



Atlantic Treaty Association - Association du Traité Atlantique

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**NATO SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

Inauguration Ceremony

Cesano di Roma, 26 March 2019

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**Fabrizio W. LUCIOLLI**

*President*

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*Excellences,*

*Military and Civilian Authorities,*

*Distinguished Guests,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It's for me a great honor and a real privilege to take part in the Opening Ceremony of the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence.

The Inauguration of this NATO Centre of Excellence takes place in an historical moment of the Alliance's life and certifies the vitality and enduring strength of our shared values and commitments.

In fact, the Transatlantic link and the Collective Defense which are making the security of Europe and North America indivisible generated the "strongest and most successful Alliance in history" (J.Stoltenberg).

For 70 years, the Atlantic Alliance has been able to prevent conflicts, preserve peace and to defend the free democratic values and territories of nearly one billion citizens.

Historically, the average life of collective-defense alliance has been estimated in 15 years. During the last five centuries, just 10 of the 63 major military alliances survived beyond 40 years term.

NATO unmatched success relies on its adaptive DNA. Despite its complex political-military structure, NATO has always been able to change according to the continuous transformation of the security landscape.

Moreover, the Open-Door policy reinforced the Alliance which – from the original 12 States - is ready to welcome the Republic of North Macedonia as its thirtieth Member.

The today opening of a new Centre of Excellence on Security Force Assistance testifies the continuous NATO's effort to cope with the security needs of the next 70 years.

To better understand the future challenges of the Centre, we can follow the Hegel suggestion telling that "you can understand the future as much you are able to understand the past."

During its first four decades NATO's role has been summarized by the first NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay, statement of "keeping Americans in, Russia out, Germans down".

During the Cold War the security concept was identified in a mere military meaning of static territorial collective defense based on the Art. 5 of the Treaty.

However, in the 1956 Report of the Three Wise Men Committee - chaired by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gaetano Martino, together with the Canadian and Norwegian colleagues Lester B. Pearson and Halvard Lange - it was already clear that "security is today far more than a military matter. *The strengthening of political consultation and economic cooperation, the development of resources, progress in education and public understanding, all these can be as important, or even more important, for the protection of the security of a nation, or an alliance, as the building of a battleship or the equipping of an army.* (Point 15)

*These two aspects of security - civil and military - can no longer safely be considered in watertight compartments, either within or between nations (Point 16)".*

Moreover, *"NATO should not forget that the influence and interests of its members are not confined to the area covered by the Treaty, and that common interests of the Atlantic Community can be seriously affected by developments outside the Treaty area. (Point 32)"*.

Such a farsighted vision anticipated the need for a Comprehensive Approach to effectively address the non-Art. 5 Crisis Response Operations (NA5CRO) NATO was launching in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

In this context, the security concept acquired new political, economic, and social dimensions and became a dynamic concept requiring the projection of forces and stability "out of area".

During the post-Cold War era NATO quickly adapted its Strategic Concept while launching Crisis Response Operations, partnerships programs, training and assistance initiatives, in the Balkans and beyond.

The fall of the Twin Towers and the invocation for the first time of Art. 5, have dramatically outlined to the Atlantic community the danger of the modern global, asymmetric and hybrid threats, which need to be addressed where they originate.

While NATO promptly reacted with a robust expeditionary role, a new Strategic Concept outlined the paramount relevance “to develop the capability to train and develop local forces in crisis zones, so that local authorities are able, as quickly as possible, to maintain security without international assistance”.

From the Balkans to Afghanistan and Iraq, the NATO Training Mission became a key asset in the framework of a Comprehensive Approach Action Plan (CAAP) adopted in the aftermath of the 2010 Lisbon Summit.

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Therefore, the today official inauguration of a new CoE for Security Force Assistance can afford on more than a quarter of a century’s NATO experience in advising, training and mentoring partner states to achieve sustainable defense reform and building capabilities.

However, the security landscape in which the Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence is today requested to act and the tasks to be addressed, appear much more complex and challenging.

The 2011 Arab uprisings and the 2014 Russian illegal annexation of the Ukraine’s peninsula of Crimea, obliged

NATO to cope with both the Collective Defense and Crisis management tasks simultaneously, and to adopt a 360° approach able to Deter and Defend the Alliance in the East while Projecting Stability to the South.

Moreover, the Russian nuclear posture, the Skripal case and the risk of CBNR proliferation, together with the potential threat of new forms of terrorism, are also of major concern. In addition, the new cyber operational domain, energy security, climate change and migrations, are testifying the different nature of the today threats and challenges, often originating with unprecedented speed, thus challenging the decision-making process of the Alliance.

Likewise, a new Hybrid Warfare is eluding the application of Art. 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty whilst the vicious use of disinformation and false news attempts to weaken the cohesion of the Western societies and their free democratic processes.

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In this unpredictable security scenario, “If NATO’s neighbours are more stable, NATO is more secure.”

This statement is at the heart of NATO’s Concept on Projecting Stability adopted by Allied leaders at the NATO Summit in Warsaw in 2016.

NATO Secretary General has often outlined that investing in developing local institution and forces and capabilities is a cost-effective mean to prevent crisis and fight terrorism and destabilization.

By stating that NATO's security is linked to the stability of the neighbours, Allied leaders made clear that while carrying out the most relevant Collective Defense reinforcement since the end of the Cold War, they were not looking to pull up the drawbridge of a NATO Fortress.

On the contrary, while NATO was enhancing its Deterrence and Defence posture, in 2014 an integrated package of defense capacity building has been launched with Jordan, in 2017 the Allies and Kuwait inaugurated a regional Centre in Kuwait to conduct activities with the Gulf Cooperation Countries, and in 2018 a new Training Mission has been planned in Iraq.

However, cooperation with partners could be more challenging in the present times.

In the past, partners in Central and Eastern Europe were much more homogenous and motivated to act due to their aspiration for NATO membership.

At present, just few nations among the over 40 NATO partners are official aspirant Countries.

Due to the increased diversity of the today partners, a more flexible approach should also be considered by NATO.

Moreover, the complexity of the security scenario requires very-well tailored programs.

[In this respect, while in the long-term NATO models of training Security Forces will prove to be the best ones, in the short term you could get more effective outcomes by taking advantage of the local procedures and training traditions.]

In the present high demanding security scenario, a critical issue remains the financial sustainability in the long-term of the Centre of Excellence training programs.

To this end, NATO's political consultation is essential to maintain the Atlantic solidarity, which could be affected by different security perceptions among NATO member States and across the Atlantic, as the Alliance is called to act in three different continents, from the Baltic to Iraq and to Afghanistan.

Allied solidarity and the Transatlantic Bond need to be strengthened by a fairer burden sharing in line with the commitment adopted by the NATO Heads of State and Government participating in the 2014 Wales Summit, which requires to devote the 2% of the GDP to defense



expenditures, with a significant portion on major new equipment and related Research and Development.

In this perspective, the strategic partnership with the European Union is key, also to assure a coherent development of civilian and military capabilities and cutting-edge technologies.

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The aforementioned security landscape represents the field of action of the CoE for Security Force Assistance.

Moreover, the Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence will take advantage and will impact on several other NATO concepts, doctrines, and policies such as: Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations (NA5CRO); Security Sector Reform (SSR); Stabilization and Reconstruction (S&R); Military Assistance (MA); Counter-Insurgency (COIN), Connected Forces Initiative (CFI).

The CoE SFA activities can be summarized by the effective acronym GOTEAM: Generate, Organize, Train, Enable, Advise, Mentor.

Activities must be based on the principle of a political and possibly financial commitment of the Hosting Nation (HN), Political Primacy of the local authorities; Legitimacy; Comprehensive Approach with the international community,

especially European Union and United Nations; Local ownership and Empowerment of local forces; in-depth Understanding of the operational and information environment; Sustainability in the long-term; Force protection; Strategic Communication; Visible and controlled effectiveness.

Finally, let me to mention how important are for NATO the gender issues in security. According to the UN Global Review on the Women, Peace and Security UNSCR 1325, the security of women is one of the most reliable indicators for how peaceful a state is. The participation of women in peace processes increases by 35% the probability that peace will last longer than 15 years.

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In conclusion, let me to congratulate the creation of the NATO Center of Excellence for Security Force Assistance and to thank once again the Director for inviting me to address this distinguished audience.

Last year at the Brussels Summit NATO leaders declared the Full Operational Capability of the NATO Strategic Direction South-Hub, based at the Joint Force Command in Naples.

The today inauguration of the Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence represents another milestone of the Italian contribution to the Alliance.

I am confident that under the leadership of Colonel Merlino, the Centre will soon become an internationally recognized focal point able to provide NATO and Partner countries with a unique capability to train and develop local forces in crisis zones while offering a comprehensive expertise and support in the area of the Security Force Assistance (SFA).

While the world is changing and NATO is continuously adapting to cope with the new security challenges, the core values of freedom, peace and security that the Centre is looking to serve remain the same that, 70 years ago, the Heads of State and Government of the Western community decided to defend by signing in Washington the Atlantic Treaty.

Thank you.