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SECRETARY GENERAL, NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION  
 CHIEF OF STAFF, SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE  
 CHIEF OF STAFF, HEADQUARTERS SUPREME ALLIED COMMAND  
 TRANSFORMATION

## **MILITARY GUIDELINES ON THE PREVENTION OF, AND RESPONSE TO, CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

References: See Annex A.

### **BACKGROUND**

1. In May 21, the Alliance adopted the Policy on Preventing and Responding to Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), hereinafter, the NATO Policy on CRSV (Reference A). This Policy represents the overarching political document, which reaffirms the continued strong commitment of NATO to prevent and respond to CRSV. As part of NATO missions, operations and NAC-mandated activities, NATO members will respond to incidences of CRSV consistent with Reference A.

2. NATO Policy on CRSV is aligned with the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (Reference B) and related resolutions<sup>1</sup>, which aim to prevent CRSV, improve assistance to victims/survivors, and establish field-driven systems for reporting to the UN Security Council, thus ensuring accountability, including and where possible, assigning criminal responsibility to perpetrators. Moreover, UNSCR 1960 (2010) formally establishes a framework for the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) on CRSV. MARA ensures a coherent and coordinated approach at the field level to enhance data collection and analysis of incidents, trends, and patterns of CRSV.

3. As part of the implementation of Reference A, the NMAs were tasked to update the NATO Military Guidelines on the Prevention of, and Response to, Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence<sup>2</sup> in line with the new NATO CRSV Policy, including terminology alignment, definitions and reporting, as well as focusing on the possible military actions to prevent and respond to CRSV. The updated Military Guidelines are to be forwarded to the NAC for approval by Jun 22.

1. UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122, 2242, 2467. See also UNSCRs 1261, 1612 and 2331.

2. Reference C.



**AIM**

4. To forward, for Council approval, the Military Guidelines to prevent and respond to CRSV by integrating these aspects into the education, training, exercises, operations planning, conduct of operations and evaluation of NATO-led operations and missions.

**CONSIDERATIONS****DEFINITION AND RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER CONCEPTS**

5. NATO defines<sup>3</sup> CRSV as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization, forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.

6. NATO's Policy on CRSV aims to provide a coherent, consistent and integrated political framework to prevent CRSV and to respond effectively to all instances committed by any actor (military or civilian) who is not part of NATO Forces (NATO already has in place internal policies for dealing with Sexual Exploitation and Abuse<sup>4</sup> (SEA) and Sexual Harassment<sup>5</sup> committed by NATO Forces). This guidance applies to all personnel deployed as part of NATO missions, operations and Council-mandated activities.

**DETAILED MILITARY GUIDELINES**

7. During planning, as well as conduct of operations, all commanders must recognize the responsibility to act within their mandate in order to prevent and respond to CRSV. The understanding of the NATO mandate, applicable legal framework and conditions for the use of force (in accordance with the approved Rules of Engagement) should be interpreted in favour of action and intervention, whenever possible.

8. CRSV and the NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS)<sup>6</sup>. As per the NATO Policy on CRSV, NATO Military commanders at the strategic, operational and tactical levels are to include all necessary measures to prevent and respond to CRSV throughout all phases of the NATO Crisis Response Process.

a. Phase 1 - Indications and Warning (I&W).

(1) CRSV can take a number of forms. It can be committed opportunistically, for example due to the breakdown of the rule of law in conflict zones, it can be a general practice that is tolerated by military commanders, or it can be used as a strategy of warfare. If used as a strategy, CRSV may be a tool of persecution or genocide to exterminate an ethnic group, threaten opposition, tactically push civilians from a geographical area or break down the public order.

3. Reference A, Paragraph 13.

4. Regulated at Reference D.

5. Regulated at Reference E.

6. These guidelines may need to be updated once the NCRS has been replaced by a Modernised Alert and Response System.

(2) Early identification and timely reporting of CRSV have the potential to expose wider deterioration of stability and satisfy conditions that would trigger an I&W intelligence response. Moreover, incidences of CRSV should be considered as potential I&W criteria during NATO mission planning and execution. Collection of Sex Disaggregated Data<sup>7</sup> (SDD) should be in line with relevant national legal obligations and NATO policies (where applicable) and, whenever possible, inform the intelligence cycle and underpin I&W assessment.

b. Phase 2 - Assessment.

(1) During the assessment phase, NATO will aim to develop a fundamental understanding of the nature of the crisis and the engagement space. A Military Gender Analysis will complement the Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information (PMESII) analysis; one focus of this analysis (supported by SDD) will be the risk and/or prevalence of CRSV as well as the short and long-term impact of CRSV on the crisis.

(2) The Military Gender Analysis must be kept updated throughout all phases of an operation.

c. Phase 3 - Development of Response Options.

(1) In this phase, and once the mandate is issued, military planners at all levels, in close consultation with and supported by the respective Gender Advisers (GENADs) and Gender Focal Points (GFPs), will ensure that all the Military Response Options (MRO) being considered contain the necessary measures to prevent and respond to CRSV.

d. Phase 4 - Planning<sup>8</sup>.

(1) During this phase, the Operations Plan (OPLAN) will be developed and will include a gender perspective Annex in line with the commander's intent. The Annex will include the provisions for the prevention of and response to CRSV, including risk assessment and mitigation strategies.

(2) In addition to the Annex, gender perspective, including prevention and response to CRSV, is to be integrated in all functional domains as applicable. Special attention will be paid to:

(a) Rules of Engagement (ROEs). The ROEs requested for the different phases of the operation, consistent with applicable International Law and NATO mandate, should enable the appropriate use of force in response to CRSV<sup>9</sup>.

7. Note that further disaggregation by age or other factors will be pursued, as appropriate and where possible.

8. As per Reference A, Paragraph 14, all NAC Initiating Directives (NIDs) will include specific guidance on preventing and responding to CRSV for any future missions and operations, unless justified as irrelevant, and, as appropriate, in the development of exercises.

9. As per Reference F, see for instance ROE 337 (pertaining to the use of minimum force -possibly up to deadly force- to prevent the commission of a crime that is occurring or about to occur, under specified circumstances), or ROEs series 18 pertaining to detention.

(b) Inter-Agency Coordination. Gender perspective will inform the development of the Liaison Coordination Matrix to make sure that the Gender Advisory Structure at the different levels have Direct Liaison Authority (DIRLAUTH) with the relevant international or national actors<sup>10</sup> in order to be able to coordinate the necessary measures to prevent and respond to CRSV.

(c) Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR). The following elements should be taken into account in the development of the CJSOR:

- i. Proposed Gender Advisory Structure is robust.
- ii. Capabilities relevant to the prevention and response to CRSV are identified.
- iii. Capabilities requiring a mixed gender composition are addressed.
- iv. Training requirements on the prevention and response to CRSV are met.
- v. Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) are encouraged to consider the positive effect of a more gender-balanced force structure with regard to responding to and potentially preventing CRSV.

e. Phase 5 - Execution.

(1) During the execution phase, the commander will take the necessary actions, including emergency first response to victims/survivors and medical assistance, to prevent and respond to CRSV and thus contribute to the establishment of a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE).

(2) In accordance with the mandate and within means and capabilities, assistance may also be provided to CRSV victims/survivors according to the guiding principles stated at Reference A<sup>11</sup>:

- i. In accordance with a survivor-centred approach, respect victims/survivors as individuals and their informed choice;
- ii. All victims/survivors will be treated fairly, respectfully, equally, with dignity and without discrimination;
- iii. Do no harm in implementing this policy: no action should be taken that could worsen the situation or trauma of a victim or survivor;
- iv. Do not interrogate or interview victims/survivors;
- v. Respect privacy and confidentiality of victims/survivors.

10. All in accordance with Reference A, Paragraph 17, Footnote 8.

11. Reference A, Paragraph 23.

(3) Additionally, information and material obtained by military forces on NATO operations, missions and NAC-mandated activities may be used to support possible law enforcement outcomes within the framework of NATO Battlefield Evidence Policy<sup>12</sup>.

(4) Allegations or confirmed instances of CRSV will be reported through Gender Incident Reports and the monthly Gender Reports. A general overview of CRSV allegations and instances will also be included in the Periodic Mission Reviews (PMR). These reports will be used at the Strategic, Operational and Tactical levels to inform the leadership, and could serve as useful information for effective decision-making processes and possible crisis reviews.

f. Phase 6 - Transition.

(1) The purpose of the transition phase is the coordination of the transition and termination of the military operation. It is essential that during the termination of military operations, all feasible efforts be made to establish an enduring SASE capable of preventing and responding to CRSV. A risk assessment will be crucial when planning transition operations, as well as the coordination with the appropriate international or national organisations. If necessary, in strict compliance with the mandate and relevant NATO standards, NATO forces could be tasked with conducting CRSV Training and Education for Host Nation (HN) Security Forces.

9. Other applications: While necessary measures regarding CRSV will need to be implemented throughout all phases of the NATO Crisis Response Process, prevention of, and response to, CRSV should also be included in Education, Training and Exercises and should inform the Gender Advisory structure.

10. Reporting and Support of Monitoring on CRSV.

a. All personnel in NATO missions, operations and NAC-mandated activities should collect and, as soon as possible, report objective, accurate and reliable information on any CRSV incidents that they observe, or that a victim/survivor reports to them. Reporting on CRSV is to use standard NATO reporting and functional GENAD reporting mechanisms.

(1) All observed incidents, as well as reports on CRSV, must be reported as soon as possible through the chain of command using established CRSV event/incident reporting.

(2) The periodic GENAD report is to include an overview of all observed and reported instances of CRSV during the reporting period, as well as a summary of all actions taken to prevent and respond to CRSV.

(3) The PMR is to include a Force Commander's assessment on CRSV if applicable.

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12. Reference G.

b. When feasible, NATO shall endeavour to support the UN MARA process by sharing information collected on CRSV, in accordance with relevant NATO security policies and procedures<sup>13</sup>. Specifically, NATO commanders will provide guidance on the establishment of protocols to secure information sharing and data protection according to ACO's directives.

11. Education, Training, Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE).

a. Education and training is a national responsibility of NATO Nations assigning military staff to the NATO Command Structure and Nations contributing to missions, operations and NAC-mandated activities. Training prior to assignment, pre-deployment training, in theatre training and individual subject-matter training should include activities to ensure that the prevention of, and the response to, CRSV is properly addressed.

b. As a complement to national training, NATO Education and Training (E&T) on the prevention of, and the response to, CRSV will adhere to the NATO ETEE policy, as outlined in the MC 0458 series. NATO's E&T requirements addressing CRSV are to be integrated into the Gender in Military Operations Discipline<sup>14</sup>.

(1) Within means and capabilities, the SCs will continue to integrate the prevention, response, monitoring, and reporting of CRSV in education and individual training solutions at the respective level. To that end, the SCs will ensure that the range and content of education and training<sup>15</sup> is adequate.

(2) Within means and capabilities, the SCs will update or develop relevant operational documents and analytical tools to facilitate prevention of and response to incidences of CRSV, through the adaptation of reporting and referring mechanisms, and integrate these in training and exercises.

(3) All staff members within the NATO Command Structure should have a basic working knowledge of gender perspective, including preventing and responding to CRSV.

(4) Selected NATO leadership will receive additional training to be able to plan and execute adequate measures to prevent and respond to CRSV.

(5) NATO Force Structure commands, NATO Allies and Partners are strongly encouraged to associate themselves with and utilize available NATO training opportunities.

c. NATO Exercises.

(1) Per References L and M, NATO is to systematically integrate gender perspective, including the prevention of and response to CRSV, into the planning and execution of exercises. To that end, the prevention of and response to CRSV needs to be included in exercise specifications, scenario development and objectives at all levels.

13. As per References H, I, J and potential applicable future agreements.

14. Reference K.

15. Including modules in the Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) portal.

- (2) Scenarios should be drawn from current and past NATO-led operations and missions, taking into account NATO Lessons Learned on CRSV.
- (3) All NATO staff will, when applicable, consider the prevention of and response to CRSV when supporting the Lessons Identified (LI)/Lessons Learned (LL) process.

12. Awareness Raising of non-NATO Forces.

- a. When invited to train local HN forces, NATO should, in accordance with its mandate and standards, raise the awareness of HN forces to all issues related to CRSV (e.g. by providing expertise or conducting respective training).
- b. NATO should screen security forces of non-NATO Nations in response to requests for assistance in order to deny support to those forces that engage in, are known to be under investigation for, or are found to be complicit in CRSV. This screening is also to be applied to non-NATO Nations that request to join NATO operations or military activities.

13. Advisors and Focal Points.

- a. As part of the comprehensive integration of gender perspective and gender mainstreaming into the work, plans, and activities of the military leadership and staff at all levels of command, Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points are to advise on the application and implementation of the NATO Policy on CRSV.
- b. When appropriate, mission-specific advisors<sup>16</sup> to the commander may be appointed, as well as/or instead of mission-specific focal point(s) at other levels of command, to facilitate the implementation of these guidelines.

14. Standards of Behaviour.

- a. It is essential that all NATO personnel uphold the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour, and comply with their national laws and regulations in preventing, responding to, and reporting on CRSV.
- b. NATO will maintain appropriate codes of conduct, to be further implemented by the Strategic Commanders. NATO codes of conduct, including Reference N, underpin NATO's commitment to the highest standards of behaviour.

15. Interaction with External Actors.

- a. All personnel in NATO-led operations and missions are to coordinate responses with other International Organisations, as appropriate, to the maximum extent possible, to support UN efforts, to prevent and provide effective response to CRSV.

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16. The UN deploys Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs) in countries with evidence of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) in accordance with applicable UNSCRs. WPAs have complementary roles to the Gender Advisers and focus on the integration of CRSV considerations in the activities of UN missions.

b. Where appropriate and authorised to do so, NATO will facilitate contact with other in-theatre actors to create an environment conducive to addressing CRSV. To that end, NATO should coordinate its responses, as appropriate, with international and national actors, such as local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Partners, civil society, including, but not limited to, women's rights organisations and women-led civil society<sup>17</sup>.

16. Reports: The SCs are to formally report on the progress of the implementation of these Military Guidelines to the MC annually. These annual reports will be discussed in the MCWG (O&P) and forwarded to the Operations Policy Committee for revision<sup>18</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

17. The MC agrees that these guidelines are to be the reference tool for all NATO commanders for preventing and responding to CRSV.

18. The MC agrees that NMAs need to continue working to implement Reference A, Reference B and related resolutions, and to integrate the prevention and response to CRSV into the education, training, exercises, operations planning, conduct of operations, and evaluation of NATO-led operations and missions as appropriate.

19. The MC tasks the SCs, with ACO in lead, to formally report on the progress of the implementation of this Military Guidelines every 12 months, beginning in Dec 22. This first report should include methods to collect and report SDD.

20. The MC endorses these Guidelines on Preventing and Responding to CRSV.

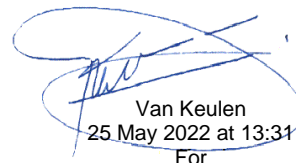
## RECOMMENDATIONS

21. The MC recommends that Council:

- a. Agrees the MC conclusions in Paragraphs 17 and 18.
- b. Approves these Military Guidelines on Preventing and Responding to CRSV.

22. This document supersedes Reference C and clears IMSWM-0145-2022 and all SDs thereto.

## FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE:



Van Keulen  
25 May 2022 at 13:31  
For

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Major General, NLD A  
Director, Operations & Planning Division  
International Military Staff

Hans-Werner Wiermann  
Lieutenant General, German Army  
Director General  
International Military Staff

17. All in accordance with Reference A, Paragraph 17, Footnote 8.

18. According to Reference A, Paragraph 34.



Annex:

A. References.

Copy to: IMS SDL CG+MR+SCR, IMS-P&C, IMS-O&P, IMS-L&R, IMS-CS, IMS-GENAD, IMS-LEGAD, IMS-LS, IS-EM, IS-PO-SEC GEN.

Originating Office: P&C.

Action Officers: Col. Gadiou, P&C (5640); LtCol. Rubio, P&C (5324); LtCol. Fermont, P&C (1968) (TT+2022-05283).

Taxonomy: Strategic Planning, Policy and Governance (STR) - STR - NATO Strategic Concepts and Plans.

References:

- A. PO(2021)0190, NATO Policy on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, 25 May 21.
- B. UNSCR 1325 (2000), UN Security Council Resolution on Women's Rights and International Peace, 31 Oct 20.
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- E. ON(2020)0057-COR1, NATO Policy on the Prevention, Management and Combating of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination in the Workplace, 4 Nov 20.
- F. MC 0362/2 (FINAL)(INV), NATO Rules of Engagement, 18 Sep 19.
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- K. MCM-0024-2014, Strategic Training Plan (STP) for Gender in Military Operations Discipline, 14 Jul 14.
- L. EAPC(C)D(2018)0008, Revised NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security, 13 Jun 18.
- M. PO(2021)0336, Action Plan for the Implementation of the NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security 2021-2025, 28 Sep 21.
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