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EXERCISE NEW HORIZONS/EXERCICE NOUVEAUX HORIZONS

SYNCHRONISATION OF INSTRUMENTS OF POWER

AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary security environment requires more than just military forces to achieve the desired end state which usually is a stable, self-sustaining state. A plethora of different actors, including state and non-state, national and international, military and non-military ones, which currently execute their actions in parallel, but not really coordinated, could improve their effectiveness and efficiency, if they synchronized their plans and the resulting actions in order to achieve synergetic effects. This paper will argue that in order to achieve this coordination, planners and decision-makers from all participating organizations need to establish an interagency planning team, which will harmonize the plans and actions of all actors toward a shared, agreed end state. Before such an interagency planning team can successfully operate, a number of challenges, to include mutual trust, education and training, information sharing etc. have to be overcome. It will be recommended that cooperation of the different agencies will already be crucial in the development phase for the necessary concepts of such a planning team.

INTRODUCTION

It is a widely understood and accepted fact that contemporary crises and conflicts are very complex; the classic confrontation of the military forces of two belligerent states has vanished as the most-likely scenario in the security environment of the modern world. Instead, many different actors, state and non-state, military and civilian, with diverging interests and goals meet in an engagement space which is not necessarily limited by state borders or the boundaries of military actions. Consequently, no single agency or military force can provide a final solution to such crises and conflicts on its own; there will always be the need to coordinate the actions of a plethora of different actors.¹

After increasingly accepting this new quality in crisis management and conflict resolving, a variety of concepts for such a coordinated approach to counter the new challenges have been drafted by different nations and organizations. The titles of these concepts have quickly developed to buzz-words which already sound familiar although the underlying concepts are far from being finalized and coming into force. Concepts like ‘Comprehensive Approach’, ‘Three D plus C’, ‘Whole of Government Approach’ or ‘Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO)’ are not completely identical, but have one unifying element: the integration of different instruments of power in the pursuit of a common goal. Although today we can already observe the partially successful cooperation of military forces and other agencies and organizations in for example Afghanistan, the persisting challenge is the coordination of the planning of such cooperation, which is not yet

¹United States Joint Forces Command. Joint Warfighting Center, *Commander's Handbook for the Joint Interagency Coordination Group* (Suffolk, VA: USJFCOM Joint Warfighting Center, 2007), vi.

institutionalized but appears to depend on ad-hoc solutions for particular situations. While military forces have planning tools at their disposal which have proven to be successful, these planning tools, like the Operational Planning Process, do not have interfaces for harmonizing the actions of military forces with those of the other actors. This lack of institutionalized integration has been recognized and is the subject of multinational concept development and experimentation projects.

This paper will argue that in order for an effective and efficient comprehensive approach to be successful, the efforts of the different actors will have to be harmonized at the operational level through a committee which consists of decision makers from all instruments of power, and that the military instrument – like all others– will have to understand its role as only one of those different instruments.

The paper will firstly describe why NATO as one of the ‘big players’ currently puts so much effort in the development of a comprehensive approach. This will be followed by a short introduction to the Operational Planning Process as the most widely used tool of military planning at the Operational Level. In order to complete the overview of purely militarily focused on the one hand and more comprehensive planning methods on the other hand, the basic ideas of the Effects Bases Approach to Operations (EBAO) will be explained. This will be followed by an identification of problems with this current situation; it will be argued that effort by different agencies, for example in Afghanistan or in experiments for EBAO and

interagency cooperation, is not yet coordinated to the necessary extent. In order to provide a possible solution to these challenges, the following section will provide an overview of the different instruments of national power, and how they could improve their efficiency by establishing an interagency planning team at the Operational Level. This interagency-planning team will be a difficult task to accomplish and some of the challenges will be highlighted, that have to be considered in order to establish a successful cooperation of all instruments of power. It will then be recommended that the different actors which have to coordinate their actions in a real crisis situations already cooperate prior to such a situation, by joint development of the necessary concepts. The concluding remarks will summarize the main aspects of the discussion and also highlight that however unlikely, a classic symmetric war between two belligerents' military forces can not be ruled out, and consequently the Operational Planning Process will not become obsolete.

DISCUSSION

The Comprehensive Political Guidance, endorsed by NATO Heads of State and Government at the Riga Summit on 29 November 2006, outlines “[. . .] the priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence.”² Amongst other things, it explicitly states the need to “improve its practical cooperation [. . .] with partners, relevant international organizations and, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations in order to collaborate more

² NATO, *Comprehensive Political Guidance*, available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b061129e.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 March 2008.

effectively in planning and conducting operations.”³ With this, NATO acknowledges the fact that “Peace, security and development are more interconnected than ever,” and identifies the implications for its own ongoing process of transformation, one of which is the imperative to “continuing to adapt planning processes to meet the new demands.”⁴ One of the planning processes which need to be re-evaluated or adapted is the planning process for campaign planning at the Operational Level.

Operational Planning Process

The planning process in the focus of this paper is the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process (CF OPP), which is very similar to the NATO Strategic Commander’s Guidelines for Operational Planning (GOP).⁵ It is a proven and successful instrument to conduct planning for military operations at the operational level. Operational Planning, as it is supported by e.g. the CF Operational Planning Process, primarily focuses on the development of a plan for the execution of military campaigns, which usually are “[. . .] major combat operations between states.”⁶ The Canadian Forces College Combined and Joint Staff Officer’s Handbook (CFC CJSOH) explicitly mentions that “Campaign planning for PSO [Peace Support Operations] often starts with the realization that the end state is not achievable by the military force” and that the military campaign

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵Canadian Forces College, *Canadian Forces College Combined and Joint Staff Officer's Handbook* (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, 2005), II-2-1/2.

⁶*Ibid.*, II-1-6/16.

is conducted with the aim of “[. . .] setting the conditions within which diplomatic, humanitarian and developmental agencies can successfully achieve this objective.”⁷ The mentioned realization is a key aspect of the changes that military forces will face in the development towards a comprehensive approach. In the best application of the famous Clausewitzian sentence that “[. . .] war is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means”, the military forces must accept that their role in modern crisis and conflict resolution will not be the sole deciding factor but only one amongst many others.⁸ However, the OPP focuses entirely on the employment of military forces; the following paragraphs will provide a brief description of this planning process.

Generally, the OPP clarifies the desired end state, identifies potential strengths and weaknesses of the adversary and how these could be countered or exploited, develops potential courses of action (COA), chooses one of these courses of action based on war-gaming results and comparison of the COAs and finally develops the operations plan.⁹ A number of campaign design concepts support the different steps of the planning process, and a further examination of some of them reveals the potential to tie in with the planning and execution of actions by other actors.¹⁰

⁷*Ibid.*, II-1-6/16.

⁸Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 605.

⁹United States Joint Forces Staff College, *Campaign Planning / Operational Art Primer AY 07* (Norfolk, VA: Joint Forces Staff College, 2007), 33.

¹⁰Canadian Forces College, *Canadian Forces College Combined and Joint Staff Officer's Handbook*, II-1-4/16.

in order to be able to develop a reasonable plan. The initial (and then continuing) process of gathering this necessary information is the ‘Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (JIPB)’. The CF OPP describes the JIPB as a “[. . .] continuous process that enables Joint Force Commanders and their staffs to visualize the full spectrum of adversary capabilities and potential Courses of Action (COA) across all dimensions of the Joint Battlespace.”¹³ While the distinction which is made between JIBP and IPB¹⁴ is irrelevant for the scope of this essay, it is important to know that in addition to information about the adversary JIPB also includes “[. . .] non-geographic dimensions of operations (cyberspace, perception, the electromagnetic spectrum, etc.)”¹⁵

After this brief introduction to the Operational Planning Process as the current planning tool for military operations, the next section will give an overview of the Effects Based Approach to Operations as a future way of planning.

Effects Based Approach to Operations

The Effects Based Approach to Operations can not and will not change the fundamentals of operational planning; still there will be an end-state which needs to be achieved, and the entire planning process will focus on identifying and employing the ways and means in terms of actions and actors to achieve this end-

¹³*Ibid.*, II-3-1/4.

¹⁴IPB is described as “focusing on the capabilities and vulnerabilities of individual opposing force components”, *Ibid.*, II-3-1/4.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, II-1-1/4.

state. EBAO is based on the idea of creating changes in the capabilities, behavior and opinions of actors within an environment. In order to achieve these changes, effects are identified, which can be physical or non-physical. After identifying the effects, actions are planned to achieve these effects and finally actors are assigned to these actions.

The effects based approach can be viewed as a cyclic process, consisting of three major functions or phases, Effects Based Planning (EBP), Effects Based Execution (EBE), Effects Based Assessment (EBA) and the supporting function of Knowledge Development (KD).

The principle of a cyclic process itself is of course not at all new, and while the purpose of EBP, EBE, and EBA is simple and thus easy to understand, the Knowledge Development function needs further examination: an essential part of the idea of an effects based approach is the holistic understanding of the operational space. What is meant by this is to understand the operational space as a system of systems, identifying its key elements and the relations between these elements. The goal of KD is to support situational awareness and situational understanding.¹⁶ The resulting Knowledge Base is often misunderstood as ‘data base’ but it actually needs to be regarded differently: the purpose of the Knowledge Base is to support the decision-makers and their staffs in all phases of the cyclic process. It therefore not only has to provide the information which in the OPP would build the basis for the JIPB, moreover should it also enable the simulation of the effects of actions. To this end, the Knowledge Base needs to be much more than a data base; in addition

¹⁶NATO HQ SACT, *Engagement Space Assessment Handbook* (Norfolk, VA: NATO HQ SACT, 2007), 9.

to the pure storage of facts, a Knowledge Base will have to provide possibilities to visualize relations between key elements like e.g. actors and influences which might come out of particular actions.¹⁷ An example for this is the poppy-farming and drug-trafficking in Afghanistan: the destruction of poppy fields would decrease the amount of drugs on the market, but on the other hand have an impact on the power of local warlords. The consideration of such second- (third-, nth-) order effects will be supported by a thorough analysis of the engagement space. The Knowledge Base will not only serve during the planning phase but also in the phases of execution and assessment, as each action will have an effect of changing the situation, so that the outcome of an action has a feedback into the Knowledge Base. For the assessment phase, the Knowledge Base will function as a measurement tool, helping to compare the intended with the achieved results.

Having reviewed the ‘classic’ planning tool for military operations and introduced a possible future way of planning for operations, the next section will show that the different actors in today’s contemporary security environments do not successfully harmonize their efforts.

LACK OF COORDINATION

NATO, in its recently issued report “Progress in Afghanistan” states in the chapter ‘Reconstruction and development’:

One of the lessons learnt over the five years of NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan is that a military solution alone does not suffice to

¹⁷The implementation of a Knowledge Base will of course make use of approved technical solutions like data bases to support the development and sharing of knowledge.

secure and stabilise the country. Security, governance, and reconstruction and development activities must complement and support each other. To that end, practical support for reconstruction and development efforts stands as one of ISAF's key supporting military tasks.¹⁸

The complexities of contemporary crises and conflicts demand a comprehensive approach, involving not only the military but all instruments of power which a state (or alliance) has at its disposal, to include the cooperation with non-state actors. This comprehensive approach has partially already come into force, as can be seen in Afghanistan, where Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), consisting of both military and civilian personnel, assist the local authorities in the reconstruction and maintenance of security in the region.¹⁹ But the lack of a truly coordinated cooperation and synchronization of the different actors on all levels could prevent the aspired success of a self-sustained security environment without the need for international assistance and continued presence.

Dr Michael Williams, head of the transatlantic programme at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, summarizes the problem:

Money is not the only problem; even if Afghanistan was awarded billions upon billions of dollars, without a co-ordinated, comprehensive and

¹⁸NATO, *Progress in Afghanistan*, available from http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/progress_afghanistan.pdf; Internet, accessed 20 March 2008, 12.

¹⁹NATO, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)*, available from http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/recon_dev/prts.html; Internet, accessed 20 March 2008.

concerted approach the funds will go to waste. There is still a stunning lack of co-ordination between the various actors on the ground.²⁰

Obviously, the problem is well-identified and currently the solution seems to fail mostly due to the lack of a proper translation of the recognized need for coordination into concepts supporting this coordination.

The transformation process of military forces makes use of the method of ‘Concept Development & Experimentation (CD&E)’ in order to develop and refine concepts for the future. One of the areas of application for this method is the development of concepts for EBAO, which is strongly endorsed by the United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM). USJFCOM conducts a series of multinational experiments (MNE, currently MNE 5), which focuses on “[. . .] a comprehensive, whole-of-government, approach, using the effects-based approach to multinational operations to explore military support to various aspects of civilian interagency operations.”²¹

Some participating countries of the multinational experimentation series have initiated own experiments, based on the MNE, to further the findings for their own concept developments. As an example, in fall 2006 Sweden conducted an experiment with multinational participation as a follow-up to MNE 4, “[. . .] in

²⁰John Bynorth and Michael Williams, “Are we Losing Afghanistan?” in *The Sunday Herald*, available from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4156/is_20080113/ai_n21206610; Internet, accessed 20 March 2008.

²¹United States Joint Forces Command, *USJFCOM Fact Sheet: Multinational Experiment 5*, available from <http://www.jfcom.mil/about/experiments/mne5.html>; Internet; accessed 20 March 2008.

order to exploit findings so far and continue the development efforts.”²² Especially this Swedish experiment yielded very interesting results, as it was not only conducted with the participation of the military but also with ‘real’ civilian actors, representing diplomatic and police forces. The context for the experiment was an EU-led peace support operation, with Swedish and international civilian officials from the European Union, ministries, MNE partners and other organizations acting as an ‘Office of the EU Special Representative’ (OEUSR).²³ Apart from the experiment’s results in terms of successful experimentation of EBAO principles, this cooperation with experienced diplomats emphasized the need for action in different areas, as the following example shows: in the early stages of the experiment, one of the participating diplomats articulated his confusion about the term ‘battle rhythm’, which was used for the daily routine of staff work during the planning and briefing phases, although the underlying scenario for the conduct of the experiment did not include a battle taking place. This anecdote exemplifies one of the challenges which derive from different culture and socialization, education and training of the different actors in such an environment. It becomes obvious that the implementation of a Whole of Government approach will require more than just identifying and declaring a shared end-state; in order to have diverse actors truly work together to achieve synergetic effects it will be necessary to have a more than mutual understanding of the capabilities of all involved entities, their procedures, readiness, speeds etc.

²²Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters, *Swedish EBAO Development After the Autumn Experiment 2006* (Stockholm: Swedish Armed Forces, 2007), 5.

²³*Ibid.*

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: AN INTERAGENCY PLANNING TEAM

As mentioned, all of the different concepts for integrated cooperation include the idea to view the military force of a nation or a coalition as only one amongst other instruments of power in the networked security. It will be easily comprehensible to resort to the military instrument if an identified effect makes it necessary to physically destroy e.g. an adversary's infrastructure. Other effects might require capabilities which are not inherent to military forces, making different actors more appropriate and suitable to take the necessary action. Some examples might include the freezing of bank-accounts which belong to a terrorist organization, embargos on certain goods, the denial of access to port-facilities etc.

NATO uses the scheme of 'PMEC' (Politics, Military, Economy and Civil) to group these different instruments of national power. 'Military' not only refers to "[. . .] the application of military power, including the threat or use of lethal and nonlethal force to coerce, deter, contain or defeat an adversary [. . .]" but can also be used for "[. . .] stabilization and reconstruction or as a tool in complex humanitarian disasters and emergencies."²⁴

The political instrument mainly focuses on the diplomatic efforts which are being made to influence actors, while "the economic instrument generally refers to initiatives and sanctions designed to affect the flow of goods and services, as well as financial support to state and non-state actors involved in a crisis."²⁵

²⁴NATO, *Bi-Strategic Command Pre-Doctrinal Handbook (Effects Based Approach to Operations)*, 2007, 1-2.

The remaining civil instrument is related to the use of support by a wide variety of entities, including e.g. judiciary, constabulary, education, public information, civilian administration and support infrastructure.

Considering the resulting enormous number of different effect-causing actors within an engagement space, military forces, police forces, diplomats, different international organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, it becomes clear that without proper coordination of all these instruments effectiveness and efficiency will hardly be optimized.

The next section will now demonstrate how the effort of the different actors in a comprehensive approach can better be coordinated.

As the military OPP starts with the identification of the desired end-state, in a Whole of Government environment the same identification will be the first priority. The then following decomposition into a military and other end states seems to be absurd under a comprehensive approach as there usually will not be a single military campaign taking place parallel to and alongside non-military actions. Rather will military and non-military actions be interwoven, thus the identification of a purely military end state as the outcome of military actions should be abandoned. What needs to be done instead is an initial and then continuous assessment of the engagement space by a committee which is not necessarily military-led. This committee, which for example might be called (and will be referred to as) 'Interagency Planning Team' needs to consist of representatives (decision makers) of all friendly actors in the engagement space. Supported by the

Knowledge Base, this committee has to decide, what effects are aspired in the pursuit of the objectives, and what actions need to be taken in order to achieve these effects. The final step has to be the assignment of a particular instrument of power to execute the action; this instrument can be, but does not have to be, the military one.

The equivalent of the earlier introduced concepts of ‘Decisive Points’ and ‘Lines of Operation’ will continue to be used, although perhaps under different names. In the end, certain effects that are achieved can be regarded as decisive points, and effects or decisive points in the pursuit of a particular objective can still be considered as being on a line of operation.

It was shown that the mentioned concepts of OPP, which has proven to be a successful instrument to support planning of operations, might be useful for the development of concepts for interagency planning. It must be noted however, that other agencies have also successfully carried out their respective missions and will bring their own planning processes or concepts to the table. This and other challenges will be addressed in the next section.

CHALLENGES

Although the concept of an interagency planning team at the Operational level sounds simple, there are a number of challenges which need to be addressed. Without offering solutions, some of the challenges will be mentioned here in order to sensitize the reader to the amount of work needing to be done prior to being able

to successfully implement a comprehensive approach to Operational Level Planning.

As long as the different departments of governments view each other as rivals in the competition for funding, it will be hard to truly accomplish cooperation towards a shared end state without some actors following hidden agendas with the purpose of gaining more influence or power.

Very similar to the introduction of the term and the principle of ‘jointness’ in the militaries of the world, during which we saw (and partially still see) strong resistance and mistrust between the different services, it is likely to be expected that the necessary mindset for a successful cooperation of different agencies can not be achieved in short-term.

One result of the aforementioned Swedish experiment was that “Many civilian and military participants also underlined the importance of having a common understanding of key notions, working methods, organization and performance, abbreviations and acronyms.”²⁶ The lack of knowledge about purpose, structure, education, capabilities and procedures of other agencies/actors will often lead to a lack of trust in these capabilities, resulting in a pre-disposition of who should or should not do what.²⁷ These ‘cultural’ issues need to be overcome

²⁶Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters, *Swedish EBAO Development After the Autumn Experiment 2006*, 53.

²⁷Great Britain. Ministry of Defence, *The UK Military Effects-Based Approach* (Shrivenham, Swindon: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2005), 1-10.

before an effective and efficient comprehensive approach will really be in place. In order to achieve this, the different instruments of power will need to cooperate prior to an actual crisis situation: military forces for example should not only educate their own personnel at their colleges but should allow access to education for the planning and execution of campaigns at the operational level also for participants from other agencies, and vice versa. Another positive feedback from the Swedish Experiments states: “No less than 92% of the OEUSR [Office of the European Union Special Representative] participants thought that their understanding of military operations had increased during the experiment.”²⁸

The development of the concepts for an effects based approach is currently led by the military, with the aforementioned experiments with multinational and interdepartmental participation helping to identify and address different pitfalls like e.g. different perspectives, languages (the ‘battle-rhythm’ example), or interoperability issues (both in the technical and non-technical domains). These experiments do not necessarily need to be led and conducted by the military; rather should other agencies be encouraged to actively participate in the development of the concepts and the ensuing experiments in order to have their share, preventing later allegations that the military aims at achieving overall leadership.

Another major challenge will be the Knowledge Development function: military intelligence will represent a major contribution to the development of that knowledge on which decision makers from a variety of different agencies will base

²⁸Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters, *Swedish EBAO Development After the Autumn Experiment 2006*, 54.

their decisions. The restrictions in information sharing, which we universally face, are counterproductive to the idea of a shared situational awareness and understanding. Although there are many different reasons for this, including legislative restrictions, force protection etc., it will be paramount to find ways to enable decision makers to base their planning on all necessary relevant information.

Further experiments, conducted by USJFCOM as well as by NATO and its member and partner states, must deal with the different factors relevant to the implementation of a comprehensive approach, and it should become obvious that although the military instrument already disposes of robust planning tools like the OPP, it will have to amend its preparation and planning tools for modern multinational and multi-departmental operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to overcome the aforementioned challenges during the implementation of a Comprehensive Approach, the different agencies and actors (NGOs etc.) should focus on cooperating as early as the phase of concept development. If a concept of operations is developed by only a smaller group, it will be much more demanding to then get the necessary broad support for the concepts by all of the entities involved in the realization-phase. To prevent this, early-stage cooperation in the development and experimentation of concepts is more likely to incorporate the characteristics, needs and opinions of all participants prior to an actual application of concepts in a real-world situation.

In order to accomplish this goal, especially the military will have to abstain from its usual leadership role: the aforementioned interagency planning team will not be able to plan the best approach for a specific situation if one of the members claims leadership regardless of the needs of the situation.

The underlying principle should be the basic concept of the Effects Based Approach: what is the desired end state? What effects do we have to create in order to achieve this end state? What actions need to be taken to achieve those effects? Which instrument is most suitable to execute these actions?

If the answers to these questions can be agreed upon within an interagency planning team and the following actions are coordinated between all participating actors, then a Comprehensive Approach might actually come into force successfully.

CONCLUSION

The examination of the current situation revealed some of the reasons for the still pending successful implementation of a Comprehensive approach. The operational planning process of the military forces is very well suited for military operations aiming at a military end state, and that exactly makes it less suitable for present-day security challenges, in which military forces have to coordinate their actions with a plethora of other actors in order to achieve the most effective and efficient use of all capabilities.

Experiments like the Multinational Experimentation series or the Swedish EBAO Experiment will help to not only refine the concepts but also to reveal additional

challenges that need to be addressed, like the aforementioned example of different terminology, culture etc.

It was shown that the cooperation of the different instruments of power, including governmental and non-governmental organizations needs to be coordinated by a committee that consists of decision-makers of all participating actors.

A number of challenges can jeopardize the successful cooperation of the PMEC actors, amongst which mutual trust and the necessary mindset for this ‘paradigm’ of a Comprehensive, Effects Based Approach are only some, but nevertheless important and difficult ones. Also rivalry and biases are common between different agencies and need to be resolved before an interagency planning team can work successfully. NATO has already acknowledged this fact and in the draft for the Multinational Experiment 5 framework states:

NATO understands that it needs to ensure that its own planning and crisis management procedures are coherently applied and that it is able to cooperate with a range of partners for example, the United Nations (UN), EU, NGOs and local actors, in the planning and conduct of operations. It also needs to convince other actors that, in seeking such co-operation with them, it is not trying to claim any leadership role over them: that would be inappropriate and counter productive.²⁹

The need to share information is not only a challenge for the implementation of a Comprehensive Approach; the necessary shift from a ‘need to know’ to a ‘duty to share’ principle has already been identified in the development of concepts for

²⁹United States Joint Forces Command, *The Comprehensive Approach: A Conceptual Framework for MNE5*, Draft Working Paper Version 0.11 (Suffolk, VA: USJFCOM, 2007), 5.

Network Enabled Capabilities.³⁰ A planning team has to have access to all relevant information in order to be able to come to a sound plan.

A formal declaration at the political level to cooperate with all actors in order to resolve a crisis situation sounds promising, but the real cooperation takes place at the operational and tactical levels. This cooperation in the pursuit of a shared, agreed end state needs participants who have the right concepts, education, training and mindsets to accomplish their mission.

However, although the conventional ‘force-on-force’ conflict nowadays is not the most likely scenario anymore, this does not mean that it can never again occur, and thus the military operational planning process is not to be dismissed. Instead it has to be re-evaluated in order to offer the flexibility to cover both types of planning situations/scenarios, the one in which the military is the main player executing typical military actions and the one in which the military has a rather supporting role in the concert of a wide array of actors.

³⁰The principle of Network Enabled Capabilities is also known under the names ‘Network Centric Warfare’ or ‘Network Centric Operations’.

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