



NATO  
SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE  
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE



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Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the newsletter n. 8/2023 of the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence which aims to enlarge the community of interest to SFA and stimulate new ideas and fields of research.

As NATO is fast evolving, the NATO SFA COE is fully committed to support the Alliance with significant projects that demonstrate, more than ever, the increased importance of SFA in mounting a response to current challenges.

SFA thrives both in conflict prevention and below the threshold of armed conflict. The COE will stimulate the entire SFA community to deepen their understanding of the area by providing high-quality products and original ideas, respecting the vision that inspired its foundation.

The NATO SFA COE has been engaged in defining the SFA Operator profile of the Advisor, Mentor and Trainer at the Strategic, Operational and Tactical level in order to enhance NATO HQs' and NATO nations' ability to select, recruit, train and deploy personnel in SFA operations. SFA advisors are called to operate in a complex and dynamic context where institutional entities, informal stakeholders and military operators are interdependent. The primary methodological assumption is the attention towards the understanding of the local context and the human factor because the awareness of local dynamics is essential for effective advising. Mapping existing capacities in the local context and the gap that exists between such capacities and the optimal capacity is a central skill for the adviser in order to promote real reforms in the security sector.

The above-mentioned topics are well explained in the first two articles of this edition. Intern Ms. Flavia Troisi presents the research of LtC Gojayev, whose article focuses on the importance of coordination, understood as cooperation and effective information exchange between the local actors and the advisors. On the other hand, Intern Ms. Arianna Arborali emphasizes the importance of training and educating SFA Operators in order to enhance their competencies and effectiveness in crisis scenarios.

Finally, in the last article of this edition of the newsletter, Cdr Massimo Caramia, the Concept Development & Experimentation Branch Head of the COE and the intern Ms. Arianna Biancardi, explore NATO and European Union cooperation in the aftermath of a new joint declaration which promotes the strategic partnership between the two organizations, recognizing that EU's defence and security cannot be achieved and implemented independently from NATO.

The Centre has created a vibrant community of interest that brings meaningful editorial content and educational opportunities to the Alliance and to the many other global and regional security and stability players. The newsletter highlights the main events of the COE, including the entry of Austria as a "Contributing Participant" of the NATO SFA COE, and contains a new section where others talk about us as a proof of our continuous commitment in the SFA area of interest.



# SFA IN MISSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL ACTORS

## INTRODUCTION

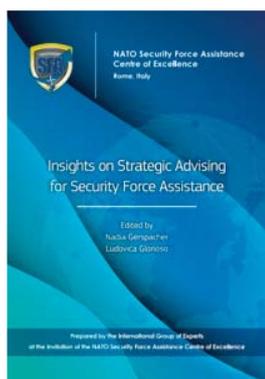
On the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2022, the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO SFA COE) had the pleasure to present its new editorial project entitled “Insights on Strategic Advising for Security Force Assistance”.



Figure 1. Luiss Student Flavia Troisi receives a NATO SFA COE Internship Award among the interns tutored by COE LEGAD on editorial projects

As a NATO SFA COE Intern, I had the exceptional chance to support the preparatory works of the publication, under the guidance of the NATO SFA COE Legal Advisor Maj. Ludovica Glorioso - one of the book's editors and my tutor.

The editorial project represented the culmination of months of intensive work, during which the Centre entrusted a group of specialists affiliated to academia and international organizations with developing their contributions, frequently based on first-hand experiences, to provide new perspectives on the role of SFA advisors in missions. The project gathered best practices, lessons learned, and new pertinent strategic approaches in order to maximize the outcomes of SFA operations at the strategic level.



The NATO SFA COE Book is available at the following link:

Lay<https://www.nsfacoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/INSIGHTS-ON-STRATEGIC-ADVISING-FOR-SFA-book.pdf>

Understanding how to enhance the creation of a new generation of advisers by helping the work of military and non-military professionals from various Alliance member countries was a unique opportunity for me.

Meeting views that tend to strengthen the importance of collaboration with local actors in SFA missions was probably the most intellectually stimulating component of the work behind the book. Despite being sometimes overlooked, this collaboration is crucial for preserving a secure environment during SFA advisory operations.

Indeed, the editorial project shined the spotlight on the importance of the local counterpart's involvement in the success of the mission.

In line with its never-ending search for improvements the NATO SFA COE has decided to further explore the topic of the relationship between Host Nations' (HN) actors and SFA advisors.

As a result of its ongoing search for fresh viewpoints and techniques in SFA, the Centre has come into touch with other experts.

## COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION IN THE MISSION

### THE IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The role of advisors in providing recommendations in an organisation is essential to achieving the desired outcome. Coordination is mainly associated with information exchange. Collaboration is two or more actors employed together in a coordinated manner. Thus, advisors must be guided by principles of coordination and collaboration in any operations or missions.

Well-established coordination and collaboration mechanisms play a vital role in the mission and operational success. As an international organization with extensive experience leading missions and operations, NATO identifies coordination and collaboration as essential elements.<sup>1</sup> Advising, particularly at the strategic level, is a delicate task. The task requires comprehensive skill sets, knowledge, a positive working attitude and ability. The essence of advising is based on the relationship that an advisor builds with counterparts.

Building trusting and productive working relationships require effort and time. Trust-building measures will increase the advisors' abilities to solve long-standing issues. The host nation counterparts and staff should see themselves as an inclusive team to counter their problems in harmony with the advisors.

The most crucial advising components are understanding the operating environment and employing the available tools provided by sending organisations or nations to crisis zones: that is, to be well trained and equipped.

<sup>1</sup> NATO SHAPE, 'Strategic Development and Preparation Directorate: Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive version 3.0.', 2021, pg.1.



Figure 2. Luiss Students (Matteo Urbinati and Flavia Troisi) at the International Conference for the Book's launch. See NATO SFA COE website: <https://www.nsfacoe.org/nato-sfa-coe-new-editorial-project-on-strategic-advising/>

Among the prominent specialists, the NATO SFA COE has cooperated with Lt. Col. Elnur Gojayev, a former staff officer at NATO Headquarters with a long experience in the field of military diplomacy and defense engagement.

In his contribution below, Lt. Col. Gojayev analysed and presented a new perspective on the engagement between advisors in missions and local stakeholders.

His work focuses on the importance of coordination, understood as cooperation and information exchange between the local actors and the advisors.

One of the key pillars in SFA missions is the involvement of the Host Nation counterparts that should perceive themselves as an inclusive team to counter their problems in harmony with the advisors.

Thus, this article will discuss the main contribution of the author in providing his expertise to develop SFA capacity in supporting local forces in crisis zones.

One of the most significant factors is understanding the HN's organisational culture. After the understanding phase is accomplished, the next phase is to adjust to that culture by adding the values required for a better functioning HN organisation. These processes will facilitate an understanding of the organisation's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, which can be exploited for that organisation's benefit. Only in a healthy environment can productive and efficient work be accomplished.

For many years, NATO has gained extensive experience in the advising field. NATO-led operations and missions have been staffed by advisers whose contributions have had significance. Several Partner Nations (PN) have improved their defence and security institutions' capacities by employing NATO and Allied advisors.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

People and faces are essential and the most valuable elements for the deployment. Establishing initial contacts starts before deployment. In NATO, an advisor should find ways to contact deployed country missions or embassy staff. It is also important to arrange meetings with country NATO desk officers.



Figure 3. <https://www.jftc.nato.int/articles/getting-ready-mission-nmi-22-2>

These introductory meetings can be a foundation for cooperation and will increase awareness and create favourable

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Radin, 'Institution Building in Weak States', *Georgetown University*, 2020, pg. 234.

conditions for the mission's success. Frequent contact and communication with these actors will serve as a tool to keep an advisor on track. Understanding and mastering NATO's strategic guidance are critical to achieving the desired end-state. NATO's partnership policies, programmes, mechanisms and tools offered to PNs play a significant role in implementing reform.<sup>3</sup> An advisor needs to have comprehensive knowledge of these reforms. An advisor should have a deep understanding and expertise of the deployed country portfolio and the mission's goals and objectives. They must be in line with the implementation process.

The key pillars of this process are:

- *Understanding the Host Nation (HN) Organisations' culture.*

In his book *Political Order and Political Decay*, Francis Fukuyama stated that 'human beings by nature also are norm-creating and norm-following creatures'.<sup>4</sup> It is necessary to analyse the HN institutional and cultural norms that drive an organisation. It is relatively easy to influence formal norms, but cultural norms are difficult to change. Both require a holistic approach to a broad range of issues. Understanding the actors involved in a mission.

Understanding actors from various organisations operating in a HN is important. A big picture of social, economic, security and military areas is helpful to get a notion about HN state-building efforts. Based on knowledge and experience obtained from different actors, strategic level advisors may formalise recommendations to the parent organisation and HN institutions.

Constant engagement with advisors from

<sup>3</sup> NATO, 'Partnership Tools,' NATO, September 1, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_80925.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_80925.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Fukuyama, 'Political order and political decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the globalisation of democracy', *Macmillan* 2014, pg. 9.

other areas will keep them in the loop. The type and level of engagement could be different. Social and official events create opportunities to exchange ideas, views and opinions and to find solutions. Strategic advisors should collect helpful information and lesson learned to build institutional memory. The gathered information would allow their successors and parent organisations to better prepare for and adjust to reality on the ground.

#### *- Integration with the advisor network.*

Modern armed conflict and its aftermath are no longer two-sided events. The face of contemporary armed conflict has not just changed in terms of technology but the participation of different actors also makes it more complex. An environment where advisors from other countries, IOs and NGOs operate presents an opportunity to learn and contribute to the HN reforms initiative. Thus, it is necessary to become part of a community of advisors. The level of integration into the community will allow the establishment of essential contacts that could be useful for implementing everyday activities. An advisor should bear in mind that different countries and organisations may have different agendas in the operating environment. Therefore, it is important to understand other actors' roles, responsibilities and capabilities in the field.



Figure 4. NATO Mission Iraq – NMI (@IraqNato) on twitter <https://twitter.com/IraqNato/status/1608087686732025856>

## 2. IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING PEER TO PEER RELATIONSHIPS

A code of conduct can be used to create harmonious working relationships with counterparts. Integrity, impartiality, professionalism, accountability and loyalty are the five core values in the NATO Code of Conduct. These values should be upheld at the personal level to achieve the highest standard of work continuity. The ability to employ norms and standards at the workplace is important for human interoperability.

Leadership influences organisational culture, but people within an organisation largely determine it. An advisor should seek opportunities for more interaction with counterparts. It is necessary to be aware of important dates in deployed countries like national, religious holidays and national mourning days. It is important to attend these events. Showing respect and sympathy will allow an advisor to be accepted by a community of co-workers.

Part of the peer-to-peer relations should be focused on demonstrating that the advice provided is beneficial to the HN. Some advisors can find themselves in the middle of turbulence. It is a moment when advisors should form their recommendations and present them. Advisors must exploit these opportunities and demonstrate skills that allow HN counterparts to calibrate and realise goals.<sup>5</sup> It is necessary to acknowledge that advice has to serve the national interests and international obligations of HN.

Local counterparts must acknowledge that it is their responsibility to build their country and it is up to them which direction it will go. A deficit of local ownership usually causes devastation in government and disorder in a country. A vivid

<sup>5</sup> Todd C Helmus and National Defense Research Institute (U.S, *Advising the Command: Best Practices from the Special Operation's Advisory Experience in Afghanistan* (Santa Monica, Ca: Rand, 2015), pg. 18.

example is the Afghan state institutions' rapid and total collapse followed by social, economic and political intermigration in 2021. There are two main challenges defined in crisis zones. The first comes from international reformers when time and resources are limited, but it is necessary to restore order and stability quickly.<sup>6</sup>

The second is related to human and technical factors in HN organisations. Both cases hinder the understanding of responsibility by HN counterparts.



Figure 6. Local forces training in Africa conducted by 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Force Assistance Brigade

### 3. FACILITATING JOINT COORDINATION

It is important to understand the mechanism of decision-making among advisors to create an effective and unbreakable chain of coordination at the strategic level. One of the critical starting questions to ask is how the lowest level of advising informs senior advisors. This is the

most complex part of establishing and fostering coordination if it is important to have diverse military options that demand coordinated and reciprocal civil-military dialogue at multiple levels. 'It calls for a high-level focus on national security team-building across and within agencies'. To achieve this, advisors making strategic decisions should be able to provide definitions of what coordination among other advisors means in practice, including 'short- and long-term goal-posts for each department and agency, clear lines of accountability, point(s) of authority and an explication of the processes on sharing information and knowledge among other advisors'.

Advisors should have a holistic view of the operational environment (OE), that is 'the physical areas and factors (of the air, land, maritime and space domains) and the information environment (which includes cyberspace)'. They also need to know the nature of the Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure and Information systems (PMESII) – whether they are adversarial, friendly or neutral. Having a holistic assessment of the OE will help advisors determine 'the conditions required to achieve stated objectives, avoiding the effects that may hinder mission accomplishment (undesired effects). Assessing the impact of the friendly, adversary and other relevant actors, such as the local populace, is essential in making progress toward attaining the military end state'. This will help advisors maximise joint efforts to achieve targeted and desirable outcomes.

### CONCLUSION

Advising is a highly dedicated task. Advisors have to meet all required professional and personal standards and norms. Setting a good example and demonstrating a positive working attitude may change the host-nation organisation's culture.

<sup>6</sup> Derick W Brinkerhoff, *Governance in Post-Conflict Societies: Rebuilding Fragile States* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), pg. 98.



The Security Force Assistance Operators course was held in Rome from 3 to 7 October at the Italian Army Infantry School Officers' Club. The aim of the course is to expand and improve the skills and effectiveness of SFA operators operating within security-related missions with a view to a global and integrated approach. The event was structured in three parts: the first part was an introduction to the course and team building, the second focused on training, in the strict sense of the word, through lectures and group work, and the last part involved a simulation that allowed participants to put into practice what they had acquired during the course.

The course opened with the NATO SFA COE Director's speech on the centrality of SFA operators and their proper training within all operations, even those not strictly defined as SFA, and he particularly focused on the importance of preparing for the challenges and adversities they may encounter in culturally diverse territories.

Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October focused on team building and analysing the scenario in use during the course. The morning of team building encouraged a more re-

laxed atmosphere among the participants, which also facilitated the exchange of knowledge, information and experiences. For those who, like me, are in a civilian position and therefore come from a different background with different experiences, it was enlightening to be able to get in touch with SFA operators for the first time through an informal social interaction such as cooperation games. In the afternoon, two strictly theoretical lectures were held on the profile of SFA operators: traits, attitudes and behaviour, and on the structure and activities of the SFA.

The second day saw the start of the lessons and the work within the three groups into which the participants were



Figure 1. Team building activities

divided. Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October opened with Mrs Kircher's lesson on the analysis and links within one or more networks. Mrs Kircher managed to totally and effectively engage us during the lesson by alternating theoretical presentations and case studies, and, in this context, the group work was central. The various working groups had to work together to analyse the actors, define the links between them and visually recreate, through the use of blackboards and post-it notes, the links between them. Also in this phase, being able to work within a group composed of different personalities, nationalities and working methods allowed me to acquire new points of view with respect to team working, the willingness of all the participants to delve into the most difficult topics for those who had never had any operational experience allowed me to work at my best and really feel part of the team.

Dr. Francesca Dell'Acqua, from the Institute for International Policy Studies, provided a mapping of the different concepts of cultural interpretation and mediation, focusing on the importance of optimal cultural competences and skills for those in the role of SFA practitioners. Such competencies and skills are fundamental for developing mutual un-

derstanding and building human relationships that are essential for achieving professional goals. The day ended with a talk by Mr. Lauber, from the Joint Centre for International Security Force Assistance, on capability based assessment and in particular the importance of understanding and supporting capability-based assessment.

On Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, the morning focused on two topics strongly linked to the previous day: mediation and negotiation, with a focus on the role and use of the figure of the interpreter within operations. Mr. Bassetti provided action guidelines on how to create a bond and relationship with one's interpreter in order to be able to work at one's best. The main guidelines were: spend time with the interpreter before a meeting, prepare him or her on the subject as much as possible and assess the interpreter's frame of reference and his or her ability to deal with concepts and terminology of the field. In the early afternoon, the groups continued to put into practice what they had learnt about planning. Lieutenant Colonel Lopez, US Army University gave the last lecture on the topics of evaluation and assessment, in particular on the role of the advisor especially in counterpart evaluations and assessments, with a theoretical focus on the cycle of involvement in the reporting and assessment phase.

On Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, Lieutenant Colonel Niedringhaus, from the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence gave the first talk on learning effective communication. He focused on the different types of communication and the analysis of each, providing effective communication strategies that can be implemented in both official and unofficial environments. Thanks to his experience, Mr. Niedringhaus provided participants with interesting reflections on both verbal and non-verbal communication and the implications that



Figure 2. Syndicate group

these have within all the human relationships in which we are involved, also allowing us to reflect on the importance of understanding the cultural context in relation to the communication style adopted by both ourselves and our interlocutor.

Mr. Smith's talk on the importance of having knowledge of the host nation and the centrality of the use of soft skills within this type of analysis was complemented by the analysis of the situation in Nigeria, as an African NATO partner. This case study allowed participants to focus on the analysis of the partnering force. Before the final phase of the course, which saw the participants involved in a simulation with an external counterpart and an interpreter, Colonel Stone spoke. Using the case study of Afghanistan on insider threats and attacks, he defined what is meant by an insider threat and the risks it poses, with the aim of recognising the long-term strategic implications and providing food for thought to recognise the prevent indicators to mitigate this type of threat. The simulation allowed all three groups to test themselves in a controlled and guided environment, which was at the same time challenging because it involved hostile counterparts and partners and interpreters with whom there

was no longstanding acquaintance, making the simulation as realistic as possible. The opportunity to watch, through an audio-video link, all the simulations gave the different groups the opportunity to pick up on each other's strengths and weaknesses and to discuss them afterwards. I found this moment as an external observer extremely stimulating. It evidenced the importance of self-analysis and confrontation with the other participants and the centrality that dialogue has in this debrief phase.

The course ended with an analysis of NATO Mission Iraq, by Major Rasmussen, to show the points of contact and integration between SFA and its integration into a more systemic approach to training within NATO. Finally, Major Nielsen, from the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, provided guidelines for the analysis and application of gender analysis, both from within and outside the military. The 7<sup>th</sup> October ended with a final evaluation of the participants, the awarding of certificates and the closing salute by the COE Director. All the modules covered in the course provide a complete and exhaustive picture of the figure of the SFA operator: role, objectives and best practices. I believe that this type of course plays a central role in the unification of procedures and objectives within NATO and above all allows effective alignment between the operators of the different nations. I think the involvement and enthusiasm shown by all participants is indicative of the interest in the doctrine and confirms the quality and effectiveness of this educational solution.

The opportunity given to me by this course was invaluable, not only from a theoretical point of view, but also from a relational point of view: being able to come into contact with experts and operational military personnel allowed me to gain a new and richer perspective on security force assistance activities.



Figure 3. Simulation

## NATO AND EUROPEAN UNION COOPERATION ON SECURITY SECTOR REFORM



2022 was the pivotal year for NATO and European Union cooperation. Both organizations published their major political documents

(the EU strategic compass and NATO strategic Concept<sup>1</sup>), in which they each emphasize the necessity to strengthen their cooperation to face the conflict currently taking place in Ukraine. The current year will be equally crucial in order to build an even stronger cooperation. As a result, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2023, a new joint declaration was released, concerning the EU-NATO cooperation. This document promotes the strategic partnership between the two organizations on the topics that the Euro Atlantic area must face right now, reinforcing the idea that EU's defence and security cannot be achieved and implemented independently from NATO.

The origin of the declaration dates back to the Cold War. In those days the international scenario had been completely transformed and required effective measures to respond to the adverse situation; this circumstance led the European Union and NATO to adopt a comprehensive approach, by increasing the range of operations and intensifying their respective interactions.

All of this was made possible through the enlargement of the sphere of competence in crisis management operations. Following decades of sporadic interactions, the two organizations institutionalized their cooperation in 2003 with the establishment of the Berlin Plus Agree-

<sup>1</sup> NATO 2022. "STRATEGIC CONCEPT Adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Madrid." [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf).



ment: a package of cooperation agreements that covered a large spectrum of topics, including the sharing and reinforcing of assets and capabilities, crisis management operations and establishing communication units. In 2016 the EU and NATO reinforced their relationship with a new joint declaration that defined seven areas of cooperation that also included defence capabilities and the maritime domain.

Despite the institutional framework described above, the Berlin Plus Agreement is not completely binding and the fields of cooperation are limited to specific topics. As a result, the agreement and declaration do not reflect the current relations between NATO and the EU both at the operational and strategic level. Indeed only two missions have been conducted under the Berlin Plus Framework.

An additional difficulty that needs to be stressed is the managing of missions where the EU and NATO are present in the same territory. A blatant example is in Iraq, where the NATO mission in Iraq (NMI) and the European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq (EUAM Iraq) coexist. The two missions have similar mandates and they report to two different



ministries within member states: The European Union to the Minister of Interior and NATO to the Minister of Defence. Nevertheless, as both work for the Security Sector Reform of Iraq they cannot be considered as entirely distinct entities and need to coordinate their activities. However, there can be overlapping concerning the activity related to cross cutting topics that are dealt with by the European Union and NATO.

An important piece of the current framework that constitutes EU-NATO relations concerns the ways in which members of the two organisations interact with each other. In fact, an important analysis must



be done by examining the inter-organizations between them (Ewers-Peters 2022): interactions between the different organisations may occur in different

ways and may not always be supported by an institutional framework and may result in the organizations influencing each other. According to some studies (Græger 2016), EU and NATO staff engage in informal practices at all levels and fields of operation that are main-

tained even when political signals are absent and cooperation is blocked.

### *Security Sector Reform, Defence Capacity Building and Security Force Assistance*

The notion of Security Sector Reform (SSR) is used both in the European Union and in NATO publications. The European Union's document defines the Security Sector Reform <sup>2</sup> (2016) as *"the process of transforming a country's security system so that it gradually provides individuals and the State with more effective and accountable security in a manner consistent with respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and principles of good governance"* (European Commission, 2016). On the other hand, the main document that defines NATO's concept on SSR is in the Allied Joint Publication 3.28 *"Early Stages of Security Sector Reform"*.

According to that publication, *"Security Sector Reform (SSR) is a sensitive political process as it strives to reform the existing institutions in conflict-affected countries so they can enforce the law"*

<sup>2</sup> "EN OUTCOME of PROCEEDINGS From: General Secretariat of the Council" 2016.



Figure 1: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_166936.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_166936.htm)

and provide security and justice for their citizens.” Doctrinally, both organisations have identified common sectors that are classified as Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Defence Capacity Building (DCB). Primarily, an important distinction to be made is that the doctrine of the two organisations is classified in a different order: according to NATO, Security Sector Reform is an activity that falls under the definition of Defence Capacity Building, while for the European Union, the Security Sector Reform includes activities that can be attributed to Defence Capacity Building.

Furthermore, while the European Union defines Defence Capacity Building in the same general way as NATO, NATO’s detailed description of Defence Capacity Building includes Security Force Assistance activities.

In any case in the last decades both organisations focused on and implemented Defence Capacity Building for several reasons but principally their actions were marked by a hesitancy to deploy armed forces for large scale and

long-term operations<sup>3</sup>. Pursuant to the EU framework, the activity of Defence Capacity Building includes the activities of mentoring, monitoring, advising and training that according to NATO’s AJP. 3.16 doctrine on SFA can be summarised with the acronym GOTEAM (Generate, Organize, Train, Enable, Advise, Mentoring).

However, the activities provided by the European Union in the spectrum of Security Sector Reform, even more so in Defence Capacity Building, correspond to the activities that are institutionally and doctrinally provided by NATO as Security Force Assistance activities. Taking into consideration that in the same territory there are EU and NATO missions that concur to achieve similar (and sometimes shared) objectives, the risk of overlapping functions is elevated, especially if concrete and tangible forms of collaboration are not provided for at different levels (strategic, tactical, operational).

Hence, if we analyse the operational

<sup>3</sup> “La Cooperazione tra l’Unione Europea e la Nato”, contributi di Istituti di Ricerca Specializzati N. 69”, 2007.



Figure 2: <https://twitter.com/IraqNato/media>

level, there is a concrete need to find methods for working together that can lead to fruitful cooperation.

Such cooperation should not be simply reduced to informal meetings for updating and briefing but be organized in a structured way. One example of collaboration at the operational level that has provided excellent results is the cooperation in maritime security. As maritime cooperation has always been a key security element for the European Union as well as NATO, the necessity emerged to create a permanent structured cooperation. After the renewed interest by both organisations through joint declarations, in the EUNAVFOR MED missions Operation Sophia (ENFM), nowadays Operation Irini and NATO Operation Sea Guardian in the Central Mediterranean, a cooperation mechanism was created: on a rotational basis, the two Organizations chair the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction mechanism in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED). An important fact in this example of collaboration is that there are areas

of collaboration between the European Union and NATO activities (e.g., training) that are already part of the doctrine regarding Defence Capacity Building.

In the last few years, western countries have avoided deploying a large number of troops abroad. Therefore, both NATO and the EU have focused on Defence Capacity Building (DCB) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) with the purpose of enabling local institutions to provide security on their own. As reiterated in the last joint declarations, the EU and NATO should increase their collaboration in this area. But, in order to create effective and profitable cooperation between the two organisations, it is necessary to figure out an approach to work together starting from the creation of a valuable mechanism to achieve their common goals through a new framework, different from the traditional ones, that enables functional coordination at different levels whilst at the same time allowing the doctrine of the two organisations to be classified in a similar way.

# 2022 MAIN EVENTS

## JFTC COMMANDER VISITED THE NATO SFA COE



On the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, the Commander of the NATO Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Major General Norbert Wagner, paid a visit to the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence.

The aim of the visit was to provide the Commander with an update and a general overview on the current and future activities of the NATO SFA COE to stimulate further collaboration between the two Military Bodies.

In particular, the proposal of a new “Assistance” Joint Function could support Commanders in facing

threats through a harmonized and holistic approach, using other means beyond Presence to provide effective action while remaining below Lethal Force.

At the end of the meeting M.G. Norbert Wagner expressed his appreciation for the high profile and the ambitious nature of the projects, stating that it was a great opportunity to share information and discuss International Security Force Assistance, training, exercises and missions.

## AUSTRIA JOINS THE NATO SFA COE

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, the NATO Centre of Excellence for Security Force Assistance (NATO SFA COE) held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee meeting of 2022.

A moment of particular significance for the history of the Centre was the signing ceremony of the Technical Arrangement, which sanctioned the entry of Austria as a “Contributing Participant” of the NATO SFA COE following the unanimous decision of the Ministries of Defence of the three Sponsoring Nations.

The presence of Austria, which will assign one of its Army officers to the Centre starting from 2023, will further increase the effectiveness of the NATO SFA COE in the areas of research and training.

Through the signing of the arrangement and the entry of Austria, the

NATO SFA COE confirmed the synergistic collaboration not only with NATO Nations but above all with its Partner Countries, thus widening the Community of Interest and continuing to affirm itself as a valuable hub of reference for Security Force Assistance.



## NATO SFA COE HOSTS NATO HQ'S "NATO ADVISORY COURSE"

From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2022, the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence (NATO SFA COE) hosted the NATO Advisory pilot course, in close collaboration with the Building Integrity Department of NATO HQ.

The purpose of the course is to enhance the individual skills and competencies of NATO civilian and military personnel called to carry out Advising activities in support of Hosting Nations in their reform and modernization programmes.

The teaching modules aim to perfect the ability to identify and evaluate the needs of the country to be assisted, to assign the right priorities to fill the identified deficiencies and, finally, to acquire the methodologies for monitoring the effectiveness of the advising activities.

The speakers from NATO Headquarters were joined by the Director of the Ministerial Advisory Division of the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) and by additional experts from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance (DCAF).



# TALKING ABOUT US

## "PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE – SFA IMPLICATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES"; NATO BUILDING INTEGRITY (BI) CHAPTER

By NATO BI Officer Dr. Nadja Milanova outlining the BI Chapter

### "Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance - SFA Implications in International Initiatives"; NATO BI Chapter



NATO BI Officer Dr. Nadja Milanova outlining the BI chapter to the NATO SFA COE publication at a panel chaired by Mr. Daniel Prins, Director of the Security Sector Reform Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) at the NATO SFA COE book launch event on 30 September 2021 (photo/NATO SFA COE)

On 30 September, the NATO Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence for (NATO SFA COE), Rome, Italy, launched its publication on Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance: SFA Implications in International Initiatives. NATO BI contributed to the publication with a chapter entitled Building Integrity and Good Governance in the Defence and Related Security Sector: NATO's Approach.

The NATO SFA COE brought together diverse perspectives and expertise from different international organisations such as the UN, EU and NATO, as well as from academia and the non-governmental sector. Through its multi-perspective and multidisciplinary approach, the publication contributes to the debate regarding the role of the international community in capacity building and related activities in crisis zones.

In his keynote address at the book's launch, H.E. Ambassador Stefano Pontecorvo underlined the importance of the publication "which serves the purpose of cross-fertilising 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".

The NATO BI chapter highlights the requirements needed to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of advisory and training functions, with emphasis on understanding the impacts of corruption, in addition to reform processes and transformation within the defence and related security sector, including the importance of integrity for leadership and for institutional legitimacy.

The book can be downloaded at the NATO SFA COE website at the following link: <https://www.nsfacoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Promoting-the-Rule-of-Law-and-Good-Governance-SFA-Implications-in-International-Initiatives.pdf>

Article published in the Building Integrity's Newsletter #12 - Autumn 2021 regarding the launch of the NATO SFA COE book on "Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance: SFA Implications in International Initiatives".

NATO BI contributed to the publication with a chapter entitled Building Integrity and Good Governance in the Defence and Related Security Sector: NATO's Approach.

You can read the full article at the following link:

[https://www.nsfacoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BI\\_newsletter\\_12.pdf](https://www.nsfacoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BI_newsletter_12.pdf)

## THE DEPENDENCE OF RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ON ICB NATO & US PARALLEL SUPPORT TO SFA AND STABILITY

By Jeffrey S. King, JCISFA Military Analyst in coordination with NATO SFA Centre of Excellence

Article published by Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) in the SFA Quarterly Newsletter, 22<sup>nd</sup> Edition in March 2022 about Security Force Assistance and stability, primarily discussing how some current NATO views on Rule of Law (RoL) and governance can impact Institutional Capacity Building (ICB).

You can read the full article at the following link <https://www.nsfacoe.org/promoting-the-rule-of-law-and-good-governance-book-on-the-jcisfa-newsletter/>

### The Dependence of Rule of Law and Good Governance on ICB NATO & US Parallel Support to SFA and Stability

by Jeffrey S. King, JCISFA Military Analyst ICW NATO SFA Centre of Excellence  
Article Approved for Public Release by NATO SFA CoE PAO

**M**utually Supporting Partner Nation and International Organization Efforts. It is well known that the US is a key partner nation (PN) and driver within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but like many other NATO member nations, the US conducts its own initiatives in a number of important functional areas. Less common however, is when the US (or any NATO member) works on those national functional area initiatives in parallel with NATO, and in a way that is meaningful for the current joint and combined force.

There currently is such a parallel opportunity between NATO and the US, in the area of security force assistance (SFA) and its support to stability. The NATO and US views on SFA and stability are not perfectly congruent. The US views SFA as a tool that supports stability across the competition continuum, while NATO limits SFA primarily to fragile post-conflict environments requiring a return to stability. However, NATO and the US's SFA and stability constructs are close enough for both parties to intelligently work together. Working together can achieve faster and more impactful synergistic effects than if done sequentially. To help enable this, NATO has a Centre of Excellence for SFA while the US has an integrator and proponent for each. Institutional capacity building can greatly advance SFA and stability. This article touches on SFA and stability, primarily by introducing how some current NATO views on Rule of Law (RoL) and governance can impact institutional capacity building (ICB).

RoL and Good Governance in support of Stability. In September 2021, the NATO SFA Centre of Excellence (CoE), located in Rome, Italy, published the book, "Promoting the Rule of Law and Good Governance - SFA Implications in International Initiatives." As the title implies, the book refers to SFA well over 200 times. An October 2021 JCISFA SFA newsletter article features the mutual support between SFA and stability in US doctrine

and practice. This mutual support manifests organizationally through JCISFA, as the joint SFA integrator, and the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), who is the US joint proponent for stability. The NATO SFA CoE book above, with "SFA Implications" in its title, makes over 80 references to stability amongst its 10 chapters. This implies that NATO considers stability to be a significant SFA implication.

Authors from around the world share their thoughts on SFA and Stability Operations.  
(Book cover courtesy of NATO SFA CoE)



Ten articles by thirteen different authors address various topics in stability and security force assistance with partner nations. This book represents NATO's latest contribution to the ever-growing body of knowledge in the field.

Book Launch Summary. The book launch was a public event on 30 September, 2021. Just days after the book's publishing. The following are some salient points from the book that were highlighted during the event.

- the radical change in the international landscape (operational environment) in recent years and the increasingly frequent rift between political, economic, social and geographic powers has had a profound effect on military requirements and resultant doctrine, structures and capabilities.
- SFA activities are not limited to training, but are part of an larger process that helps create the necessary conditions to transfer responsibility to local authorities in an orderly manner.
- Regarding an orderly transfer of responsibility, the existence of a consistent legal framework is an essential premise for a durable and stable environment in fragile states. The Cross-Cutting Topics analyzed in the book are essential to promote the RoL and to foster integrity, transparency and accountability, all of which contribute to host nation legitimacy.
- The collaboration between the primary appropriate IOs (for this subject) is essential to promote an interdisciplinary approach to SFA operations, and to identify the primary factors that contribute to building a consistent legal framework.

The following link provides a full video of the entire book launch event directly from the NATO SFA CoE

website. The link also includes separate videos from the following: Senior leaders' book introduction; videos for each of the books three sections, each containing a chapter summary from each author and a moderated panel discussion for each section.

<https://www.nsfacoe.org/video>

Way-Ahead – Informing the ICB Study-Model, Stability Concept and Related Efforts

As noted in the introduction, this book is full of references to ICB (beyond the legal framework) that will help inform the ongoing JCISFA-led study and subsequent model. Both the study and model are currently in the collection phase and will transition to the analysis phase in the spring of this year. As JCISFA continues work with PKSOI to help form a DSS concept, it will also identify the book's many contributions to stability with a DSS-conceptual context.

As JCISFA posts this book and article to a Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) binder, it will invite the SFA and stability CoI to post observations, comments, and related products. As an example, the video link to the book will be added once complete.

The NATO SFA CoE is currently constructing a book on "Strategic-Level Advising". JCISFA will participate in its review and expects it to similarly help inform the ICB study, model, or the model's experimentation. Stay tuned as JCISFA will post this book in JLLIS once it is published in its effort to promote dialogue, increase the body of knowledge, and consistently improve SFA, Stability, and related fields.

# STRATEGIC ADVISING INSIGHTS AND SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE LESSONS AND BEST PRACTICES TOWARDS FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

By Jeffrey S. King, JCISFA Military Analyst in coordination with NATO SFA Centre of Excellence

Article published by Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) in the SFA Quarterly Newsletter, 24<sup>th</sup> Edition, September 2022 re-counting the new NATO SFA COE book on “Insights on Strategic Advising for SFA” whilst describing and expounding on some of the key points as they apply to the SFA Enterprise across six primary and inter-related topic areas that correlate with the vast majority of the handbook’s chapters. You can read the full article at the following link: <https://www.nsfacoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SFA-Quarterly-Newsletter-24th-Edition-September-22-Minimum-Resolution-1.pdf>

## Strategic Advising Insights and Security Force Assistance Lessons and Best Practices Towards Future Improvement

by Jeffrey S. King, JCISFA Military Analyst with the NATO SFA Centre of Excellence

**C**reating the Space to Assess Strategic Advising and Security Force Assistance (SFA), NATO offers a strategic lens. In the second handbook of a public release series, the NATO SFA Centre of Excellence (COE) published and presented “Insights on Strategic Advising for SFA” in an all-day live and virtual panel event in July. The COE invited the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) to peer review the Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) chapter of the handbook, and to participate directly in the panel event that released the book. Through the book and panel, the COE again “created the space” for a diverse group of authors and practitioners to assess “the good, bad and ugly” of SFA—this time through the lens of strategic advising. JCISFA actively participated in the series of discussions and follow-up actions over a two-day period. This article describes and expounds on some of the key points as they apply to the SFA Enterprise: across six primary and inter-related topic areas (lectures) that correlate with the vast majority of the handbook’s chapters.



After the welcome by the Director, Col. Massimo Di Pietro, Lt. Gen. C.A. LaManna took the floor and opened the debate by underlining the importance of strategic planning, and paying greater attention to the primary causes of the crisis. (Photo courtesy of NATO SFA COE, 11 July 2022)

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### Key Insights and Takeaway Applications

**Knowing the Operating Environment in conjunction with your Partner Nation.** This insight pertains primarily to Chapter 1, “Tools for promoting rule of law and good governance in crisis zones”, and its related presentation by a former NATO senior officer who designed and implemented NATO’s Building Policy and Action Plan. Knowing the operating environment (OE) is critical before embarking on any advisor mission. This sounds like an obvious insight, but it takes time and helpful tools to know the OE as well as one should. “Hard to do” things are often overlooked, or the idea is “I’ll just figure things out when I get there”.

Take the time, *make* the time to learn the OE as much as possible. Gather tools to stay abreast of the OE and your partner nation (PN) once deployed. The Ministry of Defense Advisor (MoDA) program under the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) provides an example of a process tool towards this goal. They devote three weeks of “basic” ministerial-level advisor training, then another three weeks that focus squarely on the OE the advisor will deploy to. All advisor preparation training programs should devote some measure of time to learning the OE.

Feel free to download and browse through the handbook while reading the remainder of this article.

[Insights on Strategic Advising for Security Force Assistance](#)

See JCISFA’s Security Force Assistance Quarterly, 22d Edition, March 2022 for the article containing links to the first NATO SFA COE handbook launch and panel event from September 2021.

The NATO SFA COE will soon post a link containing a video of the book launch event on their website.

SFA Quarterly 24th Ed., SEP 2022

## Strategic Advising Insights and SFA Continued...

Way-Ahead – Leveraging Handbook and Panel Content

JCISFA will post this handbook, the panel video-link, and this article to the Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) and place it in an appropriate binder. Through JLLIS and other media, to include its 4th Quarter SFA Forum, JCISFA will post observations, comments, and related products. As discussion on this article’s (and additional) topics develop, we may increase the potential for SFA-related issues to identify and resolve, as well as apply best practices to other OE conditions.

The orange boxes with italics above describe JCISFA’s primary follow-up efforts and objectives. The vast majority of these follow-up items derived from side bar conversations in between presentations, group panel discussion, or collaboration immediately after the event or during the social mixer bridging into the following day’s opening of the COE’s Advisor Enhancement Seminar. Some members participated in both the Advisor Enhancement Seminar and handbook panel and are already part of application and follow-up action.

The book presentation, moderated by the two co-editors, Major Ludovico Glorioso, Legal Advisor of the NATO SFA COE and Nadia Gerspacher, Senior Expert in the sector, was divided into two modules. During the first session, the authors presented their chapter and provided further insights for analysis in the following session, the authors facilitated discussion on some issues relating to the processes of defining policies and advising programs in crisis areas. (Photo courtesy of NATO SFA COE, 11 Jul 2022)



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Among those are select members of the US 2d SFAB, 4th SFAB, and the 3d-353rd Advisor Training Battalion. International members include SFA practitioners from the United Kingdom and many parts of the NATO SFA COE. Some members will directly participate in African Lion 23 (that JCISFA will again participate in), and others are directly involved with EUCOM-AOR and Ukraine activities, ICW the SFAC and 3d-353rd who helps train the SFABs and others.

Many of these topics (e.g., Advisor Attributes and Advisor Training) cut across all geographical AORs. Regardless of which AOR(s) you might be focused on, stay tuned as JCISFA posts this article and related products in JLLIS. Accordingly, feel free to join the 4th Quarter SFA forum, and promote dialogue, increase the body of knowledge, and consistently improve SFA and its related fields.

Panel members offered consulting support and continuing collaboration in a unified effort to not repeat some of the same misuses and shortfalls from the Balkans and Afghanistan in Ukraine.

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SFA Quarterly 24th Ed., SEP 2022



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