

# NATO Comprehensive Civil-Military Interaction<sup>1</sup>

Discussion paper on enhancing NATO's civil-military interactions with Non-NATO Actors (NNAs) across the full spectrum of possible interactions ranging across: independent action; coordinated action; cooperative action; and joint action.

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The spectrum of interactions between military forces and civilian authorities, populations, organizations and agencies is broad and complex. Success in operations requires enhanced interaction amongst NATO and non-NATO actors at all levels.

NATO continues to evolve its comprehensive civil-military interaction so as to enhance NATO's ability to interact with non-NATO actors. It is broadly accepted that NATO's procedures for consultation, planning and decision making in support of operations, as well as its capabilities, must be more aware of and able to maximize the multitude of separate but mutually-dependent NATO and non-NATO actors.

Equally, it is firmly accepted that interaction implies neither military control of civil organizations or agencies nor the reverse. Civil-military interaction is a critical enabler for all military operations, just as civil-military interaction can be a critical enabler for civilian operations.

This paper's focus is the enhancement of operational interactions between NATO and various Non-NATO Actors (NNAs) to better respond to crises. The broader Civil-Military Environment includes strategic-level relations with Actors such as the UN or EU (AKA Political-Military) but these are not addressed in this paper.

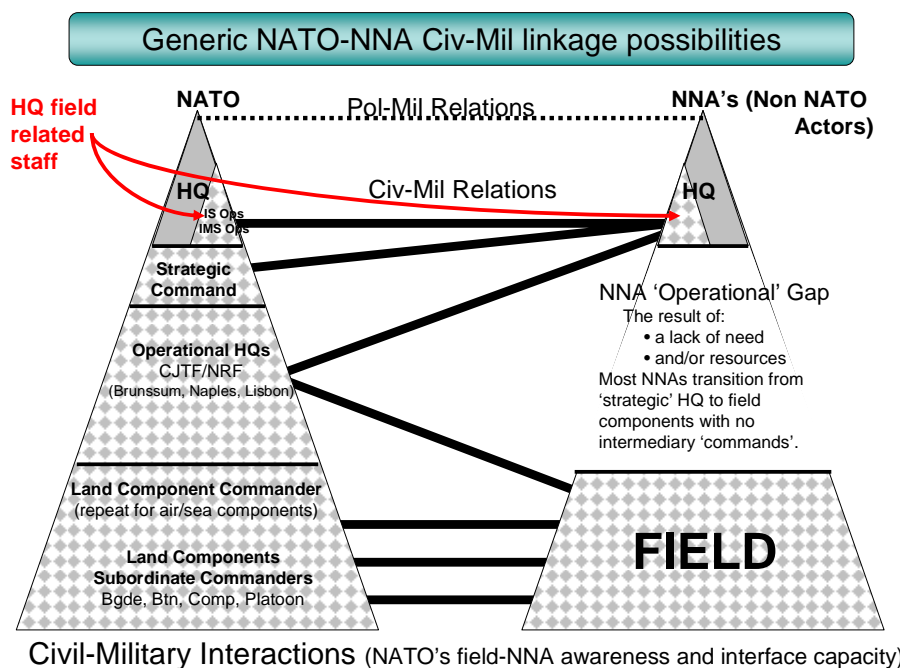
Pol-Mil relations in the NATO context must largely remain the purview of NATO member states as primarily voiced by the NATO Permanent Representatives. The national Pol-Mil players will want to retain close control or oversight over NATO's highest level strategic contacts with civilian NNA players such as the UN Secretary General. However, at times it is both appropriate and necessary that senior NATO

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<sup>1</sup> This informal discussion paper was developed concurrently with the NATO ACT's contribution to first CMX05 and then CMX06. It was drafted and regularly refined thanks to contributions from fellow Senior Concept Developers, a broad range of ACT staff, and NATO HQ interlocutors. Most recently it has been revised to reflect evolving terminology, e.g. non-NATO actors rather than non-NATO agencies, and enhanced conceptualization by those exploring the idea of comprehensive civil-military interaction. This paper remains an informal discussion vehicle, and comments and refinements are actively solicited by paul.larose-edwards@canadem.ca

staff have links to strategic level NNA partners particularly as there is no hard and fast demarcation between operational and strategic levels of many NNAs. Therefore some of the approaches set out below may have some applicability for such Political-Military relations.

Below is a pictorial representation of what NATO-NNA linkages or interactions could be. It should be noted that in general the NNAs have HQ staff and field mission staff, but for resource reasons, do not have the military equivalence of strategic commands or operational HQs. It is essential that NATO remembers this when looking to connect with civilian organization counterparts. Annexed to this paper are a series of nuanced pictorial representations of NNA sub-groupings with different degrees of partnerships, e.g. key IGOs, key NGOs, other IGOs, and other NGOs.



### A. Definition of NNAs (Non-NATO Actors) Partners

1. **IGOs** (Inter-Governmental Organizations) such as the UN, EU, OSCE, AU, OAS.
2. **International NGOs** such as the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam, Save the Children, CARE, MSF, Crisis Group, and the Red Cross family (ICRC, IFRC, national societies). International NGOs are sometimes referred to as **INGOs** to differentiate between them and host country NGOs.
3. **Host Country Actors** found in the mission country such as local government bodies and agencies, local NGOs, religious groups, traditional leaders, and community based organizations

NNAs do **not** include NATO nations' National Assets or National Governmental Organizations such as the Centres for Disease Control in Atlanta and other such NATO governments' emergency services which exist primarily to provide in-nation services. NATO tapping into such national assets of course would only be accessed through normal NATO channels, the national delegations.

However, on an ad hoc basis NATO's NNA partners in the field should include some bilateral aid agencies (USAID, DIFD, CIDA, etc.). Although not IOs properly speaking, many bilateral aid agencies play active roles in mission areas and may be key interlocutors for NATO field operations. Restricting links to those bilateral aid agencies through normal NATO national-channels would severely reduce NATO's ability to interoperate rapidly on the ground.

Host society partners, despite their key importance, are only peripherally discussed in this paper. Host society partners include local government bodies and agencies, local NGOs, religious groups, traditional leaders, and community based organizations. Sustainable solutions to crises are predicated upon host societies regaining their ability to successfully manage themselves. This simplistic statement belies the complexity of host societies regaining such sustainability, and therefore it is important that there is a NATO operational awareness of the host society partners. So while this paper does not look at NATO's host society partnerships, it should be noted that NNAs provide huge potential for NATO in that NNAs can facilitate those host society partnerships.

## **B. Operational Imperatives for NNA-NATO Civil-Military Interactions**

There are three salient reasons why NATO military look to have interactions with NNAs.

### **1. NATO End State / Exit Strategy Depends on Successful NNAs**

Key to achieving NATO end-states and exit-strategies is the success of many of the NNAs, as well as success by the host society, so that the situation no longer requires an international military presence.

### **2. Safe and Secure Environment for NNAs**

Militaries invariably will be tasked to provide safe and secure environments for NNAs, and can best achieve that task through close collaboration with NNAs.

### **3. Crises Response Expectations by Public and Politicians**

In crises, the public often will expect, and the politicians in response will task NATO militaries to take rapid action. This is particularly true in humanitarian or human rights crises. NATO will be working alongside their NNA partners and in emergencies may be tasked with some of the functions of various NNAs until those operational partners are present in sufficient numbers, e.g. constabulary functions, human rights monitoring, short-term emergency humanitarian assistance. It is essential that NATO hand over such functions as soon as possible to NNAs (see section C2 on Competition below).

It goes without saying that NATO can dramatically increase its decision coherence through a greater situational awareness of all relevant NNAs in mission areas and accessing key NNA information about local conditions. Host government and civil society including local NGOs are potentially the best source of local ground truth but are inevitably problematic with regard to reliability. Therefore locals are often best accessed via known and trusted NNAs who can access and validate information from their host government and civil society partners.

The Civil-Military Environment will have interaction taking place over a spectrum that includes awareness, de-confliction, cooperation and coherence of action. Relationships between actors may take place at different points on the spectrum of interaction, and will vary dependent on the type and stage of a crisis.

- **Independent** interactions will occur where entities have no direct relations even if their independent actions dramatically impact on others. Independent actors may range from enemy to friendly agencies which for various reasons maintain strict independence. At a minimum there is a need to promoting awareness of other players, which inter alia can start to enable self-synchronization by civil and military actors who understand that they have common interests and objectives. In situations where direct coordination or cooperation for any reason is not possible, enlightened awareness will enable self-synchronize so as to fill gaps, avoid unnecessary duplication, and otherwise achieve enhance symbiosis.

At other points on the spectrum, there are substantial benefits from direct interaction to achieve de-confliction between actors, and higher level benefits from efforts to cooperate on managing crises through common analysis, shared interests and overlapping objectives. At times there is even the ability to achieving civil-military coherence characterized by collaborative planning and concerted action.

- **Coordinated** interactions include the normal efforts to de-conflict so that ‘friendly’ agencies limit the chance that they will unnecessarily get in the way of others and avoid common concerns or objectives falling through gaps;
- **Cooperative** interactions go beyond information sharing so as to coordinate, and involve a degree of active collaboration;
- **Joint** interactions (coherence of action) are at the far end of the spectrum where entities will be operationally joined in entities such as integrated UN missions that include military components, or PRTs.

Of course NATO also looks to move, when possible, from ad hoc actions by interested parties to more institutionalized and standardized relationships. Both ad-hoc and institutionalized relations are key to enhanced interaction which can include collaborating more effectively in planning and conducting operations (including analysis, planning, execution and assessment) and through enhanced training and education.

While NATO accepts that the majority of civil-military interaction will occur through ad-hoc and at time institutionalized linkages, it also looks to evolve appropriate coherence of action and effort through joint actions with various actors engaged in crisis response.

### **C. Two Key Constraints to Enhanced NATO-NNA Partnerships:**

- 1. NATO must deal with highly asymmetrical NNAs;**
- 2. NATO should avoid unnecessary competition with NNA partners.**

- 1. Asymmetrical Actors:** NNAs range from the very large to the extremely small in all aspects including legitimacy, reliability, aims, roles, staff, financial resources, capacity, and geographical reach. This reality creates two challenges:
  - **Expanding NATO's awareness of NNAs** (see Mapping below);
  - **Expanding NATO's ability to develop operational interactions with relevant NNAs** (see CAADs and *just-in-time* partnerships below).
- 2. Competition:** when military unnecessarily agree to undertake roles normally best carried out by NNAs, they inadvertently become competitors with those they want to be partners with. Many NNAs are highly dependent on mission specific operational funding by governments. Governments for decades have encouraged those NNAs to become their implementing partners for humanitarian and other crisis response, and those NNA agencies are geared to respond rapidly when requested and when funded.

However in the flurry of crises and the frequent desire to 'plant' visible national-flags, national politicians at times mistakenly view their military as both a military and a civilian crisis response mechanism. Military accepting to take on what are normally NNA jobs put the military in direct competition for scarce resources. The other related issue is that well meaning but ad hoc 'civilian'-action by military can have unintended consequences that can reduce the impact of military actions and possibly do harm. This is the principle of *do no harm* that has been painfully learned by NNAs over the past two decades.

Both constraints can become NATO strengths if properly handled:

- If NATO effectively maps the relevant NNAs and develops new mechanisms to work with asymmetrical NNAs, NATO will become a centre of excellence in civil-military interactions; and
- Equally, NATO can refrain from competing with NNAs and assist them to fulfill their respective roles in part by reminding nations that NNAs are the preferred option for humanitarian assistance and other 'civilian' crisis responses. This will strengthen or create a number of new NNA allies for NATO and will calm a number of NNA skeptics. The courses of action below can help achieve these objectives.

## **D. Coordination & Cooperation — Courses of Action (COA)**

NATO recognizes that it faces a number of challenges. Most importantly, it needs to develop a comfort with ad hoc civil-military relations and develop mechanisms to enable and optimize these interactions. The concept of CAADs (Civilian Actors Advisor), NNA mapping/taxonomy, and *ad-hoc* or *just-in-time* procedures are such mechanisms to enable ad-hoc or just-in-time interactions.

Three possible course of action to enhance NATO-NNA partnerships:

COA 1. **Mapping NNAs**

COA 2. **CAADs (Civilian-Actors Advisors)**

COA 3. **Standing Awareness & *Just-in-Time* Working Interactions**

### **COA 1 – Mapping NNAs (Non-NATO Actor Taxonomy Project)**

**Identify and Quantify NNAs that are potential NATO colleagues or otherwise of interest to NATO.**

The first steps in any relationship is to know whom to relate to, and an understanding of what the interactions can and should be. It is essential that NNA-mapping be sufficiently nuanced and qualitative so as to be much more than merely a listing of organizations with names and contact information. There is a need to classify NNA relative strengths and weaknesses as well as their functional areas:

1. Legitimacy
2. Reliability
3. Commonality of Aims
4. Functionalities

**1. Legitimacy:** degrees of legitimacy are variable in the IGO (inter-governmental organizations) category, and highly variable in the NGO category;

- IGOs, set up by governments, tend to have legitimacy. However, there are degrees of legitimacy depending on the States that have set up the IGO, and how that IGO is governed and managed.
- NGOs have a different form of legitimacy, granted more by public constituencies and less by governments who may or may not fund an NGO. Individual NGO legitimacy is highly variable ranging from the highly legitimate to the irrelevant and even suspect.

**2. Reliability:** the degree of reliability of an organization usually runs in parallel with its level of legitimacy but is distinct in that reliability reflects the usefulness of their end-products or activities. Two indicative determinants are:

- **Key Individuals** on staff, ranging from the highly cooperative to the antagonistic, and ranging from the highly competent to the well intentioned but ineffective. Note: some NNAs have uneven staffing and SOP operational-standards, so that a highly reliable organization in one mission area may prove to be unreliable in another mission area.
- **Assets** such as numbers of staff, equipment, etc. This is highly variably from organization to organization, and equally variable for a single organization across different missions.

### 3. Commonality of Aims with NATO:

- **Congruent** – extremely common aims, and thus a high probability of common benefits from close collaboration.
- **Inconsistent** – occasionally common aims, so variable benefits from time and resources spent on coordination.
- **Divergent** and possibly in opposition – marginal benefits from collaboration, and possibly even counter-productive or dangerous.

**4. Functionalities:** this refers to mapping the NNAs' areas of activity or operational sectors of relevance to NATO's military tasks. For example, are they involved with humanitarian assistance or human rights or reconstruction?

This functionality-mapping will help differentiate between the multitudes of relevant but highly diverse NNAs. Note that this category has purposely been listed last inasmuch as functional classifications are normally seen as sufficient in any mapping exercise. However, it cannot be emphasized enough that the substantive qualifiers of legitimacy, reliability, and commonality are essential to 'reading' the functional-maps.

It should be noted that all four categories above will be assessed according to their relevance to NATO. Nevertheless, NATO's creation of an NNA organizational mapping must be handled with circumspection and diplomacy so as to send the right message to NNAs. They must be highly confident that they are being categorized merely to assist NATO to achieve interoperability with them which by definition will enhance the ability of NATO to contribute indirectly and at times directly to the efforts of those NNAs. For example, if done properly such a mapping will help to orient and reassure military commanders at all levels so as increase military collaboration with NNAs and help to ensure that NATO does not undertake tasks best carried by the NNAs. Note that the concept of CAADs (Civilian Actors Advisor) dealt with elsewhere in this paper, is central to effective mapping, and the resultant maps are key tools for the CAADs.

**Generic or 'peace-time' NNA-mapping** of course will be carried out well in advance of any crisis management and crisis response. In fact, it would be useful for ACT to immediately create that generic-map, starting with NNA HQs including their field procedures and some of their relevant field presences. For example, there is a finite number of probable NATO deployment areas, and it would be useful to carry out initial mission-specific mapping of those possibly deployment areas. Generic-mapping will be relatively dynamic as even at the HQ level there are regular changes to the NNA community and their procedures.

**Mission-specific NNA-mapping** will largely be carried out or updated *just-in-time*. Having said that, at times NATO would already have a basic mapping of NNAs in potential mission areas, and would merely look to update and strengthen such mission-specific mapping when it became clearer that NATO might be deploying to a specific country or region. Mission-specific mapping for crises areas is hugely dynamic in that NNA presence and activity in the mission area will be in constant

flux. NATO mission-specific mapping will need constant updating and refinement through the duration of any mission.

It is likely that generic mapping will be carried out, held, and maintained by ACT as a common resource across NATO. In a similar vein, contingency mapping of possible mission areas will initially be carried out by ACT but will be handed over to ACO components as they do mission planning, preparation, and deployment. The ACO components will enhance and maintain the mission-specific mapping until such time as the mission ends at which time it would revert to ACT for storage and possible updating if it is envisaged that NATO might re-engage in that mission area.

## **COA 2 - Create advisor posts of Civilian Actors Advisor (CAAD)**

Mainstreaming NNA issues within NATO and maximizing collaboration with NNAs is a strong argument for Civilian Actors Advisors (CAADs) at the strategic level down to key operational command levels.

1. CAADs would be tasked with serving as senior level advisors with specialized knowledge of NNAs and the ability to provide a high level channel of communications with NNAs.
2. CAADs would exist at both at the highest level of NATO HQ, and would be replicated through lower command levels including of course field CJTF commanders and quite possibly some of their subordinate commanders.
3. In mission areas CAADs will be in addition to the various CIMIC units (see below) which are line components and have a different albeit related role.

Note that this concept largely reflects evolving field practice in which civilian experts are either hired in or seconded in, e.g. development advisors, humanitarian advisors, cultural advisors. They go by various titles, but are all sub-sets of the CAAD concepts.

Issues of CAAD rationale, role, and positioning, run very broadly parallel to those of LEGADs (Legal Advisors) and POLADs (Political Advisors). However CAADs provide separate and unique added-value. There of course is some knowledge overlap with POLADs in particular. POLADs are usually experienced foreign ministry secondees but with limited operational-level contact with NGOs and similarly have little exposure to the operational-level of IGO field missions, e.g. UNMIL, UNAMSIL, MINUSTAH, MONUC or AU-AMIS.

CAADs on the other hand will tend to be former NGO and/or IGO staffers with experience in working in NGO and/or IGO field operations. Having '*come up through the ranks*' of NGOs/IGOs, they will have insider knowledge of NGOs/IGOs and have greater perceived legitimacy by their former NGO/IGO colleagues.

CAADs, drawn from the former ranks of NGOs/IGOs and positioned closely alongside senior commanders including the NATO SG, will provide unique two-way communication or liaison. CAADs can dramatically magnify NATO capacities and objectives, contribute to effects based operations, and facilitate faster and more fully informed decision making:

1. CAADs will be well positioned to:
  - o reassure their former NGO/IGO colleagues (attitudes) as to NATO bona fides;
  - o transmit NATO strategic and command-level concerns and requests;
  - o assist in furthering interoperability and information sharing at all levels; and
  - o facilitate a reciprocal transmission of NNA strategic and command level concerns and requests.
  
2. CAADs with NGO/IGO insider-knowledge but now with full allegiance to NATO, will provide the SG, IS, IMS, and military commanders with critical intelligence and a high comfort level for operating alongside and with the civilian side of field operations.

A corollary to the concept of CAADs is the idea of NATO ACT providing *fly-away teams* of expert advisors to assist NATO HQ and ACO in breaking crises. Composed of mission-specific experts, this would draw upon ACT's mapping of NNAs as well as ACT 'virtual' rosters of country and sectoral experts that might be of value in crisis response. While ACT will have its own small roster of outside civilian experts, its potentially huge 'virtual' roster would build upon and draw from the various existing national civilian rosters held by NATO member states. Those national rosters or civilian reserves such as CANADEM which has 8,000 civilian experts on its roster, have been created in part to assist international agencies like NATO to rapidly identify civilian experts. The recent DPKO Lessons Learned Study "*Rosters for the Deployment of Civilian Experts in Peace Operations*" by C. Gourlay Feb. 2006 sets out the full rationale why agencies such as NATO or the UN need not create their own universal rosters, but can build upon existing rosters.

### **COA 3 - Standing Awareness & *Just-in-Time* Working Interactions**

There is limited ability on the part of NNAs to devote scarce resources to strategic level or HQ level operational interface with NATO. Also at the highest NATO strategic levels, NATO member states will want to retain the prerogative and control of political-military relations, e.g. with the UN Security Council. Both realities are unlikely to change, and the enduring operational reality is that for the vast majority of NNAs there will be *just-in-time* mission-specific interface with NATO so as to achieve the necessary mutual awareness, de-confliction, co-ordination and occasionally even joint activity.

For the vast majority of NNAs, determining the need or level of requisite mutual awareness, de-confliction, co-ordination and even joint activity, will largely be dictated by mission requirements and will occur *just-in-time*. This will be more successfully achieved when the various field partners such as NATO and NNAs arrive in mission with the right attitudes about being partners in a larger international community effort.

NATO SOPs can be expanded to facilitate such *just-in-time* interaction with key NNAs including issues such as sharing of NATO information, access to buildings, etc. Note that there are a few NNAs with sufficient NATO relevance and resources

such as the EU, UNHCR, UNDPKO, UNOCHA, and the OSCE Secretariat which militate for limited but standing co-locations, either housed in NATO or NATO personnel housed in those NNAs.

NATO missions, in addition to any CAADs, may include normal CIMIC components that would help identify the need for, and then facilitate these *just-in-time* operational connections between specific NATO mission components and specific components of NNAs. Occasionally CIMIC would remain tasked as the primary interlocutor with various NNAs where there was no other obvious and willing NATO mission component that would be the primary contact. In most situations CIMIC would help to build bridges between other NATO J-staff and their respective NNA partners, and then step back while continuing to monitor the upkeep of those bridges, and re-build any bridges that get swept away.

This *bridging principle* would apply equally to CAADs. It is not the role of CAADs to replace or control normal operational staff, it is the job of CAADs to link or bridge the primary operatives on both sides, military and civilian, and then step back as those primaries address the tasks at hand. Inherent in the bridging principle is the role of facilitating and maintaining the bridges between civil and military primaries, so the role of CAADs is far more than simply initiating links.

#### **E. Conclusion on NATO-NNA Civil-Military Interactions:**

The desired end state for NATO-NNA civil-military interactions is inherently tied to NATO's effects based approach (EBA) to planning missions so as to result in enhanced effects based operations (EBO) that are fully cognizant of and aligned with the larger International Community's efforts. These are the ultimate goals of the proposed courses of action above:

- comprehensive NNA **mapping**;
- varieties of **CAADs**; and
- developing procedures for ***just-in-time working interactions*** with mission relevant NNAs.

**Mapping NNAs** will provide an immensely useful tool. Mapping must be done in a comprehensive and qualitative way, and must be constantly refined and revised to reflect mission area realities.

**Civilian Actors Advisors (CAADs)** are fundamental. CAADs engaged by NATO is critical to carrying out NNA mapping and then enabling *just-in-time* interactions. There is a central role to be played by CAADs operating at all levels within NATO HQ, in subordinate commands, and in field missions. CAADs will be key in advising on how and when to involve NNAs, not with a view to acting as a gatekeeper, but to encourage and legitimate linkages to all levels of NATO. CAADs can also act as a vital tool for NATO commanders and subordinate commanders to transmit NATO concerns, objectives, and requirements.

***Just-in-time working interactions*** will remain the enduring operation reality of crisis response. This is premised upon key civil-military partners busily engaged carrying out their piece of the international response puzzle, but who nevertheless recognize

the common benefits of collaboration and cooperation with their civilian or military colleagues. Having the right attitudes and common business practices will enable *just-in-time* interactions that minimize time requirements for collaboration and maximize the attainment of common objectives.

The combination of new or enhanced NATO tools such as NNA maps, CAADs, and *just-in-time* procedures, will dramatically strengthen NATO's civil-military interactions across the full spectrum, be they independent, coordinated, cooperative, or joint.

**ANNEX – Pictorial representation of possible working interactions with NNAs**

