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# THE COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCES CONCEPT

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The concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) provides flexible and efficient means to enable the Alliance to generate forces at short notice, providing rapidly deployable, multi-national, multi-service task forces with appropriate command and control arrangements.

A CJTF is a deployable multinational, multiservice task force generated and tailored primarily, but not exclusively, for military operations not involving the defence of the Alliance territory, such as humanitarian relief and peacekeeping.

The wide variety of possible uses of CJTFs, potentially in very different circumstances, places considerable demands on the arrangements for commanding and controlling such operations. The role of the headquarters for a CJTF is therefore crucial. CJTF headquarters "nuclei" or core staffs are being established on a permanent basis within selected "parent" headquarters of the NATO military command structure. Together with "augmentation" modules and "support" modules generated for the purposes of a specific operation they will form a headquarters to command a CJTF structured to meet the requirements of the operation in question.

The concept was launched in late 1993 and endorsed at the Brussels Summit of January 1994. On that occasion, Alliance Heads of State and Government directed that the further development of the concept should also reflect their readiness to make NATO assets available, on the basis of case-by-case decisions by the North Atlantic Council, for operations led by the Western European Union (WEU) thereby supporting the building of the European Security Defence Identity. In addition, they linked the development of the CJTF concept to practical political-military cooperation with non-NATO nations.

The respective meetings of Alliance Foreign and Defence Ministers in Berlin and Brussels in June 1996 approved an overall political-military framework for the CJTF concept. The first phase of military implementation established the viability of the concept through staff work and trials involving three CJTF "parent" headquarters. The second phase was devoted to a thorough assessment of:

- a. the Alliance's capability to deploy small- and large-scale, land- and sea-based CJTF headquarters; and
- b. any need to nominate additional CJTF "parent" headquarters.

Based on this assessment, final preparations for the third and final phase of implementation have commenced. The lessons learned from the NATO-led operations in and around the former Yugoslavia are being taken fully into account throughout the CJTF implementation process.

Trials and analyses have demonstrated the value of the CJTF concept. The NATO Military Authorities are preparing now to embark upon the concept's full implementation. This process, which includes the acquisition of necessary headquarters support and command, control and communications equipment, is presently estimated for completion in late 2004.

## THE CJTF CONCEPT IN BRIEF

- A **force** is any grouping of military capabilities, manpower and equipment in organised units.
- A **task force** is a grouping organised for the purposes of carrying out a specific mission or task, which is then disbanded when the task has been accomplished.
- A **joint task force** is one involving two or more military services (army, navy, airforce, etc.).
- A **combined joint task force** involves the forces of two or more nations.