010 "Hybrid Threat Description and Context."

to non-state actors, even small groups or a single individual. Examples of the expanded capabilities available to empowered non-state actors include:

- Area access and denial capabilities will increase in range and lethality.
- Greater proliferation of WMD/E will increase the difficulty in preventing their use.
- Adversaries' ability to disrupt NATO Consult, Command, and Control (C3) capabilities will increase.
- Due to the increased availability of advanced technology to state and non-state actors, NATO use of space assets may be challenged or denied. Space is increasingly likely to be weaponised.

4) The number and variety of crises will increase due to climate change, increasing populations and the resulting strain on infrastructure. Potential adversaries may take advantage of insufficient infrastructure and inadequate security, particularly in the wake of a natural or man-made disaster, to achieve their aims. These actors may be especially effective in filling power vacuums or using chaos created by a disaster to build a powerful narrative.

5) Military forces may operate in areas that are already resource limited where the introduction of large numbers of troops will negatively affect the existing balance.

6) Rapid urbanisation across the globe increases the likelihood of operating in urban areas or megacities where complex, three dimensional, terrain will increase the difficulty of military operations by eliminating safe or rear areas and thereby causing forces to maintain a continuous focus in nearly every direction. Most of these urban areas will be located in littoral regions.

7) The rapid flows and increasing volume of information, people, disease, money, drugs, and weapons through the global commons will allow adversaries to move easily from one area to another converging for operations and then dispersing rapidly to evade detection, tracking and targeting. Small groups will benefit from a lack of traceability and anonymity which will be afforded to them by new technologies. They may be able to rapidly emerge, engage, and disappear before Allies can

detect a hostile action. The difficulty in engaging these groups, combined with a lack of traditional military targets, may make traditional deterrence ineffective against them.

8) NATO may engage in operations that blur the boundaries between military, law enforcement and other security organizations. These various organizations could have divergent missions and aims that are not identical with those of NATO forces. These other organizations could include private military security companies, used by either NATO or other organizations.

9) Differing threat perceptions and national priorities, in conjunction with the use of sophisticated strategic communications operations conducted by external actors, may open the possibility of fractures developing within the Alliance.

10) The importance of worldwide distributed information, the speed at which information is communicated, the role of social media, and the reliability of information systems have created conditions where all Alliance decisions and actions must consider the potential impact on the information environment. The information environment comprises the information itself, the individuals, organizations and systems that receive, process, and convey the information, and the cognitive, virtual, and physical space in which this occurs. This environment has seen significant changes in recent years and will change dramatically in the future due to advances in computing technology. The universal nature of information and the potential strategic ramifications of tactical actions add to the challenge faced by NATO Commanders. This new highly interconnected and transparent information environment blurs distinctions between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. The coordination, synchronisation, and execution of information activities that deliberately create desired effects in the information environment are essential to Alliance success. Worldwide border crossing media activities will create a strategic communications competition which might end up in open information warfare to gain military, economic, or social goals in NATO Nations or at the borders of the Alliance and create a favourable environment for terrorist activities, hybrid warfare, or military conflict. Media control, especially the control of social media, will be impractical even for the most authoritarian rulers as there are so many sources and redundant ways to convey ideas via the networked media.

11) The increased speed of events related to operations may challenge NATO decision making processes, at both the political/strategic and operational/tactical levels.