



# NRDC-GR HERALD

THE MAGAZINE OF NATO RAPID DEPLOYABLE CORPS-GREECE



20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY EDITION



# 20 years

of committed readiness

## NRDC-GR 2004-2024

### CAPABLE NOW - READY FOR TOMORROW





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20 Years NRDC-GR

## EDITORIAL

*Dear readers,*

*In 2024, NRDC-GR celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since its establishment. A milestone year for a Headquarters playing a significant role within the Alliance, in a particular and complex geographic region.*

*Through our magazine, we will emphasize the importance of the Headquarters and its journey to date. Distinguished individuals, both within and outside the NATO structure, will share their insights. The magazine has consistently provided and will continue to offer the opportunity for accomplished individuals, from various professional fields within and beyond NATO, to contribute. This remains a core priority that sets us apart.*

*Public Affairs Office  
NRDC-GR*

#### **Disclaimer:**

*The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official opinions of NRDC-GR or NATO.*





## Two Decades of Excellence

As we mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official establishment of NRDC-GR, we reflect on two decades of dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to the principles that underpin our Alliance. This milestone is not just a testament to the passage of time, but a celebration of our collective achievements and the enduring spirit of cooperation and solidarity that defines NATO.

Twenty years ago, the establishment of NRDC-GR was a strategic move to enhance Alliance's operational capabilities, strengthen its response to emerging security challenges and secure, even more, its South – Eastern Flank. For Greece as also a framework nation, it was a chance to empower its role within the Alliance and continue to act as a pillar of stability and security in the South-East edge of SACEUR's AOR. Since its establishment in 2004, NRDC-GR has been an indispensable part of the Alliance's efforts to adapt to new threats and redefine its security priorities.

Throughout its 20 year history, NRDC-GR and its personnel have been at the forefront of numerous

exercises and evaluations so as to be able to conduct combined and joint land centric operations across the operational spectrum, for Cooperative Security (Article 3), Crisis Response (Non-Article 5) or Collective Defence (Article 5) Operations. NRDC-GR, since its inception to date has undertaken a number of roles and missions following successful evaluations by either national or NATO authorities. NRDC-GR milestone roles include NATO Response Force (NRF) Land Component Command (LCC) mission in 2012, Joint Headquarters (JHQ) role in 2018; and assuming the role of MCLCC for over a three year period. As of July 2015, NRDC-GR is considered a High-Readiness Force (HRF).

The world as our generation has known is changing. Nowadays, we are facing the most fragile and rapidly changing environment since the end of cold war. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine, because of the Russian invasion and the escalation of violence in the Middle East, reminds us that we should not take anything for granted, moreover, highlighted collective defence against a peer adversary as a necessity for the Alliance. As the global security environment continues to evolve, with new and complex threats, the Alliance comes up against a wide range of challenges among conventional and asymmetric threats on the field. Cybersecurity, hybrid warfare, and the strategic implications of technological advancements are just a few of the challenges that lie ahead. NRDC-GR is committed to stay ahead of these challenges, by adapting its tactics and capabilities. Our focus will continue to be centered and dedicated to plan proactively, act effectively and be prepared to respond at short notice under demanding and

rapidly changing conditions, while being able to fulfill our mission on time and in place.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NRDC-GR serves also as an opportunity to envision the future. NRDC-GR, as a key factor of peace intends to increase NATO's strong presence in Balkans and South –East edge of Europe. As a High Readiness War Fighting Corps with joint capabilities, we'll seize the opportunity to develop an innovative, multi-speed and multi-scale approach to contingency engagement, by enhancing the HQ capability to command and control effectively up to 5 combat formations and coordinate with Tactical Air and Maritime Ops, utilizing its AOCC, MOCC, and JAGIC assets. Moreover, we will remain committed to continue upholding the values that have guided us for the past two decades in order to contribute by building a safer and more secure world for future generations.

At the heart of our success are the dedicated men and women who served at NRDC-GR all these years. Each and every one of us must express our sincere appreciation and respect to our predecessors. Their professionalism, expertise, and unwavering commitment to HQ mission, laid the foundation for our achievements. As we celebrate this milestone, we honor their contributions and recognize the sacrifices they and their families have made in the service of peace and security.

Happy 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary NRDC-GR! Here's to many more years of excellence and service.

Athanasios GARINIS  
Lieutenant General (GRC A)

# NRDC-GR HQ: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF STRATEGIC IMPACT AND FUTURE-READY REFORMS



**Nikolaos DENDIAS**

*Minister of National Defence,  
Hellenic Republic*

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the official establishment of NRDC-GR HQ. Since then, through determined and steadfast preparations and work, it has become a robust and critical factor for the Alliance, representing our country.

Nowadays, facing the most fragile and rapidly changing security environment since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance is dealing with a wide range of challenges among conventional and asymmetric threats in the field.

Indeed, the ongoing conflict as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, in combination with the unprecedented and current escalation of violence in the Middle East, has a significant impact on peace and stability in our neighborhood.

NRDC-GR, located strategically in the southeast edge of Europe, has and will continue to play a key role within the Alliance in this particular and complex geographic region.

Greece, being a NATO member since 1952 has actively contributed to the evolution of the Alliance, and the establishment of NRDC-GR HQ was a milestone that proved its significance for Greece as an ally and as a pillar of stability in our volatile region.

The current conflicts in our region and the reemergence of revisionism, no matter where it comes from, have made it clear that the Greek Armed Forces need to be reformed, evolved and strengthened in order to continue to safeguard Greece's sovereignty and independence so that Greece will continue to act as a pillar of peace and stability in our neighborhood and a valuable member for the NATO Alliance.

To this end we have launched one of the biggest reforms ever performed in the Greek Armed Forces, the so-called "Agenda 2030," aiming to create a better equipped, flexible and modern armed forces capable of adjusting to the fluid and complex new battle domain.

Drawing from our NATO allies' experience as well as other nations,

and from the lessons learned from the conflict in Ukraine, we firstly aim to revolutionize the training of our personnel, active and reserve, and create the civilian – soldier who will be trained, equipped and ready to fight if the need arises.

Secondly, we will create a new defense and innovation ecosystem where, in close cooperation with universities, think-tanks and private companies, we aim to design and manufacture new systems, fitted to the needs of the Greek Armed Forces and our Allies. These systems based on new and emerging technologies will be capable of protecting our borders and presenting an even stronger deterrent to any threat.

These actions, alongside the procurement of new weapons systems for our Armed Forces and the experience already gained from our participation in NATO and EU Missions in the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and elsewhere, will further enhance their fighting capabilities and help Greece remain a respected asset within the NATO Alliance.

## TWO DECADES OF NRDC-GR: HONORING EXCELLENCE, COMMITMENT, AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY



**Dimitrios CHOUPIS**

*Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff*

In light of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Greece, I avail myself of the opportunity to commend the HQ upon its remarkable progress and course of devotion to excellence. As of 2004 to its present state, NRDC-GR constitutes a bright example of Greece's steadfast commitment to international peace and stability, as well as its adherence to the provisions of international law.

The establishment of NRDC-GR dates back to the 2002 Prague Summit Declaration, when NATO leaders showcased their vision for a technologically advanced and agile NATO Response Force (NRF). Greece at the time agreed to the creation of an HQ in Thessaloniki, thus paving the way for NRDC-GR's subsequent establishment.

The HQ underwent numerous and strict evaluations, including the

Interim Operational Capability (IOC) and Final Operational Capability (FOC) exercises held in 2004 and 2005. The said evaluations acknowledged NRDC-GR as a Low Readiness Deployable HQ, facilitating its integration into the NATO Force Structure.

NRDC-GR has so far achieved significant milestones and demonstrated outstanding operational excellence. Exercises like the 2008 CREVAL have attested to the HQ's combat readiness.

NRDC-GR later on successfully completed NRF Certification exercises, confirming its readiness to assume the role of a Land Component Command (LCC) for NRF missions, and managed to stand out in 2012 by becoming the first HQ to serve in standby readiness for NRF for an entire year. Through detailed planning and strict evaluations, the HQ achieved its objective for excellence, by being designated as NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Greece.

NRDC-GR's presence has a deep and undoubted impact on the economic development, infrastructure, and cultural progress of the city of Thessaloniki, where it has greatly encouraged economic growth, foreign investment, and Greece's international relations.



On its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, NRDC-GR proudly stands ready to face any arising challenge. Endowed with a legacy for excellence and a deep commitment to the protection of international peace and stability, NRDC-GR never fails to adapt, innovate, and lead within the diverse and multinational NATO ecosystem.

I would like to congratulate all the NRDC-GR Command and personnel for their dedication and professionalism. I am confident that the HQ has many years of service to offer both to Greece and to the Alliance as a whole.

## Special Guests

# NRDC-GR AT 20: A COMMANDER'S REFLECTION ON TWO DECADES OF EXCELLENCE



**Darryl A. WILLIAMS**  
General Commander,  
Allied Land Command

As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Greece (NRDC-GR), it is not merely an acknowledgment of time passed, but a profound reflection on the enduring strength, adaptability, and pivotal role played by this accomplished headquarters within the NATO Alliance. As the Commander of Allied Land Command, I am honored to share my reflections on NRDC-GR's journey and its invaluable contributions to our collective security.

### Navigating the Complex Security Terrain

In an era marked by dynamic security challenges, NRDC-GR has been a stalwart partner in our commitment to addressing evolving threats. From regional tensions to

global crises, the headquarters has demonstrated an unparalleled ability to navigate the intricate landscape of modern security.

### Strategic Achievements: A Testament to Excellence

NRDC-GR's legacy is etched with triumphs that have fortified our collective defense. Notable among these is the adept management of Exercise Trident Juncture in 2018, a showcase of the headquarters' ability to orchestrate joint operations seamlessly. Additionally, the incorporation of cutting-edge technologies, exemplified in Exercise Steadfast Cobalt, has positioned NRDC-GR as a pioneer in modern military practices.

### Catalyst for Unity: A Commander's Perspective

Beyond its operational prowess, NRDC-GR holds a special place as a catalyst for unity among NATO member nations. As a commander, witnessing the shared commitment and camaraderie fostered by this headquarters has been both inspiring and instrumental in reinforcing the strength of our Alliance.

### Lessons Learned and Future Commitments

On this milestone anniversary, it

is essential to not only celebrate past achievements but to draw lessons that will shape our future endeavors. NRDC-GR's proven adaptability and resilience make it a linchpin in our collective defense strategy. Looking ahead, the headquarters will continue to play a pivotal role in addressing emerging threats and maintaining the integrity of NATO's land domain capabilities.

### A Toast to Two Decades of Excellence

As we raise our glasses to NRDC-GR's 20 years of unwavering service, let us not only celebrate the achievements but also honor the dedication, collaboration, and unwavering commitment of all those who have contributed to its success. May NRDC-GR's legacy inspire future generations within the Alliance, as we continue to stand united in the face of uncertainty, fortified by the indomitable spirit that defines NATO.

In closing, here's to NRDC-GR - a beacon of excellence, a symbol of unity, and an integral part of NATO's enduring commitment to global peace and security.

### *For the Soldier!*

## NRDC-GR 2004-2024: 20 YEARS CONTRIBUTION TO GREECE AND NATO

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR) since its official establishment back in August 2004.

A 20-year period marked by significant achievements both for the operational capability of the Hellenic Armed Forces and for NATO's mission to deter any use of force or aggression and to establish freedom and peace throughout the world.

Considering the above mission, NATO has taken initiatives such as the establishment of NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps to ensure the collective defence of its member states.

NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps are High Readiness Force Headquarters, which can be quickly dispatched to lead NATO troops on missions within or beyond the territory of NATO member states.

The Rapid Deployable Corps can be deployed for a wide range of missions: from disaster management and peace support to counter-terrorism and high-intensity war fighting. They can command and control forces from the size of a brigade numbering thousands of troops up to a corps of tens of thousands. There are currently nine NATO Rapid Deployable Corps, which



are each capable of commanding up to 60,000 soldiers.

The general requirement for High Readiness Force Headquarters is to be ready to deploy its first elements within ten days and the entire force within two months.

The corps participates in the NATO Response Force (NRF) - a highly ready and technologically advanced force made up of land, air, sea, and Special Operations Forces components that can be deployed at short notice to wherever needed.

Greece recognizing the importance of NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps both for the operational capability of its armed forces and its geopolitical interests and the strengthening of

its position within NATO since early 2000 asked to join the NATO High Readiness Forces project.

In this context, following the NATO Military Committee (MC) in November 2000, the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS) decided to transform and offer the C' Corps to NATO as a candidate Deployable Land HQ at Lower Readiness (NDC - GR HQ).

The 1<sup>st</sup> evaluation of the headquarters scheduled for December 2003 aimed at the initial or interim operational capability of the headquarters. In the spring of 2004, Greece received the first document from the Alliance certifying the successful evaluation of the IOC and this marked the official establishment

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of the headquarters.

By the decision of the North Atlantic Council on 30 August 2004, NDCGR HQ was activated as an International Military Headquarters and granted international status effective on 31 August 2004.

In June 2005 the Greek HQ was successfully certified in the Full Operational Capability (FOC) and declared as Low Readiness Deployable HQ after an evaluation that was carried out in the context of the GORDIAN KNOT-2005 exercise. In this frame, the exercise was organized based on a scenario that served the requirements of the Evaluation Team and allowed all criteria to be examined. Through this process, Greece had to prove that the headquarters had the staff capability to organize and conduct operations, and also had the means and materials needed to deploy and operate in any kind of operational environment and with the ability to remain self-sufficient there for six months.

The successes of the Greek Headquarters continued in the following years as in 2008 it was recognized Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) after the evaluation in Exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 2008".

During 2012 NDC - GR HQ successfully fulfilled its commitment of being the Land Component Command of NRF 2012 and conducted the entire foreseen stand-by period readiness events and

exercises scheduled for NRF in an excellent manner.

Furthermore, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2012, the Hellenic Republic offered NDC-GR HQ as a High Readiness Force Headquarters (NRDC - GR HQ), an offer that was accepted by SACEUR on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2012.

In June 2015 as a result of an intense NATO Combat Readiness Evaluation, NRDC - GREECE HQ was declared as a High Readiness Force Headquarters after a successful evaluation which was carried out in the context of the GORDIAN KNOT/TRIDENT 15 exercise. Under this prism, the exercise was scheduled to be conducted with NDC-GR performing as one of 3 Corps size HQs fully deployed in a high-density war fighting scenario under LANDCOM as LCC in a NATO Joint Exercise directed by JFCBS in Joint level. The excellent performance and execution of "GORDIAN KNOT 15" led the NATO Evaluation Team and LANDCOM Commander to propose to the NATO Authorities to declare the HQ as NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – NRDC- GR that was accepted almost 11 years after the initial acceptance by NATO Military Committee of the HQ as Low Readiness.

During 2018 NRDC-GR HQ had another successful evaluation in the TRIDENT JAGUAR 2018 NATO exercise as NATO Joint Task Force HQ and in 2019 successfully fulfilled its commitment of being the Joint

Task Forces Headquarters.

Last but not least, NRDC-GR HQ from 18 December 2021 and after the successful conduct of Exercise STEADFAST LEDA - 21 (STLE-21), has transitioned to "Full Operational Capability" (FOC) status as a Multi Corps Land Component Command (MC LCC), able to assume command of up to 5 Army Corps (AC) level Land Component Formations.

In addition to the above achievements, it is worth focusing on the contribution but also the particularly important role of NRDC-GR for Greece and NATO.

The NRDC-GR plays a central role in NATO's ongoing operations and possess a broad spectrum of capabilities.

It has to demonstrate many remarkable capabilities in the domains of planning, logistics, administration, and command and control and it is capable of meeting the exacting challenges of a rapid deployment into various operational environments.

In order to preserve the peace, security and territorial integrity of Alliance member states throughout NATO's Area of Responsibility (AOR) and beyond, in today's dynamic and complex security environment, NRDC-GR has the ability to plan and conduct military operations as Corps, Land Component Command or Joint Task Force HQ and to operate throughout the entire spectrum of NATO missions, ranging from low-



intensity warfare to high-intensity warfare, in any physical environment.

Moreover, NRDC-GR is a structured, flexible, and credible organization that is an essential element of regional stability in the Balkans as well as it consists of a cornerstone for NATO in the whole region (Balkans, Black Sea, and South Eastern Mediterranean).

It is based in Thessaloniki which has a very important geostrategic position in the region and the headquarters of the C' Army Corps and the headquarters of the Hellenic Army Support Division are also based.

Taking into consideration the fact that Thessaloniki is the biggest port in the Balkans and has excellent facilities and transportation capabilities (modern road network, railway, Airport, 424 General Military Hospital etc.), NRDC-GR can play a decisive role as a NATO logistical hub.

Specifically, it can support all classes of equipment and services like accommodation, transportation, refueling, staging, recovery and force protection.

In conclusion, Greece via NRDC-GR actively participates in NATO's strategic and operational planning, and simultaneously it supports its military transformation (military transformation consists of the basis for improving operational readiness and effectiveness of NATO forces, and contributes to the conversion

of NATO from an Alliance in the narrow sense into a Global Security Organization), in particular as regards its safeguarding effectiveness of missions outside the region.

Moreover, NRDC-GR plays a key role in the effort of NATO to integrate strategically and operationally the countries of the Western Balkans into the Alliance.

On the other side, NRDC-GR offers many benefits and advantages to HQ staff and totally to Hellenic Armed Forces.

The members of this staff have the opportunity to work in a multinational environment and to acquire experiences from their cooperation with personnel from Nations with different cultures and military backgrounds.

Moreover, they can be familiar with NATO procedures in their domains as well as gain experiences in collaborations with the allied personnel, and officers from the other branches of the Hellenic Armed Forces to acquire a wide range of knowledge and to incorporate new strategies and tactics which applied in NATO environment, into national procedures.

Moreover, NRDC-GR deals with the development of new doctrines and best practices in the field of Defense and Security, supports the interoperability in capabilities, procedures, and methods between NATO forces, and contributes to improving their military unity and

cooperation which is the operational basis of NATO.

Furthermore, the HQ is the appropriate tool for demonstrating the capabilities of the Hellenic Armed Forces in the framework of NATO. For example, it has succeeded in promoting a new way of thinking and operating both in its staff and the personnel of other Allies which highlights the concept: "We need to be and to think joint, and then at the same time to plan and execute at the operational and the tactical level".

In addition, NRDC-GR is a useful tool of Military Diplomacy and helps both Greece and the Alliance shape relations between the allied powers in Europe, enhancing stability in the Balkans and beyond. In particular, it acts as a Greek and NATO representative which strives to prevent conflicts and ensure peace and stability, suppress tensions, and combat the causes that lead to conflict situations. Via its tasks tries to build and enhance the relations between the countries of the broad region, exchange necessary and useful information with key stakeholders, and promote the values and narrative of NATO for the collective defense of all its member states and the safety and security of their citizens.

Notably, mention should be made to the contribution of the NRDC-GR to the local economy of Thessaloniki and the synergies with the local community (Universities, etc.).

In this frame, NRDC-GR Internship

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Program (NIP) is a prominent initiative because enhances the engagement of HQ with the local community and provides university students and graduates with the opportunity to collaborate with the HQ on a non-paid voluntary basis and to be familiarized with specific areas (Informatics /System Design, Business Administration /Finance and Contracting, International Law, International Studies/Relations, Communication /Media /Journalism, Strategic Studies, Medical Studies) aiming to improve their educational qualifications.

The benefits for Greece from the operation of NRDC-GR are obvious. It is an important pillar of the Hellenic Armed Forces and for National Defense and Security.

Except for the operational benefits and the acquisition of knowledge in critical fields of defence and security, NRDC-GR consists of a pole of attraction for specialized military personnel, practitioners, and scientists, thus increasing the country's extroversion at the international level through participation and organization of multinational military tasks or seminars, training, and exercises related to the operation of the HQ.

It is a useful tool of policy that upgrades the role and influence of Greece both in the environment of NATO and in the wider region (Balkans, Black Sea, and South Eastern Mediterranean). Specifically, Greece gains great added value

because the country's footprint in Defense and Security will be increased both in terms of the wider region and in terms of the country's status as a NATO Member State.

In addition, via HQ, Greece projects its military power and deterrence ability and presents its national strategy and narrative (concerning the role of Greece as a "Pillar of Stability and Security in the region of Eastern Mediterranean"), at the international level.

Taking into account that the base of NRDC-GR is in Thessaloniki, it should be pointed out that the whole region is becoming an important Alliance hub, a fact that enhances the geopolitical and strategic importance of Macedonia and Thrace in general, as a regional pillar of NATO.

Under this perspective, with a series of initiatives and activities in the military-technical field, the NRDC-GR develops special skills and abilities for responding to the range of NATO operations and simultaneously creates a regional security system where Greece plays a leading role.

Summarizing the above significant achievements and contributions of NRDC-GR for Greece and NATO, it is certain that HQ will continue its efforts to further enhance the operational readiness and combat capabilities of NATO.

It will continue to contribute to the Defence and Security of the Alliance proving that Greece is a stable, reliable, and solvent partner

of NATO and that it has always been committed to the fundamental shared values and ideals of the Alliance and it will participate in initiatives for responding to the full range of contemporary security challenges, from crisis management to collective defense.

In addition, NRDC-GR will continue to be a valuable ambassador of Greece in NATO and promote the military power and capacity of the Hellenic Armed Forces as a credible security provider that can support its partners, protect the NATO cohesion itself, the citizens of its Member States, taking into account the internal and external security nexus.

Considering today's volatile, increasingly diverse, unpredictable, and demanding security environment, I wish NRDC-GR to continue its successful route and its staff to achieve further excellent evaluations and results.



Dr. Konstantinos P. BALOMENOS

Political and International Relations scientist.

Former General Director of the Hellenic MOD.

National Defence Policy & International Relations General Directorate.

## REFLECTING ON 20 YEARS OF NRDC-GR: A JOURNEY OF EXCELLENCE AND DEDICATION

On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NRDC-GR since 2004 when Greece had officially offered HQ NDC-GR as a Deployable Corps Headquarters in NATO Force Structure (NFS) and approved by NATO Military Committee, I will try to remember the successful journey of the headquarters and recall the main events which I have participated serving in various post in and out of NRDC-GR HQ to the end of my assignment in the HQ, elaborating little more to the early years.

Back in 2001 the Hellenic government took the political decision to provide NATO a new Headquarters [that should be named **NATO Deployable Corps – GREECE (NDC-GR)**] under the umbrella of NATO Forces Structure (NFS) that consisted of allied national and multinational forces. The Greek Armed Forces facilitated this decision with the creation of a nucleus for establishing this HQ in Thessaloniki. By the end of 2001 the core was consisting of five officers and NCOs, that I became a member as a Major responsible for the organization and manning, after my repatriation from KFOR. The initial task of this nucleus was to gather anything related to the NATO and especially to the NFS HQs. Without having access to the NATO cloud in the beginning the core, which gradually expanded

receiving more personnel, started to gather doctrines, SOIs – SOPs, Job Descriptions, creating a knowledge library. Additionally the participation to the other NFS HQs' evaluations as observers and augmentees added knowledge and experience, that combined with the study of the documentation started to create the first publications of NDC-GR. Last but not least the buildings and facilities where HQ is now located gradually were renovated and delivered for use.

The core staff showed patience, perseverance, persistence in purpose, dealt also with tasks outside their rank and specialization. In daily basis the personnel had contact with respective officers in HNDGS and HAGS to align the effort to establish the HQ properly.

The first cornerstone towards the implementation of the NDC-GR, was the Main Planning Conference

where after Greece's invitation we received delegations from the allies, offered them posts and by the end of it, we had the initial multinational posts allocation of NDC-GR. The multinational face of the NDC-GR started to shape.

Receiving the allied personnel the HQ started to mature. NDC-GR entered the period for the NFS evaluation. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> cornerstone that concluded in two phases. The Interim Operational Capability (IOC) in 2004, a static evaluation in the premises of the HQ focusing in foundation documents, existence and/or availability of necessary materials, doctrines and procedures. This was followed with a deployment exercise in autumn same year in order to test the FOC procedures in national level. In summer 2005 the Final Operational Capability (FOC) took place, where



*Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2005 (Final Operational Capability)*

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TOC during Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2008

the HQ as a well oiled machine achieved all the goals, exercised in three different locations in the vicinity of KAVALA – DRAMA, working 24/7, deployed more than 1000 personnel from HQ Staff and its supporting Units, during the EX “GORDIAN KNOT 05”. The HQ entered officially the NFS community as NDC-GR. The HQ for the FOC execution received excellent grade and complimentary notes. After FOC I transferred elsewhere in the Greek Army and left HQ.

In 2008 NDC-GR passed successfully a High Readiness CREVAL with the HQ fully deployed in island CRETE, a remarkable task for the those-days serving personnel, testing and presenting to Alliance its strategic deploying capabilities although this is not needed.

Greece offered to NATO the NDC-GR as the NRF 12 Land Component Command Headquarters (LCC HQ) for the year 2012. For this, in spring 2011 HQ first passed successfully CREVAL executed by the Land Component Command Madrid (LCC MADRID) Evaluation Team in which

I was the Coordinator, serving those days there as Training, Exercises and Evaluations Officer. Upon my repatriation I was posted again in the NDC-GR. In November 2011 during the exercise “Steadfast Joiner/ Steadfast Joist” the NDC-GR was fully deployed and evaluated as NRF HQ by the NATO Evaluation team. The HQ showed to Alliance that is more than capable to undertake this role.

After the successful stand by NRF 12 period, NDC-GR having the approval of the Greek Armed Forces to be upgraded as a Rapid HQ (“rapid” stands for the days needed for deployment), entered a period in which the whole personnel run to fulfill the High Readiness Evaluation criteria demands, alongside with other obligations preparing the staff for the High Readiness CREVAL in 2015. I was posted ACOS G5 dealing with the planning. NDC-GR HQ additionally had to deal closely with the newly formed LANDCOM explain our HQ’s role and clarify their mutual relation. It is worth to be mentioned the NDC-GR’s full support

to the LANDCOM’s own certification process with augmentees, deployed officers and the whole HQ deployed as subordinate HQ in Assiros during the final phase.

NDC-GR in the exercise “GORDIAN KNOT / TRIDENT LANCE 15” showed determination and managed to support successfully LANDCOM and passed also with excellent grades it’s own CREVAL. The HQ declared a High Readiness Forces (HRF) HQ and the name from now on is NRDC-GR.

In 2016 I was promoted to Brigadier General and appointed as DCOS SPT. The new task of NRDC-GR was to “*Be prepared to provide the additional deployed operational level Headquarters necessary to command a Small Joint Operation (Land) including, if necessary, commencement of operations and to generate the follow-on HQ to replace NATO Command Structure JTF HQ in command of a Major Joint Operation*”. For this the HQ prepared the personnel, doctrinal documents, SOPs – SOPs, procedures and mentality to be evaluated during the certification exercise “TRIDENT JAGUAR 18”. The HQ passed successfully the Joint Evaluation and committed to “JTF HQ and JLSG HQ STAND BY (2-YEAR)”. By then, the set up of the modular deployed Command Posts of the HQ matured after the thorough test all these years and a new specialized tent fabricated for the OPS CENTRE in deployments that became the focal point for conducting operations.

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*CECC during Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2019*

During this period HQ changed its structure. The organizational changes became visible since the beginning of 2019 when the new Communication Division was created. But more than a year earlier, CECC (Communication & Engagement Coordination Centre) was created to “integrate HQ’s communication capabilities and information staff functions with other military activities, in order to understand and shape the Information Environment (IE), in support of COM NRDC-GR aims and objectives”.

In 2019 I was promoted to Major General and appointed as COS of the HQ with the main task to always be ready as Joint Task Forces HQ and parallel to prepare the HQ for the new demanding role of MULTI-CORPS LCC (Land Component Command) HQ during Art 5 Operations. The new demanding role again needed the change of culture, mentality of personnel, procedures, etc. A national evaluation was scheduled during the EX “GORDIAN KNOT 20” in autumn 2020.

In spring 2020 I left the HQ finishing

my COS assignment. NRDC-GR is continuing its journey as a member of NATO Forces HQ fulfilling every demanding mission with success.

This whole period NRDC-GR HQ executed different roles, demanding ones that forced the staff to work always in high tempo, shaping their attitude and professionalism. NRDC-GR became a laboratory to test new doctrines, approaches to operations and a school for the staff to improve its skills and capabilities. It is a pool that creates high level professional staff. Looking only to the major activities like evaluations and annual NATO exercises, is easy to forget and let outside the rest of the activities that the HQ is conducting where staff from NATO is participating. Hosting of NATO Commanders Conferences, organizing various conferences, meetings, seminars, training courses are also the elements of making NRDC-GR and its staff stand proud and high in the NATO community.

I feel proud that my service placed me in the initial core responsible for establishing the headquarters. Lucky to have participated in almost all of

the main activities of NRDC-GR and proud to see all the missions given to the HQ by NATO accomplished. Now as I look back on my memories I feel complete and proud that I also contributed to the road to success of NRDC-GR. Looking at the current successful course of the HQ, my pride and love for the HQ remain and increase. Looking to the future, I am filled with optimism for the accomplishments of NRDC-GR.

I feel the need to thank all the staff (superiors and subordinates) who has worked hard to fulfill the goals of the headquarters. Allied staff also gave their best and also gave us their own way of working and thinking. Personally, I gained not only colleagues but also friends during my placement at the headquarters. NRDC-GR will hold a very special place in my heart as I reflect on my years of service.

NRDC-GR is continuing its excellent work, being equal with rest NFS HQs, making me to congratulate the Commander, Command Group and the Staff, always following its moto **“to cut the Gordian Knot”**.



Paschalis Dallas  
Lieutenant General (R)  
Honourable COS NRDC-GR

# NRDC-GR HERALD TRIBUNE - EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

My experience with wonderful Greece started in the spring of 2016. At that time I was supposed to be posted in Bruxelles, so that while visiting the EU quarters I was concerned in looking for a cozy apartment that could accommodate both me and my Brave, the dog, with a small garden and not to make him freeze. However, due to changes in the allocation of national positions I was afterward immediately informed of the big shift; no longer was the direction leading to the main HQ in Central Europe but to the Southern operational NATO HQ in Thessaloniki led by Greece. I felt a little bit discouraged at the beginning, not completely understanding the observations made by colleagues that it was like I had won a lottery, apart the more comfortable and amicable conditions for that Brave.

That has been a superb experience, as while being in periphery you could better observe and analyze the evolution of the strategic concepts of the alliances, program – organize and conduct exercises of the size that rarely you could have experienced in the field, apart my experience in the ISAF Joint Command in Kabul in 2013.

Being in a large family but far away from strategic HQs where everyone is hidden within its own too restricted expertise, the time went interestingly through the refinement



of planning skills, the elaboration of conceptual contribution that higher levels were interested to receive, the participation to higher level seminars and the preparation of more effective operational and tactical procedures at a time in which I was still believing that Small Joint Operations were the most significant core business of ours.

The three components of the Plans Division, the Plans, the Exercise and the CIMIC offices were the most relevant references of the all HQ; any business was gravitating around in peacetime, no matter the limited number of personnel (about 55 pax in total), compare to the rest.

Being able to participate to events hosted by 3 stars Commanders, and even higher like the constant relationships with Izmir Land Component representatives, or the

sensitiveness felt while trying to put forward a prudent planning related to the peripheral crisis around the Mediterranean area, all contributed to enlarge the perception from the tactical-operational dimensions to the political sensitiveness of the Alliance.

That same feeling was noted while leading the NRDC-GR Operational Planning and Liaison Element (OPLE) in SHAPE, in order to contribute, corroborate and collaborate to the improved version of the strategic planning products.

Commanders were rotating every year in NRDC-GR and the process of promotion was renovating the senior ranks at high speed. This was initially experienced as a lack of continuity but in the medium-long term that resulted as a unique instrument to maintain and preserve the initiative in the rest of the staff while letting the senior



officers looking forward, maintain a higher focus and not getting embroiled in lower level details, all together serving an institution, not privileges.

The experience at Mount Athos was cruel and majestic at the same time. Waking up so early in the morning just to pray until the sunrise, and share the simple food with the monks, imprinted the mindset in simplicity and essentiality, while the

rest of the world was frantic in running at fast pace, unaware.

Every occasion was a unique opportunity to share human feelings and friendship, so that even drinking water was a good opportunity to cheer. The sunset along the coastline of Thessaloniki is still vivid.

When decisions were taken we were then ready to execute, and that left always prior open ground for a genuine confrontation and sharing of

perspectives.

I was then very proud of representing the largest external national component, so that I even succeed in promoting two new positions in a genuine competition with our Spanish comrades.

The participation of the Italian President at the OXI day in 2018, the participation of the Garibaldi Brigade in the historical events of the Greek independence, the presence of an Italian WWI military cemetery in Thessaloniki where almost 4000 thousands lives rest forever, the tragic circumstances of WWII humanly commemorated, all of this witness the necessity to never disregard the common roots, culture and identity.

Being born in the area renowned as Magna Grecia in Italy, that is always a good reason to consider the unique common origin of ours, and the necessary efforts to keep up at the highest level, as it cannot be otherwise.

Yes, the native Greek language was incomprehensible to me, but having the same face and race never limited the possibility to understand without hearing.



Vittorio Antonio STELLA  
Brigadier General (ITA-Engineer)  
NRDC-GR DCOS Plans (2016-2019)

## THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF NRDC-GR FOR NATO, GREECE AND REGIONAL SECURITY

### Introduction

The present article aims to highlight the role of NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps-Greece (NRDC-GR), one of the nine Rapid Deployable Corps of the North Atlantic Alliance. The main argument is that NRDC-GR is of strategic importance for both NATO and Greece as well as for promoting and ensuring regional security, not only due to military factors but for several others reasons too that are related to various policy fields as well. First, it briefly presents the political environment that led to the establishment of NATO, then it highlights NATO's role and its fundamental tasks, after that it examines the relations of Greece and NATO, it proceeds to a brief presentation of NRDC-GR's mission and concludes to the analysis of its strategic importance based on the aforementioned facts.

### The establishment of NATO

The establishment of NATO was

*"You have no idea how much it contributes to the general politeness and pleasantness of diplomacy when you have a little quiet armed force in the background".*

*George F. Kennan*

the result of the **Cold War** (1947-1991) between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR),<sup>1</sup> initially leading in 1947 to the development of the **Truman Doctrine** against Communism, which was considered as the main threat for the USA.<sup>2</sup> The same year the United States implemented the **Marshall Plan**,<sup>3</sup> aiming to the economic development of the European states that would hopefully lead to peace and stability in Europe –which still suffered the severe consequences of World War II– and minimize the Soviet influence. On **June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1948** the US Congress endorsed a Resolution known as the **Vandenberg Resolution**, allowing the United States to take part in a mutual defence system in times of peace.<sup>4</sup>

consultations led to the drafting of the **Washington Document**, a document comprising indicative articles for the establishment of an Alliance, resulting –after official negotiations between December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1948 and March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1949– in the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as the Treaty of Washington) on **April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1949** in the Departmental Auditorium of Washington<sup>5</sup>. The Treaty of Washington was signed by **twelve founding member-states** (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the USA) establishing the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization**<sup>6</sup>.

### NATO's role and its fundamental tasks

According to the Treaty of Washington, NATO's purpose is to

On **September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1948** several

<sup>1</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2024, April 29). Cold War. Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Cold-War> (30/04/2024).

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Historian. (n.d.). The Truman Doctrine, 1947. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/truman-doctrine> (30/04/2024).

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Historian. (n.d.). "Marshall Plan, 1948". <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/marshall-plan> (01/05/2024).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2017, November 02). The Vandenberg Resolution: The UN Charter and the Future Alliance. <https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/eur/nato/vandenberg.html> (30/04/2024).

<sup>5</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023, October 19). "The North Atlantic Treaty". [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/history\\_pdf/20161122\\_E1-founding-treaty-original-treaty\\_NN-en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/history_pdf/20161122_E1-founding-treaty-original-treaty_NN-en.pdf). (30/04/2024).

<sup>6</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2024, March 11). "NATO member countries". [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_52044.htm#founding](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm#founding) (30/04/2024).





Picture 1. President Harry S. Truman signs a proclamation declaring into effect the 12-nation North Atlantic Pact (Source: [www.trumanlibrary.gov](http://www.trumanlibrary.gov))

safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of its member-states, promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area (North America & Europe), and preserve peace and security through

**collective defence** according to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN). Moreover, NATO member-states are committed to settle their disputes by **peaceful means**, refrain from the **threat or use of force**, and promote **friendly relations** as well as **collaboration** with other actors in several fields.

Nevertheless, **article 5** of the founding Treaty of NATO not only supports the member-states' right of **self-defence** but broadens its context to a collaborative level setting the foundations of **collective defence**, as it refers that:

*“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of*

*individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security”.*

In order to be able to accomplish its purpose, NATO periodically issues its '**Strategic Concept**', an official strategic document providing strategic guidance to its member-states which inter alia defines the Alliance's **fundamental tasks**. The latter, according to the **1999** version of the strategic document included: (1) *Security*, (2) *Consultation*, and (3) *Deterrence & Defence*, in the **2010** version were changed to: (1) *Collective Defence*, (2) *Crisis Management and* (3) *Cooperative Security*, and according to the latest **2022 Strategic Concept** comprise: (1) *Deterrence & Defence*, (2) *Crisis Prevention & Management*, and (3) *Cooperative Security*.<sup>7</sup> It must also be stressed that NATO maintains an '**open door policy**' for new member-states, which –after Russia's invasion



Picture 2. The latest Strategic Concept of NATO (Source:[www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int))

<sup>7</sup>Κουκάκης, Γ. (2024). “ Η Εξέλιξη του Στρατηγικού Δόγματος του NATO και προβληματισμοί για το μέλλον” στο Τετράδιο Γεωπολιτικής Ανάλυσης και Μελετών 8. Ελληνικό Ινστιτούτο Στρατηγικών Μελετών. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378848610\\_E\\_Exelixe\\_tou\\_Strategikou\\_Dogmatos\\_tou\\_NATO\\_kai\\_problematismo\\_i\\_gia\\_to\\_mellon](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378848610_E_Exelixe_tou_Strategikou_Dogmatos_tou_NATO_kai_problematismo_i_gia_to_mellon) (02/05/2024).

# 20years NRDC-GR

of Ukraine— led to the accession of **Finland** and **Sweden**, increasing the number of the Alliance’s member-states to **32**.<sup>8</sup>

## Greece’s relations with NATO: A valuable member-state

Greece is one of the oldest NATO member-states as it joined the Alliance in **1952** during its first round of enlargement.<sup>9</sup> Since then it has always been a **pillar of stability** in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean, safeguarding the Alliance’s values using dialogue as the main way of resolving its disputes, refraining from the threat and use of force in its bilateral relations, supporting the accession of new member-states and taking part in several NATO missions.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Greece hosts several NATO facilities such as the **NRDC-GR** (NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Greece) in Thessaloniki, the **NMIOTC** (NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center), the **IAMD CoE** (NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defense Center of Excellence)



Picture 3. The location of NRDC-GR in relation to the wider Eastern Mediterranean region (Source: [www.worldatlas.com/seas/mediterranean-sea](http://www.worldatlas.com/seas/mediterranean-sea).)

and the **NAMFI** (NATO Missile Firing Installation) in Chania (Picture 3).<sup>11</sup>

The concept behind Greece’s participation in NATO was that its collective defence mechanism would provide the necessary security guaranty for Greece against hostile actors, using the Alliance as a ‘**security provider**’. Since Greece joined NATO, its membership in the

Alliance is an integral part of the foreign policy of the Hellenic Republic, a fact that has been highlighted in several official strategic documents such as the ‘**White Paper**’ of the Ministry of National Defence,<sup>12</sup> the ‘**Strategic Plan**’ of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,<sup>13</sup> and the ‘**Annual Action Plan**’ of the Ministry of National Defence.<sup>14</sup> Finally, it must be stressed that Greece is one of the few member-

<sup>8</sup> Κουκάκης, Γ. (2023). “Η ένταξη της Φινλανδίας στο NATO και το μέλλον της υποψηφιότητας της Σουηδίας”. Κέντρο Διεθνών Στρατηγικών Αναλύσεων. Ερευνητική Εργασία No. 92. <https://www.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22751.53920> (01/05/2024).

<sup>9</sup> Hellenic Republic/Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2023, November 2023). “The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)”. <https://www.mfa.gr/en/foreign-policy/greece-in-international-organizations/the-north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato.html#:~:text=Greece%20also%20hosts%20a%20series,the%20NATO%20Rapid%20Deployable%20Corps%2D> (01/05/2024).

<sup>10</sup> Hellenic Republic/Greece in Brussels. (n.d.) “NATO Operations”. <https://www.mfa.gr/brussels/en/permanent-representation-nato/greece-in-nato/nato-operations.html> (01/05/2024).

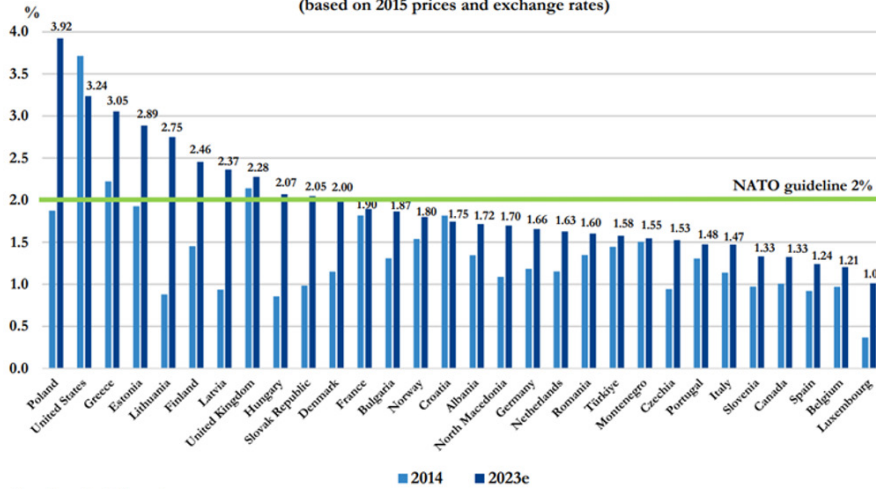
<sup>11</sup> Hellenic Republic/Greece in Brussels. (n.d.) “Greece in NATO”. <https://www.mfa.gr/brussels/en/permanent-representation-nato/greece-in-nato/greece-in-nato.html> (01/05/2024).

<sup>12</sup> Ελληνική Δημοκρατία/Υπουργείο Εθνικής Άμυνας. (2015). Λευκή Βίβλος. (Αθήνα: Τυπογραφείο Ελληνικού Στρατού). [https://ia601503.us.archive.org/1/items/WhitePaper/White\\_Paper.pdf](https://ia601503.us.archive.org/1/items/WhitePaper/White_Paper.pdf) (02/05/2024).

<sup>13</sup> Κουκάκης, Γ. (2023). “Το Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο του Ελληνικού Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών για την περίοδο 2023-2026” στο Τετράδιο Γεωπολιτικής Ανάλυσης και Μελετών 6. Ελληνικό Ινστιτούτο Στρατηγικών Μελετών. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373238770\\_To\\_Strategiko\\_Schedio\\_tou\\_Ellenikou\\_Ypourgeiou\\_Exoterikon\\_gia\\_ten\\_periodo\\_2023-2026](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373238770_To_Strategiko_Schedio_tou_Ellenikou_Ypourgeiou_Exoterikon_gia_ten_periodo_2023-2026) (02/05/2024).

<sup>14</sup> Ελληνική Δημοκρατία/Υπουργείο Εθνικής Άμυνας. (2023, December 04). “Ετήσιο Σχέδιο Δράσης 2024 (επιτελική σύνοψη)”. [https://gscs.gov.gr/wp-content/s/203s/2023/12/%CE%A5%CE%A0%CE%95%CE%98%CE%91\\_%CE%95%CF%80%CE%CF%88%CE%B7\\_%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94-2024-1.pdf](https://gscs.gov.gr/wp-content/s/203s/2023/12/%CE%A5%CE%A0%CE%95%CE%98%CE%91_%CE%95%CF%80%CE%CF%88%CE%B7_%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94-2024-1.pdf) (02/05/2024)7\_%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94-2024-1.pdf

**Graph 3 : Defence expenditure as a share of GDP (%)**  
(based on 2015 prices and exchange rates)



Note: Figures for 2023 are estimates.

**Picture 4. NATO member-states' defence expenditure (2014-2023)** (Source: [www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/3/pdf/240314-def-exp-2023-en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/3/pdf/240314-def-exp-2023-en.pdf))

states of NATO that complies with the 2% defence investment guideline set by the Alliance in 2014,<sup>15</sup> being the 3<sup>rd</sup> state that spends the largest amount (as percentage of its GDP) in defence (Picture 4).

### A few words about NRDC-GR

NRDC-GR is hosted in the facilities of the Hellenic **C Corps** that was initially established in the city of Ioannina in **1913**, moving shortly after to its current location Thessaloniki.

On **August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004** the North Atlantic Council (NAC) issued a decision activating **NDC-GR HQ** as an International Military Headquarters and on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004 it was granted its international status. On **November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012** the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SAUCER) –upon proposal of the Hellenic Republic and fulfillment of the commitment of being the Land Component Command of NATO Response Force (NRF)– included NDC-GR HQ in NRF

as a **High Readiness Force Headquarters** (NRDC-GR HQ), a status that was confirmed in **2015** through NATO Combat Readiness Evaluation. Finally, in **2019** NRDC-GR successfully assumed the role of being the **Joint Task Forces Headquarters**.<sup>16</sup>

NRDC-GR is a multinational Corps **fully sponsored by Greece**<sup>17</sup> operating under the direct operational command of the **SACEUR**, and is one of the nine **NATO Rapid Deployable Corps**<sup>18</sup> and part of the **NRF**,<sup>19</sup> meaning that it must be ready to assume command of the land component of the NRF for a stand-by period of 12 months.<sup>20</sup> As far as its **readiness** is concerned, NRDC-GR must be ready to rapidly deploy –its first elements within **10 days** and the entire force within **2 months**– upon political authorisation of the **NAC**, as a Corps or Land Component Command HQ or Joint Task Force HQ in order to conduct or sustain **Combined and Joint Land centric operations** across the operational spectrum for collective defense (Article 3 and 5) or **Crisis Response Operations** (Non

<sup>15</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2024, April 05). "Defence expenditures and NATO's 2% guideline". [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49198.htm#:~:text=In%202014%2C%20NATO%20Heads%20of,instability%20in%20the%20Middle%20East.\(02/05/2024\).](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49198.htm#:~:text=In%202014%2C%20NATO%20Heads%20of,instability%20in%20the%20Middle%20East.(02/05/2024).)

<sup>16</sup> NRDC-GR/GRF (L) HQ/HQ Support. (2020, May). "Newcomers Guide". [https://nrdc.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NRDC\\_GR\\_HQ\\_NEWCOMERS\\_GUIDE-2020.pdf](https://nrdc.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NRDC_GR_HQ_NEWCOMERS_GUIDE-2020.pdf) (04/05/2024).

<sup>17</sup> In some NRDCs the costs are shared by two or more framework nations.

<sup>18</sup> These are the **ARRC** (Allied Rapid Reaction Corps) in Innsworth (United Kingdom), the **NRDC-IT** in Solbiate Olona (Italy), the **NRDC-Spain** in Valencia (Spain), the **NRDC-T** based near Istanbul (Türkiye), the **1<sup>st</sup> German-Netherlands Corps** based in Münster (Germany), the **RRC-FR** (Rapid Reaction Corps France) in Lille (France), the **MNC-NE** (Multinational Corps North-East) in Szczecin (Poland), **MNC-SE** in Sibiu (Romania) and the **Eurocorps** in Strasbourg (France), a Corps that doesn't belong to the NATO military structure but can be used for NATO missions according to a 2002 agreement.

<sup>19</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023, July 27). "NATO Response Force". [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49755.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49755.htm) (02/05/2024).

<sup>20</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022, June 22). "Rapid Deployable Corps". [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50088.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50088.htm) (02/05/2024).

Article 5) in a designated Operational Area,<sup>21</sup> covering a wide range of **missions** such as:

- *Disaster management,*
- *Peace Support Operations (PSOs),*
- *Counter-terrorism, and*
- *High-intensity war fighting.*

NRDC-GR's **military personnel** come from different NATO member-states and are distributed in various positions, while in addition to the aforementioned staff a **NRDC-GR Internship Program** (NIP) for university students and graduates has been established in order for them to improve their skills and get to know the structure and procedures of NATO.<sup>22</sup> At the time being, NRDC-GR's **Leadership Staff**<sup>23</sup> comprises the following officers:

- **Commander:** Lieutenant General Athanasios GARINIS (Greece).
- **Deputy Commander:** Major General Valentin KRASDEV (Bulgaria).
- **Chief of Staff:** Major General Vasileios TSAMIS (Greece).
- **Deputy Chief of Staff -**

**Plans:** Brigadier General Giovanni PARMIGGIANI (Italy).

- **Deputy Chief of Staff - Operations:** Brigadier General Juan Ignacio REYES (Spain).

- **Deputy Chief of Staff - Communication:** Brigadier General Anastasios KOLEZAS (Greece).

- **Deputy Chief of Staff - Support:** Brigadier General Christos KAZAKIS (Greece).

- **Deputy Chief of Staff - Rear Support:** Brigadier General Doukas MARINOPOULOS (Greece).

As far as the activities in which NRDC-GR takes part, these include:

- **Military exercises,** such as the annual 'GORDIAN KNOT' multinational exercise that aims "[...] to train the NRDC-GR as a War Fighting Corps (WFC) to operate effectively in a joint, multinational, and multi-domain environment".

- **Training activities,** such as the 'Liaison and Reconnaissance Team' (LRT) training, the 'LOGFAS Fundamentals' course, the 'NRDC-GR Comprehensive Operational Planning' course, the 'Advanced Fast and Dynamic Targeting' external training course, etc.

- **Seminars/Conferences,** such as the 'International Humanitarian Law and CIMIC challenges in the context of Russia-Ukraine War' seminar, the 'Journalists' Safety in War Zones' seminar, the '22nd Allied Land Command (LANDCOM), Land Corps Commanders Conference (LC3)' conference, the 'Allied Command Operations Electromagnetic Warfare' conference, etc.

- **Other Events/Activities,** such as Staff visits to archeological/religious sites, historical monuments/museums, military installations, cultural centers, etc.

Highlighting the strategic importance of NRDC-GR

Taking into consideration the facts presented throughout the article it is evident that NRDC-GR is of strategic importance not only for Greece but for NATO as well and the promotion of security in the wider Eastern Mediterranean region. Using the **DIME analysis framework** that categorizes the various instruments of power into the 'soft power' categories of **Diplomacy** and **Information** and the 'hard power' categories of **Military** and **Economy**,<sup>24</sup> NRDC-GR's importance can be broken down into the following factors:

<sup>21</sup> United States Army NATO. (2018, May 07). "NATO Rapid Deployable Corps (NRDC) Greece". <https://www.usanato.army.mil/About-Us/Articles/Article/1513506/nato-rapid-deployable-corps-nrdc-greece/> (02/05/2024).

<sup>22</sup> NRDC-GR. (n.d.). "NRDC-GR Internship Program". <https://nrdc.gr/intership/> (04/05/2024).

<sup>23</sup> NRDC-GR. (n.d.). "Leadership Staff". <https://nrdc.gr/leadership/> (04/05/2024).

<sup>24</sup> Kodalle, T., Sample, C., Ormrod, D., & Scott, K. (2019, July). *Thoughts About a General Theory of Influence in a DIME/PMESII/ASCOP/IRC2 Model*. In *European Conference on Cyber Warfare and Security* (pp. 801-XVIII). Academic Conferences International Limited. <https://www.proquest.com/conference-papers-proceedings/thoughts-about-general-theory-influence-dime/docview/2261026634/se-2> (02/05/2024).

As far as the **diplomatic field** is concerned, NRDC-GR plays a vital role in promoting NATO's interests through defence/military diplomacy,<sup>25</sup> and the cooperation with academia through its internship programme. Moreover, by fully sponsoring NRDC-GR Greece clearly demonstrates in the best possible way its dedication to the Alliance, its values and purpose. Finally, the strategic location of NRDC-GR in addition to its multinational organization facilitates high-level cooperation between regional actors leading to the enhancement of their bilateral relations, consequently strengthening regional security.

As far as the **information field** is concerned, NRDC-GR enhances NATO's public diplomacy through its educational courses, training exercises, publications and various activities of Public Affairs and STRATCOM (Strategic Communication) influencing *public opinion* in a positive way. In addition to that, the collaboration of its multinational personnel in the field of *military intelligence* promotes the establishment of an information sharing culture among its members and provides valuable experience that can be transferred to its member-states. Finally, NRDC-GR's strategic location ensures the collection of information related to *regional security threats* in order to be able to take all the necessary (counter)

measures in order to address them effectively.

As far as the **military field** is concerned, NRDC-GR provides NATO an additional military capacity in terms of *planning and deployable forces*, allowing NATO to act rapidly in its Eastern and South-Eastern Flank in case of emergency. Moreover, the collaboration of its multinational personnel and means during training and military exercises enhances *interoperability* in terms of planning procedures and mission execution and creates a *cooperation culture*. Finally, NRDC-GR's presence in the region acts as a mean of deterrence for hostile actors, ensuring regional security in the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean.

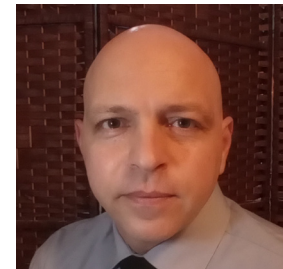
As far as the **economic field** is concerned, NRDC-GR reduces cost for NATO in case of a future deployment of Forces in the region, as it ensures a shorter supply chain through Greece and long-term cooperation with local enterprises, also supporting the Greek economy through the conducted procurement. As a result, economic security of both Greece and NATO is enhanced and the Alliance's operational function is improved.

### Concluding remarks

Taking into consideration the

facts presented in the article, it must be stressed once more that Greece is a valuable NATO member-state acting as a reliable pillar of stability in its South-Eastern Flank and that NRDC-GR is of great importance, as its presence promotes not only the interests of the North Atlantic Alliance, but the national interests of Greece as well. Thus, both NATO and Greece must make sure to enhance this strategic partnership in every possible way and explore new ways of broadening their cooperation, as according to **Henry Ford**:

*"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success".<sup>26</sup>*



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<sup>25</sup> Κουκάκης, Γ. (2024). "Η Αμυντική Διπλωματία της Ελλάδας: Η ήπια ισχύς της σκληρής ισχύος" στο Διακλαδική Επιθεώρηση, Τεύχος 59. Ανώτατη Διακλαδική Σχολή Πολέμου, σσ. 28-40. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382150159\\_E\\_Amyntike\\_Diplomatia\\_tes\\_Elladas\\_E\\_epia\\_ischys\\_tes\\_skleres\\_ischyos](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382150159_E_Amyntike_Diplomatia_tes_Elladas_E_epia_ischys_tes_skleres_ischyos) (20/07/2024).

<sup>26</sup> Muñoz, J. (n.d.). "COMING TOGETHER, KEEPING TOGETHER, WORKING TOGETHER". Peoria Magazine. [https://www.peoriamagazine.com/archive/ibi\\_article/2010/coming-together-keeping-together-working-together/](https://www.peoriamagazine.com/archive/ibi_article/2010/coming-together-keeping-together-working-together/) (03/05/2024).

# THE ITALIAN CONTINGENT AND NRDC GR: A VERY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Italy is one of the founding members of NATO which signed the Washington Treaty in 1949. From the very beginning, Italy has been a driving force in the Alliance, particularly during the Cold War, thus showing full adherence to the principles of unity and solidarity.

Over the last 30 years, NATO's internal structure and objectives have been transformed: from the bipolar world created by the Cold War to a comprehensive approach to security. On this, Italy has been fully committed not only by taking part to deterrence and defense activities, NATO operations and missions around the world, but also by strengthening NATO's partnership relations with Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Partners across the globe, as well as with other international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the OSCE.

From Afghanistan to Kosovo, from Iraq to Libya, passing through counter-piracy and the fight against international terrorism, Italy has always provided its support in terms of economic and human resources to NATO's main operations and missions, especially in light of its crucial role in ensuring stability to the borders of the Alliance, actively working in the entire Mediterranean basin, in the Balkans and in the

Middle East.

Today, Italy confirms its crucial role in the Mediterranean, also thanks to the establishment of the NATO Strategic Direction-South HUB (NSD-S HUB) at the Allied Joint Force Command Naples premises, with essential functions of monitoring and gathering strategic information about the Southern Flank. Another pivotal NATO commitment, among Italy's contributions to NATO Command and Force Structures (NCS, NFS) is the participation in NRDC Greece HQ, formally authorized with the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2005. In this context Italy plays a fundamental role as it represents the biggest contingent among the other allied contributors to the framework Nation. It is also worth noting that the Italian contingent at NRDC GR, with 14 members, is second only to the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps UK (ARRC UK) in terms of Italian participation in the NFS Headquarters.

Relations between Italy and Greece have their roots since ancient times and are supported by geographical and cultural proximity and by common belonging to the European Union, NATO and other main regional and international forums. There is a similar vision between the two countries, Greece being an important partner for Italy, both from a European perspective

and on a regional level, with particular regard to the stabilization of the Balkans and the creation of greater cooperation synergies in the Adriatic-Ionian basin (Adriatic Initiative). While our countries share historical common roots and cultural similarities, the depth of our bilateral relations can be fully explained keeping in mind that Italy and Greece – friends, neighbors, allies and strategic partners – share also a common vision, which is fully integrated into political, economic and cultural partnership (e.g. on migration, energy, the European social and economic agenda, the stability of the Western Balkans and much more).

The historical heritages, similar cultures and strong cooperation between the two countries in the Mediterranean area and European Union are clearly reflected in the NRDC-GR HQ, where Italy and Greece are making a strong NATO Alliance even stronger and ready today to face tomorrow's challenges.



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## NORTH MACEDONIA IN NATO: ADVANCING REGIONAL SECURITY AND ENHANCING MILITARY COOPERATION WITH GREECE

The Republic of North Macedonia joined the NATO Alliance on 27th March 2020. As a new NATO member country, it continued and improved its previous contribution to NATO-led operations and started with its participation in NATO Headquarters.

In NATO-led operations it participates in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia, NATO's enhanced Vigilance Activities (eVA) in Bulgaria and Romania, and KFOR in Kosovo, remaining dedicated to promoting the shared values and principles of the Alliance and actively contributing to Euro-Atlantic security and enhancing NATO alliance unity.

As a NATO member country, North Macedonia started its contribution to NATO HQs across the Alliance. Following the joining process in 2023, it became the newest partner nation to NRDC-GR. Participation in NRDC-GR reflects its intent to contribute to the allied determination for a peaceful, safe, and stable region and a safe Euro-Atlantic area.

The cooperation includes expert talks, training for special forces, training for NATO standardization,



joint training, courses in educational centers, and language training. Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS) exchanged their experiences in the field of NATO defense planning, equipping and modernization, and host country support. Also, Greece engaged in the protection of the airspace over North Macedonia as part of the NATO air policing mission. Commitment to contribute to regional security and stability is reflected in the common participation in South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG). North Macedonia is a participating nation in EU Battlegroup HELBROC, dedicated to conducting EU-led military operations.

Joint special operations on land and in maritime/sea, parachute training, combat swimming, and diving were included in the joint training of the special operations forces of North Macedonia and Greece. Cooperation between the special forces included the execution of SOFEVAL in 2021.

There are also numerous

exercises between the armies of the two countries regardless of whether it is on a bilateral level or with several other countries. Some of the exercises include "Decisive Strike 21", "Balkan Warrior 23", and "Swift Response 22" in the Republic of North Macedonia and "Golden Fleece", "Talos" and "Orion 23" conducted in Greece.

The established military cooperation between Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia, encompassing many areas is increasing by size and scope each year setting a path for permanent progress, supporting the common efforts for a secure, stable and, prosperous region.



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## TWO DECADES OF SPANISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO NRDC-GR: BUILDING CAPACITY AND STRENGTHENING TIES

In the 20 years of existence that now gaze upon it, and from its first steps, the Spanish contribution to the NRDC-GR HQ finds its origin in the structural changes NATO underwent in the early 2000s. At that moment, the Alliance had to redesign itself to confront new challenges while entangled in various Balkan conflicts.

By 2004, NATO found it self amidst a period of flux, undergoing the restructuring of its Command and Force structures. These shifts led to the closure and opening of various installations across Europe within a brief timeframe. Among these closures, was the disbanded of the four NATO Joint Sub-Regional Commands (JSRCs), which had offered a geographically dispersed joint military planning and command and control capability under the Command structure. Concurrently, and within the Force structure, the NATO Rapid Reaction Corps (NRDCs) were established. One of them, the NRDC-GR, set up its headquarters in the city of Thessaloniki. By this time, an initial core consisting of an Officer and a Non-Commissioned Officer were transferred from the JCSOUTHCENT nestled in Larissa, to the NRDC-GR HQ. In August of that year, BG Diego DE OTERO would be assigned as the first Spanish General, shouldering the responsibilities of DCOS OPS at the HQ, a position Spain has



*1.Change of affiliated Bgde. ceremony*

uninterruptedly held to this day with prestigious spanish generals such as BG DE OTERO, BG AMATRIAÍN, MG BAYO, MG ÍÑIGUEZ, BG SÁNCHEZ TAPIA, MG BARRÓN, BG DÍAZ and BG REYES.

The progressive evolution and capacity building led to the signing of the first MOU between Greece and the initial nine contributing nations, including Spain, in 2005 after a year of preparation. With the HQ in full development, activation of Force-Level Reserve Headquarters (FLR HQs) was achieved in August 2004, followed by Full Operational Capability (FOC) in June 2005.

From the year 2012 and since the certification of the Headquarters as the Land Component Command of the NATO Response Force (NRF)

for Article 5 operations, the Spanish contingent reached ten components.

Significant milestones have marked the journey of this unit, such as its certification as High Readiness in 2015 or as a Joint HQ in 2018. In each of these, the complete involvement of the Spanish



*2.NRDC-GR and X Bgde. Commanders*





3. Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2023

contingent in the irrespective areas of duty was evident.

However, Spain's commitment to the NRDC-GR is not solely reflected through personnel stationed at the HQ. Since June 2008, Spain affiliate done of its Brigades, specifically the Canarias XVI Brigade, later relieved by the Córdoba X Brigade in a ceremonial handover at Camp

Pedion Areos. Through his affiliation as a mode of relationship between a major combat unit and its HQ, active participation was maintained in all planning and execution milestones where the NRDC-GR employed these units. This is not an isolated occurrence, as reciprocally, the NRDC-ESP boasts the 34 Mechanized Brigade of the Greek



4. Flamenco dance performance

army as an affiliated unit.

In recent years, noteworthy milestones include the validation of the HQ as a Multicorps Land Component Command during the execution of Exercise Steadfast Leda 21. In 2022, under the leadership of the current DCOS OPS, BG Juan REYES, a formal evaluation of a sibling Headquarters, the ARRC, was conducted.

The Spanish contingent has also actively participated in all cultural and brotherhood activities with the rest of contributing nations held at NRDC-GR. Noteworthy is the celebration of the Spain's National Day, on October 12th, where typical dishes such as paella brewed by members of the contingent are savored, alongside a flamenco dance performance.

Future challenges await, such as the annual exercises of the Gordian Knot series or participation in the upcoming STEADFAST DUEL 24 and LOYAL LEDA 25, where Spanish personnel will immerse themselves fully, contributing value to a nation like Greece, with which they share numerous historical and cultural ties.



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## TÜRKIYE'S ROLE IN NRDC-GR: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP AND STRENGTHENING NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK

I am happy to be able to address you as a SNR of the Türkiye in a special edition for the 20th anniversary of NRDC-GR. We consider ourselves lucky to have witnessed NRDC-GR's celebration of its 20th anniversary. It's an opportunity to emphasize our journey in this multinational HQ.

NRDC-GR is an important part of ensuring the collective defense and security of the southern flank of NATO. Chartered in 2004, NRDC-GR has played a contributory role in keeping NATO's operational capabilities and readiness at high level. Its contributions to NATO are multifaceted. First, it serves as a strong element in NATO's collective defense, and is providing rapid response capabilities in various operational scenarios. The Corps enhances interoperability among NATO member states, facilitating effective coordination and cooperation in joint military endeavors.

2024 is not only special for NRDC-GR, but also meaningful for another recurrent event. Türkiye and Greece are celebrating the 72nd anniversary of their simultaneous membership in NATO, coinciding with NATO's 75th anniversary. Being integral members of NATO, Türkiye and Greece are contributing significantly to the collective security and defense of the Alliance. Türkiye, strategically located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, has provided important



military bases and played a significant role in NATO operations. Similarly, Greece has offered valuable military capabilities and expertise. Our participation has bolstered NATO's deterrence capabilities and facilitated cooperation in various missions including peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, Türkiye and Greece's membership strengthens NATO's role as a platform for promoting stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Since 2006, 13 Turkish officers have proudly served at the NRDC-GR HQ, enabling interoperability between two countries. Our presence here is a testament to the power of teamwork and the shared commitment to NATO. In the multinational environment of NRDC-GR, our officers contribute not only professional expertise but

also spirit of unity. Along with the other allied personnel our expertise and unwavering dedication have bolstered NRDC-GR's operational effectiveness and promoted regional stability.

In closing, I fully believe that, NRDC-GR's contributions to the collective defense of NATO will continue to grow with support of other Allies.



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Chief Plans A G5  
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## UNITED STATES AND NRDC-GR: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND SHARED VALUES

The United States played a major role in the formation of NATO by the hand of President Harry Truman on the 25th of July, 1949. Following World War II and under the Truman Doctrine, the US strategically shifted from isolationism toward supporting global security, specifically Europe in post-war reconstruction efforts and protection from geo-political adversaries. Since NATO's inception, the US commitment to NATO has remained steadfast.

For almost 75 years, the US has directly worked with 32 Nations within the NATO command and force structures to ensure the defense of Europe through the strongest alliance the world has ever known. The US conducts live, virtual, and constructive tactical training and exercises with NATO forces to create, test and refine regional plans. US Forces are privileged to be invited by European countries to rotate US units of all echelons throughout Europe for collective training and to support host nations in their own national force development.

On that note, the US is proud to be partnered with NRDC-GR celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary through a Memorandum of Understanding between United States European Command and Greece. Over these 20 years, the US has deployed 11 personnel with 30 years of combined service to the NRDC-GR HQ, and



its organization as it existed in other NATO directed forms, by providing Long-Term Planning, Mid-Term Planning, Logistical Planning, Fires and Targeting capacity, US national senior representation, and Liaison with US enablers and entities to coordinate country access and military training integration.

In conclusion, the US considers Greece the cradle of democracy and has modeled itself in large part on ancient Greek culture, an inspiration to nations who cherish freedom, believe in equality, promote education, respect reason, and defend liberties. As the US has stood in support for Greece in the past, so we will in the future. We are honored to celebrate with Greece on their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, National Holidays, Independence Days, and Armed

Services Day events. In kind, NRDC-GR HQ once again honors us on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for the 4<sup>th</sup> US Flag Raising Ceremony and US Independence Day celebration, thus continuing to demonstrate the strength of our US and Greek partnership “to cut the Gordian Knot.”



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G5 DACOS  
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# THE ROLE OF POLITICAL COHESION IN THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF NATO'S STRATEGIC CONCEPT

## Introduction

The integration of the individual into social groups is a human characteristic and remains a pursuit from the early stages of its existence. Each individual approaches a social group and evaluates its suitability, seeking gradual entry into it. The acquisition of this social identity presupposes the awareness by the individual of the value of his participation in a social group, but also the understanding of its importance as a social organization. The importance may come from the emotional cover offered to the individual, the special material and spiritual interest that the individual can gain, the security and prevention of risks, the stability that the person derives from this relationship by freeing him from commitments, but also the satisfaction through the opportunity to contribute to a greater and ultimate goal. Finally, the ideological parameter must not be ignored, i.e. membership of a social group whose members are imbued with common values, high ideals and accepted beliefs. The cohesion of a

team is ensured by all of the above<sup>1</sup>.

Extending this view to the political field, political cohesion can be considered to be the acceptance by all members of a political organization (sometimes military) of the purpose of participating in it, since with its particular values and ideals, it maximizes the prestige and value of an individual member. Political cohesion is a characteristic of liberal democracy. It is essentially an acknowledgement of the rules of the political game through which the norms of legislation and governance of societies are institutionalized and determined based on the law that these societies accept<sup>2</sup>.

## Political cohesion within NATO

The end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War led Western societies to create the North Atlantic Treaty. It is clear from the preamble to the North-Atlantic Treaty that this was not the fundamental declaration of yet another defence alliance. It was much more, since the basic structural component of the alliance was the

common conviction and promise that NATO should first and foremost have as its ultimate desirable state the protection of its member-states by defending the goods and ideals of democracy, individual freedom, the rule of law. All this with the ultimate objective of ensuring peace and prosperity for the people of the Member States against any attempt to challenge them. So beyond the terms of collective defence and cooperative security, NATO has seen itself as a wider security society whose members share common values. These values constitute the concept of NATO's cohesion policy.

Political cohesion should be seen as the key building block of the Alliance. It is the principle on which the edifice rests, but at the same time the good to be protected, in the form of political independence (Article 4 of North-Atlantic Treaty), the specificity of political views and national interests aligned with a view to ensuring allied security. At this point, for 75 years, political cohesion has been the bridge that fills the gap due to national differences

<sup>1</sup> De Cuzzani P, (2019, May 22). *Political Cohesion Friendship and Hostility. Nordicum - Mediterraneum vol 14 n.2.*  
[https://nome.unak.is/wordpress/volume-14-no-2-2019/conference-proceedings-volume-14-no-2-2019/\\_\\_trashed/](https://nome.unak.is/wordpress/volume-14-no-2-2019/conference-proceedings-volume-14-no-2-2019/__trashed/)

<sup>2</sup> Bellamy, Richard and Bonotti, Matteo and Castiglione, Dario and Lacey, Joseph and Näsström, Sofia and Owen, David and White, Jonathan (2018) *The democratic production of political cohesion: partisanship, institutional design and life form. Contemporary Political Theory. ISSN 1470-8914 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41296-018-00285-w>*

and contributes catalytically to the cultivation of the allied culture which is constantly strengthening making the edifice more solid and strong.

## Historic Reference

In the decades of the Cold War, political cohesion was a given by the existence of a rival coalition that professed different principles and possessed significant military capabilities. Therefore, the challenges in the field of political cohesion were limited and all member countries were aligned on a common line, with security as the ultimate goal.

The fall of actual existing socialism, the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union was a turning point in the evolution of the Alliance. The end of the Cold War may have created opportunities in the early years for NATO to expand by admitting new countries, but the lack of a common threat was a direct challenge to political cohesion. The alliance's survival after the challenge of eliminating the threat is one of the Alliance's most important successes. A success that should be treated with the same value of the fact that the Alliance for 50 years has guaranteed the security and survival of its member

states. The 1991 Strategic Concept characteristically stipulated that the Alliance would remain in place to ensure strategic balance in Europe. At that point in time, the void from the lack of an obvious threat was filled by the need to protect the political ideas and values of the Western world. The power vacuum created by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact created conditions of strategic imbalance and possible future opportunities for unspecified actors<sup>3</sup>. The 1991 Strategic Concept, the first published since 1967, was typical of the transformation the alliance was seeking. For the first time, the concepts of crisis management and conflict prevention were introduced, marking the eclipse of NATO's role as a counterweight to the Warsaw Pact<sup>4</sup>. In its place, it was highlighted NATO's intention to remain a key actor in an unknown, volatile and highly unstable security environment under the influence of the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which sparked multiple political, social and ethnic conflicts.

The political alignment and cohesion of member states has kept the alliance alive on its way into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to face new challenges. A new threat has taken shape, more

insidious and difficult to detect but just as lethal and offensive to the values of Western civilization, which was left out of the provisions of the 1999 Strategic Concept. The threat of international terrorism and religious intolerance taking advantage of globalization and social oppression<sup>5</sup>, has posed a strong challenge to the Alliance and its efforts to foster broad civil-military cooperation with the objective of pacifying and eliminating sources of tension in various potential hotbeds worldwide. NATO has demonstrated a strong ability to adapt to the challenges of new threats, defending the interests of alliance members worthily. The 2010 Strategic Doctrine included cooperative security among NATO's main objectives and tasks<sup>6</sup>, offering with its other provisions the alignment of civilian objectives and military capabilities, investing in cooperation with Russia<sup>7</sup>.

The failure to find common ground with Russia, the latter's emergence as a threat with unprecedented aggression with both the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the unprovoked attack of 2022 to Ukraine, led NATO to a radical revision of its Strategic Concept. In addition to strengthening procedures in line with the provisions

<sup>3</sup> *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept (1991)*, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_23847.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm)

<sup>4</sup> *Necas P, Terem, Kelemen M. (2009, December 15). From Washington to Lisbon: A new NATO strategic concept. Obrana a strategie (Defence & Strategy) vol 9 n.2, p 50. DOI: 10.3849/1802-7199.09.2009.02.049-060*

<sup>5</sup> *Ferreira Nunes Isabella, (2001, June 30). The transatlantic link and the European Defence and Security Identity in the Mediterranean context, NATO-EAPC Individual Fellowship Ref. IP/D16/2000/006. <https://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/nunes.pdf>*

<sup>6</sup> *Strategic Concept 2010*, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_82705.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_82705.htm)

<sup>7</sup> *Kamp Karl-Heinz, (2010, April). NATO's strategy after the Lisbon summit. Atlantisch Perspectief, 2010, Vol. 34, No. 8 (2010), pp. 4-7. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48580839>*

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of Article 4 of the North-Atlantic Treaty, the revival of the possibility of requiring the Alliance to act in accordance with Article 5 has now set new standards. Cooperative security moved away from the optimistic approach of cooperation with Russia and laid the foundations for new active initiatives aimed at cultivating partnerships globally and in various geographic areas of interest<sup>8</sup>. In this way, the Alliance, in addition to the military capabilities it is already developing, armed with diplomacy, economic cooperation, but above all its values and ideals, is forging appropriate alliances within a global bipolar but multifaceted security environment, so that in the future it will be able to face any threat, expressed or emerging. The 2022 Strategic Concept is a return to the tradition and core of the alliance's policies as they were shaped in the early stages of the Cold War. In addition, however, based on the new global economic data, the capabilities of member countries, the Concept is a revision of the role of some member countries, providing for the sharp strengthening of their military capabilities (such as Poland, the Baltic and the Scandinavian countries), but also the recognition by all and the agreement on a joint financial contribution so that the

Alliance acquires its most balanced form since its foundation<sup>9</sup>.

All these achievements came through political understanding, exchange of views, intense diplomatic activity within the framework of political cohesion. Therefore, it is understood that the intention of member countries to join the alliance in order to put aside bilateral differences in order to achieve the required understanding and facilitate its transformation, is the key asset of the Alliance that ensures its effectiveness and ultimately its sustainability, making it to date the most successful in world history<sup>10</sup>.

## The role of NRDC-GR and how it serves the political will of the Alliance

On this path created by the main projects of collective defence and cooperative security for 75 years, NRDC-GR is a powerful tool that has fully served NATO's goals, ideals and planning since its establishment. Its versatility, cooperative spirit, professionalism, strong military capabilities testify to the Alliance's commitment to ideals and values, putting military capabilities at the service of its political imperatives.

The continuous training, the successful undertaking of multifaceted

roles and missions through strenuous efforts so that it always remains valid and capable in accordance with the requirements of NATO Plans and the Strategic Concepts in force at the time, demonstrates that NRDC-GR is not a headquarters covering national objectives. It is a headquarters that harmoniously weaves the common destiny of the states represented and cultivates cooperation and a common political course to secure our common interests.

Building on this strong legacy of 20 years of allied action, our Headquarters is able to face with optimism, courage and anticipation new challenges, new threats and to stand dynamically as a stronghold protecting in its area of responsibility the ideals of freedom and democracy.

We Are NATO  
Capable Now  
Ready for Tomorrow



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NRDC-GR

<sup>8</sup> Piatkewicz D, Szenes Z, Falkowski A, Merheim-Eyre I, (2021, October 4). Core Tasks and Principles in NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept. Atlantic Forum. <https://www.atlantic-forum.com/our-views/core-tasks-and-principles-in-natos-2022-strategic-concept>

<sup>9</sup> Bolstad G, Jakobsen E, (2022 May). NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept Change, Continuity and Implications. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. [https://www.nupi.no/content/pdf\\_preview/25339/file/NUPI\\_Policy\\_Brief\\_5\\_2022\\_BolstadJakobsen.pdf](https://www.nupi.no/content/pdf_preview/25339/file/NUPI_Policy_Brief_5_2022_BolstadJakobsen.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Vergun D, (2020, December 10). NATO's Success Depends on Ability to Change as Needed. US Department of Defense. <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/article/article/2443415/natos-success-depends-on-ability-to-change-as-needed/>

## 20 YEARS OF EXERCISES: THE WAY TO SUCCESS

2024 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Greece (NRDC-GR) Headquarters. During all those years, NRDC-GR HQ has walked a long path on its way towards undertaking various roles and missions and succeeding multiple activations. The milestone venues of NRDC-GR, most of them in the form of exercises, were: its activation in 2005, when it achieved its Full Operational Capability, the successful Combat Readiness Evaluation during GORDIAN KNOT 08 in Crete, the undertaking of the NATO Response Force Land Component Command role in 2012, the upgrade to HRFL status in 2015, as a Joint Operations Land HQ in TRIDENT JAGUAR 18 and, finally, in 2021, when NRDC-GR assumed the role of a Multi Corps Land Component Command.

Before starting, credit should be given to a particular group of people, a precursor to NRDC-GR, located in Larisa, Greece, who, for almost a decade, in the 90s, fought their own battle to keep track and contribute

to as many as possible NATO Southern Region activities. These very few men, under the banner of First Hellenic Army/ Land South Central (LSC), paved the way, for what was to become NRDC-GR, and set the basis for its future evolution we witness today. Consequently, NRDC-GR was activated in 2001, on the premises of the Hellenic C' Army Corps, one of the oldest formations of the modern Hellenic Army, adopting the same emblem and motto "TO CUT THE GORDIAN KNOT". The Headquarters was granted the International Status in 2004, and, at the end of 2005, the North Atlantic Council accepted Greece's offer of a Deployable Corps - size HQ with a Low Readiness status, named NATO Deployable Corps – Greece, as part of the general structural changes of the Alliance at that period. In June 2005, the Headquarters conducted Exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 05", in

which it declared its Full Operational Capability as a Graduated Readiness Force Headquarters. Later on, in June 2008, during Exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 08", a Combat Readiness Evaluation with High Readiness criteria was conducted, where the Headquarters was deployed away from its peacetime location, in the island of Crete. In October 2011, exercise "BRILLIANT LEDGER 11" was completed, through which the Headquarters was evaluated and certified as a Land Component Command for the NATO Response Force 2012. In November 2011, the Headquarters conducted Exercise "STEADFAST JUNCTURE 11", where the NATO Response Force package was certified by SHAPE, along with the Joint Level Headquarters in various locations across Europe. After its successful certification, NRDC-GR undertook the NATO Response Force Land Component Command



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role, for the first time, throughout 2012. In March 2012, during the NATO Response Force Standby period, an Activation Rehearsal was executed, aiming to demonstrate the Headquarters' capability of achieving the synchronization of the internal activities that derive from a NATO Response Force activation. In December 2012, exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 12" was conducted during the NATO Response Force Standby period in order to maintain such a level of proficiency and capabilities.

In November 2013, in "GORDIAN KNOT 13", NRDC-GR examined its Initial Entry Capabilities within a War Fighting scenario and in December 2014, exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 14" took place, where we underwent our national High Readiness Force evaluation. The exercise was based on a war fighting scenario and provided the opportunity for the Headquarters to test the Command & Control concept, as well as the decision - making process. "GORDIAN KNOT 14", was embedded in Exercise "TRIDENT LANCE 14", which was the venue for the declaration of the Full Operational Capability of LAND COMMAND. Our Headquarters participated as Corps HQ, subordinate to LANDCOM HQ.

In June 2015, exercise "GORDIAN KNOT 15" was conducted, with the participation of personnel from 20 nations and 40 NATO and national Headquarters. The Commander of LAND COMMAND, appointed by SHAPE as Chief Evaluator and NATO Senior Monitor, verified NRDC-GR as a Combat Ready High Readiness



*Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2015*

Force Headquarters, as a result of a very intense and successful Combat Readiness Evaluation during which the HQ managed to achieve excellent results in all evaluation areas. As a consequence, "GORDIAN KNOT 15" (GOKT15), was the main training activity of NRDC-GR HQ for 2015, focusing on Corps warfare skills and capabilities, under the activation of the collective defense of the Alliance and Article 5, and was executed from 02 to 12 Jun 2015. The overall aim of the exercise was to sustain and further enhance the capability of NRDC-GR as an HRF Corps, to plan and conduct war fighting operations, and to implement the NRDC-HQ Command and Control (C2) concept by deploying three different CPs in three different locations. Besides the total of the Crisis Establishment personnel, all affiliated and dedicated units were deployed in support, as part of the EXERCISE CONTROL (EXCON) organization.

The objectives of the exercise were, amongst others: to train

NRDC-GR C2 and the relevant concepts, the operational planning and operations preparation at tactical and operational level, to exercise tactical command and control over subordinate units in a high intensity scenario, to plan and practice CIS deployment and management procedures in a comprehensive Future Mission Network environment and to plan and conduct NRDC-GR CPs full deployment, installation and sustainment on temporary infrastructure.

During the Execution Phase, the HQ deployed all its CPs: the MAIN CP was deployed in Assiros area, REAR/ALTERNATE CP was deployed in Sindos, and the Home Base Operations Centre (HBOC) remained in barracks in Thessaloniki. Air Operations Coordination Center (AOCC) was deployed and integrated in the C2 system. This was a fully deployed C2 system, including exhaustive real life support functions. The full Crisis Establishment (CE) took part in the exercise, following





*Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2015*

smooth preparation and integration. During the whole execution phase, a Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) team, located in the EXCON area was operating and conducting its own job and on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June, presented to NRDC-GR Command Group the results of the CREVAL.

Exercise GOKT 15 fully achieved its aims for excellence and the exercise objectives as a whole. The successful end-state of the exercise, the “COMBAT READY” declaration as the result of the CREVAL that was conducted by LANDCOM and monitored by SHAPE, reflected the high level of professionalism of each personnel and was the decisive point in meeting the exercise aim, strengthening the bonds with the Affiliated and Dedicated Units. Their outstanding contribution paved the way to successful conclusion of NRDC-GR HQ main effort for 2015. As the then NRDC-GR Commander, Lieutenant General Ilias LEONTARIS had stated at that time, that was a

milestone for the evolution of this HQ towards Joint Command and Control Capabilities (JC2C) and as a useful tool to secure the commitment of Greece to the Alliance.

On December the 7<sup>th</sup>, NRDC-GR reached the end of a long road map; the national evaluation as a Joint Task Force HQ (JTF HQ). Gordian Knot 2017 (GOKN17) has been one of the most challenging exercises carried out by NRDC-GR in the recent years. The exercise was executed in Thessaloniki from the 27<sup>th</sup> of November to the 07<sup>th</sup> of December.

More than 1150 Staff Officers (SOs) had been deployed in Assiros and Sindos, including 181 allied SOs from 16 Nations. GOKN17 was planned and conducted as a Command Post Exercise (CPX) using a Small Joint Operation Land Heavy [SJO (L)] scenario.

NRDC-GR has operated as a JTF HQ, in a NATO Non-Article 5, operational environment. The aim of the exercise was to nationally evaluate the HQ and its ability to meet the JTF HQ standards and requirements. The exercise was designed to illustrate most of the capabilities of the JTF HQ according to the evaluation plan. The evaluation was conducted successfully by the Hellenic National Defense General Staff which acted as Director of Evaluation (DIREVAL) and declared its Full Operational Capability as a JTF HQ, towards the NATO evaluation. NRDC-GR's High Control (HICON), supporting commands and subordinate HQ/Commands were portrayed through response cells (RCs). The evaluation demonstrated that NRDC-GR was fully capable of planning and conducting an SJO(L)



*Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2017*

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as a JTFHQ certifying its high level of professionalism and capabilities. Moving forward from GOKT17 and the national evaluation, another challenge would arise; the NATO/SHAPE evaluation under the form of a new exercise; TRIDENT JAGUAR 18.

Exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 2018 (TRJR 18) was an Allied Command Transformation-sponsored Computer Assisted, Command Post Exercise that trained and evaluated Multinational Joint Headquarters (MN JHQ) Ulm and NRDC-GR HQ in the planning and conduct of crisis response operations in a Small Joint Operation (Land heavy).

The aim of the exercise was to train, exercise and evaluate NRDC-GR in planning and conducting a Non Article 5 Crisis Response Small Joint Operations Land (SJO L) of limited complexity, under direct command of Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), in a military, civilian and asymmetric threat environment



*Exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 2018*

involving combat incidents with high intensity moments. This exercise served as a venue to certify NRDC-GR for JHQ stand-by period as agreed in the Long Term Rotation Plan (LTRP). TRIDENT JAGUAR (TRJR18) has been the most challenging exercise carried out by NRDC-GR, so far. The exercise took place in Thessaloniki area from 02 till 11 Jun 2018. 1192 Staff Officers (SOs) deployed in Assiros and Sindos, including allied SOs from 18 Countries. The biggest part of Exercise Control (EXCON) was deployed in Joint Warfare Center

(JWC) in Stavanger Norway. 86 SOs from NRDC-GR and 304 SOs NATO and contracted civilians from 21 Nations simulated the higher Command, the Units on the ground, the Opposing Forces (OPFOR) and created the challenging environment for the training audience in Thessaloniki to apply maximum performance in a realistic way. For the purposes of the exercise, the Main CP (Assiros) set up two big camps building 198 tents and 64 containers providing 6.500m<sup>2</sup> of workspace, 29500m<sup>2</sup> of camouflage net and coordinated the preparation of 13000 meal portions. CIS and Signals Brigade, laid 58 Km of cable, more than 2 Km of fiber optics, set up almost 1000 laptops and 49 servers. Deployable Network Operations Communication (DNOC) transported and built EXCON information system services. During the Execution Phase of the Exercise, a major part of EXCON was deployed in JWC installations. More than 200 pax had travelled to Norway from almost all NATO community. For two days, during EXCON Training, players simulating the troops on the ground



*Exercise GORDIAN KNOT 2017*

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*Exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 2018*

called Response Cells (RCs), sat next to Joint Theater Level Simulation (JTLS) simulation software operators validated their assets and studied their way through scenario. Senior Mentors, JEMM managers, RC chiefs, OPFOR players, tested injects while the Training Audience (TA) in Thessaloniki optimized their procedures preparing to counter the biggest challenge the HQ ever faced. Last arrivals completed the training and evaluation teams enhanced by COM JWC and senior mentors. On the 2nd of June, by means of a STARTEX message from JWC, more than 400 injects were distributed, caused many contacts, meetings and boards, synchronized with both Thessaloniki and Stavanger battle rhythms. The next exercise days demonstrated the preparedness, the skills and the flexibility of NRDC-GR SOs, challenged the procedures and proved the usefulness of trainers' advice and the good will and collaborative spirit of the evaluators. The HQ did well, as

concluded in SHAPE evaluation report. NRDC-GR was a JHQ at stand-by period, as recommended in evaluation document: "NRDC-GR has successfully demonstrated the necessary capabilities to execute Joint Task Force Command and Control of a SJO (L) for the JHO standby period beginning July 2018".

(STLE 21) was a SHAPE sponsored land domain Computer Assisted Exercise/Command Post Exercise (CPX/CAX) that trained NRDC-GR and LANDCOM Deployable Land Elements (DLE) in the MC LCC role as well as four Corps HQs (NRDC-ESP, ARRC, MNC NE and US V Corps) at MJO+ scale against a peer adversary. There were two levels of Training Audience: NRDC-ESP was the Primary one and MC LCC (NRDC-GR and LANDCOM DLE) and ARRC were the Secondary ones. STLE 21 also served as an evaluation venue for NRDC-ESP (CREVAL) as a War fighting Corps Headquarters. It was executed within existing NATO and National Communications and Information Systems (CIS) infrastructure and also used deployable communication and information systems (DCIS) HQ assets, non CIS HQ assets and NATO-owned deployable infrastructure assets.

"STEADFAST LEDA 2021"

STLE 21 aimed at training NRDC-



*Exercise STEADFAST LEDA 2021*

# 20years NRDC-GR

GR as MC LCC and, simultaneously, NRDC-ESP and ARRC in conducting high intensity operations against a peer adversary in the Land domain in a Joint environment. It was also focused on enhancing interoperability at Corps and Divisions level based on common use of agreed Allied land doctrine, tactics and procedures and on identifying future Land Domain (MJO+) Training Requirements.

The Exercise Objectives were to command & control multiple Divisions from deployed Corps Main HQ in order to conduct offensive operations, to engage a peer adversary in land operations supported by joint actions with a coordinated and synchronized use of large scale Corps maneuvers, fire support and information activities. Moreover, to plan the replacement and rotation of the assigned forces according to the operations tempo of the operation, to plan, coordinate and execute the timely support and sustainment of Corps assigned forces by ensuring all necessary and demanding activities of the Logistic Plan. Finally, to protect own Forces and freedom of action against peer adversary, inform and support the Commanders' Decision Making and Corps Planning Processes, Tactical activities and Common Operational Picture.

Exercise planning for STLE21 began many months ago. There were many meetings, VTCs and production of documents. A strict planning timeline set by JFTC was followed. Having LO's from the subordinate/War Fighting Corps was a huge success and also allowed all of us to develop



*Exercise STEADFAST LEDA 2021*

a common understanding of what MC LCC is and how it interacts with the other HQs. Following the correct and commonly accepted procedures was one of the best practices identified by all the involved HQs and verified the need to be in contact with your "matching" branches in the WF Corps and ensure they understand what is required of them. As far as the scenario was concerned, it was very challenging to see that the scenarios were getting more and more realistic and they are more than helpful in providing the best possible training conditions for the audiences, thus resulting in the best possible results. NRDC-GR produced documentation and procedures from scratch, planned and executed a complex exercise for the untested MC LCC concept and it ensured that at least for now, NRDC-GR was the expert on all things MC LCC related in NATO. Therefore, from the NRDC-GR perspective, STLE 21 was a complete success.

The recent developments in Europe and elsewhere are a clear proof of the rapidly evolving security environment we live in. Therefore, it is crystal clear that we should never rest but be vigilant, and keep on

training and educating ourselves as well as seeking excellence in our role and mission. NRDC-GR HQ works towards this direction, by constantly preparing and making itself available to the exercises taking place in Greece or abroad and/or hosting training events and activities. For NRDC-GR HQ, striving for perfection never ends, and this has been its goal since the very beginning.



Vasileios PARATHYRAS  
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Chief Lessons Learned G7  
NRDC-GR/PLANS DIV

## NRDC-GR G8 BRANCH: ENSURING FINANCIAL INTEGRITY AND NATO COMPLIANCE

The motto “Spending is beneficial for weapons” stems from the speech of Archidamus, King of Sparta, in the church of Lacedaemon, shortly before the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. In his speech, Archidamus states that”... the Athenians have allies as numerous as our own, and allies that pay tribute, and war is a matter not so much of arms as of money, which makes arms of use. And this is more than ever true in a struggle between a continental and maritime power. First, then, let us provide money, and not allow ourselves to be carried away by the talk of our allies before we have done so: as we shall have the largest share of responsibility for the consequences be they good or bad, we have also a right to a tranquil inquiry respecting them.”

**Mission:**NRDC-GR/G-8(Finance) Branch staffed mainly by officers from Hellenic Military Academy of Combat Support Officers (economic sector) located in Thessaloniki. G8’s staff provides timely overall funding and contracting support for the budgeting, requisitioning, safeguarding, accounting, reporting, auditing and management of all international and multinational funds delegated from respective sources both in peacetime and operation in according with NATO Financial Regulations (NFRs) and mission requirements with integrity and transparency.

«Εἰσὶ γὰρ καὶ ἐκεῖνοις οὐκ ἐλάσσους χρήματα φέροντες ξύμμαχοι, καὶ ἔστιν ὁ πόλεμος οὐχ ὄπλων τὸ πλεόν ἀλλὰ δαπάνης, δι’ ἣν τὰ ὄπλα ὠφελεῖ, ἄλλως τε καὶ ἡπειρώταις πρὸς θαλασσίους. πορισώμεθα οὖν πρῶτον αὐτήν, καὶ μὴ τοῖς τῶν ξυμμάχων λόγοις πρότερον ἐπαιρώμεθα, οἵπερ δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀποβαινόντων τὸ πλεόν ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα τῆς αἰτίας ἔξομεν, οὗτοι καὶ καθ’ ἡσυχίαν τι αὐτῶν προϊδωμεν»

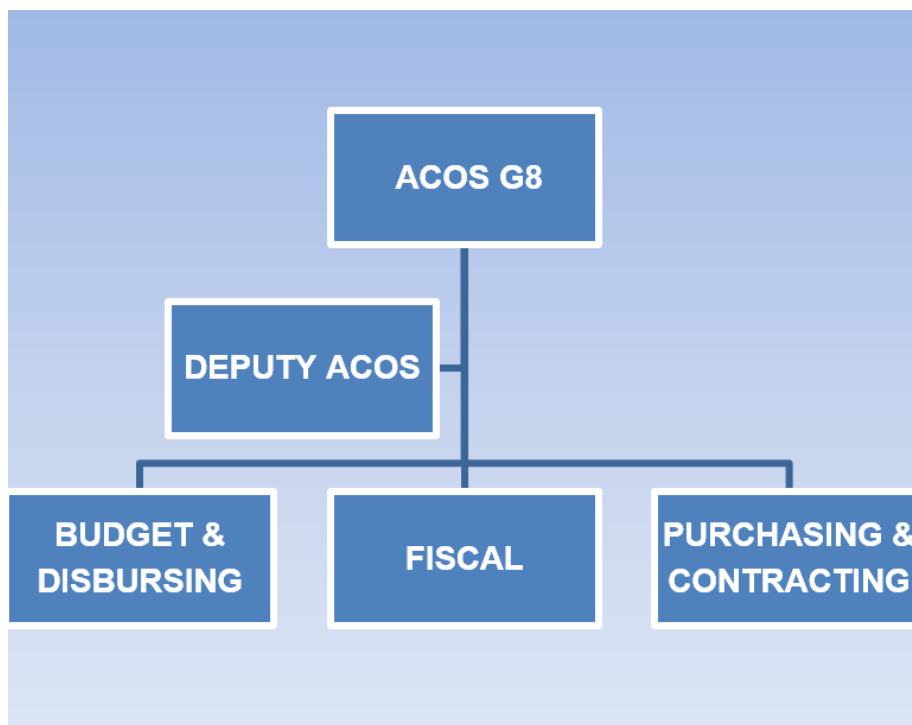
*Thucydides, Peloponnesian War, Volume A’, chapter 83*

**Organization Chart:** G8 Branch is responsible to ensure that commitments and payments are issued according to NFRs and other financial regulations. The G8 Branch consists of individual subsections, each of which constitutes a special cycle of work during the financial year.

The **BUDGET AND DISBURSING SECTION** is responsible for managing the budgetary planning and disbursing functions.

The **PURCHASING AND CONTRACTING SECTION** is responsible for all the matters concerning contracting and purchasing and for the provision of the appropriate reports-returns.

The **FISCAL SECTION**



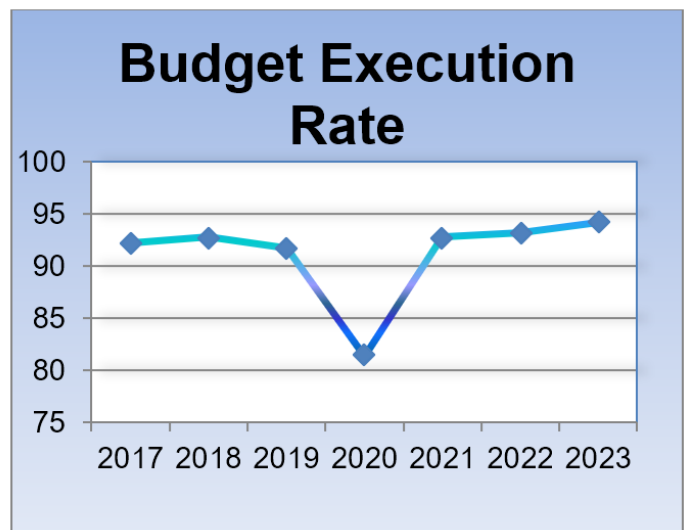
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• CIS</li> <li>• Admin Costs</li> <li>• Logistical Support</li> <li>• Geographic Support</li> <li>• Consumables/Office Management</li> <li>• Vehicular transport</li> </ul> <p><b>FRAMEWORK NATION</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises</li> <li>• Travel costs</li> <li>• Tuition fees</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Representation</li> </ul> <p><b>SHARED FUNDING</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission related costs</li> <li>• Transportation &amp; incremental costs for participation in SACEUR's validation exercises</li> </ul> <p><b>NATO COMMON FUNDING</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel cost</li> <li>• Per diem</li> <li>• DTY accommodation</li> <li>• Special equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>NATIONAL FUNDING</b></p> 
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**Funding Sources:** The fundamental funding principle for NATO-led operations is that nations absorb any and all costs associated with their participation in such operations (“costs lie where they fall”). All activities undertaken and resources used by NATO forces will be funded, individually and/or collectively. Such funding may be provided from a number of sources e.g. National, Multinational and NATO common funding in order the Operational Budget to be composed.

**Shared Budget:** The multinational Headquarters NRDC-GR is supported, for its various actions, in the contributions of the participating Nations (Participant Nations) which thus function as “stakeholders” in the Organization’s operating capital

Financial Year	Budget Execution Rate
2017	92.16%
2018	92.76%
2019	91.71%
2020	81.38%
2021	92.76%
2022	93.17%
2023	94.13%



(Shared Budget). Receivables from Nations consist of the contributions of the Participant Nations to the Shared Budget (SB) approved during the Senior Resources Committee (SRC) meeting that is held before the beginning of every fiscal year. Those contributions are recognized as

receivables when officially requested from the Nations via the respective Cash-Call Letters. The contributions are paid in two (2) installments by the Participant Nations via bank transfers. Below is depicted how the Budget Execution Rate has fluctuated during the years:

**2024** is a recalibration year for the NRDC-GR, from the current MCLCC role to a War fighting Corps (WFC) one. Current economic circumstances are marked by high inflation rate and as a result, the Shared Budget 2024 amounts are increased by approximately 7% compared to 2023.



*“NATO BUDGET OFFICERS’ CONFERENCE 2017”, 22-24 March 2017, Thessaloniki*

**IBAN:** It is worth noting that, during the years, branch’s activities has been evaluated - audited by the International Board of Auditors (IBAN) for NATO. The financial inspection of the Headquarter aims the examination of previous year’s annual financial statements. For the implementation of the audit, the International Auditing Standards were applied as well as the standards that have been adopted based on the structure of IBAN. In particular, the Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss, Cash Flow, PC Execution, Credit Transfer Statements as well as the Appendices of the financial statements of the years under review. According to previous final audit reports, the Board issued excellent opinions on the Financial Statements

of the Headquarters about the years of the inspection period. Special mention was made by the committee to the effort of the Headquarters, to strengthen the transparency and control of the financial processes through the application of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). G8 staff along with their counterparts in IBAN has accomplished a very successful and demanding audit providing their professionalism and dedication to NATO’s level of ambition.

**Conferences and Meetings:** NRDC - GREECE/G8 Branch, in all these years, has organized multitude of activities and meetings in its base. The most important ones are: «Senior

Resources Committee Meeting 2006» Dec 06, «Budget & Fiscal Officers Conference 2013», «Financial Management of Multinational Military Organizations in the Context of Resources Restrictions: «New Challenges and Perspectives» Oct 15, «Financial Controllers Conference» Sep 16, «NATO Budget & Officers Conference» (in coordination with KFOR/J8) Mar 17, «SAGE Working & Training for GRF(L) HQs» (SAGE ERP 300) Jun 17, «NFS GRF(L) HQs Senior Resources Committee Meeting 2018» Nov 18, «BOFOPO 2019 Conference for GRF(L) HQs» Mar 19.

**Trainings:** NRDC-GR/G-8 staff is periodically trained in different

## 20years NRDC-GR

trainings in order to follow the changes in the financial sector. In this way the accounting and financial management skills and abilities of G8 personnel is strengthened. They also educate personnel on resource management processes and provide them useful information and guidance about the way NATO financial procedures are developed, assessed and revised through the risk management process. G8 personnel have participated in: IPSAS (International Public Service Accounting Standards) course for finance professionals, IFRS (International Financial Regulation Standards), Project Management for Finance Professionals, Resource Management Education Program, ACO Contingency Contracting Course, MAC (Management Accounting and Costing) and IA (Internal Control).

**Microsoft Data Base (MDB)-SAGE 300 ERP:** MDB software was the first software used by G8 personnel (Fiscal & Disbursing), only for recording financial data. Accounting books were kept simultaneously with MDB software until 2015. In 2015, updated software began to be used. Since then, SAGE 300 ERP is an Enterprise Recourses Planning Software that G8 uses to manage day-to-day business activities such as accounting, procurement, project management and it is in compliance with respective NATO rules and regulations. Also it is used for the management and monitoring of its Shared Budget. Since 2015, NRDC-GR has implemented SAGE 300



*“BOFOPO 2019” Conference, 12-14 March 2019, Thessaloniki*

ERP as its main financial software. G8 Branch is planning to upgrade to the new web based version of SAGE (SAGE INTACCT) so as the platform to be updated.

**POS:** Since 2017 and in order to keep up with the international standard processes to the existing military ones, G8 has put into operation the use of POS to make transactions faster and more efficient. G8 is trying to harmonize and familiarize with the new tools and techniques that could be used when dealing with military projects in the future.

**Conclusion:** To summarize, G8 Branch’s goal apart from its funding and contracting functions in times of peace, crisis or war is to maintain the recognition of the Board (IBAN) as well as the confidence of the alliance. Trust among Alliance members is the main factor for balancing relations in the context of the smooth operation of

an HQ, a fact which is the main goal of the department’s staff. In this way accountability and transparency is ensured.



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## HELLENIC NAVY'S VITAL ROLE IN NRDC-GR: ENHANCING MARITIME COORDINATION AND JOINT OPERATIONS

From the foundation of NRDC-GR HQ, the contribution of the Hellenic Navy was implemented by the engagement of Maritime Operations Coordination Centre (MOCC), according North Atlantic Council (NAC) decision International Military Staff Memorandum (IMSM) 144-01, Feb 2001.

In general, MOCC serves as a link between the NRDC-GR HQ and the MCC HQ (afloat) or HRF(M) HQ or Naval Force which supports or cooperates with NRDC-GR HQ, in order to gain and keep mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action. It presents the Allied Maritime Component Commander's capabilities to the NRDC-GR Commander.

Throughout all these years, the MOCC personnel has contributed to the preparation and execution of the annual NRDC-GR HQ exercises, undertaking the role of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), in order to (IOT) promote jointness. Furthermore, MOCC pursues, obtains and retains sufficient structure and respective training, focusing to the specific sectors that concern a Land-centric HQ (Amph Ops, Air Missile Defence, Mar Air Ops). Basic tool upon these tasks is the engagement and 24/7 functionality and availability of the Maritime Command and Control Information System (MCCIS) server,



*"Exercise GOKN12 – Old structure manning. MOCC Personnel working on MSA (Maritime Situation Awareness)"*



*"Exercise TRJR18 – MOCC Personnel coordinating maritime operations with MCC"*

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providing Maritime Situational Awareness to all NRDC-GR HQ aspects.

With the late implementation of MDO protocols, MOCC will continue fulfill its task updated where and when necessary, paving the way and enhancing the Maritime Land Integration (MLI) vision.



Ioannis LEGAKIS  
OF-5 HN  
Chief MOCC  
NRDC-GR



*"Exercise GOKN23 – MOCC internal briefing, processing RMP (Real Maritime Picture) through MCCIS (Maritime Command and Control Information System)"*



*"Exercise GOKN23 – MOCC Personnel"*



# NRDC-GR HERALD



**NRDC-GR**  
**Herald**



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