



## **NATO'S CONCEPT FOR THE DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE OF THE EURO-ATLANTIC AREA**

**Date: November 21, 2022**

*Disclaimer: This briefing note contains the encapsulation of views presented by the speaker and does not exclusively represent the views of the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies.*

### **KEY EVENTS**

On November 21, 2022, Brigadier-General (retired) Jay Janzen, Director of Strategic Communications with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, presented *NATO's Concept for the Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area* at the 2022 West Coast Security Conference. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer period with questions from the audience and CASIS-Vancouver executives. The key points discussed were NATO's renewed focus on deterrence and defence, the concept of Deter and Defend, and the new force model.

### **NATURE OF DISCUSSION**

#### **Presentation**

The central theme throughout Brigadier-General Janzen's presentation was the Deter and Defend concept by NATO. Brigadier-General Janzen also discussed how the Deter and Defend concept seeks to deter adversaries from spreading destabilisation, widening disorder, or accruing decisive military advantage against the alliance that would impact NATO's security.

#### **Question & Answer Period**

During the question-and-answer period, Brigadier-General Janzen discussed the importance of projecting a clear and compelling narrative of one's beliefs and values, as well as taking actions which support that.

## BACKGROUND

### Presentation

Brigadier-General Janzen began his presentation by providing an introduction to NATO's Deter and Defend concept, which is one of the most strategic advances made by NATO in recent history. As he explained, NATO has a renewed focus on deterrence and defence as it defends democracy, values that promote peace, and citizens within the alliance. This concept is reflective of NATO being committed to a rules-based international order.

Deter and Defend seeks to deter adversaries from spreading destabilisation, widening disorder, or accruing decisive military advantage against the alliance that would impact NATO's security. The concept provides a framework to ensure that disorder is contained and destabilisation is managed, therefore being a war prevention strategy at its core. In peacetime, the concept articulates a way in which NATO will conduct Peacetime Vigilance Activities – such as exercises, patrolling, collecting information, monitoring, surveying, intelligence reconnaissance, and overflights – and will use those activities to prepare readiness, awareness and deter adversaries deliberately. It allows the ability to set the conditions for rapid transition to crisis or conflict if necessary, and to establish conditions for the best possible defensive posture in the alliance. By demonstrating the transition from peacetime to war quickly, that itself is a signal of deterrence to adversaries. Deter and Defend is a series of integrated plans, in which the Strategic Plans are supported by Domain/Functional Plans, and those are supported by Regional Plans. These are further connected by 30 different national plans from every member of the alliance, so it is cohesive and united. There is an emphasis on rescaling command and control and its deployable forces through a new force model. These activities will be used deliberately to forward the strategic outcomes of this plan.

In the new Force model still under design, Brigadier-General Janzen explained the three-tiered system which will more than triple the forces available to NATO. The model is built on near-peer adversaries and what is needed to defend the alliance. The first tier, which can respond in minutes, hours, or days, has close to 100,000 troops, including the ability to provide cyber, deep-strike capabilities, and ballistic missile defences. The first tier can be deployed before a potential conflict occurs and before Article V is invoked. The second tier is designed as rapid reinforcement and has approximately 200,000 troops. The third tier is designed for long-term reinforcements with at least 500,000 troops.

Deter and Defend has clear objectives that are organised at different levels—by domain, by geography, and at the strategic level—which enables NATO to have a strategic vision and alignment across 30 nations and thousands of forces. This concept ensures that, if hostilities do break out, NATO is prepared to handle anything that arises. Deter and Defend enhances NATO's ability to detect, monitor, and assess emerging threats long before they happen. Situational awareness, intelligence sharing, capabilities needed to gather the information, computer networks to share, and architecture to ensure commanders can digest that information faster than an adversary is necessary; and NATO is putting that into place.

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) has to have the ability to command multiple joint operation areas (JOAs) simultaneously, allocate resources, and prioritize the fight. Over the past 25 years, SHAPE's main focus has been on crisis management and out of area operations such as Afghanistan and Iraq; therefore this refocussing is not insignificant. Deter and Defend brings together multi-domain reinforcement, long-range joint fires, integrated air and missile defence, cyber, command and control, electronic warfare, space capabilities, and nuclear deterrence by predicting what an adversary will do, and responding faster than they can. The concept seeks to deter adversaries and prevent escalation, but if this occurs, NATO is prepared to present multiple dilemmas across multiple regions or domains to increase deterrence and ensure all Allied territory is defended.

### **Question & Answer Period**

During the question-and-answer period, Brigadier-General Janzen provided his top three takeaways for civilians to keep in mind regarding disinformation and building trust in our institutions. Firstly, it is important to project a clear and compelling narrative of one's beliefs and values; more so than managing or clarifying disinformation. Secondly, the actions taken must back up that narrative. Some of the challenges here are identifying the relevant audiences to bolster perceptions of what the audiences stand for, and accepting it is often not possible to change how other audiences may perceive you. Finally, one must be realistic about what can be accomplished in a contested and complex information environment. NATO has the resources of 30 nations behind it, and they are trying to harness them into four very simple strategic communications objectives: maintaining Allied cohesion, assuring Allied publics, maintaining Alliance legitimacy, and deterring adversaries.

Regarding the degree to which citizens engage in disinformation to affect their adversary's morale and capability, Brigadier-General Janzen explains that NATO is a defensive alliance but one which also prepares for the worst and war-fighting. They have clear policies and guidelines which dictate how they leverage the capabilities, authorities, and trust that is invested in them. NATO can manage very sophisticated and lethal weapons, up to and including nuclear weapons, in a responsible, defensive and practical way that the bulk of their member states and citizens within them trust. The same is true with NATO communications to Allied citizens, which are always truthful and transparent.

Discussing whether the commitment to transparency and trust puts NATO at a disadvantage in dealing with authoritarian states, Brigadier-General Janzen posited that it can put NATO at a short-term disadvantage, as adversaries can say unsubstantiated things quickly and exploit a fast-moving news cycle. In the medium to long-term, however, legitimacy and credibility are much more important than the short-term advantages provided by disinformation. This is what NATO Strategic Communications are focused on.

## KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION

### Presentation

- NATO has a renewed focus on deterrence and defence as it defends democracy, values that promote peace and citizens within the alliance. This concept is reflective of NATO being committed to a rules-based international order.
- Deter and Defend seeks to deter adversaries from spreading destabilisation, widening disorder or accruing decisive military advantage against the alliance that would impact NATO's security.
- By demonstrating the ability to transition from peacetime to war quickly, is itself a powerful signal of deterrence to adversaries.
- The new Force model is a three-tiered system which will more than triple the forces available to NATO.
- Deter and Defend has clear objectives that are organised at different levels, by domain, by geography and at the strategic level, which enables NATO to have a strategic vision and alignment across 30 nations and thousands of forces.

### Question & Answer Period

- It is important to project a clear and compelling narrative of one's beliefs and values, more so than simply managing or clarifying disinformation. The actions taken must back up that narrative.
- Disinformation can pollute the general discourse and affect a wide range of people, regardless of their background.
- A commitment to transparency and trust can put NATO at a short-term disadvantage, as adversaries can say unsubstantiated things quickly and exploit the news cycle. In the medium to long-term, however, legitimacy and credibility are much more important than the short-term advantages provided by disinformation.



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