



NATO
SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE



Newsletter Issue No.6 - December 2021

Contents

1. STABILIZATION AND SFA - Challenges and Opportunities for a SFA Operator and Specialist
Massimo MONCADA pag. 2
2. HOW SFA RELATES TO NATO STRATEGIES TO PREVENT (AND DEAL) WITH A CRISIS. NATO's strategy to prevent (and manage) crises
Marco DAGNA pag. 8
3. ADDRESS FOR THE NATO SFA COE launch of the book on "PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE – SFA IMPLICATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES"
H.E. Ambassador Stefano PONTECORVO pag. 13
4. INTERVIEW WITH NOORI FAQIR AHMAD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL MEDIATORS IN SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE
Camilla LAVINO pag. 15
5. THE SFA OPERATORS COURSE - Insight from the Intern
Matteo URBINATI pag. 19
6. 2021 MAIN EVENTS pag. 22

Dear readers,

With great satisfaction I present to you the closing year newsletter n. 6/2021 of the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence, which demonstrates the unwavering commitment of this COE in the service of the Alliance and its Partners.

Since its accreditation, the COE gathers and delivers knowledge and expertise in the field of SFA to NATO Nations and partners. It supports cooperation and interoperability among the wider multinational Community of Interest by providing a reference hub in the SFA field on concept development, doctrine, education and training to promote stability and reconstruction efforts for crisis scenarios.

The radical change in the international landscape in recent years and the increasingly frequent rift between political, economic, social and geographic powers has had a profound effect on military capabilities, structures and doctrines. SFA activities are not limited only to the provision of training but are part of an articulated process to ensure local forces are competent, capable, committed, confident and accountable to create the necessary conditions for an orderly transfer of responsibility to local authorities.

Within Stabilization missions, SFA has an important role to establish a safe and secure environment and set the conditions for starting other activities, which have political, diplomatic, economic, social and cultural implications. In other words, the linkages and the effects of SFA activities fall outside the military domain. In this complex operating environment, SFA activities, when properly planned and conducted, can indeed constitute a powerful means in a situation of proxy-warfare or hybrid threat by countering enemy actions conducted under the lethal-force threshold (namely, the new NATO Intermediate Force Capability concept). SFA should be one of the first options that NATO looks at when trying to pre-empt or solve a crisis.

The above-mentioned topics are well explained in the first two articles of this edition and some related issues were further emphasized by the address of H.E. Ambassador Pontecorvo, who intervened during the launch of the COE's first editorial project entitled "Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance. SFA implications in international activities" and by the article edited by our intern, Camilla Lavino, which stresses the importance of cultural awareness and competence in intercultural communication while engaging with interpreters and cultural mediators during SFA activities.

The NATO SFA COE's courses are designed, inter alia, to strengthen negotiation skills and core competencies in order to enhance their effectiveness in crisis scenarios. One example is the SFA OPERATOR COURSE, which LUISS student Matteo Urbinati, COE intern, described in his article. He emphasized the added value of the role-playing and team building activities, during which the multinational participants observed and analysed their emotional responses in dealing with unforeseen and unusual circumstances.

I am confident that the initiatives promoted by the common commitment of all the personnel of the NATO SFA COE will further encourage an interdisciplinary approach and a productive discussion aimed at identifying important key elements for developing capacity building and related activities in crisis zones in order to achieve effective solutions for a durable and stable environment in fragile states.



STABILIZATION AND SFA

Challenges and Opportunities for a SFA Operator and Specialist



For NATO, stabilization is an approach used to mitigate crises, promote legitimate political authority and set the conditions for long-term stability by using comprehensive civilian and military actions to reduce violence, re-establish security and end social, economic and political turmoil. These activities should be focused on mitigating the sources of instability and should help establish the foundation for long-term stability. Stabilization attempts to mitigate complex problems in unstable states and regions before, during and after crises and should be part of a comprehensive and integrated international response. Stabilization activities, run the spectrum from providing security to fostering justice and facilitating livelihoods and whenever possible, they should be led by the host nation/partner nation¹.

Stabilization activities should be, and normally are, civilian led and ideally implemented by legitimate local authorities, as stated in the NATO doctrine on stabilization, the AJP-3.4.5. On the other hand, the AJP-3² is focused on the conduct of operations, where the military component has the primacy to lead the campaign. However, when civilian actors or local governments cannot operate because of an insecure environment, NATO can be asked to provide security to facilitate the activities of those actors. Additionally, there may be situations where military support, other than security, will be necessary. When civilian state actors are unable or unwilling to provide support, the military may be tasked to temporarily assume the operational lead for other stabilization activities.

Within Stabilization, Security Force Assistance (SFA) has an important role, to establish a safe and secure environment and set the conditions for starting other

activities. This derives from a NATO political endorsement contained in the Lisbon Summit declaration of 2010 where it was affirmed that: “to be effective across the crisis management spectrum, NATO will develop the capability to train and develop local forces in crisis zones, so that local authorities are able, as quickly as possible, to maintain security without international assistance”³.



Figure 1. NATO SFA Definition and its linkages with NATO Strategic Concept 2010.

Subsequently NATO developed a specific concept on SFA in 2014 (MCM-004-2014), a specific doctrine in 2016 (AJP-3.16) and a dedicated SFA Centre of Excellence with the mission to improve the effectiveness of the Alliance in promoting stability and reconstruction efforts for conflict and post-conflict scenarios and to provide a unique capability to the Alliance, NATO Nations and NATO Partners in the field of SFA⁴.

¹ See AJP-3.4.5 for Military contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction, ed. 2015.

² Allied Joint Doctrine for the conduct of operations, ed. 2019.

³ <https://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.nsfacoe.org/mission/>

Generally, we look at military operations as a cause and effect dimension, where following a kinetic action we can assess the effects, such as neutralization or destruction, etc. The environment in which Stabilization and SFA usually take place is extremely volatile and uncertain, and here the human dimension has an important role. Operating as SFA Operators⁵ (Advisors, Mentors, Trainers) can be very challenging because their activities involve all aspects related to the human dimension such as the culture, economy, social facets and history of the local partner. Hence the outcomes are usually unpredictable and monitoring the development activities is very challenging. In fact, many analysts agree that the sources of instability in fragile and conflict-affected communities are as diverse as the attempts to counter them by the international community, local civilian and military officials, and non-governmental organizations. In this maze of grievances and insecurity, it is easy for a stakeholder assigned to the task of reducing conflict and stabilizing contested communities to be overwhelmed.



Figure 2. NATO military contribution to Stabilization and Security Sector Reform.

⁵ SFA Operators: Identified and trained personnel with the technical expertise and personal attitude able to conduct SFA activities and who are properly educated for training, mentoring and advising.

Stabilization and SFA activities are characterized by involving different and heterogeneous actors at various levels. Referring to the terminology, in relevant literature, donors, practitioners, and scholars often use the term “stabilization” to suggest a comprehensive effort to reduce violence in a fragile country, almost as a synonym for “state-building.” SFA operators are also required to have a great ability and inclination to establish contacts with the various actors operating in the local environment. This helps them to understand the political, social and cultural dynamics of the partner nation and to effectively support the stabilization activities. The knowledge of the roles, tasks and objectives of the other actors becomes even more important especially when facing a defence reform within a Security Sector Reform (SSR) process. Looking at the NATO SFA concept MCM-004-2014, in which the aim of NATO Security Force Assistance is to develop and improve or directly support the development of local forces and their associated institutions, there is an implied task for SFA operators or specialists to link with the host/partner nation’s political authorities and all other actors involved in developing the security sector⁶. Furthermore, considering its impact on the partner nation’s security sector, SFA requires a political, financial and long-term commitment to develop and improve the HN’s capacity and capabilities aiming at the progressive transfer of security functions to local forces⁷.

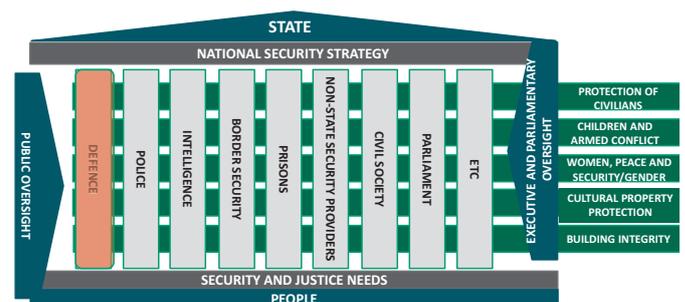


Figure 3. Defence Reform within SSR. Source: NATO SFA COE.

⁶ NATO SFA concept MCM-004-2014.

⁷ See AJP-3.16 for Security Force Assistance ed. 2016.

Considering this information, we can affirm that SFA is a military tool with political, diplomatic, economic, social and cultural implications; in other words, the linkages and the effects of SFA activities fall outside the military domain. Thanks to its adaptability and flexibility, the NATO SFA Concept finds application in the full spectrum of the crisis response operations, such as those aiming to counter irregular activities and its subsets (counter insurgency, counter terrorism and counter criminality).

Moreover, in the stabilization operations SFA contributes to the safe and secure environment assisting a partner nation in developing a sustainable capability that should enable its defence against threats to stability and security.

Furthermore, SFA is further nested in the SSR process as a key subset of Defence Reform. According to DCAF's definition, "Defence reform in the context of SSR enhances democratic con-

trol and oversight over the military and the defence sector, making both more effective, accountable and affordable considering the government, the army and the people"⁸.

Better behaviour and cultural change can improve the relationship between local forces and the population they protect. At the same time, the army must be responsive to the government's policies and must maintain its effectiveness.

For this close link between stabilization and SSR, NATO SFA activities are conducted considering the so-called Cross-Cutting Topics (CCTs), which are a range of different topics which could affect a mission in several ways. They have relevance across all NATO military operations, missions and activities and they need to be considered in a coherent and integrated manner during the planning and execution of operations.

Step by step they have been intro-

Relation with S&R-SSR

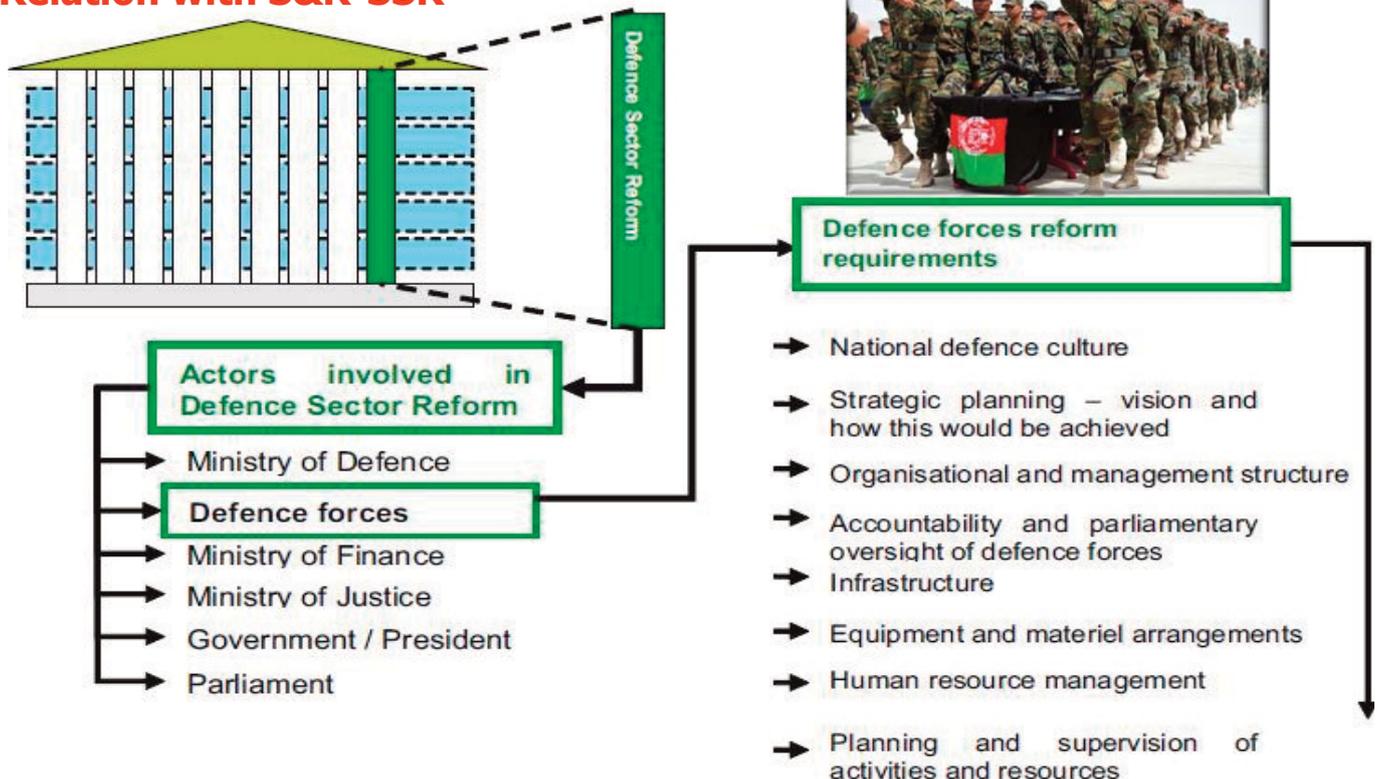


Figure 4. Relation among Stabilization, SSR and Defence reform. Source: Post Conflict and Study Center, ITA Army, Turin.

⁸ DCAF: Defence reform, Applying the principles of good security sector governance to defence. https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/DCAF_BG_13_Defence%20Reform_0.pdf

duced in many NATO doctrines to give guidance to commanders and HQs at the operational level and to offer more useful points of view for the comprehensive approach.

In a stabilization environment, the most relevant CCTs to take into account are⁹:

- Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (CR-SGBV).
- Protection of Civilians (POC).
- Children and Armed conflict.
- Cultural Property Protection (CPP).
- Women Peace & Security Agenda (WPS).
- Building Integrity.

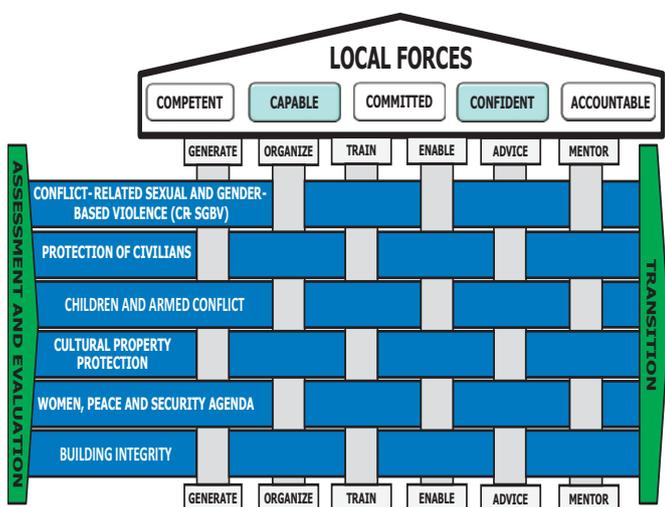


Figure 5. Relations among NATO SFA activities and the recognized CCTs. Source: NATO SFA COE.

For a SFA Operator or specialist, this implies a wide knowledge of all aspects linked with these topics to develop a proper and effective capacity building project.

In recent years the NATO SFA COE and Allied countries have been analysing in depth the best solution for selecting, recruiting, educating and training future Advisors and what kind of traits or skills they need to have or to develop. During the last year many trends were recognized in studies, roundtables and dedicated work-

shops: some of these trends were confirmed and some gaps were identified, while new challenges were discovered.



27 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

Figure 6. Example of activities conducted by NATO SFA COE with the aim to analyse the Advisor's capacities and capabilities in interacting with Local Forces, through a series of engaging academic sessions and a role-playing practical session. Source: NATO SFA COE

It has become apparent that a thorough understanding of the Host/Partner/Assisted Nation and the regional area, in terms of historical, cultural, social economical background etc. as well as of the different actors involved, is essential to conduct harmonious stabilization and security reform activities.

In this regard, prior to starting a stabilization operation, an initial assessment of the local situation and forces should be conducted to determine which activities are most appropriate to the situation and are essential to achieving NATO's and the Host Nation's (HN) objectives. An initial assessment will also clarify the HN's capability and readiness to absorb capacity building activities and how they can best suit the context whilst ensuring that each activity is tailored to the situation, local conditions, and requirements.

⁹ See AJP-3 for the conduct of operations and AJP-3.19 for Civil-Military cooperation ed. 2017.

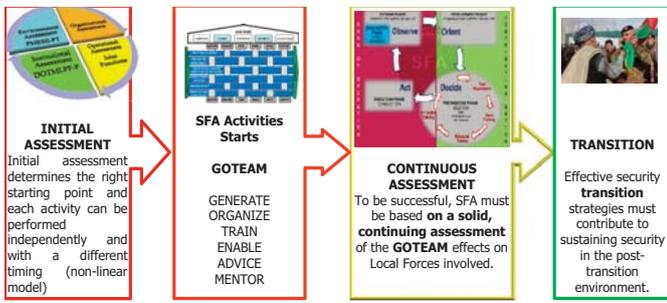


Figure 7. SFA process from initial assessment to transition. Source: NATO SFA COE.

For this reason, it is fundamental to understand the partner Nation's resilience capacity in terms of absorbing, repairing and adapting.

Especially essential are: the ability to assimilate the activities promoted by



Figure 8. Defence reform involves a wide range of actors across the security sector and society. Source: DCAF https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/DCAF_BG_13_Defence%20Reform_0.pdf

the advisors within a set timeframe, the ability to divide and reconstruct the compromised sectors of state security, and the ability to adapt to the new situation that has been created.

To be more effective it is paramount that the initial assessment must be conducted together with the Host Nation to agree, right from the start, the adequate allocation of resources and the priority to be sought according to the capacitive gaps to be filled.

Considering the environment and the many stakeholders involved, a SFA operator/specialist¹⁰ needs to know how to engage, speak and if possible, coordinate, collaborate and integrate with the other actors present in the area.

Coordination between all actors, missions and international initiatives is fundamental in Defence Capacity Building activities because many activities carried out by other actors present in the area (state, non-state, NGOs, religious organizations, regional organizations, etc.) can have effects on Capacity Building development.

Moreover, a SFA operator/specialist must have the capacity to involve the political sphere of the partner nation. In other words, in carrying out stabilization operations, a SFA operator, especially if he/she is working at the institutional level, must seek political commitment also and, above all, in the host / partner / assisted nation through the involvement of local government,

the advisors within a set timeframe, the ability to divide and reconstruct the compromised sectors of state security, and the ability to adapt to the new situation that has been created.

¹⁰ SFA Specialists: selected and trained personnel with suitable competence, knowledge, skills and experience in the SFA field capable of carrying out and supporting SFA activities and operations on a permanent basis.

political and civil society. SFA activities - as well as defence reform in the broader SSR process - would be more effective with greater involvement of the local authorities and synchronization at the various levels, from the strategic to the tactical.

This implies a need for SFA operators/specialists involved in stabilization operations to have managerial skills (project manager) in the management/planning of funds for the development of projects and the ability to design the fund plan based on the conditions reached. To these one must also add the ability to know how to allocate resources

“where they are needed and to whom they are needed” (the so-called decentralization of monetary support, which consists in the distribution of resources to direct beneficiaries without going through intermediaries, in order to mitigate corruption).

When a Stabilization operation starts with its capacity building activities there is a need to continuously monitor progress and to take remedial action to swiftly offset any identified deviations.

In this phase it is fundamental to correctly identify the so-called Measures of Performance (MOPs) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) that are instrumental to monitoring activities¹¹.

While the MOPs can be easy to measure (e.g. how many courses have been taken to create or improve the “X” capability/capacity), the MOEs are difficult to evaluate, because they involve qualitative indicators regarding the effective

¹¹ See AJP-5 for the planning of operations, ed. 2019, and Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD).



Figure 9. NMI social communication on Advisory team. Source @IraqNato.

use of that “X” capacity/capability. For this reason, the importance of being able to carry out accompanying activities is emphasized, so that the advisor/mentor can provide advice even in critical situations and have a concrete measure of effectiveness (MOE).

In conclusion, while operating in the field of stabilization operations is apparently easy, it requires great openness, mental flexibility, the ability to adapt and know how to relate with stakeholders who are sometimes very far from the military world at different levels. In this context, a SFA operator may seem mainly engaged with its military and political counterpart (local forces and Ministry), but at the same time he/she must necessarily interact with all levels of state, non-state, regional and non-state actors in the area, which in different ways concur and have effects on stabilization where defence capacity building is usually present.

HOW SFA RELATES TO NATO STRATEGIES TO PREVENT (AND DEAL) WITH A CRISIS

NATO's strategy to prevent (and manage) crises



At the Warsaw Summit, in May 2016, the NATO Nations agreed that, as consequence of the changed and less stable global security environment, the Alliance needed to integrate its Deterrence and Defence posture with a more effective effort to Project Stability and strengthen security outside its territory. The goal was to enhance Alliance security using both crisis management and cooperative security activities. This policy is not so revolutionary as it may seem at first glance but in fact it has deep roots in the Alliance. Already at the London Summit of 1990 NATO expressed its intent to project stability in Eastern and Central Europe to prevent regional fallout from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Projecting Stability is a “conceptual guide for the coordinated use of military and non-military activity and interventions in neighbouring regions. Its purpose is not solely to provide mutual benefit to partner nations, but to shape the environment in regions where the Alliance has strategic interests. It seeks to prevent or preempt the emergence of threats to stability and security¹”. NATO MC 0655² defines Projecting Stability as “a set of proactive activities, coherently articulated and comprehensively developed, which influence and shape the strategic environment to make it more secure and less threatening.

Moreover, this range of activities encompasses military and non-military efforts with a goal to make areas of strategic importance to the Alliance more stable and secure, and thus contributing to stability beyond its borders”. This definition effectively implies a strategy which:

- comprises “a set of proactive activities which influence and shape the strategic environment,” thereby defining the Means.
- is “coherently articulated and comprehensively developed,” so defining the Ways.
- aims “to make it (the strategic environment) more secure and less threatening,” by defining the Ends.

Security Force Assistance (SFA) can be considered a Means of NATO's “Projecting Stability” strategy as it develops capabilities within Local Forces (LF) in a crisis area, so contributing to the stabilization process.

¹ “Projecting Stability: Elixir or Snake Oil?”, NATO Defence College (2018).
² MC 0655 “Military Concept for Projecting Stability”.

SFA's role in improving Local Forces' capabilities

NATO has been delivering SFA activities since 2003 starting with Operation ISAF³ but only in 2014 was a formal NATO SFA Concept⁴ released.

Two years later, in 2016, an Allied Joint Publication on the topic followed. AJP-3.16 (A) "Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance" defines SFA as "*all NATO activities that develop and improve, or directly support, the development of local forces and their associated institutions in crisis zones. Local forces comprise indigenous, non-NATO military security forces and will be defined by the North Atlantic Council (NAC)*". SFA Activities – summarized in the acronym GOTEAM are Generate, Organize, Train (and Educate), Enable, Advise, and Mentor – should be performed to create or improve LF's capabilities. In particular:

Generating activities assist a Host Nation (HN) to develop the systems, structures and manpower that will be required to build a sustainable local force capability.

Organizing activities assist a HN to shape its LFs. Considerations should include measures taken to develop, implement and sustain command and control structures, functional areas (for example,

manpower and personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, planning and policy, communications, force development), supporting institutions and infrastructure.

Training (and Educating) activities aim to teach a person (or organization) a skill, or type of behaviour, through regular practice and instruction. Training may include the development and execution of programs of instruction and training events.

Enabling activities include providing services (and potentially contributing toward developing the associated institutions) that underpin and facilitate other SFA activities, particularly during the transition phase. Nevertheless, the HN must not depend on protracted NATO support.

Advising activities comprise improving the performance of designated actors by providing active participation and expertise to achieve strategic or operational objectives. An adviser can recommend a course of action, offer advice, or inform another party about a fact or situation.

Mentoring activities focus on leadership and relationships. A mentor should focus on developing and enabling personnel in leadership and command positions to achieve a sustainable capability.

³ "NATO took the lead of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan on 11 August 2003. Mandated by the United Nations, ISAF's primary objective was to enable the Afghan government to provide effective security across the country and develop new Afghan security forces to ensure Afghanistan would never again become "a safe haven" for terrorists. From 2011, responsibility for security was gradually transitioned to Afghan forces, which took the lead for security operations across the country by summer 2013. The transition process was completed and Afghan forces assumed full security responsibility at the end of 2014, when the ISAF mission was completed. A new, smaller non-combat mission ("Resolute Support") was launched on 1 January 2015 to provide further training, advice, and assistance to the Afghan security forces and institutions. [...] ISAF provided support to the Afghan government and international community in security sector reform, including mentoring, training, and operational support to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). The aim was to build professional, independent, and sustainable forces that were able to provide security to the Afghan people throughout the country. This work was carried out jointly by the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) and ISAF's Joint Command (JIC), together with the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) and other important national actors. NTM-A focused on training initial recruits and building the institutional training capability of the ANSF, while the JIC was responsible for developing fielded ANSF units through advice and assistance." (Source:

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm.

⁴ MCM-0034-2014, NATO Security Force Assistance Concept, 28 March 2014 (NAC approved 6 June 2014).



Figure 1. NATO-Iraq-training-1170x610.jpg (1170x610) (thedefensepost.com)

NATO faces evolving threats

NATO's 2030 Initiative and the current Strategic Concept commit the Alliance “to prevent crises, manage conflicts and stabilize post-conflict situations” and to “ensure that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against any threat to the safety and security of our populations”.

NATO forces face increasing threats and challenges from adversaries undertaking hostile actions, which deliberately stay below the level that would trigger a conventional (i.e., lethal) response or where a response would impose costs – with respect to undesired escalation, potential collateral damage or civilian casualties (CIVCAS), or other adverse outcomes – to the Alliance. Adversaries understand NATO's lethal capabilities and thresholds for their use, moreover, they exploit this, avoiding direct symmetrical engagements, instead manoeuvring below lethal force thresholds, pursuing their objectives observed but undeterred.

NATO members' main competitors (the so called “revisionist powers”⁵) have developed theories of victory which focus on seizing the initiative and gaining a decisive advantage in the early phases of the conflict.

The implications for the future operating environment are quite clear. Rather than a line separating Presence (and No Use of Force) and Action (and use of Lethal Force), leaving a space for manoeuvre that adversaries may exploit, there must be an engagement space in between.

Need for new Capabilities The Intermediate Force Capability (IFC)

To retain the initiative in this new operating environment, NATO should be able

to inflict costs to adversaries operating under the lethal force threshold. NATO's Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Capability Group⁶ (JNLWCG) and the System Analysis and Studies Panel 151⁷ (SAS 151) – within the NATO Science and Technology Organization – are focused on the development of an Intermediate Force Capability (IFC) to deal with the implications of the mutating Operating Environment.

IFC is the strategy that NATO is developing to bridge the space for engagement gap. A successful military strategy is based on the balanced application of *Ends* (objectives), *Ways* (broad approaches) and *Means* (resources). The following table shows how IFC strategy is articulated.

Intermediate Force Capability (IFC) Strategy elements

Means:

- Non-Lethal Weapons.
- Cyber.
- Electronic Warfare.
- Information Operations.
- Other Means Beyond Presence and Short of Lethal Force.

Ways:

- The application of proportional effects below the lethal threshold.

Strategy:

- Win the battle, both in physical and information space.
- Win the narrative in the information space.

⁶ The Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Capabilities Group (JNLWCG) is a permanent group of approximately 20 experts currently open to Interoperability Partners, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore. This group is the focal point for all activities related to Non-Lethal Weapons Capabilities in the NATO Army Armaments Group (NAAG) and across the Materiel Armament Groups (MAGs). JNLWCG is responsible for Non-Lethal Weapons Capabilities (NLWC) across the full spectrum of military operations and operating environments. JNLWCG mission is to improve NATO Non-Lethal Capabilities. Principally, this will be achieved through information exchange on national NLWC activities, standardization of NLWC material, support to NLWC-related doctrine development, support to operations and identification/promotion of cooperative activities.

Source: (http://www.future-forces-forum.org/events/default/16_expert-groups-2018?lang=en).

⁷ See (<https://www.sto.nato.int/Lists/test1/webview.aspx>) for further information.

⁵ “Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America – Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge”, USA, 2018.



Figure 1. <https://www.popsci.com/app/uploads/2019/03/18/KFEXTBEOSDU3NTMBFHV2V7CPGU.jpg>

The successful implementation of this strategy, will allow NATO to:

- actively detect, contest, and deter threats across the “Competition Continuum⁸”.
- increase the “manoeuvre space” by gaining and maintaining the initiative and expanding engagement opportunities.
- impose costs to adversaries and proxies.
- minimize undesired outcomes/effects such as hostile Info-Ops, collateral damage, and CIVCAS.
- seize/maintain the initiative in both physical⁹ and information¹⁰ dimensions.

⁸ “[...] Rather than a world either at peace or at war, the competition continuum describes a world of enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict.” US Joint Doctrine Note 1-19 dated 3 June 2019.

⁹ “[...] the physical dimension is the one where manoeuvre and combat operations take place.” F. Zinzone and M. Cagnazzo, *The Art Of War in the Post-Modern Era – The Battle of Perceptions*, 2020, p. 5.

¹⁰ “[...] the information dimension is that intangible, abstract environment where information is crafted and exists in order to be later delivered to achieve a decisive, tangible impact.” Ibidem, p. 11.



Figure 2. <https://www.popsci.com/app/uploads/2019/03/18/KFEXTBEOSDU3NTMBFHV2V7CPGU.jpg>

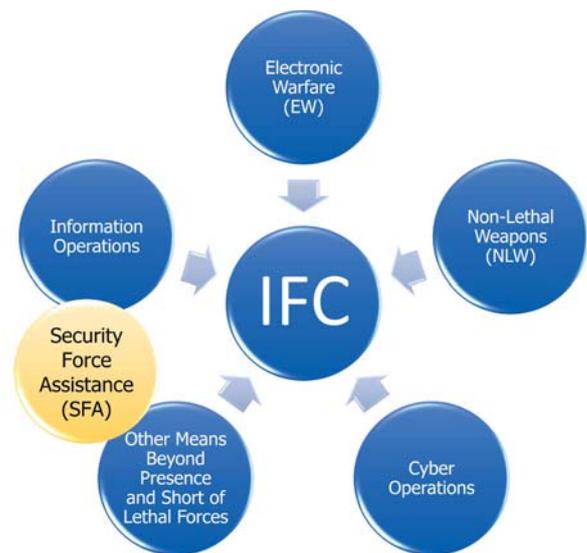


Figure 3. IFC Means

The relationship between SFA and IFC

SFA Activities can be developed along the full spectrum of crisis scenarios and they can efficiently support NATO forces in Operations to contain adversaries operating under the lethal threshold.

The SFA approach is mainly an indirect one, not directly engaging the opposing party, but helping the HN's Local Forces to do it. Indeed, SFA:

- addresses the security issues, arising from LF shortfalls, which may be at the base of instability.
- reduces the possible interactions be-

tween NATO Forces and the local population and, as such, the associated risks for CIVCAS.

- reduces the NATO Force footprint on the ground and so may support Information Operations in disrupting the enemy narrative depicting NATO units as an occupation force.
- limits the risks to the NATO Forces.

Nevertheless, Commanders and their Staff should be aware that the enemy could exploit adverse outcomes, which may occur when NATO engages in SFA Activities. For example, there is the risk that:

- LF may not abide by the rule of law and human rights and, consequently, NATO forces may be held responsible for LF violations. In this sense, it is paramount to promote the respect of the rule of law and applicable human rights by implementing tailored and contextualised International Humanitarian Law (IHL) training programmes¹¹ that will support the development of legitimate LF.
- LF individuals may be involved in corruption cases and NATO Forces delivering SFA may be held responsible. To counter corruption within LF, NATO has developed the Building Integrity (BI) and Good Governance Initiatives in the defence and related security sectors.¹² When planning SFA Activities and dealing with a Local Counterpart, opportune emphasis should be given to the integration of BI with appropriate prevention measures which can avoid the corruption phenomena and consolidate the principles of integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- Mentors following LF in combat may be called to use lethal force in self-defence situations or may be por-

trayed by the enemy as responsible for CIVCAS caused by LF. NATO Forces performing enabling activities (i.e., Close Air Support / fire support) may cause CIVCAS. Clear legal framework, responsibilities, and procedures should be established when engaged in kinetic combined activities.

- Equipment, weapons and platforms provided by NATO to LF may be used in actions with negative effects on the control of the narrative. Hence, Information Operations should be ready to counter hostile propaganda.
- SFA is a unique instrument for NATO as it significantly contributes to address a crisis by providing long-term solutions to security issues. It allows NATO forces to generate intended effects in an operating environment where the use of lethal force may cause both unintended outcomes and result in losing control of the narrative in the information space. Hence, SFA could be seen as one of the links between IFC and Projecting Stability strategies.

Conclusions

SFA Activities, when properly planned and conducted, can indeed constitute a Means for the IFC Strategy in a situation of proxy-warfare or hybrid threat by countering enemy actions conducted under the lethal-force threshold. SFA should be one of the first options that NATO looks at when trying to preempt or solve a crisis.

Still, the contents of international agreements with the Host Nation regarding the delivery of SFA require fuller analysis to better clarify roles and responsibilities and reduce opportunities for adversaries to exploit.

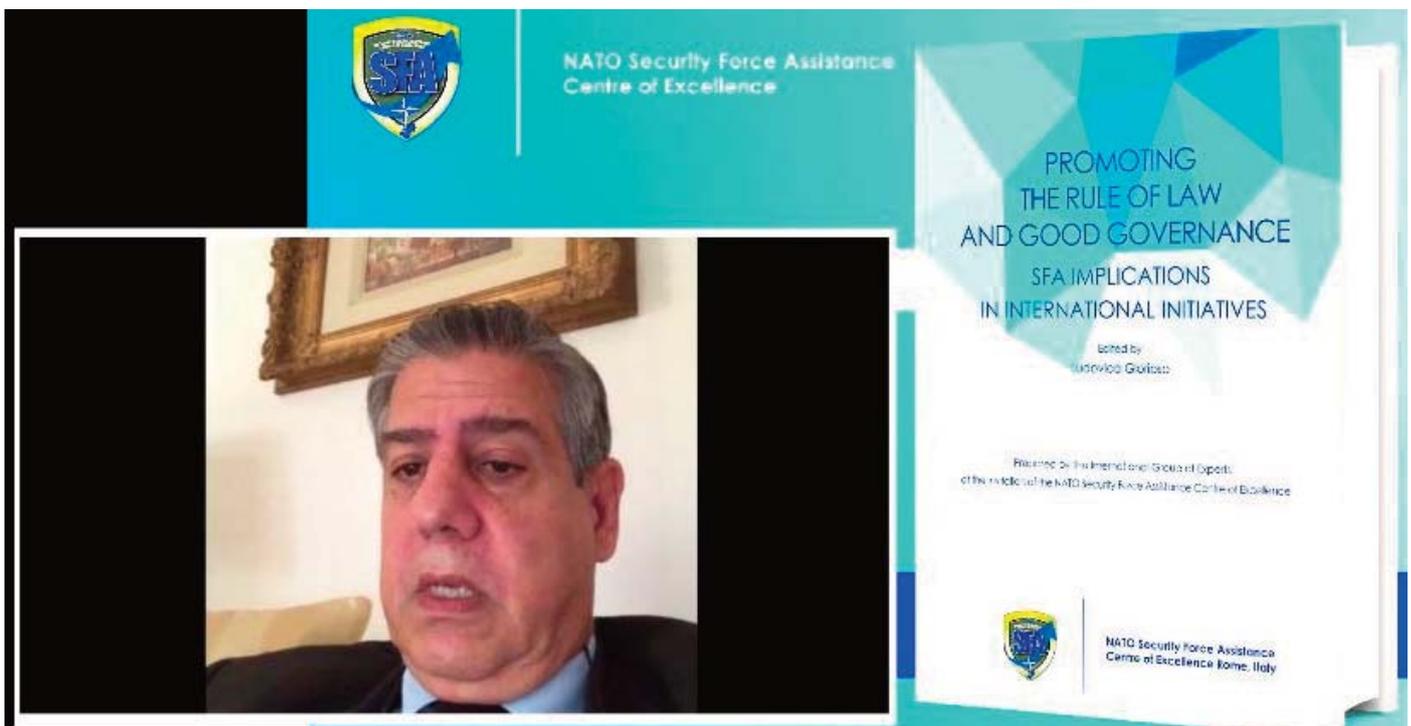
¹¹ AA. VV. Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance – SFA Implications in International Initiatives. NATO SFA COE, Rome, 2021.

¹² NATO Building Integrity, see: Building Integrity - Website (nato.int).

ADDRESS FOR THE NATO SFA COE launch
of the book on "PROMOTING THE RULE
OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE – SFA
IMPLICATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES"



I wish to thank the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO SFA COE) and Colonel Di Pietro for the invitation to speak at the launch of the NATO SFA COE book. This is an excellent initiative which is not only an exceedingly useful handbook on a subject matter which is becoming increasingly relevant for NATO, as it should be, but I also believe



H.E. Ambassador Stefano Pontecorvo

that it can be the beginning of a useful process of consultation, coordination and cooperation amongst various stakeholders and international organizations in peace supporting initiatives. May I also add, as an Italian, that I am particularly proud that the Italian Armed Forces have taken a lead on establishing the centre and in carrying forward its activities.

The book, which Major Glorioso has been kind enough to send me, is a complete anthology, I would say, of some of the primary international initiatives promoting the rule of law and good governance, and I was particularly impressed by its structure which goes from the strategic

level to the specific topics in which security force assistance has an important role. The best practices by other international organizations, EU, UN, World Bank, ICRC, ICC, is an exceedingly important portion and serves the purpose of cross fertilizing our own thinking, which needs to take care of all aspects involving rule of law, anti-corruption, DDR and the like that at first sight have little to do with the military but are essential for ultimate success.

Development and security are not in competition and are not mutually exclusive. As the book shows, they are mutually reinforcing, and both concur to determine a much-needed holistic approach to peace

supporting initiatives. Here we still need an evolution in our collective thinking, and switch into high gears avoiding outdated positions, at times dogmatic, and figure out ways in which we all have a role to play. As we are finding out around the world the task is huge and multi-faceted. SFA must play its role, but it must be complemented and complement itself a wider concept of peace supporting, by the whole of the international community.

I also welcome a more collective effort both in the conceptual and in the operational phase of SFA. As NATO, we are used to thinking collectively and acting collectively but there is always room for much needed additional consultation and improvement. Shared thinking makes a difference in the implementation phase. Particularly on matters, such as SFA, which we are still refining, and which will be a big part of future NATO operations. As Secretary General Stoltenberg has said in the past, we need to be able to project stability to places in the world which need it in order to increase the security of member states. This will be a prominent concern for NATO operations going forward.

Coming from my experience in Afghanistan, I cannot but fully concur with the main contentions of the book, starting from the fact that institution building is a must if we want security force assistance to work. Both must run in parallel as one reinforces the other and because they cannot be two separate exercises. This is exactly what failed in Afghanistan. We had an excellent Train, advise, assist and equip program which was anchored in a political reality which was not sustainable. This led to the ultimate collapse of the Republic and ushered in the Taliban. In short, civilians and military need to work hand in hand, with shared objectives and mutual understanding of what each actor is doing. This has not always been true, across the globe, in the past.

In this vein, support to the political leadership is therefore a necessary component: they need to be seen as legitimate authorities, who need to be inclusive to gain consensus among the population. I am not advocating interference in recipient countries- internal affairs. The objective is not to impose anything alien to the country and the society, but to help in building compatible and healthy institutions. As we have seen in Afghanistan, armies do not fight in an institutional void or if they are not motivated: armies fight for an ideal and an idea if that idea is upheld, shared, and believed in. By society as a whole, and not simply by a small elite.

Another aspect which does not always receive the attention it deserves is the human dimension of peace supporting initiatives. This also is well highlighted in the book. Human engagement, and the cultural and social aspects tied to it, are another essential aspect of successful operations. Here there are several lessons to be learned from our Afghan experience. I am therefore convinced that this aspect, the human dimension and human engagement, makes a difference. If you get it right, you multiply your chances of success.

I believe wholeheartedly that we always need an exit strategy, in any endeavor we undertake. Particularly as a military peace supporting operation cannot last forever; civilians need to step in and consolidate the gains. In the long run this is the best option we have to project stability in recipient countries in order to protect our own security.

Thank you very much once again for the invitation and I wish you a very fruitful discussion. I am sure that the process undertaken by the Centre of Excellence in producing this book will go a long way towards enhancing our understanding and cooperation in SFA seen in the wider, and wiser, sense.

Thank you.

INTERVIEW WITH NOORI FAQIR AHMAD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL MEDIATORS IN SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE INITIATIVES



“NATO will need to interact with different cultures and work with those who may have different beliefs, political structures and approaches to operations. Although these differences often present challenges, when diverse actors are united by a common purpose or objectives, their differences may contribute to a



Figure 1. <https://www.rid.it/storage/repository/notizie/foto/231/1.jpg>

wider range of options for SFA activities. NATO must show cultural respect towards their partners. This is paramount to create mutual trust”.

Precisely in view of establishing mutual trust, cultural mediators play a role in Security Force Assistance (SFA) that goes beyond mere interpretation. In fact, in addition to overcoming the language barrier, they function as “vital intercultural intermediaries between advisors and counterparts in the advising mission”. As

such, the effective and cooperative engagement of cultural mediators significantly facilitates the establishment of a rapport between SFA advisors, mentors and trainers and their counterparts, as well as the achievement of the mission’s end state.

Overall, cultural mediators and interpreters have provided meaningful contributions in several Security Force Assistance missions and they are increasingly being recognised and rewarded for their

expertise and work. In particular, Afghanistan constitutes an emblematic example. In fact, when the US military withdrew from Afghanistan after twenty years of conflict, the White House sought to secure relocations and visas for interpreters who worked alongside departing American forces.

The NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence interviewed Noori Faqir Ahmad, a cultural mediator with a very diverse experience in the field, including in Afghanistan. In particular, the interview aimed to shed light on the importance of cultural mediators in SFA activities – especially in relation to cultural knowledge and human interaction - as well as providing insightful recommendations for advisors working on the ground. The role and management of interpreters is a pivotal topic addressed by the NATO-accredited “SFA Operator Course” offered by the NATO Security Force Assistance COE, which deserves further attention.

Noori Faqir Ahmad was born and raised in Herat, Afghanistan, where he graduated in Economics and Management. Noori was interested in collaborating with international forces as an interpreter.

In October 2015, Noori Faqir Ahmad left Afghanistan and moved to Italy, where he continued working as an interpreter. He also further developed his skills by working as a control and quality officer in a private company.



Figure 2. TPNW reaches 50 ratifications. ICAN | Aude Catimel. <https://www.icanw.org/>

1. Based on your experience, could you kindly identify the main barriers in the cross-cultural approach, with particular attention to the biases affecting the relationship between advisor and advisee?

According to my experience, several factors and biases should be considered by advisors and advisees to avoid a negative impact on these relationships. Some of these key factors comprise:

A. Roles - Roles always entail certain expectations concerning behaviours, rights and duties. Most of the role expectations are unconscious and derive from observation and imitation of others and/or from what is commonly considered to be right or wrong.

B. Impartiality - Impartiality is an ethical principle, which ensures the advisor and advisee’s neutrality and objectivity. This implies that they should not take sides nor express their personal views about religion, culture or politics and they should avoid becoming personally involved in these issues. The advisors should not mock other individuals’ skills or knowledge and they should not, by any means, be disrespectful. At the same time, however, advisees should also refrain from judging their advisors and their backgrounds.

C. Culture - Culture may broadly be defined as a nebulous set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures, as well as behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people. Many of these assumptions may differ significantly between cultures. For example, an apparently simple term may have very different connotations for different speakers.

D. Cultural awareness and competence in intercultural communication are keys to avoiding any possible distortion or misunderstanding between the advisor and the other actors involved, including advisees, interpreters and cultural me-

diators. In particular, cultural differences may take the form not only of verbal, but also non-verbal communication, including gestures, posture, facial expressions and distance between the interlocutors. Within this framework, a competence in intercultural communication is the ability to effectively communicate and interact with other individuals who have a different cultural, ethnic or social background. Cultural awareness demands knowledge, motivation and skills. Motivation entails the willingness to accept social relationships with members of other cultural groups. Knowledge refers to the ability to know how to collect information about others, the acknowledgement of differences and similarities between communication partners and the groups to which they belong and, finally, the awareness of alternative interpretations of individuals' behaviour. Instead, effective communication with others demands interpersonal (social) skills, such as flexibility, openness, listening skills, thoughtfulness, empathy and adaptability. These skills - especially the last three - are considered essential for achieving competence in intercultural communication.

2. Could you kindly describe the relationship between advisor, advisee and cultural mediator, as well as the existing dynamics within this kind of interaction?

The nature of the relationship varies with the rank and activities of the advisor. Relations should be built by trusting, listening and a timely response between the parties. Additionally, advisors should develop their relations with mediators and counterparts in view of a common goal. However, based on my experience, most (counterpart) officers may not know how to ask for clarifications or explanations. Therefore, advisors should approach and demonstrate to their counterparts that they are available to share their knowledge, to solve or advise on how to solve problems, so as to create a friendly environment in which the counterpart feels free and comfortable to approach his/her advisor. This will positively affect the rapport and the counterpart will trust the advisor and the mediator more than before. While a good relationship may be essentially built through trust, respect, understanding and empathy, cultural knowledge of the counterpart will also play a role. For instance, if advisors are conducting a mission in the southern part of Afghanistan, they must know which Afghan tribes live in the region. Thus, considering that mostly Pashtun tribe members live there, greeting the counterpart with some Pashtun words could positively affect the relationship.

3. Which are the main challenges and opportunities in maintaining a long and fruitful relationship with the counterpart?

From my perspective, the advisor should be a good listener. If advisors wish to obtain trust from their counterparts, they should listen to them and identify their attitudes. Cultural mediators may indeed help them obtain this information. Based on my experience, at the beginning, advisors were not properly prepared for their roles. Therefore, it was very hard for them to build strong relationships, as they were

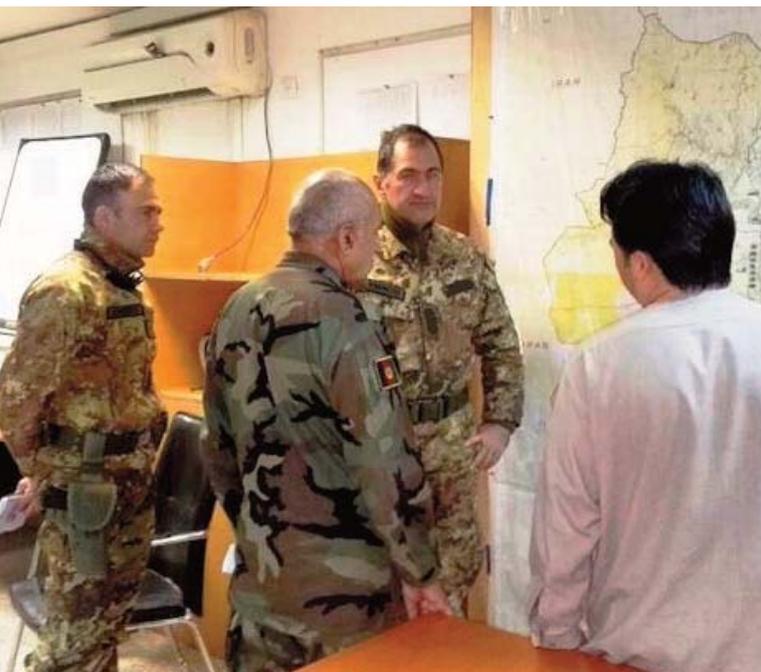


Figure 3. Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony. ICAN | Jo Straube. <https://www.icanw.org/>

advising counterparts with different cultural backgrounds and languages. Additionally, rank also played a role. In fact, it may be particularly challenging, for example, for a major to advise an Afghan general and to maintain a long-term relationship with him due to rank differences. On the contrary, colonels may be very effective in maintaining a rapport thanks to their experience and rank.

At the same time, advisors should stay in contact with the counterparts as much as possible by providing useful advice, briefing them and encouraging them to do their best. In my opinion, once established, it would be extremely useful to maintain the relationship for a long period of time or even at a great distance, as it would allow advisors and advisees to continuously stay in touch, exchange information and ideas. Additionally, the existence of an SFA Specialist to act as a reference point - by introducing and supporting advisors in the interactions with their advisees - would be extremely useful, especially to ensure a smoother turn-over and sustainable co-operation in the long term.

4. Could you kindly pinpoint and describe any behavioural aspects and fruitful ways to positively interact with the counterpart?

Based on my personal experience, in order to create positive relationships with the counterpart, advisors should patiently listen to them and offer them adequate time to share their ideas without making them feel uncomfortable, while also avoiding promises that may be broken and impair their trust. Unfortunately, however, Afghan officers often ask questions that advisors cannot answer or promise to answer in a later moment. Thus, by not fulfilling these promises, they end up undermining their counterpart's trust. Additionally, advisors should try to spend some free time with their advisees, organise simple joint activities (e.g. walks around the campus) and minimise interruption by other individuals. As

mentioned above, advisors should have a general overview about the culture and attitudes of the counterpart and they should avoid dictating choices or controlling them. For examples, Afghan officers do not usually accept dictating ideas. During the eight years of my mission, I have also witnessed advisors with at least some knowledge about Afghan culture being much more successful than those lacking this knowledge. Ultimately, advisors should be flexible.

Conclusions

This interview falls within the broader framework of the NATO SFA COE's project aimed at identifying key Security Force Assistance competencies and learning from the experiences of the personnel deployed as Advisors, Mentors and Trainers alongside Local Forces in Host Nations.

Building on this project, this interview went a step further by exploring and revealing the standpoint of another important actor in the SFA field. In fact, from the unique perspective of a cultural mediator, Noori Faqir Ahmad has shed light on some fundamental aspects that advisors should consider in their interaction with the counterpart, as well as a series of recommendations on how to establish trustworthy and sustainable rapports between advisors and advisees. Furthermore, his considerations confirmed and reinforced the paramount importance of the human factor in Security Force Assistance activities and concentrated the attention on human interaction. Ultimately, considering the importance of cultural mediators and the meaningful insights they may uncover, this interview could also initiate a new strain of research aiming to capitalise on cultural mediators and interpreters' experiences to further refine and develop the SFA Operator and SFA Specialist profiles.

THE SFA OPERATORS COURSE Insight from the Intern



The course aims to improve the competency and the effectiveness of SFA operators working in current and future missions related to security capacity-building. The course enhances the practical understanding and application of NATO SFA operators in order to shape future activities by establishing a strong awareness of the local context of crisis zones.

The event took place in Rome from the 11th to the 15th of October 2021 at the Italian Airforce's "Casa dell'Aviatore".

The first day started with general remarks provided by the NATO SFA COE Director, Col. Massimo Di Pietro, who introduced the participants to SFA doctrine and its growing importance for NATO's stabilization mission. There were several activities designed to promote the cohesiveness of the team and to help the participants get to know one another.

This team-building activity demonstrated how the actions of each individual should be supported by the common efforts of the others.

During the afternoon, the instructors of the Center explained to the participants how SFA concepts can improve the quality of assessment reports and other fundamental tools. The acquaintance of the attendees, coming from different cultural and professional contexts, was further reinforced during the ice-breaker





activity which took place in the evening.

The second day, the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Subject Matter Expert (SME) explained the importance of Local Forces (LF) analysis and mapping. Subsequently she introduced some methodologies for understanding local crisis zones and the various stakeholders involved. The participants were asked to map important stakeholders in different country scenarios and then to explain their analysis outcomes to the other groups. It is important to point out that syndicate group activities represent a useful didactic tool for two main reasons.

First, the group activity avoids the decreasing level of attention generally experienced after different hours of in-class lectures. Second, the project activity helps the participant to practically apply the theory to actual scenarios. The second day ended with a presentation of some remarkable results reached by the Center in terms of SFA implementation in the doctrine and concept development field. In particular, the results of a research study aimed at defining the main traits, attitudes, and behaviors of SFA operators were illustrated.

The first part of the third day was presented by an officer from the UK's Army Special

Operations Brigade. The lecturer provided anthropological models to map other cultures. The main merit of this lecture was to sensitize the audience to cultural awareness methods. The most important dimensions analysed were: collectivism versus individualism; and power, distance and time perception among different cultures. Particular focus was given to African countries which were the special research field of the distinguished lecturer. During the afternoon, a SFA SME reported on his personal experience during a bilateral assistance mission in Niger, where he was called to perform SFA activities for mentoring, training, and advising Local Forces in order to make them autonomous and accountable in the shortest period of time. Finally, a civilian analyst from the US Joint International Center for Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) helped the participants to understand the theoretical framework of capacity-based assessment during SFA missions. The theoretical knowledge obtained from the Afghan scenario was used to create a matrix-based table used for local forces.

The fourth day opened with lecturers from the civil institutions experts in communication strategies. The first lecture explained how communication can affect and influence the complex equation



of risk assessment activities. In addition, the second speaker provided in-depth insight on mediation and negotiation methodologies and emphasized the key role played by interpreters, who are not simple translators, during negotiation activities with stakeholder from other cultures. He also clarified the differences between a cultural mediator and an interpreter and suggested some best practices to apply when an interpreter is engaged.

The last practical group exercise was in many respects the climax of the course activities. The participants were supposed to entertain a dialogue and a negotiation with a foreign local forces high official. During the exercise, even the note-taker and the interpreter were involved to give support to the negotiator in interacting with the counterpart. The exercise was very immersive and realistic and it helped to understand how SFA activities involve a different dimension of human activity that cannot be solely reduced to the military sector but also include culture, politics, and communication.

The last day of the course was a good opportunity to explore, in detail, the role of the gender perspective in NATO missions. Finally, a brief wrap-up of the course program was delivered and each

participant received the appropriate certificate of participation.

Amongst the main topics of this course, the role of the SFA operator in advising is one of the projects of the COE aimed at the implementation of the SFA concepts and principles. In fact, the newest COE editorial project aims to provide a theoretical and practical insight into the role of strategic advisers during SFA operations. In particular, the publication will analyze the role of the adviser and the practical tools and indicators used to assess the performance of the local forces. Furthermore, it will emphasize the importance to understand the local operational context and how it is shaped by political, economic, and cultural factors, and the implications for the institutional environment and the highest level of decision-making processes.

As a civilian intern, I really appreciated the ideas and vast information provided, all of which I believe will be very useful for my professional career. I would like to offer a special thanks to all the participants of the course and to the NATO SFA COE for the possibility they offered me to participate in this event and their remarkable day-to-day efforts for delivering these kind of high-quality activities.

2021 MAIN EVENTS

NATO SFA COE AND LUMSA SIGN A COOPERATION AGREEMENT



The Director of the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO SFA COE), Colonel Massimo DI PIETRO, and the Rector of LUMSA, Prof. Francesco Bonini, virtually signed a cooperation agreement from their offices.

The agreement activates a curricular internship, benefiting the students of LUMSA University, in particular those enrolled in degree courses in “International Relations”, “Law” and “Administration and Innovation Policies”.

The virtual ceremony was included in the events of the “Cenacolo di Studi Diplomatici e Internazionali” during the course of which the NATO SFA COE Director gave a speech presenting the Centre.

The “Cenacolo di Studi Diplomatici e Internazionali” is a training project for Masters Degree students in International Relations. Coordinated by Professor Tiziana Di Maio, president of the course, the project is also aimed at students of other courses of LUMSA University who are seriously motivated and interested in pursuing a career in international relations.

LUISS' POLITICAL SCIENCES ASSOCIATION VISITED THE NATO SFA COE



A delegation from the Political Science Association (Associazione Scienze Politiche – ASP) from the LUISS Guido Carli University visited the NATO SFA COE, as part of the cooperation between the two entities that started in January 2020.

The ASP is the oldest Luiss students' Association, aiming to offer its students cultural events with authoritative institutional figures.

During the visit, the Legal Advisor presented the current editorial project that analyses the legal

and political framework in crisis areas from an interdisciplinary perspective, as well as identifying programs of important international agencies and organizations for the promotion of international humanitarian law and human rights in the context of training activities for local forces.

Finally, LUISS students had the opportunity to meet the various Department heads of the Centre, who illustrated other initiatives in the training and research in the SFA field where more opportunities for further internship programs can be initiated.



The Director of the NATO SFA COE, Col. Massimo DI PIETRO, and the Rector of the University of Verona, Prof. Pier Francesco NOCINI, signed a cooperation agreement that will allow access to the university's libraries, documents and publications of common interest, as well as the reciprocal possibility of promoting the exchange of lecturers and experts in courses, seminars or round tables, in order to share knowledge and

experience in the field of law and international relations.

Through the internship programme, university students will be offered the opportunity to collaborate with NATO SFA COE staff in the implementation of the Alliance's research and conceptual development projects in Security Force Assistance and in Defence Capacity Building. They will also be invited to contribute to the drafting of analytical documents and publications for the Centre's wide civilian and military Community of Interest.

This activity is part of the numerous cooperation initiatives that the NATO SFA COE has entered with other civilian and military entities, thus expanding its increasingly broad network of relationships aimed at providing concrete solutions to improve the effectiveness of the Alliance through a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach.

THE DSACT GEN. PAOLO RUGGIERO VISITS THE NATO SFA COE



The aim of the visit was to illustrate the main research activities that derive from ACT's Request for Support of 2021, and to anticipate the projects submitted for the Steering Committee's approval included in the "2022 Program of Work".

Among the important projects, emphasis was given to the definition of the professional profile of the SFA operator and the organization of the SFA Advisor Enhancement seminar. The seminar is an annual event aimed at testing and stan-

dardizing the identified profile model, ensuring continuity and adherence to the changing reality of the intervention area.

In addition, the fruitful synergy between the NATO SFA COE and the Stability Policing Centre of Excellence (NATO SP COE) was emphasized in the conduct of the recent seminar for "Institutional Advisors" for joint and multinational personnel.

At the end of the meeting, the General expressed his appreciation for the high profile projects and objectives achieved, highlighting how the collaboration between the Centre, NATO and partner countries plays an essential role for the benefit of the whole Alliance.

RENEWAL OF THE NATO SFA COE'S ACCREDITATION



An ACT delegation visited the SFA COE to ascertain whether the SFA COE was still in compliance with the requirements and standards established by NATO for the accreditation of Centres of Excellence, and to evaluate the accomplishments of the SFA COE starting from its establishment in December 2018.

In the first phase of the visit, the delegation had the opportunity to discuss the tasks carried out by the individuals belonging to the departments of the COE and to what extent the projects carried out over the years responded to the priorities and needs indicated by ACT, the entity responsible for coordination of all NATO COEs. Subsequently, the NATO SFA COE self-assessment questionnaire was discussed and approved in a plenary session and some proposals useful for further improving its performance were made.

At the end of the validation through a VTC, the NATO SFA COE's FOGO Champion, Major General Robert GLAB, congratulated the staff of the Centre for the reconfirmation of the accreditation and for their constant commitment to develop and investigate the relevant areas of SFA interest for the benefit of the Alliance and its Partners.

SFA ADVISOR'S ENHANCEMENT SEMINAR



The seminar was organized by the NATO SFA COE in collaboration with specialists from Cadence Consulting, a management consulting and professional training company recognized as a consulting institute within the NATO context.

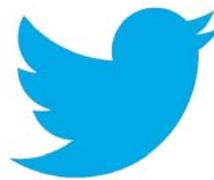
During the seminar, the participants examined the results of the "SFA Operator Project", aimed at researching the requirements, skills and qualities that the SFA operator (Advisor, Mentor and Trainer) should have in order to work as effectively as possible within the changing realities of current operational scenarios.

The seminar was structured in a series of theoretical and practical role-playing sessions in which the participants interacted individually and in teams with professional actors, simulating meetings with military, civilian and local authorities through the intermediation of an interpreter.

The event was met with unanimous appreciation by the participants and lays the foundations for including the seminar in the NATO SFA COE's training offer to complement and refine the knowledge acquired within the SFA Operators and Institutional Advisor Course.



Follow us:
www.nsfacoe.org



DISCLAIMER

Newsletter is a product of the NATO SFA COE and it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of NATO, or any government or institution represented by the contributors.



Digital or hard copies of this Newsletter may be produced for internal use within NATO and for personal or educational use when for non-profit and non-commercial purpose, provided that copies bear a full citation.

www.nsfacoe.org
www.nsfacoe.org/documents&publications/documents