NATO Transformation and Operational Support in the Canadian Forces

Part 2: The Military and Institutional Dimensions

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Abstract

This Technical Report examines the military and institutional dimensions of NATO transformation and how they may affect how the Alliance and the Canadian Forces approach the challenge of deploying and sustaining forces in the field. It constitutes the second part of a two-part project on the transformation of the Alliance and operational support. The first sections of this report define key terms and explore briefly the strategic environment in which NATO finds itself. The subsequent sections evaluate the status of the transformational process through the lens of the new military task set that the Alliance must deal with, the NATO Response Force, multinational support programs, and the internal architecture of the Alliance itself. As the Alliance will inaugurate a new Strategic Concept before the end of 2010, each section attempts to look into the near to determine what implications these transformational trends and concepts will have for the Alliance and the CF. Conclusions reveal that although a degree of strategic and (especially) financial uncertainty hovers over both entities, the support and sustainment challenge can be met through a mixture of collaboration and innovation.

Résumé

Le présent rapport technique examine les dimensions militaires et institutionnelles de la transformation de l'OTAN ainsi que son incidence sur la façon dont l'Alliance et les Forces canadiennes procèdent au déploiement et au maintien en puissance des forces sur le terrain. Il porte sur la deuxième partie d'un projet en deux volets concernant la transformation du soutien à l'Alliance et du soutien opérationnel. Les premières sections du rapport définissent les termes principaux et décrivent l'environnement stratégique dans lequel se situe l'OTAN. Les sections suivantes évaluent l'état du processus de transformation à la lumière des nouvelles tâches militaires auxquelles l'Alliance doit faire face, de la force d'intervention de l'OTAN, des programmes de soutien multinationaux ainsi que de l'architecture interne de l'Alliance elle-même. Comme l'Alliance mettra en œuvre un nouveau concept stratégique avant la fin de 2010, on essaie d'effectuer un examen approfondi à chaque section afin de déterminer les incidences de ces tendances et concepts transformationnels pour l'Alliance et les FC. Les conclusions indiquent que malgré une certaine incertitude stratégique (et surtout financière) qui plane sur les deux organisations, la difficulté de soutien et de maintien des forces peut être surmontée grâce à la collaboration et à l'innovation.

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Executive summary

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David Rudd; DRDC CORA TR 2010-246; Defence R&D Canada – CORA; November 2010.

Background: The first decade of the twenty-first century has held many challenges for NATO and its members. Although the mission in Afghanistan continues to pre-occupy the political leadership and military planners, member governments are beginning to look ahead to post-ISAF NATO and what functions the Alliance will (or should) perform. Collective defence will surely continue to be the principal function of the 28-member body, and there is at least some desire to re-direct the Alliance's attention homeward after almost a decade of heavy engagement abroad. However, discussions at the highest political levels are replete with references to a new generation of risks and threats which know no geographical limits, and which might engage the attention (if not the interest) of the allies. How to prioritize these threats would tax the political acumen of even the greatest practitioners of statecraft. Doing so in a period of severe fiscal austerity makes the task all that more challenging.

It is in this environment that NATO nations are drafting a new Strategic Concept—the first such effort in over a decade. By November 2010 when the heads of state and government gather in Lisbon, a general consensus should be forged on matters ranging from how the Alliance should be structured, what burdens it absolutely must assume, what risks it considers to be of lesser importance, what capability sets requires to address them, and how the members should pursue capability development, individually and collectively. In short, the new Concept should pragmatically assess the nature and effects of a decade of strategic change and express clearly the collective will of the trans-Atlantic community to acquire the means necessary to adapt to that change. Put simply, NATO must transform.

Regardless of whether the allies decide to re-balance the effort between the "home" and "away" game, it is clear that the continued credibility of the Alliance will rest on its ability to deploy credible forces. How these will be configured is a matter of conjecture, as transformation is an on-going (some would say never-ending) process of capability development. But it is certain that they will require a measure of logistical support if they are to operate effectively; the movement of forces and their in-theatre support – be it on land, at sea, or in the air—is critical to success, however a new generation of strategists choose to define it.

Results: How Canada and its partners will rise to the operational support challenge is becoming clear, not simply by virtue to the virtual consensus on the expanded range of threats, but by the fact that a series of multinational projects have been launched in recent years which reflect a strong desire to pool risks and resources. After many false starts the NATO Response Force still is struggling to reach operational capability, but the allies are clearly committed to it as it represents a showpiece of transformation. Canada has made significant strides to augment its own logistical capabilities which, although acquired for national purposes, could be put at the service of the collective. The outlook and activities of a re-vamped NATO that will help shape how that support is rendered.

Significance: Perhaps the most interesting developments that will drive operational support are changes to the inner workings of the Alliance. A heightened awareness of the outsized NATO bureaucracy has spawned a movement to reform it and re-orient human and financial resources in ways that will yield more useable capability. The often cumbersome decision-making process may also come under scrutiny, raising the possibility that calls for deployments may come quicker or more frequently. This will necessitate rapid response from those who must convey forces to where they can have the desired kinetic or non-kinetic effects.

Future plans: Although a degree of political and economic uncertainty prevails at the time of writing, one can expect that the Strategic Concept coupled with some difficult budgetary decisions in allied capitals with lend clarity to the Alliance's grand transformation project, and illuminate the challenges and opportunities that await the Canadian Forces and its operational support practitioners. The issues raised herein should be explored further in the wake of the upcoming NATO summit.

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David Rudd; DRDC CORA TR 2010-246; R & D pour la défense Canada – CORA; Novembre 2010.

Contexte: La première décennie du XXI^{e} siècle a comporté de grands défis pour l'OTAN et ses membres. Bien que la mission en Afghanistan continue de préoccuper les dirigeants politiques et les planificateurs militaires, les gouvernements des pays membres commencent à penser à l'avenir et à l'OTAN après la FIAS ainsi qu'aux fonctions que remplira ou que devrait remplir alors l'Alliance. La défense collective continuera certainement d'être la principale fonction des 28 membres de cette organisation, et il y a une certaine volonté de réorienter l'attention de l'Alliance sur les aspects nationaux après pratiquement une décennie d'engagement considérable à l'étranger. Cependant, on discute aux plus hauts niveaux politiques des nouveaux risques et des nouvelles menaces qui se jouent des frontières géographiques et qui pourraient requérir l'attention (sinon l'intérêt) des pays alliés. Le classement de ces menaces par ordre de priorité exigera un grand flair politique des plus grands praticiens de l'art de gouverner. La période d'austérité budgétaire actuelle rend la tâche encore plus difficile.

C'est dans ce contexte que les pays membres de l'OTAN élaborent un nouveau concept stratégique – le premier du genre depuis plus d'une décennie. D'ici novembre 2010, lorsque les chefs d'État et de gouvernement se rassembleront à Lisbonne, il faudrait établir un consensus notamment sur les questions suivantes : Comment devrait être structurée l'Alliance? Quelles fonctions doit-elle absolument assumer? Quels risques considère-t-elle de moindre importance? Quelles sont les capacités requises pour les surmonter? Comment les pays membres devraient-ils procéder pour développer des capacités, individuellement et collectivement? Bref, dans le cadre du nouveau concept, on doit évaluer de façon pragmatique la nature et les effets d'un changement stratégique durant une décennie et exprimer clairement la volonté collective de la communauté euro-atlantique de se doter des moyens nécessaires pour s'adapter à ce changement. En d'autres mots, l'OTAN doit se transformer.

Que les pays alliés décident de rééquilibrer les activités entre les niveaux international et national ou non, il est clair que la crédibilité continue de l'Alliance reposera sur sa capacité de déployer des forces crédibles. La façon dont cela va se faire est une question de conjecture, car la transformation est un processus continu (certains diraient un processus sans fin) de développement de capacités. Mais il est certain qu'ils auront besoin de mesures de soutien logistique pour mener efficacement des opérations; le mouvement des forces et leur soutien dans le théâtre – que ce soit sur terre, en mer ou dans les airs – sont essentiels pour le succès, quelle que soit la façon dont la nouvelle génération de stratèges les définiront.

Résultats: La façon dont le Canada et ses partenaires relèveront le défi du soutien opérationnel est plus claire, non seulement à cause du consensus virtuel sur la vaste gamme de menaces, mais aussi du fait que bon nombre de projets multinationaux ont été mis en œuvre au cours des récentes années, ce qui montre une forte volonté de regrouper les risques et les ressources. Après beaucoup de mauvais débuts, la force d'intervention de l'OTAN s'efforce toujours d'atteindre

une capacité opérationnelle, mais les pays alliés y sont clairement engagés car il s'agit de la pièce centrale de la transformation. Le Canada a réalisé d'importants progrès dans l'acquisition de ses propres capacités de soutien logistique qui, bien qu'étant acquises aux fins d'utilisation nationale, pourraient être utilisées pour l'atteinte d'objectifs communs. La vision et les activités de l'OTAN restructurée qui aideront à définir ce soutien sont établies.

Importance: Les progrès les plus importants qui serviront de moteur au soutien opérationnel sont peut-être les changements apportés au fonctionnement interne de l'Alliance. Une plus grande prise de conscience de la bureaucratie démesurée de l'OTAN a déclenché un mouvement en vue de la réformer et de réaffecter les ressources financières et humaines de manière à obtenir une capacité plus utile. Le processus décisionnel souvent lourd pourrait aussi faire l'objet d'un examen, rendant éventuellement possibles des appels au déploiement plus rapides et plus fréquents. Il faudra une réaction rapide des pays appelés à envoyer des forces aux endroits où l'intervention cinétique ou non cinétique est requise.

Perspectives: Bien qu'un certain niveau d'incertitude politique et économique subsiste au moment de la production du présent rapport, on peut s'attendre à ce que le concept stratégique et certaines décisions budgétaires difficiles dans les capitales des pays alliés clarifient le grand projet de transformation de l'Alliance et mettent au grand jour les enjeux et les possibilités qui s'offrent aux Forces canadiennes ainsi qu'aux responsables du soutien opérationnel. Les questions soulevées dans le présent rapport devraient faire l'objet d'une étude approfondie dans la foulée du prochain sommet de l'OTAN.

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1 Introduction

In the autumn of 2010 the leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will promulgate a new Strategic Concept. For the first time in over a decade the 28-member alliance will go beyond mere summit communiqués and declarations and issue authoritative guidance on the organization's raison d'être and its future role within the international security policies of its constituents.

As with previous Concepts, strenuous efforts will undoubtedly be made to forge a strong consensus on NATO's primary purpose—collective defence—as well as the theoretical and practical obligations of membership. One can expect that the usual pieties regarding the indivisibility of trans-Atlantic security will also be uttered. But consensus on the future of the alliance will be challenged by the question of how (and for how long) to prosecute the complex and difficult operation in Afghanistan, where varying levels of commitment, stamina and risk-tolerance have prompted uncertainty about NATO's role outside its immediate area of interest. In addition, significant defence budgetary contractions are expected to plague most allies in the years ahead, raising the issue of whether they will be able (let alone willing) to maintain sufficient capability to address the plethora of security challenges that a globalizing world has in store.

If the political will to employ armed forces in the pursuit of an agreed-upon goal is the clearest manifestation of allied cohesion and resolve, capability development must surely run a close second. Indeed, it is at the heart of a process known as "transformation"—a term embedded in the strategic and operational lexicon but often misunderstood and misused by political leaders and military practitioners.[1] Capability development goes beyond the mere acquisition of hardware; it encompass the purposeful evolution of organizations, concepts and skill-sets required to carry out future operations. The latter may be traditional territorial defence or expeditionary tasks in complex environments. In either case, the physical support and sustainment of deployed forces will often make the difference between success (however the Alliance chooses to define it) and failure.

The present report represents the second half of a larger project to assess the relationship between the transformation of NATO and the operational support efforts of the Canadian Forces (CF). It is being undertaken at the behest of Canadian Operational Support Command (CANOSCOM) in anticipation of a new Strategic Concept that is expected to be introduced at the Lisbon summit in November 2010. Part 1 examined the higher political dynamics of transformation. As such, it explored how the strategic guidance, enlargement, external partnerships, and socio-economic factors might influence operational support efforts within the Alliance and the CF. Part 2 is intended to delve deeper into the intricacies of the military dimension of NATO transformation, focussing on the operational environment and the internal workings of the Alliance. As such, it may be read as a self-contained essay. The goal is to help identify opportunities and challenges faced by the Department of National Defence and those military practitioners tasked with planning and executing a support and sustainment campaign.

[1] Colin Gray, "Strategic Thoughts for Defence Planners," *Survival*, Vol. 52, No. 3, June-July 2010, pp. 159-178. See also Allen Sens, "The RMA, Transformation and Peace Support Operations," in K. Michael, et al., *The Transformation of the World of War and Peace Support Operations* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2009), pp. 81-100.

The methodology for Part 2 mirrors that of Part 1. Following a definition of key terms and a brief effort at scene-setting, a non-exhaustive list of issue areas are examined with a view to determining how military developments and reforms—both current and possible—may affect capability development in general and operational support in particular. The characteristics of contemporary operations are being looked at with a view to determining the range of tasks that will have to be supported. Next, conceptual developments such as the NATO Response Force (NRF) and other multinational programs are assessed for their operational support implications. The report then explores institutional/organizational matters—including the reform of the Alliance's command structure and the evolution of the NATO Management and Supply Agency (NAMSA)—which are intended to enhance and improve operational support capabilities. In each section, consideration is given to possible future initiatives that do not stem from any official political guidance at the time of writing, but which may nevertheless have a salutary effect on how the allies and the CF go about their appointed support business.

2 Operational Support and Transformation

In Canadian military parlance, operational support is the term given to a range of activities relating to the activation, sustainment, and termination of a military operation. It may be regarded as a "meta-capability" composed of several sub-capabilities that are generally classified as combat support or combat service support functions. Among these are logistics, military engineering, health services, military police, equipment maintenance, personnel support, communications and information systems, etc.[2] Quite often the term "logistics" is used interchangeably with operational support. Since the objective of this paper is not to explore the evolution of the military police, engineering, or any other professions or trades within NATO or the CF, it should be assumed that this narrow definition will apply. This reductionist approach is not to devalue other functions; it is merely to align Canadian and NATO terminology. Logistics is defined by the Alliance as "the science of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces."[3] Movement generally refers to transportation of personnel and materiel to and from the theatre while maintenance is the acquisition and/or furnishing of facilities and essential services.

As practitioners well know, logistics/operational support is regarded as an essential but often invisible activity of the military campaign—a rear-echelon endeavour that lacks the cachet of the metaphorical "tip of the spear." But its importance as part of a successful operation cannot be overstated. Writing for the National Defense University, Kenneth Brown drew a useful, if not timeless, link between military strategy—the art of rendering an adversary incapable of waging war—and logistics:

> Most military professionals, over time, come to realize that the *stuff* of war indeed is as important as the strategy of war-fighting. Having what is needed cannot be presumed. No strategy can save a campaign when the 'stuff' is lacking.[4]

Even in an era where classical war-fighting has had to share the stage with operations that fall short of all-out combat, the above observation loses none of its potency.

Establishing a link between a functional capability and a concept whose meaning (let alone existence) has proven to be elusive in the eyes of even experienced analysts is no mean feat. It is not the intention of this work to explore the historical pedigree of transformation or its much-maligned predecessor, the Revolution in Military Affairs. As part two of this project is clearly geared toward practitioners, a restricted definition of transformation will be employed. NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT) defines transformation as the "continuous improvement of Alliance capabilities to maintain and enhance the military relevance and effectiveness of the

[2] See Canadian Operational Support Command website at http://www.canoscom-comsocan.forces.gc.ca/bi-rg/index-eng.asp, accessed on 12 March 2010.
[3] Senior NATO Logistics Conference Secretariat, NATO Logistics Handbook (Brussels: NATO, 2007), p.4.
[4] Kenneth N. Brown, *Strategics: The Logistics-Strategy Link* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1987), p. 2.

Alliance."[5] The 2006 Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), which effectively stands in for a Strategic Concept, situates transformation in the order of strategic priorities thus:

> The challenge is to cope with an ever-increasing set of demands with new types of operations. That is why allies are pursuing transformation of their forces: current and future operations will continue to require agile and interoperable, well-trained and well-led military forces—forces that are modern, *deployable*, *sustainable* [emphasis added], and available to undertake demanding operations far from home bases.[6]

The range of possible missions calls for a wide range of capabilities, each encompassing various equipment sets, skill sets, and the appropriate structures/organizations for the planning and actual conduct of operations. This report is concerned with the transformation of only those capability areas that are germane to operational support. Although few would dispute the need for a leading-edge communications/public relations capacity to win the crucial battle of the narrative in front of a global audience, the evolution of this capability is outside the scope of this paper, as it will not affect how forces are deployed or sustained.

[5] Allied Command Transformation website http://www.act.nato.int/content.asp?pageid=200, accessed 11 March 2010.

[6] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Comprehensive Political Guidance*, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b061129e.htm, accessed 2 February 2010.

3 NATO at the Turn of the Decade

Although it is not necessary to undertake a comprehensive view of the strategic landscape in which NATO finds itself,[7] a few observations and assumptions are in order. First, despite the fading of the Cold War into the distant background, NATO continues to be the primary vehicle for trans-Atlantic security dialogue and the preferred means through which its members harness their collective military power. However, the range of risks and threats that the allies face is markedly different from that which prevailed in decades past. The singular focus on conventional and nuclear deterrence and defence against the combined forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization has given way to a more diverse set of concerns which demand strategic flexibility—political as well as military—from the partners. Part one of this project dealt with how NATO had to adapt (or transform) politically to address the complexities of a new world. The allies brought new members into the fold, solicited new partnerships outside the Euro-Atlantic area, and, most importantly, sought periodic updates in the strategic guidance. But it was not enough that NATO continued to exist; if the creation of two generations of statesmen and soldiers was to retain its utility in the eyes of Western publics, members had to be certain what it was for.

The quest for a new Strategic Concept suggests that that question can never be satisfactorily answered once and for all. The analogy of NATO as an insurance policy—the ultimate guarantor of allied security—is arguably too vague (and uninspiring) to compel taxpayers to see to its upkeep over the long term. The forthcoming summit affords the Alliance to reaffirm its core purpose (if that is what the members want) while charting a course through a period of political and economic uncertainty. As a recent study for the Atlantic Council so bluntly put it: "the basic challenge for Strategic Concept 2010 will be to state unequivocally what NATO must be critically good at by 2020."[8]

What NATO is for and what it should be good at are questions that spark intense debate. The value of collective defence is widely agreed-upon, although there are various opinions as to whether that defence begins on the peripheries of allied territory or further afield.[9] Conventional threats have been (partially) displaced by non-traditional ones, including terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles, energy security and the vulnerability of cyber networks. There is also the question of whether NATO should acquire a civilian stabilization and reconstruction capability to address the non-military dimension of

[7] See Allied Command Transformation, *Multiple Futures Project—Navigating Toward 2030* (Norfolk: ACT Headquarters, 2009).

[8] Julian Lindley-French and Yves Boyer, *STRATCON 2010: An Alliance for a Global Century* (Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council Strategic Advisors Group, 2010), p. 5.

[9] See Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer, "Does a multi-tier NATO matter? The Atlantic alliance and the process of strategic change," *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 2009. The authors advance the thesis that NATO can be roughly divided into three camps, with "reformists" favouring expeditionary operations and an expansive definition of security encompassing non-traditional threats; "status quo" members favouring a less globalist outlook and the primacy of European security, and; "revisionists" calling for a return to the collective defence mandate of old, with a view to safeguarding NATO's eastern frontiers from the possibility of Russian revanchism.

"complex" operations.[10] How these are prioritized, whether NATO is flexible enough to deal with them, or whether they should be the preserve of other organizations or ad hoc groupings of states is not yet clear. For the sake of simplicity, this paper will look to the most recent political guidance provided to NATO members to determine what the expected task list will be post-2010.

An additional word on alliance-wide budgetary matters is also in order, as this will inevitably have an impact on whether members, having agreed on what NATO is for, will provide the means necessary to bring about its transformation. At the time of writing serious concerns abound as to the ability of many NATO members to maintain a capability set that is of sufficient range and depth to see to the range of issues listed above. In Eastern Europe, Romania is contemplating a 50 per cent cut in its armed forces. Neighbouring Bulgaria is seeking to trim an order for tactical transport aircraft and helicopters (with obvious implications for operational support) as part of a possible package of wider cuts.[11] The Czech Republic and Slovakia are contemplating the merger of their air defence, tactical transport, and ground logistics capabilities in the face of severe budget woes.[12] Defence spending in Hungary will fall below one per cent of gross domestic product in 2011.[13]

More worrisome is that NATO's four major contributors—the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), France and Germany—will also be curtailing spending. The first three have a long history of expeditionary operations, and it is possible that cuts will reduce national capacity to undertake and support operations outside NATO territory. American Defense Secretary Robert Gates has launched a drive to trim US$100-billion from the Pentagon's budget and has gone as far as to muse that America's principle expeditionary tool—the US Marine Corps—might have to re-visit its mandate in an age of austerity.[14] The UK is bracing for the loss of 20 per cent of its defence budget, with the Royal Air Force shrinking to pre-First World War levels. In Paris, amid fears of a pending €3.5-billion cut in the capital portion of the defence budget, French officials talk openly of the need for greater Anglo-French collaboration in procurement—a notable departure from France's traditional practice of encouraging substantive military co-operation through the European Union (EU).[15] Germany stands ready to break with decades of tradition and

[10] This refers to operations in which the resolution of the crisis demands "the integration of all levers of state power, both across government and among partners and allies." See UK Ministry of Defence, *Global Strategic Trends—Out to 2040*, Fourth Edition, p. 16.

[11] Agence France-Presse, "Bulgaria Wants to Cancel Orders for Helos, C-27s," *Defense News*, 4 August 2010, http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4734861&c=EUR&s=TOP, accessed on 4 August, 2010.

[12] Jiri Kominek, "Czech Republic and Slovakia look to defence co-operation," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 13 August 2010, http://www4.janes.com/subscribe/jdw/doc_view.jsp?K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/mags/jdw/history/jdw2010/jdw43873.htm@current&Prod_Name=JDW&QueryText= accessed on 13 August 2010.

[13] Peter Dunai, "Hungary mulls defence priorities as budget falls," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 12 August,2010. http://www4.janes.com/subscribe/jdw/doc_view.jsp?K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/mags/jdw/history/jdw2010/jdw43871.htm@current&Prod_Name=JDW&QueryText= accessed on 13 August, 2010.

[14] Viola Gienger, "Gates Urges Congress to Avoid 'Mistake' of Harmful Cuts in Military Budget," Bloomberg News, 13 August, 2010, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-08-13/gates-urges-congress-to-resist-harmful-military-cuts-as-federal-debt-rises.html, accessed on 13 August, 2010. Gates expressed doubts about the possibility of staging large-scale amphibious operations when potential adversaries were developing inexpensive sea-/area-denial capabilities.

[15] Pierre Tran, "French Cuts Will Affect Entire Defense Industry, Dassault Exec Says," *Defense News*, 29 July 2010, http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4727925&c=EUR&s=ALL, accessed on 30 July 2010.

abolish conscription. Although this would make little difference to a NATO dedicated to expeditionary operations (as conscripts cannot be deployed outside the homeland), it portends deeper cuts in the Bundeswehr. The Merkel government has pledged to claw back €8.3-billion from the defence portfolio over the next four years and slash up to 40,000 positions.[16]

The intent of this thumbnail sketch of defence budgetary woe is to convey the challenges facing members of an alliance that all agree must be strong and relevant. (Canada, for its part, has not yet gone into serious deficit-cutting mode, although this cannot be ruled out in the short- to medium term.) But in spite of the gloom which seems to pervade allied finance ministries, military planners would do well to recall that transformation can be driven by economic fragility as much as by economic strength. How the current state of affairs may yield opportunities for collaborative capability development will be discussed below.

For the time being it will be assumed that Canada will continue to remain an active player on the international stage, and that it will continue to place faith in multilateralism as a means of addressing crises and resolving disputes. It will remain in NATO both as a matter of interest and as an expression of the multilateral values that the Alliance embodies.[17] Although it will remain of modest military means, it will want to contribute real capability rather than just rhetorical support to allied operations.[18] As such, Ottawa will undoubtedly await the new Strategic Concept with a mixture of eagerness and trepidation, hoping that the debates over roles and risks sparked by Afghanistan, and the financial turmoil of recent months will not deter allies from doing the same.

[16] Agence France-Presse, "Germany the Phase out Conscription: Report," *Defense News*, 13 August 2010, http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4745196&c=EUR&s=TOP, accessed on 13 August 2010.

[17] Government of Canada, Canada First Defence Strategy, http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/pri/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_english_low-res.pdf, accessed on 15 March 2009.

[18] See Philippe Lagassé and Justin Massie, "Tories and Grits are as one on defence policy," *Globe and Mail*, 4 August 2010, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/tories-and-grits-are-as-one-on-defence-policy/article1660646/. The authors cite the pledge to buy the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter as evidence that regardless of who forms a government, "both the Liberals and the Conservatives want to deploy Canada's military on meaningful, internationally recognized missions overseas, an objective that requires continued investment in technologically advanced, combat-capable forces."

4 Transformation and Operational Support: Military and Institutional Drivers

4.1 A New Mission Profile

The probability that the new Strategic Concept will chart a markedly different course for the allies is fairly low. Large organizations are known for incremental change, and a radical alteration in NATO's mandate would overturn (or ignore) guidance given two very high-level documents: the afore-mentioned CPG and the more recent report by the "Group of Experts," a committee struck by Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to render outside advice on the new Concept. Both documents note the unpredictability of the international environment and the threats posed by terrorism, the proliferation of unconventional weapons, as well as the threats to critical infrastructure. Neither anticipates that the Alliance will foreswear overseas operations or that it should seek to be less flexible than it already is. Both recognize the primacy of territorial defence while calling for the maintenance of high-quality expeditionary forces backed by robust logistics.[19]

Although there is general agreement on the threat basket, it should be remembered that the CPG and report of the Group of Experts were authored before the present budgetary crisis set in. One must therefore accept a degree of uncertainty as to where the allies will concentrate what could be diminishing capability development efforts in the short term. Put simply, the mission priorities have not yet been established; there is no hierarchy of tasks. Consequently, capability development is comparatively more difficult than it was during the era of the uni-dimensional threat. Although the allies sought, with some success, to lay out concrete capability priorities at the 2002 Prague Summit and hold themselves accountable for achieving them,[20] recent financial hardship may endanger these efforts, as the short survey above attests. It is unclear whether efficiencies will be will be made as a result of consultations with partners or whether the members will make cuts and restructure with national priorities in mind. There is likely to be an element of both: electoral considerations will inevitably play a role in determining what capabilities are jettisoned and which are retained (or acquired). At the same time, multinational programs and initiatives may help members preserve key capabilities. But if the very notion of transformation is not in doubt, the pace at which it occurs may very well be.

Returning to the question of missions and tasks, despite recognition of diplomacy and development as part of the overall security equation, NATO still a military alliance—one dedicated to the security of its members through the management of organized violence. The question to be asked is what kinds of violence will Alliance be dealing with and at what distance from home? What type of forces with what mix of capabilities is required? If NATO should transform, what is it transforming to do?

[19] NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement—Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, May 2010, p. 8.

[20] The Prague Capabilities Commitment bound members to acquire/improve specific capabilities in eight essential fields, including strategic sea- and airlift, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-12857281-07335390/natolive/topics_50087.htm, accessed on 23 April 2010.

There is no shortage of views on the matter. Boyer and Lindley-French assert that, "[a]t the heart of Strategic Concept 2010 must be a commitment to enhance fighting power with capabilities and capacities designed to ensure the allies remain the world's preeminent military group."[21] The two scholars do not suggest that NATO's future lie strictly within the bounds of (conventional) war-fighting. Like so many of their contemporaries they acknowledge the range of challenges that the Alliance may face and call for agile and flexible forces to meet them. In its most recent report on global strategic trends, the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) does not discount the possibility of interstate war occurring as a result of old or new rivalries, or that major powers will not become embroiled in war outside their immediate area of interest. While there will be strategic incentives to forge relationships with new partners, the MoD asserts that, "established partnerships [ie. NATO] *will* be adapted to meet the breadth and depth of the challenges."[22] The Canadian Forces' take on the future security environment takes a similar view, noting that conventional conflict will share the stage with but will be increasingly displaced by so-called "hybrid wars" pitting states against non-state parties employing irregular tactics, terrorism, and criminality.[23]

Among the contrarian views are those of Rupert Smith, in whose provocative work, *The Utility of Force*, conventional wars—those fought between the uniformed armies of industrialized states with clear lines of operation, decisive battles, and clear outcomes—are largely, if not totally, obsolete. In their place Smith envisions wars "among the people" in which outside interveners must deal with sub-state combatants and the populations in which they operate, attempting to sufficiently neutralize the former while winning over the latter. The goal is to bring about "success" rather than the type of comprehensive victory as understood by military leaders of the first half of the twentieth century.[24] While agreeing that such conflicts are more frequent today, Christopher Dandeker argues that Smith's underestimates the utility of traditional deterrence and defence, since Western states still have vital interests that they will strive to protect.

> This is why, in terms of doctrine, equipment, training, and organization, Western armed forces are loath to cease doing what they do now; with limited resources, to prepare for industrial war while also preparing for war amongst the people. But this is not conservatism; rather, it is based on a realistic judgement of the risks and threats in contemporary international politics. It is far too early and risky to write off industrial war.[25]

Reconciling these apparently divergent views in order to set priorities for capability development is not as difficult as it seems when one considers that all envision the use of military forces far from home base. Thus the importance of operational support capabilities is clear regardless of what type(s) of instability the allies are facing. Indeed, Dandeker's thesis could be interpreted as a warning that transformation should only be taken so far; retention of at least some "traditional" capabilities is warranted in order to deal with a future that is distinctly indistinct.

David Yost takes the point a step further, arguing that transformation need not come at the expense of traditional defence needs. As previously noted, there is discord among the members

[21] Lindley-French and Boyer, *STRATCON 2010*, p. 2.
[22] UK Ministry of Defence, *Global Strategic Trends—Out to 2040*, pp. 15-16.
[23] Chief of Force Development, The Future Security Environment 2008-2030—Part One: Current and Emerging Trends. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2010, 94,
[24] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: the Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2007).
[25] Christopher Dandeker, "The End of War? The Use of Force in the Twenty-First Century," in Michael, et al., *The Transformation of the World of War and Peace Support Operations*, p. 28.

over the degree to which NATO should re-focus its efforts on the protection of allied territory. But lest one assume that this would result in a reduced need for the capabilities required to deploy forces at great distances, Yost makes the point that the distinction between collective defence (Article 5) and external crisis response (non-Article 5) missions—including those in complex environments—is illusory.

> To what extent is there a contradiction between transforming forces for expeditionary operations and sustaining preparedness for territorial defence? To some extent, this is an ill-framed debate […]. NATO today needs improved expeditionary capabilities not only for crisis response operations distant from allied territory but also for collective defence itself. This means investing in airlift and other "strategic mobility" logistical assets, mobile communications networks, combat support and combat service support. The allies must be able to project capabilities to every part of the significantly enlarged treaty area […]. Moreover, expeditionary operations…can provide training and experience relevant to Article 5 endeavours. The more the allies demonstrate their ability to conduct demanding non-Article 5 tasks at strategic range—for instance, in the Balkans (which are distant from some allies) and Afghanistan—successfully, the more they should feel able to rely on each other in an Article 5 contingency.[26]

Another significant yet under-reported development in the transformation of NATO's mission profile occurred in August of 2010 when the Alliance inaugurated the Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD). A strategic analysis team drawn from various parts of the central headquarters will keep the members abreast of developments in four issue areas: terrorism, proliferation, cyber defence and energy security. Beyond research capacity it is not yet clear what resources the allies will dedicate to these threats.[27] However, the intent, according to the Alliance, is "to move new, non-traditional security challenges to the centre of allied attention."[28]

The question as to how far to embrace non-Article 5 tasks—specifically peace support and humanitarian operations—has been taken up by Burwell et. al. who argue that NATO's effectiveness will increasingly depend on its ability to integrate stabilization and reconstruction into "military" operations, and operate alongside other international and non-governmental actors.[29] There are several recent examples of this. From mid-2005 until the end of 2007 NATO and EU personnel provided air transport and training to African Union forces as part of their peacekeeping mission in Darfur. Relief operations carried out in the wake of the 2005 earthquake and the 2010 floods in Pakistan have likewise called upon NATO's operational support (medical, air transport) resources as well as its ability to respond rapidly. Michael *et al* note that the emergence of new global humanitarian norms and the self-assigned obligations of Western states to help the less fortunate have brought military forces into play with greater frequency. As "wars of conscience" or straight relief work are likely to be undertaken in the developing

[26] David S. Yost, "NATO's evolving purposes and the next Strategic Concept," *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 2, 2010, pp. 496-497.

[27] In 2008 NATO established the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia following attacks on that country's networks by suspected Russian hackers in April of 2007.

[28] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "New NATO division to deal with Emerging Security Challenges," http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-0605913F-FE7A023D/natolive/news_65107.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed 4 August 2010.

[29] Francis Burwell, et al., "Transatlantic Transformation: Building a NATO-EU Security Architecture," Policy Paper, (Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council of the United States, March 2006), p. 4.

world—perhaps in tandem with some form of long-term societal reconstruction - the participation of other government departments may be required. This will necessitate the ability to support them logistically, even after military forces have departed the scene.

Implications for Operational Support

If the new Strategic Concept opts for a more restrained mission profile the political and transformational effects could be considerable. It would require strenuous efforts to remind the European partners of their theoretical and practical obligations to see to the security of their partners across the Atlantic. Failure to do so would have the same effect as the forswearing of expeditionary operations: a gradual de-coupling of the trans-Atlantic link. Policy-makers in Washington would inevitably question the relevance of the alliance to America's globalist security policy and reallocate its considerable operational support resources elsewhere. Canada would be hard-pressed to justify its place in an organization in which the bulk of the members gave no thought (and devoted no resources) to its security.[30]

The evidence suggests, though, that the allies will not choose to go this route and the Strategic Concept will reaffirm their commitment to extra-territorial security, broadly defined. A mixture of collective defence, crisis response (with a possible civilian component), and a variety of non-traditional threats makes for an ambitious agenda. The implications for operational support of a continued commitment to expeditionary operations will require the allies—and especially the North American partners—to ensure that their forces have sufficient strategic reach, both for the initial deployment and for the sustainment and repatriation phases of an operation. (Even in the unlikely event that the Alliance restricted its ambitions to its own back yard, long internal lines of communication would still demand that Canada make arrangements to dispatch forces to Europe and other parts of the North American continent.)

The need for adequate sealift and airlift—both the hardware residing within members' inventories and the arrangements for securing it from external sources—is clear regardless of NATO's geographical orientation. A commitment to undertake non-Article 5 missions also heightens the need for external partnerships—either bilateral or multilateral—that will permit the transit of forces and supplies to a theatre of operations. The CF's embryonic program to establish operational support "hubs" (involving assured access to airfields and seaports) in various parts of the world[31] represents prudent planning and one that the allies might do well to emulate.

The salience of the Comprehensive Approach in the official and non-official guidance implies that members recognize the possibility that they will be involved in complex missions. These may vary in duration, but those that involve societal reconstruction during and/or in the wake of war or natural disaster may require lengthy engagements and an ability to support efforts of other government departments indefinitely. NATO's experience in Afghanistan—characterized by the

[30] Paul Chapin, *Security in an Uncertain World: Canada's Perspective on NATO's New Strategic Concept*, (Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2010), 23.

[31] Denis Dion, "Force Projection and Sustainment Through Operational Support Hubs: CONOPS brief to Stakeholders," Canadian Operational Support Command Power Point presentation, July 2010. Original in the possession of author. The project seeks to conclude arrangements with countries in Central/South American, western and eastern Africa, Europe, southeast Asia and the western Pacific to allow the CF a jumping-off point for operations in or adjacent to those regions.

deployment of the now-140,000-strong International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)—has undoubtedly crystallized the demands of complex operations in the minds of operational support planners. Clearly the most ambitious undertaking in the Alliance's history, the outcome of the conflict may colour members' views of the range of tasks that NATO should undertake in the future. There is broad agreement that military force alone cannot bring irregular conflicts to a conclusion, and this "realization", combined with the human and financial costs of the mission, may give rhetorical ammunition to those who do not relish the prospect mounting of large-scale non-Article 5 expeditionary operations.[32] Assuming that NATO will continue to have an expeditionary mind-set but then lower its level of ambition and eschew involvement in some complex missions, the result of Afghanistan may be to impede efforts at transformation, thereby reducing the drive to acquire and maintain relevant capabilities. Adoption of a "lowest common denominator" approach to threat perception/identification will ensure asymmetries in transformation with members putting markedly different levels of effort into creating and maintaining useable forces and their logistical enablers.

However, there are reasons to believe that risk-aversion among the allies will not dampen the need for high-quality forces properly supported and sustained. The enduring popularity of humanitarian operations among Western publics will call on NATO's rapid response capability in the initial phases of the crisis, even if the hand-over of relief duties to other actors occurs shortly afterward. This will likewise put a premium on strategic (air) transport to bring assistance over long distances to initial point of disembarkation, along with tactical transport to access remote areas. It will therefore be incumbent on Canada and the allies to have a mix of tangible resources at hand. The CF's own force development initiatives—including the acquisition of C-17 and C-130J cargo aircraft, CH-47F Chinook transport helicopters, and a roll-on/roll-off cargo vessel on full-time charter—represent a significant step toward achieving transformation goals.

It remains to be seen how (or if) the Canadian navy's notional Joint Support Ship will incorporate cargo/vehicle space into its design, and there is no indication at the time of writing that the vessel's configuration is being informed by NATO requirements. Nevertheless, the navy's experiences demonstrate the salience of maritime operational support and the criticality of maintaining it in the face of the diverse security challenges identified by NATO. Aside from the primary purpose of the replenishment ship to keep Canadian and allied naval vessels supplied with fuel on long deployments, other support functions include the provision of supplies to forces deployed ashore for reconstruction tasks (ie. following Hurricane Andrew, 1992), and a base for medical and helicopter support during stabilization operations (ie. Somalia, 1993). These types of missions have been on the CF's task list for some time, but their inclusion in a revised Strategic Concept would be significant.

Looking ahead, it is unclear what the new pre-occupation with ballistic missile defence (BMD), cyber threats and energy security will have on operational support. One may speculate that

[32] Karl-Theodore zu Guttenberg, "Security Today and Tomorrow," Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, 28 June 2010, http://www.iiss.org/conferences/alastair-buchan/alastair-buchan-lecture-2010/, accessed on 4 July 2010. In his remarks the German defence minister declared: "When thinking about future operations, Afghanistan should not be used as a blueprint." As to the possibility of mounting major operations in the future, he proposed strict criteria: "Only if there's a grave and imminent danger to alliance members; only with a clearly defined political goal; unless there is no other alternative and all other options have been exhausted; and only if the capabilities required for success will be provided from the very beginning."

defence against theatre ballistic missiles will take place as part of an expeditionary operation where deployed forces must be protected from attacks by regional powers. If this case, portable defences (missile batteries, radars, command and control systems) would have to be sent early into theatre to cover the arrival of follow-on forces. Depending on their size and configuration, such defences might call upon strategic airlift as the fastest means of deployment. At the same time, sea-based BMD will require underway support if the firing platform(s) are to spend extended periods of time in waters adjacent to missile-armed states.

By their very nature, cyber threats are unlikely to require the types of support envisioned above. Attacks on networks will take place at the strategic level (ie. against the NATO website and those of member governments) and against command and control linkages. But counter-measures will likely be in place beforehand in the form of hardened networks and standard operating procedures to overcome functional degradation. Moving personnel and supplies to counter the "attack" will be either impossible (as the source of the attack may not be known for some time) or unnecessary, since information technology specialists will already be on site.

Energy "security" is an ambiguous term; it may encompass the protection of critical infrastructure (i.e., pipelines, refineries), offshore resources, and the routes over which energy passes on the way to markets. One may assume that responsibility for the protection of terrestrial resources and infrastructure will fall to private security firms and the non-military arms of the national security apparatus, and that no operational support will be required except perhaps in extraordinary circumstances and when the site lies in remote areas. In such a case, armed forces may be asked to supply airlift to bring assistance to where it is needed. Offshore resources (within the 200-mile limits of the coastal state's economic exclusion zone) will be likely be protected by para-military forces (i.e., coast guards). Further out and in more volatile waters, navies and naval aviation may be called upon. But among the four oil-/gas-producing NATO allies—Norway, the UK, Canada, and the US—the location of offshore fields are either not in disputed waters or in locations so remote that it is difficult to conceive of a scenario in which, say, a terrorist group would be able to launch a successful attack.

On the other hand, tankers carrying crude oil and liquefied natural gas through dangerous shipping lanes may require naval escort. Ships from NATO have of late conducted anti-piracy patrols in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden as part of Operation OCEAN SHIELD. Although the prospect of re-fuelling and re-supplying local ports (i.e., Djibouti, Mombassa, Kenya) exist, the requirement for operational support vessels to convey fighting units from home base to their patrol area, and sustain them for extended periods of time is obvious.

The same requirement exists in counter-proliferation work, as missile components, machines used to complete the nuclear fuel cycle, and materials used in unconventional weapons are usually shipped by sea and must be intercepted before they enter port. Although such activities have not yet been undertaken under a NATO flag, the US-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) has the support of all allies and has enjoyed some success in stopping the trafficking of WMD by sea. Given the determination of "rogue" states and non-state actors to acquire advanced technologies, the need to keep allied naval forces at reasonable levels of readiness and able to remain at sea for indefinite periods of time will depend in part on the partners' willingness to place operational support at the forefront of maritime doctrine.

Prioritizing these tasks can help establish useful limits on NATO's responsibilities, as well as help the Alliance channel scarce resources toward transformational goals. As far as the expeditionary/territorial "dichotomy" is concerned, the new Strategic Concept cannot and likely will not reflect the triumph of one vision over another. Rather, it will find a way of incorporating different visions and priorities and demonstrating that an alliance of democracies is still essential to the common good even if the conditions which gave rise to it have changed.

4.2 The NATO Response Force: A Catalyst for Transformation?

One of the major transformational projects of recent years, the NATO Response Force, was conceived as a high-readiness body of 25,000 personnel comprising air, land, maritime, special forces, and support elements. It is intended to be ready to deploy within five days of an order to do so and be sustainable for a month. Far from being a tool to serve only the original mandate of the Alliance, the NRF is intended to perform the full spectrum of operations, including non-combat evacuation, consequence management, counter-terrorism, and as a vanguard for a larger follow-on force. Its strategic importance is twofold: it redefines what is meant by "flexible response", and reflects the expeditionary mind-set that certain countries—especially the US—have sought to instil in the Alliance since the concept was first proposed in 2002. From an operational support perspective, the NRF institutionalized the departure from NATO's former static defence plans.

Unfortunately, the allies have yet to fully transform the concept into reality. Initial efforts to secure allied commitments to fill the pool have been disappointing. Operations in Afghanistan have compelled members to keep forces in the ISAF rotation cycle, leaving few for the otherwise idle NRF. The persistent lack of a formula to share costs equitably has also contributed to the unwillingness of members to commit forces or act as a lead nation. If the NRF is deployed, those who happen to have committed assets to it for the 12-month training/deployment period must bear the full cost of their use, while those in the previous rotation do not. (This situation was roundly criticized by Spain, which bore the brunt of the costs of leading the NRF during its only deployment—the relief operation following the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.) Meanwhile, doubts persist as to the willingness of members to commit to a force that could see them in high-intensity combat outside NATO territory.[33] These concerns have only been heightened by the operational restrictions that some NATO members placed on their contributions to ISAF.

Unable to meet the initial manpower goals, the allies considered winding up the force completely or establishing a command and control entity with no additional forces attached. In 2009 officials settled on a third option which would see the objective force reduced to a 13,000-strong Immediate Reaction Force (IRF) with a notionally larger Response Force Pool (RFP) in reserve. The requirement that the force be dispatched within five days and sustained for a month remains, although the requirement that the IRF act as an autonomous entity has been quietly jettisoned;

[33] Mats Berdal and David Ucko, "NATO at 60," *Survival*, Vol. 51, No. 2, April-May 2009, p. 65. The authors cite Germany as a reluctant contributor to missions in non-permissive environments.

only the least demanding operations (ie. those in permissive environments) are likely to be handled by a force of this size.[34]

Implications for Operational Support

Regardless of its intended purpose, the NRF cannot be considered credible without strategic lift. The 50 per cent reduction in the size of the force would seem, on the surface, to have simplified the operational support challenge. Indeed, NATO logisticians have concluded that the requirement that all forces deploy with 30 days' worth of supplies is "an unrealistic aspiration and frequently unnecessary."[35] But Berdal and Ucko note that the continuing lack of strategic lift "undercuts the NRF's ability to mobilize without significant US support and within the five-day target period." More ominously, they warn that "[it] is…uncertain whether this shortfall will be addressed in the near future, given the at best uneven investment in the defence sector within NATO Europe."[36] Thus even with a modest level of ambition, NATO will be hard-pressed to make the NRF the showpiece of transformation that it is intended to be, although the situation may be remedied by taking a joint and multinational approach to support and sustainment. This concept will be outlined in greater detail below, but suffice to say that in order achieve the 30-day timeline, planners must reduce the overall logistical demand or "footprint", to the greatest degree possible. Accordingly, the NRF calls for a Joint Logistics and Support Group (JLSG) which draws on resources from each of the services (thus the term "joint") from each participating member (hence "multinational"), thus spreading the operational support burden as equitably as possible.

Should the weight of allied consensus deem that the NRF should not be used for missions at the higher end of the operational spectrum, or if risk aversion or fiscal austerity result in allies avoiding making contributions, this will inevitably restrict the amount of logistical capability required and the frequency with which it is rendered. This may in turn slow the transformational momentum that major allies are so keen to maintain; members will have less incentive to maintain high-demand national capabilities (since national survival is not at stake) or build common ones.[37] However, some suggest that since the probability of engaging in combat is less than that for stability or humanitarian operations, and that if NATO shifts its focus (even slightly) to the latter end of the conflict spectrum, the need for operational support should be steady over time. Indeed, drawing on NRF logistical resources permits the Alliance to play a constructive supporting role to other organizations whose mandates and goals may be complementary.[38] The afore-mentioned support to the Darfur air bridge is a case in point.

At the time of writing the only Canadian contribution to the NRF took place in 2007 when the frigate HMCS *Toronto* sailed to the Mediterranean and Africa as part of Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1). No support ship was dispatched to accompany it, although this should not be ruled out in the future. As the flotilla spent 60 per cent of its time at sea conducting

[34] Jens Ringsmose, "Taking Stock of NATO's Response Force,, NATO Defence College Research Paper No. 54 (Rome: NATO Defence College, January 2010), p. 5.
[35] Fred van der Hoek, "The Revised NRF: Option Charlie," SHAPE J4 Concepts Power Point Presentation (Unclassified), 19 November 2009.
[36] Berdal and Ucko, "NATO at 60," p. 67.
[37] Burwell et al., "Transatlantic Transformation," p. 3.
[38] Berdal and Ucko, "NATO at 60," pp. 69-70.

exercises and training with regional navies, Canada may be required to sustain not only its own assets but those of its partners.

The advent of the new-look NRF holds no unique lessons for Canada, other than to avoid the unhappy experience of Spain. But in the future, should a common funding mechanism replace the current one where "costs lie where they fall," this might tempt the allies to make more frequent use of the NRF, creating a steady demand for operational support capabilities—be they nationally-funded or provided through pooling arrangements. The latter would seem most desirable at a time of severe pressure on public finances.[39] Further, if the new Strategic Concept prioritizes complex, expeditionary operations, it is possible that the NRF could be deployed with a significant civilian component. As part of a "whole of government" approach to crisis management, the CF should be prepared to support the efforts of other departments.

4.3 Multinational Operational Support Programs

According to NATO doctrine, multinational approaches to logistics have a number of positive implications: enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, reducing the costs of the overall support effort, and allowing allied nations to contribute specific expertise while conserving resources for subsequent phases of a mission.[40] A non-allied country within or near the crisis area may make available its ports, airfields, storage facilities and other infrastructure, thereby facilitating each phase of an expeditionary deployment. This would appear to conform to the spirit of "multinationality", but since host-nation support is a concept that long pre-dates the inauguration of the transformation agenda, it will not be explored here.

More recent multinational capability development innovations include commercial contracting by self-selecting groups of NATO countries (i.e., short of Alliance-wide participation). The most prominent example of this is a program meant to address the shortfall in (mainly European) airlift which was laid bare by the ISAF mission. The Strategic Airlift—Interim Solution (SALIS) is a 15-nation consortium which maintains two Antonov AN-124 aircraft on full-time charter, two on six days' notice and another pair on nine day's notice. Since 2006 the aircraft have been used to carry outsized loads to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Darfur. Participants commit to using a minimum of 2,000 flying hours per year, with each reserving a portion of the contracted time according to their needs. Canada has been a participant since the program's inauguration but is unlikely to remain in the consortium beyond the end of 2010. It will employ its own C-17 transport aircraft and obtain supplementary lift through the international charter market which, ironically, may involve the Antonovs still under charter by the SALIS participants.

In a similar fashion, a number of allies have, since 2004, contracted for the provision of up to ten roll-on/roll-off vessels to move forces by sea. Although Canada has made use of its own chartering arrangement to transport equipment to and from south Asia, it continues to be part of the nine-nation Norwegian-led consortium—presumably on the basis that once the ISAF mission ends, this critical capability can best be preserved in a pooling arrangement.

[39] Lindley-French and Boyer, *STRATCON 2010*, p. 12. The authors acknowledge that however much sense this proposal makes, individual governments are more likely to protect national programs—even those with little transformative value—rather than launch new international initiatives or build on existing ones.
[40] NATO Logistics Handbook, p. 93.

Implications for Operational Support

As the SALIS program was intended to provide capability until the A400M cargo aircraft is delivered to European air forces, it may be fairly assumed that the latter's arrival will maintain the transformation momentum. However, a reduction in orders for the A400M resulting from cuts to national procurement budgets may once again create shortfalls in airlift that will force allies into other pooling arrangements.[41] One manifestation of this is the Movement Coordination Centre Europe (MCCE) which since 2007 has co-ordinated the air and sea transport and air-to-air refuelling (AAR) capabilities of 22 participating countries, including Canada. Assets remain under national control but data on their availability is transmitted to the MCCE in Eindoven, The Netherlands so that they can be delegated to the multinational structure on a voluntary basis.

The sealift consortium may hold good prospects for enabling future Canadian deployments, particularly now that the navy's plans to build a sealift capacity into its much-delayed Joint Support Ships seem to have been severely curtailed on budgetary grounds.[42] Under the old JSS program, three vessels comprising 7,500 lane-metres of space would be able to transport over 90% of the army's vanguard battle group.[43] Assuming 2,500 lane-metres of space for vehicles, equipment, and stores in each of chartered vessels,[44] four ships could be expected to move the vanguard force plus a headquarters element and additional assets (i.e., helicopters). A fully-mustered maritime logistics capacity of ten vessels would conceivably transport the land element of a main contingency force (up to brigade size) within 90 days – an objective laid out in the CF's capstone document, *Strategy 2020*.[45] Caution must, however, be read into this maritime deployment scenario. It is unlikely the Canada would have exclusive access to the complete roster of ships at any given time. And should the crisis area to which Canada and its NATO allies deploy be located within a land-locked country, an additional air/ground movement from the (sea)port of disembarkation would be necessary. Thus the operational support challenge should, at least in some cases, be seen as a multi-phase endeavour requiring as variety of assets.

Looking ahead, how else could operational support capability be provided—especially in the resource-constrained environment in which the allies increasingly find themselves? Secretary-General Rasmussen has raised the idea of role and task sharing, whereby members would concentrate their efforts in certain areas of the capability spectrum that are voluntarily vacated (in

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[41] UK Ministry of Defence, *Global Strategic Trends—Out to 2040*, p. 71. The report says that states "are likely to seek alternate strategies to manage risk including increased interdependence and burden sharing with traditional allies."

[42] Original plans called for a trio of JSSs. This has been reduced to two vessels with an option of for a third. And whereas previous plans called for an entire deck to be devoted to vehicles and cargo, DND now states that "the JSS will be capable of delivering a *limited* amount of cargo ashore […]." (emphasis added) http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/news-nouvelles-eng.asp?cat=00&id=3464, accessed on 15 October 2010.

[43] http://www.navy.forces.gc.ca/cms/10/10-a_eng.asp?category=48&id=298, accessed on 15 October 2010.

[44] This is an estimate, as the Danish and UK ships are known to have 2,500 lane-metres of space each. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-912A8421-3BFA135A/natolive/topics_50104.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed on 15 October 2010.

[45] *Shaping the Future of the Canadian Forces: A Strategy for 2020*, http://www.cds.forces.gc.ca/str/sr-eng.asp, accessed on 15 October 2010. Although this strategic-level guidance does not directly take its cue from NATO's transformative efforts, it clearly articulates the goal of a building a globally deployable force, which is consistent with the Alliance's expeditionary mind-set.

whole or in part) by others.[46] This would reduce duplication without necessarily requiring members to adopt narrow and inflexible "niche" roles, or surrendering political autonomy. Even if the European allies are able to parcel out responsibility for the provision of certain operational support capabilities, there may be room for Canada to join in. One example could be air-to-air refuelling, which both the UK and France are struggling to re-capitalize.[47] Although Canada has recently seen two of its CC-150 Polaris refuelling aircraft become fully operational, the airframe upon which they are based—the Airbus A310—is no longer in production. The ones in CF service date back to the 1980s when they were flown by commercial carriers. The eventual unsupportability of the airframe may open the door to a tri-nation renewal of the capability—either through a joint purchase, lease, or public-private partnership. As Germany acquired its A310 refuellers at the same time and in a joint program with the CF, a four-nation replacement program is not outside the realm of possibility. This in turn may create the critical mass necessary for a true NATO-wide AAR capability to emerge—one not dissimilar to the successful NATO airborne early warning program.

Although bi-/tri-lateral programs may not be NATO–driven they can nevertheless have a transformative effect if the resultant capabilities are put at the disposal of the Alliance. According to Giegerich, "If collaboration on equipment is firmly anchored on the assumption that, in more cases than not, the armed forces of the partner nations will be deployed together, benefits will be enhanced."[48] For Canada, the potential benefits go beyond the financial and operational. Broader collaboration with European allies may simultaneously enhance Canada's profile with the EU while achieving a small measure of strategic autonomy vis-à-vis its ally to the south.

4.4 Institutional Transformation

While defence economies are being hotly debated in national capitals, NATO is grappling with a US$650-million deficit and a bureaucracy composed of a bloated Secretariat and well over 300 committees. This has created severe strains on an organization struggling to demonstrate its strategic value to cash-conscious governments and their constituents. The practice of holding tenaciously on to influential positions within the military commands and in the Secretariat may bestow a degree of prestige and influence on the nations which occupy them, but it also highlights "the triumph of representation and inclusion over effectiveness and efficiency."[49]

As NATO operates on the consensus principle, the expansion of the membership has made achieving consensus more difficult and time-consuming, and can lead to delays which serve no useful purpose other than to allow members to read prepared statements.[50] In the same vein, once decisions are arrived at by the North Atlantic Council (NAC), follow-through by the Military Committee (MC) may be impeded by representatives who are under orders from their

[46] Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Security in an era of budgetary constraint," Speech to Security and Defence Agenda, Brussels, 21 June 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_64563.htm, accessed 23 June 2010.

[47] Adrian Croft, "EADS air tanker deal faces scrutiny in defence review," http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE66B58C20100712, accessed on 14 July 2010.

[48] Bastian Giegerich, "Budget Crunch: implications for European Defence," *Survival*, Vol. 52, No. 4, August/September 2010, pp. 91, 97.

[49] Lindley-French and Boyer, *STRATCON 2010*, p. 11.

[50] Edgard Buckley and Kurt Volker, "NATO Reform and Decision-Making," Atlantic Council Strategic Advisors Group Issue Brief, February 2010, p. 2.

governments to block action on initiatives that were previously (and very reluctantly) agreed to at the political level.

The Group of Experts has called for a series of internal reforms to be articulated in the new Strategic Concept. These include streamlining the Secretariat, reducing the numbers of committees and agencies and requiring members to identify areas where administrative overhead can be slashed. It suggests that the Secretary-General should also be given full authority to implement such reforms and spend the internal budget in a manner that favours concrete policy initiatives benefiting the organization as a whole rather than on those catering to national preferences.[51] According to former top NATO officials, this would in effect give NATO's top official "CEO" authority which he could use to raise and manage additional funding for ongoing operations which might otherwise "crowd out" longer term investment projects intended to build and maintain key capabilities.[52]

Implications for Operational Support

Although the transformation of the Alliance's inner workings has not yet received the official go-ahead, one senses the build-up of momentum in that direction. Consequently, one may postulate its effects on capability development, including operational support. The streamlining of the bureaucracy—the reduction of the number of the committees and the merging of the staffs for military and non-military issues—would be transformational insofar as it liberated qualified personnel for more operationally-centred activity. This may include buttressing the ability of Allied Command Transformation to conduct training, contingency planning, exercises, and other capability development efforts.[53] It may go some way to freeing up funds which can be re-directed to multinational equipment programs or to assist with the common funding of operations undertaken by the NRF. A more useable NRF would consequently require responsive operational support.

Likewise, reform of the decision process—in which the NAC and the Secretary-General focus on strategic consultation and decision making rather than implementation, and in which the divisions of responsibility between the NAC and the MC are rigorously enforced—could increase the speed with which the allies respond to a crisis. Shortening the time delay between a political decision and a military response will demand high readiness levels for deployable forces, and great agility by those tasked with supporting them.

In the years ahead, a more radical reform of the decision-making process—one that allows members a way of registering their reservations with Alliance decisions other than through a veto—could have a salutary effect on the operational support challenge. A system of "qualified majority" in which a clear plurality of members agreed on the need to respond to a crisis could increase the demand on national and multinational logistics, as members opposed to a certain course of action agree not to obstruct action by their partners, but will not lend their own support

[51] NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement—Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, p. 34.
[52] Buckley and Volker, "NATO Reform and Decision-Making," p. 2.
[53] This may taken on even greater importance given the expected abolition of US Joint Forces Command, which is co-located with ACT.

capabilities to the effort.[54] In such a case, the participating states may have to bear additional costs if they wish to proceed.

As the inner architecture of the Alliance is renovated, consideration may be given to the establishment of new structures and the evolution of existing ones. Afghanistan has witnessed the duplication of logistical effort among ISAF contributors, whereby similar facilities consume limited space on military bases and similar but un-coordinated requirements eat up critical airlift and sealift.[55] To achieve deployability and sustainability goals, and to avoid costly redundancies, an end to the age-old concept whereby logistics is a national responsibility should be considered. The Group of Experts has recommended the creation of a NATO Deployment Agency which would consolidate all aspects of Alliance preparations for rapid deployment and sustainment.[56] Assuming that it would consider incorporating commercial solutions into the capability mix, the prospect for increased responsiveness and cost efficiency is significant. The concept should find favour with cash-poor allies struggling to meet their obligations, and the CF's recent investments in strategic lift along with its extensive experience in operational support should make for welcome contributions to the notional agency.

While the Group of Experts has renewed the call for the Comprehensive Approach to be recognized in the new Strategic Concept, it is unclear what this would mean in political or practical terms. Incorporating "civilian" capacities (such as police and judicial training, education reform, and economic development) will, in the opinion of many, effectively transform NATO from a defence pact into a security organization whose mandate overlaps those of the United Nations or the EU. There is a general consensus that is to be avoided at all costs. But unfortunately the risk of duplication or competition for a shallow pool of qualified human resources is matched by the risk of doing nothing. The establishment of a standing capability within the Alliance—either a deployable team with critical skill-sets or, more likely, an office for inter-agency co-operation—may be the least that is required since, as one study noted, "[c]o-operation with civilian actors cobbled together on an ad hoc basis is not sustainable in the long term."[57]

Canada has taken a step in this direction. In 2005 the Department of Foreign Affairs established the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) for service in complex environments such as Afghanistan. Designed to be agile and to co-ordinate whole-of government responses, it could serve as a model for a tentative NATO foray into the deeper recesses of civil-military co-operation. Should the Governments of Canada decide to retain its services beyond the current mission, the CF may have to devote at least some thought to supporting its efforts in future

[54] This concept may be referred to "structured co-operation" or "variable geometry." See Noetzel and Schreer, "Does a multi-tier NATO matter?" p. 212. An example which approximates this scenario is the resistance of Greece to the 1999 Kosovo air campaign. Bowing to heavy public pressure, Athens did not actively participate in the war, although it opened the port of Thessaloniki to allied forces transiting to the theatre through Albania.

[55] Chapin, *Security in an Uncertain World*, p. 51.

[56] NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement—Analysis and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on a New Strategic Concept for NATO, p. 39.

[57] Friis Arne Petersen et al., "Implementing NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Complex Operations," in G. Aybet and R. Moore, eds., NATO in Search of a Vision, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 75.

theatres of operation, and evacuating it swiftly if the situation warrants. Should NATO follow Canada's lead and stand up a modest civilian capability, a similar support requirement may result.

Among the existing structures, the NATO Management and Supply Agency (NAMSA) has played a pivotal role in NATO operations since its establishment 1958. Responsible for maximizing logistical effectiveness at minimum cost to members, it consolidates member requirements and negotiates competitively-bid contracts with the private sector which it then oversees for compliance and quality control. It is the Alliance's main operational support agency and complements, rather than competes with, national procurement and logistics organizations. In its own words, it is "an active participant in NATO transformation."[58] The success it has enjoyed with the ISAF mission is in no small measure due to the expansion of its staff to handle the demands of NATO's most ambitious undertaking.

In addition to fulfilling requests by individual countries whose forces are on deployment, NAMSA provides "common" capabilities—that is, services and skills sets such as utilities and airfield maintenance services—from which all allies benefit. Accordingly, it would be worthwhile to maintain its recently-acquired human resources and military contracting skills following the termination of the ISAF mission.[59] In a resource-constrained environment, common funding of this "enhanced" NAMSA may relieve some of the logistical burden on member countries, including Canada.

[58] NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency, *Information Brochure on Real Life Support, Airport of Disembarkation Services at Kandahar Airfield*, p. 3.
[59] Interview with NAMSA official, Brussels, December 2009.

5 Conclusion

Although the strategic and economic environment that confronts allied countries portends uncertainty for defence planners, it is also an opportunity to clarify what NATO stands for and explore options for how best to carry out its mandate. The range of potential threats is expansive, and will call upon critical thinking to prioritize them as well as agile military planning to defuse them. Despite the severe trials of the Afghan experience and the weight exerted by some members toward a territorial defence posture, the allies seem willing to embrace an expeditionary stance that incorporates non-military capabilities into the overall mix. The implications for operational support are many. The prospect of expanding NATO's mandate to deal with a broader operational spectrum – including humanitarian relief and threats to energy supplies – will likely demand that logistical resources are in frequent, if not constant, demand. As this higher level of activity will be at odds with efforts to trim defence budgets in the near term, innovation—in the form of pooling arrangements or role specialization—may take on increasing importance.

Canada has made significant efforts on its own and alongside its allies to address operational support needs. Since it is geographically-mandated to retain an expeditionary mind-set, it must ensure that support/sustainment is a strategic-level consideration, lest political decision-makers attempt to will the ends without giving thought to the means. In the immediate future the Department of National Defence and Canadian Forces must take careful notice of the evolving strategic environment and any pending changes to the architecture of NATO to determine how best to fulfil the obligations that the next Strategic Concept will place upon them.

List of abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

AAR	air-to-air refuelling
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
BMD	ballistic missile defence
CANOSCOM	Canadian Operational Support Command
CF	Canadian Forces
CPG	Comprehensive Political Guidance
ESCD	Emerging Security Challenges Division (NATO)
EU	European Union
IRF	Immediate Response Force (NRF)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JLSG	Joint Logistics Support Group (NATO)
MC	Military Committee (NATO)
MCCE	Movement Coordination Centre Europe
MoD	Ministry of Defence (United Kingdom)
NAC	North Atlantic Council (NATO)
NAMSA	NATO Management and Supply Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRF	NATO Response Force
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
RFP	Response Force Pool
SNMG1	Standing Maritime Group 1
START	Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (Canada)
UK	United Kingdom

US	United States
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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This Technical Report examines the military and institutional dimensions of NATO transformation and how they may affect how the Alliance and the Canadian Forces approach the challenge of deploying and sustaining forces in the field. It constitutes the second part of a two-part project on the transformation of the Alliance and operational support. The first sections of this report define key terms and explore briefly the strategic environment in which NATO finds itself. The subsequent sections evaluate the status of the transformational process through the lens of the new military task set that the Alliance must deal with, the NATO Response Force, multinational support programs, and the internal architecture of the Alliance itself. As the Alliance will inaugurate a new Strategic Concept before the end of 2010, each section attempts to look into the near to determine what implications these transformational trends and concepts will have for the Alliance and the CF. Conclusions reveal that although a degree of strategic and (especially) financial uncertainty hovers over both entities, the support and sustainment challenge can be met through a mixture of collaboration and innovation.

Le présent rapport technique examine les dimensions militaires et institutionnelles de la transformation de l'OTAN ainsi que son incidence sur la façon dont l'Alliance et les Forces canadiennes procèdent au déploiement et au maintien en puissance des forces sur le terrain. Il porte sur la deuxième partie d'un projet en deux volets concernant la transformation du soutien à l'Alliance et du soutien opérationnel. Les premières sections du rapport définissent les termes principaux et décrivent l'environnement stratégique dans lequel se situe l'OTAN. Les sections suivantes évaluent l'état du processus de transformation à la lumière des nouvelles tâches militaires auxquelles l'Alliance doit faire face, de la force d'intervention de l'OTAN, des programmes de soutien multinationaux ainsi que de l'architecture interne de l'Alliance elle-même. Comme l'Alliance mettra en œuvre un nouveau concept stratégique avant la fin de 2010, on essaie d'effectuer un examen approfondi à chaque section afin de déterminer les incidences de ces tendances et concepts transformationnels pour l'Alliance et les FC. Les conclusions indiquent que malgré une certaine incertitude stratégique (et surtout financière) qui plane sur les deux organisations, la difficulté de soutien et de maintien des forces peut être surmontée grâce à la collaboration et à l'innovation.

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