

note n°10/13

NORDIKA Programme

FONDATION
pour la RECHERCHE
STRATÉGIQUE

Samir Battiss

Lecturer at the University of Quebec
in Montreal

NATO Military Partnerships: The US National Guard State Partnership as the driving force for pre-accession and long-term cooperation

(May 2013)

This text is published as part of the NORDIKA programme, with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Abstract

The United States National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) aims to strengthen partner states in support of the security cooperation objectives of U.S. regional combatant commanders. In Europe and elsewhere, potential or real weakness in transitional states jeopardizes both regional security and the democratization process. U.S. Security cooperation through assistance in counterinsurgency, foreign internal defence, and training advisory missions seems much more relevant today than traditional State-to-State high-intensity opera-

tions. To engage in such cooperation, U.S. Combatant Commands and NATO structures could have an interesting approach at their disposal that combines national and allied security programs. The SPP/PfP case examined in this chapter shows that the Nordic/Baltic armed forces have been influenced by this approach and could play a sustaining role for the NATO Partnering approach with regard to the future regional/global stability challenges to be tackled on the short- and long-run in different parts of the world.

Introduction

Countering irregular threats, developing partners' capabilities, and supporting democratization through democratic control of armed forces are the central security tasks to be pursued in sensitive regions by both political and military leadership. The combination of diplomatic and economic tools with military and intelligence capabilities is central to mitigating irregular threats. Generally speaking, the Western approach to security cooperation appears to focus on three areas. First, it seeks to leverage the entire spectrum of defence interactions with foreign counterparts to shape defence relationships. Second, it seeks to develop mutually beneficial strategies that support the modernization of partner State armed forces for both self-defence and multinational operations. Third, habitual relationships between larger Western armed forces (namely U.S., France and United Kingdom) and transitional State counterparts would provide them in peacetime with contingency access to national military facilities and infrastructures.

Mutual security support aims to enlist allies and partners to contribute to both regional and global security as well as to fight against emerging irregular threats. Such threats are common in transitional, weak and failing States that on most occasions are threatened by terrorists and other transnational criminals. Weakness in transitional States directly jeopardizes not only the national/collective security of larger partners, but also the democratization process in the region. Security cooperation through assistance in counter-insurgency, foreign internal defence, and training advisory missions seems much more relevant today than traditional State-to-State high-intensity operations¹. From a prevention perspective, security cooperation aims to anticipate some of the conditions that contribute to instability, such as lack of governance, uncontrolled borders, and ineffective military forces. Terrorist networks and the criminal activity that funds them thrive mostly in areas where there is little or no effective government.

Countering irregular threats across the globe is a major endeavor – no single country has sufficient human or material resources to do so single-handedly. Concerned countries along with international, regional, and sub-regional organizations need to assume responsibility for peace

keeping and stabilization, in addition to the defence of its population and territory. For the Western countries most active in military support (the U.S., France and the UK) the era of “paternalist” foreign aid to troubled countries is over, and any security backing should be interpreted henceforth as an investment. These countries expect return on investment in the form of political/security benefits proportional to the human and financial capital invested in these relationships; the expected dividends raise the issue of the estimated results, after years of spending with little real progress or security improvement (Africa or Central Asia).

Gaining some security dividends in return for assistance is more beneficial than administering uncoordinated aid and expecting lasting results. This approach also could provide a useful framework to build a comprehensive and integrated strategy with allies. Security cooperation enables partner States to increase their capacity for self-defence and to eliminate ungoverned areas that attract terrorists and other transnational criminals. The desired end state is both partners increasing their capacity to secure their national and regional interests.

The result of a collective security arrangement based on cooperation and common goals would exceed any individual nation's efforts. Security support can develop common thinking amongst partners and allies about security issues, as well as increase the capability and willingness to undertake/carry out missions that serve common interests. European and U.S. allies, with limited resources and limited access to sovereign States, cannot expect to reduce global threats without the assistance and cooperation of partners and allies². National strategic documents usually make this point very clearly about partnerships; international partnerships remain a principal source of regional influence. Shared principles, a common view of threats, and commitment to cooperation provide far greater security than States can achieve with their individual material capabilities.

Given the need to face the growing international instability, security cooperation is a sensible way to counter regular and irregular threats through developing an ever-closer common security vision among nations at political and strategic levels. Thus, operationally and tactically each branch of national armed forces has increased its efforts to engage with partners. National con-

1. Ronald H. Reynolds and Jeffrey S. Grafton, “The Management of Security Cooperation,” in *Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management*, 31st Edition, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (Ohio), February 2012, pp.1-27.

2. Yves Boyer: “Alliances and Warfare” [Part. I chapter V, pp. 69-79], in *The Oxford Handbook of War*, Yves Boyer and Julian Lindley-French (Eds.) [Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2012], 736 p.

cepts seek to build a holistic force by adding security cooperation and building partner capacity to national armed forces' list of missions. While this emphasis on security cooperation represents a paradigm shift for some, for others it is a continuation of a long tradition. Designed to bolster weak and failing States, overall the concept makes security cooperation a deliberate task in normal operations of deployed forces rather than secondary to combat operations. Deploying national forces to conduct security cooperation as a preventive action against irregular threats in pre-conflict situations can pay enormous dividends. Such engagement can prevent conflict and could avoid major Western intervention by increasing partners' ability to prevent local tensions from developing into full-blown crises.

NATO Security Cooperation: Reducing Unsecured Spaces on all continents

Ungoverned areas have been increasingly identified in recent years as a key threat to regional/global security and Western interests. These areas are often seen as synonymous with failed States. A primary goal of security cooperation is to enhance governance in such areas, in order to deny sanctuary to terrorists, WMD proliferators, narcotics traffickers, and other transnational criminals. Since the end of the Cold War, failing States have posed a more significant threat to global security than have aggressive ones.

In an interconnected global environment, lack of governance in even the most remote areas poses a risk to global security and stability. Terrorists and transnational criminals use these spaces as sanctuaries for drugs or weapons storage, training, recruitment, and funding activities. In many of these environments, better governance would disrupt or even prevent terrorist and transnational criminal activities. Sanctuary denial and effective border interdiction through an effective local security presence are crucial to reducing the threat from ungoverned areas.

Overseas operations, however, are impossible without the assistance and cooperation of the host nation and its authorities. By working with and through host nations, major powers can indirectly master the process of reducing ungoverned spaces. Denying criminals and terrorists control of these areas would effectively "drain the swamp" of potential recruits and funding for transnational criminal and terrorist organizations. Through security cooperation, external actors aim to reduce the number of ungoverned

areas by training professional military forces with adequate civilian control. Many countries in the world use their military forces in a constabulary role – in other words to acquire a professional policing component in addition to national defence – while others have at their disposal real armed forces explicitly dedicated to a constabulary role. Countries with identified border control problems, large ungoverned areas, and unstable governments have already benefited, and are still benefiting, from an appropriately equipped and well led military. Security cooperation efforts would strive to empower countries to control their maritime and land borders and to react responsibly when needed during regional crisis. This would strengthen both regional responsibility and internal stability.

National security partnerships are today codified in the joint doctrine documents of major military powers and encompass activities that ensure campaign success through various means: developing allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defence and coalition operations; improving information exchange; and providing national forces with peacetime and contingency access and local infrastructure. Most military leaders now understand that shaping and developing security cooperation are an integral part of the entire campaign continuum. This is accomplished through a variety of programs including: combined/multinational education, exercises, training, and experimentation; counter narcotics assistance; counter/non-proliferation; defence and military contacts; defence support to public diplomacy; humanitarian assistance; information exchange/intelligence cooperation; and international armaments cooperation.

Western national strategies describe the emerging environment as an era of uncertainty, in which an array of traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive capabilities threaten national interests of Western countries³. The growing disparities caused by globalization may breed unease and resentment among those who benefit less. On each continent, States may continue to align themselves regionally to challenge and to balance Western presence. This balancing

3. United States White House, "National Security Strategy 2010", Washington D.C., May 2010, 52 p; U.S. Department of Defense, "Defense Strategic Guidance. Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense", Washington D.C., January 2012, 25 p. United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, "Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: Strategic Defence and Security Review", presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, Norwich: The Stationery Office, October 2010, 75 p; Présidence de la République/Ministère de la Défense, *le Livre blanc sur la défense et la sécurité nationale*, (Paris: Odile Jacob/La Documentation française, 2008), 350 p.

could take a “hard” form, but is more likely to be of the “soft” variety.

Ever since the Cold war, prudence has led the U.S and other Western countries to seek friends and allies among emerging powers and within regions where they wish to establish strategic political and economic influence⁴. Today and in the future, the most likely challenges Western countries will face are irregular ones that erode their regional or local influence. The most dangerous are those associated with the continuing existence of extremist ideologies that advocate the indiscriminate use of violence. These challenges are now transnational in nature, and are compounded by the absence of effective governance in many parts of the world. Transnational terrorist, criminal, and insurgent organizations can plan and operate from these areas. Unless directly countered, these areas will increase.

The National Guard and Geographical Combatant Commands: Supporting U.S. Theatre Security Cooperation Program and NATO partnerships

The 1990s appears to be the fundamental consolidation period for the various foreign aid programs, in the United States and NATO, into what has since been termed “Security Assistance” or “NATO Partnerships”. Several events in the last twenty years have demonstrated most pointedly not only in Europe but also in other continents that weakness of State apparatus including security forces invited the occurrence of such events and helped to gel a consensus that it was in the national interests of the U.S. and its major allies to continue strengthening the defence structure of the transatlantic community. It likewise gave some « Food for thought » to those among the nation’s leaders who still clung to the *mentis gratissimus error* that a firm line of separation should exist between foreign and military affairs. Inexorably it was being recognized that the era of “Grand or Total War” signified and demonstrated the need for the “Grand or Total Strategy”. Nowadays “Grand and Total uncertainty” that characterizes the strategic situation admittedly requires a more comprehensive approach that goes beyond a cooperation DoD/DoS,. Moreover, the philosophy inherent to the establishment of

Security/Defence Assistance Programs implied the acknowledgment that all national allied actions abroad, whatever form they may take, must have the common purpose of advancing national, allied and partners’ security and welfare. It thus involves the principle of *Realpolitik* which intrinsically allows no other justification for any policy or program of a nation in its external affairs.

















In U.S. military doctrine, theatre strategy is defined by the DoD as “*Concepts and courses of action directed toward securing the objectives of national and multinational policies and strategies through the synchronized and integrated employment of military forces and other instruments of national power*”⁵. Theatre strategy provides guidance to security activities that aim to enhance the capability and capacity of a host-nation or regional security organization’s security forces. These foreign security forces encompass not only armed forces (military, paramilitary or police with military status) but also include civilian services (police, and intelligence forces; border police, coast guard, and customs officials; and prison guards and correctional personnel) that provide security for an allied/partner nation and its relevant population or support a regional security organization’s mission. In defining and implementing the theatre strategy, each geographical U.S. Unified Combatant Commander (i.e. EUCOM, here; but also AFRICOM, PACOM, CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM, NORTHCOM) aims to establish conditions that support the partner’s (political) end state, which includes legitimate, credible, competent, capable, committed, and confident security forces. On the other hand, through strategic communication abroad, it tries to inform, persuade, and influence both local/regional partners and adversaries.

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) involves establishing a partnership between a State National Guard and other national armed forces of a sovereign country. Initially conceived as military-to-military engagement activities, several of these relationships have developed further and, nowadays include civilian-to-civilian initiatives. As a security assistance provider, it conducts activities and in so doing influences the perceptions and behavior of regional security actors. Due to the specific nature of the U.S. National Guard, the SPP initiatives have been used as dual assets – national and NATO⁶. In addition to laying the foundation





4. William H. Mott, *United States Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), pp. 1-18; William H. Mott, *Military Assistance: An Operational Perspective*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999,), pp. 1-28.

5. Barry Leonard (dir.), (Department of Defense), *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (as amended through April 2010), Washington: Diane Publishing, 2011, 690 p. in particular p. 474.

**States partnership Program and Partnership for Peace (PTP) access
Historical perspectives and coincidences**

COUNTRY	US Unified Combat Command - Area of responsibility AOR	STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM		PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE - PFP
		Establishment date	American State Partner	
Former Republics of the Soviet Union				
 Armenia	EUCOM / SACEUR	June 2004	KANSAS	October 1994
 Azerbaijan	EUCOM / SACEUR	2003	OKLAHOMA	May 1994
 Belarus	EUCOM / SACEUR			January 1995
 Georgia	EUCOM / SACEUR	1994	GEORGIA	March 1994
 Kazakhstan	CENTCOM	1993	ARIZONA	May 1994
 Kyrgyzstan	CENTCOM			June 1994
 Moldova	EUCOM / SACEUR	April 1999	NORTH CAROLINA	March 1994
 Russia	EUCOM / SACEUR			June 1994
 Tajikistan	CENTCOM	2003	VIRGINIA	February 2002
 Turkmenistan	CENTCOM	1996		May 1994
 Ukraine	EUCOM / SACEUR	1993	CALIFORNIA	February 1994
 Uzbekistan	CENTCOM	2012	MISSISSIPPI	July 1994
Former republics of Yugoslavia				
 Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUCOM / SACEUR	January 2003	MARYLAND	December 2006
 Republic of Macedonia	EUCOM / SACEUR	March 1995	VERMONT	November 1995
 Montenegro	EUCOM / SACEUR	November 2006	MAINE	December 2006
 Serbia	EUCOM / SACEUR	September 2006	OHIO	December 2006

“Neutral” (under dispute) EU members

	Austria				February 1995
	Finland				May 1994
	Ireland				December 1999
	Malta				April 1995 reactivation March 2008

NATO at the summit in Bucharest on April 3 2008

	Sweden				May 1994
	Switzerland				December 1996








Aspiring members

	Kosovo	EUCOM	March 11 2011	IOWA	
---	--------	-------	---------------	------	--

Former PFP Countries having become full NATO members

	Czech Republic	EUCOM / SACEUR	1993	NEBRASKA/ TEXAS	March 1994
	Hungary	EUCOM / SACEUR	1993	OHIO	February 1994
	Poland	EUCOM / SACEUR	July 14 1993	ILLINOIS	February 1994

Countries that became full NATO members on March 29 2004

	Bulgaria	EUCOM / SACEUR	August 1993	TENNESSEE	February 1994
	Estonia	EUCOM	1993	MARYLAND / NEW YORK	February 1994
	Latvia	EUCOM / SACEUR	1993	MICHIGAN	February 1994
	Lithuania	EUCOM / SACEUR	April 27 1993	PENNSYLVANIA	January 1994
	Romania	EUCOM / SACEUR	July 14 1993	ALABAMA	January 1994
	Slovakia	EUCOM / SACEUR	July 14 1993	INDIANA	February 1994
	Slovenia	EUCOM / SACEUR	March 1994	COLORADO	March 1994

Countries that became full NATO members on April 1, 2009

	Albania	EUCOM / SACEUR	1993	NEW JERSEY	February 23, 1994
	Croatia	EUCOM / SACEUR	1996	MINNESOTA	May 25, 2000

of goodwill, trust, access and influence, they pave the way for allied/allied – allied/partners interactions that go beyond a simple relationship to help increase a partner’s ability to accomplish a particular task or mission⁷.

Basic to the issue are the answers to the question “when”, and “how” military assistance is to be made available; especially since the number of recipients has steadily increased over the last 20 years, and this trend is likely to continue, in view of the number of States scheduled to be involved in the growing concept of “Air/Sea Battle in Asia-Pacific”, and of the future challenges in Africa and in Central Asia. This unceasing expansion of potential recipients has introduced dynamism into the framework upon which military assistance rests, making it most difficult to establish any set formula, even in general principles.

When military assistance was first launched as an integral component of national foreign policy, such aid was almost exclusively directed against potential or real threats to Europe, Africa or other areas of national – sometimes collective – strategic interests. With the development of crises in several parts of the world, provisions from an/the American perspective were made through several security assistance programs like the *SPP*, *PfP* and other NATO Partnerships, which has not only broadened the geographic scope of military aid but also introduced a complex system of governing principles, in order to meet the designed objectives of the expanded policy.

Looking at military considerations, there are apparently ample reasons to positively consider the connection *State Partnership Program* / NATO Partnerships. In Europe, the basic principles determining employment of military assistance in Europe have been, first, that they serve to improve its relative military, political, and economic strength, thereby keeping at a maximum its ability to contribute to collective security; and to protect/shelter the European NATO area from current and future threats. In accordance with these political objectives, military aid is provided to European allies and partners to assist NATO full members – and aspiring countries – with the modernization and maintenance of their forces, taking into account the latest concepts of war-

fare; to obtain the greatest possible contribution to common security from non-member countries. These objectives reflect the permanent improvement of military stature of most allies and partners, since the inception of the NATO partnerships and national programs which have enabled a shift in emphasis from individual country defence to continental and global defence of allies’ interests.

At present Europe remains the only area where military assistance is integrated with joint, regional defence planning. This is because the individual problem of internal security in Europe being of a relatively minor nature, emphasis was placed on maintaining joint military “forces in being” capable of deterring outside aggression. Areas of interests of the Alliance such as Africa, the Near East, and Asia-Pacific face somewhat akin situations to each other but, at the same time, immensely different from those in Europe. In addition to creating new partnerships with key countries on these continents, the United States’ and allied strategies may foresee the protection of common interests worldwide known as “securing access to the global commons” by resorting to “newly” trained and equipped European armed forces. Therefore, the latter may be deployed “out of European area” since the Alliance has increased its geographic scopes and the range of missions because of the globalization of threats and risks that could undermine transatlantic security; the former could be at stake several thousand kilometers away from home.

Nordic/Baltic countries, from security beneficiaries to troops providers in multinational operations

The earliest programs of military assistance were grounded in the principle of relieving to the greatest possible extent any rearmament burden on the restructuring of European economies in the early 1990s. Within less than a decade new developments on the international scene caused a major shift. The 1990s and 2000s marked an epochal change in the overall influences of world geography on both European and North American official circles, including generational change amongst political leaders. Besides these geopolitical influences, programs of national or multilateral security assistance program such as the *SPP* or the *PfP* and their coincidence over economic relationships could be an established policy put in place by major leading countries. Like the Marshall Plan in the late 1940s, NATO/ U.S. Security assistance systems of the early

6. National Guard Bureau, International Affairs Division, “Doctrine for National Guard Cooperative Efforts with Other Nations,” April 1998, p. 7; John, Jr. Groves, “PfP and the State Partnership Program: Fostering Engagement and Progress”, *Parameters*, Spring 1999, pp. 43-53.

7. Bill Owens and Troy A. Eid, “Strategic Democracy Building: How U.S. States Can Help?”, in *The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Using Soft Power to Undermine Terrorist Networks*, Alexander T. J Lennon (ed.) [Cambridge (MA), MIT Press, 2003], pp. 130-149.

1990s implied that economic aid for Central/Eastern European countries – like in other areas closely associated with the Allies – could be used for military production. In the first place, there was the necessity of alleviating the more severe effect of rearmament on the newly achieved levels of economic activity and standards of living in the countries politically connected with NATO members; and although defence support would, to a degree, serve this function, there was no suggestion that U.S. and allied largesse should relieve the beneficiaries of all sacrifices. Moreover, an agreement was implicitly reached as to how the burden of participation in multinational operations. The period since 1990 has seen increasing attention paid to multinational military forces.

Their increasing number of mission types continually requires more and more contributing forces. Operating in multinational forces is nothing new for the armed forces at NATO's disposal. Experiences *inter alia* in the former Yugoslavia, the Mediterranean, the Arabian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean have demonstrated the substantial strategic advantages to be gained through coalition and alliance operations. The National Guard *SPPs* and the *PfP* activities have made it possible for partnering nations to contribute for NATO-led or *ad hoc* military operations. Regarded as an integral device to the U.S. combatant commands' theatre engagement plans, their activities have pursued and achieved several defence and military goals, such as: Assuring dominant coalitions; Achieving and enhancing influence; Contributing to the execution of stated policy; Gaining regional access and access to decision makers ; Building relationships and military-to-military contacts; Acquiring the right systems for allies and friends; Developing a broad portfolio of coalition military capabilities; Capitalizing on rapid technological developments; Preventing proliferation of technologies and weapons into the wrong hands; Aligning goals and resources to carry out the job efficiently; Using a performance-based management system to make resource decisions.

But, although they take the form of peace-keeping, peace-support, or/and humanitarian operations, there is evidence to suggest that subtle differences in the organizational and national cultures of the countries that contribute personnel to missions can have an impact on the overall operational effectiveness of the multinational force. There is thus a requirement to consider and integrate the intercultural issues and factors that surround and influence multinational military collaboration, particularly at the strategic and operational level of command.

Because the United States and their Allies share common security interests and common values and face common challenges (threats, risks), they rely on other partnering nations. All major NATO nations' strategies recognize and emphasize the importance of multinational operations; each country reaffirms its will to act with others when it can, giving priority to "regional" or "ideological" allies and friends. Multinational operations are often analyzed as a compromise between military capability and political constraints, usually include a wide spectrum of missions; the intensity ranges from war to long-term tasks with a civilian nature in which the military apparatus plays a minor but necessary role. Multilateral actions of war are the extreme circumstance for conducting operations whose goal is to quickly achieve the multinational collective objectives with as little cost as possible. Peacetime engagement activities involving the military help to shape the security strategic environment by sharing experience in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, post-conflict rehabilitation, promotion of human rights, and strengthening democratic reforms. Although they are theoretically based on individual State requests and needs, bilateral military relations with "neutral" States and the *State Partnership Program / PfP* seek means to achieve rationalization, standardization, and interoperability that will significantly enhance the probability of operational success in multinational missions. For commanders as for political actors, the key is to build relationships, trust, cooperation, and cohesion at all military levels, while overcoming language and cultural barriers and relevantly applying common procedures or norms.

These accomplishments display U.S. commitment in relevant security areas, and are designed to lend credibility to its alliances by enhancing regional stability and providing a crisis response capability while promoting U.S. influence and access. Four significant paths have been followed by the *SPP/PfP* since the beginning of the 21st century. Several countries from Central and Eastern Europe have become members of NATO, correlatively the number of *SPP/ PfP* participating countries. NATO has also multiplied several instruments (Individual Partnership Program; Planning and Review Process; Operational Capabilities Concept) which deepen this program by allowing partners to adapt their participation through additional opportunities based upon their national objectives and capacities and perspective (Individual Partnership Action Plan ; Annual National Program; Membership Action Plan). A third dimension of NATO partnership is directly linked to the allied military presence in

Afghanistan. At tactical and operational levels, the *SPP* innovative activities combined with *PfP* low-tech and low-cost solutions appears to be a way for the United States to avoid technological shortfalls and to bypass incapability to integrate their cutting edge technologies with most of NATO and non- NATO partners. The second aspect here is the growing strategic importance of the Caucasus and Central Asia that come out as the existence of *PfP* countries/*SPP* participants in the region and the perspective of the future Afghan participation in NATO partnership initiatives. Finally, the *PfP* is increasingly used to build cooperative relationships with countries in the region by regionalizing the treatment of security and stabilization missions.

At the political level, most of Baltic /Nordic Countries have always been viewed by the U.S. as future NATO and EU members, which, together with other neighboring States, would influence decision making in the aforementioned organizations. Accordingly, U.S. considerations of their strategic value are directly linked to their potential influence on NATO and EU decision making. The U.S. also values its partners as supporters of U.S. Euro-Asian policy and of U.S.-led actions against identified threats and risks towards shared values⁸. As U.S. allies with diplomatic information, military economic (DIME) powers, countries like Finland, Poland or other current / former *PfP* members are considered potentially capable of supporting U.S. security, market and business interests in Europe. U.S., European and transatlantic policies have been fundamental factors in shaping U.S. interests toward its allies and the interests of the transatlantic community. Although each Baltic country – objectively regarded as a small contributing nation to security activities – makes its presence felt in a number of areas vital to the NATO / U.S.: development of cooperation with Russia, democratization of Belarus and Russia, stabilization of Afghanistan, the Balkans, Central and South Asia and the South Caucasus, as well as bringing Ukraine closer to dialog and integration with Euro-Atlantic structures.

At strategic level, it should be mentioned that some Nordic countries – Norway, Finland and Sweden – have been invited as “observer nations”⁹ to the Multinational interoperability council which, as highlighted by professor Yves

8. Thorvald Stoltenberg, *Nordic cooperation on foreign and security policy proposals presented to the extraordinary meeting of Nordic foreign ministers*, Oslo, February 2009, 36 p.

9. Multinational Interoperability Council (MIC- Executive Secretariat), *Membership policies and procedures*, Version 2.2, 20 March 2012, 14 p. in particular p. 4.

Boyer, “provides a joint, multinational forum for identifying interoperability issues and articulating actions at the strategic and high operational level”¹⁰.

At the operational and tactical levels, Nordic and Baltic regional territory with its airspace might be used for developing bases, headquarters and commands, and for the training of U.S., allies’ and multinational forces. Their experience in multinational exercises and operations, its in-place training centers, as well as low operating costs and relatively lower ecological requirements, readily lend themselves to these purposes. Their geographic location also retains advantages in the positioning of counter missile systems, potential early warning systems, and forward counter missile defence assets. Over the past five years, some *PfP* countries (including Nordic and Eastern European) took part, within MIC’s framework but based on Allied Joint doctrine, in two major multinational exercises termed “Multinational Experimentations (MNE)” that aim to improve coalition capabilities to ensure access to and use of the global common domains (air, maritime, space and cyber) through an application of the comprehensive approach¹¹. The specific and closed forum is valuable a meeting point, a network or a community for various actors engaged with similar challenges under the auspices of the United States armed forces. Such an exclusive “club” based on operational criteria gives some orientations and arguments for those who would call for a multi-speed NATO¹², a model that could either re-invigorate the Alliance’s partnerships or mark a sign of their slow and inexorable decline as well as that of the Alliance¹³. A precedent consisted within NATO operation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Operation Joint Endeavor), of the Nordic-Polish Brigade (NPB)¹⁴ integrated in the American sector of the Multina-

10. Multinational Interoperability Council, *Coalition Building Guide – Future Coalition Operating Environment: Interoperability Challenges for the Future*, 3rd edition / volume III.1, November 2012, 52 p. See also. Yves Boyer, “France: The State with Strategic Vision”, in *NATO’s European Allies: Military Capability and Political Will*, Magnus Petersson and Anne Haaland Matlary (eds.), Palgrave Macmillan, January 2013, p. 145.

11. Multinational Experiment 7 (MNE7) community included representatives from: Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Spain, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, and NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) with observers from Turkey and South Korea.

12. Timo Noetzel and Tobias Bunde, “Multi-Tier NATO: The Atlantic Alliance in the 21st Century”, Chatham House, 2013, 200 p.

13. Yves Boyer, “France: The State with Strategic Vision”, *op.cit.*, pp. 154-159.

14. Including five core nations of Denmark, Finland, Nor-

tional Division North (MNDN). The NPB was an incorporated element in the U.S.-led *Task Force Eagle*, one of the three divisions of NATO/IFOR/SFOR. Once the General Framework Agreement for Peace was signed, it joined the U.S. 1st Armored Division, part of NATO's Allied Command Europe, Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). These experiences and acquired know-how could have benefited other initiatives within the different frameworks: the European Union with the Nordic Battle Group and the *Visegrád* Battle Group; *Weimar* Battle Group; the United Nations through the Standby High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG).

Security support provided by both NATO and individual nations (the U.S., France, the UK or others) first develops common strategic thinking as well as a Common Situational Awareness and Operating Picture among partners and allies about security issues. It also builds capability and willingness to tackle missions that serve common interests. European and U.S. allies, with limited resources and restricted access to sovereign States, cannot expect to reduce global threats without partner and ally assistance and cooperation. The first generation of security assistance providers initially expects return on investment in the form of political/security profits in relation to the human and financial capital invested in these relationships; the expected dividends raise the issue of the estimated results, after years of spending with some real progress or security improvement. The second step will be to use the thus trained partners' armed forces now interoperable with the initial providers to replicate the model in other areas.

Conclusion

As Western countries are involved in an enduring engagement where non-traditional approaches are required, a major focus of effort needs to be placed on capacity building in partner States. No nation can lead operations alone around the globe; they all need to leverage the capabilities of partners. Prevailing against today's risks and threats will require enduring partnerships with government agencies, sister military services and nations of varying socio-economic levels and types of governance. On the hand, EUCOM and the State Partnership program with Nordic/Baltic countries used to aspire to bring American expertise based not only on goodwill, trust, access and mutual influence, but

way, Poland, Sweden, completed by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian elements.

also on actually helping to boost a partner's ability to accomplish a given task or mission¹⁵. Although initial contact is at the tactical level, as the partnership grows the relationship today is developing to cover military-to-civilian and civilian-to-civilian relationships. Interaction typically begins with small unit exchanges, and usually evolves into more meaningful relationships. The SPP has been a successful program in Europe; of the fifteen Eastern European countries that were paired in the first three years of the program, ten of them are now members of NATO. The characteristics of the National Guard have enabled the SPP to overcome some of the challenges that the U.S. regular Armed forces would have faced. The programs may be individual, tailored to the needs of the partner nation, but they cover a common wide range of activities. There are, however, some structural limitations to the SPP that detract from its ability to reach the initial expectations of both sides: lack of funding and the restrictive criteria of partnership process. A more proactive approach could serve to reduce the impact of these limitations and could eliminate potential conflict situations through partnerships that support a Western security agenda and could persuade adversaries and competitors to engage in constructive international behavior.

By fostering cooperation and mutual trust with allies and partners, especially those at a strategic crossroads, the U.S. and allies aim to prevent future regional conflict and to address current and future challenges. But there are two main aspects to take into consideration for the future in North Africa. First, although each partner nation has its own security expectations, the transnational aspect of many types of threats should be considered. These dangers have increasingly become cross-border on a continent where frontiers are artificial, either imposed by colonial history, or meaningless from a cultural perspective. Therefore, NG SPP should always be considered a multinational process to promote sub-regional activities involving two or more nations, in order to promote regional interoperable responses with U.S. NG support. As the PfP has been a relevant vehicle of NG know how in restructuring armies for the benefit of Central European Countries, other similar NATO regional programs (e.g. NATO Mediterranean Dialogue) could be

15. Typical focus areas among partners are: emergency preparedness and disaster response; military exercises and peacekeeping operations; border, port and aviation defense and security; leadership; officer and noncommissioned officer development; military media relations; medical care; defense and democratic institutions and reform; natural resources protection; economic security; and university and education exchange programs.

inspired by the interoperability success of the Nordic/Baltic experiences within both the Alliance and the EU. The Arab Maghreb Union could be seen as an interesting context for the NG SPP to lead a North African “Regional Interoperability Council”, ensuring that interoperability implementations address local concerns and unique regional circumstances, while also adhering to the national adopted strategies and tactics. Initial key issues could encompass humanitarian emergencies; energy infrastructure protection and prevention; prevention of environmental disasters caused by high-level criminal attacks prevention; Civil Defence structures in support of USAID actions, the EADRCC and the International Civil Defence Organization.

The second aspect to be carefully considered is complementarity and collaboration with non-U.S. partnerships. Indeed, particular attention should be paid to establishing channels of cooperation between allies (nationally taken), the European Union and the United States. A model could be found for NATO within “NATO training missions” approach (NTM) (Afghanistan; Iraq). This multinational operation directly or indirectly involves both NATO members and other States by providing Intelligence, Command and

Control structures and pools of trainers. Complementary U.S. – NATO – EU cooperation should be promoted in the training area. After the Libyan revolution, the major threats are transnational and thus, partnerships should move from a platform-based (national) to a network-based (multinational) approach, using a combination of on-call U.S. and non-U.S. units. When engaging in capacity building activities, purely military efforts are insufficient if they are isolated from diplomatic and economic efforts. The interagency understanding and the citizen-soldier relationship inherent in the National Guard appear to be unique advantages. The National Guard usually operates alongside other agencies within the U.S. government and in an international environment with non-state actors and the European allies’ counterparts (namely the European Gendarmerie Forces contributing: France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal), and this experience is crucial. Also, the distinctive status of Guardspersons and their ability to affect relationships on a military-to-military, civilian-to-military and civilian-to-civilian level make them ideal in the newly emerged environment in Africa and in Asia.♦

Author

Dr. Samir Battiss is Lecturer at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) and Associate Researcher at the Research Center of Canadian International Relations (National School of Public Administration, Montreal). In the fall of 2011, he was Visiting Research Fellow at the Research Division of the NATO Defense College within the framework of the Mediterranean Dialogue Fellowship. In Spring 2012 he has been selected by the Atlantic Council of the United States as “Young Atlanticist” to participate to NATO Summit in Chicago, IL, and in Spring 2013 by the Slovak Atlantic Commission (SAC) as “Young Leader” on the occasion of the Annual Global Security Forum (Bratislava).

This article uses data gathered during a study sponsored and financed by the Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l’École Militaire (Paris, IRSEM – Institute for Strategic Research – French Military College) as part of its scientific research support program.

Recently published

- Bruno Tertrais, La révolution pétrolière américaine : quelles conséquences stratégiques, note n° 09/13, avril 2013
- Noël Stott, Africa and the Chemical Weapons Convention, note n° 08/13, April 2013
- Jaclyn Tandler, Known and Unknowns: President Obama’s Lethal Drone Doctrine, n° 07/13, April 2013.
- Igor Delanoë, Le partenariat stratégique russo-syrien : la clef du dispositif naval russe en Méditerranée, note n° 06/13, mars 2013

The Foundation for Strategic Research is an independent research centre. It conducts studies for French government departments and agencies, European institutions, international organizations and companies. It contributes to the strategic debate in France and abroad.

WWW.FRSTRATEGIE.ORG