

ANNEX A TO
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FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE ALLIANCE OPERATIONS (FFAO) ROME WORKSHOP REPORT

1. Background.
 - a. Overall task: To answer the question, based on the possible instability situations in the future security environment of 2035 and beyond, what is a framework that will enable the success of NATO military forces at the core tasks?
 - b. Desired Outcome: Refinement and revision of the ideas in the draft Chapter 2 of the FFAO.
 - c. Process/Methodology: Pre-conference survey to establish baseline perceptions (quantitative) and a focus syndicate table-top discussion (qualitative) of the instability situations by the subject matter experts, with a red team component.
 - d. Rationale: Through full participation and sharing responsibility, the syndicates develop mutual understanding, and inclusive solutions for NATO forces in 2035 and beyond.
 - e. Time: Three days.
2. Participants.
 - a. Total Attendees: 119
 - b. ACT (including SEE & STRE): 30
 - c. ACO (including LCC, MCC):3
 - d. COEs: 16
 - e. Member Nations: ALB, BEL, BGR, CAN, DNK, DEU, ESP, FRA, HUN, ITA, NLD, NOR, POL, PRT, ROU, SVN, USA
 - f. Partner Nations: AUT, CHE, FIN
 - g. COEs: C2, CCD, CIMIC, CJOS, CMDR, CSW, DAT, ENSEC, EOD, HUMINT, JAPCC, JCBRN, MILMED, MP, SP, STRATCOM
 - h. Other: NATO NDC, NSHQ, NCIA, IMS, JWC, JALLC
 - i. EU: EC, EDA

j. OTHERS: Academia/Industry Leonardo S.p.A., University of Cambridge, Centro Studi Difesa Civile, Austrian Institute of Technology, KA Europe, Vesalius College, UK Met Office, SIPRI, Old Dominion University, Canadian Defence Research and Development Centre

3. Summary of Workshop Findings.

a. The FFAO workshop at the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome consisted of over 115 participants from NATO organizations, NATO and Partner Nations, NATO Centres of Excellence, academia, industry, and other key stakeholders in the community of interest. Syndicate discussions made solid progress on improving Chapter 2 of the FFAO. Major take-aways from the session are as follows:

(1) Overall, although the concept of a central idea was largely accepted, the FFAO should keep the idea of a simple list of Strategic Military Perspectives (SMPs) to stay consistent with the previous version of the FFAO. The FFAO needs to keep the ideas discussed in the tenets and enabling elements but keep them in the background with the SMPs as the big message of the FFAO.

(2) The FFAO should increase the emphasis on strategic communication, operating and adapting at the same time, innovation, adaptability, being multi-purpose by design and the ethical questions.

(3) The syndicates discussed at great length idea of “federation” as a key and persistent characteristic of the future force. Many syndicates felt that the term federated itself is not clearly understood and we need to clearly and succinctly define what we mean by the word. Other words discussed as possibilities to use instead were “cooperative,” “networked,” “synchronized,” or “integrated.” Despite how the FFAO should clearly and succinctly define how we are using the word (see next bullet).

(4) The syndicates developed a draft definition of federation for consideration during the workshop as follows: Efforts to enhance strategic awareness to leverage and explore options via dialogue, linkages, synchronization, de-confliction and collaboration with a broad cross-section of stakeholders (both internal and external, without ceding autonomy) to promote a unity of effort and efficiency to achieve a well-defined end-state.

4. Syndicate Findings.

a. Syndicate 1: This syndicate started with a general discussion on the proposed framework with the associated terms and definitions. Following that discussion, the syndicate used the scenarios of Natural/Manmade Disasters and Cyber Attack to validate and to refine the framework. Main conclusions are summarized hereafter with the notion that more details are captured and will be used for further discussion during the rewriting of Chapter 2.

- (1) The FFAO 2015 is used for reference in national documents and a fundamental change in structure or terminology should only occur if clear improvement is required (i.e. in case of mistakes, gaps, etc.). Therefore keep the term SMP and do not change this to “characteristics”; amend the list of SMPs where required and improve the description of the different SMPs – in particular the new ones (i.e. Federated) – for better acceptance and understanding. The syndicate suggest to use the descriptions “forces need to be”, “forces need to do” and “forces need to be supported by” instead of the terms “characteristics”, “tenets”, and “enabling elements”.
 - (2) Most “characteristics” and “tenets” were validated with Federated, Interoperable, and Improvise being contested. Some of the “enabling elements” were validated, but others were seen as being better placed amongst the list of tenets since they describe, “what forces need to do”. It is further suggested to order the terms differently and syndicate them where related or to combine them where an overall term is better suited (e.g. “lessons learned”, “training and exercises”, and “capability development” could all fit under the suggested “tenet” constantly Improve).
 - (3) Suggestions for new “characteristics” (what forces need to be) are: multipurpose by design, supportive and visible. Suggested “tenets” (what forces need to do) are: Improve Constantly (and might incl. “lessons learned”, “training and exercises”, and “capability development”), Develop Human Capital, and Know your Enemy. As far as the tenets concerned, suggested new ones are Information Knowledge Management and a Fast(er) Acquisition Process.
- b. Syndicate 2: This syndicate began by studying the Instability Situation “pandemic disease.” Analysing the characteristics written in the draft, the syndicate realized that some characteristics do not have a direct relation with the SMPs mentioned in FFAO 2015. The SMPs are globally accepted and have been used and referenced in later documents. The syndicate did not agree with deleting or significantly changing the term without a clear justification. Regarding the structure of the chapter, they found the questions posed easier to follow than the titles themselves. On the other hand, the syndicate found it difficult to follow the diagram of the chapter. The draft framework shows that the tenets are derived from the characteristics, but the syndicate struggled to understand the connection and the flow within the diagram. As such, there must be a flowing storyline that guides the chapter from the beginning to the end.

- (1) The most debated word was “federated.” If the FFAO is going to use it, a better definition is needed.
- (2) The importance of the paragraph written in Chapter 1 about ethical questions was also mentioned. Some people proposed to mention it again in the rest of the document by analysing the consequences of these ethical questions.

(3) Some in the syndicate advised to write the document starting with Chapter 1 and continue with the Chapter 3, Military Implications, and then write Chapter 2, SMPs.

c. Syndicate 3: This syndicate used the campaign plan development method followed by a “so what?” analysis in four scenarios (Critical Infrastructure Attack, Endangerment of Civilians, Escalatory Use of Force, and Conventional War). Strategic Analysis Branch ideas developed in pre-conference meetings took heavy fires but at the end of the day, the core ideas survived to this troops in contact exercise. If the “federated” concept is understood, the way to implement it is still unknown. The idea of “understand, plan and act in an open world” will require a new kind of interoperability followed by specific standards, tools and legal framework.

(1) The “campaign plan” methodology worked very well. The syndicate was easily able to develop a robust course of action from the political to the tactical level. Thanks to that “War and crisis management level organization”, each syndicate member was able to participate according to its own operational background and academic skills. The discussions developed during this phase were very productive and useful to warm up the team for the next phase.

(2) The second phase used a deductive approach that consisted from a blank paper to answer to the questions: What do the forces need to be? (Characteristics). What do the forces need to do? (Principles) and which Forces Enablers to succeed? This direct questions way allowed to avoid “the battle of definitions” and obliged the team to stay focus on the “so what?” deduced from the course of action. (Annex 3).

(3) The syndicate came easily to an agreement on the Alliance’s centre of gravity and was able to define quickly what the force need to be. As plan, the federate concept focuses all the attentions and brought many debates. If “ends” of the federate concept seems to be understood, “ways” for its implementation are more unclear for most of people. A “ways” narrative could be very useful for the next workshop to improve our ability to communicate on the ACT’s end state.

(4) Principles and enablers were the most challenging part. Nevertheless, the “pragmatic” approach chosen by the syndicate led to an outcome similar to the proposal in the draft. At the end, the question of “how does NATO maintain political will?” was debated. This fundamental question linked to the future of the alliance and its cohesion could be developed in a more specific way in the FFAO document.

d. Syndicate 4: This syndicate discussed the instability situations of escalatory use of force, conventional war, critical infrastructure and endangerment of civilian with the overall objective of validating the defined characteristics, tenets, and enabling elements. The uses of the futures wheel method allowed the syndicate to approach those situations from different aspects normally understood by military planners. Also, the presence of non-military syndicate members greatly enhanced the conclusions. While

going through the instability situations, the syndicate agreed that the nature of the characteristics, tenets and enabling elements changed depending on the scenarios.

(1) Overall, the syndicate was challenged with the provided definitions of “federated” in both the pre-conference draft and the presentation. The syndicate developed its own proposed definition: Efforts to enhance strategic awareness to leverage and explore options via dialogue, linkages, synchronization, de-confliction and collaboration with a broad cross-section of stakeholders (both internal and external, without ceding autonomy) to promote a unity of effort and efficiency to achieve a well-defined end-state. In general, the antithesis of “federated” is “stove-piped.”

(2) Additionally, the syndicate made numerous comments on the validity of the tenets. During the endangerment of civilian’s scenario, it became clear that “fight to win” is not appropriate in all cases. Suggestions were brought forward to replace with “strive to win” or “act to win.” A greater importance in this case should be placed on having a well defined “end state.” “Work together in an open world” could be better defined by “promote unity of effort”. Finally, the syndicate felt that “innovation” should be included as a tenet (in addition to the enabling element of innovative industries). Finally, the syndicate recommended splitting political will and appropriate authorities as they represent two distinct but important enablers.

e. Syndicate 5: This syndicate discussed the instability situations of global commons disruption, unconventional war, governance challenges, and endangerment of civilians with the overall objective of validating the defined characteristics, tenets, and enabling elements.

(1) This syndicate recommends adopting the six proposed SMPs as: credible, federated, aware, resilient, interoperable, and agile into FFAO Chapter 2.

(2) Syndicate 5 determined that “enduring political will” should be used to describe the political and military guidance, which includes enduring interests, strategic concept, core values, summit declarations, and political decisions.

(3) Syndicate 5 modified the central idea to be defined as, “to maintain the operational edge today and into the future, NATO countries continue to adapt their forces to act together across all domains in a comprehensive way to achieve the political goals of the Alliance.”

(4) Syndicate 5 also made minor changes to the “Tenets” and “Enabling Elements.” (see attached slides)

f. Syndicate 6: This syndicate discussed the instability situations of global commons disruption and unconventional war (including governance challenge and endangerment of civilian population).

(1) Overall, this syndicate considered the general outline for Chapter 2 of the FFAO was valid, although they felt that the way it was represented on the slide misrepresented the actual content of the chapter.

(2) The word credible in the characteristics is not tangible, nor measurable. The syndicate advised using ready as a characteristic instead.

(3) In addition, the syndicate discussed how important sustainability would be in the future, e.g. because of swarm technology and the mix of civilians and combatants. The syndicate felt that this needs to be addressed properly in the chapter, preferably as new characteristics.

(4) The syndicate had difficulties in understanding the value added by the tenets, and advised to either go back to the original tenets described in the read ahead or delete them.

(5) For the enabling elements (better referred to as supporting elements) the advice was to make sure they are at the same level, and that they are not duplicates or partially duplicates of some of the other elements presented in Chapter 2.

g. Syndicate 7: This syndicate discussed the instability situations of pandemic disease, terrorist attack, and WMD/E Use with the overall objective of determining the characteristics, tenets, and enabling elements future NATO forces may need in the future.

(1) Overall, this syndicate felt that the general outline for Chapter 2 of the FFAO was valid. In the political –military guidance category, the syndicate felt that the core tasks, strategic knowledge, and the NATO level of ambition should have increased emphasis.

(2) Additionally, the syndicate felt that cohesion as the centre of gravity is valid but the document should include a discussion on the will of the Alliance writ large. The syndicate also felt that strategic communication should be added to the central idea.

(3) As far as the draft characteristics, the syndicate felt that the term “federated,” could be used interchangeably with the term “networked.” Additionally, both of the terms “federated” and “agile” need clear definitions.

(4) The syndicate also made numerous recommendations to clarify the tenets and enabling elements (see outbrief slide).

h. Syndicate 8: This syndicate discussed the instability situations of global commons disruption, WMD/E Use and pandemic disease with the objective of validating and refining the characteristics, tenets, and enabling elements of the Draft Chapter 2 of the FFAO.

(1) In general, the syndicate agreed that the characteristics are the key aspects of the Chapter 2 and should be concise.

(2) The syndicate felt that the term “federated” is an improvement from just partnership or networked, but the term “federated” itself is misleading and a better term is needed.

(3) According to the syndicate, the characteristic “adaptive” should be added, because in comparison to “agile”, it expresses the ability to detect and react to social, economic, political and technological change.

(4) The syndicate recommended that the document should include a concise definition of every characteristic to develop a common understanding. The syndicate preferred the title “SMPs” to “characteristics,” because “SMPs” is widely accepted and the proposed change might cause unnecessary confusion.

(5) Additionally, the syndicate decided that tenets should be deleted from the draft, because they describe the nature of the characteristics. The distinction between characteristics and tenets are often blurry, thus confusing and not adding much meat to the bone for the capability planners.

(6) The syndicate widely accepted the enabling elements, however, felt that the enabling elements are a mix of strategic overarching ideas and operational ideas. To address this, the syndicate recommended making the distinction between whether the particular enabler is influenced by either political or military authority.

5. Way-ahead. The workshop achieved the overall objective of getting the raw material needed for Chapter 2 of the FFAO. Moving forward, the FFAO team will incorporate recommended changes into the draft Chapter 2 of the document. In May, this document will be submitted for abbreviated staffing and review for redlines. Following this review, the FFAO team will conduct the next workshop in October 2017 in Stavanger, Norway to discuss Chapter 3 of the FFAO, Military Implications.

6. Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR). The OPR for this document is Strategic Analysis Branch, Strategic Plans and Policy Division, Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander – Transformation. Points of contact are Colonel Tibor Szabo, tiber.szabo@act.nato.int and LTC Aaron Bazin, aaron.bazin@act.nato.int. Conference slides and supporting documentation is available at: <http://www.act.nato.int/futures-work>.