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# NSD-S HUB NEWSLETTER

01 December 2018

“Development of peaceful and friendly relations.....promoting conditions of stability and well-being (Art.2 NATO Chart)”

## Director's Foreword

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*HUB Director's address at the beginning of a challenging 2019*

Dear Friends of the HUB,

After the Holiday festivities, we are recharged and ready to press forward with the same vigor and intensity with which we ended 2018. I sincerely believe that 2019 will prove to be even more demanding in terms of new challenging and complex problems---I am committed to ensure the HUB is ready for our mission!

I would like to take this opportunity to re-emphasize my deep and personal commitment to strengthening the bonds of friendship with our Allies and Partners in the Middle East and throughout Africa. Extensive networks and cooperation with civil society entities is paramount to the HUB and NATO's long-term success. Our overarching goal must always be to demonstrate the value of the HUB, not only throughout NATO but especially with our Allies and Partners who reside in the South. We understand that various threats or challenges cannot always be addressed in straight-forward, kinetic military responses; in the HUB's area, they take the form of weak institutions, socio-economic disarray and, sometimes, the absence of decent governance. These realities underscore the importance of why the HUB must continue to accurately and effectively fuse data from disparate sources of information—mainly defense and civil society actors—so we can gain a holistic and comprehensive picture of the Middle East, North Africa and the Pan Sahel. We understand how our environment in the South is ever-changing and increasingly dynamic. Thus, it is imperative for every member of the HUB to remain agile and flexible—not only in the way we process information, but how we engage and build networks throughout the South. Many nefarious or bad actors continue to find innovative ways to further their goals to destabilize our region, mainly for their personal or selfish goals. The HUB's value-added and long-term success depends upon the HUB's niche ability to identify opportunities, aligned within our NATO Article 2 mandate. The HUB must strive to better the lives of the local populace in our region while, simultaneously, providing NATO leaders with actionable recommendations for greater optimization.

Only a year ago, many individuals had doubts as to whether or not the HUB can uniquely or positively affect the myriad of challenges in the South. As we enter 2019, I can declare, without hesitation and with a great level of confidence, that the HUB is ready to execute a robust operating and production plan that will only solidify our rightful position throughout the Transatlantic Alliance. The HUB team is ready for 2019 and beyond.

As they say in my country of Italy, “Buon Anno!” (Happy New Year!)

## Issues Surrounding the Upcoming Nigerian Elections

*HUB analyst and an expert from Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KA IPTC) provide a view on upcoming Nigeria election and potential implications in the continent*

NSD-S Hub, in coordination with the Ghana-based Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC), views the upcoming Nigerian elections in February, 2019 as having broad implications for Africa. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, the West African regional economic hub, and the world's 8th largest oil producer. Therefore, a contested election may lead further instability in the broader region. In coordination with African and international organizations, NATO could promote greater transparency, emphasize diplomatic efforts that underscore the importance of mediating disputes, and support civil society shareholders to peacefully accept the electoral results.

These elections are seen as a referendum on current President Buhari's first-term, especially his government's efforts at reducing corruption, addressing socio-economic disparities, and reducing violent extremism. The elections will be contested primarily between Buhari's All Progressives Congress (APC) and the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP), which ruled Nigeria from 1999-2015. Both parties function as patronage-based coalitions of fractious elite networks.

The risk of parties disputing the results and impending post-election violence will further strain vulnerable Nigerian institutions such as military and security forces currently preoccupied with Boko Haram and the 1.9m Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in North-Eastern Nigeria. On a positive note, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is expected to deliver credible elections again in February, based on its success in 2015.<sup>1</sup> Also the National Peace Council (comprised primarily of religious/traditional leaders from across Nigerian society) played a key role in ensuring peaceful elections in 2015. For instance, the Council called on the major parties to sign a "Peace Pact", where everyone accepted the final results of the elections.

To sum up, the KA IPTC views on NATO's role would be as supportive of initiatives that promote greater transparency and mediation efforts that underscore the Rule of Law. In alignment with the African Union, regional stakeholders, and other international actors, promote diplomatic efforts that encourage parties to effectively address their internal disputes. Accentuate the importance of peaceful settlement of differences and support for civil society to amicably accept the electoral results.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-07-25-countdown-2019-nigeria-elections-page-tayo.pdf>  
[https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/sr\\_429\\_verjee\\_et\\_al\\_final.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/sr_429_verjee_et_al_final.pdf)



Run for President in Nigeria 2019

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# HUB Activities & Engagements

## TARGETING THE DE-MATERIALIZED “CALIPHATE”. Extremism, Radicalization and Illegal Trafficking. (\*)

A HUB analyst attended the NATO Defense College Foundation (NDCF) High-level Seminar about the “Caliphate” and its evolution. The seminar started with the assumption that although DAESH has lost nearly 98% of its controlled territory, their group’s ideology is still widely followed. As a result, the end of the Caliphate will not mean the end of terrorism. In fact, the threat of terrorism from the western Sahel to the Levant is as real as ever. Terrorist groups remain well equipped and organized and, thanks to the Internet, are able to recruit different people from nations worldwide. Given this reality, it is clear that military action alone will not diminish the threat of terrorism; rather a combination of military, economic, social and political tools must be brought to bear. Civil Society groups, particularly grass-roots movements which have access and influence with the populations who live with the threat of terrorism every day, must be nourished in order for real change to occur.

Additionally, in order to effectively counter terrorist organizations, it is important to focus on networks. Controlling territory means amassing billions of dollars through activities like extortion, robbery, taxation, and selling pilfered oil. In 2015 DAESH generated over 6 \$billion, the equivalent of the gross domestic product of Lichtenstein, by selling stolen oil. Now without territory, DAESH cannot secure and smuggle oil so the organization is diversifying. Experts have identified new trends in funding such as environmental crime, illicit finance, cyber activities, abuse of social media, and infiltration in the legitimate economy. The organization has recruited individuals with tech skills used not only for propaganda but also for fundraising. In addition, with the use of encrypted social media such a WhatsApp, their communications will be more secure and harder to track.

Terrorists are operating in a world where fundraising can be easily accomplished outside of state control. An increase in public-private partnership to help reveal such activity, and a change in the UN commercial code demanding companies to be more transparent would help to limit terrorists ability to exploit domains outside of state control. There is also the need to focus more on cyber space. International Organizations such as NATO and the EU have a crucial role to play both on the ground and in the cyber domain to protect the communication space in order to prevent and neutralize the jihadi propaganda and recruitment. For example, there are a number of successful regional Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) cases that counter terrorist’s propaganda efforts by involving local stakeholders in counter-messaging and engaging in the community.

NATO’s Counterterrorism Action Plan reflects quite well this shift from combat-driven actions to activities aimed at increasing partner effectiveness. There is the need for more public-private partnership and to understand the cultural substratum where the ideology took shape. More tools have to be used in harmony, combining economic, social, political and military ingredients which allow access to local civil society elements. This is one of the major reasons the NSD-S HUB was brought into existence, to be a positive tool used to fully understand the terrorist threat, as well as to counter the threat through confidence-building measures and initiatives with non-military entities dedicated to long term stability programs. Relationships with international organizations and private and public institutions will bring along a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions, to include NATO, are established.



*HUB analyst summarize the attendance to a NATO Defense College Foundation High level Seminar on DAESH and de-materialization of the Caliphate*

(\*) Dr. Erika MONTICONE NSD-S HUB Engagement Advisor

## Winning the war against terrorism: the pivotal role of Strategic Communications (\*)

Since NATO invoked its collective defense clause (Article 5) for the first and only time in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, there has been an increase in the frequency of jihadist attacks. Despite the recent setbacks of DAESH in Levant or AQIM in Sahel, terrorism remains alive and able to continue the fight in failed states or in the virtual caliphate and to inspire terrorist lone wolves in our countries. Conscious that it may have severe consequences for the security of our citizens and for international stability, many Allies and International Organizations consider terrorism as the top priority. Who is this enemy, why STRATCOM could play an essential role to tackle this scourge and what are the factors for success? These are the main questions this article will seek to answer.

An experienced, skilled and learning enemy...

The terrorism we have been facing is characterized by a significant operational experience and a deep understanding of shaping the information environment. Well structured, terrorist groups understand psychological warfare and guerrilla tactics, using sound narratives and the entire panel of social media tools to spread fear or to successfully recruit. They are also learning entities, able to adapt their courses of action and ways of communication to the context. Thus, what are described as 'inspired attacks' by 'lone wolves' conducted outside of combat zones have replaced sophisticated planned operations. Without any skill or dedicated capabilities, recent attack perpetrators have even managed to keep their relatives completely in the dark about their intentions, making more difficult for our Nations to tackle the threat.

...whose defeat also depends on STRATCOM...

NATO has been playing a key role for many years in the fight against international terrorism, but improvements could be made to both prevent and respond to terrorism, notably through the STRATCOM function and its capacity to integrate communication capabilities with other military activities in order to shape the information environment. Winning the battle of perception is indeed a prerequisite and it starts with our ability to build and promote a culturally sensitive narrative against terrorism, aimed at explaining who we are, our intent and the benefits of our actions. Meanwhile, we should counter terrorist messaging, by refuting their flawed interpretation of existing texts, providing alternative content, promoting our successes and exploiting every defeat suffered by the enemy. Our capabilities must also disrupt the enemy's means of communication.

Covered by a dedicated information strategy or STRATCOM framework, the use of STRATCOM related activities <sup>(1)</sup>, including but not limited to communication capabilities, fully supports the abovementioned objectives and tasks. STRATCOM can integrate multiple activities aimed at weakening the credibility, legitimacy or decision making process of the enemy. In addition to contribute to targeting the networks, STRATCOM related activities can also introduce dissent among terrorists, create internal rivalries or facilitate exit from groups, relying on a reintegration process dedicated to the repented. Finally, the STRATCOM function can play an important role in tackling the root causes of radicalization and terrorism through developing influence capabilities of selected partners or promoting specific communication campaigns in the field of protection, assistance to victims, education, reconciliation or good governance.



*NRDC Italy STRATCOM  
Advisor provides his  
insight in the role of  
STRATCOM in the War  
against Terrorism*

...and the related factors for success

But STRATCOM efficiency will require some factors to be met in the field of analysis, planning, execution, assessment and cooperation. The first precondition is the understanding of the Information Environment, to which the STRATCOM function can contribute. It enables the identification of early warnings, opportunities and risks.

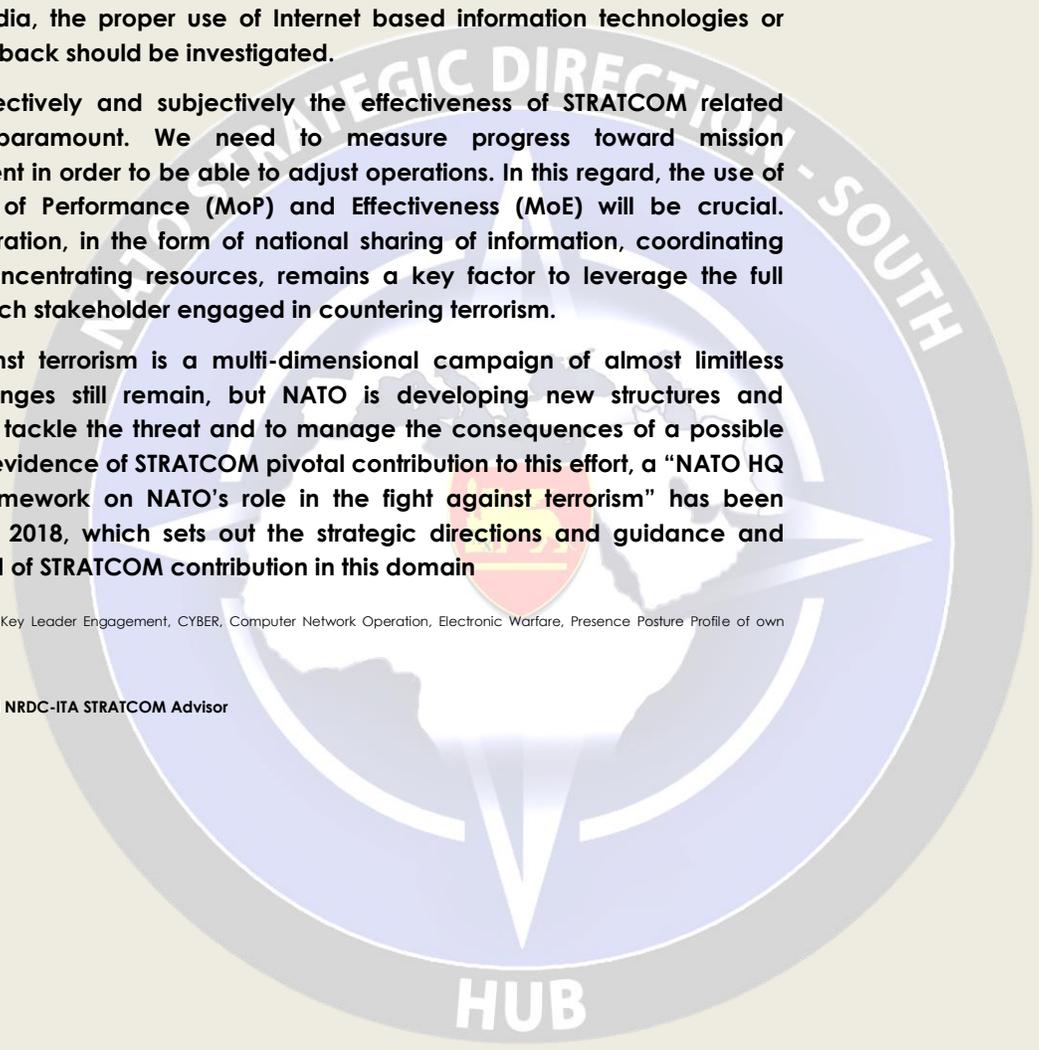
In the same vein, STRATCOM outcomes and products, supported by clear directives and guidance, must be delivered at the earliest stage and then integrated in all parts of the planning process. In terms of execution, successes mainly rest with the availability of relevant capabilities. Without ruling out traditional media, the proper use of Internet based information technologies or existing reach back should be investigated.

Assessing objectively and subjectively the effectiveness of STRATCOM related activities is paramount. We need to measure progress toward mission accomplishment in order to be able to adjust operations. In this regard, the use of Measurement of Performance (MoP) and Effectiveness (MoE) will be crucial. Finally, cooperation, in the form of national sharing of information, coordinating efforts and concentrating resources, remains a key factor to leverage the full potential of each stakeholder engaged in countering terrorism.

The war against terrorism is a multi-dimensional campaign of almost limitless scope. Challenges still remain, but NATO is developing new structures and capabilities to tackle the threat and to manage the consequences of a possible attack. As an evidence of STRATCOM pivotal contribution to this effort, a "NATO HQ STRATCOM framework on NATO's role in the fight against terrorism" has been issued in May 2018, which sets out the strategic directions and guidance and paves the road of STRATCOM contribution in this domain

(1)Public Affairs, PsyOps, Key Leader Engagement, CYBER, Computer Network Operation, Electronic Warfare, Presence Posture Profile of own troops...

(\*)Col Daniel Zouggari NRDC-ITA STRATCOM Advisor

The logo is a circular emblem with a light blue background. It features a white map of the African continent in the center. Above the map, the words "NATO STRATEGIC DIRECTION - SOUTH" are written in a semi-circle. Below the map, the word "HUB" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire emblem is set against a larger, semi-transparent version of the same design in the background.

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## 2018 UN Security Council resolutions focused on Africa and the Middle East (\*)

The Security Council resolutions of 2018 focused mainly on conflicts in Africa and the Middle East. In those resolutions, the Security Council repeatedly underlines the necessity to consider, among other factors, following two aspects in order to achieve the stability of nations and to support peace processes:

1. The involvement of women in the peace process;
2. The role and strengthening of the law in the fight against corruption and trafficking.

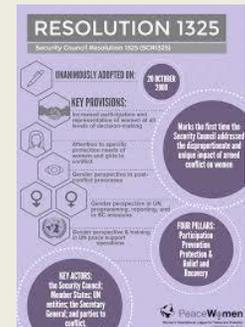
These factors that have a territorial and transnational dimension represent fundamental steps for the strengthening of common security. In this context NSD-S HUB can contribute for awareness and better understanding of such elements, supporting the activities of NATO in the Sub and in the Middle East.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is generally accepted as a basic document on the Women's Agenda for Peace and Security (WPS). This resolution and the following UN resolutions, as UN Res. 2242 (2015), have placed the participation of women "at the top" in the agenda of the United Nations and are an integral part of the process to "faithfully promote international peace and security". The WPS agenda is expansive and ambitious; as well as necessary in order to promote sustainable and positive peace. The involvement of women in peace processes mainly affects two aspects:

- women's participation in negotiations and in situations of conflict,
- Women's participation in the political development process of a country.

According to the International Peace Institute, "lasting 15-year peace agreements are all the more likely if achieved through female involvement". However the percentage of women who participate in these processes as mediators or as members of the United Nations contingents is still insufficient. In the course of 2018 with Resolution 2450 (2018) on the Middle East in relations between Syria and Israel, the SC "has recalled resolution 2242 (2015) and its aspiration to increase the number of women in military and police contingents of United Nations peacekeeping operations". Resolutions 2242 and 2250 still appear to be weak in determining what the strategic objectives should be to foster women's involvement in peace processes, yet the increased consideration of women in peace negotiations has increased attention to gender equality and gender rights in conflict areas.

During civil wars or military interventions, women are victims of harassment, rape, physical abuse and psychological trauma, therefore the solution should be found in the involvement of women in civil society. On this matter, the Security Council in Resolution 2444 (2018) on the conflict between Somalia and Eritrea has welcomed "the FGS's (Federal Government of Somalia) efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence, encouraging strengthened reporting mechanisms to facilitate prosecutions, and further encouraging the FGS to continue to implement its National Action Plan on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict through training, accountability, victim support and oversight of the security sector ". Besides in the resolution 2451 (2018) on the situation in Yemen, the SC has underlined "the importance of the full participation of women and the meaningful engagement of youth in the political process". On this matter, the NSD-S HUB includes in its production plan the strengthening of NATO's efforts in implementing the WPS agenda, recognizing the importance of women's active and significant participation and taking into account the impact of threats and the challenges of South.



*NSD-S HUB Legal Advisor gives her insight on some UNSC Resolutions affecting HUB Analysis on Africa and Middle east issues*

Other fundamental pillar in the stabilization processes is represented by the fight against corruption and illicit trafficking. Corruption continues to be a basic cause and a catalyst for conflicts, widespread violations of international humanitarian law and impunity in developing countries, threatening the consolidation of democracy and respect for human rights.

For the past 15 years, measures to tackle corruption have rarely been, if ever, incorporated into peace agreements. Yet state abuse and corruption are often a root cause of the conflict. Countries emerging from the conflict often have very high or endemic corruption, low state legitimacy, low state capacity, weak rule of law and high levels of physical insecurity and residual violence. The economic legacies of civil wars involve concentrations of wealth from illegal or unregulated trade and unofficial "taxes" collected by soldiers, rebel factions, etc. Furthermore, some post-conflict countries are not able to control corruption while others are not willing to do so.

There are rarely security conditions to enforce the laws. Academic literature has evolved from considering corruption as functional and benign to one of the greatest obstacles to development, highlighting the links between corruption and the rule of law, conflict, inequality, democratization and economic development. The link between corruption and Terrorism and violent extremism has been repeatedly recognized by the Security Council and General Assembly started from United Nations Convention against Corruption on 2005. This is confirmed in a lot of resolutions emanated by SC during 2018 as resolution 2448 (2018) on the situation in the Central African Republic the Security Council has requested the Secretary-General to implement zero-tolerance policy on serious misconduct, ... fraud, corruption, trafficking in natural resources or wildlife, including by making the use of the existing authority of the SRSG to ensure accountability of the Mission's staff and through the effective mission support arrangement". Moreover in resolutions 2442 (2018) and 2444(2018) on conflicts in Somalia, the SC on one hand has condemned every direct illegitimate activity to the supply of terrorist groups linked to ISIL (also known as Da'esh) because they undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia, Yemen to Somalia, on the other hand has welcomed "the continued progress on building a track record of reforms under the International Monetary Fund Staff-Monitored Program, with the progress of the anti-corruption bill, and highlighting the importance of the continual progress in these areas, emphasizes the efforts of the Somali federal government to tackle corruption and promote transparency and increase mutual responsibility to zero tolerance approach to corruption and increase mutual accountability in Somalia". Again in Resolution 2441 (2018), the Security Council condemned the illicit export of oil from Libyan territory made by Libyan institutions but which do not act under the aegis of the national government. It is clear that international actors need better information and analysis to understand the links between corruption and conflict. A wider effort must be made to tackle corruption in developing countries. Based on this consideration, the HUB has made the understanding and analysis of non-military aspects of instability, governance, economic and how corruption and lack of transparency can become a source of further conflicts and instability, one of its objectives. In particular the NSD-S Hub has a production plan to understand what transparency strategies within the military forces in a partner state have been taken and ways to improve them. In conclusion, the Hub, which aim is to collect and analyze data to contribute both to global understanding and to the decision process, can be a vehicle for building a common security culture. It is evident that the resolutions mentioned above and the HUB production plan follows a single common thread. Both are intended to understand and anticipate future challenges, as well as to support policy choices in order to stabilize the whole area.



(\* ) Lt.Col. Valentina CAPURRO NSD-S HUB Legal Advisor