



MEDIA BACKGROUNDER: NRC PRACTICAL COOPERATION

INTRODUCTION

In 1997 NATO and Russia signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, which provided the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations and led to the development of a bilateral programme of consultation and cooperation under the Permanent Joint Council (PJC).

In 2002 the relationship was given new impetus and substance with the signature of the Rome Declaration on "NATO-Russia relations: A New Quality", which established the NATO-Russia Council. At that time NRC Heads of State and Government agreed to enhance their ability to work together, as equal partners, in areas of common interest and to stand together against common threats and risks to their countries' security.

The 2008 NRC Summit in Bucharest was the first such event since the signature of the Rome Declaration. It examined how NRC work over the previous six years had implemented the objectives and principles of the Rome Declaration and what could be done in order to implement them even more effectively in the future.

Following the Georgia crisis in early August 2008, formal meetings of the NRC and cooperation in some areas, including military cooperation, were suspended. Nevertheless, in key areas of common interest such as Afghanistan, Counter-narcotics and the Fight against terrorism, cooperation continued.

At the June 2009, informal NRC Ministerial meeting in Corfu, NRC Ministers decided to re-launch political and military cooperation.

Then in December 2009, at the first formal NRC ministerial since the Georgia Crisis, NRC Foreign Ministers took steps to reinvigorate NRC cooperation, including by launching a Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges. It was intended to bolster the NATO-Russia broad dialogue on Euro-Atlantic security and advance further their practical

cooperation. The Review focuses on such areas as cooperation on Afghanistan (including counter-narcotics), terrorism – including vulnerability of critical infrastructure, piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as natural and man-made disasters were the subjects of this Joint Review. In addition, Ministers agreed to further work on areas such as Theatre Missile Defence/Missile Defence; the Cooperative Airspace Initiative and Counter-Piracy.

At the Lisbon Summit, NRC Heads of State and Government took a number of important decisions. These include the completion of the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Challenges; extended transit arrangements in support of ISAF, an expanded counter-narcotics training project in Afghanistan and in the wider region through support to national capacity-building; a tasking to develop an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund to support the Afghan Armed Forces to operate its helicopter fleet more efficiently; and cooperation on Theatre Missile Defence and Missile Defence.

NRC PRACTICAL COOPERATION

Struggle Against Terrorism

NATO-Russia cooperation in combatting terrorism has taken the form of regular exchanges of information, in-depth consultations, joint threat assessments, civil emergency planning for terrorist attacks, high-level dialogue on the role of the military in combating terrorism, lessons learned from recent terrorist attacks, and scientific and technical cooperation. NRC members also cooperate in areas related to terrorism such as border control, non-proliferation, airspace management, and nuclear safety.

NRC members have agreed at their Summit in Lisbon to a joint assessment of terrorist threats. On that basis, they will update the 2004 NRC Action Plan on Terrorism, aimed at improving the overall coordination and strategic direction of NRC cooperation in this field.

A concrete example of cooperation in this field is the "Stand-off Detection of Explosive Devices" project aimed at confronting and countering the threat of attacks on mass transit and possibly other public gathering places through jointly developing technology to detect explosives.

Since December 2004, joint pre-deployment training has been underway to prepare Russian ships to

support Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean Sea. Ships were deployed in 2006, 2007 and 2008. At Lisbon, the Russian Federation confirmed its interest in the resumption of its support to this operation.

Cooperation on Afghanistan

The NRC Pilot Project for Counter-Narcotics Training of Afghan, Central Asian and Pakistani Personnel was launched by NRC Foreign Ministers in December 2005 to help address the threats posed by the narcotics coming from Afghanistan. The initiative seeks to build local capacity and to promote regional networking and cooperation by sharing the combined expertise of NRC nations with mid-level officers from initially Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and since September 2010, from Pakistan. The project is being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Russia and Turkey have hosted training courses in their specialised centres of excellence and mobile courses led by NRC nations in all participating countries are also being conducted. Since 2007, Finland also contributes to the initiative. Close to 1250 officers from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan have already been trained under this NRC Project. Pakistani officers will receive their first training in December 2010. In Lisbon, the NRC agreed to provide further direct assistance to institutional capacity building.

Furthermore, to contribute to the ability of the Afghan Armed Forces to operate its helicopter fleet more efficiently, the NRC will develop an NRC Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund in 2011.

Land Transit in Support of ISAF

In March 2008, the basis was established for facilitating transit through the Russian territory of non-military freight from NATO, NATO members and non-NATO ISAF contributors, in support of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan in accordance with UNSCR 1386. In 2010, NATO and Russia entered into discussion on amendments to the existing 2008 agreement in order to improve the arrangement by permitting movement of cargo by rail both to and from Afghanistan through Russian Federation territory and to better clarify the types of equipment that might be moved. Since Lisbon, extended transit arrangements in support of ISAF (including reverse transit) are in place.

Missile defence

In the area of theatre missile defence, which aims at the protection of troops in joint areas of operation, a study was launched in 2003 to assess the possible levels of interoperability among the theatre missile defence systems of NATO Allies and Russia. Three command post exercises (CPX) have been held – the first in the United States, in March 2004; the second in the Netherlands, in March 2005; and the third in Russia, in October 2006. A Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX) also took place in Germany in January 2008. The interoperability study, the CAX and the command post exercises provided a basis for future improvements to interoperability and developed mechanisms and procedures for joint operations in the area of theatre missile defence.

An NRC Missile Defence Working Group was established in December 2009 and initially tasked to build on lessons learned from previous theater missile defence cooperation and to exchange views on possible mutually beneficial cooperation on missile defence, based on a joint assessment of missile threats. Work is ongoing to identify practical cooperation activities.

Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI)

NATO and Russia have begun exercising a joint system for air traffic coordination. This will be the first NATO-Russia system of this kind to be fielded. The system focuses primarily on the fight against terrorism and will provide a shared radar picture of air traffic and early notification of suspicious air activities. If an aircraft starts behaving erratically, the air traffic coordination system offers increased visibility and transparency to rapidly ensure coordination in the European airspace.

The new system has two coordination centres – in Warsaw and Moscow – and local coordination sites in Kaliningrad, Rostov-on-Don, Murmansk (Russia), Warsaw (Poland), Bodø (Norway), and Ankara (Turkey). In these nations, training and entry-level exercises are already ongoing.

A NATO-Russia Operational Exercises Team (OET), led by the NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A), has been formed to conduct the exercises and develop the exercise scenarios under the new system. OET will consist of experts from France, Norway, Poland, Russia, Turkey, the United States, EUROCONTROL and NATO's military commands.

The development of a joint air traffic coordination system is a tangible result of the NATO-Russia Council's Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI). NRC nations, including Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States, have so far contributed more than Euro 10 million in aggregate to the CAI project.

Beyond its practical objectives such as improving air safety and security, the NRC CAI project also significantly contributes to building mutual trust between NATO and Russia. The CAI system is expected to be fully operational in 2011 and is open for participation by other nations.

Non-proliferation

Dialogue on a growing range of issues related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has developed under the NRC. A number of in-depth discussions and expert seminars have been held to explore opportunities for practical cooperation in the protection against nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The informal consultations focused in particular on ballistic missile proliferation and nuclear terrorism. The NATO Russia Council Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (ADN) Working Group was tasked in December 2009 to continue the work of previous NRC groups on conventional arms control and non-proliferation cooperation. The work of the Group has focused on assessing global trends in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and reviewing areas in which NRC nations could work together politically to promote effective multilateral arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation efforts.

Defence Transparency, Strategy and Reform

A confidence-building dialogue is maintained on doctrinal issues, doctrine, strategy and policy, including their relation to defence reform, nuclear weapons issues including weapon safety and security, and force development and posture. The aim is to enhance mutual transparency and understanding between NRC members on the above stated topics; to conduct consultation, confidence-building, transparency and cooperation activities on nuclear weapons issues and topics, and related complementary issues; to exchange experiences on implementation of defence reform in specific areas; and to continue work in the area of linguistic cooperation.

Defence Industrial Cooperation

A broad-based study on "NATO-Russia Defence Industrial and Research and Technological Cooperation" was conducted under the auspices of the NRC between 2005 and 2007 with the aim of promoting cooperation in these areas. The study brought together Government and Industry experts from both sides in a series of round-table conferences. The Study's two reports concluded that there is potential in combining scientific and technological capabilities to answer global threats. The Lisbon meeting confirmed an interest among NRC nations to pursue such work.

Logistics Cooperation

Over the past seven years NRC(LOG) has engaged in a number of co-operative activities that have laid down the groundwork for a better understanding of each other's logistics concepts, structures and policies. In 2007 this cooperation developed towards a more active and practical approach in several logistics functional areas; namely fuel, air transport, and medical. Today this cooperation is being further extended with the aim to explore potential capabilities and to enhance interoperability to support future NATO operations, especially in Afghanistan. Significant outcomes have been achieved in the areas of fuel (Conference on Fuels interoperability, held in Rome in April 2010), medical (Seminar on Military Medical Challenges in Afghanistan, held in Svetlogorsk in June 2010) and water purification. There is a challenging but achievable work plan concerning logistics engagement for 2011 that will further improve the NATO-Russia relationship within logistics areas.

Military-to-military cooperation

The overall objectives of military-to-military cooperation under the NATO-Russia Council – Military Representatives (NRC-MR) are: (1) to build trust, confidence and transparency in order to achieve stability and mutual understanding and (2) to develop the capacity for possible joint action within agreed areas of cooperation to respond, as might be agreed, to common security interests, threats and challenges. During 2010, the NRC-MR has developed, approved and implemented the NRC-MR Work Plan 2010 (part of the NRC Work Programme 2010). Activities in the four agreed areas of cooperation (Logistics, Combating Terrorism, Search and Rescue at Sea and Counter Piracy) have taken place, as scheduled. Mutual interest

and reciprocity, combined with key leader engagement and supported by operator-to-operator contacts have been key to success in our mil-to-mil cooperation efforts in 2010. The NRC-MR Work Plan 2011 is currently being developed. The 2011 plan will build on the NRC-MR Work Plan 2010 and seek to deepen and widen NATO-Russia practical military cooperation. Formal approval of the NRC-MR Work Plan 2011 by NRC CHODs will be sought at their meeting in January 2011. The prospects for deepening our practical mil-to-mil cooperation efforts are good and should continue to support the political dialogue.

Arms control

The NRC has also provided a forum for frank discussions on issues related to conventional arms control, such as the CFE Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty and confidence- and security-building measures.

Nuclear Weapons Issues

In the nuclear field, experts have developed and updated a glossary of terms and definitions; organised seminars on nuclear doctrines and strategy in 2005 and 2009; and observed nuclear-weapon-accident-response field exercises in Russia (2004), the United Kingdom (2005), the United States (2006) and in France (2007). Additionally in 2007 an NRC Nuclear Expert seminar was held on Lessons Learned from Nuclear Weapons Incidents and Accidents in Brussels. In November 2009, an NRC Seminar on Nuclear Doctrine and Strategy was held in Oslo, Norway. The overall theme of the Seminar dealt with NATO and national NRC nuclear weapons states' nuclear doctrine and strategy. Each of the four NRC nuclear powers and NATO provided comprehensive presentations related to their respective nuclear doctrines. In addition, a number of academics presented personal views on deterrence-related subjects. Nuclear Experts also conducted a seminar on measures and actions which could be taken by NRC nations in response to a detected improvised nuclear or radiological device in a hypothetical scenario in 2010.

Civil Emergency Planning

The main interlocutor for Civil Emergency Planning Allied experts is EMERCOM of Russia (the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and the Elimination of the Consequence of Natural Disasters). Therefore, the cooperation focuses primarily on dealing with the consequences of natural and technological disasters and with the consequences

of terrorist acts (including the use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological agents).

Examples of the practical cooperation between NATO CEP and Russia are the NRC consequence management exercises that have been conducted since 2002 (two in the Russian Federation (2002 - Bogorodsk and 2004 - Kaliningrad), one in Italy in 2006, and the most recent one in Norway in March 2010).

As a result of the "Joint Review", future work of the NRC Working Group on Civil Emergency Planning and Civil Protection will also focus on Risk Reduction, Capacity-Building and cooperation in the area of civil preparedness and consequence management related to High Visibility Events (HVEs).

Crisis management

NATO and Russia have a long history of cooperation in crisis management. In fact, between 1996 and 2003, Russia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor to NATO-led peacekeeping operations. Since 2002, the NRC has taken steps to enhance cooperation further in this area, notably through the approval in September 2002 of "Political Aspects for a Generic Concept for Joint NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations". These were tested in a procedural exercise, and conducted in three phases between May 2003 and September 2004.

New threats and challenges

Promising work on confronting new threats and challenges through scientific cooperation is taking place within the framework of the NRC Committee on Science for Peace and Security. Key areas explosives detection, information technology-based threats, study of human factors in defense against terrorism, eco-terrorism, defence-related environmental security, disaster forecast and prevention of catastrophes.

NRC Website and Public Diplomacy

The NRC Website (www.nato-russia-council.info) was launched in June 2007 to increase public awareness of NRC activities.

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