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NSD-S HUB NEWSLETTER

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

Director's Foreword

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As the HUB heads into the spring season, we continue to refine our Comprehensive Approach methodology, which is based on our foundational principle to Connect, Consult and Coordinate in support of NATO's Framework for the South. Our links with various international organizations throughout North Africa, Middle East and the Sahel brings more value-added to NATO—especially as our products and deliverables provide timely analysis and insight to our leaders throughout the NATO enterprise. Although we have made inroads and strides throughout NATO's South, there is still a lot more to do. The HUB's contribution to information sharing and situational awareness is paramount to achieving the Alliance's objective of projecting stability. In fact, during a policy speech by NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, he articulated a very salient point that when our neighbors are stable...we are more secure.

As we celebrate NATO's 70th anniversary this April, we are continuously reminded that NATO must remain agile, flexible and ready to adapt to dynamic and complex global challenges. We cannot under-estimate the complicated nature of some of these threats. The HUB, however, is NATO's innovative tool that will directly assist our decision-makers and leaders to better understand our shared challenges, as well as identify the great opportunities for projecting stability in the South.

I sincerely hope you will find some interesting articles in this issue of our Newsletter. I also invite you to kindly visit our HUB website (www.TheSouthernHub.org) where you will discover a series of interesting and thought-provoking analytical papers.



HUB Director's address

NSD-S HUB and Three Stones International Webinar on GENDER EQUALITY AND IN/STABILITY IN AFRICA

On February 28, 2019, the NATO Strategic Direction– South HUB (NSD-S) and Three Stones International held an online chat forum to discuss “Gender Equality and In/Stability in Africa”. During the daylong event, NSD-S personnel engaged with 70 community and civil society participants, including representatives from communities, NGOs, think tanks, and academia, from 17 African countries.

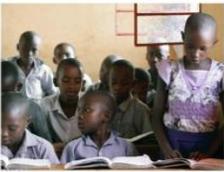
KEY RESULTS

Diverse and thoughtful inputs were provided by participants spanning six topics. The main outcome was gender equality is a process that needs to continuously be pushed forward in order to reach sustainable levels to support stability and security in Africa. However, this must be done in a “proper” way and with consideration for possible counterproductive effects. There were questions about NATO and gender policies, and what NATO is doing in this space.

The main points discussed by participants included:

- To achieve gender equality, men need to be involved. This is important to reduce Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and to train men, including boys, in gender equality. Without awareness from men, gender equality and women empowerment can result in even more violence.
- Equal access to literacy and health is fundamental for future stability. Women literacy translates to empowerment for all the community (children first) as well as reduces fertility rates and improves economic and social situations.
- Women leaders and women in decision-making positions think more about sustainable solutions for the well-being of the community. Examples of best practices on countering violent extremism (CVE), peace mediation, climate change, and a participant mentioned an example from Libya on how women leaders have an impact.
- UNSCR 1325 is considered important to lead the way but needs to be implemented on the ground, not just on paper. There are no monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and not all countries have National Action Plans (NAP).
- Increase number of female law enforcement promotes prevention of GBV but the staff needs to be trained on gender awareness and women's rights. Awareness should be raised against GBV also in the communities and with local administrations.
- Gender equality is a factor for more stability but not without nuances. Gender equality should be strategically reached with gender equity and constitutions or laws supporting gender equality. They should be effectively applied and not remain on paper.

You can see more at <https://www.thesouthernhub.org/publications-2/made-in-nsds-hub/new-nsds-hub-publications.aspx>



NSD-S HUB Workshop “on “REGIONAL DYNAMICS AND FACTORS OF (IN) STABILITY IN THE WESTERN SAHEL

From 27th to 28th of March 2019, the NSD-S Hub hosted a workshop titled “Regional Dynamics and Factors of Stability in the (Western) Sahel.” The event was attended by NSD-S Hub analysts as well as by external participants from NATO and civilian organizations with expertise in the security and human development domains and extensive experience working in and studying the Sahel. The aim of the workshop was to deepen the understanding of the Sahel dynamics by highlighting the prevalent drivers of instability, as well as the effects of various stabilization responses in the region.

A shared view amongst the participants was that stability in the Sahel is heavily affected by a series of overlapping transnational factors, which have to be understood by considering the informal characteristics of the Sahel environment and its societies, particularly how the ethnical/tribal affiliations create a system that transcends national government influence and formal borders. The drivers affecting stability in the Sahel are numerous and not always easy to account for. Therefore, to facilitate discussion, the workshop distinguished between long term drivers - socioeconomics, demographics, climate change - that shape the environment and create the conditions for the short term drivers - transnational organized crime networks, expansion of extremist armed groups and violent intercommunal conflicts. The overall situation in the Sahel, however, is the result of the simultaneous interaction of all of these continually evolving factors. Socioeconomics is a multilateral dimension that encompasses low economic development, scarcity of resources, and insufficient provision and access to state delivered services. Combined with the long term driver of climate change – occurring across the Sahel belt, with dramatic effects in areas like Lake Chad, it leads to a situation where a large part of the population suffers from severe food and water shortages. The high rate of population growth in the Sahel countries over the last decades has resulted in a large working age population. However, most of the Sahel population is employed in subsistence agriculture. The lack of other economic opportunities marginalizes these communities, in particular the youth who are unable to find employment, and are therefore more prone to get involved in illicit activities or, in the worst case scenario, to join the various violent extremist organizations operating in the region. For most of the communities in the Sahel, the prevalence of the illicit economy has facilitated the proliferation of organized crime networks. While the major traffic routes across the Sahara desert have been used for centuries for moving a wide range of commodities, today, illegal networks use these routes to traffic people, weapons, and narcotics. The most visible and destructive cause of instability is the proliferation of religiously motivated violent extremist organizations. In the Western Sahel, the security situation has degraded significantly during the last 12 months as the armed groups traditionally operating in Mali expand their area of operations throughout the Liptako-Gourma area that comprises parts of Burkina Faso and Niger. These armed groups have been taking full advantage of, not only the traditional trade routes, but also traditional community structures in the Sahel by manipulating ethnicity to promote their ideology. Intercommunal conflicts between nomadic herders and farming communities, fueled by the competition for land resources, are also increasing, leading to an unprecedented level of violence. Moreover, in parts of Mali and Burkina Faso, the intercommunal conflicts overlap with the violent actions of the extremist groups, making difficult to identify clear division lines between the two. The path towards a stable Sahel is clearly long challenging. The governments, as the primary responders, need to urgently address root causes of the instability, but they need the help of regional and international partners. As the Sahel issues are transnational in nature, a comprehensive strategy for the Sahel, one that would harmonize the efforts of all the relevant actors, is becoming increasingly critical for the stabilization of the region.



*HUB Workshop
on Western
Sahel*

NSD-S HUB Workshop “NORTH AFRICA Regional Dynamics



*HUB Workshop
on NORTH
AFRICA
Regional
Dynamics*

On 09 April 2019, the workshop “North Africa Regional Dynamics” was hosted in the Joint Forces Command (JFC) Naples Headquarter, organized by the NSD-S HUB.

The aim of this event was to set up an informal forum where participants could share their points of view on the common challenges that NATO and countries on both sides of the Mediterranean basin are facing, trying to identify gaps and potential areas for further cooperation.

In accordance with HUB principles - to understand those challenges it is necessary to hear the voices of the people living in the region - all the guests and interlocutors of this event came from different North African countries; in particular from Egypt, Mauritania and Tunisia. The event was an opportunity to establish frank and open discussions, where participants from the Hub and partner nations expressed their personal views on different issues.

The topics previously selected to initiate discussions were essentially two: Economic Developments and Security Challenges. Despite having two main points of discussions, further analysis led to a wide range of topics being covered, all connected to each other. During the morning session, the issues discussed ranged from the development of renewable energies to the impact of migration on the countries of transit and final destination. Afterwards, discussion moved to the link between climate change and rural exodus connected with the fast urbanization and the economic situation related to it.

The afternoon was then dedicated to the Security Challenges where the focus was on the importance of Libya for the stability in the region, and the international cooperation and regional strategies in the fight against the terrorism and radicalization. Although there were many discussions that occurred throughout, the greatest emphasis was on identifying the root causes of this particular challenge.

The workshop has seen the active participation of the various interlocutors and has truly been a moment of knowledge and reflection. The next step for all involved will be to convert the various challenges into opportunities for NATO to contribute and cooperate with African nations to reinforce stability in the region.

HUB

HUB Activities & Engagements

NSD-S HUB Director visit to KAIPTC 18 February 2019



NSD-S HUB Director and KAIPTC Director of Research Division during last visit to Accra

From 19-21 FEB 2019, the NSD-S Hub Director visited the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana to participate in the opening ceremony of the Assessment Workshop provided by the Hub, as well as to meet with the Commandant and the Director of Research to discuss potential research collaboration between the Hub and KAIPTC.

The Director was very warmly received and had very productive conversations with both the Commandant and the Director of Research regarding future cooperation on research projects and events. KAIPTC is very well respected and well connected in Africa and developing a close working relationship with the Centre should prove very beneficial for the Hub as it matures as an organization.

KAIPTC is pleased that NATO has established the Hub in order to expand the organization's knowledge and appreciation for Africa, and is eager to assist the Hub succeed by sharing contacts and agreeing to collaborate on projects. KAIPTC plans to send representatives to the Hub's Sahel Work Shop in March and Climate Change Study Day in May.

7th Edition of the Shared Awareness and De-Confliction in the Mediterranean Sea (SHADE MED)

Personnel from different sections of the Hub participated in the seventh edition of the Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean Sea (SHADE Med) that took place in Rome. This is a forum where representatives from nations and organizations interested in or impacted by the migratory phenomenon in the Mediterranean basin can meet to de-conflict and coordinate activities by sharing situational awareness, assessment of the evolution of trends and best practices.

Military personnel from NATO, EU and different countries, including Libya, as well as law enforcement agencies, international organizations, NGOs and Universities representatives attended this edition.

Many topics related to migration and the security situation in Libya were presented and discussed in an open and frank atmosphere under the Chatham House rules, to highlight a few: the decrease of migrants crossing through the Central Mediterranean Route but the increased death toll, the changes in the smuggling business model, the dire situation of migrants stranded in Libya and the latest achievements of the different military operations and civilian missions in place to address this issue.



Image from the NSD-S HUB Staff attendance to the 7th Edition of SHADE MED Conference

Visit of Mr. Larry GBEVLO-LARTEY Director of Africa Center for Study and Research on Terrorism.

On 26th March 2019 Mr. Larry GBEVLO-LARTEY, Africa Union Special Representative in charge of Counter Terrorism Cooperation and, concurrently, Director of the Algiers based African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) paid a visit to the NSD-S HUB and met with the Director and the Staff.

The ACSRT was established in 2004 pursuant to the decision of the AU High-Level Inter-Governmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, held in Algiers in September 2002.

Its primary role is to assist AU member States build their Counter-Terrorism capacities. Its mandate includes the conduct of research, analysis and studies on the terrorism situation and terrorist groups in Africa, maintaining a terrorism database, centralizing information on terrorism and sharing this with AU Member States. The ACSRT provides a forum for interaction and cooperation among Member States and Regional Mechanisms. The Centre is considered part of the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission and plays an important role in guiding the AU's CT efforts and implementing the AU counterterrorism framework. It works in collaboration with a number of regional and international partners to ensure coherent and coordinated CT efforts in the continent.

The meeting was very productive and the discussion was on possible avenues for closer cooperation and support in order to facilitate information sharing and coordination, provision of technical and professional advice, increase capacity, and perform research and analysis.



NSD-S HUB Director meeting with Dr. Larry GBEVLO-LARTEY

Visit of Amb. Sergio Piazzì - Secretary of THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Ambassador Sergio PIAZZI, currently Secretary for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) has visited the NATO HUB for the South on 26 March 2019. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) is an international organization established in 2005 by the national parliaments of the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region. It is the legal successor of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM), launched in the early '90s. The main objective of PAM is to forge political, economic and social cooperation among the member States in order to find common solutions to the challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, and to create a space for peace and prosperity for its peoples. It has 33 founding and associate member States. PAM is the center of excellence for regional parliamentary diplomacy, and a unique forum whose membership is open exclusively to Euro-Mediterranean countries, which are represented on equal footing. This is reflected in the composition of the Bureau and the alternating Presidency. The current President of PAM is Sen. Alia Bouran (Jordan)". The Secretary General, assisted by international and local staff, directs the Secretariat and coordinates the activities of the Assembly. Each national delegation has five members with equal voting rights and decision-making powers. Associate members and Observers do not have voting rights. As today's challenges, including mass migration, climate change and most importantly the resurgence of conflicts and the evolution of terrorism, require a collective effort, good will and confidence building measures, and this is where the HUB can contribute e support the most. The undoubtable commonalities between the two entities and the need for an essential link with civil society, has found its essence in ensuring coherence and coordination in decision making processes. PAM parliamentarians fully participate in today's regional debates thereby contributing to the elaboration of policies that bear both an immediate impact and a long-term impact for future generations. The political dialogue established among members of PAM, in particular with respect to the Middle East issues, Syria and Libya crises, is of vital importance. To further its objectives, PAM encourages the inter-governmental support of the main actors in the region as well as regional institutions.

The Member States of PAM are: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Palestine, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.



Seminar “CRIME TENDENCIES, SOCIAL CHANGES AND PREVENTIVE APPROACHES”



Delegates from African countries during the Seminar in Algeria

On the 27th and 28th March 2019 a Hub delegation attended the seminar “CRIME TENDENCIES, SOCIAL CHANGES AND PREVENTIVE APPROACHES”, organized by the National Gendarmerie Command in Algeria. It was held in the Circle des Officiers de l’Armée en Algiers, and organized by the INCC (National Institute for Criminology and Criminalistics).

The agenda for the seminar consisted of 2 days presentations, followed by a discussion.

The content was entirely police issues focused on the main actions carried out by Algeria and other neighboring countries regarding the phenomenon of the “out of control” urbanization and its impact on criminality.

This was a great opportunity to spread the features of the Hub to regional actors, as well as to be well aware of the problems tackled in the seminar, and to contact and open relationships with different actors in the field of security and safety in the north of Africa, which included foreign representatives from National Gendarmeries and similar Corps from Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Italy and France, as well as people from Academia and different expertise centers in Algeria, Suisse, France and Canada.

CARNEGIE ME Centre Lebanon & Friederich-Ebert Stiftung From division to unity: how to share power in the Middle East and beyond

Personnel from NSD-S Hub Civil Military Engagement Coordination Section participated, on 5th March in Beirut, in the event organized by Carnegie Middle East Centre Lebanon and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Beirut: From division to unity: how to share power in the Middle East and beyond

The topic of this activity fell into the following context: "Different models of power-sharing aim at enhancing democratic governance, whilst protecting the rights of different communities, including religious and ethnic minorities. As many of the conflicts in the Middle East persist, finding an acceptable and inclusive model of power-sharing is essential to end violence and to open a way for peaceful dialogue and sustainability". Both the topic discussed and the outreach to the organizers are in line with the interest of the NSD-S HUB, because they help to improve the understanding of the dynamics of the Middle East, specifically by providing regional and local perspectives on the different factors affecting stability in the region.



Panelist delegates attending the Carnegie & Ebert-Stiftung Conference in Beirut.