

# NATO and the Partnership for Peace

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**D**uring 1989 and 1990, as the hold of the Soviet Union and the authority of communist regimes evaporated across the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies attempted to make sense of this new situation. There was unease that the old certainties of the Cold War era were being swept away without any guarantees that their replacements would be more comfortable to live with. There was disquiet that the security linkage with the United States, through NATO, might no longer be sustainable or, at least, might be substantially more difficult to sustain than it had been. The complete dissolution of the Soviet Union was barely conceivable at that time. Allies were also wrestling with the complexities of extremely challenging arms control agreements, while also trying to define the wider role of the Atlantic Alliance in a Europe where the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe and, subsequently, the European Union would also be significant political players.<sup>2</sup> As they contemplated these uncertainties, the idea began to take hold that the Alliance had to provide practical assistance and institutional structures to support emerging democratic institutions and states in resisting the almost inevitable pressures that could emerge and drag them back toward the authoritarian practices to which they had been accustomed for a generation, or more.

In July 1990, in their London Summit Declaration, NATO Heads of State and Government extended the “hand of friendship” to the countries of the East that had been their adversaries in the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> They also noted that NATO would adapt and could “help build the structures of a more united continent, supporting security and stability with the strength of our shared faith in democracy, the rights of the individual, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.”<sup>4</sup> They also proposed that the countries of the former Warsaw Pact establish regular diplomatic liaison with the Atlantic Alliance.

At the November 1991 Rome Summit, NATO leaders “applauded” the “rejection of totalitarian communist rule” by the peoples of Central and Eastern European states.<sup>5</sup> They pledged support in their steps toward reform and promised “practical assistance to help them succeed in this difficult transition.”<sup>6</sup> They also invited the foreign ministers of these countries, including the newly independent Baltic States, to meet with Alliance foreign ministers the following month to inaugurate a new North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) that would “focus on security and related issues where Allies can offer their experience and expertise, such as defence planning, democratic concepts of civilian-military relations.”<sup>7</sup> During the course of that inaugural meeting on December 20,

Ambassador Afanassievsky, representing the Soviet Union, requested that all references to the Soviet Union (which would formally dissolve itself six days later) be deleted from the official statement of the meeting and that he now only represented the Russian Federation.<sup>8</sup>

While the NACC helped build confidence by providing opportunities for multilateral political consultation and cooperation in the early 1990s, it became clear that many of the newly democratic countries of Europe wished to fully integrate into European institutions, such as NATO, that had been closed to them during the Cold War. This was a response to clear and understandable security concerns, but was also seen as a badge of “respectability” demonstrating that they had left behind their communist past. These pressures could not be ignored, even though the most pressing issue for NATO at this time was its growing involvement in support of a struggling United Nations, in trying to ameliorate the effects of the bloody conflicts that had broken out in the Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in particular.

The January 1994 Brussels NATO Summit—while also focusing on measures to contain the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and adjusting NATO military structures to be better able to support the planned emerging European Security and Defence Identity—made one crucial policy statement and inaugurated a new process that would fundamentally affect the development and dynamic of the Alliance for the next two decades. There was an unambiguous commitment to accept new members into NATO: “We expect and would welcome NATO expansion that would reach to democratic states to our East.”<sup>9</sup> This was linked to the new Partnership for Peace (PfP) process, a concept that had been developed by Ambassador Charles W. Freeman, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Regional Security Affairs (subsequently International Security Affairs), and Joseph Kruzal, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe.<sup>10</sup> The Summit Declaration stated:

*We have decided to launch an immediate and practical programme that will transform the relationship between NATO and participating states. This new programme goes beyond dialogue and cooperation to forge a real partnership - a Partnership for Peace. We invite the other states participating in the NACC, and other CSCE countries able and willing to contribute to this programme, to join with us in this Partnership. Active participation in the Partnership for Peace will play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO.*<sup>11</sup>

PfP was to be an essential component of association with NATO for any country that wanted to become a member, but it also provided a framework in which other countries could develop a relationship with NATO to the extent and at the speed they wished.

One major component of PfP focused on developing military interoperability between individual partner countries and those of NATO, but it also emphasized the importance of measures that form the bedrock of what is now called defense institution building (DIB).<sup>12</sup> In an article published the month after the Summit, the late Les Aspin (U.S. Secretary of Defense when PfP was launched and who had presented the idea to NATO Defense

Minister colleagues at their meeting in October 1993) noted that “importantly, the partner will also demonstrate that it intends to achieve civilian control of its military and make its defence budgets and policies transparent - that is, making them visible to its citizenry.”<sup>13</sup> This tied in closely to the aims of the George C. Marshall Center, opened by Aspin and the then German Defense Minister Volker Ruhe in June 1993. The center’s first Director, Dr. Alvin Bernstein, described it as focusing on “apolitical military under civilian oversight and the defence priorities necessary for the maintenance of a stable government.”<sup>14</sup>

PfP had several basic requirements: signature by a partner of the common Framework Document (the first two objectives of which were transparency in defense planning and budgeting and democratic control of the armed forces); submission of a Presentation Document (setting out the main areas of cooperation with NATO in which the partner country was interested); and the development of an Individual Partnership Programme between NATO and the partner country detailing the specific activities in which the partner wished to participate.<sup>15</sup> However the PfP concept needed considerably more detail. Much of this was drawn from feedback from briefing teams that visited potential partner countries in the months after the Brussels Summit. This information was then considered by the new Political-Military Steering Committee established in NATO to develop PfP.

Also missing from the original PfP prospectus was the promised planning and review process that “the members of the North Atlantic Alliance will develop with the other subscribing states...to provide a basis for identifying and evaluating forces and capabilities that might be made available by them for multinational training, exercises, and operations in conjunction with Alliance forces.”<sup>16</sup> The importance of such a planning and review process derived from the experience of NATO force planning, which was initiated in 1952 and was regarded, despite regular complaints about its complexity and workload, as an essential pillar of NATO’s collective defense. Work to establish the PfP Planning and Review Process (or PARP as it became known) began in earnest in the summer of 1995 when representatives of four countries met to hammer out the details before passing their ideas to the NATO International Staff for discussion among all the Allies.<sup>17</sup>

A major reason for adopting this unusual approach was a desire on the part of the four countries to avoid introducing into PARP a number of Cold War-legacy features that continued to exist in Alliance force planning. This would have been more likely if the proposal had been drawn up by the International Staff who would, necessarily, have had to take Alliance force planning as a model. These legacy issues included a rather rigid demarcation of responsibilities between the NATO military and civilian staffs, and the sequential involvement of military-led and civilian-led committees, which lengthened the allied force planning process (with doubtful added value), decreased flexibility and responsiveness, and created a tendency toward bureaucratic “turf wars.” The four countries wished the PARP to be capable of being carefully tailored to the needs of each individual partner. Therefore, it had to be flexible, keep bureaucracy to a minimum, and involve NATO civilian and military staff working as one team (under civilian lead), with only one

NATO subordinate committee—the new Political-Military Steering Committee—dealing with the process in a holistic way.<sup>18</sup>

During its early years, PARP did, indeed, focus on identifying and evaluating partner forces for multinational training, exercises, and operations, and developing planning targets for such forces, jointly agreed between NATO and the partner country concerned. But the lessons identified from the accession to NATO of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in 1999 demonstrated clearly that PARP needed to go beyond this and put a much greater focus on reform. This development led to PARP, and especially the planning targets drawn up within it (now called Partnership Goals), becoming a central mechanism in NATO's approach to DIB.

Reviewing their own experiences of preparing for NATO accession, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland saw that they had been significantly over-optimistic about what they could achieve in preparing their forces for future NATO membership, over-optimistic in assessing what forces they could provide to the NATO force structure, and substantially unprepared for assessing associated costs. These shortcomings had largely been the result of the prevailing mindset within their military structures, derived from their communist, Warsaw Pact legacy, which led the military simply to state what they believed they needed in the expectation that “the politicians” would then provide the cash. When coupled with the absence of effective evaluation and accounting structures in the military and ministries of defense, which were hardly needed in such a demand-led environment, the result was considerable embarrassment that the promises made by the three countries during the accession process could not be delivered. The three new NATO members concluded that they should each have conducted a thorough defense review and made any necessary adjustments before joining the Alliance. Allies agreed with this conclusion and, at the Washington Summit in 1999, inaugurated the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

The MAP was intended to be a much more comprehensive and intrusive progress review of countries wishing to join the Alliance.<sup>19</sup> It consisted of five chapters: political and economic, defense and military, resources issues, security issues, and legal issues (corresponding to the five areas covered in the formal NATO accession discussions before a Protocol of Accession is signed). In the defense and military chapter, PARP was to be the mechanism to assess progress, but with an expanded mandate. This was despite a proposal by the United States to introduce a completely new planning process only for aspirant countries, which, it was eventually recognized, would have been unmanageable. The MAP document said:

*Within the general framework of the expanded and adapted PARP and in accordance with PARP procedures, planning targets specifically covering areas most directly relevant for nations preparing their force structures and capabilities for possible future Alliance membership will be elaborated with aspirants. Aspirants will undergo a review process on their progress in meeting these planning targets. These planning targets will be established on the basis of consultations*

*between each aspiring country and NATO and may be applied to any component of their force structures, rather than solely to their PfP-declared forces.<sup>20</sup>*

While targets to develop relevant standards and interoperability of future NATO forces remained important, the first planning target in the Partnership Goal packages for all countries in the MAP (and which was non-negotiable) required them to carry out a strategic defense review and to do so, importantly, in consultation with NATO. This Partnership Goal required a great deal from MAP countries. For instance, individual Partnership Goals from a variety of countries included, as a minimum, that the review should include the missions of armed forces and capabilities necessary to implement them, and the affordability of current and/or planned force structure against the level of national resources for defense. Other aspects to be included in the review should address the equipment-term modernization plans, manning levels of military units, other personnel aspects (including the proportions between officers, NCOs and professional soldiers in active service, and a reserve concept), education and training policies and practices, logistic support capabilities, base closures or realignment, and the disposal of surplus equipment and ammunition. The wide-ranging Partnership Goal formed the basis for the greater part of the discussions that took place between the country concerned and the NATO staff team; the discussions could be very frank and robust.

The PARP procedures required only a limited number of formal interactions between a partner country and NATO staffs or NATO countries. In even-numbered years there would be a detailed staff level discussion, typically over a day and a half, of the proposed package of Partnership Goals in the partner country's capital. This was followed by a Political-Military Steering Committee meeting in Brussels between the partner country and all the Allies to discuss and recommend agreement of the Partnership Goals. In the following year, the staff level and Political-Military Steering Committee meetings would focus on the draft PARP Assessment that reviewed progress in implementing Partnership Goals, developing the armed forces and their interoperability more generally, and determining progress in the strategic defense review. The Partnership Goals and PARP Assessment were formally approved through "silence procedure" by NATO ambassadors and that of the partner country.<sup>21</sup>

In practice, many of the countries in the MAP actively sought additional consultations with NATO staffs, and sometimes with the Political-Military Steering Committee, to elicit feedback on how the direction or elements of their strategic defense reviews were being perceived. For the countries concerned, there was a clear value in checking that what they intended to do in their strategic defense reviews would be regarded favorably by the NATO staffs as they prepared the biennial PARP Assessments that formed part of the annual MAP assessments by Allies.

Therefore, the role of the NATO staffs expanded to provide a consultancy service to MAP countries: this became one of the core tasks of the NATO civilian force planners in the Defence Policy and Planning Division of the International Staff. In this work a key

element was an insistence that there was no “NATO model” that could, or should, be applied by a partner country as it developed its defense forces and defense institutions (and, later, security institutions more widely). The approach was to probe whether the country had a coherent and effective set of policies, objectives, and management practices that could stand up to scrutiny from within government, parliament, civil society, and outside organizations like NATO. If a country could not withstand such scrutiny, this was pointed out, and suggestions were made on how to adjust matters, drawing on the wide experience the NATO staffs had of military structures and Ministries of Defense. However, it was a cardinal objective that this work had to be carried out by staff officers (civilian and military) of the country concerned. They had to fully understand how the results had been reached, be able to defend the methodology and conclusions internally and externally, and thereby ensure that the outcomes were “owned” by the country concerned.

The general range of issues covered in this consultancy work usually followed a particular format. The first area was a solid definition of the country’s security and defense objectives: Had they been defined comprehensively and clearly? Were they understood in the same way by all of those involved in the defense and security field? Was that understanding shared by the political establishment and the general public? What were the risks to security that a country believed it faced? Did this constitute a common understanding across government about the security priorities for the country? What sort of assumptions were being made as these policies were being developed? How far ahead had the government looked to try and predict the issues it would need to resolve? How much money would be available for defense and security, taking into account other important priorities associated with economic and social issues? Were these questions being properly addressed in fundamental documents such as a National Threat Assessment, National Security Strategy, Defense Strategy, Military Doctrine, and Defense Law?

From these issues, the NATO team would then suggest re-examining the proposed roles of the armed forces and whether there was complete clarity about the objectives they should pursue. This re-examination had to take into consideration the detailed tasks of the armed forces and how many of each type of unit or capability would be needed for each task. These detailed tasks could then be subjected to analysis to determine what might be the optimum way of fulfilling them. For example, how many light infantry battalions would be needed, compared to the number of mechanized or armored battalions? How big should the reserve forces be compared to the active forces, and was there sufficient money to provide them with worthwhile training and equipment? What were the infrastructure and logistics requirements needed to allow the front line units to carry out their tasks most effectively? Would it be possible to perform tasks more effectively by providing more resources for logistics support, rather than investing in front line capabilities?

Linked questions addressed whether the units in the armed forces would have the optimum capabilities in terms of equipment, training, and procedures to be able to carry out their tasks most effectively. This might also lead to a discussion about whether there was scope to increase effectiveness by greater cooperation between individual services within

a country, such as shared logistics or education facilities, or by greater cooperation with other countries, including Allies. It was often necessary to focus on personnel management, training and education, logistics, and command and control systems to assess whether they could be improved as well as suggesting ways to assess what might be the best mix of equipment for the armed forces.

It was always necessary to discuss the financial provision for defense, both in absolute terms and whether a country was getting the best value for money from the defense budget it had or would likely have in the future. This usually required considerable discussion of a country's ability to identify what it spent on particular activities or capabilities: the experience of the team was that there was a great temptation for the military to base its plans on the financial resources that they wished to be available, rather than what the Ministry of Finance was prepared to allocate.

Finally, there was the question of how to deal with political approval (within government and outside) and public information about defense and security plans. This area included how to ensure proper and informed parliamentary scrutiny and public debate on defense plans, and whether there should be a White Book to ensure a reliable source of information on policy.

The NATO force planning staffs dealing with these issues and providing consultancy advice were very small, never exceeding 11 staff officers, and also had to deal with the cyclical force planning work for all of the Allies. Therefore, it was vital that an effective working relationship was developed with the staff of the country requesting the consultancy advice. Consequently, the same staff officer would work with one or more countries over an extended period (sometimes eight or more years) with continuity and the possibility of building enduring working relationships given priority. This is significant because the military members of the NATO team were generally on short-term postings of three years or less. It was noticeable that in this relatively short period, with only limited opportunities to interact with the staff of partner countries, few of the military members of the team were able to make much of a real contribution to the long-term work of guiding a strategic defense review or building defense institutions.

However, NATO was not the only player in the field offering advice to countries on defense transformation and institution building. A few countries provided defense advisors who lived in the partner country and worked within the Ministry of Defense (MOD) (and sometimes in the General Staff). Defense attachés in allied embassies (and those of wealthier partners) also played a role in advising or facilitating the provision of advice. The United States, in particular, provided funds for partner countries that were often used to pay for contractors to work in the MOD to provide advice. The fact that these individuals were "on the ground" on a daily basis meant that it was extremely important that the NATO team liaised with them to ensure that they understood what advice NATO was giving countries, (and vice-versa) and to ensure that, as far as possible, partner countries were not receiving contradictory messages. Similarly, other actors, such as U.S. European Command and the International Security Advisory Board were also providing advice in the area of DIB and it was important to keep alongside them, as far as possible.

In addition to work with MAP countries, there was also a special program with Ukraine which, following independence in 1991, had requested that NATO help in transforming its large Soviet-style military establishment into smaller, modern, and more efficient forces. Ukraine was an early member of PfP and the PARP. In 1997, the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine was signed. A year later, the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform was established, co-chaired by NATO and Ukraine, to facilitate consultation and practical cooperation on defense and security sector reform issues. The priority for NATO in setting up this body was—in addition to improving the interoperability of Ukrainian forces with those of Allies—to strengthen the democratic and civilian control of Ukraine’s armed forces and to enhance governance more widely.<sup>22</sup> In April 1999, a NATO Liaison Office was established in Kyiv to support these efforts.

Ukraine did not then aspire to NATO membership, but there was a clear need for a structure, going beyond consultation, to try and add impetus to reform efforts for the Ukrainian armed forces. In 2001, drawing on the PARP framework of Partnership Goals, a special set of planning targets was developed for each of the individual Ukrainian services (army, navy, air and air defense) and the General Staff to focus efforts on reform in each of these institutions. Progress in taking these forward would then be assessed during regular meetings with the NATO team. These special targets were called National Defence Reform Objectives and covered preparations for a defense review, developing coherent strategic documents, establishing transparent and accurate financial management, improving personnel management, equipment procurement, training and education, logistics systems, and other management areas.

In addition, the Ukraine country officer from the Force Planning Directorate of the NATO International Staff was deployed to Kyiv for several periods of roughly three weeks to assist Ukrainian staff officers in planning to meet these targets and to help implement mechanisms that would allow a more objective approach to analyzing defense management issues, and devise solutions to put in place a self-sustaining system. A program was also created to identify promising young Ukrainian officers who, with financial assistance from some Allies, were brought to NATO Headquarters in Brussels to work as interns in the Force Planning Directorate for a year in order to give them practical NATO experience; they would then return to Kyiv to take up key staff positions.

The National Defence Reform Objectives for Ukraine were subsequently incorporated into the regular PARP Partnership Goals. However, following Ukrainian requests, and agreement in the Joint Working Group for Defence Reform, the PARP for Ukraine was extended. The armed forces and militarized units of the Ministry of Emergencies had participated in PARP since 1995 but, following the development of the National Defence Reform Objectives, the Interior Troops (which have now been superseded by the National Guard), the State Border Guard Service and the Security Service of Ukraine also began taking part in PARP.

## Further Steps to Enhance the Partnership for Peace

As conceived in 1994, PfP was an open-ended mechanism in which each partner would set its own objectives, wide or narrow, and pursue them at the speed and to the extent they wished. This was successful in providing opportunities while not being prescriptive. However, over time, Allies wished to provide more encouragement for reform in the defense sector and in other areas. Consequently, following a Comprehensive Review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace at the 2002 Prague Summit, Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs) were introduced to “ensure a comprehensive, tailored and differentiated approach to the Partnership, and which allow for support to the reform efforts of Partners.”<sup>23</sup> These plans would enable NATO to “provide its focused, country specific assistance and advice on reform objectives that interested Partners might wish to pursue in consultation with the Alliance. Intensified political dialogue on relevant issues may constitute an integral part of an IPAP process.”<sup>24</sup>

Over time, eight countries decided to develop IPAPs.<sup>25</sup> IPAPs were far-reaching documents covering areas where the individual country committed itself to reform, not only in the defense area but also more widely, such as in rule of law, human rights, combatting corruption, promoting stable and sound economic development, relations with neighbors, and improved public information systems to support democratic oversight.<sup>26</sup> Essentially, IPAPs, which were jointly agreed by the Alliance and the partner country, could be seen as a bargain between the two parties that, if the partner country was serious about reform, Allies would adjust their cooperation and assistance programs to support these efforts more actively.

The Prague Summit also saw the launch of the Partnership Action Plan mechanism that was intended to be “an issue-specific, result-oriented mechanism for practical cooperation involving Allies and interested Partners,” focused on functional areas.<sup>27</sup> It was envisaged that such areas might include border security, capabilities for joint action, civil emergency, management of resources, or environmental issues. The first of these was, unsurprisingly in the wake of September 11, 2001, the Partnership Action Plan–Terrorism (PAP-T). Although PAP-T did not evolve into a vibrant cooperation mechanism, the concept of an issue-specific mechanism did lead to the launch of Partnership Action Plan–Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB) at the 2004 Istanbul Summit.

The PAP-DIB aimed “to reinforce efforts by EAPC [Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council] partners to initiate and carry forward reform and restructuring of defence institutions to meet their needs and the commitments undertaken in the context of the Partnership for Peace Framework Document and EAPC Basic Document, as well as the relevant OSCE documents including the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.”<sup>28</sup> Although the official text noted that it might have particular relevance to the partner countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as Moldova, it was open to all partners. Its aims were to enhance democratic control of defense activities; improve legislative and judicial oversight of defense; improve assessments of security risks

and national defense requirements; develop and maintain affordable and interoperable capabilities; optimize the management of defense ministries and other agencies with force structures; encourage compliance with international norms and practices in the defense sector; foster effective and transparent financial planning and resource allocation; help improve effective management of defense and the socio-economic consequences of defense restructuring; ensure effective and transparent personnel structures and practices in the defense forces; and encourage international cooperation and good neighborly relations in defense and security matters.

For both IPAPs and the PAP-DIB, it was explicitly recognized that, in the defense and military sphere, the PARP would play a major role in collecting and analyzing information about practices and progress in reform, and by using the structured mechanism of Partnership Goals, negotiated directly with partner countries, as a means to try to hold countries to account for any perceived backsliding on their declared reform objectives. It was also clear to the NATO staffs that, although the focus of these programs was on the defense sector, they could not be viewed in isolation. If reform was to be effective, it needed to permeate all areas of government. Therefore, Partnership Goals in the PARP had a deliberately wider emphasis than just the defense sector, and sometimes were addressed specifically to ministries other than the Defense Ministry.

## Special Cases: The Western Balkans

### *Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)*

The Dayton Peace Agreements of 1995 ended the fighting, but left BiH with two entity governments (plus the Brcko District) and a very weak and greatly circumscribed state-level governmental structure. Both Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina had their own defense ministries, and separate armies and command chains (as well as separate, informal Bosniak and Croat command chains within the Federation army). The international community was heavily engaged with this complex set of governments to try and encourage the development of a coherent political entity, rather than one where different groups had stopped killing each other (perhaps only temporarily). International engagement was also complex: the Office of the High Representative had one mandate, the OSCE another; NATO had the job of policing the “peace,” and a number of individual countries also acted independently in trying to influence political outcomes. Dayton had also mandated a Standing Committee on Military Matters to provide coordination between the two entity armies, though it was generally ineffective.

Nonetheless, with much prodding from the international community, work began to promote communication and coordination between the two armies. As the sense developed, both among Bosnian politicians and the international community, that the country’s development would best be anchored in Euro-Atlantic institutions, there was an aspiration that BiH should apply to join PfP. It was clear that further progress in defense reform would be necessary. In November 2002, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson

set out in a letter to the Presidency of BiH “important areas in which progress in reform would be needed before membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina could be considered.”<sup>29</sup> Among these was the important political consideration of unambiguous full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In May 2003, High Representative Lord Ashdown used his Bonn powers to establish the Defence Reform Commission (DRC) to “examine the legal measures necessary to reform defence structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, identify constitutional and legislative provisions at variance with such requirements and propose legislation and other legal instruments.”<sup>30</sup> Lord Ashdown appointed James R. Locher III, a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, as Chairman. The DRC was supported by elements of the international community, including NATO’s Stabilization Force (SFOR) in BiH and the NATO international Staff in Brussels who organized workshops as part of a Tailored Cooperation Programme (often in the NATO School at Oberammergau, Germany) to bring together representatives of the different entity Ministries and armies on “neutral” ground to facilitate understanding and a willingness to compromise.<sup>31</sup>

The DRC’s first report recommended that BiH look beyond PfP and make an explicit commitment to achieving NATO membership in the future.<sup>32</sup> By the end of 2003, a Law on Defence had entered into force that created a minimal state-level command structure, but left in place the separate entity armies and MODs. This structure—although not demonstrating that “the centre of gravity in defence has shifted decisively from the Entities to the state,” as Lord Robertson described it, nonetheless was regarded as a first step toward full integration in this sensitive area. In December 2003, NATO Foreign Ministers urged BiH to envisage the NATO June 2004 Istanbul Summit as a realistic target by which it could meet the outstanding conditions to join PfP.<sup>33</sup> In order to maintain progress, Lord Ashdown extended the DRC’s mandate so it could oversee the implementation of the report’s recommendations.<sup>34</sup> To advance this work, an ad-hoc group of international community experts led by the OSCE worked with the Secretariat of the Standing Committee on Military Matters to define the structures of the MOD, Joint Staff, and the Operational Command.

During 2004, the first state-level Minister of Defense, Nikola Radovanovic, was appointed and the process of filling military and civilian positions in the MOD proceeded—though very slowly. Work to implement the 2003 Law on Defence was also slow as a result of fundamental disagreements about the extent to which effective state-level institutions should be developed. Nonetheless, there was progress in developing concepts and producing a Defense White Paper, but this was not sufficient for the Alliance to invite BiH to join PfP at Istanbul. Politically, the continued inability of BiH—primarily Republika Srpska—to cooperate effectively and sincerely with the ICTY, more than offset the progress made on defense reform, as was noted explicitly by NATO.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, the security situation within BiH having greatly improved, NATO was preparing to end the SFOR mission and hand over principal responsibility for security to the European Union at the end of 2004. However, NATO maintained a presence in the country, creating NATO Headquarters Sarajevo, whose primary responsibility was to support defense reform in BiH.

Lord Ashdown, who was dissatisfied with the lack of progress in putting the entity armies fully under state-level control, extended the DRC mandate for another year, until the end of 2005.<sup>36</sup> This was intended to “inter alia, include assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to further implementation of its recommendations and to oversee the fulfillment of the benchmarks of [NATO] for Partnership for Peace and progress toward a single military force for Bosnia and Herzegovina.”<sup>37</sup> During this period, the DRC would have two co-chairmen: state-level Defense Minister Radovanovic and a NATO co-chair. Interestingly, the NATO co-chair was not the Commander of the new NATO Headquarters Sarajevo; rather it was one of his subordinates, Raffi Gregorian, a U.S. diplomat experienced in the region who was appointed as Political Advisor to the Commander of NATO Headquarters Sarajevo. Gregorian’s terms of reference were, uniquely, agreed by the North Atlantic Council itself, and included an explicit requirement for him to communicate directly with the International Staff in Brussels to ensure that the military chain of command did not try to constrain his actions in this inherently political area. Likewise, to ensure that there was sufficient in-depth expertise to support him, NATO recruited the principal members of the OSCE-led ad-hoc group of experts established at the beginning of 2004 to work as part of the NATO Headquarters (though fortunately with offices in the state-level MOD building in central Sarajevo rather than in Camp Butmir, some eight miles away, where NATO Headquarters Sarajevo is based). These experts were necessary since the military personnel appointed to this and other such headquarters would generally stay for six months to a year.<sup>38</sup>

By the end of 2005, after substantial work in a variety of sub-groups, a new Law on Defence and a Law on Service had been drafted and enacted. A new Armed Forces of BiH had been created with a Joint Staff having full authority over military elements. The previous conscript force structures were replaced by a professional army based on multi-ethnic brigades under an Operational Command. The two entity armies and MODs had ceased to exist, and the entity Parliaments had amended their constitutions to remove any defense role. However, this significant set of achievements still required full implementation and the structure that was agreed also included many compromises required to satisfy entity concerns and assuage associated fears. Nonetheless, as an exercise in persuading former enemies to work together toward a common purpose, it was a major success. In inviting BiH to join PfP in December 2006, Allies acknowledged that the work on defense reform and the creation of a “single military force” within the country had been the brightest spot in terms of attempting to normalize political life in BiH. As a PfP member, BiH continued to work on developing its defense institutions, including inserting more realism into the structure set out in the 2005 Defence Law, through their IPAP, PARP Partnership Goals, and consultative advice from the NATO International Staff and NATO Headquarters Sarajevo on a further defense review launched in April 2009.

### *Serbia*

Two months after the murder of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic on March 12, 2003, Boris

Tadic, the newly appointed Defense Minister of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, visited NATO Headquarters and addressed the North Atlantic Council. During this address he expressed the desire of Serbia and Montenegro to join PfP. For similar reasons that BiH could not be invited to join PfP at that time—doubts about the level of cooperation with the ICTY and the failure to hand over indicted war criminals to the Tribunal—Serbian membership was, politically, not then possible. However, Allies were keen to help the Belgrade government with reforms, especially in the defense and security sectors. NATO staff therefore began cooperation with the Belgrade authorities on defense reform issues from late 2003, with a number of discussions in Belgrade on defense reform and defense restructuring, including as part of an established Tailored Cooperation Programme. Within the MOD, a reform team had been established in December 2003 working with the UN Development Programme and a number of seconded foreign advisors.

However, the process of reforming the military, which had for so long been a semi-independent institution, was not going to be straightforward. First steps had been to order the transfer of the intelligence and security services from the General Staff to the MOD, and to place the General Staff under the control of the Defense Ministry. These structural changes needed to be accompanied by changes in mindset and working practices if they were to be successful; all of this occurred against the background of severely constrained financial resources for defense and uncertainties about the future of the State Union.<sup>39</sup>

In mid-2005, the Norwegian Delegation in NATO made a proposal for a special Defence Reform Group (DRG) to be created between Serbia and NATO. Allies discussed how such a group might function, and drew up terms of reference, which were then transmitted to Belgrade for consideration. The DRG would have senior-level co-chairs from Serbia and the NATO International Staff, and was to involve, to the extent possible, defense attachés and other representatives of allied countries accredited in Belgrade. The procedural details were worked out between the two co-chairs. The purpose of the DRG was to provide advice and assistance to Belgrade in restructuring their military and implementing transparent and coherent management of the military. Therefore, the most important objective was to ensure working practices that best suited Belgrade's assessment of the most effective methods to achieve the desired results in the circumstances that they faced; NATO was not intending to tell Belgrade what to do or how to do it.

It was agreed that the DRG would conduct business mainly through "Working Tables" considering a range of different topics such as policy and planning, finance and budget, human resources, logistics, civil/military cooperation, professionalization of the military, base conversion, military health, public relations strategy, reform of the intelligence and security system, and military housing. These Working Tables would meet on a regular basis and report back to a coordinator on progress. These progress reports would be the basis for plenary meetings which, initially, were held about every six to seven weeks and included presentations by the leaders of each of the Working Tables. The first plenary meeting of the DRG took place in February 2006. Therefore, well in advance of the November 2006 NATO Riga Summit at which BiH, Montenegro and Serbia were invited to PfP, NATO

already had an extensive and intensive institutional relationship with Serbia, which was enhanced with the opening, in December 2006, of a NATO Military Liaison Office in the Serbian MOD building.

It had always been intended, certainly on the NATO side, that meetings of the Working Tables would include allied defense attachés that were interested in the subject covered by the Working Table, and whose countries were providing or contemplating concrete assistance in these areas, such as financial management. This arrangement proved very difficult to put into practice and was a source of much frustration among the defense attaché community, with whom the NATO co-chair had a preliminary meeting (including later the Military Liaison Office staff) before each of the DRG plenary meetings. Various reasons were given for the failure to inform defense attachés about—much less invite them to—forthcoming Working Table meetings; these included the short-notice nature of the meetings and the demands that interpretation would have put on resources. It was also made explicitly clear as time went on that there were procedural and quasi-legal obstacles to (and indeed suspicions about) unsupervised direct contacts between members of the Serbian armed forces and members of foreign military forces and foreign governments.

Nonetheless, progress was made in a number of areas, the extent of which was largely dependent on the personality and energy of the Serbian co-chair.<sup>40</sup> The DRG functioned as a mechanism by which the senior leadership of the Ministry could force the sometimes reluctant lower levels to undertake work and be held accountable for it, in public, on a regular basis. It was the NATO role to essentially provide support for the reform efforts of the Serbian leadership, to provide the public audience, and, in the case of the foreign representatives, to facilitate the provision of whatever assistance their capitals were prepared to offer. However, the extent to which the Serbian co-chair used the DRG in this way varied as individuals who held the post changed.

In June 2007, Serbia joined the PARP by submitting its first PARP Survey on the basis of which a draft PARP Assessment and an initial package of Partnership Goals were prepared. During the autumn of 2007, however, it became clear that Kosovo was preparing to declare independence, most Allies would recognize its independence, and NATO would undertake a number of functions beyond the scope of the existing UN mandate that would have the effect of supporting that independence.<sup>41</sup> This was unacceptable to Serbia and the result was a “de facto” suspension of many activities with NATO. These included meetings of the DRG, from October 2007, and discussion and finalization of the PARP Assessment and Partnership Goals. It did not mean, however, that contacts between NATO and Serbia ceased. By November 2008 there was agreement on the Serbian side that work on the PARP documents could continue, and that the DRG would also begin to work again in the future although with a slightly changed emphasis. The number of Working Tables, which was as high as 16, would be significantly reduced, and their work would focus on the areas of development covered in the Partnership Goals; in practice this meant that most areas addressed by the previous Working Table structure

would continue to be improved. DRG plenary meetings would be held less frequently, twice yearly. The DRG commenced work again in June 2010.

### *Kosovo*

Following the Kosovo air campaign in 1999, NATO deployed the Kosovo Force (KFOR) under United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244 to ensure a “safe and secure environment.” UNSCR 1244 also authorized a political process to determine Kosovo’s future status. However, Serbia and Kosovo Albanians, and their respective foreign supporters, had very different views on what type of future status would be acceptable; consequently, attempts to secure agreements made little progress. In 1996, discussions began on a political process to determine the future status of Kosovo, led by the United Nations Special Envoy Maarti Ahtisaari. The Ahtisaari proposals were never formally approved and, when it became clear that Kosovo would not wait for a negotiated political settlement, many of the countries most involved in the process talks began making preparations for how they would support a “post-independence Kosovo.” In addition to continuing to ensure a safe and secure environment, NATO agreed to take on three new tasks: stand down the Kosovo Protection Corps, stand up a new Kosovo Security Force (KSF), and establish a new civilian-led organization to oversee the KSF.<sup>42</sup> The first two of these tasks were given to KFOR, but the third—building a new security-related Ministry from scratch—was to be the task of NATO HQ in Brussels.

From the outset, some basic principles for this task were determined. Civilian, democratic control of an armed force would be paramount and the uniformed military (in the KSF) had to accept this. Therefore, even well before the declaration of independence, a NATO staff officer from Brussels was deployed to Pristina to work closely with the institutions of the international community on the ground in drafting the new constitution, its associated laws, and the framework for the new Ministry. The Ministry’s structure would include the senior command of the KSF; there would be no separate General Staff.

It was also deemed necessary to have a team on the ground in Pristina to undertake the work of developing the Ministry. Since NATO International Staff resources were meager, Allies and some partners were asked to provide and pay for staff to work in the Ministry Advisory Team—later renamed the NATO Advisory Team (NAT) to accommodate concerns of the four Allies that did not recognize an independent Kosovo.<sup>43</sup> The key team members were in place in January 2008, and others joined over the succeeding months until it built up to a total of 14 members plus several locally recruited support staff. The team leader reported directly to NATO HQ in Brussels and—since this was the key post and the incumbent became *de facto* a key advisor to the Minister—continuity was regarded as essential. In the seven years between early 2008 and spring 2015, there were only three team leaders, an average time in post of almost two and a half years for each individual.

It was also regarded as very important that the team members were integrated into the Ministry and also into the society. Therefore, a generous offer by the KFOR Commander to provide the team with working and living accommodation in Film City, the secure

NATO command compound, was politely refused. The team was initially provided office accommodation in the Kosovo government building, later in the Ministry for the KSF, and generally rented apartments in Pristina.

The team needed to prepare for and design the Ministry (during the first months there were no Kosovar staff in the Ministry), including drafting almost all of the necessary legislation and regulations covering the personnel management of civilians in the Ministry and uniformed members of the KSF. They then needed to organize the recruiting of staff; establish the staff branches and support elements; devise policies, plans, guidelines, and supporting regulations; provide training; and handle legacy issues such as financial matters that required resolution. Thereafter, once the Ministry had an initial operation capability, they advised and mentored Ministry staff and assisted in refining and implementing plans, policies, and guidelines. This effort led to the development of a Ministry—where there was nothing before and which still needs to mature—over a relatively short period.

In the meantime, the Kosovo Protection Corps had been stood down in 2009 with the assistance and involvement of the United Nations Development Programme. The KSF was established in January 2009 and began to operate in September 2009. It was mentored by KFOR and assessed by the KFOR Commander in November 2011 as having reached full operational capability. The North Atlantic Council formally announced in July 2013 that full operational capability had been reached. The long period between the KFOR recommendation to declare full operational capability and the formal NATO announcement was taken up with very difficult and politically-charged discussions within the Alliance (including non-NATO KFOR troop-contributing countries) on how NATO would provide support to the KSF in the future.

The task of mentoring and advising the KSF was taken away from KFOR—which had long wished to distance itself from its KSF responsibility, as it believed that such responsibilities undermined its perceived impartiality between the two communities in Kosovo—and was given to a newly-formed NATO Liaison and Advisory Team (NLAT). The poorly drafted NLAT terms of reference included the provision of advice to the KSF at brigade-level and above, ignoring the fact that the already-established NAT had the role of providing advice to the Ministry for the KSF, which already contained within it the senior command chain of the KSF above brigade level. The NLAT—whose members generally worked and lived in Film City, rather than being collocated with Kosovar colleagues—was also to be headed by a military officer. As was usually the case, military personnel undertake relatively short tours of duty: between July 2013 and September 2016, there were six commanders of the NLAT, an average time in post of slightly over six months for each incumbent.

As the NATO committee discussions on support for the KSF dragged on, the proposition was advanced that having two advisory teams entailed duplication; indeed, when the NLAT structure was recommended by the same committee in 2013, it did duplicate a number of functions that had already been successfully carried out by the NAT since 2008. Finally, in early 2016, NATO took the decision to merge the two teams—in future

to be known as the NATO Advisory, Liaison and Training Team (NALT)—with a military officer in charge, thereby undermining the decisions-in-principle taken in 2008 that civilians should be unambiguously in charge of the KSF, and that continuity of engagement with Kosovars would be a vital factor in maintaining influence.

## Programs that Never Were: Russia, Afghanistan, and Libya

### *Russia*

The Russian Federation joined PfP in June 1994. It developed a package of activities as part of its Individual Partnership Program, a number of which were pursued very enthusiastically, such as cooperation in the field of civil emergency planning. It did not, however, join the PARP, despite a number of approaches from the NATO staffs to explain the potential benefits of this planning process for Russia. It seemed that Russia felt that it would be inappropriate, as a major power, to participate in PARP on the same basis as other, much smaller, countries. In response, NATO staffs offered to create a new process dealing with planning specifically for Russia that would be separate from PARP, but this was rejected. In 1997, the Permanent Joint Council was created with Allies and Russia, giving Russia a special forum that distinguished it from other partners; in 2002, the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was created, which gave Russia the same status in that forum as each of the NATO Allies.

Under the framework of the NRC, a number of attempts were made to engage Russia in work that could be linked to DIB. These included a series of roundtable discussions with presentations by individual nations on their experiences in defense management areas, such as the conduct of strategic defense reviews, reserve systems, recruitment systems, the role of non-commissioned officers, and the management of post-traumatic stress disorder. The Russian approach to these discussions was always less than enthusiastic and it rejected, as it saw it, being “forced” to “adopt” Western standards. There was also an attempt to engage Russia in an exercise in transparency, which NATO countries had undertaken for decades by publishing each year’s defense expenditure and military manpower data. Russia did provide some expenditure data (but not military personnel numbers) in 2005 but not thereafter.<sup>44</sup> The effort involved in trying to organize DIB-related exchanges increased greatly. Practical cooperation was pursued in a range of other areas, such as search and rescue at sea, logistics, and theater ballistic missile defense, with the NATO hope of moving toward broader DIB.

In the face of such reluctance to engage with NATO on defense reform or even to acknowledge that any reform of the Russian military establishment was necessary, it proved impossible to undertake any meaningful DIB-related work.

### *Afghanistan*

A separate chapter in this book addresses Afghanistan and provides considerable detail on DIB efforts there. However, it is worth noting a slightly different perspective: as seen from staff in NATO Headquarters.

Afghanistan was primarily a military operation, militarily-led and organized, with

large numbers of personnel rotating through the theater at relatively short intervals. In 2006, the Defence Policy and Planning Division of the NATO International Staff was tasked—as part of the Afghan Cooperation Programme being led from NATO Headquarters—with providing advice and assistance to the Afghan MOD to develop a long-term planning system. This led to a number of discussions with Afghan interlocutors on the form this system might take, and four staff visits to Kabul from 2007 to early 2009.

The relative paucity of visits to Kabul resulted from the difficulty in obtaining permission for entry to theater from the NATO military commanders who had been granted virtually complete authority in these matters. This was due to limited accommodation at ISAF Headquarters, the need to provide force protection to incoming visitors, and competing priorities. While Afghan Defense Minister Wardak and his staff were supportive of such a program, the NATO military authorities and Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan (CSTC-A) were suspicious, to the point of hostility. Their concern was that the NATO staff focus on a long-term planning system might undermine their objective of the development of an Afghan National Army in the medium term, or that the Afghans might try to play one group off the other in order to secure more practical assistance. Although it was possible to persuade the NATO and CSTC-A military personnel in Kabul that the proposed NATO effort was neither intended to, nor would it, undermine the medium-term objective, by the time each successive NATO staff visit took place, almost all of the previous military interlocutors (on six-month tours) had gone and the whole process needed to be repeated with the newcomers. Given the very small number of NATO staff available to address this task (many of whom were already heavily engaged in other projects), this program was abandoned.

### *Libya*

Following the fall of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, Libya suffered enormous disruption and turmoil as competing militias vied for power, influence, and wealth. The United Nations established the United Nations Support Mission to Libya (UNSMIL). With the assistance of foreign embassies and assistance teams in Libya, UNSMIL launched a process called “Towards a Defence White Paper” that aimed to build a consensus on the need for coherent, well-organized armed forces under the control of the central government.<sup>45</sup> The official Libyan armed forces had become moribund under Gaddafi, and the different militias, affiliated to different regions, cities, tribes, and philosophies, were now the de facto powers in the country. NATO staff were invited to take part in two of the 2012 sessions attempting to develop this document, but the Alliance itself had no formal role in this work.

In February 2013, representatives of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, sought NATO support for the creation of a new National Guard in Libya. Following an official request by the Prime Minister, Allies agreed (with some misgivings concerning the security situation) to authorize a fact-finding team to visit Tripoli in June 2013.

The team had high-level meetings with the Prime Minister, Defense and Interior Ministers, Chief of Defense, and others. The team also insisted on a meeting with representatives of the revolutionary brigades. Although the Libyan government (to the extent that it had a common view) seemed to see a National Guard as a way to “lawfully integrate armed revolutionary brigades” into a new security structure, it was clear that external assistance would need to address concepts, doctrine, command and control arrangements, equipment, finance, infrastructure/basing, legislation, personnel structures, and recruitment/integration, and would have to be coherent with arrangements for the army and police. It was envisaged that when work progressed to the stage of real implementation, it would then be appropriate to consider establishing a small team on the ground for a short period. That team would need to be mostly voluntary national contributions, with a NATO International Staff member in situ as team leader.

The team concluded that it ought to be practicable to provide assistance, but a number of additional questions needed to be answered, including the issue of appropriate security provision for team members in the lawless environment of Libya. However, on July 18, Prime Minister Zeidan sent another letter to NATO saying that the proposal for a National Guard was now off the table, but asking for NATO support in some unspecified DIB context. Consequently, a further visit took place in September 2013 to explore exactly what was meant, and to scope what might be possible. The team had meetings with a number of the same interlocutors as on the previous visit and also with representatives from the General National Congress (GNC). The report produced did not attempt any sugar-coating. It was blunt about the security situation, the lack of progress by the Libyans, the absence of an over-arching security sector vision, and the lack of a common view among Ministers, the GNC, and the revolutionary brigades about how to resolve the parlous security situation. However, it concluded that there was a potential role for NATO in trying to help develop work on a security sector architecture in conjunction with UNSMIL, the European Union Border Assistance Mission, and the Allies active on the ground, including in working to establish a properly trained army.

Allies agreed to establish a NATO Advisory Team and the Secretary General wrote to Prime Minister Zeidan on November 26 stating that NATO’s effort would be to advise Libya on development of a national security strategy. The NATO team would also provide advice on issues arising from this, as well as adapting the current security architecture to the new policy. This would build on and complement the work of other international actors. The offer of assistance also required the establishment of a proper framework for cooperation between NATO and Libya based on an Exchange of Letters. Unfortunately, a combination of the failure of the Libyan authorities to sign the Exchange of Letters (despite numerous attempts by NATO to get them to do so), the ousting of Prime Minister Zeidan on March 11, 2014, and the sharply deteriorating security situation inside Libya during 2014 meant that the NATO Advisory Team never began its work. NATO continues to be prepared to support Libya in such a venture as soon as conditions allow.

## Further Initiatives

### *Building Integrity and Trust Funds*

In 2007, NATO and Transparency International staffs generated the idea that NATO might develop a program to address corruption in the defense and security sector. The EAPC endorsed this idea in November 2007 as part of the PAP-DIB; it has grown considerably to include some 20 participating countries.<sup>46</sup> The Building Integrity program requires a country to complete a self-assessment questionnaire on existing policies and practices. This is then analyzed as part of a NATO peer review process, with a draft report produced and discussed with country authorities. The aim of this process is to recommend, in conjunction with the country concerned, practical steps to strengthen transparency, accountability, and integrity in the defense and security sector. Participating countries are encouraged to involve parliamentarians and civil society groups in the completion of their self-assessment questionnaires and the peer review process, and are free to apply the model more widely across government.

The Building Integrity program has been financed largely through NATO's Trust Fund mechanism, which allows interested countries—Allies or otherwise—to commit funds for a specific purpose—in this case, for combatting corruption. By providing close oversight and strict standards on project proposal development and implementation for projects, Trust Funds also contribute to building capacities and enhancing working practices in the defense and security field.

### *Professional Development Programs*

Under the auspices of the Joint Working Group on Defence Reform (JWGDR) for Ukraine, a professional development program was launched in 2005 for civilians working in Ukraine's defense and security institutions. The aim of the program was to strengthen capacity for democratic oversight and management, help anchor best practices, and help improve interagency cooperation through training. This program was expanded significantly in 2014 to help Ukraine meet the challenges arising from Russian aggression. A professional development program for Georgia was launched in 2009 at the request of the Georgian MOD. In 2011, it was expanded to encompass other security-related institutions. Both programs are managed from the NATO Liaison Offices in Kyiv and Tbilisi respectively, and are also supported by NATO Trust Funds.

### *Education*

In addition to the education and training establishments run by or for NATO, there are about 30 national Partnership Training and Education centers in both Allied and partner countries that offer education and training to enhance individuals' capacities to develop policy or manage projects and programs in ways that are more effective, transparent, accountable, and responsive to democratic control. The Alliance also has an Education for Reform Initiative that focuses specifically on this objective. This initiative is supported

by Defence Education Enhancement Programmes, which bring together teams of defense academics from Allied and partner countries and are tailored to individual countries. These provide advice on how to develop defense educational establishments with an emphasis on developing faculty members and comprehensive curricula, including the DIB Reference Curriculum.

### *Defense and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative*

At the 2014 NATO Wales Summit, the Alliance launched the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative (DCBI)—initially focused on Georgia, Jordan, and Moldova (and subsequently Iraq)—to enhance NATO’s role in capacity building, noting that NATO had been engaged in such work for many years.<sup>47</sup> This was intended to reinforce NATO’s commitment to its partners and to assist in projecting stability, and was a further explicit recognition of the importance of such activities. DCBI is not limited to NATO partners; it is also intended to be available, on a case by case basis, to countries that have not entered into a formal partnership arrangement with the Alliance.<sup>48</sup>

While the DCBI includes technical military training and assistance, it is focused on strategic-level advice, including national security architectures, policy, and defense planning. The initiative envisages the Alliance acting in close cooperation with other international actors, especially the United Nations, European Union, and OSCE. Under DCBI, a pool of pre-identified International Staff and International Military Staff experts has been established to provide a task force or “surge capacity” for fact-finding missions or strategic-level advisory and assistance missions. A Special Coordinator for DCBI has been established (currently the NATO Deputy Secretary General) who is responsible for ensuring coherence among existing programs and bringing together the civilian and military staffs. A “Military Hub” has also been designated to act as a coordination point for the staff of the NATO Strategic Commands and to assist in assessing requests from countries for aid.

The 2016 Warsaw Summit also emphasized the importance of this initiative, which is now included under the rubric of “projecting stability,” but it remains to be seen what the balance in these efforts will be between DIB and technical military training.

## **Conclusion**

In a number of countries—especially those that have joined or aspire to join NATO—there is a demonstrable improvement in the environment in which policy and management decisions are made, with a clear movement toward a more objective, analytical, and transparent approach. Significant numbers of civilian and military personnel in Ministries of Defense and General Staffs have understood the need for effective, objective-based decision-making.

Unfortunately, it is not yet possible in all cases to say that this constitutes a culture of honest, objective decision-making throughout these organizations. There are still

examples of decision-making in the equipment, logistics, personnel, policy, and other spheres, including in NATO countries, that do not stand up to close scrutiny, fly in the face of established priorities, or which have obviously been influenced by political factors. There is always a risk that DIB efforts will falter when dealing with a small, largely self-selected group of interlocutors who may not be representative of the greater numbers in the organizational structure, and who remain largely untouched by the attempts of outsiders to change established cultural practices and expectations. The performance of the Ukrainian MOD and General Staff in 2014 and 2015, as the Russian aggression unfolded, was a salutary lesson in how far intensive NATO engagement for 20 years had failed to modernize mindsets throughout the structure.

Reflecting on these successes and failures, what lessons can be derived from NATO's experience in DIB (recognizing the difficulties of generalizing about NATO's experiences with over 25 countries on four continents, some at peace and others engaged in conflict)?

### *Credibility*

Defense institution building—or DIB—is not a military process; it is a political and cultural process. It depends upon many factors. Among the most important is credibility—those offering advice must be able to demonstrate their own personal experience in the subjects on which they are advising, and must be able to produce relevant examples from their previous positions that illustrate the relevance of that advice. Building a rapport with host country interlocutors involves conversations that allow both sides to demonstrate their professional competence. Almost everyone likes to talk about their job, or previous jobs, and discussions of this nature help form a common bond.

### *Continuity*

DIB demands continuity. There must be continuity among those offering advice so that trust and personal relationships can be developed with interlocutors; this militates against a rapid turnaround of personnel in this area (military personnel on tours of short duration are especially vulnerable from this point of view). Continuity is most effective when the advice is provided from advisors based in the host country who work alongside host country colleagues day to day, socialize with them off-duty, and live in (and hopefully come to understand better) the community in which they are based, rather than in an isolated “bubble” (such as a military compound).

Continuity is also important among the interlocutors. If the host nation personnel with whom advisors are interacting change on a frequent basis, it will be difficult to make headway. Host country interlocutors need time to understand concepts, develop skills, and put those skills into effect. They must also be seen to be valued and rewarded for having acquired those skills, and given appropriate and consistent support from high-level managers and from peers by ensuring that sufficient numbers of those who have acquired new skills can work together to provide a critical mass for new ideas to take hold.

### *High-level Buy-in*

There needs to be high-level engagement and support in the host country for the process of building effective institutions and working practices. Again, such engagement needs to be consistent, which may prove difficult as political leaders (and their priorities and positions) could change following elections. The relationship with NATO, or any other body of advisors, may lose momentum as a result. It is important for DIB teams to maintain engagement during such low periods in order to demonstrate long-term commitment to assisting the host country. Interludes like this can be frustrating, but without such strategic patience, progress may be lost and emerging windows of opportunity may be missed. In addition, maintaining consistent high-level engagement is necessary for NATO to properly support its staff officers in the field.

### *Consistency From and Within NATO*

Although there has been a long-standing understanding that supporting reform and effective democratic institutions is an important contribution that the Alliance can make to stability, it has not been communicated with sufficient consistency and enthusiasm over the years. The evident decline in importance attached to the EAPC and the growth of ministerial and summit meeting formats linked to military operational contributions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and elsewhere (reflecting a “what can you do for NATO?” approach), has caused some dismay. A proliferation of new partnership programs (often as a result of messy compromises arrived at to resolve disputes in NATO committees) over the years, some with questionable or minimal substance, does not necessarily help create an impression of an organization that has carefully considered its intentions. The failure of Allies to come to timely agreements on the dates and formats for Ministerial and Summit meetings has created frustration among partners, as has the decision to deny them offices in the new NATO Headquarters building. There is also an occasional tendency for those who work in NATO Headquarters in Brussels to assume that their preoccupations are the most urgent items on the agendas of countries with whom they seek to engage, when the reality is that NATO and its programs may be quite a long way down their priority lists. This rather careless and casual approach does not help those on the ground seeking to demonstrate to a host country that NATO values them and is prepared to invest in helping them.

### *Understanding the Political, Societal, Historical, and Existing Institutional Context*

Successful engagement with a host country requires understanding of its history, political and social culture, and governmental and military practices. Any advice given must take account of these and be individually tailored to best fit what may be possible in that country. There is no NATO or Western model that must be followed, and any attempt to impose one (even assuming there would be agreement among NATO countries or staffs about what such a model would look like) would cause antagonism. However, in some cases, especially where a country is very keen to join the Alliance, a clear statement of

the standards expected by NATO may be necessary to progress the debate and to resolve disagreements.

Language skills are also important in being able to engage with and influence host country interlocutors. The official languages of the Alliance are English and French, but in practice, English is the principal working language and among the NATO military staffs it is the working language. If there is a sufficient pool of host country interlocutors with good language skills, business can be conducted expeditiously and effectively. Where this is not the case, it is essential that professional interpreters with a good knowledge of the relevant technical vocabulary are provided; without this support, much time will be wasted, opportunities missed, and frustration caused.

### *Commitment of Resources*

Support for the development of effective, accountable, and transparent defense institutions has become an essential part of NATO's work to encourage development of a security environment where there is less likelihood of instability, conflict, corruption, and miscalculation, and greater likelihood of improving governance in the defense and security sector. The demand for DIB activities, both from Allies and from potential recipients, has grown substantially, although the financial and staff resources that NATO is prepared to devote have not.

This contradiction between growing ambition and practical reluctance was summed up eloquently by Lord Robertson in his farewell speech to the North Atlantic Council on December 17, 2003, where, referring to the NATO Civil Budget, he said: "Never has so much attention, with so much detail and to so little effect, been devoted to such a small thing. With a budget of 171 million Euros a year, each nation around this table gets an excellent bargain. It is sad, even scandalous, that your nations ask and receive so much from NATO and its staff, and at the same time show yourselves so mean in refusing additional resources for this small and effective organisation. My successor deserves better treatment."<sup>49</sup>

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## Notes

1 The author worked in the Defence Policy and Planning Division of the Brussels-based International Staff for almost 20 years until mid-2015, retiring as Director of Planning. This article is, therefore, written from the perspective of NATO Headquarters and its own activities. There were many activities and programs supporting defense institution building carried out by individual Alliance countries (and some partner countries), other organizations, and in the framework of military operations that were not always completely visible to staff in Brussels. This needs to be taken into account in reading this chapter.

2 The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) became the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in January 1995.

3 NATO, *London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance* (October 27, 2000), available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c900706a.htm>>.

4 Ibid.

5 NATO, *Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation* (October 27, 2000), available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911108a.htm>>.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 NATO, "North Atlantic Cooperation Council Statement on Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation," Press Release M-NACC-1(91) 111, December 20, 1991, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_)

texts\_23841.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

9 NATO, “Declaration of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council (“The Brussels Summit Declaration”),” Press Release M-1(94) 003, January 11, 1994, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_24470.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_24470.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.

10 Charles S. Kennedy interview by Charles W. Freeman, Jr., April 14, 1995, available at <<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mfdip.2004fre01/?st=gallery>>.

11 “Declaration of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council (“The Brussels Summit Declaration”),” *op. cit.*

12 Countries participating in PfP were originally referred to as “Partners.” However, the development of new relationships (Mediterranean Dialogue in 1994, Contact Countries/Partners across the Globe in 1998, and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in 2004) led to a decision to largely combine these programs in 2011. All non-NATO countries in these programs were then known as “partners.” This convention is used throughout this chapter. On a separate note, in June 1992, NATO Foreign Ministers had declared the Alliance’s willingness (on a case by case basis) to support CSCE peacekeeping activities: in December 1992 Foreign Ministers extended this to include United Nations peacekeeping activities and Defense Ministers concluded that support for peacekeeping activities should be included among the missions of NATO forces and headquarters. There was already a recognition that non-NATO nations would likely wish to take part with NATO in such missions; the requirement for interoperability was therefore necessary and obvious.

13 Les Aspin, “New Europe, New NATO,” *NATO Review* 42, No. 1 (February 1994), available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1994/9401-3.htm>>, 12-14.

14 Richard Cohen, “The Marshall Center: An Experiment in East-West Cooperation,” *NATO Review* 43, No. 4 (July 1995), available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1995/9504-6.htm>>, 27-61.

15 NATO, “PfP Framework Document,” Issued at Ministerial Meeting of North Atlantic Council, January 10-11, 1994, available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110b.htm>>.

16 *Ibid.*

17 The Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, and United States: France was invited but declined to join this group, since it did not, at that time, participate in NATO’s collective defense planning.

18 The new committee had two seats at the table for each country so that national civilian and military delegations could be represented. Unfortunately, in practice, there was little involvement from the staffs of Allied Military Representatives who established their own military-only committee.

19 NATO, “Membership Action Plan (MAP),” Press Release NAC-S(99) 066, April 24, 1999, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/fr/natohq/official\\_texts\\_27444.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/fr/natohq/official_texts_27444.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.

20 *Ibid.*

21 A NATO procedure to streamline decision-making, whereby a document prepared by the staff or a NATO committee is circulated to ambassadors (or ministers) but is not expected to require a meeting to discuss it, since agreement by national staffs has already been reached. If “silence” is “broken,” a discussion at ambassadorial (or ministerial) level would be required.

22 NATO, “NATO-Ukraine Action Plan,” November 22, 2002, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_19547.htm?](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_19547.htm?)>.

23 The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was the successor to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). It was established in 1997 and, like the NACC, brought together representatives of the Allies and all partners. It was intended to reflect NATO’s desire for a security forum that would better reflect the more operational role of partnership. In fact, in recent years it has fallen into disuse, with preference being given to meetings in formats of Allies and those partners contributing troops to different NATO operations. The last EAPC Ministerial meeting took place in June 2009; NATO, “Prague Summit Declaration,” Press Release (2002)127, November 21, 2002, available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm>>.

24 NATO, *The Prague Summit and NATO’s Transformation: A Reader’s Guide* (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2003), available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/rdr-gde-prg/rdr-gde-prg-eng.pdf>>.

25 Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Montenegro, BiH, and Serbia. Uzbekistan began developing an IPAP, but work on this ended after the deaths in Andijan in 2005.

26 As an example, see Serbia’s objectives, available at <<http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/images/ipap/ipapeng.pdf>>.

27 *The Prague Summit and NATO’s Transformation: A Reader’s Guide, op. cit.*

28 NATO, “Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB),” June 7, 2004, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_21014.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_21014.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.

29 SG (2002) 1215, included in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Defence Reform Commission, “The Path to Partnership for Peace,” September 15, 2003, available at <[https://www.jfncaples.nato.int/systems/file\\_download.ashx?pg=1441&ver=1](https://www.jfncaples.nato.int/systems/file_download.ashx?pg=1441&ver=1)>.

30 The Peace Implementation Council, meeting in Bonn in December 1997, granted substantial powers to the High Representative to adopt binding decisions relating to implementation of the Dayton Peace agreements when local parties seemed unwilling or unable to act; Office of the High Representative, “Decision Establishing the Defence Reform Commission,” May 09, 2003, available at <<http://www.ohr.int/?p=65835>>.

31 For a full and largely first-hand account of this effort, see: Rohan Maxwell and John Andreas Olsen, *Destination NATO: Defence Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003-13*, Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall Paper 80 (London: Routledge, March 24, 2014).

32 “The Path to Partnership for Peace,” *op. cit.*; In April 2010, the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Tallinn invited BiH to join the Membership Action Plan, pending resolution of the issue of the ownership (by the state or Entity governments) of 63 sites identified as needed for the use of the Armed Forces of BiH. To date, despite some progress, it has not been possible to fully resolve this issue.

33 NATO, “Final Communiqué,” Press Release (2003)152, December 4, 2003, available at <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2003/p03-152e.htm>>.

34 Office of the High Representative, “Decision Extending the Mandate of the Defence Reform Commission,” February 04, 2004, available at <<http://www.ohr.int/?p=65627>>.

35 NATO, “Istanbul Summit Communiqué,” Press Release (2004)096, June 28, 2004, <<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>>.

36 Office of the High Representative, “Decision Extending the Mandate of the Defence Reform Commission,” December 31, 2004, available at <<http://www.ohr.int/ohr-dept/pol/drc/pdf/drc-report-2005-eng.pdf>>, 181.

37 *Ibid.*

38 This Political-Military Cell in NATO Headquarters Sarajevo still exists and has been recognised in successive annual NATO Periodic Mission Reviews as being a crucial asset in promoting defense reform and building defense institutions. Consequently, any proposal for change to this Cell has to be referred to NATO Headquarters in Brussels for approval. This stipulation proved necessary because it became clear that the military command chain was uncomfortable with having a group of civilians as part of a subordinate headquarters whose expertise in the principal goal of the organization was so far ahead of the military members of the chain of command. This had resulted in attempts by the military chain of command to constrain their size, resources, and activities, which the Headquarters in Brussels was not prepared to permit. Having said this, it is not inevitable that a military headquarters staffed largely by military personnel will be inadequate to the task of supporting defense reform and defense institution building, particularly if given the right leadership and the imposition of strict requirements concerning the expertise and length of deployment of the personnel posted there, as evidenced by the work of NATO Headquarters Skopje over several years.

39 The State Union was created in February 2003, but was a very loose political union between Serbia and Montenegro. There were pressures in Montenegro for full independence that were realised in June 2006, after a referendum in Montenegro resulted in 55.5 percent of those voting casting their ballots for independence. Serbia declared its own independence a few days later.

40 For example, Working Table 1, dealing with financial planning, produced a report in October 2007 acknowledging that the financial planning model then used in the Ministry of Defense was based on a methodology that was 20 years old, obsolete, unusable, and needed to be thoroughly overhauled.

41 Kosovo declared independence unilaterally in February 2008.

42 NATO agreed to take on these tasks in a so-called “Bridging Directive,” NAC Execution Directive for the KFOR Bridging Directive, dated March 10, 2008.

43 Greece, Romania, Spain, and the Slovak Republic.

44 NATO, “NATO-Russia Compendium of Financial and Economic Data Relating to Defence,” June 9-10, 2005, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_57094.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_57094.htm?mode=pressrelease)>.

45 UN Security Council, “Report of UN Secretary General on United Nations Support Mission in Libya,” S/2012/675, August 30, 2012, available at <[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2012/675](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2012/675)>.

46 These include seven NATO countries as well as partners in Europe, Asia, and South America.

47 NATO, “The Wales Declaration on the Transatlantic Bond,” Press Release (2014) 120, September 5, 2014, available at <[http://nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_112985.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_112985.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.

48 This was a specific response to the possibility of providing advice and assistance to Libya, but it also keeps open the door for such requests from other countries in the future.

49 NATO, “Farewell Speech to the Council by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson,” December 17, 2003, available at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_20352.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_20352.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.