IRELAND

Ireland has been engaged in several activities with the SPS Programme. At present, recent examples of cooperation include the Women, Peace and Security agenda, counter terrorism, advanced technologies with security applications and Cyber Defence. Below are some examples of ongoing and completed projects led by NATO and Irish scientists and experts under the framework of the NATO SPS Programme.

Cooperative Activities

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS (NAPs) ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

A workshop was held in Ireland to examine the role of National Action Plans (NAPs) of NATO Allies and partners in the implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security. It also reflected on the contributions of NAPs to enhancing cooperative security and increasing local ownership in peace processes. It took into consideration international cooperation on action plans and particularly explored the model of partnering, cross-learning and twinning as strategies to develop National Action Plans. The Workshop also included a discussion on the role played by civil society in the development of NAPs and in monitoring the implementation of NAPs [ref. G5036]. This workshop was led by Project Directors from Ireland and the United Kingdom.

TERRORISTS’ USE OF THE INTERNET: ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

This workshop took place in 2016 to examine current and future use of the internet by terrorist groups, focusing on propaganda and the recruiting of Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Discussions examined the threats posed, as well as technology, policies, and actions designed to counter them, and provided recommendations in this regard. The event brought together practitioners with relevant expertise and generated innovation, interdisciplinary and robust methodologies and techniques for the study of terrorists’ online activities [ref. G5086]. This workshop was led by Project Directors from Ireland and the United Kingdom.

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MORUS - UNMANNED SYSTEM FOR MARITIME SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

Today, mapping and monitoring of coastal, off-shore and underwater areas is an important task of civil and military authorities when securing borders, preventing illicit trafficking and illegal migration, and preparing naval trainings and operations. With maritime traffic on the rise, there is a need for better mapping and monitoring which current systems cannot meet. This multi-year project will lead to the design and production of ‘MORUS’ - a fully operational, robotic system comprised on an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and an Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV). MORUS is the world’s first robotic system of its kind, filling the gap of currently available tools with its ability to use sensor equipment weighing up to 100 kilograms. Paired with cameras, the prototype will be able to act autonomously, collecting images and relaying data in currently unmapped or inaccessible environments [ref. G4807]. This project is led by scientists from Ireland, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

NATO AND CYBER SECURITY: BUILDING ON THE STRATEGIC CONCEPT

This workshop, held in London in May 2011, brought together a group of senior officials from NATO, national governments, industry, and academia. The goal of the event was to discuss and examine the strategic dimensions of potential cyber threats to the land, sea, air, and space domains of NATO’s collective security umbrella. Participants discussed possibilities for mitigating various types of cyber threats, while looking at options for deterrence and collective defence and security in the cyber domain. They examined opportunities for the implementation of new strategic approaches to cyber threats, and the ways these approaches could feed into the new Strategic Concept [ref. 984348]. The event was organised by the Institute of International and European Affairs from Dublin, Ireland and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, from the UK.

ARMED GROUP, CIVILIAN PROTECTION AND THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING

This Advanced Research Workshop (ARW) is designed to trace the evolution of civilian protection in the mandates and practices of peace support operations, and explore the network of relationships between relevant stakeholders (i.e. armed forces, local peacebuilding organisations, early-warning networks of civil society organisations) that have a significant bearing on how the mandate is operationalized. The workshop will identify obstacles and barriers to effectively protect civilians from violent attacks by armed groups, including human trafficking, slavery, forced displacement, child recruitment and forced marriages. The ARW aims to examine the utility of existing policy analyses on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, and to generate lessons learned and best practices from peacekeepers’ experiences over the last five years of protecting civilians in difficult circumstances [ref. G5412]. This activity, to be held in November 2018 in Dublin, is led by experts from Ireland and the United Kingdom.