| **Information valid as of October 2003** | NATO's military concept for defence against terrorism |

INTRODUCTION

Background

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States demonstrated both the capability of a determined enemy and the vulnerability of Alliance members to large-scale terrorist attacks. NATO's Article 5 declaration and subsequent operations demonstrated the Alliance's resolve to deal with this threat.

Background
▪ NATO's contribution to the fight against terrorism
Key links
▪ Annex A: Definitions

On 18 December 2001, NATO Defence Ministers tasked the NATO Military Authorities to prepare a Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism for approval by the North Atlantic Council. The NATO Military Authorities requested political guidance from the North Atlantic Council and following receipt of the necessary guidance, submitted their Concept for approval. The Concept was approved by the North Atlantic Council in permanent session and then endorsed by Heads of State and Government at the Prague Summit on 21 November 2002.

Concept Development

The major guiding principles in the development of the Concept were:

- The Washington Treaty.
- The 1999 Alliance Strategic Concept.
- The NATO threat assessment on Terrorism.
- The Political Guidance provided by Council, which stipulated that NATO's actions should:
  - Have a sound legal basis and fully conform to the relevant provisions of the UN Charter and all relevant international norms, including those concerned with human rights and humanitarian requirements.
  - Help deter, defend, disrupt and protect against terrorist attacks or threat of attacks, directed from abroad against populations, territory, infrastructure and forces of any NATO member state, including by acting against these terrorists and those who harbour them.
  - Act, on a case-by-case basis, if requested, in support of the international community's efforts against terrorism.
  - Provide assistance to national authorities in dealing with the consequences of terrorist attacks, particularly where such attacks involve the use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons.
  - Work on the assumption that it is preferable to deter terrorist attacks or to prevent their occurrence rather than deal with their consequences and be prepared to deploy as and where required to deal with particular circumstances as they arise.

Threat Assessment

NATO's Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism was developed to

defend against the threat identified in NATO's Threat Assessment on Terrorism. This assessment concluded that:

- Although religious extremism is likely to be the source of the most immediate terrorist threats to the Alliance, other motivations for terrorism could emerge from economic, social, demographic and political causes derived from unresolved conflicts or emerging ideologies.
- In addition, although state sponsorship of terrorism is currently in decline, political circumstances could lead to its rise, providing terrorists with safe havens and considerable resources.
- Although the predominant form of terrorist attack remains the creative use of conventional weapons and explosives, terrorist groups are expected to strive for the most destructive means available, including Weapons of Mass Destruction.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

Overview

The Concept identifies four different roles for military operations for Defence against Terrorism. In each of the four roles, Force Protection (FP) is an essential consideration. The 4 roles are:

- Anti Terrorism, essentially defensive measures.
- Consequence Management, which is dealing with, and reducing, the effects of a terrorist attack once it has taken place.
- Counter Terrorism, primarily offensive measures.
- Military Co-operation.

Force Protection

Force Protection must be a fundamental part of any military plan aimed at defending against terrorism. As total Force Protection is probably unachievable and unaffordable, even in the most benign of environments, Military Commanders must balance the risk to their forces against their mission objectives and decide on the appropriate level of force protection to employ. Their decisions will be influenced by up to date threat assessments.

Anti Terrorism

Anti-Terrorism is the use of defensive measures to reduce the vulnerability of forces, individuals and property to terrorism. Although nations have the primary responsibility for the defence of their populations and infrastructures, there is a role for the Alliance if a nation requests support. Timely and accurate intelligence is an essential requirement in successful deterring and protecting against terrorist attacks. Allied Anti Terrorist actions could include:

- Sharing of intelligence.
- NATO-wide standardised threat warning conditions and defensive procedures
- Assistance in air and maritime protection.
- Assistance to a nation wishing to withdraw its citizens or forces from an area of increased terrorist threat.

Consequence Management

Consequence Management is the use of reactive measures to mitigate the destructive effects of terrorism and is the responsibility of national civil authorities, but the Alliance could provide a wide range of military support, such as:

- Robust planning and force generation processes to rapidly identify and deploy the necessary specialist assistance. This could include, for example, the immediate assistance to civil authorities in the areas of: Chemical Biological, Radiological and Nuclear defence; engineering; and management of Displaced Persons.
- The creation of an Alliance Registry of capabilities which are available at short notice to support national efforts.
- The establishment of a training and exercise co-ordination capability for development of multi-national response capabilities.
- The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Relief Co-ordination Cell could provide the necessary nucleus to enhance co-ordination between NATO and affected nations.

Counter Terrorism - General

Counter terrorism is offensive military action designed to reduce terrorists' capabilities. Allied nations agree that terrorists should not be allowed to base, train, plan, stage and execute terrorist actions and that the threat may be severe enough to justify acting against these terrorists and those who harbour them, as and where required, as decided by the North Atlantic Council. Counter terrorist operations will be mainly joint operations and some units specifically trained in Counter Terrorist operations might be extremely effective. Furthermore, winning the trust of the local population through Psychological Operations and Information Operations is vital. The Concept addresses two broad roles for NATO's involvement in Counter Terrorist operations:

- NATO in the lead.
- NATO in support.

Counter Terrorism - NATO in the lead

The Concept states that in order to carry out successful Counter Terrorism operations, NATO must have adequate Command and Control and intelligence structures, as well as forces trained, exercised and maintained at the appropriate readiness levels. While the capabilities needed to successfully execute Counter Terrorist operations are largely a subset of those needed to carry out more traditional joint operations, the manner in which the conflict will be fought will be different. Therefore the following planning aspects need special attention:

- Procedures and capabilities that support accelerated decision cycles, in order to be successful in detecting and attacking time sensitive targets in the Counter Terrorist environment.
- Access to flexible and capable Joint-Fires, ranging from precision-guided stand-off weapons to direct conventional fires.
- The need for more specialised anti-terrorist forces.

Counter Terrorism - NATO in support

The North Atlantic Council has decided that, on a case-by-case basis, the Alliance might agree to provide its assets and capabilities to support operations in defence against terrorism, undertaken by or in co-operation with the European Union or other International Organisations or coalitions involving Allies. Possible support for the European Union or other International Organisations will be based on relevant arrangements agreed between NATO and the organisation concerned. In this context, NATO's support options could include the following:

- A role as coalition enabler and interoperability provider.
- The ability to back-fill national requirements. An example of this was when NATO deployed to the United States in order to free US Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) to deploy to Afghanistan.

- Forward deploying of forces in support of the broader coalition efforts. An example of this was the deployment of NATO maritime forces to the eastern Mediterranean.
- The expression of political and military commitment.
- Practical support as manifested by Host Nation Support and logistic assistance, including over flight and basing rights.
- The use of NATO's operational planning and force generation capabilities to plan a mission and generate a force for a coalition of like-minded NATO members, and also help to support and sustain that operation.

Military Co-operation

There have been many discussions, in many organisations, about options to counter the threat posed by terrorism. A common theme in these discussions has been that military action alone will not be enough to deal with the terrorist threat and that military operations should be coordinated and implemented in a coherent manner with diplomatic, economic, social, legal and information initiatives.

Within most NATO nations, civil authorities, such as the police, customs and immigration authorities, finance ministries, interior ministries, intelligence and security services, are the primary agencies involved in dealing with terrorism and military forces will need to operate in support of, and in close coordination with all these agencies. The Concept therefore states that NATO must harmonise its procedures and efforts with civil authorities within nations in order to maximise its effectiveness against terrorism.

NATO regularly confers with the major international organisations such as the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Union. In addition, NATO has several programmes that can facilitate co-ordination outside the Alliance. These include the Partnership for Peace, the NATO/Russia Council, the NATO/Ukraine Commission and the Mediterranean Dialogue.

The Concept notes that the trust, transparency and interaction already developed through these relationships serve as an excellent vehicle for the further co-ordination of measures to combat terrorism and recommends that they should be further explored.

REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPT EFFECTIVELY

Capabilities

The Concept identifies a number of essential capabilities that will be required to successfully implement it. These capabilities are:

- Effective Intelligence.
- Deployability and Readiness. Once it is known where the terrorists are or what they are about to do, military forces need the capability to deploy there. Due to the likelihood that warnings will be received only at very short notice, forces need to be at a high state of readiness.
- Effective Engagement. Forces need to be able to engage effectively. This means precision-guided weapons and weapons able to reduce the risk of collateral damage.
- Force Protection. There is a constant requirement for Force Protection to ensure Alliance forces' survivability.
- CBRN Defence. Given the possible terrorist use of CBRN weapons, CBRN defence equipment needs to be given a high priority.

Procedures

In addition to the capabilities described above, the Concept identifies certain procedures that need to be developed or enhanced. These include:

- Identifying Alliance vulnerabilities and how to protect them appropriately.
- Developing an overarching international strategy for defence against terrorism.
- Developing appropriate arrangements for providing support to the relevant civil authorities.
- Reducing the availability of weapons of mass destruction, and small arms and mines, for terrorist use, including through Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation procedures.
- Making Alliance decision making as effective and timely as possible in order that, given the very short warnings that are likely for terrorist activity and intentions, Alliance forces can be deployed and employed appropriately.

CONCLUSIONS

The principal conclusions of the Concept are:

- NATO and its member nations face a real threat from terrorism and countering this threat will, in most circumstances, be time critical.
- Nations have the primary responsibility for defence of their populations and infrastructures; therefore NATO should be prepared to augment nations' efforts.
- There are 4 roles for NATO's military operations for defence against terrorism. These roles are Anti-Terrorism; Consequence Management; Counter-Terrorism; and Military Cooperation. NATO's Counter Terrorism operations could be either with NATO in the lead, or with NATO in support. Force Protection needs to be considered in all military operations to defend against terrorism.
- The Alliance needs to be prepared to conduct military operations to engage terrorist groups and their capabilities, as and where required, as decided by the North Atlantic Council.

Annex A - Definitions