On September 17, 2018, the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) and the U.S. Army War College’s Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute hosted a one-day strategic seminar to discuss the major aspects and ongoing NATO efforts to define and integrate its “Projecting Stability” concept. The seminar was held at the AUSA conference center in Arlington, Virginia. What follows is a short description of key points and themes arising from the conference.

MG John Kem, Commandant USAWC

Many of the key themes in the Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) were formulated in the 2016 symposium, such as the relationship between the Departments of Defense, State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Challenges in Macedonia, where GEN(R) Carter Ham was serving and first met GEN(R) Sullivan, were part of the reason GEN(R) Sullivan created PKSOI 25 years ago. Peacekeeping and stability missions remain as important today as in the past and it is worth remembering Secretary of War Elihu Root’s comment upon the founding of the U.S. Army War College in 1901, the purpose is “not to promote war, but to preserve peace”.

GEN(R) Carter Ham, President & CEO, AUSA, former Commanding General, USAFRICOM

The concept of Projecting Stability is not new for NATO, and saw some of its initial principles embodied in the ongoing Partnership for Peace (PfP), which started in the early 1990s. The goal of the PfP program is to partner with countries and provide the tools to enhance stability and open the door for membership as desired.

Projecting Stability is a defense and security capacity-building program, which focuses on Advise and Assist missions, while training militaries to protect their borders and mitigate the threat of hybrid warfare, most recently demonstrated by the hybrid threats from Russia. Stability must be created across regions, otherwise stable countries will continue to be at risk from instability in neighboring countries. Experience has taught that NATO can enhance security by working with willing partners to improve stability and resiliency. As such, Projecting Stability has become a central part of NATO’s core business.

Two new concepts of projecting stability are the Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) and Building Integrity. DEEP provides tailored, practical support to individual coun-
tries to develop and reform their professional military education institutions, while focusing on the hybrid warfare crises. Corruption and poor governance undermines democracy and erodes the trust of the people. NATO’s Building Integrity focuses on countering these effects and building resilience. NATO’s Defense and Related Security Capacity Building initiative reinforces NATO’s commitment to partners and helps project stability by providing support to nations requesting assistance, such as Georgia, Moldova, Jordan, Iraq, and Tunisia.

Although the threat of instability has declined in Central and Eastern Europe in the 21st century, this threat significantly increased in the world at large. The attacks on the United States on 9/11 marked a sober start in a new era for NATO. Recently, there has been a rise in turmoil and violence in North Africa and the Middle East that has contributed to the spread of terrorism and a humanitarian crisis. The EU is a strong partner with NATO in seeking to foster stability through their economic packages, which when coupled with NATO’s focus on military educational institution building, enhances long-term stability.

Key Points:

- Institution Building must occur at the strategic level, as unconnected tactical solutions only lead to a return to conflict. The military needs more coherent political guidance to shape current and future operations on long term objectives. Institution building is essential for long-term stability. NATO is very good at institution building, such as designing national security strategies, defense strategies, defense ministries, a chief of defense staff structure, and putting into place a long-term, self-sustaining training program. NATO can assist in building the broadest possible coalition, which will lead to more robust, sustainable solutions.

- The US and NATO rely heavily on our own experience and country mandates to shape our capacity building and development strategies, rather than truly listening to the host nation needs. Without a culturally nuanced, host nation voice in the development of self-sustaining solutions, there will be no political buy-in, and only nominal support from the host nation. NATO can and should do better at incorporating local history, politics and culture into political strategies and institutional development.

- The US and NATO have developed extraordinary abilities to target terror cells and leaders. However, that has not prevented the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. The current threat environment is worse than on 9/11 and that trajectory will continue. While we have made extraordinary progress in destroying ISIS over the last four years, there are still thousands of fighters and eight declared ISIS franchises, and as many undeclared ones. Terrorism is proliferating and spawning new groups, largely through online recruitment where personal interaction is not required. Terrorist planning is no longer large scale and centrally planned, but holds to the mantra of “stay where you are, use what you can, and kill as many as possible.” A van attack on personnel is just as devastating as an IED, but requires no training, no resources, and no direction. Technology continues to expand violent extremist capabilities. Preventing the creation of new terrorists should be a primary focus.

- Following the hard lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan, the Department of Defense (DoD) cannot do stabilization alone. As such, the U.S. 3Ds of Diplomacy (State Department), Development (USAID) and Defense (Department of Defense) crafted the Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR), which offered a definition of stabilization that might be useful to the NATO alliance. The SAR defines roles for stabilization, with the Department of State as the overall lead, USAID as an implementing partner and DoD acting in a supporting role.
Through hard lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan, DoD came to the conclusion that they cannot do stabilization alone. While the SAR recognizes stabilization as a fundamentally political endeavor, practical experience demonstrates that DoD needs legislated authorities for supporting stabilization efforts in remote or uncertain environments. Lessons learned from the SAR could apply to NATO, specifically in enhancing Defense Institution Building capability, and incorporating better management of NATO’s Civilian and Military interactions, such that NATO might consider creating or partnering with an organization similar to USAID.

- NATO’s Strategic Foresight Analysis report provides an insightful perspective into a confluence of trends that affects all sectors (political, human, technology, economic resources and environmental), leading to instability. NATO’s Framework for Future Alliance Considerations expounds on the nature of war and strengthens deterrence, defense and projecting stability. In order to Project Stability, units need to be innovative, credible, agile and interoperable in applying a comprehensive approach to crisis management, cooperative security and proactive activities; working in concert as one partner. The power of the 29 NATO members’ combined efforts is a very formidable force that Russia does not desire to engage directly. Getting consensus across 29 partners requires sharing intelligence across the EU and NATO. Hybrid threats are the greatest factor in driving cooperation in order to face these challenges.

- Hybrid threats are ambiguous, difficult to detect, and deniable. Partners must engage on a regular basis to counter hybrid threats and identify potential weakness, such as cyber defense. An effective partnership may entail the European Union focusing on energy security, while the military applies overt and covert actions. The intelligence community should focus on attributing hybrid attacks to actors in order to develop an effective strategic communication program. Russia micro-targets specific communities and focuses messaging on the corruption of the government to sow discontent. Training on hybrid threats, such as media manipulation, needs to be propagated down to the population, so the community can define their own strategies for defeating terrorist recruitment efforts. Such training should incorporate the professionalization of the media corps, which has weakened over the years, making them susceptible to exploitation and false narratives.

- Non-kinetic defeat mechanisms need a greater role in countering terrorism, such as preventing terrorist travel, movement of monies, and internet presence. Strategic communications and counter narratives should be agile and quick in responding to recruitment efforts, especially in contesting the dramatical-ly increasing use of internet recruitment. Counter narratives must be capable of battling terrorist messaging on a rapid basis. Operation Gallant Phoenix is a shining example of fusing publicly available information with analysis of captured enemy material and proprietary information from multiple countries and international law enforcement agencies to identify potential terrorist plotting and disseminate that information to local law enforcement in the target country for interdiction. Several similar efforts are underway to fuse criminal and national or military intelligence to counter narcotics and human trafficking information. Additional initiatives to combat terrorist financing are also essential.

- NATO lacks, and urgently needs, the capacity to retain lessons and track personnel with unique mission experience in both the security and civilian realm. Institutionalizing the collection and incorporation of military and civilian lessons learned ensures mistakes of the past are not repeated. Paramount to this would be a database with contact information for individual experts who have planned and participated in stabilization activities.

- As the US considers restructuring resources in Africa, counterterrorism efforts should be viewed more broadly as peace time competition. As the U.S. withdraws from Security Cooperation partnerships in Africa, the door opens for stronger investment in the security and economic realm from Russia and China, which affects U.S. influence in these countries. As terrorism rises in northern African countries, the threat to Europe increases, thus any changes in the U.S. posture in Africa needs to be able to mitigate risk in Europe. China is investing heavily in infrastructure development in Africa, while also increasing precision strike weapons and tank sales to African nations by 50%, which is not helpful for a continent that has limited interstate conflict.

- A comprehensive assessment of a country’s needs is critical before initiating any strategy development. If partner nation’s population and its government do not feel they are part of a solution, then they will not be “wedded to it”, so they must be intertwined in the design of their own solutions and strategies. The U.S. and NATO are very good at identifying the positive aspects of stability efforts, but typically focus on tactical training and incremental measures. A thorough, brutal assessment is essential to determine the efficacy of short-term initiatives aligning with long term strategic objectives. However, if there remains an ill-defined long-term strategy not aligned with the partner country’s interest, then assessing the fulfillment of sustainable end-states becomes impossible. Pre-determined end states are necessary to ensure a strategy that incorporates mea-
sures to build sustainable capacity and to thwart partner nation’s dependency on U.S. and NATO resources. NATO retains a tremendous pot of resources and is very successful at coordinating coalition efforts. Therefore, streamlining capacity-building efforts reduces redundancy, which is a major propagator of partner-nation resource dependency.

Middle East North Africa (MENA) Region Panel

Moderator: AMB Donald Koran, USAWC Diplomatic Advisor to the Commandant


Key Points:

- Instability is a domestic issue, and as such, institutional capacity building inherently becomes the principal component of projecting stability. Africa has sufficient numbers of soldiers, but the countries are in dire need of infrastructure development to ensure sustainable stability. Appropriate skill set development includes engineering, logistics, health and human service administrators, and capable instructors and educators. Organizations within civil society become the primary interlocutors for identifying sustainable infrastructure requirements and for determining which specific resources are to remain as local natural resources. Local society and its citizenry will perceive this as a long term local investment. All development efforts must be prioritized by the local community, as they must want the resources more than the investing organization. The first layer of defense for development projects are those who have a stake in the security and economic means of stay behind equipment and opportunities. Presence forces should attempt to utilize the local economy as much as possible, rather than import them from their home country, as this money will have an outsized effect on multiple local and national agencies, and actually build resilient funding streams. Partner nation ministries must develop a funding stream for leave-behind projects by carefully considering the phasing of development initiatives. Coordinating and aligning coalition efforts with the most appropriate capability provides the synergy necessary for success.

- NATO should assist African nations in assuring that African soldiers are more responsibly organized, trained, and equipped in a manner to serve their people. The intent is to develop an armed forces which is viewed as net positives to society, a part of the security apparatus that the citizens run-to vice away-from. These soldiers also need alternative employable skill sets for after their military service. Hence, emphasizing infrastructure build-out as part of the peacekeeping mission and mandating that the host nation participates with the construction of infrastructure, gives the former soldier some skills to bring back to his/her community. Security Cooperation must follow a capabilities based approach, which focuses on the essential system requirements. NATO’s expertise is capacity building, and should be their primary focus in operations, while leaving the task of primary material provider for such operations to other better suited organizations.

- The movement of refugees changes the behavior and culture of a country and the surrounding region. Refugee movement is a threat to the current liberal democracies of Europe. Elections have featured the refugee issue as entirely inimical to the oneness of Europe. Beginning with enhanced refugee screening processes that may introduce undue hardship, create unhelpful legislation, and compel a shift to nationalism, it also fuels a relief effort, mainly by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who become part of the refugee movement business plan. Secondly, human traffickers become a criminal juggernaut by providing a substantial work force to both legal and illegal enterprises. Ultimately, the gross domestic product provided by the illegal human traffickers becomes too great a revenue stream to interrupt; it becomes self-sustaining and leads to corruption throughout the elected leadership. In essence, refugee flows become a tool of nations, as forced migrations strains the economics of receiving nations, thus creating instability and reducing economic opportunities for the host population. As an example, Russia has weaponized refugee flow, encouraging Syrian President Assad to use chemical weapons on his people to create overwhelming numbers of refugees to destabilize Europe and the NATO alliance. Overall, criminal activity can equal entire GDPs of some nations. The culturally accepted norm is for
African countries to export goods and resources to other countries outside of the continent to reduce competition between neighbors. Since exporting outside of Africa is the norm, illegal markets entrenched in refugee flows thus cut revenue streams to the country. As revenue streams decrease, corruption and graft increases, and technology greatly enhances the speed of these transactions.

- The Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) in Naples is focused on advise and assist missions to identify root causes of instability and strengthen partnerships as a component of Projecting Stability. NATO understands the importance of working bilaterally and multilaterally with the African Union (AU) as an important partner to develop a mutual dialogue and develop interoperability for future efforts to curb illicit activity. The AU is a valuable partner in combatting illicit trafficking and terrorism, which has a direct spillover effect on Europe. Through NATO's new initiative, the NATO Strategic Direction South Hub, personnel directly engages NGOs, IOs, academia and civil society to gain local perspectives and perceptions in order to develop a true all-encompassing understanding of its feasible rolls and missions for incorporation into comprehensive solutions. The population needs to view NATO as accessible, while NATO understands that the population is an integral part of the solution. That being said, it is essential to understand which members of the community are being engaged to ensure NATO is not sending the wrong message to that group.

Key Points:

- Future European conflict will probably not be conventional, but some form of gray zone competition and conflict short of armed conflict, thus NATO needs to be prepared to compete in this space. The success of democracies is not inevitable, they can fail, thus rapid responses to aggression or instability are essential. Georgia and Ukraine are two such examples of countries that needed rapid intervention assistance in an attempt to deter Russian aggression. In 2008, NATO’s Bucharest Summit rejected Georgia’s and Ukraine’s application for a membership action plan. Russia’s invasion of Georgia followed four months later. The US responded with ineffectual sanctions following Russia’s incursion into Georgia and created a green light for the annexation of Crimea. When Russia infiltrated the Donbas region, the US finally enacted serious sanctions. The shooting down of an MH17 caused outrage in European countries, especially the Netherlands, and spurred Europeans to impose additional sanctions. The US and NATO also deployed military forces and sold Air Defense assets to the Baltic States as a deterrent to Russian troop movements near the Baltic State borders. The US provided javelin anti-tank weapons to Ukraine and continued to rotate Georgia National Guard into Georgia to make it a less viable target for Russia. NATO has nearly tripled support to the Baltics and Poland. Political soft power and political military assets need to be part of a deterrent national strategy, inclusive of complementary military training and capacity building efforts.

- The United Nations should authorize a peacekeeping force to secure the Donbas region until it returns to full Ukrainian control. The mandate should establish a peacekeeping force as robust as the IFOR mission, and include an interim international governing body for Donbas until Ukraine can reclaim sovereignty over its territory and borders. NATO forces with a U.S. contingent would not be an acceptable solution for Russia. Potentially, a Swedish or Finnish neutral force would be acceptable. President Putin appears to be looking for a way to pull Russian assets out of the region due to the extreme economic strain. In order for the mandate to be accepted, others must allow President Putin to save face. A potential incentive for Russia might be for the UN to pay for troop movements out of the Donbas region, as was the case with East Germany.

- Georgia and Ukraine enacted multiple improvements to their military forces and governance structure to enhance their portfolio for entrance into NATO. Georgia enacted an acceptable defense concept, and met many of the NATO requirements, but in both countries’ cases, there is hesitancy to bring them into NATO, which would increase tensions with Russia. The

**Eastern Europe Panel**

**Moderator:** COL Darrell Driver, Director of European Studies, NSS, SSL, USAWC

**Panel Members:** Ambassador William Taylor, Executive VP, US Institute of Peace; GEN Riccardo Marchiò, Commander, Allied Joint Forces Command Brunssum; LTG(R) Ben Hodges, former Commander, US Army Europe
case of Georgia is central to NATO strategy; the foundation with Georgia is very strong. NATO should consider admitting Georgia immediately to send a message to President Putin that he does not get to veto the sovereignty of states, or to get a separate Russian sphere of interest. The political situation has to be right and Georgia has to be ready. The best option would have been to introduce rotational forces into Georgia immediately after Russia’s annexation of Crimea. Georgia is building a deep sea port in Anaklia, which will be the primary Black Sea “Silk Road” port connecting China to the European trade community, thus greatly enhancing Georgia’s economic value. The Anaklia port alone should emphasize the need for NATO rotational forces in Georgia to prevent future Russian incursions. A continued Georgian shortfall is a lack of a Coast Guard for Black Sea security.

- Russia has no desire to take on the 29 countries of NATO, and resents and fears NATO cohesion most of all. The goal of many Russian activities are to wreck the international order and challenge the cohesion of the alliance. Russia’s strategic aim against NATO is to demonstrate the alliance cannot adequately defend member states. If Russian leaders believe this objective has been achieved, then they might miscalculate and invade NATO territory on the pretense of defending a Russian minority population. Russia does not follow a truly hybrid warfare or Gerasimov doctrine, but instead, adheres to a classic Russian misinformation campaign, including manipulating troop movement numbers. If the U.S. were to permanently base troops in Poland, such an action would elicit a Russian response, likely pushing troops into Belarus. For such an action, the U.S. must conduct this action with the support of NATO. Any perceived action to provoke Russia must understand that Russia only respects strength in numbers and equipment. Russia dominates the information space, a component of their misinformation campaign. Thus, the U.S. and NATO must greatly enhance their narrative, focusing on Russia’s wrongdoings.

- When the US calls for NATO partners to provide more than their required 2%, NATO needs to consider incentivizing partners to give more, which may not be in funds. NATO needs to create a formula that counts infrastructure improvement/expansion that has demonstrable military value (railway, bridges, etc.). Germany provides an excellent example. Rather than provide more tanks, they could dedicate rail assets to better move NATO equipment and troops to target areas in the Baltics and Poland.