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EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

I greatly welcome you in the 18th issue of the Headquarters' HERALD magazine. Here we bring you the views, opinions and experiences of the staff and subject master experts from the NATO community as well as views and beliefs of special guests. We focus on providing you with the most current and informed perspectives on military, security, collaborative activities, historical, science, cultural and other issues of global interest.

*The Public Affairs Office, always trying to keep up with the latest updates, has this year upgraded NRDC-GR's website **(www.nrdc.gr)**. It will be our pleasure to visit us in our new, upgraded website, where you will also find the magazine and follow us on our social media.*

The Public Affairs Office would like to thank the writers of the articles for their contribution. Furthermore, we want to thank our readers for their support. Please feel free to suggest any idea you may have to help us improve the experience we deliver.

In conclusion, we wish you and your families a safe and happy summer, lots of fond memories!

Very respectfully,

OF-4 (GRC A) Paschalis KAMPOURIS
NRDC-GR Chief Public Affairs Office

Dear Herald Readers

As the new Commander of NATO Rapid Deployment Corps – Greece, I am exceptionally pleased to address you this summer, through our semi-annual publication.

The main task of the Headquarters in the current time period, is the fulfillment of the role of Multi Corps – Land Component Command to the fullest of our capabilities. Past our certification with «STEADFAST LEDA 21», we continue to train our personnel, improve our skills and update our procedures and means of operation. Our goal is to remain current and maintain our high level of readiness, in anticipation of any mission the Alliance would assign.

In the modern geopolitical environment, the requirements from an operational standpoint for the MC-LCC are extremely high, while the face of our world is changing with breathtaking rapidity. The mercurial times we live in, demand flexibility, adaptability and the ability to anticipate future developments.

With that in mind, NRDC-GR is keeping a close eye on the events that are unfolding in the international scene. We are scanning all the available data in order to find possible lessons that are to be learned, technological advances that can be exploited and ultimately, what could possibly constitute our modus operandi in a future conflict.

At the same time, the personnel of NRDC-GR is joyfully anticipating some oncoming developments. The official integration of two new countries into the Alliance marks a bright spot in the history of NATO. As our family grows and our borders expand, new horizons open for the Alliance, bringing new capabilities and responsibilities. In the near future we will forge new bonds, work together with new people in new lands, gain new skills and become stronger and more resilient.

Currently, the next objective of NRDC-GR and the focus of our staff is the upcoming exercise «GORDIAN KNOT 22». As we prepare once again to train in the role of MC-LCC in a large, multinational, joined operation during conflict, crisis or all-out war, we are keenly reminded of our duty towards our countries and the Alliance. Despite the worldwide troubles regarding COVID-19, energy and conflicts, success is the only option for our Headquarters.

After a few months at the helm of NRDC-GR, it is my strong belief that the Corps is a linchpin in the southeastern wing of NATO, in an area that in the past has seen its share of small and large scale conflicts. With our resounding presence and our consecutive successes, with our fighting spirit and our high level of readiness, I can confidently assure our friends and warn our opponents that here, we still guard Thermopylae, ready to defend our countries and the Alliance.

Sotirios KOSTAKOGLOU
Lieutenant General (GRC A)

"COMMUNICATING OPERATIONAL RISKS TO STAKEHOLDERS: KEEPING PANDORA'S BOX CLOSED"

Mr. Athanasios Fourtounas
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Mr. Athanasios Fourtounas is Associate Professor in Risk Management, Project Management & Operations Management in the Business Administration & Economics Department at the CITY College, University of York Europe Campus. He is a retired army officer with a M.A. degree from the University of Macedonia in International relations & Security and a number of international certifications regarding Risk Management and Project Management. He is a Senior trainer for Human Asset Greece S.A. and a Workshops facilitator for EU, UN, OSCE and NATO. Moreover, he served for 6 years in NATO positions and he was deployed in the first KFOR NATO mission in 1999. He is involved in research projects regarding logistics, refugee & border management and decision support systems.

Noted historian, economist, and educator Peter L. Bernstein once said "The essence of Risk Management lies in maximizing the areas where we have some control over the outcome while minimizing the areas where we have absolutely no control over the outcome". In a military operational environment, such a perspective is more than crucial as communication is an area where there can be some measure of control over the outcome.

Risk oriented communication in operations has traditionally been a one way, unilinear, top-down transfer of information from command to the staff and public. The current bibliography on risk communication, in contrast, views stakeholder communication during operations as an outcome of interactions. Although there are no official results on the effectiveness of these new communication strategies due to the lack of systematic studies by universities, EU or NATO, there is growing empirical evidence to suggest that a two-way dialogue between operational stakeholders is more effective than traditional unidirectional risk communication. This non-linear, multi-directional approach is consistent with a political and military landscape where legitimization is gained through negotiation and deliberation.

Traditional risk communication has relied on the notion that simply informing and educating military staff will increase their overall understanding and risk awareness. This one-way information flow from the higher command to subordinate staff and units is often associated with the so-called "Deficit Model" which has been found to be unhelpful in the decision making process. During conditions of uncertainty, decision-making needs to start with understanding what the decision-maker already knows, identifying the gaps in existing knowledge and information, and then filling these with appropriate stakeholder knowledge. Understanding how people perceive risks is a pivotal factor contributing to successful risk communication.

Risk Governance and Communication

Risk governance and communication in a military operation requires a variety of stakeholders (e.g., multinational military staff and units, NGOs, national, regional and local authorities, scientists, media, the public, etc.) with different skill

sets to work together. Understanding the way in which each stakeholder perceives risk is essential for effective risk communication. To implement targeted risk communication processes, a clear and shared perception of both impact and its likelihood of occurrence is required as well as an understanding of potential propinquity implications to each stakeholder. Especially on emerging or for low-probability risks, high-consequence events and potential "Black Swans" (i.e., a rare outlier event of high impact that could have been foreseen, but was not perceived), the uncertainties associated with risk assessment and decision-making processes should be transparently communicated to all stakeholders.

The interacting, and interlinked, communication and risk management processes reflect the dynamics of a complex operational theater for a multinational NATO force. As stakeholders have different departure points, communicating risks among them must be an iterative process to converge towards a common understanding and fill any knowledge gaps. Divergence may occur when, for example, population in a theater may decide not to act on risk assessment results if they deem them unreliable (due to trust issues resulting from, for example< operational incidents or perceived political gains), or when knowledge claims are tested in different contexts). Similarly, decision-makers and staff may want to know how a risk assessment was carried out, including its outcome, while local authorities and NGOs may create assumptions about citizens' risk perception and subsequent behaviors. Thus, understanding the complexity of behavioral dynamics is important in the management of risk during an operation.

The foundation of Risk Governance and Communication is "Trust", and trust building is a long-term, iterative, process founded on good practices and lessons learned. When present, trust becomes the 'oil' facilitating the creation of an effective risk communication culture among diverse stakeholders. Trust is built through systematic sharing of information and inclusive experiences between all stakeholders in dedicated meetings and discussions before, during, and after an operation. Building long-term partnerships is also the key to enhancing multidisciplinary collaboration thus promoting synergies among stakeholders so as to enhance multidisciplinary continuous collaboration, timely actions, and interventions, especially across risk domains and silos, sectors, and territories in the area of operations. A competent leader is needed to moderate this process, acting as a catalyst, steering its own HQ towards a learning culture.

Finally, the control of risk and communication is much harder when social media tends to be the first to communicate both relevant and fake news. Against this background, we can benefit from past lessons, good practices, and insights from science to rebuild trust through effective communication processes to enhance risk governance.

Concerns regarding Risk Communication

Globally, societies, communities, institutions and organizations like NATO, even if deeply interconnected in the face of the risk, are historically organised in a hierarchical and sectoral way thus assuring specialisation and clear responsibilities in governance processes; this may, however, hamper the efficiency of responding to risks. Reflection starts with the assumption that interconnected and dynamic operational risks require the participation of all actors involved, facing and defining shared problems in a collaborative and communicative manner and working together to build trust and common understanding in

an open and problem-solving mode. The starting point for adequate risk communication is a clear understanding of failures in risk governance and communication processes.

Among the main points during the planning of communicating risks include the importance of:

(1) Clarifying risk and uncertainty communication objectives in relation to actors' roles and responsibilities before, during and after an operation;

(2) Being aware of potential biases and possible opposing values among actors when communicating risks and uncertainties as the knowledge of these values and biases makes communication more effective;

(3) Modeling a context-sensitive communication framework to empower the dialogue with the intended audience.

Studies show that trust building is a fundamental focal point, providing an in-depth discussion, and presents long-term iterative processes based on good practices and lessons learned.

Similarly, the multidimensionality of risks requires proper training and long-term partnerships which are key to enhancing multidisciplinary collaboration in order to promote synergies between all stakeholders in an operational theater. Embedding these synergies in stable networks builds trust and enables the exchange of information and best practices, developing an education and training culture, and awareness raising in the area of risk management, governance and communication.

Using existing technology during the execution of risk processes related to risk communication also plays an important role in the decision making process. In this vein, "Risk Sensing" through artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in particular, is an innovative solution for risk forecasting and reflects the fact that a comprehensive knowledge approach is only possible and effective if we are able to predict (i.e. 'sense') the relevant risk in a very capillary manner. Sensing requires that a NATO force has adopted a clear Risk Attitude (Averse or Neutral or Seeker) and a structured risk approach (i.e. a Risk Management plan) before the mission, based on a multipolar set of Risk Activities (tools & techniques) combined with an integrated knowledge assessment process and intelligent agile 'reach-back' architecture (Risk Reassessment and Risk Audit activities); in the future the latter might act as an intelligent comprehensive sensor to provide deep insight and early warning signals into complex crisis scenarios but also Lessons Learned and future recommendations after the end of an operation.

Moreover, relevant risk activity techniques must be applied such as multi-risk analysis, the existing public warning communication strategy and related flexible visual analytics reporting. Research suggests that the application of various visualization and communication methodologies may assist in ensuring that a message is understood. As such, new participatory training processes such as risk mapping, integrated with proper risk templates (Risk Breakdown structures and Probability and Impact Matrixes), are becoming increasingly important for NATO HQs.

Another communication aspect to consider is awareness of potential biases and possible opposing values among stakeholders when communicating risks and uncertainties. Knowledge of these values and biases makes communication more accurate and effective. Furthermore, communication should be framed in terms of a dialogue with the intended audience so that terms

Source: Risk Management Workshop in NRDC-GR, 2021

and vocabulary are clearly defined and areas of uncertainty clearly communicated. We have to accept that all stakeholders are not trained in probabilistic thinking thus making the use of expert judgment difficult to be transmitted.

Even where risk assessments are understood, achieving effective actions can be challenging; risk perception is only part of the picture, particularly when people have motives not to take action or are not empowered to do so. According to experts, stakeholders often prefer information on a given hazard to be 'certain'. During meeting, Risk Owners who used the phrase 'I am certain' were judged to be more risk savvy than experts who said 'it is certain that'.

Strategies for effective Risk Communication

Risk communication strategies related to an operational plan need to meet the following criteria so as to be effective and provide Agility (a combination of Flexibility and Resilience) to a NATO force must:

• Be planned autonomously and applied on an ongoing basis.

• Involve a wide range of actors (e.g., units on the ground, staff, public authorities, scientists, NGOs, international organizations, the media) to take into account a diversity of risk perceptions and vulnerabilities and gain public confidence.

• Cover a wide range of threats as well as opportunities (domestic and trans-boundary, known and anticipated, emerging from cascading

effects, etc.)

• Fulfill a wide range of purposes and functions: education and training, inducing behavioral changes, raising confidence in the NATO force and public participation in risk-related decisions.

• Support a sustained communication process using appropriate sources, media/channels, mode and tools of communication in which the content and style of messages are tailored to the cognitive and psychological needs of all stakeholders. This requires different approaches for minorities, men and women, and children and be formulated around a proper gender operational planning.

• Be based on the understanding of local risk perceptions and capacities since the people's response to risks is influenced by past experiences and local cultures,

risk communication should.

It should be noted that there is no perfect strategy, tool or style of communication; the most appropriate are those that the target audience is receptive to. Communication with the poorest, most marginalized and most vulnerable groups of stakeholders is a major challenge due to accessibility barriers such as illiteracy, cultural marginalization, displacement, physical remoteness, social isolation and a lack of access to modern technologies (e.g., internet, social media, mobile phones). The most important communication channels for these groups are their own social networks and face to face communication.

'Best emerging practices' for effective risk communication

Taking into account not only the challenge of multilingualism and multicultural personalization in a

Source: Science for Disaster Risk Management 2020, European Commission

NATO environment but also inside the area of operations where non-military stakeholders do not speak the native language which includes personnel from IOs and NGOs, expats and refugees, NATO forces have to find innovative ways to communicate.

During crises, effective and efficient communication is of utmost importance and having control over the quality of translations is also an additional challenge for a NATO HQ. Also, messages regarding risks need to be culturally adapted to different settings taking into consideration cultural differences extending from mere age differences to a national culture with regard to the most popular social media tools and national norms for communication style and tone.

A number of innovative and emerging practice for an effective risk communication include:

1. Pre-operational planning, creating teams, fact-finding protocols, messaging and delivery.

2. Accepting uncertainty and ambiguity.

3. Listening to stakeholders concerns.

4. Communicating with compassion, concern and empathy.

5. Partnering with the public and external stakeholders.

6. Collaborating and coordinating with credible external sources.

7. Meeting the needs of the media and remaining accessible.

8. Providing messages of self-efficacy by issuing specific information informing people about what they can do to reduce threats and exploit opportunities; these messages can help in restoring some sense of control over an uncertain and threatening situation

9. Realizing that crisis response is a narrative and that one is telling a story.

10. Wording used for risk communication should be inclusive and emphatic in order to contribute to effective communication

11. Being committed and able to deliver on the promise to be the first, and best, source of information.

Final Points to Consider

Communication means, and addresses two main questions:

• how to create trust and conditions that are mutually understandable among all the stakeholders involved;

• what is the role of a NATO HQ, institutions and governance as part of an overall and shared system of knowledge of risks.

To achieve the goal of effectively communicating risks, it is simply not enough to produce risk content and risk data or information; what is needed is a comprehensive shared knowledge system, able to support, communicate widely and be understood by all the actors involved and exposed to risks.

Today, if we analyze any operational theater we can easily understand the importance of adequate, multidimensional, inclusive risk communication, and the provided stepping stones and solutions for all actors involved in risk communication. In particular, the current experiences we are all sharing show how the network of information and communication may help overcome the network of a systemic risk. How the situation has evolved from February 2022 in Ukraine is an important case study that has to be examined in relation to how the rival parties communicated risks to their stakeholders so as to motivate and mobilize them.

It is vital to clarify risk and uncertainty communication objectives along with roles and responsibilities before, during and after a crisis. Ad hoc working groups should be set up and already prepared (briefed) for when a crisis disrupts an operation and there is a need to activate an action plan and related Risk Checklist. Dedicated information exchange should already be up and running to provide a continuous basis for information and experience exchanges along with enhancing a learning culture.

The approach to communicating risk in recent years has shifted from a top-down, 'one size fits all', approach to a more democratic, engaged and inclusive one that implies and relies on a partnership between all Stakeholders in an operational theater. To sum up, a bottom-up, people-centred and participatory process needs to be established in order to ensure collaborative and inclusive decision-making before, during and after an operation.

THE 2ND MOUNTAIN BRIGADE "SARMIZEGETUSA"
PER ASPERA AD ASTRA

A short history of the 2nd Mountain Brigade "Sarmizegetusa"

The history of this part of the world has emphasized much more the need for the ability to conduct operations in a mountainous environment, thus, during the First World War, on the 3rd of November 1916, the first Mountain Troops Corps in Romania was created, by the transformation of the Military Ski School in Bucharest. These new mountain troops were suited for fighting in difficult terrain but ill equipped for open terrain, due to their lack of artillery.

On the 1st of July 1923, the Mountain Troops Corps was divided into the 1st and 2nd Mountain Divisions (the predecessor of the "Sarmizegetusa" 2nd Mountain Brigade), large units designated to conduct operations in high mountainous regions, along the Carpathian mountain range.

Between 1937 and 1940, the 2nd Mountain Mixed Brigade, alongside other mountain combat structures, participated in the strategic covering operation of Romania's northern border. On the 3rd of July 1941, during the 2nd World War, the brigade took part in the bloody fighting to liberate Bucovina and Bassarabia, two important Romanian provinces, lost to the Soviet Union, in the aftermath of the Ribbentrop – Molotov Pact.

In 1944, Romania broke the military alliance it had with Germany and joined the United Nations, thus fighting off the German and Hungarian armies in order to liberate Northern Transylvania, another historical region lost in the aftermath of the Vienna

Dictate. The end of the war found the 2nd MTN BDE near Prague, on the 12th of May 1945, after a continued offensive and heavy fighting that took place in the Tatra Mountains, in Czechoslovakia.

As a consequence of the heavy losses suffered by the Russian army at the hands of the Romanian mountain troops and after the Soviets installed a puppet regime in Romania, the 2nd MTN BDE went through a series of disbands and reestablishes. In 1964 the brigade was reestablished for the last time and in 1973 it was awarded the name of "Sarmizegetusa", in honor of the ancient Dacian capital city.

Brigade capabilities

The 2nd MTN BDE is a major tactical military formation comprised of a command headquarters, three light mountain combat battalions, one artillery combat support battalion, one anti-air defense combat support battalion and a logistical combat service support battalion.

Under direct command and in support of the brigade HQ, the commander also has at his disposal a reconnaissance COY, signals COY, CBRN COY, engineers COY, CSS COY and one MP COY.

The 2nd MTN BDE, at its core, is a light mountain infantry combat structure, self-sufficient, trained and prepared in conducting mountain operations. The main equipment the brigade has at its disposal, is represented by the reconnaissance armored personnel carriers, 120 mm mortars, Oerlikon GDF-003 35 mm twin cannon towed anti-aircraft guns, Spike fire and forget anti-tank guided missiles, the RQ-11 Raven small hand-launched remote-controlled unmanned aerial vehicle, as well as other support and logistical vehicles designed to access remote and harsh areas.

Considering the specific nature of the 2nd MTN BDE, its military personnel is being specially trained in mountaineering, skiing, survival in harsh conditions and winter warfare.

Although the brigade is specifically designed and trained to conduct operations in mountainous areas, this does not preclude the structure from operating in an urban environment or in flat areas.

The 2nd Mountain Brigade "Sarmizegetusa" and NATO

The 2nd MTN BDE has a long standing relationship with NATO, through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, which started back

Brigade TASKORG

in 1995, thus enabling the brigade to tailor and configure its training in accordance with the interoperability needs of that moment.

At the NATO summit in Prague in 2002, Romania along with six other countries were invited to join the Alliance. As a consequence, in March 2004, Romania officially became a member of NATO and started aligning its military procedures to those used by the Alliance.

Since then, the 2nd MTN BDE participated in U.N. and NATO led operations abroad, on a rotational basis, providing the opportunity for the mountain battalions to prove their worth and determination in accomplishing the tasks and missions assigned to them.

• UNAMI missions in Iraq 2005 – 2007 (3 rotations):

o UNAMI II SEP 05 – APR 06 – 1 MTN COY (33rd MTN BTN);

o UNAMI III APR 06 – SEP 06 – 1 MTN COY (21st MTN BTN);

o UNAMI IV SEP 06 – APR 07 – 1 MTN COY (21st MTN BTN);

• ROFND missions in Kosovo 2005 – 2007 (3 rotations):

o ROFND XI – 1 MTN COY (30th MTN BTN);

o ROFND XII – 1 MTN COY (30th MTN BTN);

o ROFND XIII – 1 MTN COY (30th MTN BTN);

• ISAF and RESOLUTE SUPPORT missions in Zabul and Kandahar provinces 2007 – 2020 (9 rotations):

o JUN 07 – JAN 08– 33rd MTN BTN;

o JUN 08 – DEC 08 – 30th MTN BTN;

o DEC 08 – JUN 09 – 21st MTN BTN;

o JAN 10 – AUG 10 – 33rd MTN BTN;

o JUN 12 – DEC 12 – 21st MTN BTN;

o **JUN 12 – DEC 12 – 2nd MTN BDE HQ;**

o AUG 12 – FEB 13 – 33rd MTN BTN;

o FEB 15 – AUG 15 – 33rd MTN BTN;

o JUN 18 – DEC 18 – 30th MTN BTN;

o JAN 20 – AUG 20 – 21st MTN BTN;

• The enhanced forward presence in Poland 2017 – 2020, 3 rotations by the 228th Air Defense Battalion.

As a consequence of all the missions abroad, the 2nd MTN BDE became the first Romanian brigade to rotate the entirety of its combat battalions in the theatre of operations

Afghanistan.

Multinational exercises and training

GORDIAN KNOT and TRIDENT JAGUAR

Since 2014, the „Sarmizegetusa" 2nd Mountain Brigade has been affiliated to the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Greece, participating in multinational exercises like GORDIAN KNOT and TRIDENT JAGUAR, helping to reshape and adapt the command and control architecture of the forces and means available, the introduction of new doctrinal concepts, as well as aiding in the development of training strategies so as to be able to actively participate in the full spectrum of missions specific to crisis response operations.

GOLDEN FLEECE 22

The brigade also participated in the GOLDEN FLEECE exercise, organized by the Hellenic National Defense General Staff. Alongside the Romanian mountain infantry platoon, the exercise brought together representatives from Albania and Bulgaria, with observers from the United States, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Cyprus.

The multinational force, to which the Romanian mountain infantry platoon was assigned, was tasked with repelling hostile elements from a designated area alongside the capture of key objectives and thus facilitating the introduction of armored elements into combat.

By jointly applying tactics and procedures during the FTXs and with the use of training and live ammunition, the GOLDEN FLEECE 22 exercise contributed to the training of military personnel in meeting the current challenges of peacekeeping operations, thus improving the cooperation and interoperability aspects between the Balkan participants, creating a climate of mutual understanding and trust between them.

SARMIS multinational exercise

Taking advantage of the fact that Romania is covered by one third of its territory by mountainous terrain, the 2nd MTN BDE, on a yearly basis since 2015, is responsible with organizing the SARMIS multinational exercise, the biggest mountain training exercise in the country. The SARMIS exercise creates the perfect framework for the training and evaluation of all the units under the brigade's command.

SARMIS is a multinational tactical field/real exercise based on a fictitious scenario that is listed in NATO's Military Training and Exercise Programme (MTEP) and part of the Combined Joint Enhanced Training Program (CJET), planned and led by the „Sarmizegetusa" 2nd Mountain Brigade.

The core objectives of the training exercise are to plan, prepare, lead and execute a series of tactical operations, in a multinational environment, specific to the mountainous warfare and to update, standardize and validate standard operating procedures employed by the participating nations.

Since its first iteration back in 2015, the SARMIS multinational exercise grew yearly with the participation of more countries interested in training their troops in a forested mountainous environment, in isolated and remote areas and in harsh weather conditions.

Foreign elements that took part in the SARMIS multinational exercise:

- 2015: 2nd Squadron / 2nd Cavalry Regiment "Cougars" USA, 1 Company from the Canadian army and 1Company from the United Kingdom army;

- 2016: one Company from 2nd Battalion, The Rifles (2 RIFLES) UK and 1Regimental Engineer Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment USA;

- 2018: one Company from1st Battalion, The Rifles (1 RIFLES) UK;

- 2019: one Company from 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh UK and one platoon form the 101 Alpine Regiment form Bulgaria;

- 2021: a team of observers from

the French 27th Mountain Brigade.

Future prospects

The 2nd Mountain Brigade's objectives for the future revolve around concepts like interoperability in a multinational environment by participating in exercises organized abroad or by integrating foreign elements in the brigade's SARMIS exercise, continuous training in summer and winter mountain warfare, contribution to the mountain infantry's developments of SOPs and TTPs and by providing a credible deterrence against any threats aimed at NATO.

Closing remarks

The current state of the security environment necessitates an increase in the 2nd Mountain Brigade's training efforts, a constant adjustment to the demands of the present conflicts while also maintaining its credible combat capabilities.

Training in a multinational environment represents, and also provides, the basic framework that contributes to achieving the goals presented above, thus proving that together we are stronger and better prepared to face the current threats.

Per Aspera Ad Astra, through hardships to the stars!

Gabriel CONSTANTIN
OF-1 (ROM A)
SO Public Affairs Office
2nd Mountain Brigade "Sarmizegetusa"

THE NATO APPROACH TO THE TERRORISM THREAT

The NATO summit held in Brussels on June 17, 2021 underlined the foundations on which the Alliance is founded, namely the principles of democracy, freedom and respect for the law. In this sense, Collective Defense is no longer a mere concept of territorial integrity, but extends to the need to preserve the peace and security of all Member States. The priorities set for 2030 are, moreover, the development of the military instrument for deterrence and eventual defense, the political capacity that involves institutions at all levels, and a comprehensive approach to security. NATO, therefore, is increasingly involved in the defense of democratic values. Terrorism was therefore identified, in addition to the defense of territorial integrity, as the main threat to the democratic values and stability of NATO countries. The legal bases for NATO intervention to counter terrorism are obviously Article 3 and Article 4 of the Treaty, in compliance with the laws operating in the sovereign state within which it operates and the ROEs previously established.

From NATO's point of view, Terrorism is a strategic threat, which aims to destabilize, create disorder and weaken the security systems of the States that represent its target. This threat spreads over several "domains", which doctrinally are: Land, Air, Maritime, Space and the Cyber one. The latter domain, in particular, should not be underestimated from the point of view of the terrorist threat, since it has already been seen that, precisely the use of information technologies, which do not need particular and expensive hardware, can carry codes capable of compromise the functionality not only of other IT systems but also the systems that manage energy sources, transport, hospitals, etc.

In each of these domains, the terrorist threat can be conveyed in multiple ways. Therefore, NATO's attention is focused precisely on these modalities, studying their capabilities and effects, in order to identify the most correct instrument of prevention and contrast. Among these methods, which include the use of propaganda and the attack on computer systems, it is also worth underlining the use of the phenomenon of migratory flows, which in itself constitutes an element of destabilization but can also be exploited for the insertion of terrorist cells in an anonymous and direct way. Even the crime itself can be a vehicle for perpetrating terrorist acts. In this sense, the link between crime and terrorism assumes considerable importance, for the ability to finance terrorism, contribute to attacking the supporting structures of the state and its capacity for destabilization; in addition, it contributes, together with other modalities, to create actions (isolated or through a network) to attack the resilience of the state.

However, within NATO it is not excluded that this threat may also be used by structured organizations, including state organizations, which use it in a hidden form. Therefore,

in the analysis of the threat, this possibility cannot be ignored. This is the so-called use of proxies, or armed groups financed by one state to destabilize another, without directly entering an armed conflict. Their cycle of operations develops through three phases: a phase aimed at creating destabilization, a subsequent phase to create unrest and finally a third to obtain a local rescue, where it is possible that an enemy state can easily intervene. Here we enter the field of a conflict that in NATO is categorized as "Gray Zone" or "Hybrid Threat". The "Gray Zone" is that indefinite state between peacetime and a state of war, and is characterized by the ambiguity of the conflict (in the past, terms such as "Irregular Warfare, Low Intensity Conflict, Asymmetric Warfare, Military Operation Other Than War). Instead, the "Hybrid Threat" is the combination of conventional and unconventional tools to attack a state while remaining below the threshold of the possible attribution of responsibility.

Both concepts broadly envisage the development of terrorist activities, which need, in order to be fought, all the instruments of the power of a State (Diplomatic, Intelligence, Military, Economic), in an environment often devoid of diplomatic interlocutors, through activities that are not

necessarily linked to a geographical domain and acting on three levels of confrontation: the conventional one, the one against the population, the one against the international community. In combating this threat, NATO uses the tools it already has at its disposal to counter a conventional attack; indeed, it is the only organization that, in addition to constituting a forum for coordination and control (as, for example, it occurs in the EU) , has specific planning and operational tools (forces, means, funding) that can be readily used. First of all, the contrasting actions begin with the "Understanding" phase, with a continuous updating of the crisis areas or possible interventions; then a phase of "Preparing" with the preparation of tools and forces available; finally, the "Responding" phase which consists in the defense of critical infrastructures and in the projection of forces. As part of the planning, not being able to develop a precise contingency plan (not knowing the direction or extent of the threat), NATO monitors possible crisis areas outside its external borders and follows their developments. In this sense, the "NATO Strategic Direction South hub" closely follows NATO's southern area, monitors complex situations that could give rise to threats of a terrorist nature,

produces dossiers and collects statistical data. Furthermore, not being able to define the timing of a possible intervention, NATO can count with immediate availability on the VJTF ready to be employed at 48 hours, at the level of a brigade,

with logistic autonomy and long-range deployment capabilities. Planning therefore focuses on the need to make this rapid force autonomous for an acceptable amount of time and to be transported to a previously identified crisis area. On the other hand, as regards operational instruments, the fight against terrorism is essentially based on some actions of primary importance.

First of all, the ability to develop and disseminate a coordinated and shared communication strategy is fundamental. In this sense, there are organizational Centers, such as the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence in Latvia, capable of effectively disseminating communications aimed at countering terrorist propaganda. Another operational tool derives from the ability to understand the phenomenon of terrorism through constant supervisory action (supported by information activities), taking an active part in crisis containment activities, for example by operating in the state subject to crisis, at its request (Host Nation) and carrying out "Security Forces Assistance" activities or implementing Stability Policing (whose Centers of Excellence are located in Italy) and countering the acquisition of weapons by terrorists.

On the subject, it is worth remembering among the initiatives considered most effective and representative of the commitment of the Alliance in the fight against terrorism, the establishment in 2016 of the Hybrid Fusion Cell which became operational in 2017 and inserted within the IntCen intelligence center, aimed

at to the reception and examination of information, even confidential, on hybrid threats, coming from the various interested parties, which are immediately shared with the partners, in order to contribute to the decision-making process in terms of security. The aforementioned cell monitors the ways in which state and non-state actors conduct disinformation activities aimed at Member States and institutions, focusing in particular on the ways in which they use their tools of influence in order to create instability or to reduce the sovereignty and independence of the institutions. Secondly, it deals with carrying out an accurate assessment of the vulnerabilities of the partners and institutions themselves, intervening on the improvement of their resilience capacity through the sharing of best practices, the development of new policy proposals and the identification of topics to be explored.

The general objective remains that of contributing to forming and increasing a common culture which is indispensable as a prerequisite for joint and effective action both in terms of defense and in response to any attacks. In addition, a Civil Emergency Planning Committee (CEPC) is also set up at the NATO headquarters, with the task of integrating the civil sector with the military sector of the Member States. This committee has the ability to engage different civil sectors such as energy, economics, transport, health, etc., and regularly interfaces with international organizations of various kinds, in order to provide NATO leaders with proposals and suggestions aimed at combating terrorism but above all to improve the "resilience" of individual Member States. In light of this, it is evident that NATO is strongly committed to civil emergency situations, which today are intensifying. In fact, NATO's role in this regard includes a wide range of different situations, which require different policies, principles and tools for resolving purposes. Previously we mentioned the concept of resilience as the ability of a State to resist an enemy attack or an economic-political shock, which is one of the objectives to be encouraged and improved both for the States themselves and for the Alliance.

The concept of resilience refers to one of the key elements in the fight against terrorism, which uses not only military or police capabilities, but also civilian preparation, involving both institutions and the private sector (transport, satellite communications, logistics , energy, etc). Resilience is considered, in fact, as a prerequisite for guaranteeing collective security and defense, which combines the concept of civilian readiness and preparation with that of adequate military capabilities;   by reducing their own vulnerabilities and thus strengthening individual resilience, each ally indirectly contributes to reducing the vulnerabilities of NATO itself. At the basis of this reasoning is the awareness that the military component of the Alliance depends on a solid civilian component, necessary to support its actions. This issue was the subject of extensive discussion during the Warsaw summit in 2016, in which the Alliance indicated the minimum requirements to strengthen the resilience of allies, referring, in particular, to the ability to deal with situations with a high number of victims, and to ensure the resilience of the health system, including a sufficient level of medical supplies, adequately stored and guarded.

In conclusion Terrorism remains the most direct asymmetric threat to our security. Terrorist Groups have expanded their networks, enhanced their capabilities and invested in new technologies to improve their lethality. Countering terrorism will remain essential to ensuring our collective defense and common security, and we will continue to deter, defend and respond to threats and challenges from terrorist organizations that affect the security of our populations or the integrity of our territory.

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The "Soft" Side of Military Power

The realistic traditional view of military power,[1] passed over consistently the "attractive" face of military power. The focus of this paper is twofold. The first objective is to clarify that there is not "soft" and "hard" power resources, thus soft power results could potentially be yielded by any kind of resource.[2] The second objective is to shed light on the "soft" side of military power by presenting cases on which, military power can be utilized in order to "produce" soft power behaviors.

Nye coined the term "soft power" in his book "Bound to Lead",[3] which ,from a point of view, was a response to the traditional realistic view of power as to Paul Kennedy's argument that the US is suffering from "imperial overstretch".[4] In the following years, he has analyzed further the concept.[5] Generally, Nye approached the power

in terms of behavior : "power is the ability to influence the behavior of other to get the outcome one wants".[6] He asserts that soft and hard power are subdivisions of the behavioral approach of power.[7] During the period of almost thirty years, he gave plenty of definitions but in 2011 he offered a comprehensive definition : "Fully defined, soft power is "the ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of

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[1]This view puts emphasis on the number of tanks, ships, airplanes, aircraft carriers and missiles. For one of the most prominent analysis for this issue see John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, (New York, W.W.Norton & Company,2001)

[2]The effectiveness of transforming the resources into results depends on the context. For "Power Contextual Approach" see David Baldwin, Power and International Relations: A Conceptual Approach, (Princeton-Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2016), ebook

[3]Joseph Nye, Bound to Lead : The changing nature of American Power, (New York, Basic Books,1990)

[4]Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000, (New York, Vintage Books, 1987) ; As he explains "I developed the concept of soft power while trying to solve two puzzles, one disciplinary which referred to my complaint that the realists start with traditional elements of power but they stop so soon after they start without realizing there is much more to be explained, and the other about policy concerning the appropriate response to the widespread view that American power was in decline" Joseph Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept", Journal of political power, (Feb,2021):4,5

[5]Joseph Nye, The Paradox of American Power : Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone, (New York, Oxford University Press,2002) ; Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004) ; Joseph Nye, The Future of Power, (New York, Public Affairs, 2011)

[6]Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004), p.2

[7]Robert Kohane, Joseph Nye, "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age", Foreign Affairs, Vol.77, No.5, (September-October/1998):86. The other prominent approach is power in terms of resources and power in terms of capabilities – the pocession of resources and the capabilities that are usually result to succeed the desired outcomes

framing the agenda, persuasion, and positive attraction".[8]

It is apparent that Nye defines soft power in terms of behavior and not in terms of resources.[9] He elucidates further this issue, by contending that "many types of resources can contribute to soft power, but that does not mean that soft power is any type of behavior (..) some resources that are commonly associated with hard power in most contexts, can also produce soft power in another context".[10] Although he claimed that there are some specific potential soft power resources,[11] it seems from the above analysis that there is the theoretical legitimization to argue that soft power could be obtained by any resource. Consequently, military power, apart from coercion (hard power behavior) can also be a resource of attraction (soft power behavior). Even though, military soft power is barely a new concept, has its foundations on theory of soft power. Indeed, Nye never ruled the military out as a potential resource of soft power. In particular, he claimed

that "hard power can sometimes have an attractive or soft side.[12] He also mentioned that the military has a broad range of officer exchanges, joint-training, and assistance programs with other countries in peacetime, that could be the recourses of soft power policies.[13] However these are not the only variations of military soft power. Below, it is attempted to present concisely, case studies related with

the U.S conduct of military soft power, in order to take up the cause of above analysis.

Military Exchange Educational Programs might be a significant soft power resource. Atkinson ,who coined the term military soft power, argues that the military exchange educational programs, hosted by United States War and Staff colleges and funded by International Military Education

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[8]Joseph Nye, "Power and Foreign policy", Journal of Political Power, Vol.4, No.1, (April 2011):9

[9]Initially there was some kind of confusion because Nye made a "blurry" distinction between soft and hard power in terms of resources and in terms of behavior. As he put it, in behavioral terms soft power is attractive power. In terms of resources, soft-power resources are the assets that produce such attraction. Further ambiguity was created when Nye tried to match tangible recourses with hard power and intangible recourses with soft power. According to Nye "the ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority (..) The distinction between them (hard and soft power) is one of degree, both in the nature of the behavior and in the tangibility of the resources" in Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004), p.6,7. This argument was criticized by Baldwin see David Baldwin, "Power and International Relations", In . Carlsnaes, T. Risse, and B.A. Simmons, Handbook of International Relations, (London, Sage Publications,2002), p.177-191. Finally Nye acknowledged that tangibility of resources was not a defining criterion between soft and hard power Joseph Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept", Journal of political power, (Feb,2021):6

[10]Joseph Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept", Journal of political power, (Feb,2021):6

[11]"The soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)" Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004), p.11

[12]Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004), p.26

[13]Also in wartime, military psychological operations ("psy-ops") are an important way to influence foreign behavior and even obviate outright military means. Joseph Nye, Soft Power : The means to Success in World Politics, (New York, Public Affairs, 2004), p.115

and Training (IMET),[14] could form worldwide military networks. These can be seen as one of the ways in which US is able to extend its influence and accomplish its foreign policy goals, notably the development of democratic governance. Those programs shape the beliefs and perceptions of foreign military officers and build a goodwill toward the United States. In turn, this procedure may affect the future actions of these officers and in a sense it may help the United States nurture and support democratic cultures in transitioning as well as nondemocratic countries. During the revolution of Arab Spring, those officers played a significant role facilitating the democratic transitions, especially in Tunisia and Egypt.[15]

Machain argues that the foreign military training lead to the increasement of US influence in the recipient country. This influence might be converted to wider civil – military cooperation between these states and consequently this can result in more pro-U.S. voting behavior in the UN General Assembly, especially if the agenda of the conference is associated with military issues.

Another induction of the research was that the impact of military foreign training to the grade of U.S. influence in the recipient state's behavior, increases when the military has a greater role in government.[16] Military deployments may also constitute a soft power resource. Allen conducted a survey and found that U.S. military presence in fourteen (14) states is correlated with increased support for the U.S. presence, people and governance. Specifically, individuals of the recipient state through interactions with U.S. military personnel and also through economic benefits accompanied military deployments, had a more positive view for the U.S presence, people and governance.[17]

Another critical domain of military soft power is the provision of humanitarian assistance (or relief) in conflict areas or after a natural disaster, by armed forces. The 16th Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, James Stavridis emphasized on the importance of this type of military soft power resource by claiming "I did all I could to channel our vast military resources toward the conduct of soft power (..) this

meant reducing the dollars spent on preparations and increasing our spending on humanitarian operations, medical diplomacy, drug education and training in the rule of law.[18]

In that context several programs of humanitarian assistance had been conducted in order to create affiliation between the local people and the military personnel and therefore to facilitate military operations and achieve operational objectives. For instance, U.S. developed two tools of providing humanitarian assistance in Afganistan and Iraq, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and the Commander's Emergency Response Programs (CERP). These programs aimed to facilitate the military operations, amongst others, by trying to win the "hearts and minds" of the local population, through humanitarian aid.[19] Also U.S during the Vietnam conflict carried out military medicine aid programs such as the Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP),[20] the Military Provincial Health Assistant Program(Mil-Hap) and the Civilian War Casualty Program (CWCP).[21] These programs were considered by officials as helpful for the allies to win

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[14]IMET has three primary goals : to professionalize foreign military forces, to improve interoperability with U.S. military forces, and to increase respect for democratic values and human rights.

[15]Carol Atkinson, Military Soft Power : Public Diplomacy through Military Educational Excanges, (Lanham, Maryland : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014)

[16]Carla Martinez Machain, "Exporting Influence: U.S Military Training as Soft Power", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.65, (September,2020): 313-341

[17]Michel Allen, Michael Flynn, Carla Machain, Andrew Stravers, "Outside the Wire:U.S. Military Deployments and Public Oponion in Host States", American Political Science Review, Vol.14, No.2, (February, 2020)

[18]James Stavridis, "The Police need to Learn about Soft Power", TIME, 6 July 2020

[19]Alice Gadler, "Armed Forces as Carrying both the Stick and the Carrot. Humanitarian aid in US Counterinsurgency Operations in Afganistan and Iraq",Goettingen of International Law, Vol.3, No.1, (2011):217-250

[20]Unit medical officers and aid men visited villages to treat local people illnesses and injuries.

[21]Provision of military medical personnel and eruipment to assist Vietnamese government hospitals in caring for civilians.

floods on 2010 are few examples where U.S military had played a crucial role by providing humanitarian aid. As Harman put it "our generosity and compassion combined with the U.S. military's unparalleled ability to deliver disaster relief may be our most effective foreign policy tools".[24]

Military exercises can also be assumed as a variation of military soft power. Military exercises with other countries cultivate the feeling of affiliation between the military personnel and international links are created. Furthermore, common military exercises contribute in shaping worldviews and enhance the goodwill among the participants. In that context U.S conducted numerous military exercises with its partners such as "Talisman Saber" in Australia, "Shared Accord" in Africa, "Saber Guardian".[25] On the same direction Wolfley claimed that "there are four distinct ways to create advantage through attraction and persuasion: gain allies through attraction, influence the values and roles of other military through socialization, train other armies to take on the burden of providing security through delegation and manage the behavior of allies through assurance. Military constitute one way to produce attraction.[26] As it is noticeable military exercises can

the hearts and minds of the people, causing them to shift their allegiance from the Viet Cong to the Saigon Government.[22]

The case of U.S. navy hospital ship missions can also be deemed as a resource of military soft power. Since 2006, the U.S navy deploys annually one of its two hospital ships in missions to either Central and South America or the Asia-Pacific region. Their mission is twofold. Primarily they seek to provide emergency medical support for U.S armed forces deployed in combat and secondary to provide full hospital services in support of disaster relief and humanitarian

missions worldwide. Hospital ship visits may create sentiments such as gratitude, admiration and shared values which in turn increase the possibilities of "producing" attraction. As Forster states "by delivering aid, the U.S. can demonstrate goodwill, reassure support, shape perceptions, build relations, and thus generate soft power".[23]

The U.S. military's ability to deliver disaster relief was proven in many cases in the past, and resulted in the enhancement of America's favorability. Indonesia's earthquake and tsunami on 2004, Pakistan's earthquake on 2005 and floods on 2010 and Haiti's

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[22]Robert Wilensky, Military Medicine to Win Hearts and Minds : Aid to Civilians in the Vietnam War, (Lubbok, Texas Tech University Press,2004)

[23]Larissa Forster, "The Soft Power Currencies of U.S. Navy Hospital Ship Missions", International Studies Perspectives, Vol.16, (2015), 367-387

[24]Jane Harman, "The Military's Invaluable Soft Power",Wilson Center, (November,2013)

[25]U.S Forces Work With Partners In Numerous Military Exercises

[26]Kyle Wolfley, "The Shape of Things to Come : Why the Pentagon must Embrace Soft Power to Compete with China",Modern War Institute, https://mwi.usma.edu/the-shape-of-things-to-come-why-the-pentagon-must-embrace-soft-power-to-compete-with-china/, Accessed on 28 February 2022
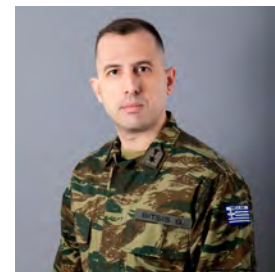
U.S tried to put hard power tools in a soft power package".[30]

Undoubtedly, military power is leveraged more effectively on producing hard power results. But it must always kept in mind that the armed forces can be utilized also, with equal efficacy, in order to "produce" soft power behaviors such as attraction. Coercion and attraction are not always mutually exclusive but they can also operate in a supplementary manner. This is reflected exceptionally by the "hard" and "soft" side of military power.

be an example of promoting these tactics.

An integrated approach case of military soft power that entails many of the above categories is the U.S African Command (AFRICOM). On February 2007 President Bush announced the creation of AFRICOM which was in consequence of the increasement of the U.S national interests in Africa and especially on the fields related with the energy, counter-terrorism and the incremental engagement and influence of China in Africa.[27] One of the main objectives of AFRICOM is "the contribution to the development of capable and professional militaries that respect human rights, adhere to the rule of law, and more effectively contribute to stability in Africa".[28]

AFRICOM fulfills its mission through exercises such as "Flintlok", "Africa Endeavor", "Cutlass Express", through security cooperation programs like "International Military and Education Training", "Africa Partnership Station", "Humanitarian Assistance" and through other additional programs such as "Woman Peace and Security" and "Africa Enlisted Development Strategy". It is obvious that some of these belong on the sphere of hard power and other have a soft power orientation. Hence AFRICOM represents a new hybridized form of soft power and hard power.[29] As Hackbarth put it "AFRICOM was intended to be a new kind of military command, integrating traditional security functions with humanitarian aid and development. In other words,

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[27] Stephen Morrison, "Exploring the U.S Africa Command and a New Strategic Relationship with Africa", Center for Strategic and International Studies, (August, 2007)

[28] United States Africa Command, https://www.africom.mil, Accessed on 4 March 2022

[29] Philip Seib, Carola Weil, AFRICOM, "The American Military and Public Diplomacy in Africa", USC Annenberg Policy Briefing, (March,2008)

[30] James Hackbarth, "Soft Power and Smart Power in Africa", Strategic Insights, v.8, issue 1, (January,2009)

SMALL STATES, NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY AND NATO

Definition of a small state

The definition of a small state is critical and crucial for detecting major challenges and respective clarification of its foreign policy. In parallel, it contributes to the engraving of its political national security. From a broader perspective, small states are considered those, that do not comply with the Great Powers (Brighi & Hill, 2008:128).

Small states are perceived as too weak to raise any kind of distinction in the world order, or to change its regulations and norms. From this perspective, small states have been characterized as "one weaker part in a non-conventional relationship, that cannot differentiate by itself the nature or the functionality of this relation" (Hurrel, 2007). Practically, the weakness of a small state stands at its measurement features, such as the limited territory, the confined population, the weak and addicted economy and limited military capabilities. According to Jaquet, a small state does not obtain the power or the means in general, in order to impose its policy, will, or to protect its

national interests via political power implementation. Consequently, it can be taken for granted, the inability of a small state to defend its national interests without the political or military assistance or intervention of other more powerful states (Rice, 2000).

To close up with the definition of a small state, it is widely perceived from the academic community that "measurable" factors play the most critical role in defining a state such as.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, the expansiveness of a state, does not always determines the capabilities and the respective national security policy. Despite the fact that the "size" constitutes a crucial factor, it does not deter the small states to be active and impose their political footprint in the global scene. This contradiction among size and power, is exemplified by Sweden, Finland and Denmark, which although are perceived as small states, they are dynamically activated and involved in multiple large scaled military exercises and operations (Alesina & Spolaore, 2005). Further fortification for Finland and Sweden will take place after the completion of accession at NATO, a process that has been triggered by Russian aggression after their invasion in Ukraine.

There is a part of the academic community which considers that a small state is not assumed such as due to its size, but in accordance with the bilateral or multilateral relations

that conducts. NATO constitutes a strong valued-based military Alliance that attracts many small states which want to gain access and enhance their potential and footprint in a global level.

The spectrum of conditions that avails in the compile of the national security of a state, include multiple parameters. Historical and geographical aspects, energy reserves (hydrocarbons), military capabilities, economic indicators, political will and effective decision making, and others play their respective role. As a result, the security agenda of small states is compiled and adjusted in relation to their geographical position on the map, the neighborhood status, and the generic measures of its performance (Buzan et. al., 2003: 45).

Small States Challenges

Small states "needs" can assist in the better perception and understanding of the national security strategy. Depending on the national and international conditions, small states choose policies that reflect their needs in a better way, and aid them to achieve their foreign affairs and diplomatic objectives. Small states confront multiple vital challenges for their sustainability. Apart from conventional military threats, the current geopolitical complex implies plenty of non - linear and unconventional warfare activities such as terroristic attacks, environmental disasters, cyber-

attacks, hybrid threats and massive economic and social vulnerabilities. (Armstrong και Read, 2002). Small states have to tackle with them, so as to secure their sustainability and even their existence.

A wide range of challenges requires strong capabilities in order to be dealt with. Small states, as aforementioned lack such capabilities. They obtain small scaled economies, limited diplomatic resources and less resources in general in comparison to the more powerful states. (Barston, 2019:39). Nonetheless, one of the basic challenges that that small states are called to face, is the security dilemma, that is composed of two components: the "influence" on the one hand and the "autonomy" on the other. Small states intent to increase their influence parallel to the efforts for guarding their autonomy. According to the ad hoc geopolitical conditions, they select policies that reflect their needs in the most efficient way. Nevertheless, potential reinforcement of their influence does not lead to increase of their autonomy and vice versa (Bailes et. Al.,2016). Small states cannot take part in the decision-making process of the Great Powers and other rivalries, while being obliged to play a more active role in international generic activities that do not represent their values, or are not

aligned to their needs and objectives. Consequently, security and influence constitute two things that the majority of the small states do want to achieve and secure accordingly, but not always successfully (Karns et al., 2004).

In most cases, small states require a solid international system or sub-system, and security credentials provided by other great powers or institutions (eg NATO or the EU), in order to sustain themselves. International institutions are based, in their majority, on equality among all members, collateralized by small states as a platform to communicate effectively their needs. (Archer,2014:68).

Small states and Strategy

There are numerous cases, that small states did not want to align their policy with any of the great powers, by any means, and has been more preferable for them to implement a neutrality strategic option. Neutrality in international relations, constitutes in tandem with isolationism, parts of the strategic abstention concept (Kouskouvelis, 2004: 191). Despite the fact that isolationism could lead even in the eradication of a small and weak state, neutrality constitutes the most common choice with regards to the global security environment, no matter the spectrum of problems and obstacles that contains. Small states prefer neutrality in order to avoid the participation in high range ascendancy conflicts, proving that they do not comprise threat for the more powerful states, minimizing at the same time the collateral risks. History has revealed that neutrality

in general, is considered as an efficient way of handling with great powers ferocity issues, and securing the independence and subsequent sovereignty of the small states. Many small states that are located close to hostile countries, prefer the strategy of neutrality so as to brood over their national security (Karsh, 2012). Nevertheless, the accession of small states in large scaled coalitions and international institutions, adds up to a path for improvement, especially with regards to their security agenda. NATO last decades has proven its new strategic direction and agenda which includes "openness" to many small states.

Small States and NATO

NATO has changed considerably since the end of the Cold War. The contemporary Alliance is characterized by a new strategic mission and new operational area, an ongoing military transformation process, and a growing emphasis on partnerships even with small states as aforementioned. NATO has become an outward-looking organization with the goal of stabilizing and securing troubled areas in South and Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Black Sea and the MENA region. Achieving this goal, entails transformation of capabilities: what is needed are mobile forces that can efficiently project force several thousand miles out-of-area. Due to the changes, small states now have increased opportunities for influence in NATO, especially through niche capabilities, i.e. special skills that increase the value of the Alliance. The decision-making process has become more democratic and operations

seem to be no longer dominated by Great Powers. NATO would like to see the smaller allies contribute even more. The influence of a small state depends on its political will and on the level of its contribution to operations.

The main challenge for small states is to find meaningful ways to contribute to these demanding NATO's new objectives and tasks. Dealing with these challenges is not a piece of cake. This can be reflected in Laajava's words: "The foregoing list [of the characteristics of today's security environment and the challenges they impose] ... illustrates how much all democratic nations, big or small, allied or non-allied, have to work together in order to improve security and stability in the 21st century. Security must be

seen as a wider concept than it was previously, the military dimension being only one, albeit very important, part of it." (Laajava, Jaako Tapani, Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Finland) .

In conclusion, small states have limited budgets, limited bureaucracy and limited restructuring and transformation capabilities. If a small state wishes to contribute meaningfully to NATO's new tasks, it must first generate the political will necessary to inspire a genuine debate in regards to the nature of its desired armed force. Consequently, it has to predict what level of risk will be acceptable to the population and the bureaucracies involved. Then it has to choose what capabilities to procure and the methods necessary to procure them most effectively, with emphasis on niche capabilities, role specialization and others. If these steps are taken successfully, a small state will consistently be regarded as source of significant contributions to expeditionary operations in

peacekeeping, stability operations and war-fighting. These steps are absolutely necessary if one wants to gain more influence within the Alliance. The Alliance is open even under harsh conditions, such as the current status in Ukraine. Finland and Sweden are under examination for accession until the end of 2022. Two more small states will be part of our Alliance's community as soon as possible. Especially Finland by its affiliation, will batter down all the stereotypes with regards to "Finlandization" concept. NATO will support this perspective. NATO will support and enhance any effort of even small state to play its role and protect itself from the global threats. We are ALLIES. We are NATO.

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Risk and the Digital Business

As of 2019, much of the business world had been actively discussing the "digital transformation" for well over 5 years. According to surveys from Gartner, more than 87% of senior business leaders say digitalization is a company priority. But Gartner cautions that only 40% of organizations have brought digital initiatives to scale.

In early 2020, the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic forced most businesses to send their staff home to "shelter in place" or shut down in-person operations such as malls, movie theaters, or manufacturing plants entirely. A great many of the business processes that continued operating did so only through digital processes and telecommuting. As the crisis seems has been passed, not only are massive numbers of employees working at home, but many business processes are shifting online in order to operate at all. It is as if COVID-19 has pressed the gas pedal on the digital transformation.

Digital transformation is not an easy task though. Apart from other things, it demands more cybersecurity, not just because it means "more IT" but also "riskier IT". Newer technologies – such as mobile devices, social networks, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT) – are all seeing accelerated adoption during the pandemic. Unfortunately, new technologies often emerge without adequate security built in. Deeper blends of the virtual, physical, and social worlds merge into something new, often with profound security

implications. In extreme cases, digital outages or cyberattacks could stop elevators, crash vehicles, start fires, explode pipelines, or turn off medical devices.

Cyberattackers can steal vital trade secrets and personal identity records from business databases for use in credit card fraud and identity theft exploits. They also conduct extortion schemes, such as ransomware attacks which encrypt digital information and demand payment for the key to unlock it. Even mature remote access systems, web-based applications, and business processes can be highly vulnerable when deployed without adequate testing, hardening, and procedural controls. The early days of the COVID-19 crisis saw increased cyber-fraud as business processes such as accounting or payroll underwent forced digitalization.

Cybersecurity for the digital business addresses "information risk," which includes both "cyber-risk" (from attacks on IT) and "IT operational risk" (from IT errors, failures, and outages). It's the security leader's job to propose controls or workarounds to protect the business, whenever possible in a way that doesn't impede or slow innovation. It is the business leader's job to work with security to balance opportunity and risk.

The need to understand the general aspects of cybersecurity has evolved the last years, as enterprises and organizations, even the most technologically mature having their individual cyber teams (penetration testers, incident responders, blue team, red team etc.), suffer from attacks resulting in losing, depending the case, revenue or fame and trust. To even begin to achieve the promise of cybersecurity, security and business leaders must align to rationalize cybersecurity. They must go beyond the myths – such as

the one that cybersecurity is just a technical problem – that still mislead many.

We've all heard that "Security is about people, process, and technology." But that can sound like overly general advice not calibrated to each and every type of IT environment or business. Many security consultants advise starting with a security assessment and devising a plan for building up an enterprise security program. As that sounds quite generic, security leaders and those tasked with security responsibilities need more detail. Aligning security programs to the business through six priority focus areas, is a good starting point towards building a robust security program. These areas could be:

• Build a healthy security culture and governance model

• Manage risk in the language of the business

• Establish a control baseline

• Simplify and rationalize IT and security

• Govern and control access without creating a push on the business

• Institute cyber-resilience, detection, response, and recovery

It is important to understand the above are not an ordered list and they need to be scaled for a business's industry, size, complexity, level of security pressure, and maturity level. To analyze all these areas would need much more space than this of this article, but we mention them for reasons of completeness. We will try to mention a few things on them.

Organizations through their security personnel, should strive to improve security-related behavior through user awareness and training programs. Sometimes these programs succeed in bettering security-related behaviors, sometimes they don't. It turns out that people's behavior is related to a larger issue of security culture, which is itself a part of organizational culture.

Formally adopted security policies, well-defined security governance, and clear security-related roles in the business are prerequisites for a successful security program. But in the background behind the visible security governance and security program machinery is the organization's security culture. A security culture is the part of an organization's self-sustaining patterns of behavior and perception that determine how (or if) the organization pursues security. A positive security culture can provide your best opportunity to secure the business; a negative one can be your greatest vulnerability.

> *"Culture eats strategy for breakfast, lunch, and dinner."*
>
> **Peter Drucker, Management Guru**

Modern organizational thinking sees organizational culture as paramount for business outcomes. Security leaders can use communications and awareness programs to gradually enhance security culture throughout the organization as well as improve specific user behaviors such as resisting and reporting phishing messages. Over a period of time,

security teams can cultivate a network of influencers throughout the business to create a healthier security culture.

Thought leader Edgar Schein once said about business culture in general: "If you do not manage culture, it manages you, and you may not even be aware of the extent to which this is happening." Likewise, security culture can make or break a security program.

In fact, the root cause of many security breaches is not technology, but a "people" vulnerability such as an employee being tricked by a phishing message or other social engineering exploits into giving away credentials or installing malware. In other cases, a failure to follow a process, such as change control, is the culprit. Often, multiple things go wrong. A breach rarely is, and in fact should not be, caused by just one vulnerability.

Security culture inherits many attributes of the business culture. But it is is a smaller problem space, and many security behaviors can be improved through targeted awareness campaigns, process changes, and even user experience changes to technologies – without changing the core business culture.

Awareness programs can be targeted to improve specific security-related behaviors for defined audiences. They can also be used in a strategic effort to improve security culture. Figure 1, diagrams three dimensions of an optimal user awareness and training program.

Today's users work online in a minefield of malware, ransomware, social engineering, and insecure devices, applications, and networks.
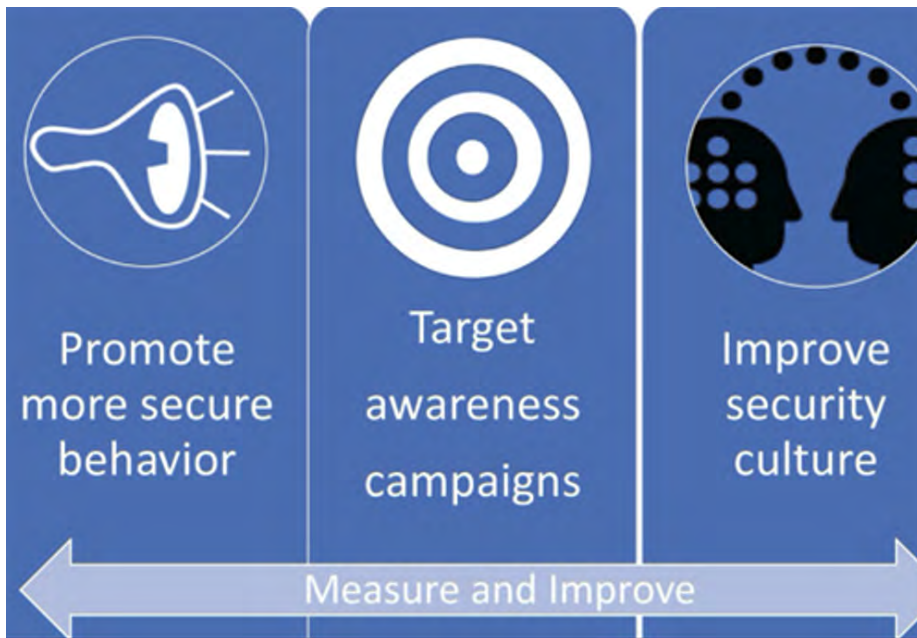
Figure 1 Dimensions of User Awareness and training programs

Some primary purposes for awareness programs are to improve users' understanding of cyber threats to themselves and the business as well as teach them to practice basic security hygiene against those threats.

Some of users' most common insecure practices are

• Failing to be vigilant enough to ignore or report potential phishing messages

• Falling for other social engineering tricks

• Selecting weak passwords or not changing default passwords

• Sharing accounts with colleagues, friends, and family members

• Telecommuting unsafely (using insecure Wi-Fi, leaving devices unlocked or unattended)

• Disabling security controls on a device

• Installing or using unauthorized applications

• Using obsolete software or unpatched software

• Revealing potentially sensitive information in personal interactions or on social networks

Business and security leaders in organizations with a healthy security culture tend to accept and approve of requirements for awareness programs and security governance. They seek to move the organization from being one that performs tactical awareness and training projects to one that intentionally defines and measures security culture targets as a way to achieve its security vision, drive its security strategy, and meet its security objectives. Awareness and training efforts to strategically improve security culture can be built in an iterative manner and therefore be accessible to almost any security organization in almost any business. The main prerequisite is to enrich the awareness and training program to be a bit more strategic, enhance security-related communications, and measure aspects of the security culture along with the results of these efforts.

Cybersecurity isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition. Executives and Boards of Directors always want to know: How much is enough? What approaches to cybersecurity are right for us? There aren't easy answers to these questions; however, common sense dictates one must scale the cybersecurity effort to the kind of business one is in and the IT realities of the business.

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2020-2022, A SPECIAL PERIOD OF TIME AND A "GOLDEN AGE OF FLICC"

What is happening and how do we act in this situation?

Whatever comes to mind while thinking about this period, we have all somehow got under the umbrella created by the words coronavirus, inclusion, restriction, gathering, protection measures. An umbrella which main characteristics are the information and disinformation storm, its constant review, chaos, doubt and many criticisms.

These two years have brought us into a head-on collision with the unknown but also with the fear that it causes. We stood face to face with our ignorance but also our need to deal with it by any means. There have been many times in these two years, that we have even managed to find the strength to accept our inability to understand that we do not know certain things.

In addition, we crashed for good with the economic exploitation of this difficult situation but also with the emergence of social needs that have

been highlighted in the last two years.

So where and how do we stand in all this, how have we let them into our lives?

It is worth noting that it is in our nature when we are in a threatening and difficult situation, from which we cannot escape and excluding the case of resignation, to be active.

During this period, we observe many different behaviors. Just think of your acquaintances. Others hid in the houses, others were careless to the developments until the virus infected someone of their own, others joined a group, and found refuge there. Many also changed their behavior during this period. It is impossible to refer to all the different behaviors observed. But it is worth talking a little more about a conversation that we hear

everywhere around us.

Like many others, I was troubled by the creation of two diametrically opposed groups, the pro-vaccinators and the anti-vaccinators. Maybe it seems impossible, but these two groups originally had the same basis, the need to protect their members. The first declare that Vaccines protect against the "dangerous" virus, and the last, that non-vaccination is protection against the "dangerous" vaccine. This kind of disagreement has arisen in other areas as well, such as climate change. Is there, after all, climate change or not?

But how does one end up participating and supporting one or the other group? This is the point to talk about FLICC. This is an acronym that summarizes the 5 techniques used in order, for a targeted audience,

27

to refute science. In the image (3), we see in detail which main technique each letter represents and by which it is supported.
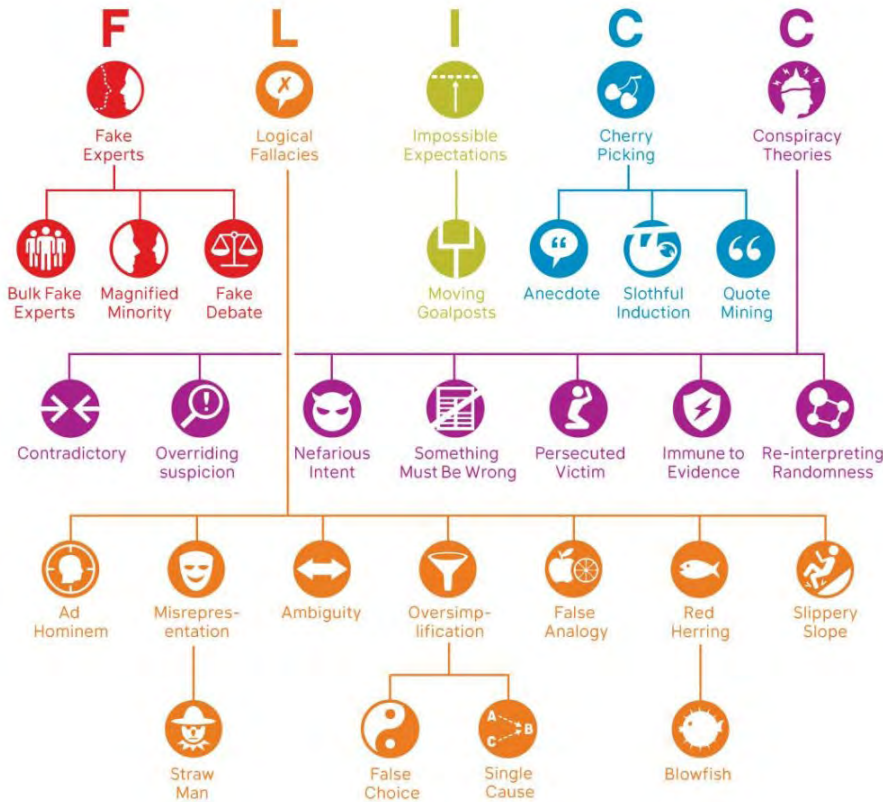

Image (3)

F (Fake Experts) refers to the impression of expertise but without any specialization. This technique is supported in three ways:

A) Bulk Fake Experts: Citing large numbers of seeming experts to argue that there is no scientific consensus on a topic. For example, "There is no expert consensus because 31,487 Americans with a science degree signed a petition saying humans aren't disrupting climate."

B) Magnified Minority: Magnifying the significance of a handful of dissenting scientists to cast doubt on an overwhelming scientific consensus. An example is the opinion that "Sure, there's 97% consensus but Professor Smith disagrees with the consensus position."

C) Fake Debate: Presenting science and pseudoscience in an adversarial format to give the false impression of an ongoing scientific debate. For instance, "Climate deniers should get equal coverage with climate scientists, providing a more balanced presentation of views."

L (Logical Fallacies) refers to arguments where the conclusion doesn't logically follow from the premises. Also known as a non sequitur. The ways in which it is carried out are the following:

A) Ad Hominem: Attacking a person/group instead of addressing their arguments, e.g. "Climate science can't be trusted because climate scientists are biased."

B) Misrepresentation: Misrepresenting a situation or an opponent's position in such a way

as to distort understanding, e.g. "They changed the name from 'global warming' to 'climate change' because global warming stopped happening."

C) Ambiguity: Using ambiguous language in order to lead to a misleading conclusion, e.g. "Thermometer readings have uncertainty which means we don't know whether global warming is happening."

D) Oversimplification: Simplifying a situation in such a way as to distort understanding, leading to erroneous conclusions, e.g. "CO2 is plant food so burning fossil fuels will be good for plants."

E) False Analogy: Assuming that because two things are alike in some ways, they are alike in some other respect, e.g. "Climate skeptics are like Galileo who overturned the scientific consensus about geocentrism."

F) Red Herring: Deliberately diverting attention to an irrelevant point to distract from a more important point, e.g. "CO2 is a trace gas so it's warming effect is minimal."

G) Slippery Slope: Suggesting that taking a minor action will inevitably lead to major consequences, e.g. "If we implement even a modest climate policy, it will start us down the slippery slope to socialism and taking away our freedom."

I (Impossible Expectations) refers to demanding unrealistic standards of certainty before acting on the science. This technique is applied by demanding higher levels of evidence after receiving requested evidence (Moving Goalposts)

The first **C** (Cherry Picking) is related to carefully selecting data that appear to confirm one position while ignoring other data that contradicts that position. Cherry Picking is done in the following ways:

A) Anecdote: Using personal experience or isolated examples instead of sound arguments or compelling evidence, e.g. "The weather is cold today—whatever happened to global warming?"

B) Slothful Induction: Ignoring relevant evidence when coming to a conclusion, e.g. "There is no empirical evidence that humans are causing global warming."

C) Quote Mining: Taking a person's words out-of-context in order to misrepresent their position, e.g. "Mike's trick… to hide the decline."

The second **C** (Conspiracy Theory) is about proposing that a secret plan exists to implement a nefarious scheme such as hiding a truth. The main components of conspiracy theories are:

A) Contradictory: Simultaneously believing in ideas that are mutually contradictory, e.g. "The temperature record is fabricated by scientists… the temperature record shows cooling."

B) Overriding suspicion: Having a nihilistic degree of skepticism towards the official account, preventing belief in anything that doesn't fit into the conspiracy theory, e.g. "Show me one line of evidence for climate change…

oh, that evidence is faked!"

C) Nefarious intent: Assuming that the motivations behind any presumed conspiracy are malicious, e.g. "Climate scientists promote the climate hoax because they're in it for the money."

D) Something must be wrong: Maintaining that "something must be wrong" and the official account is based on deception, even when specific parts of a conspiracy theory become untenable, e.g. "Ok, fine, 97% of climate scientists agree that humans are causing global warming, but that's just because they're toeing the party line."

E) Persecuted victim: Perceiving and presenting themselves as the victim of organized persecution, e.g. "Climate scientists are trying to take away our freedom."

F) Immune to evidence: Re-interpreting any evidence that counters a conspiracy theory as originating from the conspiracy, e.g. "Those investigations finding climate scientists aren't conspiring were part of the conspiracy."

G) Re-interpreting randomness: Believing that nothing occurs by accident, so that random events are re-interpreted as being caused by the conspiracy, e.g. "NASA's satellite exploded? They must be trying to hide inconvenient data!"

Strange as it may seem, too many people are affected by the above mentioned techniques to an extent that they do not realize. But why are some people affected more, some less and some not at all? What are the common characteristics of a FLICC-affiliated audience?

This is a very large chapter, which we will be able to approach on broad lines.

Initially, an audience that feels pressured by the socio-economic status often needs to be decongested. One way to express all this pressure is to oppose the authorities and their practices. But when these practices are in line with science, the scientific practices come into play. An audience with such a background is really very easy to be influenced by denial techniques. They experience the social-economic systems as uncontrollable "enemies" and so the creation of conspiracy theories seems to help members of this group "escape" from being influenced by these systems.

Of course, we cannot avoid to refer to the individual itself. Whether or not someone supports an idea depends a lot on the point of view of those he/she trusts. When their close social environment participates in a group, it is easier for them to embrace it as well. The group takes the form of a shelter. Its rules and ideas provide reassurance.

In addition, it is difficult for many to accept that some things do not fall within their area of expertise. They feel uncomfortable when it seems to others that they do not know things. Usually they support reasoning that seems reasonable but hides a fallacy. For example, for a scientist the word "theory" is the way of examining a field with interpretive and predictive inductive conclusions. For someone unrelated to science the word "theory" is just an idea. So, if the word "theory" is used properly, it can lead to fallacy.

The purpose of this rough description of the situation was to look at things out of the box, regardless of which group each one belongs to, if any. In addition, we may now be able to recognize the denial techniques of science, protect ourselves, and look at the extreme events that accompany significant conditions, such as the Covid-19 with a different perspective.

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SMART DEFENSE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INITIATIVE. NATO'S DEFENSE FUTURE IN FACING NEW AREA'S CHALLENGES.

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization heads of state and governments gathered in Chicago for the 2012's summit, the alliance was once again faced with an abundance of issues and challenges. Threats such as terrorism, the Afghanistan crises, problems regarding energy security, cyber defense and missile defense were only few of the pressing issues that founded their way in the ambitious agenda and the summits final declaration. All the above combined with the financial crises, alongside with fiscal austerity have led to severe cuts in defense spending in almost all allied countries.

Confronted by this combination of growing capability shortfalls and declining defense budget the allies have come to acknowledge that the traditional NATO's approach is no longer applicable. Thus, it was crucial at this point that a new plan was to be introduced as a transformation of the development of defense acquisition to deliver capabilities in more efficient and cost effective manner. This initiative, labeled 'Smart Defense' was described by the NATO's secretary general Anders Fogh Rasmussen as a way to 'build greater security with fewer resources but more coordination and coherence'.

As a matter of fact, the Smart Defense project is a cooperative way of thinking about generating the modern defense capabilities that the Alliance needs for the future. In this renewed culture of cooperation, allies are encouraged to work together to develop, acquire, operate and maintain military capabilities to undertake the Alliance's essential core tasks agreed in NATO's Strategic Concept. That means harmonizing requirements, pooling and sharing capabilities, setting priorities and coordinating efforts better.

By introducing this initiative, the NATO Secretary General has designated the Supreme Allied Commander, Transformation (SACT), General Denis Mercier, and the Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Rose Gottemoeller, as Special Envoys for Smart Defense. National support is essential, regarding both the concept of Smart Defense and the development of concrete multinational projects. The Special Envoys engage with senior military and political leaders to encourage participation by Allied nations.

In this framework the main goal of Smart Defense is in an essence to transform the approach of defense acquisition in order to deliver capabilities in a more efficient and effective way. At the same time it promotes new ideas and management methods such as coordinated acquisition and integrated management of common abilities. The nations have the possibility to get involved and participate in the

projects that are estimated to be more beneficial for their defense policy. This way, better collaboration is facilitated within NATO and the allies are strengthening their bonds by planning their defense and deterrence policy alongside with the future of the alliance. Getting the opportunity to spend the defense budget by investing on covering the aspects of their potential 'weaknesses', spreads the feeling of equality and coalition among the member states, thus they feel that their needs are covered. Last but not least, the initiative provides strategic responses to capability shortfalls. By working together the allies are entitled to find better solutions and better respond to any challenges that may arise.

The Smart Defense project mainly focuses on the following domains. First and foremost organizing and mitigating the effects of the announced reduction in the defense budget on NATO countries by making better use of the available resources. Prioritizing; aligning national capability priorities with those of NATO has been a challenge for some years. Smart Defense is the opportunity for a transparent, cooperative and cost-effective approach to meet essential capability requirements. Secondly, it revives the old theme of burden sharing between America and Europeans by highlighting the need for closer collaboration of defense policies of allies on a concept of fiscal austerity in Europe. Also it is crucial to mention, that the project provides the opportunity to collaborate with external

NATO partners such as The European Union Defense Agency. Both of the institutions are coordinating their capabilities initiation within the recent efforts of Smart Defense. Lastly, the initiative aspect is to find innovative ways of coping with flagship projects.

Nevertheless, within its strengths and benefits we need to be prepared to acknowledge the risks that Smart Defense holds. The primary criticism is based on two defining and potentially fatal problems. First many nations are skeptical to reduce the scope on their defense investments, despite the declining budget. It would not be individual states but NATO, as a collective alliance, that would be capable of defending across the full range of potential threats. A second major criticism on the project is that, a similar approach has been tried before with mixed success. The original idea dates back to 1970, with smaller amount of effort, but in the context of addressing the growing military and capability gap between the members of the alliance and the United States of America. Now, we need to ensure that it won't end up as another bumper sticker for a new Summit.

The Supreme Allied Command Transformation (SACT) primary center of attention rests in how to make smart defense for successful in the future. Its core function lies in combining strong political will, clear vision of job sharing and significant financial or industrial gains. Also, as known, cooperation between limited similar countries tends to be generally

more successful and efficient than multinational projects run by NATO in the past that involved many partners.

Under the light of the current events NATO is facing once more a major threat that could impact not only the Alliance but the global peace as well. On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine. The attack marked a major escalation between the countries, which had been in a state of conflict since 2014. The invasion received widespread international condemnation, including new sanctions imposed on Russia, triggering the 2022 Russian Financial crisis. Under this framework NATO should not overview the European dependency, especially Italian and German on the Russian oil. In the recent years, Russia has supplied Europe with nearly 40 percent of its natural gas imports and more than a quarter of the oil it buys from abroad. Dependence on the country's energy supplies, and fear of how a disruption to its exports may increase prices, has made it difficult for the other governments to impose sanctions on one of its biggest industries. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been rapid and dramatic, but the global economic consequences will be much slower to materialize and less spectacular. Yet, other than Ukraine, Russia will likely be the biggest long-term economic loser from the conflict. Financial markets reacted swiftly to news of Russia's invasion. The MSCI All Country World Index, a leading global equity gauge, fell to its lowest level

in almost a year. The price of oil rose above $100 a barrel, while European natural gas prices initially surged by almost 70%.

These energy-price increases will negatively affect the global economy. Europe is especially vulnerable, because it did little in recent years to reduce its dependence on Russian gas, and in some cases – notably, Germany, which abandoned nuclear power – even exacerbated it. On the other hand, oil-importing countries will experience a headwind from higher prices. The United States is more hedged: Because its oil production is equal to its oil consumption, more expensive oil is roughly neutral for GDP. But higher oil prices will hurt US consumers while helping a more limited segment of businesses and workers tied to the oil and gas industry. The price surge will also add to inflation, which is already at its highest levels in a generation in the US, Europe, and other advanced economies.

But some perspective on these immediate consequences is in order. Moreover, prices for oil futures are lower than spot prices, suggesting that the market expects this increase to be temporary. Central banks may therefore largely look through events in Ukraine, neither holding off on tightening nor speeding it up in response to higher headline inflation. And global stock markets are still up over the last year. Similarly, although the Russian stock market has fallen significantly since the start of the

invasion, Western sanctions are unlikely to have immediate dramatic effects. Sanctions rarely do; they are simply not the economic equivalent of the bombs that Russia is currently dropping on Ukraine.

Nevertheless, in the longer term, Russia will likely be the biggest economic loser from the conflict (after Ukraine, whose losses will go well beyond what can be measured in the national accounts). Russia's economy, and the well-being of its population, has been stagnant since the Kremlin's 2014 annexation of Crimea. The fallout from its current, large-scale invasion will almost certainly be more severe over time. Sanctions will increasingly take a toll, and Russia's growing isolation, as well as heightened investor uncertainty, will weaken trade and other economic links. In addition, Europe can be expected to reduce its fossil-fuel dependence on Russia.

The longer-term economic consequences for the rest of the world will be far less severe than they are for Russia, but they will still be a persistent challenge for policymakers. There is a risk, albeit a relatively unlikely one, that higher short-run inflation will become embedded in increasingly unanchored inflation expectations, and thus persist. If that happens, central banks' already difficult job will become even more complicated.

In addition, defense budgets are likely to rise in Europe, the US, and some other countries to reflect the increasingly dangerous global situation. As a matter of fact, the German Chancellor Olaf Scholz recently announced a plan to beef up the German military on Sunday, pledging €100 billion ($112.7 billion) of the 2022 budget for the armed forces and repeating his promise to reach the 2% of gross domestic

product spending on defense in line with NATO demands. The decision is to step up and meet NATO's target for defense, spending of 2% of GDP. There is no question that more Allies are going to follow Germany's example and start ensuring that the defense budget is efficient to stand up against any future threats.

Nevertheless, and even before the recent Russian threat arise, Europe had started stepping up defense on her own. Over the last decades the discussions about independent European security have been multiplied, leading to the creation of numerous institutions like the European Defense Agency (EDA), Organization for Security and Collaboration in Europe (OSCE) etc. This network of institutions works to advance the idea of a cooperative and cohesive Europe and to develop collaborative European Capacity to address the pressing foreign, defense and security policy challenges of our time. This challenges one more the NATO's influence and guidance on the European Area of Defense and may affect directly both the budgetary spending and the Smart Defense project

These limitations and difficulties must be and will be successfully addressed in order to enable cooperation on emerging security challenges , providing the vital glue that will hold together Allies and the partners. Since then, Smart Defense has developed into a major consideration by Allies to deliver

needed capabilities in a cost-effective and efficient manner. This is reflected through an extensive portfolio of evolving projects and proposals and an ever-growing number of successfully completed efforts. The latter have been delivering real benefits to Allies through the formula of doing things together instead of doing them alone.

Can the reform help?

With these fundamental considerations in mind, no amount of reform can lead to a secure answer on the Alliance's future. But it's not the same as saying that this reform is pointless. It can significantly help- and if NATO is able to improve on the basis, then the implementation of the Smart Defense could make the alliance better and stronger.

The Smart Defense mindset has started to take hold. NATO will continue to capitalize on the momentum gained over the last few years through implementation and

evolution of Smart Defense projects. With these principals as a guide the following are a number of concrete suggestions of reform. Some are already under consideration or development at NATO, while others have been tried and shelved: others may be a new area of effort. All are worthy of further exploration.

Firstly, arises the need to formally reexamine the 'Level of Ambition' and implement improvements into NATO's defense planning process. The gap between the assertion of NATO's level of ambition and declared force posture-and the reality of what NATO nations provide and the Alliance as a whole can project- has grown to such a point that it strains credulity. By having a serious and grounded debate about the reducing level of ambition, it may also be possible to insist more effectively declared Allied commitments be fully executed in practice- thus raising NATO's capability and credibility. Moreover, while defense planning process reforms has been agreed to, vigorous

implementations and above all delivery of promised capabilities, is essential to restoring credibility's to the defense planning process.

Secondly, the Alliance needs to focus on expanding the use of multinational consortia, to facilitate the acquisition of high-end capabilities. Also, it is crucial to establish formal collaboration between NATO and the European Defense Agency (EDA). While the essence of both NATO and EDA is the Defense casualties it is only natural for those similar organizations to combine their forces in order to magnify the success. A combination of both is better than isolation and they may be able to reduce the overlap in programs.

In addition we need to consolidate the NATO independent agencies and bring them under greater supervision by the North Atlantic Council and the Secretary General. This is where the greatest amount of the budgetary resources lies. Saving of the consolidation of the agencies and the sharing services should be reprogrammed into higher priority needs for NATO to conduct effective operations in the future and into enhancing NATO's capability. By using the agency consolidation we drive the necessary acquisition in order to achieve the reform. The current acquisition processes for NATO Security Investment Program (NSIP) capabilities and urgent operational requirements are not aligned and consume a great amount of time. This process should be fundamentally

overhauled and brought in line with the tempo of the current operations and the required transformation.

In this framework arises the need to expand NATO expert civilian staff capacities in the areas of cyber, energy terrorism, policing and development assistance. This would serve to increase NATO's own knowledge base, to help integrate these factors in NATO's operations and planning; and to ensure that NATO's is in a position to coordinate effectively with outside entities such as the United Nations, the European Union, World Health Organization and likewise. This also an open area for more active cooperation with the industry.

And last but not least, in fast paced environment, technology is the synonym of the development. As a matter of fact, the Alliance needs to pay more attention into upgrading the role of intelligence and communications, in order to strengthen a shared analytical basis for NATO decisions and actions, and to speed the process by which NATO observes and responds to developments in general.

As a conclusion, NATO faces a number of challenges today, not the least been the age of austerity for the transatlantic community which will, and already is putting immense pressure on defense budget. While reforming NATO is not a silver bullet for all the ails NATO, careful measures can put the Alliance on the sounder

footing and enabling it to work smarter in order to tackle emerging and dynamic threats to the transatlantic security in a fiscally constrained environment. As a matter of fact, it is crucial to mention that this article addresses the recent challenges that affect the Alliance today and by the day that it is published there may arise more new problems ahead.

NATO will continue to confront and standstill against all future challenges. Alongside the Alliance, NRDC-GR as a High Readiness Force Land (HRFL) HQ will continue to support NATO's vision by further promoting peace and security, by adjusting in any new challenges that arise in this multidimensional environment and by respecting the alliance's values.

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Western financial sanctions on Russia after the invasion of Ukraine: Effective or not?

Introduction

The sirens of war sounded in Europe as on the dawn of 24th of February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that he had ordered a "special military operation" in Ukraine, citing the "defence of the Russian-speaking people" of Donbas (which he recognized as independent 24 hours later). In his speech, the Russian President called for the recognition of Crimea as Russian territory, the "denazification" of the Ukrainian government and a "neutral status" for Kiev as a precondition for ending the invasion of Ukraine. Shortly afterwards, the Kremlin clarified that the Russian President called for "recognition of Russian sovereignty in Crimea, the achievement of demilitarization and denazification of the Ukrainian State and a guarantee of its neutral status" as a precondition for any settlement. This triggered out an outrage by the West, whose leaders, despite President Putin's warnings that any involvement of a third country in the field would lead to unprecedented consequences, did not hesitate to declare economic war on Russia by imposing severe economic sanctions.

Historical Framework

The Russo-Ukrainian war is an ongoing and protracted conflict between Russia and Ukraine dating back to February 2014 which escalated in February 2022 with Russia's military invasion of Ukraine. The conflict initially mainly focused on the status of Crimea and Donbas regions which are internationally recognized as parts of Ukraine. Since 2014, Russia had occupied the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces in eastern Ukraine and had begun to prepare the ground for their complete annexation in the future. In the spring of 2014, pro-Russian insurgents raided eastern Ukraine. This was followed by referendums on secession from Ukraine and the declaration of so-called "People's Republics" under Russian leadership. The Ukrainian government failed to suppress the uprising and with the end of hostilities, the "Minsk Peace Agreement" was signed, which effectively put the front line on hold, offering an opportunity for mediation and a diplomatic solution. However, in both provinces the "Russification" did not take long to begin, mainly through schools and education. The Russian currency was introduced and many industrial units were transferred to Russian territory. A pivotal point is Moscow's decision in 2019, to provide Russian passports to the population of the separatists territories. According to recent estimates, near 80,000 citizens of eastern Ukraine have acquired Russian citizenship. After all, this is the main argument that President Putin invokes today when referring to the protection of these "Russians" in order to recognize the "People's Republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk. Ukraine was unable to handle the issue legally, as it initially treated the separatists as "terrorist organizations" and the Donbas area as "occupied territories". What is worth pointing out is that the Crimean peninsula was annexed by the Russian Federation on March 2014 and has since been administered as two Russian federal

entities - the Republic of Crimea and the Federal City of Sevastopol. Their secession from Ukraine and the annexation by the Russian Federation may have been the starting point for the war currently taking place in Europe.

The West Lambasts Moscow

As mentioned above, despite the Russian President's stern and clear warnings and threats, there was close coordination between NATO and the European Union from the outset, followed by drastic decisions and a patchwork of unprecedented and relentless economic and other sanctions. From the very first moment, the western leaders did not hesitate to express their outrage over the invasion decision and to make their position clear, claiming that Russia, with its illegal military actions, is blatantly interfering with international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter and thus undermines European and global security and stability.

However, it is necessary to stress that the West had carried out a package of sanctions against Russia since the annexation of Crimea in 2014. In particular, Washington has banned US citizens from doing business with VTB, the second largest Russian bank, its subsidiary known as Bank of Moscow and the Russian Agriculture Bank, the bank that provides loans to farmers. In a word, the US has imposed sanctions on all major banks in which the Russian state holds more than 50% of the shares, except Sberbank. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance announced that the United Shipbuilding Corp, based in St Petersburg, had also been sanctioned. The European Union in turn, has decided to freeze the assets of four Russian businessmen personally linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the grounds that they benefited from the annexation of the Crimean peninsula or actively supported the destabilization of eastern Ukraine. At the same time, sanctions were imposed on 87 individuals, including

several members of the Russian National Security Council and other individuals and entities subject to travel restrictions and freezing of assets. The aim was to prevent investment in certain sectors in Crimea and Sevastopol, notably in the construction, transportation, telecommunications and energy sectors.

Economic Sanctions

This time (2022) however, the sanctions cannot be compared to those mentioned above. The West imposed even more harsh sanctions in order to change the Kremlin's decision to continue the war. Prioritizing the financial sector, the decision was to strike directly at the Central Bank of Russia, quickly banning all transactions with the Russian monetary institution and freezing its assets. Effectively, it became impossible to liquidate its assets. The Ruble instantly began a free-fall against the Dollar. An extremely powerful blow to the Russian financial system was the exclusion of the country's largest banks from the international interbank system SWIFT, a system that exchanges financial information on cross-border transactions taking place around the world at any time of the day. In other words, it is a global financial "artery" that allows the smooth and rapid transfer of money across borders. By extension, Russia's ability to operate globally is directly affected. In addition, restrictions were placed on the issuance of "golden passports" to Russian nationals. The Russian

"Oligarchs" will not be able to use their financial assets in European and American markets.

The US in turn, announced large sanctions on Russian public debt, cutting off the Russian government from Western funding. At the same time, the US Treasury has imposed sanctions of "total exclusion" on the Russian Direct Investment Fund. The list of sanctions also included personal sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces, Valery Gerasimov.

The United Kingdom followed the same path, freezing the assets not only of the aforementioned, but also of a number of Russian oligarchs, including the owner of Chelsea Football Club, Roman Abramovich, while additional sanctions were imposed on more than 100 individuals, entities and subsidiaries. The British Prime Minister called the Russian President's move a "full-scale invasion" and announced immediate sanctions against five Russian banks - Rossiya, IS Bank, General Bank, Promsvyazbank and Black Sea Bank - as well as against individuals Genadi Timchenko, Boris and Igor Rottenberg. Next came the freezing of all assets of Russian billionaires on British soil and a ban on their ability to enter the country. London announced that sanctions have been imposed on two defence industries and four defence officials in Belarus, due to the Country's role in facilitating the Russian invasion of Ukraine. One of the most important sanctions that Britain imposed on Russia concerned the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF). Under sanctions, the largest Russian bank, Sberbank, withdrew from the European market. Finally, London announced the suspension and prohibition of all export licenses for dual-use items to Russia, a decision that covers products that could have military use.

Uncertainties and international sanctions against Russia have led the rating agency Fitch Ratings to downgrade the Russian economy again. The international rating agency rated the country as " C " (from " B " previously), considering that the risk of Moscow going bankrupt is imminent due to the possibility of a default on its public debt. As a result, the sale of foreign currencies has been suspended for six months, the Ruble has fallen to a new historical low against foreign currencies, and the number of lenders showing confidence in Russia and willingness to enter into lending agreements at reasonable interest rates has decreased.

Moving to additional sanctions and focusing on Belarus, Westerners announced the exclusion of three Belarusian banks (Belagroprombank, Bank Dabrabyt and Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus) from the SWIFT banking system. They also banned transactions with the Central Bank of Belarus related to the management of reserves or assets and the provision of public funding for trade and investment in Belarus. The latest sanctions even included the export of maritime navigation technology to Russia, while cryptocurrency assets are also targeted. Shortly afterwards, the news that Goldman Sachs had pulled out of Russia, becoming the first major Wall Street bank to announce it after the invasion of Ukraine, exploded like a bombshell. The announcement came after the bank earlier disclosed a $650 million credit report in Russia.

Reaching the fourth round of

sanctions - following the adoption of the Economic Crime Bill - the EU expanded the list of entities involved in the attack on Ukraine and banned the export of luxury goods to Russia, as well as the export of steel. The UK in turn, listed elite people with assets worth 100 billion pounds ($130.63 billion). In addition, the UK withdrew all financial support for exports to Russia and Belarus, which means it will no longer provide new guarantees, loans or export insurance. Furthermore, it raised import duties by 35% and hit imported goods, such as vodka, fertilizers, metals and other raw materials, worth a total of £900m a year.

The fifth round of sanctions against Russia included economic measures to ban new investments in Russia, severe sanctions on two Russian financial institutions – Alfa Bank and Sberbank and sanctions on critical major state-owned enterprises. Meanwhile, the UK has imposed sanctions on Russia's largest bank, Sberbank, and committed to end all imports of Russian coal and oil by the end of 2022. On the 11th of April 2022, Europol, jointly with EU Member States, Eurojust and Frontex, launched Operation "Oscar" to support financial investigations by EU Member States targeting criminal assets owned by individuals and legal entities sanctioned in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Operation "Oscar" also aims to support criminal investigations by Member States in relation to the circumvention of EU-imposed trade and economic sanctions. Furthermore, Canada

targeted Russia's defence industry with its latest round of sanctions. Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly said the new measures imposed restrictions on 33 entities in the Russian defence sector.
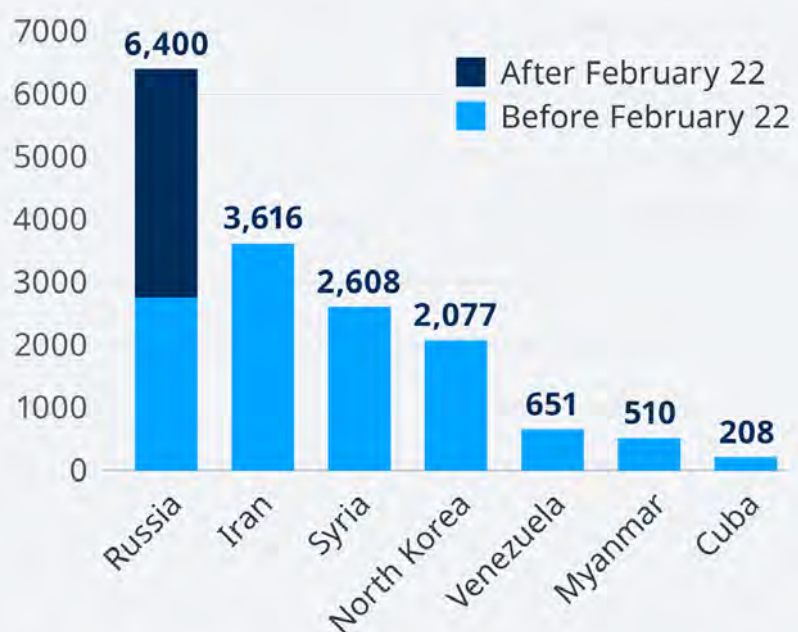
Full Spectrum of Sanctions Against Russia

Sanctions were also imposed in every other area apart from the economic sector, which nevertheless have economic impact. In particular, CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, has announced that it will not enter into new collaborations with Russian scientific

institutions, putting many scientific projects at risk. At the same time, the global credit card giants Visa and Mastercard, have announced a suspension of activity, while American Express, Prada, Puma, Zara, Samsung, Paypal, IKEA, as well as Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen etc., have also announced a similar suspension of activity and trade. Volvo, Daimler Truck, Harley-Davidson Inc, Ford Motor Co, BMW, Jaguar, Land Rover, Aston Martin and General Motors amongst others, have also announced a temporary suspension. On Monday April the 4th, Airbnb suspended operations in

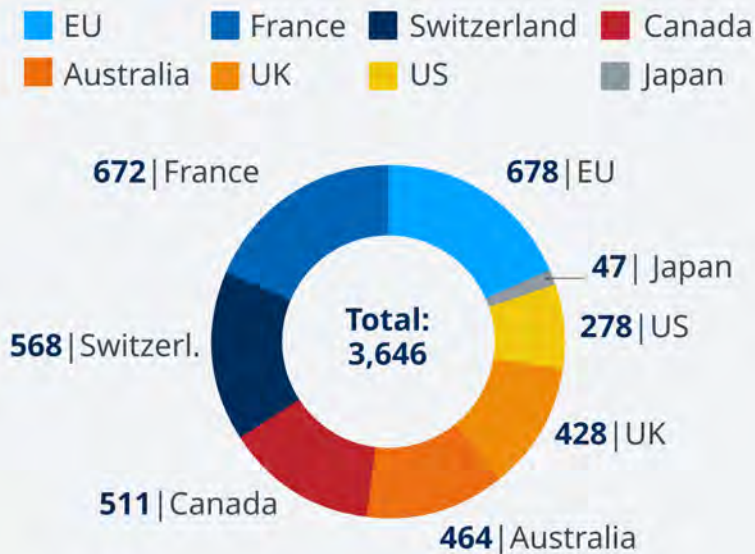

Russia is now the world's most sanctioned country

Number of sanctions

Russia 6,400 / Iran 3,616 / Syria 2,608 / North Korea 2,077 / Venezuela 651 / Myanmar 510 / Cuba 208

After February 22 / Before February 22

Source: castellum.AI | March 15

Who sanctioned Russia

Since February 22

EU **France** **Switzerland** **Canada**
Australia **UK** **US** **Japan**

672 | France   678 | EU
                 47 | Japan
568 | Switzerl.   278 | US
      Total: 3,646
                 428 | UK
511 | Canada
      464 | Australia

Russia and Belarus.

As for the media, the EU decided to ban the broadcasting of Russia's state media RT and Sputnik. In turn, Facebook and Youtube blocked their broadcasts, while Google has barred Russian state-funded media from making money through its platforms. Twitter blocked accounts and Spotify closed its office in Russia indefinitely. At a later time, the Biden Administration announced new sanctions aimed at major Russian technology companies and sanctions-evasion networks.

As it is already mentioned, sanctions were also imposed on individuals. Since 2014 and the annexation of Crimea, many Russian individuals have been the target of European and American sanctions. Western leaders expanded the list of these individuals, with 23 frontline

figures and 351 members of Duma, along with the addition of Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Prime Minister Mikhail Mysustin. For these individuals, there will be a ban on their travel to EU countries and an asset freeze in Europe. Shortly afterwards, another 160 Russian officials were added to the European Union's blacklist, including 14 oligarchs and prominent businessmen in the mining, pharmaceutical, telecommunications and digital technology sectors, all of which are a source of major revenue for Russia. On the 31st of March, the UK government issued further sanctions against Russian propagandists, state media outlets and military figures – including a man duped "the butcher of Mariupol". Meanwhile, they announced new additions of individuals to the UK's

sanctions list. On the fifth round of sanctions, incorporated sanctions on Russian government officials and their family members, including President Putin's adult children and relatives of Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

The transportation sector has also been strongly affected, with the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States banning Russian airplanes, further restricting the activities of the Russian airline Aeroflot, which had already been forced to cancel a large number of flights. More broadly, both the European Union and Canada have banned the export of aircrafts, parts and equipment from the aerospace industry to Russia. Maritime transport is also damaged, as the United Kingdom closed all its ports to Russian-flagged ships and ships chartered by Russians or Russian-owned vessels. There is a heavy price to pay in aviation as well, since Russia had orders for 62 Airbus and Boeing airplanes, the delivery of which was banned. Companies manufacturing components and providing maintenance and repair services for the existing fleet are subject to similar bans. Finally, in the context of technology, the United States and the United Kingdom announced restrictions on Russia's use of US technology in various sectors such as processors and microchips manufactured by Nvidia, Intel and Qualcomm.

The sports world also turned its back on Russia, imposing sanctions and banning it from all kinds of

competitions. FIFA and UEFA banned Russia's National Teams and clubs from international football and the Champions League final was moved from St Petersburg to Paris. The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) has suspended Russian athletes and officials until further notice, while Euroleague Basketball has provisionally excluded Russian teams (CSKA Moscow, Unics Kazan, Zenit St. Petersburg and Lokomotiv Kuban Krasnodar). Formula 1 has announced that there will be no GP in Russia this season. In tennis, it was decided that Russian and Belarusian players will continue to compete in international organizations, but no longer under their Nations' names or Flags. Finally, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) announced the exclusion of Russian and Belarusian athletes from the Winter Paralympic Games in Beijing.

The energy sector is maybe the one of greatest importance and of global concern. The US and UK have announced an embargo on Russian oil as part of the sanctions for the invasion of Ukraine. US President Joe Biden announced his decision that Russian oil would not be accepted in the US, in order to deal a strong blow to Putin's war machine, and made it clear that the embargo would also apply to gas, LNG and coal imports from Russia. Such a measure was not possible to be adopted by all EU members because of their dependence on Russian oil. The United Kingdom, which initially announced a "gradual" embargo until the end of 2022, has also moved in a similar direction. In particular, the UK

Energy Minister stated that imports of Russian oil would be ended by the end of 2022 in order to allow time for the market and businesses to find alternatives. However, UK will not be banning gas from Russia as the US has done. Meanwhile, BP is abandoning its stake in Russian oil giant Rosneft in an abrupt and costly end to three decades of operating in the energy-rich country, marking the most significant move yet by a Western company in response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. At the same time, Shell stopped buying Russian crude and said that it would phase out its involvement in all Russian hydrocarbons from oil to natural gas over Ukraine.

Russia's response to sanctions

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that he signed a decree of economic measures, in response to sanctions by "unfriendly countries". These measures are being taken in order to protect the national interests of Russia due to the "unfriendly and illegitimate actions" of the US, the UK and other countries, but also to international organizations that have joined them "aimed at illegally restricting or depriving the Russian Federation, its citizens and Russian legal entities of property rights."

It is worth mentioning that, few days ago, Moscow demanded foreign buyers pay for Russian gas in Roubles or else had their supplies cut, a move European capitals rejected and which Germany said amounted to "blackmail".

The new rules prohibited state authorities at all levels as well as organizations an individuals under Russia's jurisdiction from making transactions, including the conclusion of foreign trade contracts, with legal entities, individuals and enterprises under their control in relation to which economic measures are applied. Moreover, it banned the fulfillment of obligations to persons and entities under sanctions and financial transactions with them. Lastly, the decree also banned the export of raw materials or products mined or produced in Russia if their end users are sanctioned individuals or entitles.

The Impact of Sanctions

Indeed, these sanctions of historic scale that have been imposed due to Putin's war on Ukraine have been barraging the Russian economy measurably, leading to factory closures, job losses, a doubling of interest rates and a decline of the Ruble – all of which have been further exacerbated by rising inflation. Although, it is still too early to assess the full impacts of these sanctions, there has already been sharp downward pressure on the Russian financial markets and economy. Doubtlessly, there will be an elevated level of inflationary pressure worldwide triggered by Russian sanctions in general, but the magnitude of that depends on individual countries overall macroeconomic and fiscal conditions.

Meanwhile, lots of people consider that the sanctions are like a double-edged sword, while

they inflict pain on Russia but also impose costs on their imposers. The sanctions and the deepening conflict, by helping to raise global commodity and energy prices, translate into higher revenues for Moscow in spite of a significant decrease in its exports. And the higher international prices, by fueling inflation, mean political trouble at home for those imposing the sanctions. Besides, sanctions historically have worked better against small, vulnerable states than large or powerful ones.

To conclude, Western sanctions on Russia have been effective, while they stopped Vladimir Putin's preannounced military offensive into Ukraine in the summer of 2014. Moreover, sanctions have hit the Russian economy effectively. Since 2014, it has grown by an average of 0.3 percent per year, while the global average was 2.3 percent per year. They have slashed foreign credits and foreign direct investment and may have reduced Russia's economic growth by 2.5–3 percent a year, that is about $50 billion per year. The Russian economy is not likely to grow significantly again until the Kremlin has persuaded the West to ease the sanctions. Furthermore, the impact of sanctions will get worse over time, while the official figures are set to rise dramatically as the war continues and Western sanctions take a more severe toll on Russian civilians.

The convolution of NATO and the West will entrain long-term results.

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THE ARGONAUTS:
THE CHALLENGE OF COOPERATION

For well over three millennia, the story of Jason and the Argonauts' quest to retrieve the fabled Golden Fleece and bring it back to his homeland has been an enthralling story of grit, compassion, and revenge. It is a story full of characteristics typical for high adventures and endeavors, like the voyage to faraway lands, confrontation with monsters and hostile tribes, love, cunning plans and a hot pursuit all the way to the triumphant return. It was more than inevitable that this saga would become a source of inspiration for many generations and produce many works in any type of artistic expression.

Nevertheless, myths and reality are not separate or opposing instances. The purpose of any extraordinary (even supernatural)

pic.1: Jason sprayed the dragon with a herbal potion that Medea had crafted for him. The dragon fell asleep and Jason was able to seize the Golden Fleece.

narrative, in every culture, is not just to deliver a work of fiction to illusive audiences standing in awe. Rather, the primitive intention has always been to provide a model for human conduct, to find fundamental points about values and ways of relating to ourselves, to others and to the world. In this regard, all myths contain deep elements that remain alive and active even today.

The Argonauts saga is unique among the ancient myths in regard that it does not glorify a person but rather a team. Even in the classic epics of Iliad and Odyssey, with the myriad of characters involved, the focus is on individual heroes and their deeds, not to the organization or the band they belong to. The story of Jason and his companions is a tribute to the basic principles of teamwork, each one of them evolving and revealing itself through the flow of the narration. The principles that allow us to face the challenge of cooperation.

*"**Ye shall return here with the fleece but meanwhile, both going and returning, countless trials await you"**,* an Idmon's prophecy in Argonautica by Apollonius Rhodius clarifies that the story must be very challenging. Jason, hidden from his evil uncle Pelias, who had usurped his father's kingdom, returns to his homeland to reclaim the throne. But, upon his arrival in Iolcus, his uncle persuades him that, in order to prove
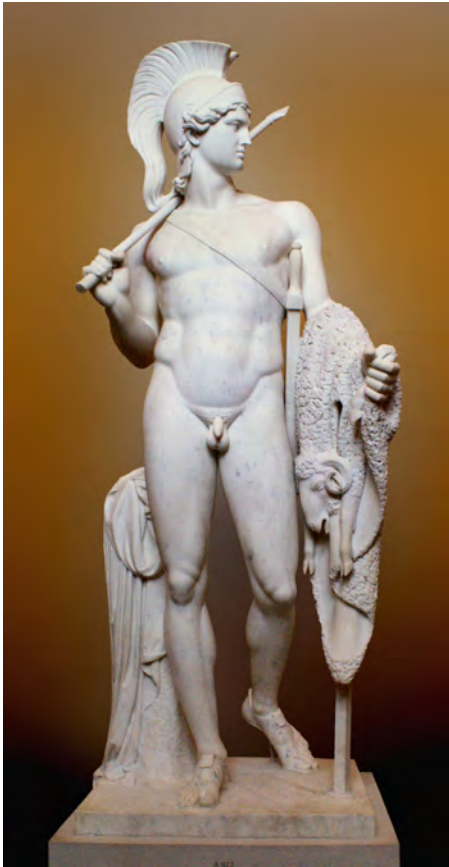

pic.2: Jason returns the Golden Fleece back to his homeland.

his worthiness, Jason must travel a perilous journey to the Black Sea and the land of Colchis, and retrieve the famous Golden Fleece. Jason, although knowing that this is a difficult -or even impossible- task, accepts the challenge with enthusiasm. This is exactly the first step into cooperation: the decision to do or not to do and the firm will to undertake a noble mission that deserves an equally noble team to implement this. It is from this state of mind that the energy, resilience and strength necessary to carry out the work will be mobilized.

Now, a new challenge unfolds: to find allies and assemble a team. To accomplish his mission, Jason receives help from the goddess Athena - the goddess of intelligence, logical thinking and strategy. The people he needs, he finds in heroes from various parts of Greece, who, inspired by the glory of the task, yearn

pic.3: Jason statue

to be part of the mission. For their journey to be accomplished, Athena guides the construction of a ship, the Argo, with a highly innovative technology for the time. No mission can be accomplished, no team to work as one, unless there is proper planning to involve of all kind of resources: personnel, time, materiel and procedures.

During the long journey to Colchis, the Argonauts face a multitude of challenging experiences against all kinds of peril, from most supernatural to sheer hostility, even the Gods' animosity itself. In every single case, the band of heroes manage to overcome them by simply employing the proper qualities of each hero, such as the flying Boreads matching successfully the harpies, or Orpheus subduing the Sirens threat with his ultimate mastery in music. Successful delegation of tasks, based on proper knowledge of each team member's qualities, skills, talents and strengths is the foundation of successful teamwork.

The ship arrives at its destination but, as would be expected, Aeetes, the king of Colchis, would not deliver the Golden Fleece easily and thus, he proposes two challenges, which Jason should accomplish without the help of the Argonauts. In this turning point, when everything seems lost, Jason receives the unexpected help from the king's daughter, Medea, who has fallen for him. Jason does not hesitate and displays a much-sought quality that has been praised as a quality of proper leaders: flexibility. Still focused on the mission, Jason identifies at a glimpse the opportunity given. He adjusts the plan, forges a proper alliance and makes Medea a part of it and finally gets grasp of the ultimate goal – the Fleece.

Overcoming the fury of King Aeetes over the loss of the sacred object and the betrayal of his daughter, the Argonauts manage to escape back to Greece with their prized object. The journey may have begun with the goal to bring the supreme object back, but returning home becomes now something primordial. Presenting, showing the community what has been won, is not only the crowning of the mission but also serves the higher concept of sharing. It is this sharing that allowed seafaring people like the Greeks to expand their knowledge on new fascinating places, new sea routes and interesting people, and at the same time, to take advantage of the experience against the perils and hazards associated with endeavors to these destinations.

Praised, eagerly pursued by many, from ancient philosophers and theoreticians to modern business and

pic.4: Argo

pic.5: Media falls in love with Jason, thanks to Eros, the God of love.

administration gurus, teamwork has never ceased to be considered a Holy Grail for successfully accomplishing set goals and missions. Nevertheless, as charming as may be considered, implementation is hard to achieve, the main reason being the inherent need of everyone to stand out amidst the crowd. In the case of military operations, there is no space for such a luxury. The very essence of the entity of a military force lies in

employing all these principles that are characteristics of teamwork: fixation on the set goal, proper manipulation of all available resources, careful planning, faith in skills and individual qualities of the members of the team, flexibility and adaptation against unpredictable events and, finally, sharing the gained experience and the lessons learned with affiliated organizations.

Modern age has risen too complex for leaders to act on their individual thoughts, vision and perspective. The multitude of scientific, social and technological disciplines that can be accounted around us, renders the existence of respective subject matter experts a necessity. Expecting to enjoy success without the employment of an appropriately constituted team, is not only naïve but can as well prove

extremely dangerous for all the organization involved.

So, the next time that someone would be interested or tasked with a compelling mission that seems hard enough, it would be merely wise to remember the story of Jason and the band of heroes besides him. The key to face the Harpies, the Clashing Rocks, the Dragon or the Talos of modern age is to identify the teamwork essence behind the myth and embrace it. Then, engagement to any collective journey would be a lot more easier and Colchis will not anymore look that formidable to those who are tasked to reach it.

We conclude our article with our verified hypothesis. Yes, the myth of the Argonauts' journey can provide us with clues as to the logical, ethical and aesthetic aspects associated with teamwork and the phenomenon of collaboration. In our analysis, we weave relations between the myth of Jason and the Argonauts and what we call the principles of collective journey.

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C/SGT VI Class (GRC MSCSO)
Military School of
Combat Support Officers

pic.4: A scene from a Greek red-figure vase depicting the death of Talos, the iron automaton which protected Crete.

HELLENIC MANUAL OF THE LAW OF ARMED CONFLICTS

Manual that presents in an intelligible form the main rules of LOAC and codifies the State's commitments, as these emanate from its obligations according to customary and conventional International Law.

The Manual contributes to the proper dissemination of LOAC among military personnel, enhancing their compliance with the obligations derived from the Conventions. To that, it is also fulfilled the relevant obligation, as it is enshrined in article 83 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. At the same time, it constitutes a useful tool for the academic community and anyone interested in that field of International Law familiarizing them with the specificities that govern the extraordinary situation of the war.

The Hellenic Manual of the Law of Armed Conflicts (LOAC) has been published on 10th May 2022 being at the disposal of the Hellenic Armed Forces personnel and accessible to the general public through a private Publication Agency. The Manual that has been written by HQs NRDC-GR Legal Team, specifically LtC Vasileios Karatzias, Maj Vasileios Zalidis and Cpt Alexandros Lioutas, is under the Hellenic National Defense General Staff (HNDGS) approval for use by the Hellenic Armed Forces. In this context, it has been prefaced by Hellenic Chief of Defense, General Konstantinos Floros. Its main purpose is to present in a legally justified and intuitive way the core principles and rules of this Branch of International Law.

Unfortunately, this Manual comes to the fore in the middle of unpleasant moments for Europe, due to the current international armed conflict that takes place in its boundaries almost 80 years after WW II. The idea behind this project was to produce a complete, concrete and modern

A draft of the Manual had already been launched on 15th December 2021 in an event that was co-hosted by the Corps of Legal Advisors/ HNDGS and HQs NRDC-GR at the War Museum in Athens. During this event the Manual was launched,

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The vision of the writing team is that this Manual will contribute to the planning and execution of a wide range of military operations of the Hellenic Armed Forces by setting out the international legal context. It has been drafted by legal advisors who tried to combine their academic background in the law, their military status, their long-lasting cooperation with the domestic and international legal community as well as their operational experience in the Office of LEGAD of HQs NRDC-GR in order to have in place a Manual that will address the concerns of the military commander and secure the proper and effective implementation of LOAC in its natural space, the operational environment, being used as a practical training guide.

Finally, the authors' intent is for this this manual to be translated in English in due time so that its content can be communicated to a wider audience.

among others, by Mr. Andres Munoz Mosquera, Director of the Legal Office at NATO Allied Command Operations in Mons, Col Mark Dakers, Director of the Military Department at International Institute of Humanitarian Law in Sanremo, Mrs Monica Zanarelli, the Head of the ICRC in Greece as well as by specialized representatives of the academic community of Greece. In this event emerged very clearly that the Manual would have a great value for the Hellenic Armed Forces, while broadening the understanding of this Branch of the Law. Concerning Manual's structure, it consists of three (3) parts. In the first part, the analysis of the LOAC rules takes place through three extensive subject modules. The aim of the writing team is to give legally justified and realistic answers in pivotal points covering topics

such as: the means and methods of warfare, the targeting process, the protection of civilians, of POWs, of the cultural property and of the environment, air and naval warfare, the participation in hostilities and the main actors, the ROEs, responsibility issues and the role of legal advisor in the planning and execution of military operations. In its second part, a table of Conventions, Protocols and other texts of international law is listed accompanied with ratification and content details, while the third part, consists of the full text of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the three Additional Protocols to them in Greek language, as they were transferred in the domestic legal order. The intention behind this is to help the reader via the quick access to the prototype text.

NRDC-GR CHANGE OF COMMAND

On Thursday the 17th of March 2022, at the premises of "Pedion Areos" Camp in Thessaloniki, Lieutenant General (GRC A) Anastasios SPANOS, after one year of significant accomplishments, handed over the Command of C' Army Corps & NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR) , to Lieutenant General (GRC A) Sotirios KOSTAKOGLOU.

The ceremony was attended by the Deputy Minister of Interior (Sector of Macedonia and Thrace) Mr. Stavros KALAFATIS, the Chief of the Hellenic Army General Staff, Lt Gen Charalampos LALOUSIS, the Commander of 1st Hellenic Army, Lt Gen Aggelos CHOUDELOUDIS and retired NRDC-GR Commanders, as well as the religious, political and military authorities of the city of Thessaloniki and other distinguished visitors.

Lt Gen Anastasios SPANOS, during his farewell speech highlighted his appreciation and honor for the hard work of the personnel and the achievements of the HQ. The new Commander of C' Corps/NRDC-GR HQ, Lt Gen Sotirios KOSTAKOGLOU, in his Order of the Day, expressed his pride and gratitude for his assignment and his appreciation for the achievements of his predecessor.

NRDC-GR Herald

LAND DOMAIN LOGISTIC CONFERENCE "AMALTHEIA 2022"

On Tuesday the 10th and Wednesday the 11th of May 2022, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR) hosted in its premises the "LAND DOMAIN LOGISTICS CONFERENCE-AMALTHEIA 2022" (LDLC-A 22) which combined the LANDCOM's Land Domain Logistics Conference (LDLC), with the NRDC-GR's annual AMALTHEIA seminar, with speakers and participants from NATO Command Structure (NCS) HQs and NATO Force Structure (NFS) HQs.

At the begging of the event, the NRDC-GR Commander, Lieutenant General Sotirios KOSTAKOGLOU, welcomed all the participants, highlighted the importance of the seminar constituted a great opportunity for all to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and discuss issues related to land logistics, sharing information and reinforcing the Joint Logistics Network.

The aim of the "LDLC-A 22" was to improve the knowledge, interoperability and communication within the NATO Logistics Community, taking into account the NRDC-GR's role as Multi – Corps Land Component Command (MC LCC). Also, it was focused on gaining and setting a "MC-LCC support" common understanding, from Strategic to Tactical level and conducting vignette-led discussions, in order to clarify and de-conflict key aspects of operating,

in the logistic domain as MC-LCC in a Major Joint Operation Plus (MJO +).

The event focused on the Logistic Challenges in Complex High Intensity Operations and the participants had the opportunity to understand and discuss, apart from the aforementioned, topics about Stockpiling, Theatre Logistics and Tactical Implications.

"MACHAON" Military Medical Seminar 2022

On Wednesday the 18th and Thursday the 19th of May 2022, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR), conducted the "MACHAON" Military Medical Seminar 2022. This 2-day seminar, was focused on Medical planning and Support Major Joint Operations +, Military Medical Ethics and Pandemic Management.

The event was organized by GMED and chaired by NRDC-GR/ DCOS SPT, who underlined the importance of this seminar, which is broading the medical knowledge, sharing best practices and enhancing capabilities, in order to tackle critical challenges that Medical Advisors need to address.

The seminar aimed to serve as a useful platform for medical advisors, planners, experts and professionals for sharing experiences, views and good practices, enhancing their capacities and building a common understanding on critical military medical subjects, with regard to the planning of military large scale operations.

The participation to the seminar included distinguished briefers from the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence (UK MOD), King's College London and other NATO entities, coming from the Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Brunssum, Allied Land Command (LANDCOM), NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Spain

(NRDC-ESP), NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Italy (NRDC-ITA), Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE), Joint Logistic Support Group Brunssum (JLSG BS), Hellenic Air Force General Staff (HAFGS), Romanian Land Forces HQ, Multinational Division South – East (MND-SE), NATO Force Integration Unit Hungary (NFIU HUN), 424 Military Hospital of Thessaloniki (MHTH) and 3rd Veterinary Hospital (3rd VH).

NRDC-GR VISIT ROUPEL FORTIFICATION

On Tuesday the 24th of May 2022, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR), organized a daily visit for its staff and their families to ROUPEL fortifications, at the northern border of Greece, one of the most historical and significant military installations in the country. The ROUPEL Fortress was defended heroically by the Hellenic Army during the WWII against the Axis invasion. The guided tour of the Fort, also included an interesting visit to the war museum, located in the area of the monument.

STOCKPILE PLANNING COMMITTEE (SPC) MEETING I/2022

From Tuesday the 31st of May until Thursday the 2nd of June, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Greece (NRDC-GR) hosted the NATO Stockpile Planning Committee (SPC) Meeting 1/2022, at the premises of "PEDION AREOS" camp, in Thessaloniki.

The SPC is an Allied Command Transformation (ACT) entity, which is in charge of promoting effective stockpile across NATO, conveying advice and inputs from Nations for the purpose of NATO Defense Planning Process (NDPP), bridging the National and the NATO strategic levels. The meeting was organized and chaired by the ACT Staff Element Europe.

National delegations from member states, representatives from NATO HQ, the International Staff (IS), the International Military Staff (IMS), Allied Command Operations (ACO), the United States European Command, the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) and the NATO Communications and information Agency (NCIA) have contributed with selected logistic topics at their level, respectively.

NRDC-GR/AOCC IKAROS SEMINAR I/2022

On the 22nd and 23rd of June 2022, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece/ Air Operations Coordination Centre (NRDC-GR/ AOCC) conducted the "IKAROS I/2022" Seminar.

The aim of the seminar was to enhance the knowledge of NRDC-GR Staff on matters related to air domain. The seminar focused on communicating the accumulated experience of Air Land Integration (ALI) challenges, in the context of NATO Multi-Corps Land Component Command (MC-LCC).

The seminar was organized in close cooperation with NRDC-GR Fires and Targeting, G2, G3 and LEGAD Branches.

Valuable interaction, exchange of ideas among participants and sharing of experiences, resulted in a successful and productive outcome.

Statue of
Alexander the Great
King of the Ancient Greek Kingdom of Macedonians