

Political Guidance

on ways to improve NATO's involvement in

Stabilisation and Reconstruction

Background and Political Context

1. At their meeting in June 2010 Defence Ministers tasked the Council in Permanent Session to prepare political guidance on ways to improve NATO's involvement in stabilisation and reconstruction for review by Ministers in October 2010, taking into account related strands of work. This paper responds to that tasking. It offers political guidance that NATO should follow when stabilisation and reconstruction requirements are expected to be part of a future operation. It thus provides the basis for further work to be done by NATO staffs and military authorities in the field of stabilisation and reconstruction, and will also inform NATO's ongoing HQ and command structure reforms. The guidance should also be used to inform and guide the conduct of current operations. It should also contribute to and complement the work on the response to the tasking by Heads of State and Government to report at their next Summit on further progress with regard to the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan and NATO's ability to improve the delivery of stabilisation and reconstruction effects as part of the international community's efforts and NATO's intrinsic contribution to a civil-military approach.
2. Improving NATO's involvement in stabilisation and reconstruction will require a careful prioritisation of human and financial resources. This is particularly important in the current context of economic strictures and the associated need to limit new commitments to the most critical and urgent requirements as well as to avoid unnecessary duplication with other international organisations, particularly the UN and the EU, which could provide complementary capabilities in the field of stabilisation and reconstruction. For increased transparency and improved planning and management, upon deciding on any future operation requiring civilian and/or military capabilities, it will be important for the Council to have as full and accurate a sense as possible of resource implications. The overall campaign plan determines the budget from which resources stem. Once the decision is made to conduct an operation involving stabilisation and reconstruction requirements, resources to conduct these activities should be properly allocated, as failure to do so will undermine the prospects of the success of the operation. It is important to recall that capabilities preponderantly belong to nations (rather than organisations), and that nations maintain a single pool of capabilities that can, upon their decision, be employed nationally, multinationally or within the framework of the various organisations such as the UN, the EU and NATO. In the case of the Alliance, NATO must have the ability to plan for, employ, and coordinate civilian as well as military crisis management capabilities that nations provide for agreed Allied missions.
3. As with any political guidance this document should be reviewed in light of future experience in operations.

General Principles

4. Stabilisation and reconstruction efforts address complex problems in fragile, conflict and post-conflict states. Stabilisation and reconstruction efforts contribute to a comprehensive approach to crisis management and to complementarity, coherence and coordination of the international community's efforts towards security, development and governance. For the purposes of this political guidance, stabilisation and reconstruction activities should be understood to include support to establishing long-term stability and strengthened governance, local capacity building and the promotion of ownership by the relevant national authorities¹, encouragement of the rule of law and establishing the basis for economic, human and social development. The ultimate goal of such efforts is to maintain or return to a stable, self-sustaining peace. It will be important in this context for the Alliance to seek, in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, unity of effort with the other members of the international community, in particular its strategic partners the UN and the EU.
5. The primary responsibilities for stabilisation and reconstruction, and particularly reconstruction, normally lie with other actors – ultimately, the relevant national authorities, but also, as appropriate, various local and international organisations and NGOs. Normally, civilian authorities who have the necessary knowledge and experience should undertake such tasks. Nevertheless, there can be circumstances which may hamper the other actors from undertaking these tasks, or undertaking them without support from NATO. Without prejudging NATO's decision-making autonomy, such circumstances may include situations where said actors: (a) are not (or not yet) present on the ground; (b) cannot operate freely due to a hostile security environment; or (c) do not possess sufficient equipment, capabilities or expertise. In such circumstances NATO may decide to fill such gaps in the delivery of stabilisation and reconstruction effects, until the conditions allow the transfer of these activities, or support other organisations, helping to create conditions for them to get estab-

lished and begin to operate. When considering whether to engage specifically in stabilisation and reconstruction, NATO will take into account such factors as: the nature and importance of the stabilisation and reconstruction challenge for Allied aims in theatre; the capacity of Allied nations to contribute needed military and civilian capabilities and expertise, as well as financial resources; any requests from other organisations or relevant national authorities; and the need for effectiveness and unity of effort and avoidance of overlap with other organisations present in the theatre. NATO will act in consistence with international law.²

6. Before committing to an operation NATO would need to undertake a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the political, socio-economic and institutional situation and the physical infrastructure in a potential theatre of operation.³ This should be done with a view to enabling the political level to take informed decisions and if tasked by the Council, to performing adequate planning and conduct of operations that include stabilisation and reconstruction activities. NATO's analyses should take duly into account available assessments, analyses and capabilities of other actors, particularly from the UN. Bearing in mind the expertise of various actors and international organisations, one of the main objectives of NATO should be to establish with relevant non-NATO actors, in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, whether and to what extent they will be able and willing to undertake stabilisation and reconstruction tasks in cooperation with NATO. This information, among other factors as noted above, will inform political decision makers as they consider whether and to what extent NATO should get involved in an operation and to what extent and how it might complement or stand-in for stabilisation and reconstruction activities of other organisations.
7. Any plan for stabilisation and reconstruction in the context of a specific operation should, wherever possible, be developed in dialogue and close consultation with the relevant national authorities and be adapted to the specific country situation. It should build upon and promote local ownership, i.e. the appropriation by the relevant national authorities of commonly agreed principles and objectives

¹ The relevant national authorities are, for the purposes of this Political Guidance, defined as the governing authorities of the nation which is the recipient of the international community's assistance in stabilisation and reconstruction. They may include authorities at the national, regional and local level, as appropriate. At the same time it is recognised that there may be circumstances in which these authorities are lacking, contested or only beginning to emerge (see also paragraph 7).

² This refers to the Charter of the United Nations, as affirmed in the North Atlantic Treaty.

³ NATO's different bodies and the nations have varied or emerging levels of capability for comprehensive analysis and assessment of the factors enumerated in this paragraph. These capabilities are to be enhanced and better interlinked in the future.

as well as their active support for and commitment to the implementation of those objectives. In the absence of relevant national authorities in crisis situations or in the immediate aftermath of a conflict, stabilisation and reconstruction should be conducted in a way that allows eventual national authorities to take ownership of such activities.

8. Operational experience has demonstrated that in many cases stabilisation and reconstruction are essential parts of missions, even while combat or counterinsurgency operations are still underway, and are necessary to bring an operation to a successful conclusion, since this often cannot be accomplished by military means alone. Without accompanying stabilisation and reconstruction elements to complement military actions, many situations could lapse back into conflict. In addition, NATO's activities in stabilisation and reconstruction help win the support of local populations from the very beginning of an operation and help sustain it, and mitigate the conditions that could devolve into an insurgency or support an ongoing one. With this in mind, and taking into account the situation on the ground, potential stabilisation and reconstruction requirements should be considered from the outset, including mission planning, and during all phases of operations.
9. Against this background, the Alliance must be able to plan, prepare for, and possibly conduct stabilisation and reconstruction activities, as well as interact with other actors, as decided by the Council. This ability should be resourced, adapted as necessary, trained and exercised.
10. If and when NATO considers and decides to undertake stabilisation and reconstruction activities, close communication and collaboration with relevant actors must continue throughout all phases of an operation and at all levels in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan. This will allow consideration, within a transition plan, of when, how and under which political parameters these activities can be transferred or transferred back to those actors as soon as conditions permit. To ensure seamless transition, planning of these issues should involve the relevant actors from the outset and throughout the implementation phase. This will allow NATO to take into account relevant actors' expertise not only in planning but also in conduct of stabilisation and reconstruction activities and to adapt these as necessary. In this context, for NATO to be able to immediately and

effectively implement a political decision, it should be able to make recourse to appropriate extant capabilities, adapt and apply previously developed tasks undertaken in the interim to fill gaps and pre-established coordination arrangements with relevant actors, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis, to allow expeditious action, help increase cooperation and ensure effective use of resources.

11. Whilst ensuring close communication and collaboration with relevant actors, it needs to be borne in mind that some humanitarian actors, including certain NGOs, will want to safeguard the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality with the aim to protect their personnel and recipient communities. Nevertheless dialogue, information sharing and de-confliction of activities will be important and should be conducted by NATO with due respect for the humanitarian space in accordance with the 2008 "UN Civil-Military Guidelines and Reference for Complex Emergencies". According to these guidelines, humanitarian aid should only be carried out by military forces when civilian actors are not present or the security situation does not allow civilian actors to undertake these tasks.
12. There is no blueprint for future operations; circumstances can differ considerably from case to case. Therefore retaining flexibility is essential. Bearing this in mind, if and when NATO decides to undertake stabilisation and reconstruction activities as described above, as a political-military organisation and building on its comparative strengths, it should support, where applicable, the relevant national authorities and the other non-NATO actors, in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, and accord particular attention to the following areas:
 - Establishing a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement;
 - Helping to restore public security;
 - Helping to restore basic utilities and infrastructure;
 - Facilitating support to humanitarian aid;
 - Helping to establish the conditions for meeting longer term needs with respect to governance and development, in particular through security sector reform.

These potential activity areas should be taken into account already in the analysis and decision-making phases.

13. Also needed throughout an operation is appropriate civilian and military expertise within NATO to enable comprehensive assessment of possible stabilisation and reconstruction requirements, determine NATO's role within the international community's efforts with regard to stabilisation and reconstruction, conduct civil-military planning at the appropriate levels to include stabilisation and reconstruction, and manage the effective, efficient and coordinated conduct of an operation that may include NATO's use of civilian and military means for stabilisation and reconstruction purposes. Alongside NATO commanders in the field, the role of NATO civilian officials should be optimised. This civil-military expertise will also help NATO planners to assess the impact of military operations on the political, economic, civil, and social aspects of the conflict and avoid or mitigate unintended effects. In addition, it should help NATO to determine the range of actions, both military and non-military, that could be undertaken to contribute to long-term stability and security in an area of operations. Modest civilian and military staffing, including appropriate reporting arrangements, for these purposes will need to be integrated in relevant parts of the Alliance structure.
14. In order to deliver stabilisation and reconstruction effects, access is needed by NATO to specialised capabilities⁴ including trained, experienced stabilisation and reconstruction experts. The Allies and NATO already possess some stabilisation and reconstruction-related capabilities. For NATO, the work of the Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan, the creation of the Comprehensive Approach Specialist Support Database (COMPASS), the appointment of a Civil-Military Interface Adviser at SHAPE and the work of NATO's Civil Emergency Planning Committee (CEPC) are relevant examples. The possible capability requirements relevant to the conduct of NATO's operations involving stabilisation and reconstruction are being addressed within the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP). For a specific operation these capabilities will be provided by nations who are willing to make them available. In order to effectively respond to these requirements Allies are encouraged to ensure that proper civilian and military coordination mechanisms are in place at national level. There

may also be room for multi-national initiatives in the area of developing capabilities for stabilisation and reconstruction.

15. Throughout NATO's engagement in operations involving stabilisation and reconstruction, it is important to ensure that the NATO and national lessons learned and best practices are properly captured, documented and presented and shared in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, including drawing strategic-level conclusions. Lessons learned should be fully taken into account for current and future operations, exercise and training activities as well as the development or adaptation of applicable concepts and doctrine.
16. With regard to taking these general principles forward, Annex 1 sets out ways to improve NATO's involvement in stabilisation and reconstruction. This Annex provides guidance for the preparation, execution and transition of NATO's stabilisation and reconstruction activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

17. In the light of the above and Annex 1 on ways to improve NATO's involvement in stabilisation and reconstruction, the implementation of this Political Guidance will require the following:
 - a) The Alliance must be prepared, under circumstances which are elaborated in this Political Guidance, to plan for and manage the coordinated employment of military and civilian capabilities to fill gaps in the delivery of stabilisation and reconstruction effects, in the interim until conditions allow the transfer of these activities.
 - b) Building on existing NATO and national capabilities relevant planning staff and expertise are required at the appropriate levels in NATO's structures.
 - c) Arrangements for close interaction with other international actors, in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, and with relevant national authorities will be essential if the Alliance is engaged in helping to undertake stabilisation and reconstruction activities.
 - d) The NATO Defence Planning Process will be important in identifying relevant capabilities and any shortfalls. As part of this process the Alliance should establish an understanding of what is already available at NATO and to the nations.
 - e) Any possible changes in NATO's structures and

⁴ In accordance with the Outline Model for the new NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP), the NDPP could, inter alia, address non-military capabilities and expertise to complement the military support to stabilisation and reconstruction efforts. These non-military capabilities could be sought from existing and planned means in national inventories of those nations that are willing to make them available.

procedures deriving from this political guidance will be done within agreed resources and structures, and are subject to standard oversight procedures, including by the Council.

18. The Defence Policy and Planning Committee recommends that the Council in Permanent Session approve this Political Guidance and agree:

a) To direct the NATO Military Authorities to implement this Political Guidance:

- in all their further relevant work, in particular as regards planning, pre-deployment training and provision of training to indigenous security forces.
- in the execution of current and future operations.

b) To direct the appropriate NATO staffs to continue to address the specialised capabilities that are required for potential stabilisation and reconstruction activities through the NATO Defence Planning Process, including through the use of Generic Planning Situations and Case Studies that account for non-military tasks, in the operational analysis in the context of the ongoing Capabilities Requirements Review 2012, and to report regularly on progress in this respect.

c) To direct the appropriate NATO staffs to reinvigorate the collection and analysis of stabilisation and reconstruction related best practices and lessons learned from operations and reflect them in operations, exercise and training activities.

d) To task the Defence Policy and Planning Committee to prepare a report to the Council on the overall implementation of this Political Guidance by the Autumn 2011 meeting of Defence Minis-

ters; and to review the Guidance as necessary in the light of future experience in operations and make recommendations for any required amendments, in close conjunction with work ongoing in the context of the broader Comprehensive Approach.

e) To encourage Allies to:

- further develop, in addition to their military capabilities, relevant national capabilities, including through multi-national efforts and in accordance with the NATO Defence Planning Process where appropriate;
- Contribute with stabilisation and reconstruction related national lessons identified to relevant NATO bodies and databases;
- Incorporate stabilisation and reconstruction related best practices into national operations, exercise and training activities as well as doctrine and concept development.

f) That this Political Guidance will be taken into account in any further reform of relevant Alliance procedures and structures, including current efforts to streamline NATO's structures.

g) That close attention will be paid to resources when considering whether to conduct an operation that may have or may come to have stabilisation and reconstruction elements, with a view both to efficiency and financial prudence, as well as making sure that identified stabilisation and reconstruction activities will be properly resourced.

h) To forward this Political Guidance to NATO Defence Ministers for their endorsement at their meeting on 14 October 2010.

Annex 1

Ways to improve NATO's involvement in Stabilisation and Reconstruction

A. The preparation for an operation involving stabilisation and reconstruction

1. When NATO prepares for an operation which may involve stabilisation and reconstruction, it should be ready to:
 - a) Fully take into account stabilisation and reconstruction requirements and related general principles in the comprehensive analysis and political-military planning as well as planning at the military strategic and operational level. This would include an early analysis and assessment of the situation in the conflict area, combining both civilian and military expertise to account for all contributing factors and implications of the conflict, and taking into account local political, social and economic circumstances and sensitivities. It would also include assessing the impact of military operations.
 - b) In accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan, conduct early consultations with other international actors present, or who may be present, in theatre as well as if possible with the relevant national authorities. The aim of these consultations would be to share analyses and assessments of the situation in a conflict area and to consult on each organisation's plans and available capabilities and expertise for stabilisation and reconstruction requirements as well as to help identify requisite arrangements with other actors for coordination with civilian efforts as soon as the operation starts. They would also identify which stabilisation and reconstruction activities other actors will be able and willing to perform, and, as a consequence, which stabilisation and reconstruction activities NATO and Allies may need to fulfil until other actors are able to do so and what conditions may trigger a transition from one actor to another. To this end pre-established arrangements for drawing in a coherent fashion on capabilities provided by nations who are willing to make them available should be ready to be activated.
 - c) Develop benchmarks in close coordination with others involved, in particular, if possible, relevant national authorities, to assess the evolution of conditions that would permit a scaling down of NATO's possible stabilisation and reconstruction activities as other local, and if applicable, international actors gradually build up their capabilities and take over responsibility.
 - d) Facilitate pre-deployment training for Allied and non-NATO contributors' personnel in terms of responding to stabilisation and reconstruction requirements in line with established NATO standards and provide assistance when appropriate and within available resources. This should respond to the need to strengthen coherence of training provided to personnel from different nations. The training should enhance political and cultural awareness of the country in question and build common understanding among civil and military personnel, which is critical to the effective delivery of stabilisation and reconstruction. Courses should as a rule foresee participation of representatives from other international and non-governmental organisations, as already agreed as part of the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan. NATO personnel must also be trained on how to best support civilian efforts on the ground.
 - e) Envisage that an appropriate part of Allied and non-NATO contributors' personnel should also be trained in providing training and advice in turn to indigenous security forces. This will require the development of appropriate standards and methodologies.
 - f) Foresee that strategic communication on NATO's role and activities with respect to stabilisation and reconstruction activities should start at the earliest opportunity and continue throughout an operation.

B. The execution of an operation involving stabilisation and reconstruction

2. In this phase, NATO's overall aim should be to help establish conditions that enable the local popula-

tion to restart its normal activities and permit appropriate civilian authorities to assume their tasks. In the early phases of a Council-approved operation that includes stabilisation and reconstruction activities, building on the preparatory phase outlined in part A above and as set out in the general principles, NATO should be ready to:

- a) Conduct stabilisation activities with the aim of establishing a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for the relevant national authorities and population as well as for other actors.
- b) Help restore public security. This can include helping to establish law and order, the rule of law, and basic legal infrastructure, in particular at least an elementary justice system.
- c) Help restore basic services (access to water, food, shelter, and basic medical care), and to help restore basic infrastructure (e.g. roads, airfields, electrical power). CIMIC Quick Impact Projects can play a role here but they need to respond to a real local need and be coordinated with local authorities and relevant actors, and support longer term efforts without creating conditions of dependence. This can also include, if necessary, serving temporarily as a link between local government authorities and central government ministries to ensure the provision of essential services.
- d) Facilitate support to humanitarian aid. In all phases, particular attention needs to be paid to the fact that many humanitarian actors, especially NGOs will want to safeguard the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality, and impartiality; nevertheless dialogue, information sharing and de-confliction of activities will be important and should be conducted by NATO with due respect for the humanitarian space.
- e) Help lay the ground for meeting longer term governance and development needs. This includes, in particular, supporting security sector reform, which in turn can require training and mentoring local military and if necessary police forces and advising local government officials in the areas of law and order and rule of law. It may also include disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration.
- f) Support political institutions and civil and economic infrastructure. This may include assistance in the conduct of elections and in the creation or restoration of key infrastructure for the local educational and health systems.

- g) From the outset, and throughout the operation, support the establishment of coordination arrangements involving relevant actors in the field, in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan (it is assumed that coordination arrangements at headquarters level, established as part of the preparation phase described in paragraph 1b will continue). Such arrangements would oversee stabilisation and reconstruction activities, coordinating with individual Allies, NATO partners, and different international and non-governmental organisations with the aim of ensuring the prompt delivery of stabilisation and reconstruction effects and avoiding duplication of efforts and resources. Information gathered from these arrangements will help to establish when other actors can assume responsibility for stabilisation and reconstruction and NATO can scale down its involvement (taking into account any benchmarks that may have been developed as per paragraph 1c).

C. Transition of stabilisation and reconstruction activities

3. As a principle NATO should seek the transition of its stabilisation and reconstruction activities to the relevant national authorities or international actors in coordination with them, as soon as conditions allow. In many cases, these conditions will depend upon establishing sufficient stability to commence a return to normal activities by the relevant national authorities and population. It should be recognised that this may not be a linear and universal process, i.e. applicable to the entire area of operation at the same pace and acknowledging that a deteriorating security situation might require NATO to re-engage. Therefore a gradual approach may be necessary. At this phase, NATO should be ready to:
 - a) Cooperate closely with other actors both in the field and at the headquarters level, and determine which tasks are to be handed over, to whom, when and how. In this context NATO should be relatively flexible to ensure that the draw-down of its capabilities and expertise will not leave a gap or render it unable to provide assistance that may still be required by other actors even after they have started taking over stabilisation and reconstruction tasks.
 - b) Progressively draw down those stabilisation and reconstruction capabilities that were needed to

perform the tasks that are being handed over to other actors.

- c) At the same time, ensure that it retains or where necessary increases, capabilities in keeping with the evolving situation. For instance, its role vis-à-vis public security and rule of law can be expected to gradually evolve from providing a safe and

secure environment, to training and mentoring local security forces, to partnering with them, and, finally, liaising and monitoring. Capabilities needed for these tasks may be different.

- d) Continue to participate in coordination arrangements at headquarters and field level until its exit.