



NATO Defense College



Vox Collegii

The voice of the College



#WEARENATO

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Vox Collegii

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Dear Reader,

It is my great pleasure to present Vox Collegii XIX.

During the past six months, we have been running Senior Course 134, comprising 76 high-level officers and civil servants from 33 NATO and partner countries all around the world. Together with our other courses and many related activities, we have spent yet another intensive academic year in fulfilling our Education, Research and Outreach mission.

Over the last nine years this journal has sought to support NDC's core mission and its vital role in supporting our Allies and Partners in the promotion of transatlantic values. Uniquely, it has undertaken this goal by encouraging a debate between scholars, policy makers and military journalists, who have offered significant insights on crucial NATO-related topics for a wide readership.

This year represents a pivotal year for NATO and our collective security. In this edition of Vox Collegii you will find four articles focusing on the Alliance's 70th anniversary, together with others on the NDC's NMDX simulation exercise, NATO enlargement and the Alliance's strategic intent in the High North. There is also a

tribute to our beloved colleague Vincenzo Di Stefano, who sadly passed away in April.

Dr Elizabeth Buchanan's article provides the first analysis of NATO's High North challenges and priorities. In detail, the author provides an interesting perspective on how the return to the Greenland, Iceland and United Kingdom (GIUK) gap would affect the Alliance, given recent Russian assertiveness in the region.

The second article, by Dr Pierre Dugue, addresses another area of strategic relevance for the Atlantic Alliance, looking at alternative solutions to Georgia's NATO membership aspirations that might avoid escalating tensions with Moscow over the Caucasus.

Moving on, Alexander Moens, Alexandra Richards, Cornel Turdeanu and Harleen Atwal review the Negotiation, Mediation, and Decision Making Exercise (NMDX) that was held at the NATO Defense College this summer. In existence since 2017, this version of the NMDX is a simulation exercise that allows graduate and senior undergraduate students to experience the challenges of NATO decision-making and gain insight into the frustrations and complexities of diplomatic negotiations. The students undergoing this advanced training were prepared for the NMDX experience during a 13-week accredited programme entitled The NATO Field School, run by Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Last but not least, the article by NDC Research Division Director Dr Thierry Tardy is dedicated to NATO's 70th anniversary. To mark the occasion, the NATO Defense College held an international Conference with many high-level personalities in attendance, such as former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Deputy Secretary General Mrs Rose Gottemoeller and Admiral James Foggo, Commander Allied Joint Force Command. The event represented a unique opportunity for an open discussion on NATO's past, present and future. In celebrating the Alliance's

70th birthday, the Conference was also vital in keeping the debate alive about the Alliance's ambition to contribute to stability and peace by adapting itself to the unstable international environment and to the post-21st century threats that challenge NATO as a military organization.

I trust you will enjoy reading this special edition of Vox Collegii and find inspiration for creative strategic thinking on the key issues facing the Alliance, while also continuing to support the NDC as a leading NATO centre of education, outreach and research on transatlantic security issues.

In conclusion, thanks to all those who have contributed so much to the continuing success of this magazine.

Francesca Buratti
Public Affairs Office



Dear Reader,

The NDC has accomplished much since our previous issue of *Vox Collegii*. In addition to the NDC's successful delivering of top quality education, research and engagements, much was done toward better preparing your College for all that lies ahead and for the challenges of tomorrow.

SC 134, the ongoing Senior Course, will have seen 76 Course Members graduate, representing 33 NATO and partner nations. These newest Anciens have now benefitted from enhanced tools, insights, critical thinking and perspectives, not only on NATO, but on the world as a whole. Furthermore, the exposure and networks acquired while at the College should also benefit them for their future endeavours, whether within NATO or in other international forums.

For NATO Regional Cooperation Course (NRCC) 21, the NDC's other major educational undertaking and a key part of its outreach programme, 37 Course Members from 19 countries graduated on 18 April 2019. They join the ranks of more than 600 NRCC graduates since its inception in 2009. NRCC 21 was the second NRCC to start concurrently to our SC; these synergies are still proving very valuable. Some lessons learned from NRCC

20, the first iteration under the NDC's Trial Structure, were implemented, tested, and proved positive.

As for other courses, Generals, Flag Officers and Ambassadors' Course (GFOAC) 2019-1, titled "NATO's 360-Degree Approach to Security", was held from 13 to 17 May and was composed of 45 military, diplomats and civilians, from 25 countries. In June, the Senior Executive Regional Conference (SERC 8) was successfully held with 22 Ambassadors and General Officers. The Integrated Partner Orientation Course (IPOC 2019-1), as well as five Modular Short Courses (MSC) held during the last Senior Course, were also well received by participants.

Two major engagements were delivered and supported by the NDC over the last 6 months: the 19th NDC Kyiv Week was held in Ukraine, in the first week of April 2019; and a very engaging 48th NDC Conference of Commandants was held in Rome in the last week of May.

Our Research Division (RD) not only continued to organize and sponsor multiple conferences and events, but also organized and coordinated the NDC's own NATO 70th Anniversary event, under the theme: "NATO@70: No Time to Retire". The RD also furthered their publication catalogue, publishing 11 NDC Policy Briefs (six of which by prominent scholars, including NATO's Deputy Secretary General, who offered analysis of the 70th anniversary of the Alliance) and one NDC Research Paper since February 2019. This Division also hosted multiple visiting scholars and research fellows, while providing support to the educational mission of the College through formal mentoring and reviewers for all of SC 134'S Study Projects and Individual Papers. One Course Member's Individual Paper was also published as a NDC Policy Brief.

But the major achievement of the NDC over the last 6 months is the official submission of its first ever Strategic Plan. Re-energized by the arrival of our new Dean, Dr Stephen Mariano, the improved version of the NDC Strategic Plan was produced and

presented to the MC at NATO HQ, as well as shared with our NDC personnel and further discussed with NATO MilReps. This Strategic Plan, also built on some initial lessons learned from our Trial Structure, seemed well received by all, and we are now looking at its implementation. This keystone document will also be instrumental in the next update of MC123, the Policy Guidance to the NDC.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work of our Respectful Workplace Committee, who instituted a very much appreciated Code of Conduct Day last February, resulting in an exhaustive Code of Conduct framework for the NDC, developed from the staff's input. As you know, a respectful workplace is very important to the College; I have asked the Committee to continue building on this success.

Sadly, I also think it fitting to mention that we were all shocked by the sudden passing of our NDC colleague and friend, Vincenzo DiStefano. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family: Vincenzo will be greatly missed.

Finally, I would like to welcome our new DOM, BrigGen Francesco Giuliano, whose undisputable leadership is already paying dividends in support of the NDC. I also take this opportunity to thank our departing staff members and wish them all the best in their future endeavours, whether that be further employment or a well-deserved retirement. Their contribution to the NDC has not gone unnoticed.

*Lieutenant-General Chris Whitecross
Royal Canadian Air Force
NDC Commandant*

Returning to the GIUK gap

Dr Elizabeth Buchanan



Dr Elizabeth Buchanan was a Visiting Maritime Fellow with the NDC Research Division in 2017-2018. The opinions and conclusions outlined in this Policy Brief are those of the author alone. They do not represent the official position of NATO or the Australian Government. Special thanks to Dr Marc Ozawa and Colonel Ian Hope at the NDC Research Division

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and must not be attributed to the NATO Defense College or to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The High North is a region of concern for NATO, yet the Alliance remains non-committal to the challenge. At the same time, Russia is increasingly assertive and active in the High North, particularly in the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (GIUK) gap. Russia has returned in force to the GIUK gap and NATO should refocus on this Cold War-era strategic chokepoint. This Policy Brief examines NATO's High North challenge and the priorities of the Alliance in the North Atlantic. This Policy Brief aims to outline what a return to the GIUK gap could look like for the Alliance.

For the past decade, calls for the Alliance to develop a High North presence have resulted in increased exercises and yet overall, a non-committal approach. Indeed, NATO's most recent Strategic Concept (2010) made no mention of the High North, nor the Arctic, due largely to an inability to reach consensus amongst the Alliance on NATO's role in the region.¹ This hands-off approach to the region is further highlighted by the Alliance's Maritime Strategy (2011) which likewise excludes any mention of the High North. This is particularly problematic given that the 2016 Warsaw Summit reaffirmed NATO's commitment to "deter and defend" the North Atlantic – an area that the High North region is part of. At the same time, Russia's re-emergence and assertive foreign policy has threatened the concept of peaceful High North development. The language towards Putin's Russia used in the Warsaw Summit was unprecedented since the Cold War. How NATO can address the stark gap between its posture and the Alliance's renewed commitment to the North Atlantic is the subject of this Policy Brief.² Indeed, the 2018 Brussels Summit reinforced NATO's resolve to improve "overall maritime situational awareness" in the North Atlantic. Yet, the Alliance's maritime posture in the North Atlantic remains an area of concern – NATO is without a strategy for the High North.

This Policy Brief addresses an important High North challenge for NATO, on the renewed strategic significance of the GIUK gap. In doing so, it demonstrates an unfolding strategic challenge from Russia to NATO in the High North. This gives the Alliance a starting point for reaffirming its commitment to a crucial, yet neglected, component of the North Atlantic. The High North is home to various ties that bind and force the Alliance to have a credible strategy for securing member interests.

Situating the High North in NATO's North Atlantic challenge

The High North represents a capability gap for the Alliance's initiative of 360-degree security. NATO once had significant capacity to deter in and defend the North Atlantic region. History accounts for how this northern flank fell off the NATO agenda. For further insight into the early days of NATO's High North strategy – a time when the region "held a central place in NATO strategy and operations" – see the important works of Gjert Lage Dyndal.³ During the Cold War, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT)'s area of responsibility included the North Atlantic. This clearly delineated operational boundary extended from the North Pole to the Tropic of Cancer, and from the West Coast of Africa to the East Coast of North America.

There were a range of important sub-commands in SACLANT responsible for

¹ Coffey, Luke (2016) NATO Summit 2016: Time for an Arctic Strategy. The Heritage Foundation.

² Interview: senior NATO official November 2017.

³ Dyndal, Gjert. How the High North became central in NATO Strategy: revelations from the NATO archives The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol 34, No. 4, (2011).



the High North. They included: Commander-in-Chief Eastern Atlantic headquartered out of Northwood UK and the US-based Striking Fleet Atlantic (STRIKEFLT).⁴ NATO had a forward strategy with the capability to execute a robust response to any threat to Europe from the North. As Tamnes notes:

From the early 1980s, the forward maritime strategy rested predominantly on the deployment of STRIKEFLT to the Norwegian Sea. A major share of NATO's air reinforcements, and all of NATO's naval and amphibious reinforcements to northern Norway, were SACLANT forces. STRIKEFLT's presence off the Norwegian coast doubled the number of air-defence fighters and tripled the numbers of fighter-bombers available.⁵

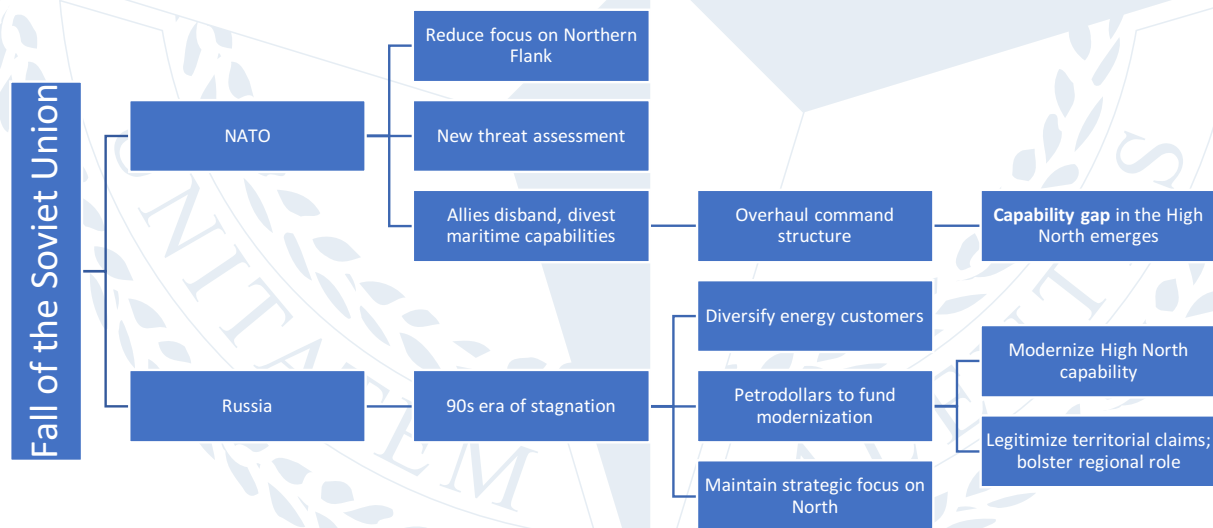
The 1969 Brosio Study, commissioned by SACLANT, concluded the Alliance would be unable, by 1975, to counter the Soviet submarine threat in the North Atlantic.⁶ However, Brosio did not account for the coming collapse of the Soviet Union. When this happened, the Alliance assumed there was no longer a threat to the North Atlantic. When SACLANT was disbanded in 2002, the Alliance lost its clear operational boundaries in the North Atlantic.

Without the Soviet threat, the Alliance rebranded itself as a power player in the fight against international terrorism. In 2001, the Alliance focus shifted to the Middle East. In recent years, the High North has fallen further from the NATO agenda with the

2008, Russia has invested heavily in modernizing its military and revamping the Northern Fleet, and likewise restoring its aggressive Cold War-reminiscent posturing in Russia's High North.

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Soviet's High North 'bastion' strategy disappeared and the Northern Fleet fell into disrepair. This Soviet concept originated in the 1960s, aimed at securing the Northern Fleet housed on the Kola Peninsula.⁷ This is Russia's sole year-round ice-free port. Under Putin, Russia's North Atlantic interest has been assigned increased significance in various strategies, including the 2015 Maritime Doctrine.⁸ This bastion A2AD strategy has returned as a hallmark of Russian sea power and maritime strategy. Certainly, situational awareness once housed at SACLANT, would have communicated to Brussels that Russia was always going to have a strategic interest in the High North region.⁹ Moscow was never going to abandon the High North forever.

NATO's reaction to the fall of the Soviet Union is at the heart of the Alliance's High North challenge today. By way of background, Figure 1 summarises how NATO lost its footing in the North Atlantic. Today, Russia treats the region as a vital component of its economic base for the 21st Century. The North Atlantic will continue to grow in significance for Russia in the future.



migrant crisis on Europe's doorstep. As such, NATO maritime capabilities have shifted to the Mediterranean. Meanwhile, the era of Putin coupled with (for a time) high global oil prices, ushered in financial capital for Russian defence spending. Since

Figure 1: A tale of two different approaches to the High North.¹⁰

⁴ Rolf Tamnes "The Significance of the North Atlantic and the Norwegian contribution" in Olsen, John (2017) NATO and the North Atlantic. RUSI Whitehall Paper 87. Page 14.

⁵ Ibid. Page 14.

⁶ Till, Geoffrey (2005) Holding the bridge in troubled times: The Cold War and the navies of Europe. The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol 28, No. 2.

⁷ For further discussion of Russian maritime strategy in the High North see: Rolf Tamnes "The Significance of the North Atlantic and the Norwegian contribution" in Olsen, John (2017) NATO and the North Atlantic. RUSI Whitehall Paper 87. Page 9-11.

⁸ See R Connolly, 2017, Towards a dual fleet, NDC Research Division

⁹ Interview: senior NATO official November 2017.

¹⁰ Copyright of author: Dr Elizabeth Buchanan

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Articulating NATO's High North agenda

A number of member states have High North and Arctic strategies. For instance, Norway is a leading architect, along with Russia, in the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation initiative whilst also a NATO member. And yet, NATO is not assigned a role in the Norwegian Arctic strategy.¹¹ This is despite Oslo increasingly lobbying for formal NATO engagement in the region. Denmark's Greenland is home to a NATO linkage through the Thule US military airbase - along with Iceland, which hosts NATO's air defence system and US Keflavik airbase. Some non-High North NATO member states also have formal Arctic strategies, namely the UK and France. Canada on the other hand, is adamant against any NATO presence in the Arctic. This is contradicted by the US which does envision some sort of role for the Alliance but has not clearly articulated it. Thus, consensus on NATO's role in the region is elusive due to various member interests.

The High North (with a greater focus on the Arctic) is creeping back into the global strategic picture. Key studies on the question of what NATO should do (or not do) in the region have been led by RUSI, NATO's Emerging Security Challenge Unit as well as the NATO Defense College's Research Division. They all largely conclude that NATO has a role to play in the High North. There is also recognition from senior NATO officials that the Alliance has a responsibility to the region.¹²

Despite a general agreement by the research community that NATO needs a High North strategy, they fall short of providing what a strategy would entail. NATO's current posture towards the High North appears to fall short of the Alliance's policy as communicated in the Warsaw Summit. This is further bolstered by continued commitment to an Alliance Maritime Strategy that was written for a different global security environment. NATO's 2017 move to revive the Cold War-era Atlantic Command is a step in the right direction. It would be practical for the Alliance to bolster Maritime Allied Command (MARCOM)'s existing capacity to counter the changing North Atlantic strategic environment.¹³ Growing MARCOM's situational awareness of the High North is one avenue. The Alliance could also establish a NATO 'Centre of Excellence' for the High North at MARCOM. The Centre could fund cutting-edge research agendas, host policy round tables and educate senior Alliance members on the strategic environment.

Ultimately, policy and posture within the Alliance are left relatively unaligned when it comes to the North Atlantic. Seeking to rectify this, in October 2018, NATO launched its largest military exercise of recent years. Focused on the North Atlantic, the Trident Juncture exercise was based on an Article V (collective defence) scenario also involving Alliance partners Sweden and Finland. Earlier this year, NATO also conducted

the Dynamic Mongoose exercise to test the Alliance's Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) skillset.¹⁴ NATO's Trident Juncture 2018 saw 50,000 participants from 30 nations participate.

The GIUK gap – a starting point for renewed North Atlantic strategy?

The Alliance cannot afford to ignore the strategic challenge of the Northern Flank any longer. This is evident when reviewing Russia's revived North Atlantic interests and emerging A2AD strategy in the region. The GIUK gap, a 1,100km stretch of relatively shallow water, is central to securing NATO's Northern flank (see Figure 2). In World War I, the GIUK gap was crucial for European and North American replenishments. Further, in World War II, the region was significant for countering the German U-Boat challenge.¹⁵ The shallow waters made identifying and countering submarine threats more straightforward than in other parts of the North Atlantic. During the Cold War, the GIUK gap was crucial for monitoring the movement of Soviet submarines.¹⁶



Figure 2: The GIUK gap.¹⁷

¹¹ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/fad46f0404e14b2a9b551ca7359c1000/arctic-strategy.pdf>

¹² Interview: senior NATO official November 2017

¹³ Interview: NATO official November 2017

¹⁴ https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_04/20180425_1804-factsheet_exercises_en.pdf

¹⁵ Interview: senior NATO official November 2017

¹⁶ Interview: senior ex-NATO official November 2017

¹⁷ Wikimedia Commons



Mahan's classical teachings of maritime theatres and the notion that great power lies in states who possess great navies have been shelved by the Alliance in favour of the 'hybrid' and 'cyber' domains.¹⁸ Today, the GIUK gap, is the best bet for the Alliance to effectively track Russian submarines exiting the Kola Peninsula out into the Atlantic. Whilst the Alliance debates internally just what a High North strategy looks like, NATO's eroding ASW capabilities are simply no match for Russian subs in the GIUK gap.¹⁹ The reality is that the GIUK gap - a natural barrier - has fallen from the NATO agenda at a time where it should be at the top.

Returning to the GIUK gap and even redrawing it would be advantageous for the Alliance. NATO could do this in two phases. With a NATO return to this area, phase two could see NATO capabilities move beyond the GIUK gap to reach the Svalbard archipelago. Phase two should focus on the region as an area of extended operational capability for the Alliance, rather than just a barrier to Russian maritime power. This would allow NATO to have the capacity to reach the harsh High North environment. NATO should have the capacity to quickly respond to Russian aggression in this area. The Svalbard Treaty affords Norway, as sovereign of the region, a surveillance/caretaker role, however, current trends in the continental shelf debate may result in a large component of the Svalbard region's seabed to be Norwegian territory. Therefore, in line with Article 5 (and 4), NATO would require a capability and strategy for dealing with any potential Svalbard crisis sparked by assertive Russian maritime activities.

Norway might also need NATO support in an Article 5 scenario. Russia's Northern Fleet already conducts forward operations in the Norwegian Sea, treating it as an international waterway beyond the control of any one navy. NATO can meet this challenge by forging credible deterrence capacity through a forward maritime strategy in the North Atlantic. Of course, this raises the question of who would pay for this capability. A basic stock-taking of NATO's maritime power is not comforting either. The Royal Navy has dwindled to only 19 surface combatants and 7 attack submarines. Even France has gone from 35 frigates in 1995 to fewer than 20 in 2018.²⁰ Herein lies the policy and posture gap for the Alliance. There are practical obstacles that would need to be solved before any strategy could be credibly implemented.

Recommendations

In conclusion, the need for a NATO High North strategy is clear. The path to creating and implementing a strategy is not. However, as this Policy Brief has argued, the Alliance might consider the following recommendations – as first steps:

1. Establish a NATO Centre of Excellence for the High North at MARCOM.
2. Return to the GIUK Gap.
3. Better communicate the Alliance's High North interest and stake to the general public.
4. Reintroduce the Alliance to the principles of maritime strategy, the teachings of Mahan and credible threat assessment capability. This will require investment in subject matter expertise at MARCOM.
5. The Alliance should consider revising its Maritime Strategy for the contemporary operational environment, post - Ukraine 2014.

Each of these recommendations serves to better position the Alliance to be more effective in the High North.

¹⁸ Interview: senior NATO official November 2017

¹⁹ Interview: NATO official November 2017

²⁰ Nordenman, Magnus (2017) *From submarines to smuggler skiffs. United States Naval Institute: Proceedings*. Vol 143, Iss. 3.

Georgia's NATO ambitions: the pitfalls of enlargement prospects in the Caucasus

Pierre Dugue

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The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and must not be attributed to the NATO Defense College or to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Introduction

In August 2018, almost exactly ten years after the outbreak of the Russo-Georgian War, Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev warned that Georgia's accession to NATO 'could provoke a terrible conflict'¹. This threat came amid growing transatlantic ambitions on the part of the Georgian government, which has amended its Constitution to enshrine NATO membership as a prime objective².

In this regard, Tbilisi enjoys rather favourable international attitudes. Georgia has proved to be a reliable economic, political and military partner to many NATO member states. It is a flourishing democracy with high potential, due to its key location between the resource-rich Caspian Sea and the strategically important Black Sea. Georgia has become an important actor in the context of renewed great power confrontation with Russia, and has received extensive backing from the West. Is granting Tbilisi full NATO membership the next logical step?

Taking the NATO-Georgia relationship forward is essential. Nonetheless, the regional security environment remains a major inhibiting factor. Russia's continuous forward presence in the Caucasus effectively seeks to further its *de facto* control of its immediate neighbourhood. Subsequent military deployments have meant that Tbilisi has had to relent on its transatlantic aspirations – a factor Georgia can hardly ignore, no matter how forceful its ambitions may be.

I argue that instead of an immediate and unconditional membership offer that would entail an Article 5 commitment, NATO should seek a compromise in looking for alternative ways of integrating Georgia. These ought to uphold the same mutual benefits as membership – cooperation, interoperability, intelligence-sharing – while being politically compatible with Russia's wariness of any NATO presence in the Caucasus.

1. Geopolitics of the Caucasus: Georgia and the legacy of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

An integral part of Tbilisi's post-Soviet nationalist rhetoric has been the constant and consistent rebuking of Moscow, a rationale whose roots run deep in Georgia's historical narrative and self-perception as Russia's vassal³. This rationale was transposed into the country's independence-driven foreign policy, which primarily aimed at minimising Moscow's influence. Early on, Tbilisi saw in Azerbaijan's Caspian resources a valuable alternative energy provider to Gazprom. Talks began as early as 1994 for the creation of a Baku-Suspa pipeline, which opened in 1999. Baku became an important partner in establishing a highly beneficial Caucasus-Europe energy route, a project furthered by the creation of the GUAM Organization (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) for Democracy and Economic Development in 2001. The establishment of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum-

¹ Osborn, Andrew, 'Russian PM warns NATO admission of Georgia could trigger 'terrible conflict'', Reuters (August 6th, 2018) <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-nato-georgia/russian-pm-warns-nato-admission-of-georgia-could-trigger-terrible-conflict-idUSKBN1KR1UQ>

² 'NATO-Georgia Commission Declaration at the Brussels Summit', NATO Press Release (July 12th, 2018) https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156627.htm

³ Jones, Stephen, *Georgia: a Political History Since Independence* (Tauris, 2013)



The flags of the 13 NATO and partners which participated in Noble Partner 18
(by US Army Sgt. Kris Bonet)
<https://www.eucom.mil/media-library/photo/39443/noble-partner-18-comes-to-an-end.jpg>

Ceyhan pipeline in 2005 was perceived as a major step towards an integrated Transcaucasia energy project, highly profitable to Georgia's economy, but also highly polarizing.

Armenia did not fit well into Georgia's grand strategy. Trans-Caucasus energy projects were drawn to bypass Yerevan. These dynamics directly resulted from the conflict around the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh territories with Azerbaijan, to which Georgia became a third party. With Tbilisi considering Baku's natural resources as an existential guarantee of independence from Moscow, in 2011 the government stated that it 'unilaterally supported the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and [...calls for] the liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan'⁴. President Saakashvili further added that 'whoever opposes Azerbaijan is Georgia's enemy'⁵.

In order to gather support amid diplomatic isolation in the region, Armenia internationalized the conflict by calling upon Russian political and military assistance. Yerevan requested the stationing of Russian troops from 1995 onwards to offset Azerbaijan's military superiority. Most importantly, Baku's resources stopped transiting to Armenia and, to balance this, 'Russia supplied nearly all of Armenia's natural gas and oil and has a significant position in its energy infrastructure'⁶. In early 2019, Armenia dispatched non-combat troops to Syria under Russian command, an expression of bilateral gratitude.

In sum, the Nagorno-Karabakh war led to the establishment of set alliances due to Armenia's regional isolation. Increased Russian presence came about as a result of Yerevan's balancing efforts. Post-Soviet dynamics have thus brought about distinct

geopolitical blocs, namely Tbilisi-Baku-Ankara and Yerevan-Moscow.

2. Russia in the Caucasus: a *de facto* strategy of absorption

In April 2008, NATO unanimously declared that it would welcome Georgia into the Alliance. In August, Russia crossed the border and pushed back the Georgian forces' pacification campaign in South Ossetia, while striking targets as far afield as Tbilisi Airport and moving deep into Abkhazia. The general academic consensus argues that Moscow sought to keep Tbilisi under control – non-aligned at best – through military coercion, to ensure the Caucasus would remain NATO-free⁷.

Iryna Busygina demonstrated that Russia's grand strategic purpose of repositioning itself as a great power entails a policy of absorption of its 'near abroad'⁸. For instance, Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov had forcefully declared in 2002: 'We are ready to cooperate but if there are attempts to squeeze Russia out of these regions, where we have historic interests, we will not accept that.'⁹

The Kremlin seems to have embraced Darwinian paradigms whereby world politics equates to geopolitical competition, and where power is a key pawn to survive. As such, Russia's near abroad policy may aim at establishing a 'strategic depth' against competing organisations like the EU and NATO, a doctrine inherited from Soviet times¹⁰. Dummy entities like the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC) seem to validate this hypothesis. Since 2008, Russia's Caucasus strategy has consisted in keeping Georgia non-aligned through a continuous forward presence, characterized by the *de facto* control of land, air and maritime domains.

Initially, Moscow implemented a *terra nostra* strategy - a *de facto* land occupation. In Abkhazia and South Ossetia respectively, the 7th and 4th military bases house approximately 10,000 soldiers¹¹. The regions have been fenced off and recognized as independent States by Moscow. In 2017, reports indicated that South Ossetian and Abkhaz militias were being trained by Russian forces, slowly integrated into the Southern District's structure and joint exercises in Vladikavkaz¹². Moreover, Tbilisi is being intentionally coerced through the presence of rapid-reaction troops in Russia's 102nd military base in Gyumri,

4 'Georgia supports resolution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict within Azerbaijan's territorial integrity' Trend News Agency (August 28th, 2011) <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/karabakh/1924105.html>

5 'Whoever Opposes Azerbaijan is Georgia's 'Enemy,' Says Saakashvili in early August 2011, Asbarez (August 4th, 2011) <http://asbarez.com/97475/whoever-opposes-azerbaijan-is-georgias-enemy-says-saakashvili/>

6 Bayajian, David, 'Why Russia Needs Armenia and Vice Versa', Armenia Weekly (February 5th, 2019) <https://armenianweekly.com/2019/02/05/why-russia-needs-armenia-and-vice-versa/>

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10 Palmer, Diego A. Ruiz, 'Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons', NATO Defence College Research Paper (N°120, October 2015)

11 Lavrov, Anton, 'Post-war Deployment of Russian Forces in Abkhazia and South Ossetia'. In Ruslan Pukhov. *The Tanks of August*. Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies (2010)

12 'Moscow Moves to Absorb Rebel Georgian Region's Military' Reuters (March 14th, 2017) <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-georgiaarmy/moscow-moves-to-absorb-rebel-georgian-regions-military-idUSKBN16L1XQ>

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Russian Air Force Sukhoi Su-34, Sukhoi Su-24M, Sukhoi Su-27, Sukhoi Su-30 and Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-29 flying in formation (Dmitry Terekhov)

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/44/Sukhoi_Su-34%2C_Sukhoi_Su-24M%2C_Sukhoi_Su-27%2C_Sukhoi_Su-30%2C_Micoyan%26Gurevich_MiG-29_%284711768875%29.jpg

Armenia, 50 km from the border with Georgia¹³. The base consists of three mechanized infantry, one artillery and one anti-aircraft missile regiments¹⁴. Three large-scale CSTO exercises will take place in Armenia in March 2020.

Russia has also developed an *aer nostrus* strategy – a *de facto* monopoly on air traffic through the deployment of air supremacy assets. Units of fourth-generation MiG-29 fighter jets and S-300 long-range air defence systems are operational in Russia's 3624th airbase in Erebuni Airport near Yerevan, 3,500 strong¹⁵. Access denial, airspace violations and monitoring contribute to the coercion of Georgia. An important step has been the ratifying by Yerevan of a joint air defence initiative agreement that would integrate both countries' anti-air systems¹⁶. This is a significant step in advancing Russian influence in the Caucasus, since increased deployment of air-defence systems – like the S400 – would finalize Russia's

continental defensive zone and establish a continuous anti-access/area denial (A2AD) corridor from Murmansk to Latakia¹⁷. Finally, Russia is carrying out a *mare nostrum* strategy around the Caucasus. Since its annexation, the Crimean Peninsula has constituted the backbone of Russian forward defence in the South. The Black Sea Fleet has been modernized with anti-ship systems, ballistic missiles and long-range anti-air systems, so as to control maritime traffic and *de facto* secure the Black Sea through A2AD means¹⁸. This exerts pressure on Tbilisi, for it results in the isolation of the essential economic hubs of Poti and Batumi, which can be blockaded at will by the Kremlin. Russia has pretensions over the Caspian Sea, whose natural resources determine Georgia's political independence. In October 2015, in a large show of force, two Caspian flotilla corvettes fired 26 cruise missiles that travelled more than 2000km to hit targets in Syria¹⁹. Georgia is arguably caught between two informal 'Russian lakes'.

¹³ Klimentiev, Mikhail, 'Medvedev secures long-term foothold in Armenia', *The Moscow Times* (August 23rd, 2010) <https://themoscowtimes.com/news/medvedev-secures-long-term-foothold-in-armenia-796>

¹⁴ Nikolai Litovkin, 'Russia and Armenia to Create Joint Defense Force in Caucasus', *United Press International*, November 16, 2016 <https://www.upi.com/Russia-and-Armenia-to-create-joint-defense-force-in-Caucasus/1461479301074/>

¹⁵ Klein, Margarete, 'Russia's military capabilities', *German Institute for International and Security Affairs*, (October, 2009) pp.20 https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2009_RP12_kle_ks.pdf

¹⁶ Litovkin, Viktor, 'Russia, Armenia to set up joint air defense system in the Caucasus', *United Press International*, October 12, 2016 <https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2016/10/12/Russia-Armenia-to-set-up-joint-air-defense-system-in-the-Caucasus/3711476290768/>

¹⁷ Institute for the Study of War (August 29th, 2016) <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/russian-anti-access-and-area-denial.html>

¹⁸ Gvosdev, Nicholas, 'Russia's Strategy in the Black Sea basin', *War on the Rocks* (August 2nd, 2018) <https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/russias-strategy-in-the-black-sea-basin/>

¹⁹ '4 Russian warships launch 26 missiles against ISIS from Caspian Sea', *Russia Today* (October 7th, 2015) <https://www.rt.com/news/317864-russian-warships-missiles-launch/>



Georgian military during an exercise

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pictures/2019_03_190327b-ims-georgia/20190329_190327b-019.jpg

3. Georgia's NATO membership: prospects and alternatives

Russian presence in the Caucasus has galvanized, rather than buried, Georgia's transatlantic ambitions. Moscow's misinterpretation lies in the fact that Tbilisi's outward-looking policies are not motivated by an unconditional admiration for the West, but by an inherent rejection of Russia.

Tbilisi has been seeking outside support, most notably in the EU, NATO and the United States, through a policy of military contributions. At its peak, Georgia had more than 2,000 troops in the NATO-led mission to Afghanistan in Kandahar and Helmand, some of the deadliest places²⁰. It currently contributes to NATO-led missions to Kosovo, the Horn of Africa and in the Mediterranean, as well as to the NATO Response Force²¹. Georgia's contingent in the US-led war in Iraq was the third largest, with a brigade-size contribution in 2007²². Tbilisi also provided a force of 156 soldiers to the EU-led missions to the Central African Republic and Mali²³.

Yet, Georgia's diplomatic efforts were slow to be rewarded. It is the Crimea annexation that drew attention to Russia's increasing grip over the Caucasus and triggered global support for Tbilisi. Georgia suddenly became a strategic partner, essential in countering Moscow's integration of its neighbourhood that might, ultimately, undermine European security as a whole.

Georgia has been given political backing through different mechanisms. In 2014, at the Wales Summit, the NATO-Georgia Commission invited Georgian diplomats to participate in Military Committee meetings. The Summit also produced a 'Substantial NATO-Georgia Package' (SNGP) that included the establishment of a Joint Training and Evaluation Centre and a military-civilian Administration School so as to promote the assimilation and interoperability of Georgian troops into the NATO command structure²⁴. What is more, a seventeen-nation NATO exercise took place in Georgia in March 2019.

As for the U.S., Washington took the bilateral relationship to an unprecedented level for very specific reasons. Georgia has proven to be a strong democracy in a troubled region. Terrorists in the Pankisi Gorge appear to be a priority, since they are affiliated to the Caucasus Emirate and therefore to the Islamic State's global network. Georgia's energy-transit facilities are

²⁰ Coffey, Luke, 'NATO membership for Georgia: in US and European interest', Heritage Foundation, Special Report n°199, (January 29th, 2018)

²¹ 'Substantial NATO Georgia Package (SNGP)', NATO Factsheet (September 12th, 2015) https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_12/20151209_151209-factsheet-nato-georgia-package.pdf

²² Lilikadze, Koba, 'Iraq: As Third-Largest Contingent, Georgia Hopes to Show Its Worth', Reuters (September 7th, 2008) <https://www.rferl.org/a/1078614.html>

²³ 'Facts and Figures about EU-Georgia relations', European Union External Action Service (EUEAS) website https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eap_factsheet_georgia_en_web.pdf

²⁴ 'Substantial NATO Georgia Package (SNGP)', NATO Factsheet (September 12th, 2015) https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_12/20151209_151209-factsheet-nato-georgia-package.pdf

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Meeting between NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, and the Georgian Prime Minister, Mamuka Bakhtadze
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pictures/2019_03_190324a-trip-sg-georgia/20190325_190324a-008.jpg

essential to mitigate Gazprom's monopoly in Europe. Georgia is also a forward ally in a region hostile to the U.S. and dominated by Russian satellites in Central Asia, and by Iran in the South. Congressman Ted Poe (TX-Rep) declared: 'The friendship between our two nations has been forged in blood [...] There is no doubt, the United States must do more to help Tbilisi continue its democratic trajectory and defend against the very real Russian threat [...]'.²⁵

Do all these facts justify granting Georgia NATO membership? It would appear a fair endeavour, considering Tbilisi's past commitments. And yet, it seems to be politically unfeasible. One would be ill-advised to test President Putin's resolve after the Crimea precedent by expanding NATO further eastwards. This by no means implies that Georgia should be sacrificed to Moscow. The political objective is rather straightforward: **find the right balance between Georgia's quest for security and Russia's aversion to NATO's presence in its near abroad.** Informal ways of promoting the integration of Tbilisi into NATO may consequently be fit for purpose.

Bilateral efforts can directly boost Georgia's internal security without alienating Moscow. NATO members should, through

the United Nations, push Russia to commit to President Sarkozy's 6-point plan that specified the repositioning of Russian forces at their pre-war positions. Besides, NATO countries could provide anti-ship and medium-range anti-air systems to Georgia so as to help Tbilisi: 1) *defend* its coastline; 2) *control* its *de jure* airspace (including over Abkhazia and South Ossetia); and 3) *deter* Russian adventurism in the Caucasus. In 2017, the 'General Security of Information Agreement' enhanced intelligence and counter-terrorism cooperation, while in 2018 the 'Georgia Support Act' promoted deterrence, counter-disinformation and cyber operations²⁶. Washington also approved substantial arms sales to Tbilisi, including a \$75 million sale of anti-tank Javelin rockets²⁷. Ideally, all NATO members should provide bilateral assistance to Georgia outside of the NATO framework.

Under a NATO framework, policies can indirectly, yet substantially, contribute to Georgia's security. NATO could produce a comprehensive, wide-reaching Black Sea Security Strategy – the region's centre of gravity. Framed by this document, an increased number of anti-ship and missile defence systems deployed to Romania could contest Russia's

²⁵ Guthrie, Samantha, 'Georgia Support Act Introduced in US Congress', *Georgia Today* (June 27th, 2018) <http://georgiatoday.ge/news/10964/Georgia-Support-Act-Introduced-in-US-Congress>

²⁶ 'United States and Georgia Sign General Security of Information Agreement', U.S. Department of State (May 9th, 2017) <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/05/270754.htm>

²⁷ 'Georgia-Javelin Missiles and Command Launch Units' Defense Security Cooperation Agency (November 20th, 2017) <http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/georgia-javelin-missiles-and-command-launch-units>



Press point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili in March 2019.
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pictures/2019_01_190123a-visit-georgia-presid/20190123_190123a-014.jpg

maritime presence and consequently decrease pressure on Tbilisi without directly creating grave tensions over the Caucasus. The regular patrolling of NATO warships in the Black Sea would likewise provide further political reassurances and display great overall resolve. Ultimately, since 2017, Georgia has been part of NATO's 'Partnership Interoperability Initiative' (PII), allowing non-NATO partners to contribute to NATO missions and exercises²⁸. This initiative is, arguably, an ideal middle ground. NATO and Georgia mutually benefit from interoperability, mutual assistance and intelligence sharing; while the PII is compatible with Russia's 'NATO-free Caucasus' policy. The PII could be further developed through encouraging Georgian contributions to NATO's multi-national battlegroups deployed to the Baltic States, and by organizing regular non-combat exercises in Georgia (logistics, command and control, and cyberattack simulations).

Conclusion

Georgia has become one of the centres of gravity of the NATO-Russia relationship. It is precisely at the crossroads between Russia's policy of absorption of its near abroad and NATO's open door policy. Russia is exercising direct military pressure on Georgia through naval, maritime and land deployments, while

NATO provides political, economic and light military assistance. Georgia has demonstrated its leaning towards NATO, yet Tbilisi can hardly ignore regional dynamics. Compromise appears to be a reasonable solution.

Whilst the immediate environment is arguably too hostile, and Moscow too unpredictable for a traditional membership offer to be made, NATO can still foster the bilateral relationship through alternative means. NATO members should bilaterally engage with Georgia to promote interoperability and boost its defensive capabilities. Under a NATO framework, a comprehensive Black Sea strategy could be conceived and implemented so as to contest Russian behaviour and decrease pressure on Georgia. Likewise, Tbilisi could further contribute to NATO through participating in NATO exercises and joint operations. All these measures could enhance Georgian security and further foster the NATO-Georgia relationship, but without aggravating tensions with Moscow over the Caucasus.

²⁸ 'Partnership Interoperability Initiative', NATO (June 7th, 2017) https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/topics_132726.htm



The NATO Defense College and the (Canada) NATO Field School and Simulation Program

By Alexander Moens, Alexandra Richards,
Cornel Turdeanu and Harleen Atwal



Dr Alexander Moens is the Chair of the Political Science Department at Simon Fraser University and the founder of the SFU NATO Field School.

Alexandra Richards attended the 2017 NATO Field School (successfully role playing the NATO Secretary General) and as a senior undergraduate student has worked closely with Professor Moens to help deliver the Field School 2018 and 2019.

Cornel Turdeanu is a Political Science student focusing on NATO, defence and international security. In 2015, Cornel co-founded the SFU Model NATO Club and in 2017 co-founded and organized the SFU NATO Field School.

Harleen Atwal attended the 2018 Canada NATO Field school and is a fourth year Criminology student at SFU specializing in police studies.

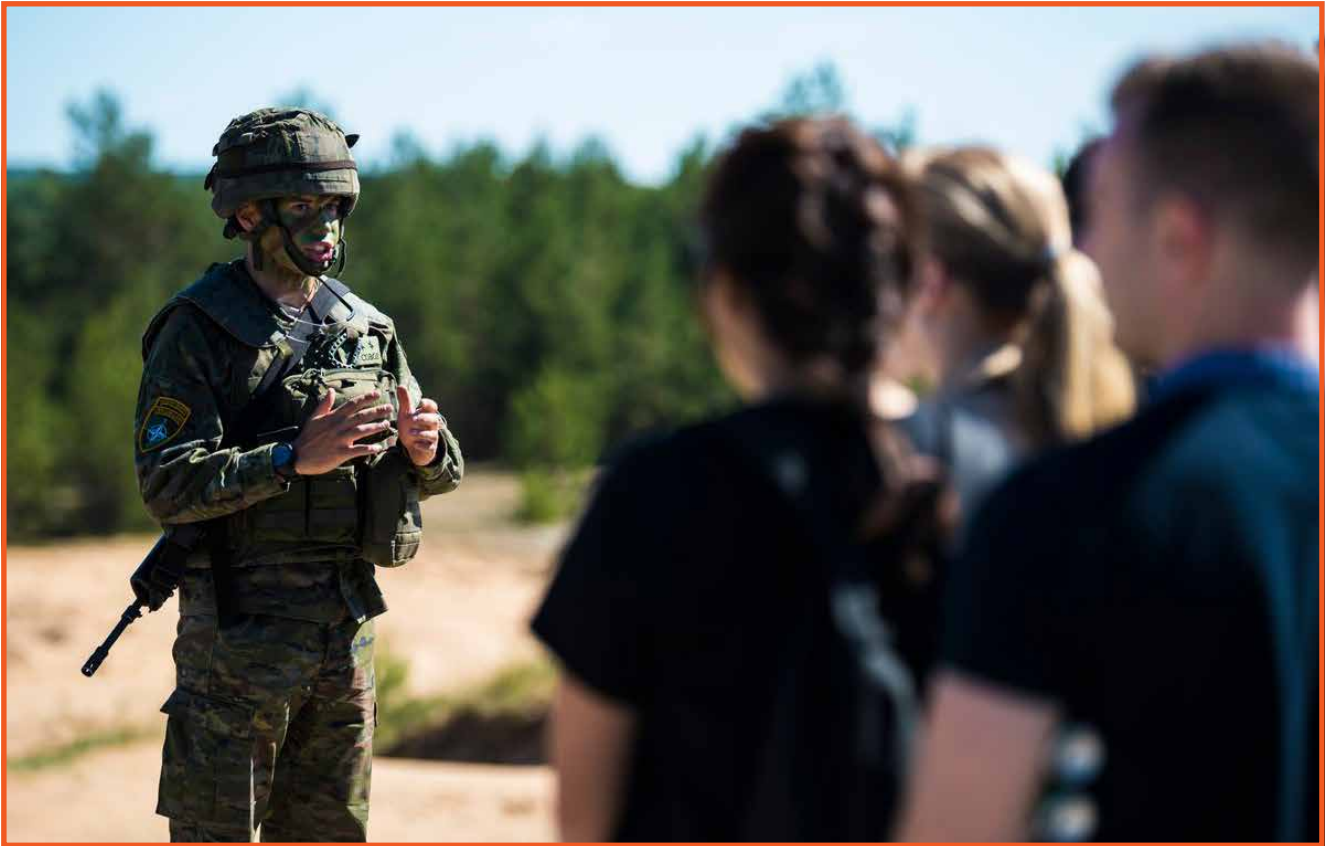
The opinions expressed in this article are their own and must not be attributed to the NATO Defense College or to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Since 2017, the NATO Defense College has opened its doors one week per year for graduate and senior undergraduate students to experience the hands-on simulation learning in a Negotiation, Mediation, and Decision Making Exercise (NMDX). Under the direction of Colonel Jan Abts (2017), Captain (Navy) Alfonse Altmeier (2018), and Colonel Martin Bulka (2019) and mentored by Mr. Ilay Ferrier and Colonel Ian Hope, students gain insight into the challenges and complexity of NATO decision-making and experience the frustrations and exhilarations of diplomatic negotiations. This experience gives them a comprehensive understanding of NATO in a way that stays with them for life. For example, one student stated "seeing how people react to stress... actually reminded me that diplomats are only human too, and they can cave to stress. This brought a human element to diplomatic relations and crisis simulations, and I now have a greater appreciation of the work that these people do, under real pressure." Another remarked, "the highlight of the Europe portion was being [the] secretary-general, that is something I won't get to experience again but the skills I learned and I developed will stay with me forever."

The NMDX is a challenging simulation exercise and many of our students come into the program without extensive experience in international security and diplomacy. However, students undergoing this advanced training are prepared for the NMDX experience in a 13-week accredited program entitled The NATO Field School, run by Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Vancouver, British Columbia. The NMDX is one of the important components of the SFU NATO Field School. Alongside standard classroom learning, students are granted the opportunity to visit army, navy, and air force bases and joint headquarters in various NATO locations, and experience hands-on mentoring by NATO leaders and experts. Students are graded on multiple assignments and create competitive social media content designed to both deepen the effect of their personal and career learning while reaching wider audiences across the Alliance.

Before the students arrive at the College in June 2019 for the NMDX, they will have been in the program for over six weeks. It begins in May with five-weeks at the SFU campus in Vancouver with classroom learning, simulation training and guest lecturers to familiarize participants with defence and security issues and organizations such as NATO. The lectures and briefings are delivered by visiting and embedded experts from the Canadian Department of National Defence, the Armed Forces, NATO Headquarters and academia. After five weeks, the European portion of the Field School begins. Before heading to Rome, the 2019 student cohort of 45 students will arrive in Belgium where they will receive briefings from various European security experts. This includes high-level briefings at NATO Headquarters (NATO HQ), Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), EU Military Staff Headquarters, and the Canadian Delegation to the European Union. These briefings give students insight into the various entities and processes of NATO as well as what a career as a diplomat or international staffer may be like. This prepares the students for their next event, the NMDX at the NDC.

Following the NDC's unique contribution in simulation learning, the 2019 student cohort will visit a NATO eFP Battle Group in the Baltics and go through a day of training at the NATO Centre of Excellence for Strategic Communication in Riga. The students then spend the last week of the Field School in Bucharest, working



Pictured: Spanish soldier briefing students in Latvia

closely with a group of approximately 40 students from various NATO nations and NATO Partners, with the intent of preparing a core group of European applicants for next year's Field School program. This final week is designed to bring together students from across the Alliance in a week of intercultural learning, high-level briefings from Eastern European and NATO security experts, and discussions about the meaning of the "transatlantic bargain." The student cohort will then disband and complete their course work, and reflect on what they have learned throughout this unique program of study.

For many of our students who have already reflected back on what they learned in 2017 and 2018, they noted how the experience helped them to grow and learn beyond their expectations. One student wrote this of the experience; "the Field school transformed me and taught me so much... about myself and my resistance to fatigue and schedules... I improved my note-taking and public speaking skills respectively through the briefings and the NMDX simulation in Rome. Today, I can see real progression in my learning experience and I almost feel like an expert in NATO related topics (but not a NATO expert yet)." Another stated, "This program has been more than what I expected... I now know and have learned so much information

from high level officials who directly work in the career field that I would like to pursue, which is irreplaceable and priceless."



LtGen. C. Whitecross with students in Vancouver

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Colonel Ian Hope, NDC Faculty, mentoring during the Crisis Management Exercise.

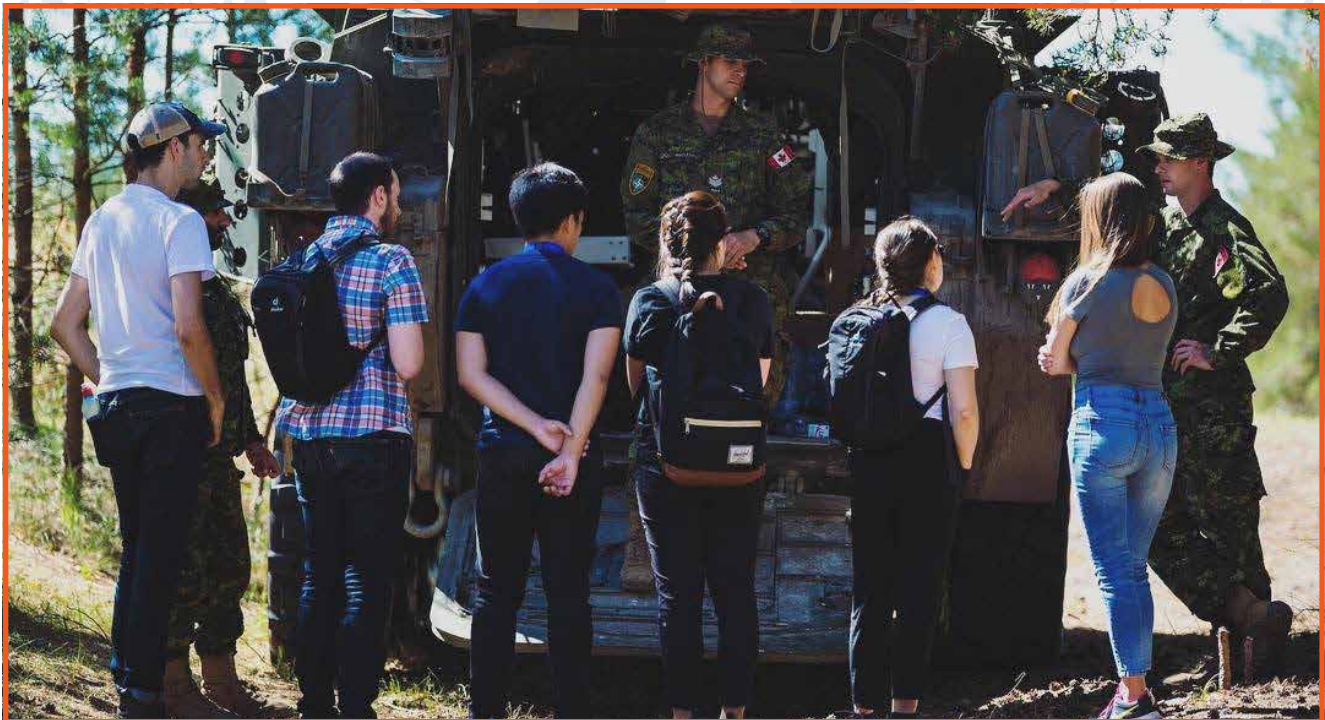
Some of the students' reflections on the program are not about themselves but about their understanding of the world around them. Here are two examples:

"I understand much more the importance of working with partners and the very fragile nature of democracy. We must actively protect it and secure it. Otherwise, we could fall into a desperate situation."

"The entire process of strategic planning and forecasting for the potential crisis is partly the reason why I am interested in pursuing a career within the intelligence, so it was incredible to see and hear how these people work on a day to day basis."

These reflections show the impact that the NATO Field School program has on its students. These types of reflections often develop into an interest in a career in security and international affairs, which many former NATO Field School Alumni are currently pursuing.

Embedded in this unique NATO Learning Program is a research project, measuring university students' perception of armed forces and NATO, which develops data for academic research on understanding of popular perceptions of the Alliance. This research has shown that the impact that this program has on the students is likely due to the combination of simulation learning, visits and hands-on experiences and high-level briefings. As Gill (2015, p.11-12) noted in her work, there is often an extreme disconnect between the "rational/objective/analytical" and the



Simon Fraser University students during their NATO Field Study.



"affective/subjective/experiential," particularly in university studies of international relations, which limits students' ability to gain comprehensive understanding "about the realities that drive live conflicts, or understand the political and social forces that often determine the limits and choices available to people engaged in them." With the help of the NDC and others, the NATO Field School has been able to effectively combine these elements creating a unique high-impact learning experience for the Alliance's university students.

The NDC's partnership with this unique program amounts to a strategic, long-term investment in civilian understanding of the functions of the Atlantic Alliance. In many NATO member states, civilians lack appreciation for and understanding of the important role that armed forces play in multilateral cooperation, the grist of NATO work every day. The NMDX helps these students gain such insight. The NDC's role is also part of maintaining the highest level of curriculum standard, offering students the best possible comprehensive education on NATO.

Started in Canada in 2017, the NATO Field School and Simulation Program has not been limited to Canadians, but includes students from the USA, France, and Turkey. Starting in the Fall of 2019, the Field School is recruiting students from all (soon to be) 30 NATO nations. Having students from across the Alliance is an opportunity to form a network of young security professionals who better understand one another. As one student wrote; "the friendships we made on the [NATO Field School] will lead to a wide network of connections down the road."

The investment in providing NATO's civilian university youth experience in the fundamentals of politico-military relations and multilateral decision-making and operations is an investment in burden-sharing and Alliance solidarity that will yield fruit in years to come. As a Field School student testified, "...[D]iplomacy is everything. Only by talking are we able to resolve issues. Once we stop talking, that's when we have issues. This has stuck with me, and I will remember this as I go forward in my career." (Please visit our website to see video testimonials at www.sfu.ca/natofieldschool.html).

The NATO Field School and Simulation Program was founded and is directed by Professor Alexander Moens, the first NDC Eisenhower Fellow in 2015, who teaches and mentors the students throughout the entire 13 week program. The Field School draws on national and NATO-PDD grants and financial support to keep the fees low and to pay for experts' expenses. The program engages both PhD and MA students in every aspect of its operation, and prepares students for further internships, including at the NDC, with funding generated by the NATO Field School Program.

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Group picture of Simon Fraser University students at the NATO Defense College.

International Conference - “NATO at 70: no time to retire”

Dr Thierry Tardy



Dr Thierry Tardy is Director of the Research Division at the NATO Defense College in Rome. Previously he was Senior Analyst at the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS). He has researched and published extensively on European Security, with a particular focus on military and civilian crisis management, the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO; inter-institutional cooperation in security governance; security regionalism; and the EU Common Security and Defence Policy. Thierry has been teaching in the field of European Security at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Paris), La Sorbonne, the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations (INALCO), and the College of Europe in Bruges. He has also lectured regularly at the NATO Defense College and at the European Security and Defence College (ESDC). He is a graduate of the Institute of Higher National Defence Studies (IHEDN, 62nd National Session, 2009-10).

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and must not be attributed to the NATO Defense College or to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

On 11 and 12 April, 2019, the NATO Defense College held an international conference to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Atlantic Alliance. On Thursday 11 April, former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen delivered the keynote speech. The following day, the conference was organized in four panels. NATO Deputy Secretary General Mrs Rose Gottemoeller delivered the opening keynote address, while Admiral Foggo, Commander, Allied Joint Force Command, delivered the closing speech.

This event allowed for an open discussion on NATO's past, present, and future. NATO's successes, but also challenges. On 4 April 1949, twelve Western states met in Washington to give birth to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, whose purpose was to prevent a return of war in Europe. As they celebrate the Alliance's 70th birthday this year, its current 29 member states are also, to a considerable extent, honouring its success. NATO has, indeed, contributed to maintaining peace in Europe, by deterring the Soviet Union during the Cold War; by working to bring an end to the conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia in the 1990s; and, since 2014, by kitting itself out again for collective defence to counter a newly aggressive Russia. With the imminent membership of the Republic of North Macedonia, the successive waves of enlargement bear witness to the success of this model for the soon-to-be 30 member-strong Alliance.

Of course, difficulties have arisen, beginning with Afghanistan and Libya, where there was a disconnect between operations on the ground and the politico-strategic levels, but generally NATO has been able to adapt to fast-moving developments in the security arena, whereas all other major institutions (the UN and the EU) are struggling.

Yet the time for rejoicing or for retirement has not yet come. The challenges are enormous. Added to the strategic environment which morphs constantly, making Europe more fragile overall, the shifting nature of the threats challenges NATO as a military organization. In Russia's case, these are of a territorial nature, but elsewhere they can be hybrid, cyber and terrorist.



Former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen delivers the keynote speech at the opening dinner.



Q&A with NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller, moderated by NDC Dean Dr Stephen J. Mariano.

In view of this situation, the Atlantic Alliance must set itself five priorities.

First, it must continue to deter and to defend itself against Russia. To achieve this, NATO must send a strong message of cohesion with regard to the notion of collective defence, embodied by Article 5 of the Treaty, whereby an attack against one of its members constitutes an attack against all, and must be understood as such. Further, the decisions taken at the three

summit meetings in Wales (2014), in Warsaw (2016), and in Brussels (2018) must be implemented. In Wales, member states committed to spending 2% of their GDP on defence, a pledge respected by only four countries in 2018. Another decision was to strengthen deterrence, in particular by deploying troops to the Baltic States and to Poland, but also by supporting the countries around the Black Sea, as well as by the recent "Readiness Initiative", whereby to counter a potential Russian incursion into Allied territory, the Allies commit to supplying extra assets to the Alliance within 30 days. Financially and operationally, the effort required is massive and its feasibility often uncertain.

Second, the Alliance must give substance to its ambition to contribute to stability on its periphery, through support, training, and capacity-building. The "Projecting Stability" concept was officially introduced in 2016, but in fact, it combines the longstanding activities of crisis management and cooperative security by using a less intrusive approach. It entails working more closely with local partners and better coordinating with other organizations. Projecting stability must also include the fight against terrorism, which operationally is a complex task, and whose relevance for NATO is not always shared by member states. The task is enormous, stretching as it does from North Africa to the Middle East, where NATO is not always welcome – the Libyan affair having left its mark – and where NATO's added value is unclear.

Third, if acting alone NATO cannot succeed in achieving



International Conference - "NATO at 70: no time to retire"

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Photograph of US President Truman signing the document implementing the North Atlantic Treaty at his desk in the Oval Office
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c1/Truman_signing_North_Atlantic_Treaty.jpg

a strategic result – hence the need for partnerships. The European Union must be the priority partner. Both institutions have understood this by setting up, from 2016 on, a number of concrete activities in the fields of hybrid threats, cyber-security or military mobility (the transfer of troops on European soil). But the scale of the challenges will require a qualitative leap forward, which is impossible today because of two types of obstruction: first, the issue of Cyprus, which pits Turkey against Cyprus in regard to the status of the northern part of the island, with each of the two countries blocking any rapprochement with the institution it does not belong to; and second, the obstruction caused by the state of competition that exists between NATO and the EU, that partly stems from the EU's desire to become involved in the defence sector, at a time when the transatlantic link is unravelling.

Fourth, the Alliance must enlist in the cultural revolution which will enable it to enter the digital era of artificial intelligence, big data and biotechnology, thus empowering the organization to effectively deal with future threats, which will be different from today's and require new doctrines and different capacities.

Fifth, no lasting impact in the previously-mentioned priorities can be attained if NATO is unable to ensure its own cohesion. A cohesion which has been severely tested by the American administration's wavering commitment to the Alliance and to the defence of its members, in spite of its still significant presence on the ground. There are also divergent views on the organization's agenda: to look East and to Russia, or to the South with its cross-cutting threats? The Alliance has developed its 360° vision, but a number of states want their own specific



Family portrait of NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Washington, D.C.
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pictures/2019_04_190403g-mfa-reception/20190404_190403g-006.jpg

problems to be taken more into account, sometimes to the detriment of solidarity. Our values are also at stake. NATO is not purely a military alliance built around narrow interests, it is also a community of values, such as democracy, individual freedoms and the rule of law. In some NATO member states these values are under attack, and their illiberal policies or politics, are a threat to NATO's credibility.

At age 70, NATO must constantly reinvent itself, in a world where a good number of states and citizens too have limited confidence in the virtues of multilateralism. The Organization is still relevant today, because the world around it is unstable; and because NATO aspires to creating stability. Obsolescence is not on today's agenda.



Vincenzo DiStefano

Head Budget and Finance Branch



Today, it is with great sadness that we commemorate a true friend who served the Alliance loyally for over twenty-five years, spent entirely at the College except for an earlier tour of duty in Belgium. Vincenzo Distefano, Head of the NDC Budget and Finance Branch, died suddenly while spending the Easter break with his family in his native Sicily.

A graduate of Catania University, Vincenzo joined the Italian Navy in 1985. His naval career included three years as a Lieutenant in the Budget and Finance Division of SHAPE, followed by service as Chief of Support and Logistics on the frigate *Grecale*, in which capacity he participated in UN Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and was deployed with the WEU Contingency Maritime Force off the former Yugoslavia. He then spent the years 1994-1997 at the NDC, as Budget and Fiscal Officer, after which he was appointed Chief of Supplies and Logistics to the Second Italian Naval Division and the destroyer *Mimbelli*. He left active naval service with the rank of Commander, becoming a Navy Reserve Officer to take up the civilian position he occupied at the College until just a few days ago.

Over the past twenty years, Vincenzo worked in close contact with a number of NDC Commandants. All of them were able to benefit from the immense contribution he made to our institutional life, not only in terms of his unmatched professional skills but, above all, thanks to his human integrity, his wonderful personality, his solid common sense and his unwavering loyalty to the College. As a long-serving and indefatigable member of the command group, he acquired a keen vision and a vital historical perspective that enabled him to offer sound, timely advice when Commandants were required to address important aspects of College life.



In addition to decorations conferred by the Italian Navy in recognition of his services in UN and WEU missions, in 2016 Vincenzo was awarded the NATO Meritorious Service Medal.

I first knew Vincenzo as a colleague and came to cherish his friendship as a fellow member of the Anciens' Executive Committee. I find it greatly moving to remember how much he did for our community, working tirelessly behind the scenes throughout his tenure to ensure that the annual Anciens' Seminar was always impeccably organized at a readily affordable cost for those attending.

Having first joined the NDC BudFin Branch during his years of active service in the Navy, Vincenzo actually qualified to become an Ancien while continuing to serve as a mainstay of the College.

***"In loving memory of Vincenzo DiStefano,
mainmast of the College 1999-2019"***

Ciao, Vincenzo, on behalf of all your friends among the Anciens.

Brigadier General (ret) Ugo Consiglio (ITA A)

Former NDC staff; Editor of *Spotlight*, the NDC Anciens' Association Newsletter





Our Courses

Senior Course 134



AZERBAIJAN
LTC T. ASADBAYLI

BAHRAIN
MAJ M.K. AL-BUAINAIN

BELGIUM
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COL D. FARRIS
COL P. FEUERHERM
COL M.S. KOESTNER
COL P. ROBICHAUD

CZECH REPUBLIC
COL P. VOHRALIK

DENMARK
LTC M.A. VILLUMSEN

FRANCE
COL V. BOUQUET
COL N. DURHIN
COL E. LEBAS
COL M. LIPSKI
CAPT (N) L. MACHARD DE
GRAMONT
COL J. MEUNIER
CAPT (N) N. PANNETIER

GEORGIA
COL D. KIKNADZE

GERMANY
LTC I. CASSENS
COL R. JORASCH
LTC A. POHL
COL O. PROST
BGEN F. TRÄNAPP

GREECE
COL I. ASIMAKOPOULOS
CAPT (N) M. STAMELOS
COL C. VASILEIADIS

HUNGARY
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ITALY
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LTC A. FORTE
LTC A. IASILLI
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JORDAN
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NETHERLANDS
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Dir. O.R. HUMLEGÅRD
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REPUBLIC OF KOREA
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ROMANIA
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SLOVAKIA
COL S. VERČIMÁK

SLOVENIA
LTC A. INDOF

SPAIN
LTC P. DIAZ GONZALEZ
CDR J.C. GAMUNDI FERNANDEZ
LTC F. RUIZ GÓMEZ
LTC D.J. SÁNCHEZ CAAMAÑO
LTC F. SANCHEZ-ARIONA

TAIWAN
LTC M.C. HUANG

TUNISIA
COL H. SAYADI

TURKEY
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LTC Ö. DOĞAN
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UNITED STATES
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COL M. GRIFFIN
LTC R. RYBKA
LTC R. SHOWALTER
LTC A. VILLA



Our Courses

NATO Regional Cooperation Course 21



AFGHANISTAN
LTC D. KABEER

ALGERIA
Couns. F. FERHAT
LTC A. TIDJANI

EGYPT
Third Secr. M.E.E.M. ELHALWAGY
First Secr. M.A.A. ELKHATIB

GEORGIA
COL G. ANDGHULADZE

GERMANY
CAPT (N) V. GELHAUSEN
Mr G.A. MATHES

IRAQ
BGEN M.A.M. ALABED RASOOL
Third Secr. M.J.M. ALJABERI

ITALY
COL A. MARUCCI
COL L. TABACCHI
COL M. TIRICO

JORDAN
COL H.M.T. ALHAMAD
COL S. WIDYAN

KUWAIT
LTC K.E.M.N. ALDOUSARI
COL K.T. ALOTAIBI
LTC A.Y.M.Y. BIN YOUSEF

MAURITANIA
COL E. M'HAMED
LTC G. TALEB EL VADHEL

MOROCCO
COL S. LACHEHEB
COL O. RAIF

PAKISTAN
LTC T. AYAZ
GpCAPT H. KHAN

QATAR
LTC R.S.A. AL-HAJRI
COL S.A.Y.H. AL-SAEY

SAUDI ARABIA
LTC A.M.I. ALHASSOUN
COL M.H.Z. ALHELAL
First Secr. A.M.A. ALQESAYER

SPAIN
COL F.A. BLANCO DE LA TORRE
COL M. RUIZ ALONSO
LTC F. VILLEGAS DELGADO

TUNISIA
COL M. BERRIRI
LTC M.H. ZOGLAMI

UKRAINE
COL Y. BAIDIN

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
COL N.H.O.B. ALNUAIMI

UNITED STATES
CDR C.G. WAHLIN



Our Courses

GFOAC 2019/1



The Generals, Flag Officers & Ambassadors' Course (GFOAC 2019-1), entitled "NATO's 360° Approach to Security", took place at the NATO Defense College during the week of 12-17 May. Forty-eight senior military and civilian leaders, from NATO and partner states, attended the Course. GFOAC is a high-level course aimed at one- to three-star officers and civilians of equivalent rank from the member countries of NATO, the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Global Partners. The course seeks to promote mutual understanding of contemporary security challenges and NATO's interests and capabilities.

Our Courses

SERC 8



On 21st June 2019, the NATO Defense College (NDC) concluded the eighth edition of the Senior Executive Regional Conference (SERC 8) in Rome. The group of 22 distinguished participants included ambassadors, diplomats and high-ranking generals, as well as two members of Gulf Royal Families.



Our Courses

IPOC 2019/1



The Integrated Partner Orientation Course (2019/1) on "NATO: Present and Future" was held at the College from 1 to 5 April 2019, in conjunction with Senior Course 134 and Modular Short Course 134/3. This edition brought together 13 members. The Course is designed to analyse the nature of NATO as an organization, examining its activities and policies, as well as its contribution in the field of security. Within this framework, it was possible to focus on the changing nature of the security environment and the relevant steps and adaptations NATO must undertake over the next few years.

Modular Short Course 134-1



Modular Short Course 134-2





Our Courses

Modular Short Course 134-3



Modular Short Course 134-4



Modular Short Course 134-5



Modular Short Courses form part of the five-month Senior Course. Since the Senior Course is divided into several Study Periods on specific themes, these can be attended by military officers and civilian officials who are not able to join the Senior Course for its entire duration. To make this possible, the NDC offers five Short Modular Courses during every Senior Course: each MSC is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to update and improve their knowledge of key political, military, defence-related, economic and socio-cultural questions with implications for the Alliance.



01 February



Graduation ceremony of SC133, in the presence of the Chief of Italian Defence Staff General Enzo Vecciarelli.

5 March



Visit of Chief Superintendent Maureen Levy, from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

15 April



The President of Albania, H.E. Ilir Meta, delivered a lecture of opportunity to Senior Course 134, NATO Regional Cooperation Course 21, and College faculty and staff.

20 February



Inauguration Ceremony of Senior Course 134 and NATO Regional Cooperation Course 21 attended by Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Chairman Military Committee.

11 March



NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations Dr John Manza was briefed on the activities and mission of the College by the NDC Dean, Dr Stephen Mariano, and the Research Division Director, Dr Thierry Tardy.

27 May



Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Tod D. Wolters visited the NATO Defense College and delivered his address to NDC Staff and SC 134.



Our Publications

NDC Research Paper Series**March 2019**

NDC Research Paper 2 - NATO's Futures:
the Atlantic Alliance between Power and Purpose
Sten RYNNING

June 2019

NDC Research Paper 3 - A Strategic Odyssey:
Constancy of Purpose and Strategy-Making in
NATO, 1949-2019
Diego A. RUIZ PALMER

NDC Policy Brief Series**January 2019**

Policy Brief 1 - Energy security in the Baltic Region:
between markets and politics
Marc OZAWA

NDC Policy Brief 2 - NATO's nuclear deterrence:
more important, yet more contested
Michael RÜHLE

February 2019

NDC Policy Brief 3 - Vostok 2018: ten years of
Russian strategic exercises and warfare preparation
Dave JOHNSON

NDC Policy Brief 4 - Preparing for "NATO-mation":
the Atlantic Alliance toward the age of artificial
intelligence
Andrea GILLI

March 2019

NDC Policy Brief 5 - NATO at 70:
modernising for the future
*Rose GOTTEMÖLLER, NATO Deputy Secretary
General*

NDC Policy Brief 6 - NATO's coming existential
challenge
Karl-Heinz KAMP

NDC Policy Brief 7 - "NATO@70": still adapting
after all these years
Julian LINDLEY-FRENCH

April 2019

NDC Policy Brief 8 - NATO is doing fine, but the
Atlantic Alliance is in trouble
Bruno TERTRAIS

NDC Policy Brief 9 - 70 years of NATO:
the strength of the past, looking into the future
Kori SCHAKE and Erica PEPE

NDC Policy Brief 10 - NATO at 70:
enter the technological age
Tomáš VALÁŠEK

May 2019

NDC Policy Brief 11 - Building the airplane while
flying: adapting NATO's force structure in an era of
uncertainty
Sara Bjerg MOLLER

NDC Policy Brief 12 - What NATO's
counter-terrorism strategy?
Kris QUANTEN

June 2019

NDC Policy Brief 13 - Why the Baltics matter.
Defending NATO's North-Eastern border
Sven SAKKOV

NDC Policy Brief 14 - The necessary adaptation of
NATO's military instrument of power
Jan BROEKS

Russian Studies Series**January 2019**

Russian Studies 1 - Waiting for the Storm:
South Caucasus
Ray FINCH

Russian Studies 2 - Fundamentals of the state policy
of the Russian Federation in the field of naval
activities for the period until 2030
Richard CONNOLLY

March 2019

Russian Studies 3 - Development Strategy of State
Corporation Rosatom to 2030
Nazrin MEHDIYEVA

Russian Studies 4 - General Gerasimov on the
Vectors of the Development of Military Strategy
Dave JOHNSON

June 2019

Russian Studies 5 - In the Service of Russia
Gudrun PERSSON



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