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Leadership in International Organisations

The Case of NATO

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Foreword

International organisations are a crucial part of our daily lives although we often do not even realise it. They are essential in ensuring that our mail is delivered across the globe, trade runs smoothly, citizens can fly safely, international crime is tackled across borders, international health and safety standards are applied and so on. What we need as citizens are organisations that are well run, accountable, and with good governance. This requires leaders that understand their role and the aims of the organisation they serve, master a variety of leadership competencies, and know how to operate effectively in a unique cultural and organisational context. It is a challenging environment in which to work and few – if any – receive adequate training to succeed. The result is that it often takes months for newly appointed leaders to find their way within their organisation and to master the skills they need to succeed.

At the Centre of Army Leadership, we have discussed how to support British Army leaders when they are posted to international organisations. Not surprisingly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and its subcommands are particularly relevant for us as many Army leaders are posted there every year. The training at the Defence Academy and in other international centres like the NATO Defence College in Rome or the NATO School Oberammergau already offer excellent training and resources. However, we often receive requests about the lived experience at the headquarters and subcommands and how to prepare to achieve the best outcome and perform at optimal capacity. This is of course a complex issue that cannot be solved in a short publication. However, we hope that this *CAL Research Paper* will be helpful in drawing out some important points to allow readers to plan and prepare for their new post.

Dr Jamie Shea, CAL Honorary Fellow, has a wealth of experience and advice to offer. He spent his entire professional life at the NATO HQ in Brussels. He started off as a minute writer and rose to the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges. Recently retired, Shea has had the opportunity to reflect on his own experience and to write down for us his personal advice to British Army leaders posted to NATO.

Shea's views are from a civilian perspective and are informed by his own roles and experience. Not everything is applicable to or relevant for military leaders. However, any Army leader will find here several points of reflection, helpful advice, and useful insights into how the organisation works, how to prepare, what to look out for and how to thrive.

Dr Linda Risso
Senior Researcher

THE CENTRE FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP

Leadership in International Organisations

The case of NATO

Dr Jamie Shea
Centre for Army Leadership – Honorary Fellow

International organisations are complex institutions, with multiple functions and layers of authority. Leadership is exercised at all levels.[1] The purpose of this paper is to offer my personal view and advice as an international civil servant about how to engage with the challenge of taking up a role in an international organisation and how to be an effective leader from day one. I spent my entire career at the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) HQ in Brussels as a member of the International Staff working alongside diplomats, military personnel, and contractors. Over the years I have developed in-depth knowledge of the inner workings of the alliance and its organisational culture, and I hope my views will be of interest to British military personnel and civil servants posted to one of the NATO HQs and subcommands.

Overview

NATO is an inter-governmental organisation of 31 member states (with Sweden due to become the 32nd member shortly). Its Permanent Secretariat does not have the supranational status of the European Commission, which is able to issue directives and to be in the driving seat pushing policy forward. The stakeholders of the alliance are the member states. The Secretary General is the public face of the organisation and dominates all the media interviews, speeches, and public communications. Few – if any – other senior NATO officials are known outside NATO Headquarters and the Brussels diplomatic bubble. The alliance also holds more frequent summit meetings (one a year during the current cycle) and regular meetings of foreign and defence ministers every year but again, few – other than experts – know about their existence or follow their work.[2]

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[1] Billerbeck, Sarah von. "Talk from the Top: Leadership and Self-Legitimation in International Organizations". *International Studies Review*. 24/3 (Sep 2022), pp. 1-26. Heizel, Mirko. "Mediating power? Delegation, pooling and leadership selection at international organisations". *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*. 24/1 (Feb 2022), pp. 153-170. Adler, Nancy J. "Shaping History: Global Leadership in the Twenty-First Century" in Burke, Ronald J. and Cooper, Cary L. (eds.), *Leading in Turbulent Times: Managing in the New World of Work*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003, pp. 302-318.

[2] Parizek, Michal. "Worldwide Media Visibility of NATO, the European Union, and the United Nations in Connection to the Russia-Ukraine War." *Czech Journal of International Relations,* vol 58, n. 1(2023), pp. 15–44.

At first glance, the role of the NATO Secretariat is to operate the machinery that brings the allies together for consultations and then to oversee the implementation of those decisions, reporting the results along the way. Even the Secretary General is constrained in their ability to lead. More 'secretary than general', some might say. They reflect the consensus among the allies and explain and justify NATO policies which are set by the member states, not their own staff. Given the recurring differences – and even occasional disputes – among a membership of 31 states whose interests and preferences do not always coincide, the Secretary General and their staff need to spend a great deal of their time troubleshooting and working quietly behind the scenes to keep the family together. Consolidation can often take time and effort away from new plans and initiatives to take an organisation like NATO forward.[3]

However, is this common view of top-down leadership and a largely subordinate staff at NATO headquarters waiting for the allies to come together and act, the right one? Can effective, purposeful leadership be exercised at other levels? Is there room for a bottom-up approach to complement the top-down one? To answer these questions, we need to define the core outputs of the NATO HQ and then examine the diplomatic and bureaucratic processes through which those outputs are delivered. This will enable us to identify the role and added value of the International Staff and International Military Staff by tracking how they interact with the member states and improve the quality of both political decision-making and the follow-up implementation. Of course, process must be linked to relevance and in particular to the specific challenges and tasks that the alliance is facing.

A frequent issue in international organisations is legacy programmes, which means that a large portion of personnel and resources are devoted to long-term activities that are often losing importance. It often proves difficult to shift people and resources to the new, growth areas with the result that the organisation loses traction and viable responses to the new challenges are slowed down, which inevitably leads to frustration.[4] For instance, when in 2010 the Group of Experts chaired by former US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, proposed that Partnerships with non-NATO countries should become a third core task of the alliance, it found that less than 2% of the alliance's civil and military budgets were being spent on carrying out Partnership activities. On the other hand, the NATO Security Investment Programme was spending over 20% of its budget on old

[3] Hendrickson, Ryan C. *Diplomacy at NATO: The Secretary General and Military Action After the Cold War.* Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 2006. Risso, Linda. "Leadership styles: A comparative study of Secretaries General Ismay, Spaak and Wörner", in Gram-Skjoldager, Karen et al. (eds.*) Organizing the World: International Organization and the Emergence of International Public Administration, 1920-1960s*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020.

[4] Palmer, Diego A. Ruiz. "A Strategic Odyssey: Constancy of Purpose and Strategy-Making in NATO, 1949-2019." *NATO Defense College*, June 2019. Link Fiott, Daniel. "Defence Industry, Industrial Cooperation and Military Mobility." *NATO and the EU: The Essential Partners*, edited by Gustav Lindstrom and Thierry Tardy, NATO Defense College, 2019, pp. 55–64. Link

infrastructure projects, initiated decades earlier, for which there was no longer a military requirement.[5]

A consensus-based organisation such as NATO where the Secretary General has the power to shift up to 10% of the civilian budget and personnel in any given year without seeking the approval of the member states, makes this a particularly difficult undertaking. Hence, the notion of effective management cannot be related only to the smooth operation of processes, for instance that meetings are organised and take place or that the Secretary General or a NATO team visits a certain country for consultations. It becomes too easy for any bureaucracy to judge success and effectiveness by ticking the boxes of activities having been conducted. The yardstick is not what the staffs are accomplishing but what they ought to be doing. Only by shifting the focus can the role of leadership in all its diverse forms (inspirational, networking, intellectual, negotiating, organisational) be seen and assessed more clearly.[6]

This leads us to consider the core tasks or delivery areas of NATO today. There are essentially five areas.

- Strategic Forecasting and Horizon Scanning. The production of information, intelligence and knowledge that can improve threat assessments within NATO and the overall quality of decision-making.
- Defence Planning and Capability Development to maximise the delivery of national forces and equipment to the alliance for its missions and deterrence functions, as well as to fill capability gaps and meet minimum military requirements.
- The conduct of agreed NATO operations and programmes to achieve mission goals and objectives. This also includes the management of partnerships with other organisations, countries, industry, and Non-Governmental Organisations to acquire vital external capabilities and services as well as greater legitimacy for NATO's activities.
- Political Consultation among allies at all levels and in all key policy areas build consensus and facilitate timely and effective decision-making processes.
- Public Diplomacy to build trust and confidence among parliaments and public opinion in the member states, key NATO partner nations and beyond to maintain support for the alliance and to facilitate engagement in its activities.

Each of these core tasks and delivery areas determine a unique context in which leadership is defined and delivered.

Strategic Forecasting and Horizon Scanning

According to Napoleon, it was forgivable to lose a battle but not to be taken by surprise. Knowledge and accurate information are the first line of defence. This is

[5] NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement. 17 May 20. Link.

[6] World Economic Forum, *Effective Leadership in International Organizations*, Cologny: WEF, April 2015. Link. Thorn, I. Marlene, "Leadership in International Organizations: Global Leadership Competencies", *The Psychologist-Manager Journal,* vol. 15, n. 3, 2012, pp. 158-163.

even more important at a time when NATO is dealing with the challenge of China as well as Russia while aspiring to take a 360-degree approach to other threats, such as terrorism and pandemics. In the context of NATO, the more compelling the intelligence picture is, the easier it is to make decisions and the harder it is for individual allies to hold things up by citing ambiguity and uncertainty.

During the Cold War, NATO was largely reactive. This is a natural stance for a security organisation as it is easier to respond to something that has actually happened than to initiate activities about something that may or may not happen. Shock and outrage are good ingredients of political consensus, as became clear after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. It was at this point that the North Atlantic Council (NAC) invoked NATO's Article 5 collective defence clause for the first time.[7] NATO's primary defence function has always been deterrence, which implies anticipation and the ability to act before the worst has happened to prevent it. Actions need to be based on intelligence and foresight analysis to provide enough reliable elements to allow sound decision making. The less intelligence you have, the more important it is that each element be accurate and reliable. Knowledge needs to come in two forms: strategic foresight to allow early warning of threats and potential crisis; and actionable operational intelligence to help with immediate crisis management and to match the responses to the gravity and speed of evolution of the situation.[8]

These two areas have been problematic in NATO in the past. For much of its existence, NATO Headquarters only had access to military intelligence only in terms of what allies were willing to share. NATO officials could not commission or call up intelligence from the member state services and what did arrive was often ad hoc, not always geared to the alliance's priorities, and frequently too out of date or too general to be useful for NATO planners. A breakthrough occurred after Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014 using covert, hybrid warfare tactics that took the allies by surprise. The nations decided to give NATO HQ access to their civilian intelligence agencies, an unprecedented move because many of the new threats that NATO staff were tracking – such as cyber intrusions or disinformation campaigns – were originating in the civilian space and were conducted by proxies rather than by state actors. In the aftermath of the invasion of Crimea, it was agreed that the NATO staff could request intelligence support and communicate its priorities to a Civilian Intelligence Committee alongside the long-standing Military Intelligence Committee.[9]

In this context, leadership at the staff level often consists of mapping out a challenge or formulating a requirement while waiting for a crisis or incident to occur

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[7] Statement by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, 2 Oct 01, Link

[8] Mandel, David R. and Barnes, Alan. "Geopolitical Forecasting Skill in Strategic Intelligence," *Journal of behavioural decision making*, vol 31, n. 1, Jan 18, pp. 127-137. Barnea, Avner. "Strategic intelligence: A concentrated and diffused intelligence model." *Intelligence and National Security,* vol.35 n. 5, 2020, pp. 701-716.

[9] Dylan, Huw and Maguire, Thomas J. "Secret Intelligence and Public Diplomacy in the Ukraine War" *Survival,* vol. 64, n. 4, 2022, pp. 33-74.

which will induce nations to respond. For example, the staff inserted a reference to the need for the alliance to focus on the threat of international terrorism in nearly every ministerial communique from the late 1980s onwards. It was after the 9/11 attacks that NATO first created a Defence Against Terrorism Programme of Work in its Defence Investment Division to share counter-terrorism capabilities and expertise such as in biometrics and counter explosives technologies within the alliance and fund trials and demonstrations.[10] It was only in July 2023, as the result of an agreement between the NATO Secretary General and Türkiye at the Vilnius Summit, that the alliance agreed to establish the post of Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, a post that has existed in the European Union (EU) for two decades.[11] 'Better late than never' is a mantra of every NATO staffer.

Cyber attacks on NATO's public facing IT systems operated by its Public Diplomacy Division during the Kosovo air campaign (March-June 1999) were a powerful incentive to set up a NATO Cyber Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) at Allied Command Operations in 2009 and to define a methodology to assess the vulnerability of those networks and their dependencies on national IT systems.[12] In 2016, at the instigation of the United States, a new Joint Intelligence and Security (JIS) Division was established at NATO Headquarters with the first full time international intelligence staff. The willingness of the United States to put many of

[10] NATO Topic: Countering Terrorism. Link.
[11] Vilnius Summit Communiqué. Issued by NATO Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Vilnius 11 July 2023. Link.
[12] NATO Cyber Security Centre. Link.

its own intelligence officers and resources into this new Division was undoubtedly a prerequisite for its effectiveness. [13]

The launch of the JIS Division demonstrates that the NATO staff can rarely exercise leadership by themselves. In nearly all cases they need to persuade first and foremost an important ally or coalition of allies to back their cause, and lobby other allies in the NATO committees to bring a project over the line. This requires focus, patience and stamina. The JIS Division has certainly had a major impact. Its Fusion Cell allows the NATO staff to produce an aggregate and comprehensive picture of a situation whereas before an ally offering a single source of intelligence could exploit that to impose its own view with little questioning or second guessing by the other allies. Today, nearly every key meeting of the North Atlantic Council begins with a comprehensive intelligence update to set the context and to link it to immediate security interests of the alliance to convey a sense of urgency. These intelligence briefings help the Secretary General and their staff to focus the allies on the core areas where guidance and decisions are needed.

A good example of this approach was when the UK came to the North Atlantic Council after the incident in Salisbury in 2018. Operatives of Russia's GRU – the foreign military intelligence agency – used the Novichok nerve agent against a Russian spy who had defected to the UK. To ensure a collective decision and action by NATO, the UK put a great deal of intelligence on the table revealing some sources and methodologies that in the past it probably would have restricted to the Five Eyes community. Based on this comprehensive overview, the alliance responded by agreeing on a joint expulsion of Russian diplomats.[14] In many respects this was a ground-breaking decision as it meant that the alliance was developing a collective notion of solidarity and willingness to take common action in responding to threats or attacks only affecting one ally but not the others.[15]

This new approach to intelligence sharing to sustain the alliance's response is a relatively new development. When Estonia was briefly paralysed by a cyber attack attributed to Russia in 2007 or Spain experienced a major terror attack in 2005, the alliance took no common action, nor did the afflicted ally request or expect it. By contrast, the alliance invoked its Article 5 collective defence clause for the first time on 12 September 2001 precisely because at that time the citizens of many allied countries had been killed in the World Trade Center and allies felt acutely that the

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[13] NATO Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. Link. Ballast, Ian. "Trust (in) NATO: The future of intelligence sharing within the Alliance," Research Paper 140. Sept 2017. Rome: NATO Defence College. Ballast, Ian. "Merging Pillars, Changing Cultures: NATO and the Future of Intelligence Cooperation Within the Alliance", *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence,* vol.31, n. 4 (2018), pp. 720-744.

[14] Reuters, NATO expels seven Russian diplomats, limits size of mission, 27 March 2018. Link.

[15] Walsh, James Igoe, *The International Politics of Intelligence Sharing.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Maras, Marie-Helen, "Overcoming the intelligence-sharing paradox: Improving information sharing through change in organizational culture", *Comparative Strategy,* vol 36, n. 3, 2017, pp. 187-197. Seagle, Adriana N., "Intelligence Sharing Practices Within NATO: An English School Perspective" *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, vol 28, no. 3, 2015, pp. 557-577.

terrorist attacks were as much against their values and security as against the United States itself. A NATO response was a way of building future deterrence against similar attacks elsewhere.

Thus, the 2018 decision that followed the Salisbury attack demonstrated that a clear Article 5 case was no longer the indispensable trigger for common NATO action. Smaller, more hybrid incidents or attacks could also elicit a collective NATO response if they were part of a general threat affecting all allies as is certainly the case with cyberattacks, terrorism, disinformation, or sabotage operations as well as natural disasters related or not to climate change.[16]

Multinational diplomacy is often about trade-offs and compromises and the willingness occasionally to take calculated risks. This can be a tricky line to tread for leaders. The misuse of intelligence during the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, for example, created a suspicion of intelligence manipulation among allies, a damage which the US and UK have had to repair ever since by putting significantly more intelligence on the table. Salisbury as well as the calling out of Russia before its invasion of Ukraine are examples of the British and American attempt to regain the allies' trust.

Intelligence is an area where the NATO staff will continue to be dependent on the resources of the nations. Strategic forecasting and horizon scanning are different. Today the NATO Headquarters has its own in-house resources to do the job. Forecasting can be done with open-source intelligence as well as through collaboration with academic and think tank experts. It requires subject matter knowledge and in-depth research. However, as it concerns future scenarios rather than immediate action, there is normally plenty of time to do this. Forecasting is about identifying evolving situations that could impact on the alliance's security, either directly or indirectly. Scenarios can help to narrow the range of probable outcomes and to identify the drivers that will influence those scenarios. This makes it easier for strategic forecast analysts to propose courses of action to policymakers, either to pre-empt a likely situation or to prepare NATO to absorb its impact.[17]

The difficulty in exercising leadership in the field of forecasting, however, is to convince NATO's senior leaders and the ambassadors in the North Atlantic Council to take it seriously. They are often fully engaged in the crisis of the day. There is a real and strong temptation to adopt a wait-and-see approach about everything else. In addition, there is the concern that if NATO is seen publicly to be addressing an issue, there will be an expectation that it will act, and mounting pressure on it to do so. Conversely there is also the concern that if the alliance is seen to be showing an interest in a region or issue before it has fully elaborated its policy or decided what

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[16] The most notable example of this concerted approach is the Cyber Defence Pledge. 8 Jul 16. Link.

[17] The NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) produces periodic Strategic Foresight Analysis Reports on political, social, technological, economic, and environmental trends. The latest available report was released in October 2017 and built upon the Strategic Foresight Analysis 2013 and 2015 Update Reports. Allied Command Transformations, *Strategic Foresight Analysis. 2017 Report.* 2017. Link. A new Strategic Foresight cycle was initiated in 2022 and its work is currently ongoing.

it wants or needs to do, it can provoke a negative reaction either from its own domestic public opinion or from a foreign power.

A good example of this risk occurred just before NATO's Vilnius Summit last July. Discussions within the organisation to set up a liaison office in Tokyo to help implement its new Individual Tailored Partnership Programmes with its four Asia-Pacific Partners (Japan, New Zealand, Australia and South Korea) leaked to the press. China reacted vociferously and negatively and claimed that this liaison office was the thin edge of the wedge in terms of NATO trying to expand its geo-political influence in the Asia-Pacific.[18] France picked up on this response and opposed the creation of the office, arguing that NATO is a regional organisation and should keep its focus on European security. Its role was not to become a 'North Pacific Alliance'.[19]

Although forecasting and horizon scanning seem like good things to do in theory, making them work in practice is much more problematic. In 2010 the NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, set up a Strategic Analysis Capability (SAC) in the newly created Emerging Security Challenges Division. It produced many excellent forecasting analyses, but the Secretary General's Private Office was often unsure what to do with them, worrying that if it distributed the forecasts to the allied delegations, it would be seen to be provoking a debate on an issue with which they might not want to engage at this stage. As a result, many of the papers sat on the Secretary General's desk unread or at least un-responded to. A better approach would have been to use a chosen forum on a regular basis to discuss the forecasts informally and gauge the willingness of the allies to take an issue further (for instance the gathering of intelligence or military contingency planning). The obvious place to do this was at the ambassadors weekly private lunches every Tuesday. When this was tried on a couple of occasions, the results were promising. Yet this was the exception rather than the rule.

The Secretary General and the SAC needed to be clearer with each other about what themes and topics they wanted to address, and which ones were essentially chosen for the Secretary General's personal awareness and which ones were intended to be taken up with the allies. Papers initially intended for the Secretary General alone in the first instance could obviously be tweaked later for informal debate at the Permanent Representatives' (PermReps) lunch. This however never happened and the SAC inevitably became demotivated. The International Staff was spending a great deal of time and effort producing good material that the senior leaders were unwilling or unable to use. The SAC initiative needed to be better socialised with allies from the outset and presented as an initiative by the Secretary General to demonstrate his autonomy. Then the nations would have better understood the SAC's *raison d'être* and how it could help them to conduct more informal strategic discussions. The Secretary General could have encouraged allies to contribute or share their own national policy papers or intelligence assessments

[18] Reuters. "NATO to set up liaison office in Tokyo, beef up regional ties, Nikkei reports." 13 Jun 23. Link.
[19] Reuters." NATO leaders send mixed messages in Japan office controversy." 12 Jul 23. Link.

with a view to providing complementary elements to the discussion and to demonstrate that the SAC had no exclusive role in this domain. These steps would have helped to give the SAC a more secure foothold in the organisation. Ambiguity between leadership and staff rarely produces good work and an opportunity was lost.

Linking the work of the International Staff to the priorities and concerns of the senior leadership is an issue in any organisation, particularly international ones. To enhance the interaction, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer – Rasmussen's predecessor – had created an HQ Policy Board. The idea was for him to meet monthly with his senior leadership team (the Assistant Secretary Generals and heads of the independent offices) to solicit their thinking and advice on key alliance challenges. As the Secretary General defined the topic, a division or office within the staff was designated to take the lead and produce a framing discussion paper. The value of these meetings was that all participants could speak freely and confidentially. The Secretary General could hear the various views and decide which course of action he wished to follow. Rasmussen was good at summing up and making clear which follow up actions he was tasking and who was accountable to deliver them, and by when. The staff were motivated by the opportunity to speak truth to power (at least once a month). The Chairman of the Military Committee participated in the Policy Board meetings which provided a useful military perspective and a link to the work of the International Military Staff. Normally in a hierarchical and rigidly structured organisation like NATO, the civilian and military parts of the House could only communicate with each other formally, on the basis of specific decisions (as in NAC's requests to the military authorities for specific advice or inputs) and in full respect of the chain of command. Hence, the Policy Board was a valuable mechanism for the NATO civilian leaders to test ideas on the military side of the House at an early stage and in a confidential and informal setting.

Like any other leader, NATO Secretary Generals have different personalities and leadership styles. Since the end of the Cold War, they each served an average term of four years. As a result, new initiatives and processes are often discontinued when a new leader comes in and before they can achieve cruising speed and demonstrate

their real value over time. Succeeding Rasmussen, Jens Stoltenberg preferred a one-on-one approach and working with his immediate advisors in his Private Office. His small Policy Planning Unit worked increasingly for him and to serve his priorities than to support the HQ more generally. The Assistant Secretary Generals were seen more as division managers than as political and strategic advisers despite being senior officials in their national administrations in many cases. In terms of producing a common strategic awareness and making best use of all the knowledge and ideas embedded in the staff, a leadership opportunity was perhaps lost. This said, now that the alliance is confronting some extremely complex intellectual questions such as its future relationship with Russia, how to engage China, and to mitigate the security aspects linked to climate change. Harnessing all the brain power within the HQ in a more structured way is going to be more productive in the long run than working in small, restrictive groups or relying on only a small team of trusted advisers. Yet, given the pace and complexity of change in international affairs, the appetite for strategic forecasting at NATO may (and should) prevail at NATO HQ.[20]

Defence Planning and Capability Development

NATO has few forces of its own, the exception being 18 commonly funded AWACS aircraft. A core task of NATO Headquarters is to persuade the allies to devote as many of their national forces and capabilities as NATO needs for its missions, whether collective defence or non-Article 5 out of area operations. The Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) defines the minimum military requirements and identifies the critical shortfalls which expose the allies to risk and could jeopardise mission success. The NATO International and Military Staffs then work together on a defence planning process which all allies participate in. The defence planning process runs on a two-year rolling cycle so that the force goals and capability targets accepted by the allies can be continually assessed and reset. The staff present each ally with a 'reasonable challenge' based on what NATO defence planners calculate that ally can afford to deliver to the NATO force posture in terms of extra units, higher readiness levels or equipment upgrades. The progress of that ally in meeting that commitment – which is politically and not legally binding – is monitored in annual visits to the capital by the NATO staff and the holding of 'trilaterals' at NATO headquarters with the individual ally, the other 30 allies and the NATO experts. At these meetings the ally under scrutiny presents its defence and procurement plans and budgets to the Defence Review Committee and submits to the peer pressure of the other allies.[21]

This process uses transparency in the form of 'naming and shaming' of the defence spending and investment performance of individual allies as a lever to push

[20] Risso Linda. *NATO at 70: A historiographical approach*. London: Routledge, 2014. Hendrickson, *Diplomacy at NATO*. Risso "Leadership styles".

[21] Risso, Linda. "Vigilance is the Price of Liberty: The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe Marks its 70th Anniversary". *RUSI Journal*, Vol 166, n. 1 (2021), pp. 48-58.

them to meet their force goals. For instance, the International Staff puts detailed tables into the Secretary General's Annual Report, which is published at the end of January.[22] The calculations of individual national performance are based on agreed NATO definitions and data which makes it difficult for allies to claim that they are meeting the NATO defence spending target of a minimum of 2% of GDP (this new permanent benchmark was agreed at the Vilnius Summit in July 2023) by putting extraneous spending into the defence budget (for instance the cost of intelligence services or pensions for veterans or the widows of soldiers). NATO cannot stop its members from adding these things but by providing the details of what goes into each nation's budget, the interested observer has a better idea of what contributes directly to deterrence and NATO tasks and what does not. The risk here is that the rigorous NATO criteria for measuring 2% of GDP means that few allies meet the defence spending pledge target (only 11 out of 31 in 2023 thus far according to NATO statistics) which can re-ignite long-standing debates over burden sharing and the Europeans' commitment to their own defence.[23]

The Vilnius Summit has produced another breakthrough by adopting Regional Defence Plans for NATO territory covering three strategic areas in northern, central and southern Europe.[24] For the first time since the end of the Cold War these defence plans, drawn up by the respective Joint Force Command HQs and signed off by SACEUR, General Christopher G. Cavoli, give each ally a number of assigned military tasks as part of collective defence. These are defined as specific units that need to deploy to specific locations in a set time frame with forces and equipment able to sustain high intensity combat. Henceforth, national defence and capabilities planning must be geared to generating the forces that SACEUR has requested. NATO exercises will be devoted to testing the implementation of various regional or capability aspects of SACEUR's strategic plan. A good example of this is the Air Defender exercise, organised by the German Luftwaffe in June 2022. It was NATO's first Europe-wide air defence exercise since the end of the Cold War and brought together 250 aircraft from 11 allied nations (a quarter coming from the United States).[25]

The defence planning process faces several dilemmas. If it is short term, allies will have already signed their contracts for their national requirements and can no longer adjust these for NATO. It will be difficult for the staff to persuade certain allies to forgo a given project (such as diesel-powered submarines for the Arctic) in favour of something that is a NATO priority (like an additional armoured brigade to be sent

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[22] At the time of writing the latest available report is the 2022 Report. Reports are usually published in March and cover the previous year. A copy can be downloaded from the NATO. For the latest publication, see *Secretary General's Annual Report 2022*. Link.

[23] Koivula, Tommi. "Carry that weight: Assessing continuity and change in NATO's burden-sharing disputes", *Defence & Security Analysis,* vol. 37, n. 2, 2021, pp. 145-163. Kunertova, Dominika. "One Measure cannot trump it all: Lessons from NATO early burden-sharing debates", *European Security,* 26/4. 2017. Pp. 552-574.

[24] Vilnius Summit Communiqué. Issued by NATO Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Vilnius 11 July 2023. Link

[25] Air Defender 2023. Bundeswehr website. Link.

to the Baltic states). If the process is too long term, it may prove inflexible in adjusting to changing threats. This happened after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, when taking old equipment and ammunition out of storage (such as Leopard 2 tanks, Hawk air defence systems, and 155 mm ammunition) became a priority overnight. There is a generally accepted procedure whereby the allies entrust the International (Civilian and Military) Staff to set defence targets for them and assume that they will be treated fairly and objectively. Provided that the staffs continue to respect this ethos, their leadership role will not be contested.

Capability planning by contrast is less straightforward. Modern military capabilities are expensive. Few allies can afford the big enablers, such as strategic airlift, air and missile defence or in-flight refuelling aircraft all by themselves. There is a logic behind international cooperation to procure these systems. Yet getting agreement on cost shares, technology transfers and production shares is not easy given the industrial and financial interests involved. Allies might not be able to agree on the specifications of a system given their different operational requirements and they may have different timelines for when they need the new capability. At many stages, pre-feasibility and feasibility studies or Memorandum of Understanding, a multinational programme can unravel. Staff leadership here lies in creativity in spotting opportunities and trying to form ad hoc groups of allies (not excluding close partners) to carry the project forward.

There is plenty of scope for innovation here in what has become known as 'smart defence '. Equipment can be leased or procured on a time share or percentage availability basis. This is the case with three C17 transport aircraft that NATO operates from Papa airbase in Hungary. Countries not using their full-time allocations can sell them on to others. Another good example of innovation is the 5 Global Atomics observation drones that 13 allies have acquired, and which are based at Sigonella airbase in Sicily. This was a requirement that emerged from NATO's Libyan air campaign in 2011 when the alliance relied on US ground observation capabilities that could only be provided on an intermittent basis given US commitments elsewhere. Yet all allies pay for the ground terminals that receive the data from the drones and for the team of analysts at Sigonella. Thus, a whole systems approach which is flexible in allowing allies different forms of participation delivers a key capability that many of the smaller allies would not be able to afford and which gives NATO assured access to crucial ground observation round the clock. It is worth mentioning that multinational procurement is not a preserve of NATO. The European Union (EU) member states can use the European Defence Agency (which they are currently doing to bulk buy 155 mm ammunition for Ukraine) or smaller mechanisms such as OCCAR and regional cooperation groups (the Nordic countries are currently working on joint air defence).[26]

[26] The European Defence Agency promotes and facilitates integration between member states within the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Link. Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d'Armement / Organisation for Joint Armament Co-operation (OCCAR). Link. Reuters, Nordic Countries plan joint air defence to counter Russian Threat, 24 Mar 23. Link.

Leadership on capabilities is also the capacity to define certain areas where NATO can have an undisputed advantage given its larger membership and possession of a number of established agencies, handling assets like pipelines, air defence systems, IT and communications or procurement. One such advantage is in defining standards, particularly for interoperability whether of weapons components or communications. NATO standards today apply across the great majority of western countries whether they are NATO members or not. Another is in weapons and equipment maintenance and contracting for spare parts or training. Here the NATO Supply and Procurement Agency in Luxembourg is used by both NATO member states and partners to contract at the most competitive prices to support common platforms such as the F16 fighter jet. A Military Agency for Standardisation works on defining Standardisation Agreements (STANAGs) among allies. Good leadership is always easier if an organisation has developed over time the infrastructure of services and technical expertise that make it the go-to option for allies seeking help to manage both initial procurement and the life cycle costs of equipment.[27]

A related challenge is equitable and measurable burden sharing, and what to count or not to count in terms of what contributes to the alliance's security in the broad or narrow sense. In Wales in 2014 the allies committed to 2% of their GDP to defence by 2024. As mentioned above, currently only 11 out of 31 allies are meeting this target. However, more are meeting the secondary target to devote 20% of defence budgets to modernisation.[28] It is a delicate issue for NATO. Some allies, especially the United States and others spending 2%, will believe that this is a reasonable objective particularly in the light of a more assertive Russia and a deteriorating international security environment. If they can meet the goal, why not others? Yet other allies will assert that this is a crude target that does not take sufficient account

[27] NATO Supply and Procurement Agency (NSPA) Link. Weaver, John Michael. "NATO Support and Procurement Agency" in *NATO in Contemporary Times: Purpose, relevance and Future,* Palgrave, 2021, pp. 113-122. Gulyas, György and Pohl, Árpád, "The Role of the NATO Support and Procurement Agency in Support to Operations", *AARMS,* Vol. 19, No. 3 (2020) 37–51.
[28] NATO, Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries. PR/CP(2022)105. 27 Jun 22. Link.

of actual outputs nor of the contributions that they provide to NATO in terms of forces, bases, and capabilities for both Article 5 and non-Article 5 operations. Indeed, Germany at 1.4 % of GDP arguably contributes much more to NATO (and to assisting Ukraine) than Greece which has traditionally spent 2% and more on its military. So many allies would like these contributions to be factored into the assessment and the measurement criteria for alliance burden sharing to be broadened. Yet an expanded set of burden sharing criteria would not necessarily help the spending laggards. Poland aims to spend 4% of its GDP on defence in 2024 and has also played host to 1 million refugees from Ukraine. It would easily outrank its European allies when it comes to NATO-relevant burden sharing even if the criteria were much more broadly drawn and included solidarity actions such as accepting refugees, investing in resilience, hosting allied forces on their territories. However, the big spenders on defence in NATO tend to be the countries that do these other things as well, further undermining the case of those allies that see assistance programmes as a substitute for building military capability.[29]

Where allies have different views, the task of the NATO staffs is a delicate one. First how to measure 2% in the first place? Can defence spending include items such as army pensions or the budgets of gendarmerie forces or intelligence agencies? Second, should the criteria be broadened to include security more broadly such as contributions to UN peacekeeping missions or EU operations under the EU Common Security and Defence Policy? Germany has suggested a benchmark of 3% of GDP which would include foreign aid. Although only 11 allies are meeting the 2% target, the NATO Secretary General has pushed successfully for 2% to become the minimum (the floor) rather than the maximum (the ceiling), a decision adopted by the alliance summit in Vilnius in July. This is going to put a premium on the staff's negotiating skills to build bridges among the allies in the months going forward as there is no longer a concrete date (as with the 2024 deadline for meeting the previous 2% target from 2014). The 2% benchmark has certainly been a useful driver in making nearly all allies increase their defence spending, in some cases significantly. The Secretary General has reported an 8.5% increase across the board in 2022 alone, or US$ 450 billion in extra defence spending (excluding the US) over the 2014 baseline and forecast trends.[30]

Yet what is the best tactic to cajole allies towards the new, more ambitious target as well as to meet their existing 2% commitment? Naming and shaming in public, maximising allied peer pressure or more quietly nudging the foot dragging allies behind the scenes even if it means extending their deadlines beyond 2024? In this context, good leadership entails the ability to make shrewd tactical judgments and to navigate the domestic political scene within alliance member states carefully. Some allies are happy to be criticised in public by the Secretary General as a way to

[29] Bogers, Marion et al. "NATO Burden Sharing Research along Three Paradigms", *Defence and Peace Economics,* vol. 33, n. 5, 2022, pp. 534-547. McGerty, Fenella et al. "NATO burden-sharing: past, present and future", *Defence Studies,* vol 22, n. 3 (2022), pp. 533-540.
[30] *Secretary General's Annual Report 2022*. Link.

generate political pressure and relieve the burden on national defence ministers to argue their case in cabinet where it might prove unpopular. Canada, a notorious under-spender on defence at 1.4% of GDP once encouraged Secretary General, Lord Robertson, on a visit to Ottawa to do precisely this. Others are far more sensitive and prefer to hear the criticism in private.

Operations and Programme Management

As NATO returns to collective defence, operations outside the alliance's territory have become less important. The largest operation by far, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, terminated in 2014. The follow-on mission, Resolute Support, which trained the Afghan army, ended in chaotic circumstances with the withdrawal of the remaining NATO contingents from Kabul in August 2021. This has left NATO with three remaining non-Article 5 missions: the Kosovo Force (KFOR) force in Kosovo, a training mission in Iraq, and a maritime task force to monitor illegal migration in the eastern Mediterranean.

The years following the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991, when the alliance deployed its forces beyond its borders for the first time gave the NATO staff valuable experience in managing operations and adopting an integrated political-military approach.[31] The alliance also involved partner nations into these operations to the extent that some became major contributors (such as Georgia in Afghanistan or Sweden in Libya). NATO also established cooperation with other international organisations, especially the United Nations, the EU, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the World Bank to coordinate the military and civilian dimensions of stabilising and rebuilding places like Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. This is the new concept of 'comprehensive and cooperative security', which integrates three complementary dimensions: politico-military, economic and environmental, and the human component to ensure a holistic approach to crises for deep resolution and long-term stabilisation. The staffs set up regular meetings of the North Atlantic Council with these outside contributors to give them a seat at the table and the right to express their views and shape decisions even if NATO itself retained the final say.[32]

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[31] Hope, Ian. "The Western Balkans and the Revenge of History", Research Paper 142. Rome: NATO Defence College, Nov. 2017. Special Issue of *Comparative Strategy.* "Twenty years after Kosovo and Allied Forces: Controversies, Implications and Legacy", Vol 39, n. 5, 2019.

[32] The OSCE Concept of Comprehensive and Co-operative Security An Overview of Major Milestones. SEC.GAL/100/09, 17 June 2009. Link. Debuysere, Loes, "Crisis Responders: Comparing Policy Approaches of the EU, the UN, NATO and OSCE with Experiences in the Field", *European Foreign Affairs Review,* Vol 24,n. 3 (2019), pp.243-264. Jansen, Marenne and Kramer, Eric Hans, "The Future of the Comprehensive Approach as a Strategy for Intervention" in Kramer, Eric-Hans and Molendijk, Tine (eds), *Violence in Extreme Conditions: Ethical Challenges in Military Practice,* Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2023 (Open Access, Link), pp. 87-98. Wohlfeld, Monika and Tanne, Fred. "Comprehensive Security and New Challenges: Strengthening the OSCE", IAI Papers 21-23. Rome: Istituto Affari Internazionali, May 2021. Link. See also NATO's perspective at NATO Topic: A comprehensive approach to crises. Link.

The operations in the Western Balkans also enhanced interoperability between NATO and partner countries and supported the development of a common strategic outlook. This process of socialisation with partner nations has certainly helped to integrate Finland and Sweden rapidly into NATO's political and military structures once Helsinki and Stockholm decided to abandon non-alignment and apply for NATO membership. Yet in the case of Sweden the process is not yet fully complete as the Turkish and Hungarian parliaments have still not undertaken the ratification process. This has not however prevented Sweden from being integrated into the alliance in all but name.[33]

Through operations, NATO staff were able to forge a network of security relationships, both institutional and personal, which enabled a comprehensive approach. For instance, during the international missions to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden in 2011, the participating nations developed a SHADE (Shared Awareness and De-Confliction) mechanism to share information and intelligence and to coordinate and occasionally deconflict their activities. This took the form of daily online meetings on a virtual platform hosted by the International Maritime Organisation in London where the participants could consult and update each other. The mechanism also allowed for a direct contact with the shipping companies and insurers and to pinpoint areas of greatest risk. NATO was able to support the EU Atalanta mission (counter-piracy military operation at sea off the Horn of Africa and in the Western Indian Ocean) with satellite data while the EU's efforts to combat piracy on land through the freezing of financial assets or the training of a coastguard undoubtedly helped to make NATO's Ocean Shield maritime operation (Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea) more meaningful.[34]

Modern threats take the form of networks. They combine different factors to reach a critical mass of threat (terrorism or piracy are prime examples as they combine finance, weapons, recruiting and indoctrination with local economic factors). Networked threats clearly call for networked responses in which military means by themselves will be ineffective if not complementing civilian approaches. A good example of this is improvised explosives (IEDs) in Afghanistan in which civilian efforts to disrupt the jihadists supply networks proved as necessary (if not more so) as the military operations to find and destroy the IEDs in the ground. Yet, the age of interventions and operations is coming to an end as the evacuation of nationals from crisis zones replaces as a priority humanitarian intervention in the crisis zones themselves. In the future, a key challenge for the NATO staff will be to preserve and redirect the networks and trust relationships built up during the three decades of operations to be able to handle different types of threats.

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[33] NATO's partnership agreements include: the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and 'Partners across the globe'. NATO also cooperates with international organisations and primarily with the United Nations, the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Edström, Håkan et al. (eds), *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*. Basingstoke: Palgrave 2011.

[34] European Union Naval Force Operation ATALANTA. Link. NATO – Counter-Piracy Operations (2008-2016). Link.

Those threats are certainly taking more of an internal dimension as hybrid warfare activity by Russia and China or pandemics and climate change stresses and impacts have shown. Resilience has become the new buzzword on the Brussels scene and military forces have been constantly used to build emergency Covid-19 hospitals and vaccination centres, organise flood evacuations, fight forest fires, and intercept migrant boats in the Mediterranean or English Channel. The protection of critical infrastructure such as oil and gas pipelines against deliberate acts of sabotage, such as the destruction of the undersea Nordstream 2 gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea or the protection of undersea internet and telecommunications cables or satellite terminals and uplinks have now become a military responsibility. NATO and the EU have set up a joint task force to protect offshore oil rigs and underwater cables.[35] Cyber security is another area where networks of different actors are needed to identify the threats, provide early warning, and intervene rapidly to protect IT infrastructure and mitigate damage.[36]

No one organisation has all the answers and tools. It is essential to have reliable information and intelligence sharing networks to bring governmental agencies together with the private sector and civil society (like in the case of 'white hat' cyber *hacktivists*). This integrated approach is often crucial for effective self-defence. Both NATO and the EU have their own rapid response cyber teams and

[35] NATO - Topic: NATO and the EU set up taskforce on resilience and critical infrastructure. 11 Jan 23. Link. Brauss, Heinrich and Mölling, Heinrich. *NATO 2030 – The Military Dimension*. Policy Brief 7. Rome: NATO Defence College, December 2021.

[36] Jacobsen, Jeppe T., "Cyber offense in NATO: challenges and opportunities", *International Affairs*, vol 97, n. 3, May 2021, pp 703–720. Marrone Alessandro and Sabatino, Ester. "Cyber Defence in NATO Countries: Comparing Models". IAI Papers 21. Rome: Istituto Affari Internazionali, 5 Feb 21.

incident response centres (CERTS) as well as industry partnerships both for security as well as to keep abreast of the threat landscape and technological innovation.[37]

Cooperation with the EU based on comparative advantage is an obvious priority. NATO is strong on the threat intelligence side and the military use of cyberspace while the EU is strong on the industrial side and on industry regulation and standards. As of 2023, three Joint Declarations on EU-NATO cooperation have been concluded and should help to facilitate more regular dialogue and practical cooperation between the two institutions.[38] Cooperation with the OSCE which has worked on sets of confidence and security building measures in cyberspace is also useful to begin to define norms and a code of conduct in this area.[39] In dealing with universal threats such as cyber attacks, pandemics or climate change, working with like-minded partners brings much added value.

In this context, effective leadership is about building and sustaining networks based on communities of shared interests. Regular crisis management exercises can help to test procedures and identify gaps or overlaps and duplications. Yet, sustaining networks over time and between crises is not easy: personalities in key positions retire; building equally trusting relationships with their successors can take time; lessons learned from one crisis can be forgotten by the next; and a balance of incentives needs to be created so that both sides benefit over time from cooperating with the other and one-sided relationships are avoided. All this takes persistence and the ability to exploit opportunities for cooperation as they come along. It also requires a clear vision as to which capabilities in other organisations are most useful to NATO and how to access them.

Political Consultation

NATO Headquarters is at heart a political organisation. It has 250 committees under the North Atlantic Council and the Military Committee. Hundreds of meetings take place each week involving both the diplomats and military staff working in the Permanent Delegations, and usually assigned a specialist portfolio, and national officials coming in from capitals. This veritable diplomatic beehive helps to familiarise a maximum of national officials and military personnel with the workings and procedures of NATO, something that can come in handy in a crisis. It ensures also that all 31 allies can participate fully in the alliance's deliberations from beginning to end of a decision cycle. Close cooperation and continuous dialogue also establish formal and informal diplomatic channels to exchange views, share concerns and de-escalate potential tensions.[40]

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[37] Galinic, Darko, et al. "Cyber Rapid Response Team: An Option within Hybrid Threats." Conference Report. 2019 IEEE 15th International Scientific Conference on Informatics. Date of Conference: 20-22 November 2019, pp. 43-50. Link.

[38] NATO - Topic: Relations with the European Union. Link. The latest Declaration (10 Jan 23). Link.

[39] NATO – Topic: Relations with the OSCE. Link.

[40] Sayle, T.A (2019), *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

This said, geo-political factors are never far away and when the Quad of the big four allies (US, UK, France, and Germany) have reached agreement on a certain issue, the others tend to go along, willingly or otherwise. The danger here is that the rise of the authoritarians can happen inside the alliance as well as without. These leaders have not bent so easily or quickly to the consensus culture and have used the consensus rule to hold up decisions, as Recep Erdogan has done over Sweden's membership of NATO or Viktor Orban over meetings of the NATO-Ukraine Commission. At times, problems in the alliance mean that a lot of important NATO consultations do not take place in the committees but in the corridors or delegations' offices where small groups of allies can apply pressure discreetly or try to find acceptable compromises. The Secretary General is also on hand to use his own offices to mediate as he and his predecessors have done consistently in disputes between Greece and Türkiye in the eastern Mediterranean, for example.[41]

The leadership challenge in managing alliance consultations is to make the time allotted to them commensurate with the urgency of a given situation and the need for relevant and substantive decisions. Hundreds of hours of debating time in the North Atlantic Council are not productive if they lead to deadlock or the lowest common denominator decisions that often come too late to weigh on a situation. On the other hand, allies can sometimes be frustrated that NATO's political dialogue is often too narrowly focused on the alliance's immediate agenda while key strategic concerns are pushed to the side, like the rise of China, the instabilities in the Middle East and Africa, the balance between security in the Atlantic area and the Asia-Pacific. This tension is what led President Emmanuel Macron of France to declare

[41] Michel, Leo G. "NATO Decision-Making: The 'Consensus Rule' Endures Despite Challenges" in

provocatively in October 2019 that NATO was 'brain dead'.[42] What Macron said is that although NATO was working well as a military organisation, it was not functioning well politically, and it was not in a position to push the western democracies to face global challenges.

The issue is that there is ambiguity in NATO between its immediate task of military collective defence and its more exalted role as a forum of western democracies standing together against all kinds of challenges in and beyond Europe. The major allies have different expectations of what they expect from NATO consultations. This is where the role of the NATO Secretary General is perhaps at its most important and influential. They must decide what to put on the Council agenda; when to push for a decision or when to play for more time so that they can continue their private discussions with allies behind the scenes. The Secretary General must also decide on the best way of using informal discussions, such as at the PermReps Tuesday lunches to clear the air and identify possible pathways to formal consensus. As their authority and negotiating room for manoeuvre are not infinite, they must use them carefully.

This still leaves room for innovation in the way that NATO Headquarters organises its political consultations. The Covid-19 pandemic brought in the greater use of virtual meetings, especially ministerial meetings and even summits, at short notice. This modern communication technology did not need to await the pandemic before being exploited. The emerging security challenges also require a different cast of national government representatives to be of value. In discussing the challenges of hybrid warfare and resilience, NATO has held meetings of national security advisers who are often more on top of the domestic/international security interface than Foreign or Defence Ministers who for decades have monopolised NATO's links with its member state capitals. Political Directors have met in the NATO framework to discuss the Iranian nuclear programme. There have also been the occasional informal meetings of Foreign and Defence Ministers in the 'Gymnich' format (open discussion and a strategic reflection that facilitate working out a later compromise at higher level) familiar to the EU, as well as joint meetings between the North Atlantic Council and the NATO Military Committee and between the Council and the Political and Security Committee of the EU. All these formats offer interesting possibilities and deserve to be tested to see which provide particular added value in terms of allies' situational awareness and useful political guidance (or high-level endorsement) for NATO's actions. In this context, the Secretary General's leadership consists of being ready to experiment and persuade allies (if only in small groups at first) to try something new. As the challenges on NATO's agenda become more diverse, and as much civilian as military, NATO headquarters needs more presence and influence over the capitals to do its job. Cyber, terrorism or disinformation experts at NATO, for instance, do not come from Foreign and

[42] Reuters, NATO is experiencing 'brain death', France's Macron says, 7 Nov 19. Link

Defence Ministries alone but frequently also from intelligence agencies and Police or Interior Ministries, or as contractors from the private sector firms.

The NATO staffer has the added challenge of needing to be familiar with the organisation and working cultures of a much greater number of national government departments than was the case a few decades ago. They must develop and sustain contact with a much wider circle of experts. The challenge is to integrate all these many pieces of expertise into a single coherent policy for NATO to follow. It means going beyond the gathering of expertise and forming real partnerships for crisis management and response. Working in the interface between domestic security and international security issues – a dimension in continuous expansion – is as fascinating as it is demanding.

Public Diplomacy

NATO is generally well supported by public opinion in its member states. Old antagonisms over NATO between left and right in countries such as Greece, Spain or Portugal and notably France during the post-Gaullist period, have long since died down. Even during the difficult years when NATO was no longer being identified with its primary task of collective defence and took on potentially controversial missions (Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq) public support for the alliance remained relatively firm in the older member states. The newer members in Central and Eastern Europe, looking over their shoulders at the Russians, were in their great majority more enthusiastic about the value of alliance membership and its direct link to security.[43]

The EU, by contrast, faced a bigger challenge in sustaining public support in its member states and especially among populist parties on the right and the left, as it was seen as intervening (or interfering) much more in their domestic affairs. Thus far the alliance has not faced its own Brexit situation although some reports suggest that Trump toyed with the idea of withdrawing the US from NATO, how seriously it is hard to tell. The member state where support for NATO has declined is Türkiye. This reflects the way Erdogan has instrumentalised the alliance to appeal to his nationalist audience. Many Turks have also felt that NATO HQ has not paid sufficient attention to the threats that their country has faced from Kurdish extremism and the war in Syria.[44]

International organisations exist to fulfil practical functions and to provide public services. They are not designed to be popular or to be loved even if the EU, invoking European cultural values and the continent's war-torn history, has tried to inspire a popular political movement. So does public diplomacy at NATO matter?

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[43] The NATO Public Diplomacy Division monitors public opinion across the NATO countries and produces Annual Tracking Surveys and Polling Results twice a year. The documents can be viewed and downloaded from the NATO website: *NATO Public Opinion Research.* Link. Risso, Linda. *Propaganda and Intelligence in the Cold War: The NATO Information Service.* London: Routledge, 2014.

[44] NATO Public Diplomacy Division. *NATO Audience Research: Pre-Summit Polling Result 2023.* Link.

The short answer is yes, because general support for NATO the institution does not necessarily imply support for its particular policies or decisions. Just five years ago, a majority of Germans said that Germany should not come to the defence of its allies and neighbours.[45] Missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo were unpopular in many allied countries and support for greater defence spending, although higher since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, has bobbed up and down. The populist far right in France has also advocated France withdrawing once more from the alliance's integrated command structure. Complacency is the enemy of good strategic communications. Moreover Russia, now locked in an adversarial relationship with NATO, is using all its skills and resources in propaganda and disinformation to portray the alliance as a warmonger and to make NATO enlargement responsible for its invasion of Ukraine. The public support for NATO that surged in the wake of Putin's aggressions could subside as the cost of supplying weapons and military support to Ukraine escalates or NATO calls for even higher levels of defence spending at a time of inflation, tight national budgets and strained public services. Support for NATO among US Republicans, traditionally transatlantic loyalists, is another cause of concern as fringe politicians move centre stage and claim more airtime.

Information has traditionally been a national responsibility at NATO. Yet many allies leave it to NATO HQ as it gives them a margin of manoeuvre in national politics to distance themselves from other allies or even NATO itself if it is tactically convenient for them to do so. The NATO Secretary General with the support of the staffs must take up this challenge by constantly visiting the member states and reaching out to the key national target audiences. The media are the first point of call, but parliaments are equally important particularly as new political parties and new, younger faces have appeared in recent years. Opposition is one thing but lack of knowledge or simple indifference to security and defence issues can be equally corrosive in the long run. Even a NATO that is not in immediate trouble needs a public diplomacy strategy. Indeed, the organisation today receives vastly more media coverage than during the Cold War years when small numbers of the Brussels press corps showed up twice a year to cover the ministerial meetings.[46]

The current Secretary General, Jen Stoltenberg, has been a competent media performer, usually hitting the right note and rarely putting a foot wrong. Yet NATO's public diplomacy has seemed more hesitant. Should it mainly use social media to convey simple messages, or should it engage with opinion formers in more sophisticated security debates? How can it open up NATO HQ more so that the public (at least virtually) can go inside and see for itself how the alliance operates from one week to the next? How much effort should NATO devote to public opinion in important partner countries, for instance in the Asia-Pacific? Can it effectively reach audiences in Russia or Belarus and how can it counter more quickly and

[45] Munich Security Report 2023. Re:vision. Feb 23. Link. NATO Public Diplomacy Division. *NATO Audience Research: Pre-Summit Polling Result 2023.* Link.
[46] Risso. *Propaganda and Intelligence*.

effectively Russian disinformation? Another issue concerns NGOs and pro-NATO support groups in the member states. These have declined or disappeared due to lack of interest and support from the HQ, which was more focused on its immediate communication priorities. Yet these national groups and associations are often the eyes and ears of the alliance within the member states and can nurture support for NATO between visits by the Secretary General. With soon to be 32 member states, the NATO Public Diplomacy Division cannot be everywhere at once. Building networks of support for NATO among young political leaders, academics, and civil society representatives in the member states is a leadership challenge for the future and before more critical currents, perhaps strongly influenced by Kremlin narratives, begin to make themselves heard.

A Multifaceted Approach to Leadership

The core question is: what are the defining elements of successful leadership in an organisation like NATO once we have understood that leadership is more multifaceted and diverse in its requirements due to the multi-layered and multinational nature of the organisation?

First, there is the constant focus on the big strategic picture. A security and defence organisation like NATO must define a view of the world that would best allow it to achieve its objective of providing reliable and durable security for its almost one billion citizens. Ending the war in Ukraine in a way that it is a defeat for Russia and allows Ukraine to survive as a democratic, western oriented state in its sovereign territory is the first essential element. Reducing Russia's capacity to harm NATO member states both in the military and economic sense (particularly as energy dependence is concerned) as well as to undermine allied societies through hybrid warfare tactics is another. We could also think of preventing a military alliance between Beijing and Moscow and keeping channels of communication and even cooperation between China and the West open. We must also prevent jihadist and Islamist movements in Africa from posing a threat to Europe. This is a complex agenda. The key to success is for NATO's senior leaders to ask themselves every day: 'what can I do today to move NATO closer to meeting these objectives?' and to constantly measure progress.

In a large and complex organisation such as NATO it is easy for leaders to be blown off course and to spend their time and energy chasing secondary or transient objectives rather than focus on the truly important ones. Rabbit holes to go down will always be there and running from one meeting to the next and being constantly busy will often give the illusion of making progress. The ability to stay focused personally and to keep the team also focused on what is important rather than simply urgent is always going to be a challenge. 'Events, dear boy, events', as Harold Macmillan famously put it, will always intervene and tempt leaders to constantly change strategies. Yet, major transformative shock events like the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US or Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 happened because western leaders lost their focus on these emerging threats and did not take

necessary actions at an earlier stage, such as the terrorist attacks in Kenya in the 1990s or the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008. Staying focused on present threats is the first step in preventing future ones.

Second, good leadership requires developing a clear public narrative and message. All effective communication needs constant repetition and leaders must be associated with one or two (but not several) key themes and ideas. The mantra of NATO Secretary General, George Robertson, was 'capabilities, capabilities and capabilities.' All NATO watchers remember him for that, as they do Manfred Wörner for his passionate appeals for NATO intervention to stop the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. By this standards, Jens Stoltenberg has done well by choosing to campaign on the need for higher defence spending and for increased allied support to Ukraine. He could spend his time talking about security in Africa or the lessons learned from NATO's intervention in Afghanistan or the impact of AI on military technology. Yet, those are issues for NATO officials at a lower level in the hierarchy to communicate on or the academic and think tank community. Leaders at the top must stick to one or two simple and direct messages, if they are to reach through to the general public. [47]

Third, much of good and effective leadership is picking up and implementing the ideas and decisions of those who have gone before you. This is inevitable in an organisation like NATO where most positions, particularly the senior ones, are occupied by incumbents for a maximum of six years before they make way for others, often from different backgrounds and nationalities. Hence, although decisions can be taken quickly, implementation can extend over several years so that those who design and those who execute are rarely the same individuals. Yet to put one's stamp on an organisation means developing a project of one's own and leaving a legacy as a designer and not only an executor.

A good example comes from the current NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg. Late in his mandate Stoltenberg began work on a new Strategic Concept for the alliance as the previous iteration dating back to 2010 still described Russia as a partner, albeit a prickly one. There was also no mention of China and only a passing one-line reference to climate change as a security challenge. This concept adapted the alliance to the 2010 prevailing security environment but did little to prepare it for the future. To his credit, Stoltenberg has led the charge for a significant revision, taking the allies along with him at each stage of the conceptual and drafting process. First, he gathered a group of senior officials around him to engage the think tank and policy community to produce his own report on NATO 2030. This took a much more sober and realistic view of Russia as an adversary, put China on NATO's radar screen for the first time, stressed the growing importance of the Asia-Pacific region to alliance security, and placed climate change much more prominently on the agenda, as behoved a Secretary General who was a former UN

[47] Laity, Mark. "The Birth and Coming of Age of NATO StratCom: a Personal History", *Defence Strategic Communications,* vol 10. Spring-Autumn 2021, pp. 21-70. Link.

Special Envoy on climate change. Stoltenberg also appointed a young international group of think tankers to write their own NATO 2030 report so that he could tune in to the perception of NATO among the 25 to 40-year-old generation. This report put a particular stress on climate change, cyber, new and disruptive technologies and the manipulation of social media and the internet to spread disinformation and propaganda. Subsequently the Secretary General established a high-level group of former ministers and senior officials from 10 allied nations, led by Thomas de Maizière of Germany and Wes Mitchell of the United States to carry out a formal review of NATO and to make recommendations. The group consulted a wide range of experts, including the author of this paper, and produced over one hundred individual recommendations. The allies then drafted the new Strategic Concept which was adopted at the Madrid summit in June 2022. The Secretary General's policy planning unit held the pen throughout and was able to influence all the successive drafts of the Concept.[48]

No doubt the allies would have turned to writing a new NATO Strategic Concept sooner or later; but by grabbing the bull by the horns and leading from the front, the Secretary General was able to stamp his ideas and authority on the process and ensure that all the allies, and not just the larger ones, were consulted and had their say in shaping the Concept. The NATO 2030 report and the group of experts allowed the ideas to be debated and tested informally so that a form of consensus could be achieved that made the formal drafting and final agreement among allies that much easier. The 2022 NATO Strategic Concept will always be part of Stoltenberg's legacy. This demonstrates that every NATO official at whatever level of the hierarchy should try to formulate one leadership project to change the organisation for the better and try to achieve it during his or her time in post. It is a motivating factor in what might otherwise be a purely process driven, ticking the boxes routine.

The fourth factor of good leadership is getting the organisation as a whole to perform. My observation of many NATO Secretary Generals is that they are engaged in the high politics and diplomacy of the alliance. They do not have the time or the inclination to manage the large bureaucracy under them. They work with their close advisers and certain, limited sections of the Secretariat according to their priority issues. They leave much of the rest to tread water. This leads to an organisation in which some parts are overworked while others are underworked. The leadership challenge is to mobilise the less engaged portion and to bring them in support of the core objectives of the Secretary General. This can be done by moving people more frequently from low priority areas to higher priority ones, by being decisive at cutting legacy activities that consume human and financial resources but deliver less and less, by forming joint task forces across the staff to get backwater services better tied to the mainstream and by giving people through training and exercises

[48] At the time of writing, a detailed overview of the work in support of NATO 2030 can be found on the NATO website: *NATO 2030: Making a Strong Alliance Even Stronger*. Link.

secondary jobs that they can switch to in a crisis or conflict (such as moving human resource managers to be press analysts in the NATO Media Operations Centre). The Deputy Secretary General and their Office is well placed to take on these day-to-day management tasks. The goal is to make NATO less of a routine bureaucracy performing the same regular tasks and more of an operational HQ that can transform immediately to handle crises by transferring resources as required.[49]

Fifth, leadership means allowing staff to speak truth to power. All organisations develop a culture and a view of the world that compels loyalty and a sense of common belief and shared purpose. This can be a source of strength and cohesion particularly in a security organisation like NATO with a tight link to the military and its disciplined culture. Yet, in a fast-moving security environment there is the risk of conformity, complacency and of tunnel-vision. Threats can be missed or underestimated and opportunities for diplomacy or dialogue missed. Just as NATO exercises now have their red teams to help NATO staffers understand how alliance statements and decisions are perceived and understood by NATO's adversaries, so all leaders must create a working environment where policies can be debated and questioned. Staff need to be encouraged to speak truth to power, provided this is done in a confidential and constructive way, something that the old HQ Policy Board provided for.[50]

Good leadership is therefore also about instituting a policy process that enables a wide range of views and options to be canvassed and assessed. Then a rigorous review process is necessary to test that a strategy is delivering or needs to be adjusted. In this context it is essential that the organisations foster a genuine supportive culture in which challenge and criticism are seen as invaluable tools to reach the best decision for the organisation. Obviously, respectful challenge must not only be aired in a psychologically safe environment, but it must also always be made with the best interest for the organisation in mind, in a respectful way and at the appropriate point in time.[51]

Perhaps a good example of how this system might have worked better is after the 9/11 terrorist attacks when NATO rushed into declaring its Article 5 collective defence clause very much in the heat of the moment and with no planning or serious consideration of what this could imply in terms of military action. Nothing followed for weeks as the US made clear that it did not need alliance military contributions at that stage and the situation became embarrassing for NATO. Finally, the US, realising

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[49] Johnston, Seth .A. *How NATO Adapts: Strategy and Organization in the Atlantic Alliance since 1950.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University. 2017. Holbeche, Linda, *The Agile Organisation: How to Build and Engaged, Innovative and Resilient Business.* 3rd ed. London: Kogan Page, 2023. Kates, Amy. *Networked, Scaled, and Agile: A Design Strategy for Complex Organizations.* London: Kogan Page, 2021.

[50] Clark, Timothy R. *The 4 Stages f Psychological Safety: Defining the Path to Inclusion and Innovation.* Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2020. Edmondson, Amy C. *The Fearless Organisation: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation and Growth*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2019. Laloo, Eugene et al. "The impact of leadership on the psychosocial safety climate of organizations: A scoping review of the international literature", *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Health*, 13/2 (2023), pp. 258-271.

[51] British Army. *Followership Doctrine Note*. Section 6: Responsibility to Challenge (2023). Link.

the gravity of the invocation of Article 5 in terms of NATO's credibility, came up with an 8-point list of very modest actions that it suggested the organisation could take to demonstrate solidarity. Look before you leap is the lesson here.

Finally, in an international organisation like NATO, leadership is about building coalitions at all levels and across the organisation and beyond: between the Secretariat and key allied Delegations, between the various Sections and Divisions, with the private sector and with other like-minded organisations like the EU, the UN and the OSCE. Coalitions provide the critical mass of expertise, resources and political punch needed to move an issue forward. They serve as locomotives for drawing in others as they pick up steam. The task here is to spot opportunities, build bridges between different cultures and approaches and create win-win situations where all participants can see benefits to themselves from a given project. Here, the Secretary General and their staff may not have much, if any, formal power; but they can convene and rally others into action. This is a considerable asset if it is used skilfully and if the staff has done its homework in choosing the right projects and programmes. Patience can be as important as persuasion.

Conclusion

Leadership in NATO comes in many shapes and forms and is not the preserve of those in formal senior management roles. It is about creating and empowering myriads of leaders at all levels, who can contribute to the five core delivery areas identified above. Leadership in NATO can and must be exercised in intellectual analysis, innovation, programme management, policy negotiation, network creation or communications. Senior leaders must strive to get the best out of people and resources to achieve the alliance's objectives.

How Should a British Military Officer Posted to NATO Prepare?

Jamie Shea's Advice

1. Do your homework

The first thing to do is to consult broadly with colleagues and personal contacts who work or have recently worked in the NATO system. NATO is a complex organisation, which is constantly transforming. The risk is that by the time a new official comes to understand its workings and feels comfortable navigating it, it is already time for them to depart. Books and think tank reports tend to focus on the big strategic issues rather than on how the diplomatic and military machinery works. There is therefore no substitute to talking to insiders who can share their knowledge and experience.

It is also important not just to have a snapshot of what is happening today but how certain tasks and priorities are likely to evolve in the run up to the next NATO summit. Anticipating the likely evolution of issues and identifying in advance potential road bumps, decision points and trade-offs is the quality of effective leaders. Identifying challenges well in advance allows more time to devise options and strategies to either confront them head on or work around them. The way a question is posed largely determines the answer, or at least the initial responses from those it is addressed to. There are few issues that come onto the NATO agenda that are entirely new. Many, such as burden sharing, how to do effective defence planning or how to balance military planning with political strategy, have been there since the alliance was set up in the early 1950s.

The players and the context may change but not the core substance. Nations therefore have had plenty of time to form their positions and their views and attitudes are invariably coloured by previous experience and memories of bureaucratic battles past. The NATO civilian or military official does not need to be an academic NATO historian, but they do need to have some grasp of the background as how the views and strategic culture of individual allies have been shaped over time. Some readings into the history and archives are never a waste of time, and NATO's rich history is never boring. For a deeper understanding of current security concerns and priorities, there is no substitute to talking directly to the national delegations themselves and to try to get inside their mindsets. Simply ignoring a national position because it strikes you at first glance to be overblown or irrational is rarely a good way to get consensus for a decision or policy shift. Nations have their reasons for thinking the way they do and are usually more flexible if they see that these reasons have been recognised even it is often not possible to accommodate them fully.

2. Understand your job and your role

To maximise flexibility and allow for occasional changes in taskings, many NATO jobs are described in rather vague and generic terms, listing a whole host of job requirements and responsibilities. This does not make preparation easy. It is critical to find out exactly what the job entails and how it complements and relates to what others in the section or division are doing. All of us bring a combination of professional and personal strengths as well as weaknesses to any job we are carrying out. A realistic grasp of what the job entails can help an officer or official to fit their strengths and weaknesses to the job and identify where it will be necessary to delegate tasks or to draw on the skills and expertise of colleagues. The most original thinkers do not always make for the best committee chairpersons just as the best speechwriters and analysts are often not the best administrators, organisers, and people managers. NATO job advertisements often expect candidates to have every conceivable skill known to man. But the effective leaders are less those who adapt themselves to the job than those who adapt the job to them and succeed in doing it their way. International bureaucracies are surprisingly adept at adjusting to the personality and leadership styles of incomers once they understand how the new leader or manager intends to run the ship. Making your stance on continuity or change *vis à vis* your predecessor in the post and making your style and approach clear from the outset are the prerequisite of effective leadership.

3. Communicate clearly

You must be able to communicate clearly and succinctly both up and down the chain of command. Senior leaders must have confidence in their closest advisers. This comes from the ability to make it quickly clear why an issue needs attention according to the 'why should I care about this, and why at this precise moment in time?' test. Senior leaders need just the right amount of information to understand why an issue is important and needs their personal involvement. It could be a looming danger or a sudden opportunity to be seized while it is still available. Too much detail loses the policy makers' attention and patience quickly. They do not need the whole history or every micro-detail of an issue but just an overview, which is honest and accurate even if it is not the good news and reassurance that officials much prefer to present to their leaders. It is better to be right than to be popular and speaking truth to power is as important in an international organisation like NATO as it is in a national civil service or military service. But it is also a question of choosing the right moment and context. Establishing trust and a reputation for reliability and integrity make this access to power easier over time as does the ability to present not only problems but also options and solutions. Not forgetting of course that for politicians media reaction and media handling are crucial. Political leaders are less interested in challenges that they cannot solve or in issues which will only become pertinent after their retirement. Top advisers are those who can relate issues that may at first seem remote to an institution's daily work to its longer-

term relevance or even survival. Officials call this 'bringing the sphere of interest into the sphere of concern and then into the sphere of responsibility and action.'

4. Know how to measure success

In a large and complex organisation like NATO it is easy to become lost in process and to measure success by the ability to stay out of trouble. Action always carries greater risks than doing nothing but although this approach may look like the best way of ensuring the next promotion, it rarely makes for a successful organisation in the long run. Nor does it secure promotion ultimately to the jobs that really matter. Similarly, measuring success or effectiveness simply by the amount of paperwork produced or the number of committee meetings held, or the number of activities crammed into an annual programme with an important Partner Nation may at first sight demonstrate relevance to a higher authority, but it does not measure real impact or lasting benefits to alliance security. Doing one thing well is always better than doing many things half baked, if not badly.

5. Persistence is key

A true test of leadership is to come into a job with a clear sense of three or four priorities which, if achieved, will truly make a difference to the performance of the organisation and its ability to deliver genuine security improvements. That way the leader's choice of daily activities (for instance which meetings or trips or speeches to accept) can be dictated by one clear principle: how does this activity help me to achieve my priority goals? And at the end of every day, have I come a step or two closer to them? As mentioned previously, Secretary General Lord Robertson arrived at NATO proclaiming that he had three priorities: 'capabilities, capabilities and capabilities'. He stuck to this mantra in virtually every activity and communication, whether internal or external, throughout his four-year term. When I asked him why he was making capabilities the topic of his 101st speech as NATO Secretary General, he replied that it was precisely after repeating his core message over 100 times that people would finally start paying some attention. Every historian of NATO remembers George Robertson for his capabilities message and reforms as no doubt they will remember the current Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, for his message on defence spending and his unwavering support for Ukraine. It is easy for leaders to sit back and wait for the inevitable crisis to come along as the opportunity to invent a theme for themselves and to profile themselves to the wider world. Yet if crises are often predictable, it does not mean that they will be predicted (and adequately prepared for). By definition a crisis is something that is not easy to control, and it exposes the weaknesses in even robust organisations. Naturally, leaders must manage crises, whether real or artificial and reputational, as best they can, and as and when crises occur. But successful crisis management is always the result of many diverse actors working together rather than the product of a single leader. Each individual leader, no matter how powerful, has only limited agency over the evolution of a crisis being dependent on the good actions or fortunate outcomes

of multiple other actors, or the mistakes and failings of many more. Yet no serious leader will want to place their fate in the hands of luck and chance or to survive by snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. And in the case of success innumerable people will claim the credit. Where the individual leader can have agency and leave a mark is by formulating and pursuing their own strategic or structural reform objectives.

6. Language is power

Decision-making power inside NATO Headquarters always lies with the written word. After all, the alliance moves forward by drafting documents and political consultations often come down to haggling over words and the placement of sentences and sub-clauses. The currency of diplomacy is minutes, speeches, communiques, and memoranda of understanding. Consensus in NATO does not completely exist until it can be satisfactorily expressed on paper. This puts a special responsibility (and burden) on the shoulders of native English speakers as the alliance works largely in English (despite French being the official second language). Proficiency with words and competent drafting skills are a prized asset within NATO and make the skilled wordsmith the go-to person to resolve many a sensitive discussion. Yet, native English speakers need also to be sensitive to the three quarters of staff members for whom English is not the first language and to find ways to bring them on board in daily work and policy discussions. Working in a multicultural environment is never easy and it is important not to fall into the trap of confusing lack of language fluency with lack of competence. Everybody around the table has valuable contributions to make, a key interest to represent, a critical point to make. They all are important cultural bridge builders to their home nations. The English native speakers therefore must show sensitivity towards the others and use their privilege but not abuse it.

Go into the job with a clear idea of how the organisation works, what your role is, and how you can perform at your best. Being open and flexible are the keys to leadership effectiveness in NATO.

Resources

Online Resources on NATO:

NATO's Civilian and Military Structures
NATO Organization
NATO Military Committee
NATO International Military Staff
NATO Chiefs of Defence
Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
Allied Command Transformation
North Atlantic Council
NATO Committees
NATO International Staff
NATO Civilian Principal Officials
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A comprehensive approach to security
NATO – Relations with the European Union
NATO – Relations with the OSCE
NATO – Relations with the United Nations

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