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**The Important Thing is Not Winning but Taking Part:
The Norwegian Approach to Multinational Defence
Cooperation Between 2005-2014**

By

Tor Magnus Hjartøy

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of MPhil by Research

School of Humanities

College of Arts

Faculty of History

University of Glasgow
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Abstract

Following the end of the Cold War the Norwegian Armed Forces went through several significant periods of reform that arguably created as many problems as they solved. Despite reducing the troop numbers, bases and materiel of the Armed Forces, at the turn of the century the Norwegian Armed Forces were still not able to solve its mission or balance its budget. In the period between 2005-2014, even further reforms were set to be implemented, and the leadership of the Armed Forces felt compelled to look at new avenues to save money and retain capabilities in the process. In the following years, several studies showed that one such avenue was multinational defence cooperation (MDC), which was a method to both save money and retain capabilities. Following these studies Norway entered into two major MDC initiatives: The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) initiative, and NATO's 'Smart Defence' initiative. These initiatives were different in methodology and scope, but both promised significant cost savings and increased ability, if only participants committed to the initiatives. My thesis seeks to understand both how and why Norway was motivated to take part in these initiatives individually, and to understand what can be said to be the Norwegian approach to MDC in general.

Though these two areas of MDC are very different, Norway's motivation and behaviour in them contain some similarities. Traditionally, Norway has been an importer of security that wanted to maximise potential for Great Powers to come to her aid when needed. It is my argument that this is also a significant motivation for Norway's participation in MDC initiatives. MDC can be an avenue to create bonds between nations, bonds that can be utilised, when needed, to gather support. As such, such participation is a strategy for Norway in an of itself. For MDC to have maximum effect, certain sacrifices of control and freedom of action have to be made by the participants. Norway's behaviour in these two initiatives shows that Norway is unwilling to make such sacrifices, rendering the cooperation relatively ineffective compared to its stated ambition. As such, it is my contention that Norway's stated goals for defence cooperation; cost savings and capability retention, are subjugated to her goals of creating bonds between nations in order to secure reciprocity and support, in the event it is needed in the future.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tor Magnus Hjartøy', written over a horizontal line.

Signature

TOR MAGNUS HJARTØY

Name in capitals

Disclaimer

Although I am currently employed by the Norwegian Armed Forces, this project has been entirely self-funded, independent, and in my personal time. Any views or opinions presented in this work are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Norwegian Armed Forces.

List of Abbreviations

ACT	Allied Command Transformation
ADAPT	Alliance Defence Analysis and Planning for Transformation
C3	Command, control and communications
CBT	Cross-border training
CHOD	Chief of Defence
COPA	Cooperation Area
COPA ARMA	Cooperation Area Armaments
COPA CAPA	Cooperation Area Capabilities
COPA HR&E	Cooperation Area Human Resources & Education
COPA OPS	Cooperation Area Operations
COPA TR&EX	Cooperation Area Training & Exercises
CS	Coordination Staff
EDA	European Defence Agency
EU	European Union
FNC	Framework Nations Concept
GUNOP	Guidelines for NORDEFCO military level operating procedures
MCC	Military Coordination Committee
MDC	Multinational Defence Cooperation
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAF	Norwegian Armed Forces
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIA	NATO Communication and Information Agency
NDRE	Norwegian Defence Research Establishment
NOK	Norwegian Kroner

NORDCAPS	Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support
NORDEFECO	Nordic Defence Cooperation
NORDSUP	Nordic Supportive Defence Structures
NORTAT	Nordic Tactical Air Transport
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SHIRBRIG	Stand-By High Readiness Brigade

Introduction

In 2005 a meeting took place between the newly appointed Norwegian Chief of Defence, General Sverre Diesen, and Minister of Defence Anne Grethe Strøm-Erichsen. The General, who had 35 years of experience in military affairs, wanted to explain to his new boss, a politician with no military experience, that despite extensive reforms of the last five years the state of affairs in the Norwegian Armed forces was not as satisfactory as some would have it. He detailed his understanding of the current situation, the factors influencing it, and finally outlined his vision for the future of the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF), which he summed up like this:

If we were to extrapolate [recent developments] it would take 20-25 years until we reach a point where it in my opinion is hard to claim that we have any sort of meaningful national defence capability.¹

Following this meeting, General Diesen and Minister Strøm-Erichsen oversaw a period of some of the largest and most extensive reforms in NAF's history. Bases were closed, record-breaking procurement programs were initiated, and new ways of obtaining and retaining military capabilities were explored.² General Diesen, as controversial as Norwegian Generals come,³ had already been fighting for years to implement reform and change the mind-set of an organisation moulded by the Cold War. One such previously unheard of idea, was the concept that Norway would integrate her defence structures with her neighbouring and aligned countries, through various bilateral and multilateral agreements. This concept, the concept of multinational defence cooperation and integration, will be the overarching theme of this thesis.

Multinational Defence Cooperation (MDC) in Norway was not a creation of General Diesen, the NAF had cooperated with other militaries for decades since

¹ Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

² 'Defence Study 2007', *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2007 – Sluttrapport*, http://bfo.no/images/uploads/dokumenter/FS07_komplett_version.pdf, accessed 7 July 2015, pp. 18-30

³ General Diesen was described as strong-willed and outspoken, something that is relatively uncommon for officers in the public debate. An example of reactions to Diesen's behaviour can be seen in an editorial here: http://www.dagensperspektiv.no/meninger/redaktorens_mening/diesen-rir-igjen-

Norwegian independence in 1905, specifically with NATO countries along with the nonaligned Nordic countries. However, while the MDC efforts prior to the mid 2000s were limited, and not a significant part of Norwegian policy, MDC gained significant traction just a few years following 2005 signifying a considerable shift in opinion on the matter.

Problem statement and research questions

From 2005 onward, deep multinational defence cooperation arose as an expressed potential strategy for the Norwegian Armed Forces in order to achieve cost savings and capability retention, as seen in white papers and military studies in the latter part of the decade. Despite this change in attitude, studies have shown that projects and efforts to implement MDC have not yielded savings in accordance with their intention, and several projects have been very public failures. This contrast of potential versus actual reward is interesting in that it begs the question what is happening in the process, a question that is worthy of study. Because efforts to promote MDC has not been voiced with the same intensity before 2005, describing the specific factors driving the change would be useful to understand the process of change within the Armed Forces themselves, as well as the MoD as its governing agency. Moreover, since studies have shown that the efforts have left something to be desired of MDC despite Norway being involved in two major MDC initiatives in the period, shedding light on why this is could provide some insight into specific characteristics of Norwegian defence reform and defence tradition.

To establish a clear and concise objective in my research I have outlined two main research questions to be answered in my thesis. These are:

- 1) What motivated the Norwegian Armed Forces to participate in multinational defence cooperation after 2005?
- 2) Using 'Smart Defence' and Nordic Defence Cooperation as case studies, what can be said to be the 'Norwegian approach' to multinational defence cooperation in the period from 2005 to 2014?

When my research questions are answered, my objective is that my research will shed new light on the role of multinational defence cooperation in Norwegian defence policy.

Limitations and thesis structure

In this thesis, I will seek to explore the main drivers of multinational defence cooperation following Gen. Diesen's appointment as Chief of Defence in 2005, and to the NATO Wales Summit in the fall of 2014. Furthermore, I will try to derive what characteristics can be said to be the 'Norwegian approach' to multinational defence cooperation. To do this, I have chosen to study the two largest multinational frameworks for cooperation in the period, Nordic Defence Cooperation and NATO Smart Defence. These are chosen because they represent very clear and contrasting areas of cooperation for the Norwegian military, as the Nordic Defence Cooperation framework is conducted outside of NATO, and the Smart Defence framework is within the NATO structure. The choice of case studies is also based on the fact that these are the two largest avenues of defence cooperation for the Norwegian Armed Forces, and the most significant initiatives that have been seen in these domains the last few decades.

Additionally, the rationales behind their conception are also similar, making them useful for comparison. I believe that how and where the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the NAF choose to focus their efforts says something about where they perceive Norwegian security to be rooted, and where it should be developed. This will be expanded upon in the case studies.

By choosing a relatively short timeframe (10 years) and two very distinct and multilateral cooperation areas, some areas that have a long history in the Norwegian Armed Forces, such as certain bilateral agreements, will have to be excluded. The most prominent examples are agreements for cooperation with the United States, and the United Kingdom, which have long been instrumental in the development of the Norwegian Armed Forces. And although the timeframe is short, the period I have studied saw events that had significant effect of developments on a global scale, causing an accelerated pace of development, and the emergence of wholly new methods in the area of military cooperation between nations. Furthermore, 'Nordic Defence Cooperation' and 'Smart Defence' are not the only cooperation projects of the period, but they are the

ones who contain the most far-reaching and comprehensive ambitions of cooperation, at least in concept. Other frameworks, such as NATO's Lisbon Critical Capabilities and Connected Forces Initiative, along with the smaller Nordic initiatives preceding the Nordic Defence Cooperation initiative, can also provide insight into Norwegian patterns of behaviour, but will not be studied in this thesis. This is done in order to achieve a necessary depth to the study of the two chosen cases.

To properly examine the emergence of MDC in the Norwegian military, I believe it necessary to first establish a foundation for understanding of the major reforms that have been conducted since the end of the Cold War, reforms that have transformed the Norwegian Armed Forces and brought about new thinking. I will describe the main periods of reform of the Norwegian Armed Forces from the end of the Cold War in 1991, to 2005. This is done in order to understand the process of change leading to the 'current situation' that General Diesen referred to above. This description will focus on reforms, and not policy, strategy or operations. This is done in order to understand the pattern of behaviour in the reform processes of the Norwegian Armed Forces. This will in turn be used to place MDC and the reforms of 2005-2014 in a larger context.

My thesis will be comprised of an introduction, four chapters that form the main body, and a conclusion. Chapter one will focus on the changes to and reform of the Norwegian Armed Forces from 1991 to 2005. This chapter will provide insight into the extremely challenging transition from a Cold War-minded defensive force, to a relatively capable expeditionary force. I will explain how budgets declined all the way through the 1990s, in an effort to cash in the so-called peace dividend following the demise of the Warsaw Pact, and how the perceptions of Norwegian security changed throughout the same period. Furthermore, I will describe how the developments of the 1990s caused the NAF to become a force too large to sustain, leading to a state of crisis and the need for, and eventual implementation of, several rounds of reform during the early to mid 2000s. The end of this chapter will seek to establish a bridge between the developments of the end of the Cold War, through the crises-reform cycle of the 2000s to the emergence of General Diesen's radical ideas regarding MDC.

In chapter two I will attempt to describe the history and workings of the Nordic Defence Cooperation initiative. I will highlight the role of General Diesen and how his two major studies, the Possibilities Study and the Defence Study, influenced Norwegian thoughts of MDC in general, and NORDEFCO specifically. I will also outline the organisational workings of the NORDEFCO initiative and its development from foundation until 2014, along with some of the major successes and challenges. These include the failed procurement of the ‘Archer’ self-propelled artillery system, and the success of the much lauded ‘cross border training’ project. The end of the chapter will focus on how Norway has approached the initiative, arguing that Norway has seen a great deal of promise in the Nordic domain in general, and NORDEFCO in particular, since 2009.

In the third chapter I will attempt to describe the long roots of NATO’s ‘Smart Defence’ initiative, and how this is one of a long line of initiatives NATO has undertaken to tackle some of the most fundamental challenges in the organisation: the disparity of burden-sharing between the USA and Europe. I will explain how the ‘Great Recession’ provided the point of departure for Fogh-Rasmussen’s speech during the Munich security conference in 2011, and how that speech started a chain of events leading to the initiative itself. I will also, as with NORDEFCO, outline the organisational workings of ‘Smart Defence’ along with successes and challenges.

The fourth chapter will seek to describe how recent events, mainly the Crisis in Ukraine, has affected the Norwegian approach to defence cooperation, and the sense of necessity of MDC in Europe at large. I will discuss how the developments in Ukraine caused Norway to argue for a necessary change in attitude in the NATO alliance and among the Nordic countries, a change that affected MDC’s place on the list of priorities for all parties involved.

Translations and terminology

This thesis deals to a great extent with Norwegian writing and Norwegian oral history sources. There are instances where I will have to translate book or article titles and text from Norwegian into English. In the event that the translation is my own, I will postfix [ed. transl.] to the quotation so that it is clear that the translation is my own. In the event of quotations from my interview subjects,

the translation of all quotations and excerpts will be my own. Therefore, such a postfix will be unnecessary.

When studying the Nordic countries and/or the Scandinavian countries, some confusion can exist as to which countries fall under what category. The Nordic countries are Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. The Scandinavian countries are the countries that lie on the Scandinavian Peninsula: Norway and Sweden, plus Denmark. This is important to note, because this is not only a geographic distinction, but also a distinction in culture and heritage.

In Norway, the terms ‘peacekeeping’ and ‘peace establishment’ missions are not widely used. Instead, the term ‘internasjonale operasjoner’ (international operations [ed. trans.]) is used in both cases. I will use the Norwegian method of referring to such missions.

During reform cycles of the Norwegian Armed Forces several studies have been produced to provide decision makers with a decision basis. Normally the Chief of Defence produces one study as a military recommendation to the Minister of Defence, which in recent years have been called ‘Forsvarsstudie’, with the year of publication as a discriminator. All such studies will be referred to as ‘Defence Studies’ in this thesis. Moreover, the Ministry of Defence has conjunctionally commissioned an independent study made up by politicians, scholars, officers and subject matter experts. These studies have had many names during the years, from ‘Forsvarskommisjon’ (Defence Commission), and ‘Forsvarspolitisk Utvalg’ (Defence Political Commission), to ‘Ekspertutvalg’ (Expert Commission). For sake of simplicity, I will refer to all such studies as Defence White Papers, with the year of publication as a discriminator.

In the Norwegian Armed Forces, the term ‘Styrkeproduksjon’ is widely used and has no equivalent English translation. The literal translation is ‘strength production’, and is an umbrella term for any activity aimed at making troops combat ready. In this thesis I will substitute this term with the more generic term ‘training and exercises’.

Lastly, the term ‘structural element’ is widely used in this thesis and in the source material. This term usually reflects a specific set of materiel that can

operate independently. A fleet of fighter aircraft is a structural element; a light infantry battalion is also a structural element, but both require more than just a fighter jet or a soldier with a rifle, to function. They need support elements, staff, maintenance and so on. The term bundles together all the required elements to enable the capability in question to operate.

Short description of NORDEFCO and ‘Smart Defence’

The Nordic Defence Cooperation initiative was established in November 2009, following a meeting of all the Nordic Defence Ministers in Helsinki, effectively replacing several lesser agreements between the Nordic countries.⁴ The purpose of the initiative, as laid out in the Memorandum of Understanding that effectively created the NORDEFCO framework, was to ‘strengthen the participants’ national defence, explore common synergies and facilitate efficient common solutions.’⁵ NORDEFCO came about two years after the ‘Possibilities Study’⁶ was published in 2007, and replaced a number of small and fragmented initiatives in the Nordic domain, merging them under a common umbrella. The initiative has seen some degree of success, but has not been without scandals and roadblocks. The NORDEFCO organisation and method focuses on a lean organisation, minimising bureaucracy and maximising output.⁷ Such a priority has not been vocalised as much in the NATO domain, highlighting the main difference between the two: size and flexibility of the organisation.

NATO’s ‘Smart Defence’ initiative is in many ways the brainchild of former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Rasmussen coined the term ‘Smart Defence’ in his keynote speech at the Munich security conference in 2011. However the initiative did not gain real traction until NATO’s Chicago summit in

⁴ ‘NORDEFCO MoU between Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland’, signed 4 November 2009, <http://www.norden.org/en/om-samarbeidet-1/nordic-agreements/treaties-and-agreements/defence-affairs/memorandum-of-understanding-on-nordic-defence-cooperation-nordefco>, accessed 13 September 2015’

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ ‘Ömsidigt förstärkande försvarslösningar: Norsk-svensk studie av möjligheterna till fördjupat samarbete’. The study is known as ‘Mulighetsstudien’ in Norwegian, which translates to ‘Possibilities Study’ in English. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fd/dokumenter/svensk-norsk_mulighetsstudie_1.pdf, accessed 7 July 2015

⁷ ‘NORDEFCO Annual Report 2012’, <http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/NORDEFCO%20Annual%20Report%202012.pdf>, accessed 6 September 2015, p. 5, 22

2012. In Chicago, all NATO countries committed to the concept of ‘Smart Defence’ as outlined by the Secretary General in his Munich speech. The purpose of the initiative was to ensure that NATO could ‘develop, acquire and maintain the capabilities required to achieve the goals of ‘NATO Forces 2020’’.⁸ As is often the case when NATO conducts its business, ‘Smart Defence’ struggled with the number of nations involved, differing goals and objectives, and a weak mandate. As I will explain later on, Norway has been an active member in the ‘Smart Defence’ work, taking the lead in one project, and participating in several others.

Available work in the field of study

In recent years, there have been some major publications in the area of the history of the Norwegian Armed Forces. In 2004 a group of authors led by Professor Olav Riste published the fifth and final volume of their ‘Norsk forsvarshistorie’, which translates to ‘Norwegian Defence History’.⁹ Volume five covered the years from 1970 to 2000 and is arguably the largest and most substantial work on the development of the Norwegian Armed Forces after World War II. Prior to this work, few publications existed where the Armed Forces and not the more general term ‘Foreign Relations’ were at the centre point. An example of such a work is Mr Riste’s ‘Norway’s Foreign Relations’, originally published in 2001, which is a landmark work spanning the entirety of Norwegian foreign relations history to the year 2000. Ståle Ulriksen’s work ‘Den norske forsvarstradisjon’ (The Norwegian Defence Tradition), published in 2002,¹⁰ represents a substantial analysis on the history and foundations of Norwegian tradition for discussing military matters. His critical viewpoints regarding the establishment of certain ‘truths’ and their effect on the structuring of the military is certainly useful to consider when discussing transformation processes in the military.

⁸ ‘NATO Smart Defence’ webpage, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_84268.htm, accessed 7 July 2015

⁹ Olav Riste et. al, *’Norsk Forsvarshistorie: Allianseforsvar i endring’*, (Oslo: Eide, 2004)

¹⁰ Ståle Ulriksen, *’Den norske forsvarstradisjonen – Militærmakt eller folkeforsvar?’*, (Oslo: Pax Forlag A/S, 2002)

Since 2001, attention has been focused on the effects of 11 September 2001, and the Norwegian Armed Forces being at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, rather than upon the general development of the Armed Forces or defence policy. Works like 'Norges Kriger' (Norwegian Wars),¹¹ 'Norge i internasjonale operasjoner' (Norway in international operations)¹² and more dramatic autobiographical works such as 'Brødre i blodet - I krig for Norge' (Blood brothers - At war for Norway)¹³ are focused on battles, individuals and specifics on the operations following the events of 9/11, although the work 'Norwegian Wars' does cover a great deal more than just the post-9/11 battles.

In the area of Nordic security and defence policy, few books or major works have been published since NORDEFECO was founded. Although this is understandable because of the short timespan, it does pose some challenges to find quality writing on the subject. Håkon Lunde Saxi has provided several articles where he discusses Nordic defence cooperation. His work 'Nordic Defence Cooperation After the Cold War' published in the Oslo Files on Defence and Security in March 2011, explores why and how the Nordic countries seek to cooperate on defence matters, and whether they are likely to succeed. Saxi has quite possibly delved deeper into NORDEFECO than any other Norwegian scholar. His description of the bottom-up forces that were instrumental in creating NORDEFECO,¹⁴ along with his comparison of the structure and culture of the individual Nordic nations¹⁵ have been particularly useful in this thesis. Other scholars have also produced notable work on Nordic security, Tuomas Forsberg's work: 'The rise of Nordic defence cooperation: A return to regionalism?' provides a great deal of insight into the driving factors in Nordic defence cooperation, arguing that it is not purely an economic motivation but also a shared identity that drives cooperation.¹⁶ Clive Archer's work on 'the Stoltenberg Report and Nordic Security' details the reasoning behind and effects of Thorvald Stoltenberg's report on Nordic

¹¹ Per Erik Olsen (ed.), *'Norges Kriger – Fra Hafrsfjord til Afghanistan'*, (Oslo: Vega Forlag, 2011)

¹² Tormod Heier et.al., *'Norge i internasjonale operasjoner – Militærmakt mellom idealer og realpolitikk'*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2014)

¹³ Emil Johansen, *'Brødre i blodet – I krig for Norge'*, (Oslo: Kagge forlag, 2011)

¹⁴ Håkon Saxi, 'Nordic Defence Cooperation After the Cold War', *Oslo Files on Defence and Security*, March (2011), p. 49

¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 49-59

¹⁶ Tuomas Forsberg, 'The rise of Nordic defence cooperation: a return to regionalism?', *International Affairs*, 89: 5 (2013) p. 1161

cooperation. Archer also provides insight into Stoltenberg's ideas and how they relate to existing frameworks for Nordic cooperation.¹⁷ None of these study Norwegian policy specifically, neither do they compare actions and behaviour in the two cooperation areas NORDEFCO and 'Smart Defence'. This is where I will attempt to bring new insight to the field.

There are many scholars working on questions concerning the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance. However, the 'Smart Defence' initiative has created few waves in the academic community. As with writing on NORDEFCO, there are few books or major works on this topic. Bastian Giengrich has been a vocal sceptic of 'Smart Defence' in his work: 'Smart Defence: Who's buying?' where discusses challenges relating to both national sovereignty and the challenges of a fragmented organisation such as NATO.¹⁸ Jacob Henius and Jacopo MacDonald provide a detailed account of the fundamentals of the 'Smart Defence' initiative in their 'Smart Defence: A Critical Appraisal'.¹⁹ Also in the critical category, Marcin Terlikowski's: 'Not as smart as it could be: the NATO Smart Defence initiative' details how the initiative was too focused on savings, and how bureaucracy and lack of trust hamper its progress.²⁰ To provide new information in the area of Smart Defence, my research provides insight into how the framework is perceived by both a specific nation, but also specific people involved in Smart Defence projects.

None of these authors, apart from Håkon Saxi, focus specifically on Norway's relation to MDC, NORDEFCO or 'Smart Defence'. Moreover, no publications from the Norwegian military, that I could access, discussed MDC and Norway specifically. Swedish officers have discussed Nordic cooperation to a great extent, indicating that the topic is more discussed and more interesting within the Swedish military organisation.²¹ My research is therefore breaking new

¹⁷ Clive Archer, 'The Stoltenberg Report and Nordic Security: Big Ideas, Small Steps', *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook*, (2010), pp. 48-57

¹⁸ Bastian Giengrich, 'Smart Defence: Who's Buying?', *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 54:3 (2012), p. 73

¹⁹ Jakob Henius and Jacopo MacDonald, 'Smart Defence: A Critical Appraisal', *NATO Defence College Forum Paper Series*, 21 (2012)

²⁰ Marcin Terlikowski, 'Not as smart as it could be: the NATO Smart Defence initiative', *Polish Institute of International Affairs Strategic Files*, 22 (2012), pp. 1-5

²¹ See the following masters theses from the Swedish Defence College: Jacob Strålmark, 'Nordiska försvarssamarbeten - Säkerhetspolitiska intentioner i kamp med ekonomiska realiteter',

ground because it delves into the drivers of Norway's approach to MDC as a strategy in and of itself, instead of focusing on a single area of cooperation.

In the more general area of military reform studies, Tom Dyson has authored several articles and books detailing German defence reform.²² His studies showed how domestic policies seemingly unrelated to military matters, along with the important roles of significant personalities involve with the process, both limit and shape the resulting reform.²³ This is also evident in my studies on Norwegian reform in the same period and following years.

Methodology and ethical considerations

I have chosen the qualitative interview method, known as oral history in the UK, to carry out my research, coupled with primary source text material from the government. The characteristics of the interview method include close contact between the researcher and the subject, verbal and visual expressions and observation of participants.²⁴ I carried out one-on-one interviews with the subjects at a place and time of their choosing, with interview durations varying from ~30 minutes to ~2 hours. I conducted my interviews in line with the ethical requirements placed by the University on such research, including the required formal documents, the participant information sheet and the consent form. I believe that the forms that I provided the subjects, and the way I contacted subjects and scheduled interviews, satisfy the ethical requirements of subject safety, confidence, permission and consent. The subjects chose the time and location, they had obtained any and all required permissions for participation, and were informed of the unclassified nature of this project. They were also informed of, and consented to, their name being attached to any quotes from them. All information has been stored on a hard drive with 128-bit encryption,

Swedish Defence College, (2014), Jonas Ottosson, *'Nordiskt försvarssamarbete i åsttramningens tidevarv'*, Swedish Defence College, (2012).

²² Tom Dyson, 'German Military Reform 1998-2004: Leadership and the Triumph of Domestic Constraint over International Opportunity', *European Security* Vol. 14, No. 3, 361/386, September 2005

²³ Ibid., p. 1

²⁴ Tove Thaagard, *'Systematikk og Innlevelse – En innføring i kvalitativ metode'*, (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2009), p. 11

following transfer from a recording device. At no time has any raw material been distributed to any party.

The chosen method is effective at extracting a large amount of information from each subject, due to the verbal form and the time spent during interviews, leading the researcher to be able to obtain knowledge about how the subject thinks and reflects on his own experiences.²⁵ This leads to data gathering that is not just simple metrics, but structured thought, arguments and an individual's own insights. I chose this method because of the complex nature of the subject matter, and a need for depth in the data gathered in order to understand the processes at work.

I contacted my subjects by either phone or email, sending them my participant info sheet, so that they could understand my project and what they were asked to do. Those who were interested in meeting me also received some bullet points up-front, based on their expertise, so that they could prepare for the interview if needed. My own preparations involved gathering information about the subject, his background and work history, so that I could tailor my questions to his expertise. During the interview I utilised form of interviewing called 'partially structured approach'.²⁶ The structured element of my approach was that I had the bullet points in front of me, the same ones provided to the subject. I then used the bullets as starting points, giving the subject an easy way into the subject matter. I did not restrict the interview to these topics; rather I let the subject lead the way into other topics, as he felt natural or informative. This way I was assured of covering all the points that I felt was required, and at the same time allowing for a more natural dialogue and rapport between the subject and I.

My goal was to obtain access to subjects involved in work on both NORDEFECO and 'Smart Defence' across all the main levels of military planning: the strategic, the operational and the tactical level. I have succeeded in all but one, with no subjects involved in the tactical level of work on NORDEFECO. I have interviewed five current or former members of the Norwegian Armed Forces and the

²⁵ Ibid, p. 12

²⁶ Ibid, p. 89

Norwegian Ministry of Defence. The amount of subjects is quite low, but this is normal in qualitative studies focusing on depth.

Weaknesses in choice of method

When working with qualitative interviews, the subject may sometimes feel obligated to respond to questions in a way that they expect the researcher to want them to, providing answers that are more in line with the researcher's values and opinions.²⁷ Moreover, it is more than likely that the subjects shaped their answers to fit their own narratives or beliefs, even in a response that was seemingly objective and neutral. I believe this challenge may in the case of my research be aggravated by the fact that I am myself an officer and therefore a colleague of the subject. Moreover, the fact that I provided bullet-points and topics up-front may have influenced the subject's responses toward that subject matter. It is hard to mediate these challenges, it would be dishonest of me to attempt to hide my military background and employ, and it would also be hard to avoid informing the subjects of the subject matter in question during the interview. Furthermore, the matter at hand is subject to interpretation by anyone, thus allowing the subject to project any desired narrative. I believe that my behaviour during the interviews and my emphasis in each interview that the project was self-funded and in no way affiliated with the NAF, established a sufficient sense of research independence for the subject to consider this as a non-military project. I also believe that I have obtained an enough sources to allow me to identify if and when my sources are projecting a personal belief or narrative. This occurred in all my interviews, most notably in General Diesen's case, where an agenda toward MDC is easily identified.

Another weakness of the method is one that is present in all qualitative research: the lack of larger, more measurable metrics for comparison. Through quantitative research I could have been able to gain a metric to compare how much effort, money or otherwise, Norway has put into either NORDEFCO or 'Smart Defence'. However, since my focus has been on the individual's experiences and thoughts on the processes involved in MDC in Norway, and not on such metrics, I consider it outside the scope of this thesis.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 105

Primary sources

My primary sources are as mentioned five current or former NAF or MoD employees. These are, with organisational affiliation, expertise and rank if applicable:

Name	Affiliation	Expertise	Rank
Sverre Diesen	Norwegian Defence Research Institute, former Chief of Defence	History and development of the NAF, NORDEFCO	General (ret.)
Sigurd Glærum	Norwegian Defence Research Institute, researcher	ADAPT project, Smart Defence	N/A
Inge Kampenes	Norwegian MoD, structure and capability development section	MDC, NORDEFCO	Colonel
Jon Meyer	Norwegian Defence Staff, Structure-section	Structural development of the NAF	Commander
Knut Are Seierstad	Norwegian MoD, Smart Defence coordinator	Smart Defence	Lieutenant Colonel

Sverre Diesen is arguably the one person that has had the most influence on the development of the Norwegian military since 2000. His role in the reforms in 2000, 2007, the Possibilities Study, and his efforts as Chief of Defence and as a military writer, have influenced the direction of the Norwegian Armed Forces in a significant way. His information provides insight into the strategic level of decision making in this field, his thinking and priorities at the time these events happened, and his personal thoughts on these developments.

Sigurd Glærum has extensive experience in military research from both NATO and the Norwegian Defence Research Institute. His observations from being the project manager on the only NATO Smart Defence project led by Norway, provides valuable insight into how multinational cooperation can work in practice on the tactical and operational level, and what factors affect the progress of such projects.

Inge Kampenes has been chair of the NORDEFCO 'Capabilities' cooperation area, as well as head of the Norwegian MoD's capabilities and structural planning

section. As such, Kampenes has extensive experience in the strategic processes surrounding the development of the Norwegian Armed Forces, as well as being arguably the foremost authority on NORDEFCO in Norway.

Jon Meyer has experience from the organisation section of the Norwegian Defence Staff, and has seen first-hand how multinational defence projects can materialise either bottom-up or top-down, and how they transition from the strategic to the operational and tactical level. Although he is not directly quoted or cited, his information provided insight into the relationship between the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces themselves.

Knut Are Seierstad was the first project manager for 'Smart Defence' in Norway, and exercised great influence on how the initiative was perceived in Norway, and what projects Norway participated in. Seierstad has great insight into the processes concerning multinational cooperation on an operational level, both in NATO and in Norway, and is arguably the foremost authority on 'Smart Defence' in Norway.

I believe that I have gained access to some of the most influential and knowledgeable people in Norway in this field. However, due to the nature of military affairs, not all officers and officials consider themselves in a position to express their opinions on such matters, causing them to decline to be interviewed. As such, there is a risk that others could have provided greater insight or contradicting information. This is a risk that is unfortunately difficult to negate.

In addition to my interviews, I have also utilised government documents and other reports that constitute primary source material. Examples of such material include Defence Studies, expert group reports, political group reports and more. Such documents are often referred to as 'grey literature' or 'white papers'. These documents are online, except the Defence Studies of 2000 and 2007, which are not readily available online, despite being unclassified. These studies were provided to me by the MoD. These studies and reports provide context to the information provided by my subjects. Whereas my subjects provide insight in the processes that take place, the written work shed light of the decisions and end result that follow such processes. Moreover, speeches and parliamentary

proceedings have also been used to shed light on how arguments for and against certain decisions were made, and what concerns were presented beforehand.

1 The Norwegian Armed Forces after the Cold War

In this chapter I will describe some of the challenges that the Norwegian Armed Forces faced after the end of the Cold War, and the efforts that were made to reform the Armed Forces to adjust to the changed post Cold War-world. I will also discuss some of the enduring characteristics of the Norwegian defence discourse, both in politics and elsewhere, that can greatly influence decision making and thinking. I will also discuss some of the more general developments regarding military technology that affect all Armed Forces, including Norway. These three areas, a changed world, discourse and tradition, as well as technological developments can be argued to play significant roles in shaping reform processes independently, even more so when they happen simultaneously.

During the Cold War, Norwegian policymakers considered the nation an importer of security through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in which it was a founding member. After NATO was formed in 1949 the Norwegian public was told that the country was politically committed towards mutual assistance in the Alliance, assistance that Norway was set to receive and not provide, in the event of war.²⁸ Despite this dependence on NATO, efforts were taken in order to preserve national freedom of action, as well as to avoid tension with the Soviet Union. This was achieved by implementing restrictions on several aspects of Allied (American) operations within Norwegian territory. The most notable restrictions were that Norway did not allow allies to establish bases within her borders or introduce nuclear weapons to her territory. Neither did she allow exercise activities in the areas closest to the Soviet Union.²⁹ The idea was that while a defensive alliance was necessary due to the risk of war, the country felt a need to minimise this risk and reassure her neighbour in the east that northern Norway would not become 'a springboard of aggression'.³⁰

Olav Riste states that Norway has a history of requiring special treatment, often in ways that allow the country to set requirements or demand commitments

²⁸ Riste, *'Norway's Foreign Relations'*, p. 207

²⁹ Ibid, pp. 214-215

³⁰ Ibid, p. 216

from other nations, while at the same time avoiding having others set such requirements for Norway.³¹ According to Riste, Norway's self-imposed restrictions represented a posture that had 'no lack of ambivalences', fuelled mainly by left-wing politicians sceptical towards American policies.³² This scepticism was not only directed at the U.S., as several incidents indicated that the Soviet Union conducted extensive intelligence operations and border violations on and over Norwegian territory, which was met with criticism in Norway.³³ You could say that this scepticism was more directed at great powers in general, echoing a traditional sentiment of fear of the great powers squabbles, evident as early as in the 19th century as seen in the priest Nicolai Wergeland's writings:

Here we would live, so was Heaven's Will, as the poor in his remote cabin, with limited means, content with less, enjoying the undisturbed Peace, without feeling the great's lusts, but also not a part of their cabals, quarrels and grief. [ed. transl.]³⁴

The idea of Norway being a recipient of security was also evident in that 'holding time' became the defining underlying principle governing the organisation of the Norwegian Armed Forces during the Cold War. The Armed Forces was meant to resist an attack from the Soviet Union long enough so that the country would not be lost until Allied reinforcements could arrive. Additionally, the idea was that Norway should be able to not only work with, but lead the allied forces supporting her. This required a large and credible command and control apparatus and logistical element that could command a much larger number of troops than were normally fielded by the NAF. This doctrine was dubbed an 'Invasion Defence', and was obviously almost entirely defensively oriented.³⁵

³¹ Olav Riste, 'Isolasjonisme og Stormaktsgarantiar', *Institute for Defence Studies, IFS no.3* (1991), p. 44

³² Ibid, p. 214

³³ Rolf Tamnes and Knut Eriksen, '*Norge og NATO under den kalde krigen*', book chapter published online, <http://www.atlanterhavskomiteen.no/files/atlanterhavskomiteen.no/Tema/50aar/1a.htm>, accessed 30 September 2015

³⁴ Nicolai Wergeland, in Riste, '*Isolasjonisme og Stormaktsgarantiar*', p. 8

³⁵ Jacob Børresen et. al., '*Norsk Forsvarshistorie vol. 5*', (Bergen: Eide, 2004), p. 46

The opinions on what was the main purpose of the Armed Forces, along with what the position of Norway in the international community was, at least on the surface, a consensus-driven discourse. The phrase ‘there has long been an agreement on the main lines of Norwegian foreign policy [ed. transl.]’, or any equivalent, has been used often when discussing both foreign policy and defence policy.³⁶ As one group of scholars noted: ‘Respectable and serious political parties can disagree, but hardly in security policy and questions regarding the relationship to the U.S.. [ed. transl.]’³⁷ Samuel Huntington points out that such consensus may lead to a limited public debate regarding the issue at hand, an outcome that can certainly be argued to be seen in Norwegian defence discourse of the time, or lack thereof.³⁸ Calls for an increased interest in foreign policy or defence policy have been presented and then largely ignored, further confirming Huntington’s argument.³⁹ Because of this, the role of NATO and the purpose of the military has been almost a non-existent debate compared to other debates regarding the Norwegian public sector. Ståle Ulriksen argues that this consensus and limited debate create attitudes that over time will:

[B]ecome so incorporated, so institutionalised, that they will assume the form of ‘truths’ or axioms. If the gap between the defined requirements and what you are actually doing becomes too large, the basis of the consensus will disappear and you will have periods of turmoil, conflict, debate and creativity. [ed. transl.]⁴⁰

Olav Riste claims that although the outside framing, settings and labels on Norwegian security changed from non-aligned, through neutral, to aligned, the contents defined as the core element of Norway’s security political position have

³⁶ Atle Skjærstad, ‘Solid enighet om utenrikspolitikken’, *Bergens Tidende*, 4 April 2007, <http://www.bt.no/nyheter/utenriks/Solid-enighet-om-utenrikspolitikken-1839944.html>, accessed 7 July 2015. Christian-Marius Stryken et. al., ‘Politiske tvangstanker’, *Dagbladet*, 9 September 2005, <http://www.dagbladet.no/kultur/2005/09/09/442808.html>, accessed 7 July 2015. ‘Bred enighet om norsk utenrikspolitikk’, NRK, 16 October 2013, http://www.nrk.no/video/PS*127455, accessed 7 July 2015

³⁷ Stryken et. al., ‘Politiske tvangstanker’

³⁸ Samuel Huntington, ‘The two worlds of military policy’, in Ulriksen *‘Den norske forsvarstradisjonen’*, p. 21

³⁹ See statements from then Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre: ‘Vil ha mer debatt om norsk utenrikspolitikk’, *Dagen*, 2 September 2008, http://www.dagen.no/Innenriks/Vil_ha_mer_debatt_om_norsk_utenrikspolitikk-46315, accessed 7 July 2015. See also article by Ole Gunnar Skagestad, ‘Debatten som stilnet: Hva skal vi med forsvaret?’, *Minerva*, 23 August 2007, <http://www.minervanett.no/debatten-som-stilnet-hva-skal-vi-med-forsvaret/>, accessed 7 July 2015

⁴⁰ Ulriksen, *‘Den norske forsvarstradisjonen’*, p. 21

been ‘almost surprisingly stable’ [ed. transl.].⁴¹ This tradition for continuity in the discourse on military matter is important to note when analysing the rate of adoption of alternative strategies or viewpoints in military matters in Norway. Because this thesis will discuss an alternative strategy and method, multinational defence cooperation, and the Norwegian reactions to it, such a tradition and characteristic may be important, as it can represent a significant force in shaping the discourse over time.

This apparent consensus would most likely have been challenged when the Cold War ended and Norway was faced with massive changes in the prevailing world security order. The unification of Germany and the dissolution of its largest neighbour, the Soviet Union, made defence planning more challenging than during the Cold War. As soon as the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the rationale for defence spending was called into question, and many sought to use funds for other more benign purposes.⁴² In January 1990 the government commissioned a white paper that was to form the ‘main guiding principles’ of defence planning after 1993, as the guidelines for the current period were already established.⁴³ The resulting Defence White Paper 1990, led by former Prime Minister Kåre Willoch, established that Norway now needed to think more in the lines of quality over quantity, and shift toward a greater focus on northern Norway. This view was also reflected in the Chief of Defence’s (CHOD) Defence Study of 1991.⁴⁴ The changing mood regarding defence spending throughout Europe, and the evident need to rationalise the army resulted in a steady decline in defence spending throughout the 1990s. As seen in the Defence White Paper 2000, the 1998 budget was about 8% lower than that of 1990,⁴⁵ which gave the Armed Forces significantly less funds to work with considering the effects of eight years of inflation. The army was hit with the bulk of the reductions, with its

⁴¹ Riste, *‘Isolasjonisme og stormaktsgarantiar’*, p. 6

⁴² ‘La forsvaret få nullvekst’, *Aftenposten*, Morning Edition 10 January 1990, p. 6. See also: ‘Haugli vil ha forsvarspenger’, *Aftenposten*, Morning Edition 11 July 1990, p. 4

⁴³ ‘Defence White Paper 1990’, *Forsvarskommisjonen av 1990* http://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_digibok_2007102600053, accessed 6 September 2015, p.11

⁴⁴ Olav Riste, ‘Eit ’minimumsforsvar’ for Norge? – FK90 og spørsmålet om alliert assistanse’, *Institute for Defence Studies IFS Info No.5* (1992), p. 12

⁴⁵ ‘Defence White Paper 2000’, *Et Nytt Forsvar*, NOU 2000:20, (Oslo: Statens forvaltningstjeneste, 2000), p.7

mobilisation force reduced from approximately 180.000 to 100.000,⁴⁶ a 55% reduction. This was dramatic considering that most of the Armed Forces' equipment were obsolete already in the 1980s, and calls for increased rather than decreased investment had been voiced shortly before the end of the Cold War. In 1985, then Chief of Defence General Bull-Hansen published a report stating that in order to realise 'an adequate national defence' within the alliance, the Armed Forces needed a boost in defence spending of 7% annually.⁴⁷ Additionally, later reports indicated that of the 13 Brigades in the Army of 1990, only four could be sufficiently equipped for battle, indicating that almost 70% of the Army's contribution to the 'Invasion Defence' of 1990 did not have the means to fight.⁴⁸ Consequently, the state of the Army in 1990 meant that the money saved by cuts in troop numbers would likely not end up in the Army's budget, but rather be absorbed by subsequent budget cuts. This meant that when the budget cuts on the 1990s came, the NAF was already underfunded and underequipped.

The force reductions and budget cuts happened at the same time as the number of Norwegian commitments to international military operations, such as those in Lebanon, Kuwait, Bosnia and Kosovo, increased dramatically. This put further strain on the military in a period of rationalisation and reform.⁴⁹ Norway's experience in the Balkans illustrated the challenges that faced the Post-Cold War NAF: Deployments were slow, the ability to interoperate was inadequate, and specialised capabilities and materiel were scarce.⁵⁰ Further aggravating the issue was the significant reduction in annual NATO investment funds directed at Norway at the time, down from 1.25 billion NOK on average between 1985 and 1990, to a meagre ~350 million on average between 1994 and 1999.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Ibid p.10.

⁴⁷ Børresen et.al., '*Norsk forsvarshistorie*', p. 292

⁴⁸ Gunnar Nils Johnsen, Øyvind Mølmann and Erling Gunnar Wessel, 'Brigadenes Materiellbetingede Operativitet i Perioden 1990-95', *Norwegian Defence Research Establishment Report*, no. 5036 (1993), p. 19

⁴⁹ Ibid p.17.

⁵⁰ Per Pharø, 'Norge på Balkan 1990-1999: Lessons learned', *Institute for Defence Studies IFS Info*, no. 3 (2000), p. 8

⁵¹ 'Defence White Paper 2000', p. 17

These telling signs of a force in need of reform did not necessarily affect the state of consensus regarding foreign and defence policy, or create any debate resulting in reorientation. The budgets continued to drop, and further cuts were approved, and at the same time the command and logistical elements continued to increase.⁵² This effectively led to a continuation of the structure and concepts of the Cold War ‘Invasion Defence’, with large command and control elements able to lead allied troops. This tells us that Norway had not managed to effectively reorient herself despite the change in world order and the new demands placed on the NAF during the course of the 1990s. This is perhaps not surprising, given that the recommendations of the Defence White Paper of 1990 recommended a continuation of the ‘Invasion Defence’, and a focusing of the military to the north of Norway.⁵³ This focusing to the north represented in effect a ‘regional invasion defence [ed. transl.]’, that meant that the Armed Forces would defend one region at a time against a strategic assault. By adopting this modification of the old ‘Invasion Defence’, the NAF avoided to take into account that the traditional threat perception was inaccurate or obsolete.⁵⁴ According to Gen. Diesen, this led to an inability to properly implement changes that ‘would adapt the Armed Forces to a threat that was fundamentally *different* [ed. transl.]’.⁵⁵

In hindsight, it is apparent that the assumptions regarding Norway’s security during the Cold War did not fit the post-Cold War environment, and her insistence on keeping the ‘Invasion Defence’ concept aligned poorly with her increasing engagement in international operations. As one regional conflict replaced another, at the end of the 1990s Norway had been involved in most of them.⁵⁶ Although participation in international operations was fairly commonplace, the frequency of operations within a relatively short timeframe as we saw in the 1990s was not. Moreover, Norway was increasingly part of NATO and not UN-led operations, a departure from the pre-Cold War era where

⁵² Ulriksen, ‘*Den norske forsvarstradisjonen*’, p. 232

⁵³ Børresen et.al., ‘*Norsk forsvarshistorie*’, p. 315

⁵⁴ Sverre Diesen, ‘*Fornyelse eller forvitring – forsvaret mot 2020*’, (Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2011), p. 21

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Børresen et.al., ‘*Norsk forsvarshistorie*’, pp. 167-168

Norway participated primarily in operations with a UN mandate and leadership.⁵⁷ In 1999, changes in the new NATO strategic concept signified the importance of international operations, or 'out-of-area' operations as they were sometimes called. The concept included 'crisis management' as one of NATO's tasks, signifying the importance of international operations at the time. This inclusion of 'crisis management' was based on the premise that:

The security of the Alliance remains subject to a wide variety of military and non-military risks which are multi-directional and often difficult to predict. These risks include uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area and the possibility of regional crises at the periphery of the Alliance, which could evolve rapidly.⁵⁸

Given that such tasks would have to be solved 'case-by-case and by consensus',⁵⁹ and in accordance with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, it was no longer a requirement that every ally participated in NATO operations. This was a sharp contrast to the dominant idea of the traditional Cold War Article 5 operation, where saying no was not an option. Subsequently, since participation was no longer mandatory, any country's participation could arguably represent a metric for both the level of loyalty to the Alliance (or the U.S.), ability to fight, and willingness to take on risk. Despite the fact that Norway had argued against such endeavours during the Cold War, Norway became an active participant in out-of-area operations from the mid-1990s and onward.⁶⁰ In the book 'Norway in international operations' [ed. transl.], Janne Matlary explains that following the end of the Cold War, NATO operations became 'wars of choice' where participation 'in a way that was seen as useful in American eyes, is important'.⁶¹ The objective, according to Matlary, was to avoid marginalisation and to be seen as a participant willing to assume 'the burden of risk and loss' [ed. transl.].⁶² The assumption is that this was done with reciprocity in mind. 'Norway participated in Afghanistan in order to support a sense of solidarity in NATO that

⁵⁷ Petter Bjørge, 'Fra FN til NATO – Norske styrker som eksportvare?', *Militære Studier* 6/2014, (Oslo: Norwegian Defence University College, 2014), p. 77

⁵⁸ 'NATO Strategic Concept 1999', http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm, accessed 12 September 2015

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Børresen et.al., 'Norsk forsvarshistorie', p. 378

⁶¹ Heier et.al., 'Norge i internasjonale operasjoner', p. 69

⁶² Ibid., p. 70

would make it easier for the alliance to commit in the [High North] if necessary' [ed. transl].⁶³ Matlary draws on a quote by Hew Strachan in order to point out that such concerns of reciprocity in the relationship to the United States is not only a small-nation concern but also concerns greater powers:

[Great Britain is] not primarily in Afghanistan to address the developmental difficulties of the Afghans, nor to tackle the terrorist threats to the British homeland at source. Britain is in Afghanistan for the same reason it took part in the invasion in Iraq: The Anglo-American alliance is the corner-stone of British foreign and defence policy.⁶⁴

Matlary explains that this idea of reciprocity is not limited to Afghanistan but is true for the entire period following the end of the Cold War.⁶⁵ This strategy of participation as an investment in future security is arguably based in the world of Realpolitik, and does not match the stated political rationale for participation. According to politicians at the time, Norwegian participation in out of area operations was founded in a moral impetus for humanitarian intervention, effectively making military participation seem like an altruistic act of compassion far removed from the world of Realpolitik. According to Matlary, this was done because it eliminated 'opposition from the so-called left side of Norwegian politics. [ed. transl.]'⁶⁶ This idea of reciprocity and political horse-trading will be significant when discussing participation in multinational defence cooperation projects later on in the thesis.

Acknowledging that the reforms of the 1990s had not had the desired effect, made visible by at times lacklustre performance in international operations, the Ministry of Defence commissioned a new Defence White Paper in 1999 to review Norwegian defence policy once more. The report would provide directions for the new main course that would guide the evolution of the Armed Forces in the future.⁶⁷ The paper, titled 'A New Defence' acknowledged that the political

⁶³ Erik Bøifot, Master Thesis, '*Det norske militære engasjementet i Afghanistan – Idealisme eller egeninteresse?*', in Heier et.al., '*Norge i internasjonale operasjoner*', p. 72

⁶⁴ Hew Strachan, 'The Lost Meaning of Strategy', *Survival*, 47:3 p.54, in Heier et.al., '*Norge i internasjonale operasjoner*', p. 70

⁶⁵ Heier et.al., '*Norge i internasjonale operasjoner*', p. 73

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 75

⁶⁷ 'Defence White Paper 2000'

guidance and requirements put forth throughout the 1990s were consistently undercut by reduced funding.⁶⁸ Throughout the 1990s the NAF saw a steady decline in activity as a result of both the lack of funds and reduced numbers. By 1999 the number of conscripts that were trained were down to 50% of 1990-levels, and the number of exercises for the Home Guard was down to 25%, while the number of hours flown on military aircraft was down to 75%.⁶⁹ Paradoxically, the same period saw a steady increase in the number of senior ranking officers and corresponding wage expenditure.⁷⁰ Although the paper refrained from hyperbole when describing these developments, it used very strong words when describing the developments of the last decade, and the consequences of not immediately implementing new reforms:

The reform process of the 1990s have been by and large a failure, despite good intentions and high ambitions. Both the wage costs and the proliferation of military infrastructure are at the same level as at the end of the Cold War. The Armed Forces organisation is too large and daily operations consumes an ever increasing portion of available funds. [...] To counteract the growing disparities and develop a defence that is adapted to the current realities and future demands, is not a question of adjustment and rationalisation. It will require *radical reform*. [ed. transl.]⁷¹

Part of the necessity for reform was founded in a growing understanding that the new security climate of the post Cold War world was, in fact, fundamentally different. The days of Norway being an importer of security, and the Norwegian Armed Forces being constructed around the concept of ‘holding time’ were seemingly over. Given that the events of 11 September 2001 were only a year away, the paper described this acknowledgement in a surprisingly candid and foreboding way:

The restructuring of NATO also presents Norway with new demands and challenges. With the security trends in today’s Europe, NATO could in the future have to focus even less on situations and challenges that have traditionally been central to Norwegian security and defence policy. It is also possible that in the long run, NATO could become less significant and less able to solve the sum of the tasks it

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 10

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 12-14

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 10

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 26-27

has set out to accomplish, and that Norway may become marginalised in such a situation. [...] The development of NATO implies greater expectations of Norwegian participation in different types of military operations and activities outside her closest area in order to contribute toward facilitating peace and stability in a broader perspective. In addition is the expectation that Norway must, in a credible manner, be able to contribute to the traditional collective defence of the alliance and also assume a greater responsibility for her own security [ed. transl].⁷²

In 2000, then CHOD Sigurd Frisvold presented the new Defence Study of 2000 which, together with the Defence White Paper 2000, served as a milestone in the development of the post-Cold War Norwegian Armed Forces. Then Brigadier General Sverre Diesen led the study team. Diesen focused on an apparent disparity between the increasing number of tasks assigned to the military and the continued reduction in defence spending.⁷³ He argued that, contrary to previous studies that focused on the nations military requirements, the ‘overarching and limiting factor of [the Defence Study] is the economy’ [ed. transl].⁷⁴ Arguably, the most critical section of the document is where it discusses the strategic rationale of the NAF. It acknowledges that the previous strategic rationale was to defend a singular part of the country against an invader (the Soviet Union), until Norway’s allies were able to reinforce her. In contrast, the new security situation meant that such an invasion was unlikely, and the military would now have to respond more quickly to a more diverse range of crises. This meant that requirements governing what the NAF needed to be able to do would have to change accordingly. Limited funding would render Norway unable to develop such abilities, and if funding did not increase, more and more money would have to be diverted from investment and procurement to maintenance and operations, leading to entire structural elements being cut in order to balance the budget.⁷⁵

The Defence Study of 2000 recommended sweeping cuts in all branches of the military, especially the Army and Navy.⁷⁶ Reactions were immediate. An entry in

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ ‘Defence Study 2000’, *‘Forsvarssjefens forsvarsstudie 2000 – Sluttrapport’*, (Oslo: Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2000), p. 3-5

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 5

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 20

⁷⁶ Ibid, section 4.

the daily *Aftenposten* 1 November 2000, read: ‘Cuts suggested by Chief of Defence causes storm among employees’, with the article claiming that 14 different units would be removed from the Armed Forces following the recommendations of Defence Study 2000.⁷⁷ General Frisvold commented in the same article that a ‘niche defence is possible’, further indicating that the only way to balance the budget may be to specialise the military, adding fuel to the fire of his critics. Although the suggestions spurred a great deal of debate, it is interesting to note that critics never delved into the more fundamental elements of Norwegian policy, such as the relationship to and dependence on the U.S. Nor did they discuss possible alternatives that were better suited to the new requirements. Rather, the critics focused on the negative consequences of the suggested cuts for the NAF’s ability to solve its traditional mission, and why their own unit was invaluable in this respect.

Despite pointing to many of the same problems and challenges, the two studies were in some areas different. The most telling contrast between the Defence Study and the Defence White Paper was the Defence Study’s underlying premise that NATO would send reinforcements in the event of *crises* in addition to war. Three out of four scenario models reflected Cold War thinking in major ways, structuring the military in a way requiring it to be reinforced, regenerated or to act as part of an Allied operation.⁷⁸ Absent from the Defence Study was the possibility for increased use of multinational defence cooperation. The Defence White Paper touched on this briefly in its section on the ‘Nordic dimension’.⁷⁹ The paper states that there are several important factors that promote a more active policy of integration by Norway with regard to its Nordic neighbours, most notably shared interests, geography and threat perception could pave the way for cooperation in procurement and other areas. It even went so far as to suggest the possibility of multinational units in a Nordic framework. The fact that Sweden and Finland were not NATO countries, however, was seen as a major hindrance to further integration: ‘As long as the nations have differing

⁷⁷ Ole Magnus Rapp, ‘Forsvarssjefens kuttforslag høster storm hos ansatte’, *Aftenposten*, 1 November 2000, p. 2

⁷⁸ ‘Defence Study 2000’, p.3

⁷⁹ ‘Defence White Paper 2000, p. 45

connections to NATO and the EU, this will serve as a limiting factor for the continued development of this cooperation.’⁸⁰

The Defence White Paper further emphasises the importance of NATO and nurturing the relationship with the U.S., saying in line with the traditional perceptions of Norwegian security: ‘Membership in NATO is steadfast, and will for the foreseeable future remain the cornerstone of Norwegian security and defence policy.’⁸¹ Despite this emphasis, the paper does acknowledge that the importance of the EU for European security may increase if the U.S. shifts its attention elsewhere. Scholars noted that one conclusion that could be drawn from this was that we were witnessing an ‘enhanced europeanization of Norwegian security politics’.⁸² Following the accordant descriptions in Defence Study 2000 and the Defence White Paper 2000, of a military in dire need of funding and reform, the Norwegian parliament passed a budget increasing the defence budget by 2.5%, not counting special funding for operations abroad. The portion of funds allocated for investment alone was increased by 10.6%, which signified that it was generally accepted that the NAF needed significant modernisation.⁸³ The Minister of Defence at the time, Kristin Krohn Devold, expressed this understanding when interviewed about the proposed changes:

The military faces large and important tasks as it adapts to tomorrows threat scenario, and this is reflected in the newly passed budget. The focus is on modernising the military so that we can be safe in the future also. [ed. transl.]⁸⁴

Despite the budget bump, the other changes proposed by administration did not fare as well. When the proposition reached Parliament, the majority in Parliament voted to modify it to keep many of the structural elements that were suggested disbanded. One opposition party went so far as to accuse the administration of wanting to ‘raze’ the NAF, calling the other parties to rally in

⁸⁰ Ibid, p.46

⁸¹ Ibid, p.48

⁸² Bjørn Olav Knutsen, ‘The Nordic Dimension in the Evolving European Security Structure and the Role of Norway’, *The Institute for Security Studies Western European Union* (2000), p.27

⁸³ ‘Forsvarsbudsjettet 2002’, Press release 50/2001, (Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Defence, Oslo.

⁸⁴ ‘Forsikringer om et forsvarlig forsvar’, *Aftenposten*, 14 December 2001, p.13.

support of a modification to the proposal.⁸⁵ The resulting compromise focused mainly on the Navy, but also the Home Guard, the mainstay of the old 'Invasion Defence' was maintained at current numbers.⁸⁶ It is not clear whether the politicians were motivated by tradition or Cold War thinking, or if the compromise was simply a political horse trade. Notwithstanding, the studies of 2000 suggested that the NAF was in a state of crisis, the reforms that were proposed were in the end not implemented due to lack of political will. This meant that the NAF would have to maintain a larger force than it really wanted.

In the years following the compromise, from 2003 to 2005, the military leadership faced scandals and criticisms calling into question how the military spent its money. The Office of the Auditor General rejected the military's accounts for the fiscal year of 2003, and in a press release the office explained that the military 'lacked internal control' and 'violated existing regulation'.⁸⁷ In 2004, the Norwegian military spent approximately 1 Billion Norwegian Kroner (NOK) more than they were allocated, causing media outcry. The daily newspaper 'Dagbladet' wrote:

The military is heading toward a gigantic budget bust of 1 Billion Kroner for 2004. The Ministry of Defence and the Defence Staff is working around the clock to confirm the numbers. [ed. transl.]⁸⁸

The MoD responded quickly and produced two significant publications in 2005 and 2006 describing immediate action,⁸⁹ adding descriptions of the economic control process in the organisation.⁹⁰ Additionally, measures to increase cost-

⁸⁵ 'Høyre: Regjeringen vil rasere forsvaret', *Aftenposten*, 5 May 2001, <http://tux1.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/d208309.htm>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁶ 'Fornøyd forsvarsminister', *NRK*, 11 June 2001, <http://www.nrk.no/norge/fornoyd-forsvarsminister-1.500458>, accessed 30 September 2015

⁸⁷ 'Riksrevisjonens samlede merknader til statens regnskaper for 2003 - Dokument nr. 1 (2004-2005)', https://www.riksrevisjonen.no/presserom/Pressemeldinger/Sider/Pressemelding_Dok_1_2004_2005.aspx, accessed 6 November 2014

⁸⁸ 'Milliardsprekk i Forsvaret', *Dagbladet*, 18 January 2005, <http://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/2005/01/18/420611.html>, accessed 6 November 2014

⁸⁹ St.meld. nr. 29 (2004-2005), 'Om merforbruket på forsvarsbudsjettet i 2004', Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 8 April 2005, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/e4c37c1cc5844c77810f3fcc0dd5383e/no/pdfs/stm200420050029000dddpdfs.pdf>, accessed 12 September 2015

⁹⁰ St.meld. nr. 10 (2005-2006), 'Om økonomisk styring i Forsvaret', Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 7 April 2006,

effectiveness to the order of NOK 1.4 billion was also initiated.⁹¹ One could say that this situation mirrored Ulriksen's argument that when the gap between requirements and practice becomes too great, turmoil ensues. The attention directed at the military at the turn of the millennium can certainly be characterised as turmoil. However, the bulk of the attention concerned mismanagement of funds, despite the fact that Parliament passed a military organisation larger than the military wanted. The situation indicated quite clearly that the process of reform was a painful one.

As we have seen, the reform of the Norwegian Armed Forces from 1990 to 2005 had been considerable and ineffective at the same time. When the Cold War ended, the Norwegian Armed Forces had for years required significant investments in order to be able to field an effective 'Invasion Defence', which would be the Norwegian response to a major conflict in during the Cold War. In the period, there were two major reform cycles, one in 1990-91 and one in 2000. In 1990, the old 'Invasion Defence' concept was largely continued, despite the fact that the effects of the end of the Cold War, and despite the indications that the Armed Forces were unable to field the force required of the concept. Budget cuts and rationalisation efforts were proposed and implemented, and at the same time, the Armed Forces had to field troops for various international operations, that put even more strain on the military. Consequently, problems compounded. In 2000, two studies pointed out that the NAF was significantly underfunded, and that the old 'Invasion Defence' was no longer a suitable concept for Norwegian needs.

The 1990 reform retained old concepts that were arguably outdated, leading to reduced force numbers, discontinued bases and structural elements, but no fundamental discussion on what threats existed or how to counter them. The 2000 reform attempted to correct some of the imbalance between funding and ambition, but although the military was modernised, it wasn't really reformed,⁹² and reforms were only partially implemented. The demands on the NAF mounted

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/5d3b111a93bc4d2da7f81d25fe276820/no/pdfs/stm200520060010000dddpdfs.pdf>, accessed 12 September 2015

⁹¹ Sverre Diesen, *speech in Oslo Military Society*, 28 November 2005, http://www.oslomilsamfund.no/oms_arkiv/2005/2005-11-28-Fsjef.pdf, accessed 8 July 2015

⁹² Ulriksen, 'Den norske forsvarstradisjonen', p. 266

after the first years of the new millennium, and trying to balance the budget brought about huge challenges, as seen in 2004. Furthermore, the enduring role of NATO and Norway's relationship with the United States was not revisited, giving the process an even greater sense of a purposeful continuation of the existing order, rather than significant change. This continuation can perhaps be a result of the development of an axiom regarding how the NAF should be structured, and what threat it was supposed to face. This axiom dictated that the Armed Forces had to be as large as possible in order to counter an invasion from Russia. At the same time, the Armed Forces would participate in international operations so as to be seen as a loyal ally, worthy of future support should she need it. The fact that the events of the 1990s occurred with little or no debate, strengthens this perspective. Especially in the political opposition, the lack of willingness to depart from the old concepts most likely contributed to the reform cycle of 2000 being significantly hampered.

When Sverre Diesen was appointed General and Chief of Defence in December 2004, the Ministry appointed not only an officer but a published writer and military theorist,⁹³ with his own ideas of what the main challenges of the Armed Forces were, and how to tackle them. Gen. Diesen has described his thinking in his book *Fornyelse eller forvitring: Forsvaret mot 2020*.⁹⁴ Gen. Diesen felt that the reforms that were carried out after the end of the Cold War failed to succeed in two areas: Firstly, the process did not sufficiently take into account the multifaceted effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In a speech in Oslo Military Society in November 2005, the general was very critical of what he regarded as:

[T]he highly simplified understanding that one can see on occasion in the military debate, namely that the difference between the old threat of invasion and the current situation is that the conventional threat today is of the same character as before, only with a decreased likelihood. [ed. transl]⁹⁵

⁹³ Diesen published the book 'Militær strategi' (Military Strategy) in 2003, and was therefore a published writer on military affairs when he became CHOD in 2005

⁹⁴ Sverre Diesen, 'Fornyelse eller forvitring'

⁹⁵ Sverre Diesen, 'speech in Oslo Military Society'

According to Gen. Diesen this practice contributed greatly to a military organisation that was too large, and he accused the administration, and Parliament, of not assuming responsibility for their actions. In his mind, if the government avoided implementing cuts suggested by officers and experts, they would have to compensate by allocating money to fill the gap that they had created.⁹⁶ This did not happen, effectively ignoring the warnings of Defence Study 2000. Moreover, Gen. Diesen believed that certain trends in the development of military technology that applied to all nations, created challenges for any Armed Forces that had seen their troop numbers and structures reduced. The trend was the technology-driven rise in cost of military materiel, and the consequence was critical mass. These issues shaped Gen. Diesen's thinking when he assumed office, I will explain them below.

Rising investment cost of military technology – 'Techflation'

With the implementation of computers and ever-increasing technological sophistication into even the most mundane of military hardware, the cost of such hardware has increased dramatically during the course of a few decades. An obviously exaggerated way of demonstrating this is Norman Augustine's 16th law. This law states rather absurdly that if you extend the upward trend in procurement cost of combat aircraft, in 2054 the entire U.S. military budget will be sufficient to buy one aircraft. And as he says humorously:

This aircraft will have to be shared by the Air Force and Navy three and a half days per week, except for leap year, when it will be made available for the Marines for the extra day.⁹⁷

Mr Augustine's laws may be written tongue-in-cheek, but he does have the numbers to back it up, drawing a line from the Kitty Hawk all the way to the F-15 Eagle and the F-16 Fighting Falcon.⁹⁸ The most recent examples of combat aircraft like the F-22 Raptor, which has an estimated procurement cost per

⁹⁶ Diesen, 'Fornyelse eller forvitring', pp. 29-31

⁹⁷ Martin Edmonds, 'Augustine's Laws: Norman Augustine', *Defence & Security Analysis*, 21: 1 (2005), pp. 111-114

⁹⁸ Ibid.

aircraft of almost \$370 million fits nicely into such projections.⁹⁹ The problem extends not only to the tip-of-the spear type of equipment such as combat aircraft, submarines or aircraft carriers. The rising cost is for all types of equipment. A contemporary example of this trend is that the United Kingdom is estimated to spend 4% more in total on equipment in 2015 compared to 2014, which is a massive increase in a single year.¹⁰⁰ The pace of technological development also means that state-of-the-art equipment purchased today will become surpassed by new and vastly improved equipment in a much shorter span of time than similar equipment 50 years ago.

This rising cost of military equipment is an interesting divergence from non-military technology, which has seen the same amount of technological development but nowhere near the same increase in cost. This may be attributed to the fact that military technology is often bespoke, and produced in relatively small quantities. This was less of a problem during the Cold War when cost was secondary to performance, now we see a very different picture.¹⁰¹ Because of the rise in cost, maintaining the same number of combat aircraft, to use that as an example, becomes impossible. For most Armed Forces, the solution is to cut down the number so that cost parity is achieved,¹⁰² which leads to a new problem all in itself: Critical mass.

Imbalanced tooth-to-tail ratio and the problem of critical mass

Tooth-to-tail ratio is an expression that has been increasingly popular in recent years. In short the expression relates to the ratio of combat vs. non-combat personnel in the armed forces, discriminating very distinctly which type of troop belongs in the combat or non-combat category.¹⁰³ Typically the non-combat category has been comprised of logistical functions such as transport, food, housing and similar support structures, while the combat category has been

⁹⁹ Jeremiah Gertler, 'Air Force F-22 Fighter Program, *Congressional Research Service* 7-5700, (2013), p. 9

¹⁰⁰ Sam Jones, 'Mounting Military Equipment Costs Put UK Troop Numbers in Peril', *The Financial Times*, 13 January 2015

¹⁰¹ 'Defence Spending in a Time of Austerity', *The Economist*, Briefing section, 26 August 2010

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ John J. McGrath, 'The Other End of the Spear: The Tooth-to-Tail Ratio (T3R)', *The Long War Series Occasional Paper*, no. 23 (2007), p. 2

comprised of any unit tasked with fighting the enemy. The debate is regularly centred on how many non-combatants you have to have to put one combatant into combat, and some also include the number of civilians employed by the military.¹⁰⁴

This ratio can be used by militaries as a measurement of combat effectiveness if one accepts the premise that more tooth equals more combat effectiveness. If one nation needs 20 non-combatants to field one troop, and another needs only 10, you can say that the latter is more effective at fielding troops, as it has a tooth-to-tail ratio of 1:10 versus the former's 1:20. Now as nations attempt to be more effective, they try to reduce the amount of 'tail' required to conduct operations. This can involve trimming down the 'fluff' of support operations, rendering only the most important aspects of support operations left.¹⁰⁵ The term is not unproblematic. Critics have called the term 'archaic' and 'blatantly misused' because the term oversimplifies a complex organisation into only two parts, leaving too much room for discussion about what actually constitutes teeth and tail.¹⁰⁶ Because of the steadily decreasing defence budget allocations after the Cold War, nations like Norway have been forced to cut much of their combat force, or 'tooth', in addition to the support structures that accompany them.

From a tooth-to-tail standpoint, scaling down combat and non-combat troops equally makes no difference. If you remove one non-combatant for every combatant the ratio remains the same. However, if you continue scaling back, even if you scale back 1:1, you will eventually encounter the issue of critical mass. Critical mass means you cannot reduce the size of your forces, be it a single capability or a whole branch, infinitely without having to get rid of it all together. Eventually, you will reach the minimum level of support structures required to field even a single troop. As Diesen points out:

The military, as any other large organisation, cannot be scaled down all the way to zero, and still retain a proportion of its strength and

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 4

¹⁰⁵ Doug Webster, 'Transforming Cost Improvement', *Armed Forces Comptroller*, winter, (2006), p. 48

¹⁰⁶ Mrinal Suman, 'Teeth to Tail Ratio: An Archaic Concept', *Indian Defence Review*, Vol. 21, Issue 4 (2006), p. 71

firepower. It is not as if a military which is 10% of what it used to be retains 10% of its effectiveness. On the contrary, the reality is that when your forces drop below a certain minimum volume, the effectiveness of your force structure is reduced dramatically and the unit cost of each capability increases almost exponentially. The reason for the increasing unit cost is the fact that your support functions cannot be reduced at the same rate as the number of weapon systems and platforms, consequently the cost of support and logistics make up and increasing part of the total, hence the sharp increase in unit costs as the number of units of each capability dwindle [ed. transl.]¹⁰⁷

The key word here is *base cost*. The fact that any capability carries with it a base cost no matter how many units of each capability you possess. This issue presents itself both when you are trying to improve your tooth-to-tail ratio, and when you are trying to reduce cost by scaling down the size of your defence structure as a whole. You reach a point where you cannot remove any more support structures without rendering the entire capability ineffective due to lack of support. Eventually the process also makes little sense in an economic standpoint due to the fact of the inevitable mounting per-unit cost.

In order to bring about potential solutions to these problems, General Diesen initiated two major studies that I will describe more closely in the next chapter. However, it is useful to keep in mind General Diesen's goals for the process he was about to undertake: 1) Avoid having Parliament passing a larger force than it was financing. This meant that the Armed Forces would have to be able to maintain and renew the force with the passed budget. 2) Ensure that defence budgets grew in such a way that it maintained a stable purchasing power for the Armed Forces. This to account for cost developments in what Diesen calls the 'special' defence market, which refers to the phenomenon of 'techflation' that I have described above. 3) Create an acceptance among politicians for a more profound and peremptory defence cooperation with other small and medium sized countries.¹⁰⁸ As my thesis is centred around MDC I will look at Diesens two studies, and the events that followed them, with MDC in mind.

¹⁰⁷ Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

¹⁰⁸ Diesen, 'Fornyelse eller forvitring', p. 32-34

2 Nordic Defence Cooperation

In this chapter I will describe the NORDEFCO framework, its origin, inner workings and how Norway has approached the framework. I will discuss whether or not the framework is the most comprehensive cooperation effort among the Nordic militaries to date, and if it really represents a departure from the previous initiatives that were prevailing in the Cold War and 1990s. I will try to detail the ambitions of the framework, and the underlying premises that motivated its founders. I will also describe some of its challenges and some of its successes, which can tell us something about the dynamics between the nations involved. Furthermore, I will discuss Norway's goals and ambitions for the framework, both in government documents, behaviour in the framework, and ambitions voiced by high-level politicians. My goal is to give a clear presentation of what NORDEFCO is, what motivated its foundation, and how Norway approaches NORDEFCO.

Nordic cooperation before NORDEFCO

Nordic cooperation, not only in defence, has faced numerous challenges since World War II. As Riste noted in his work on Norway's Foreign Relations:

Nordic cooperation had a built-in advantage due to geographic nearness, strong cultural affinities, and very similar languages, and a number of limited cooperative ventures saw the light of day under the aegis of the Nordic Council. But attempts to go beyond practical collaboration to schemes that smacked of integration tended to awaken ghosts from past history, such as Sweden's leadership aspirations, or Norway's fear of being dominated by her erstwhile union partners.¹⁰⁹

In addition to such fears and aspirations, the Nordic countries were very much a part of the larger state of play in the Cold War. This limited their room to manoeuvre and rendered them with 'little choice during the Cold War years but to accept the policy consequences of being part of the East-West divide.'¹¹⁰ However, the topic of a Scandinavian or Nordic alliance surfaced both after

¹⁰⁹ Riste, *'Norway's Foreign Relations'*, pp. 237-238

¹¹⁰ Clive Archer, 'Still Nordic After All These Years: Nordic Security in the Post-Cold War Period', *Security Dialogue*, 36 (2005), pp. 397-401

World War II and after the end of the Cold War, and major powers such as Great Britain entertained the notion on both occasions.¹¹¹ To explain why any such arrangements failed to materialise would be a thesis in an of itself, but as Alyson Bailes indicates for the post World War II arrangement, it was clear that ‘the Swedish square peg simply would not fit in the round hole to let the Nordic pact materialize’.¹¹²

When the Soviet Union crumbled, so did the taboo on discussing foreign policy in the Nordic Council.¹¹³ However, it soon became evident that the countries still lacked the ability to pull in the same direction.¹¹⁴ The list of initiatives that were launched during the course of the nineties is long, and most were met with scepticism in the Norwegian military establishment. Initiatives such as the ‘Stand-By High Readiness Brigade’ (SHIRBRIG)¹¹⁵ and the ‘Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support’ (NORDCAPS)¹¹⁶, exemplify how the differing priorities and allegiances of the Nordic countries hamper collective effort.¹¹⁷ A later foreign minister joint article, published in a Swedish daily in 2010, noted that Nordic cooperation, despite enjoying a high degree of consensus regarding initiatives that affect the Nordic region ‘is characterised by good intentions, not concrete action [ed. transl.]’.¹¹⁸ Norwegian researcher Håkon Lunde Saxi attributes this admission of inaction to the fact that while the Nordic countries aspire towards cooperation in ‘high politics’, historically they have seen a much greater degree of success in cooperating in ‘low politics’, areas such as labour migration and cultural exchange.¹¹⁹ While the results of Nordic military cooperation undercut its ambition, some progress was made

¹¹¹ Alyson J. K. Bailes, ‘The Nordic Countries From War to Cold War – and Today’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 37 (2012), pp. 156-163.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Saxi, ‘Nordic Defence Cooperation’, p. 16

¹¹⁴ Børresen et. al., ‘*Norsk Forsvarshistorie*’, p. 215

¹¹⁵ ‘SHIRBRIG: Ready to Deploy’, *United Nations webpage*, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/publications/yir/2006/shirbrig.htm>, accessed 25 March 2015

¹¹⁶ ‘NORDCAPS MoU between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden’, signed 24 April 2002, <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/NORDCAPS---MOU-between-Denmark-Finland-Norway-and-Sweden/id419404>, accessed 25 March 2015

¹¹⁷ Børresen et. al., ‘*Norsk forsvarshistorie*’, p. 216

¹¹⁸ Lene Espersen et. al., ‘Stärk Relationerna Mellan Norden och Baltikum’, *Sydsvenskan*, 10 March 2010, <http://www.sydsvenskan.se/opinion/aktuella-fragor/stark-relationerna-mellan-norden-och-baltikum>, accessed 22 March 2015

¹¹⁹ Saxi, ‘Nordic Defence Cooperation’, p. 12

during the course of the 1990s, attributed to Sweden's involvement in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative, as well as the Nordic countries participating in ever more direct action in various international operations in former Yugoslavia.¹²⁰

Although the Nordic dimension was increasingly present in Norwegian policy and military operations during the course of the 1990s and past the turn of the century, the focus for both the Norwegian Armed Forces themselves and the broader Norwegian public was not centred on such cooperation as a major way of reforming the Armed Forces. When General Sverre Diesen became CHOD, he brought the idea to the forefront of the discussion, primarily through two studies, the Possibilities Study of 2007 and the Defence Study of 2007.

The Possibilities Study

In the fall of 2006, Gen. Diesen, along with his counterpart in Sweden Håkan Syrén, commissioned a study to 'explore the possibilities for developing mutually beneficial cooperation along the entire breadth of the Swedish and Norwegian military structure.'¹²¹ The study was completed in August 2007, and contained a large number of specific suggestions for cooperation between the two countries. According to Diesen, the idea of carrying out this study with Sweden was founded simply in the fact that the two countries were of comparable size and therefore experienced many of the same problems.¹²² The study, dubbed 'Mulighetsstudien' (Possibilities Study), gave a sense of urgency to the implementation of MDC by stating that:

[L]imited economic resources and transnational security challenges make multinational defence cooperation an imperative to securing a long-term balance between tasks and economy for the defence powers. [ed. transl.]¹²³

¹²⁰ Børresen et. al., *'Norsk forsvarshistorie'*, pp. 211-217

¹²¹ 'Possibilities Study', preface.

¹²² Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

¹²³ 'Possibilities Study', preface.

With such a starting point, it is obvious that this study would not discuss *whether* there were any avenues for cooperation, but rather *which ones* the two countries should focus on.

The study was military-oriented in that it focused on specific capabilities, specific materiel and specific elements of military short and long-term planning for the two countries. One of its most important premises was that the process of rationalising the Armed Forces has progressed to a point where ‘several structural elements are approaching critical mass [ed. transl.]’.¹²⁴ To alleviate the problems relating to critical mass, the Possibilities Study indicated that international cooperation could be one method of mitigating the critical mass problem. The study focused on select primary areas for cooperation for each branch of the military:¹²⁵

Army

- 1) Joint training of specialists
- 2) Joint procurement, updates and renovation of materiel
 - a. Joint procurement of Archer artillery and Combat Vehicle 90
- 3) Joint force for use in international operations
 - a. This included a possible joint high-readiness force

Navy

- 1) Joint procurement of submarines
 - a. This included coordinating the timing for procurement and also the type of boat
- 2) Joint minesweeping capability
- 3) Joint use of logistics vessels
 - a. This included the possibility of joint procurement in the future
- 4) Joint exchange of sea surveillance information

Air Force

- 1) Joint use of C-130 Hercules
 - a. Establishment of a joint main air base for the aircraft

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 2

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 10-22

- 2) Cooperation on NH-90 Transport helicopter
 - a. Coordination of logistical support
 - b. Colocation of helicopters
- 3) Joint air exercises and joint use of national airspace
- 4) Joint exchange of air surveillance information
 - a. This required approval from NATO, but the study suggested that joint training of personnel could be carried out regardless

The study also contained suggestions for cooperation on several projects of a lesser degree of intricacy and political flammability, such as higher education, R&D, gender issues and more.¹²⁶ The sheer amount of suggestions for integration in the study is surprising, and a large portion of the primary areas of cooperation included suggestions of colocation of forces, integration of logistical elements and coordinated long-term planning for the entire range of materiel.

Defence Study of 2007

Gen. Diesen filed the Defence Study 2007 in November 2007,¹²⁷ just three months after the Possibilities Study. Traces of the three goals that Gen. Diesen had set out to achieve were obvious already in the first few paragraphs of the study's end report. Here, the report proclaimed the definitive death of the old 'Invasion Defence', and detailed how this was necessary due to the fact that the old structure would be 'a less than rational response to today's security challenges'.¹²⁸ The importance of Norway's ability to participate in NATO-operations was also highlighted early on, furthering the argument that the old preoccupation with quantity over quality had to be reversed.¹²⁹ In order to achieve the economic goals that Gen. Diesen outlined, referred to in the report

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 22-32

¹²⁷ 'Forsvarssjefen overleverte Forsvarsstudie 07', *Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence webpage*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/forsvarssjefen-overleverte-forsvarsstudie/id488524/>, accessed 7 July 2015

¹²⁸ 'Defence Study 2007', 'Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2007 – Sluttrapport', http://bfo.no/images/uploads/dokumenter/FS07_komplett_version.pdf, accessed 7 July 2015, p. 1

¹²⁹ Ibid.

as ‘long-term financial balance’,¹³⁰ the report stated that the following structural measures would have to be completed:

- A significant rationalisation of the base structure and concentration of the Armed Forces in fewer places
- An extensive commitment to multinational cooperation, especially in logistics, training and exercises and support elements
- A necessary reduction of combat units by cutting the least critical or important elements
- Development and reinforcement of the combat units that are especially important and valuable
- Maximum exploitation of the Armed Forces’ materiel by allowing fully trained (read: not conscripts) troops man the equipment¹³¹

On the security situation and threat environment, the study devoted a large section to explaining exactly what types of conflicts should be defining the structure of the Armed Forces, based on what it regarded as the ‘power and ‘Realpolitikal’ state of affairs in our part of Europe’ [ed. transl.].¹³² The underlying premise that the study sought to establish was that the Armed Forces should be structured to ‘secure a capacity for solving the minimum of tasks that a sovereign state should be able to solve without allied help [ed. transl.]’¹³³ This would act as a deterrent, dissuading states wanting to use force to impose their will on Norway. If Norway was able to achieve this minimum level, the idea was that any aggressor would have to use such a great degree of force to achieve its goals, that the ensuing situation would most likely be severe enough to warrant an allied response.¹³⁴ This focus on the capability for independent operations was a departure from the thinking behind the ‘Invasion Defence’, or of participation in out-of-area operations as a means to ensure reciprocity, where the

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ All bullet-points are from ‘Defence Study 2007, p. 5

¹³² Ibid., p. 4

¹³³ Ibid., p. 5

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 6

responsibility for Norwegian security were firmly placed in allied hands. Moreover, the study discussed what form aggression toward Norway could assume in conflicts to come. The study claimed that, compared to the spearhead attack with a massive follow-on invasion from the Soviet Union that was expected during the Cold War, conflicts of the future would be ‘radically different’. Future conflicts would, according to the study, have the following characteristics:

1. The conflict would be the result of small, regional disagreements
2. There will be isolated and limited use of force from the aggressor in order to put pressure on the government to alter course in the matter
3. The operation (the response) will have to be carried out on short notice
4. Conquering and holding territory will not be an objective for any party
5. The conflict will primarily be limited to the air and sea domains¹³⁵

The study goes on to explain specific cuts and restructurings that would be necessary in order to create a force that could meet such a threat, focusing on standing rather than reserve or conscription-based units, and reducing or removing several structural elements, particularly the Home Guard.¹³⁶ Moreover, the study laid out a dramatic timeline of what would have to be done with the NAF given a flat budgetary development, only adjusting for inflation, until 2028. The conclusion stated dryly: ‘If must be pointed out that if a political decision is made to maintain the current budgetary level, one has, in reality, also decided to disband our military defence.’ [ed. transl.]¹³⁷ It is not hard to argue that this most likely was a scare-tactic to force the politicians to increase the budget.

The Defence Study 2007 mirrored the Possibilities Study with regard to the challenges of critical mass and multinational defence cooperation’s role in solving these challenges, as seen in the following quote:

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 7

¹³⁷ ‘Defence Study 2007’, p. 61

Most small and medium-sized countries are experiencing an increased pressure on the defence economy, resulting in smaller structural volume. Many countries are experiencing that the number of military capabilities in certain areas have been so significantly reduced, and that the size of some structural elements are approaching a level that is approaching critical mass. At the same time, a larger proportion of the force is being used in operations, resulting in increased attrition on personnel and materiel. [ed. transl.]¹³⁸

By pointing out that a sufficient depth and breadth of MDC was necessary to realise the potential of cooperation efforts, it seems likely that Gen. Diesen expected resistance in this area. Such a resistance is understandable given the Defence White Paper 2000's emphasis on sovereign freedom of action when engaged in MDC.¹³⁹ Defence Study 2007 recommended colligating the defence planning processes of Norway and Sweden based on the recommendations of the possibilities study, something that would almost certainly conflict with the desire for sovereign freedom of action. The reactions to Defence Study 2007 were vocal and in a familiar format. Newspaper articles in large types scolded Gen. Diesen for his suggested cuts, calling the study 'the Chief of Defence's death list'¹⁴⁰ and 'a gloomy read'.¹⁴¹ Others suggested that Gen. Diesen would end up making Norway's national defence 'history',¹⁴² due to the large number of cuts he suggested. As in debates of the past, the discussion in the major newspapers did not incorporate MDC or the role of security guarantees. As in 2000, most critics focused on the negative consequence for the NAF's ability to function in an 'Invasion Defence'-scenario.

The Defence Minister at the time, Espen Barth-Eide, did acknowledge the emphasis and potential that the Possibilities Study and Defence Study 2007 placed on MDC. In a speech in the Defence College in September 2007, just before the Defence Study was published, he pointed out that 'several projects currently outside the scope of national defence budgets could be realised

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 63

¹³⁹ 'Defence White Paper 2000', p. 59

¹⁴⁰ 'Forsvarssjefens dødsliste', *Folkebladet*, 15 September 2007, <http://www.folkebladet.no/meninger/leder/article108153.ece>, accessed 11 July 2015

¹⁴¹ 'Godtar ikke basenedleggelser', *Nettavisen*, 5 November 2007, <http://www.nettavisen.no/nyheter/innenriks/--godtar-ikke-basenedleggelser/1424816.html>, accessed 11 July 2015

¹⁴² 'Nasjonalt forsvar blir historie', *Aftenposten*, 20 October 2007, <http://www.aftenposten.no/iriks/--Nasjonalt-forsvar-brAblir-historie-6492921.html>, accessed 11 July 2015

jointly. At the same time, counter arguments of cooperation have been weakened.’ [ed. transl.]¹⁴³ This acknowledgement paved the way for the MDC initiatives to come.

The founding of NORDEF CO

In June 2008, the Nordic Foreign Ministers met in Luxembourg and agreed to commission a study to ‘look into how Nordic cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy can be developed over the next 10-15 years’.¹⁴⁴ They tasked former Norwegian Foreign Minister, Thorvald Stoltenberg, with conducting the study, which would be presented in February 2009.¹⁴⁵ The report, dubbed ‘The Stoltenberg Report’ presented 13 areas of cooperation that could include all the Nordic countries. The cooperation areas included maritime surveillance, joint military task forces and more.¹⁴⁶ While working on the report, Stoltenberg visited the various Nordic countries several times, and learned that the thoughts and ideas about the situation in the Nordic was by and large the same. All the Nordic nations wanted to strengthen Nordic cooperation as they found their interests and strategic position to be very similar. They also felt that because of the increasing of their role as producers and facilitators for the petroleum industry, the region had seen an increase in strategic importance.¹⁴⁷

The report suggested several purely military areas of cooperation that can be characterised as deep-level cooperation, mirroring the recommendations of the Defence Study 2007. Cooperation areas such as joint task forces and shared surveillance both require some degree of integration and mutual dependence that would, if implemented, represent a new direction for Norway. This is

¹⁴³ Espen Barth-Eide, ‘Utfordringer i norsk forsvarspolitik’, *speech at the Norwegian Defence College 17 September 2007*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/utfordringer-i-norsk-forsvarspolitik/-id481025/>, accessed 11 July 2015

¹⁴⁴ ‘Study on Nordic Cooperation in the Area of Foreign and Security Policy’, *Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs webpage*, <http://formin.finland.fi/public/?contentid=132656&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>, accessed 11 July 2015

¹⁴⁵ ‘Stoltenberg Report presented to Nordic foreign ministers’, https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/nordic_report/id545258/, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁴⁶ Thorvald Stoltenberg (ed.), *Nordisk Samarbeid om Utenrikgs- og Sikkerhetspolitikk*, (Oslo: Prime Minister’s Office, 2009), pp. 7-34

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5

especially so seeing as prior reports recommended against such concessions or dependencies.¹⁴⁸

Before Mr Stoltenberg submitted his report, the Nordic countries signed yet another Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding defence cooperation named 'Nordic Supportive Defence Structures' (NORDSUP) in the fall of 2008.¹⁴⁹ With NORDSUP, the governments wanted:

[T]o provide a framework for cooperation between the Participants in the field of capability development based on the principles of mutual interest, equality, reciprocity and sovereignty.¹⁵⁰

During this process, Gen. Diesen continued to put pressure on the politicians to get serious about Nordic cooperation. During a debate in Oslo, where the commanding officers of Finland, Sweden and Norway were all present, strong support for Nordic cooperation was voiced by all parties, and a clear message was given to the politicians from Gen. Diesen when he said: 'It is now time to demonstrate will.' [ed. transl.]¹⁵¹

Following the Stoltenberg Report, the Nordic governments came together in November of 2009, and signed an MoU for what would become the NORDEFCO framework.¹⁵² This effectively terminated the many and fragmented frameworks for Nordic defence cooperation, uniting them under the singular NORDEFCO umbrella. Although the Stoltenberg Report represented a significant nudge toward cooperation, there is a clear impression that the drive to create NORDEFCO was in a large part because of the Possibilities Study and the efforts of Gen. Diesen. Inge Kampenes, who has lead the capabilities area of cooperation in NORDEFCO, believes Gen. Diesen was very influential in this respect:

¹⁴⁸ 'Defence Study 2007', p. 43

¹⁴⁹ Saxi, 'Nordic Defence Cooperation', p. 18

¹⁵⁰ 'NORDSUP MoU between Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland', signed 13 November 2008, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/FD/Temadokumenter/MoU_Nordic-Support-Defence-Structures_netutgave.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁵¹ 'Et tett samordnet nordisk forsvar i framtiden?', <http://www.norden.org/en/news-and-events/news/et-tett-samordnet-nordisk-forsvar-i-framtiden>, accessed 12 July 2015

¹⁵² 'NORDEFCO MoU'

Diesen, in his period, was a very active force for cooperation as a solution. He was oriented toward the Nordics, and the driving factor in the development of NORDEFCO from NORDCAPS and NORDACS. It became something more because of his push. [ed. transl.]¹⁵³

The workings of the NORDEFCO framework

Intention

The stated intention of the framework was relatively ambitious, and changed little from 2009 to 2014. The NORDEFCO MoU of 2009 outlined goals for the collaboration, citing the desire for the framework to be ‘comprehensive’ and that it would ‘strive for optimum resource allocation’.¹⁵⁴ The first annual report from the framework went further, stating that its *raison d’être* was to ‘produce national military capabilities in a more cost-efficient way’.¹⁵⁵ Mirroring the 2010 report, version two of the ‘Guidelines for NORDEFCO military level operating procedures’ (GUNOP) from 2011 stated that the framework was to ‘strengthen the participant’s national defence’, and also ‘increase the quality in the production of operational capabilities’,¹⁵⁶ further emphasising that the objective was to produce capabilities in addition to facilitating cooperation. Later reports also repeated such statements, indicating that the intent has been in agreement since NORDEFCO’s foundation.¹⁵⁷ In addition to these military-level intentions, the Ministers of Defence published a statement in December 2013 outlining its vision for the framework toward 2020.¹⁵⁸ Although it did not contain any significantly new information, compared to the annual reports and the associated action plans, the statement did contain a desire to further integrate, exemplified by the following paragraph:

¹⁵³ Information from Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

¹⁵⁴ ‘NORDEFCO MoU’

¹⁵⁵ ‘NORDEFCO Annual Report 2010’, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fd/temadokumenter/nordefco_mcc-2010-rapport_del-1.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 4

¹⁵⁶ ‘Guidelines for NORDEFCO Military Level Operating Procedures’, (2011), http://www.nordefco.org/Files/110914_gunop.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015 p. 6

¹⁵⁷ ‘NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013’, <http://www.nordefco.org/files/NORDEFCO%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 6. See also ‘NORDEFCO MCC Action Plan 2015-2018’, http://www.nordefco.org/files/141211_NORDEF%20MCC%20AP2015-18_final.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, section 2.3

¹⁵⁸ ‘Nordic Defence Cooperation vision 2020’, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Cooperation-2020>, accessed 13 September 2015

By 2020 the Nordic countries will have deepened their capability cooperation with the aim to increase systems similarity, including armaments, interoperability and shared solutions to identified capability gaps and shortfalls. Possibilities for pooling of capabilities and resources will be actively sought and the principles created for Nordic Tactical Air Transport (NORTAT) will serve as an example also for other cooperation areas.¹⁵⁹

Although it makes no mention of integration specifically, the fact that system similarity and interoperability is emphasised indicates that the nations wanted to facilitate integration.

Inner workings

The NORDEFCO structure is divided into a political level and a military level. The political level is headed by the Ministers of Defence of all the Nordic countries, with a Policy Steering Committee as its managing body, with ministerial meetings twice a year.¹⁶⁰ The military level is headed by the Chiefs of Defence, with a Military Coordination Committee (MCC) as its managing body, comprised of flag officers appointed by the respective CHODs.¹⁶¹ Norway assumed the chair of the MCC in 2010; and the responsibility of chair has rotated annually among the nations.¹⁶² The MCC sets priorities and describes deliveries within the NORDEFCO framework through an Action Plan. This Action Plan is revised and published annually, however every Action Plan covers a period of four years. In addition to the Action Plan, the GUNOP describes guidelines for NORDEFCO military level operating procedures, and has been published for use within the framework.¹⁶³ Revised multiple times in the short lifespan of the framework, the 'GUNOP' details the framework all the way from the basic intention to principles for naming of activities.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ 'NORDEFCO Annual Report 2010' p. 6

¹⁶¹ 'NORDEFCO Annual Report 2012', <http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/NORDEFCO%20Annual%20Report%202012.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 4

¹⁶² 'NORDEFCO Annual Report 2010', p. 5

¹⁶³ 'NORDEFCO Annual Report 2010', p. 9

¹⁶⁴ 'Guidelines for NORDEFCO Military Level Operating Procedures', (2014), http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/140815_GUNOP-FINAL1.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 2

The MCC also oversees a Coordination Staff (CS), whose function is to support the MCC in conducting meetings on that level, functioning as an ‘essential link between the policy-level decision-making body and the MCC’.¹⁶⁵ The CS has several support groups to assist it in its work concerning select topics. These groups are focused on methodology, legal and technical questions.¹⁶⁶ CS also manages and supports five ‘Cooperation Areas’, abbreviated COPAs. The COPAs are responsible for ‘leading, managing and implementing the decisions made by the MCC’.¹⁶⁷ The five COPAs are:

1. Cooperation Area Capabilities (COPA CAPA)¹⁶⁸
 - a. COPA CAPA addresses the Nordic countries’ development plans and processes. Based on common needs, COPA CAPA identifies areas of mutual benefit with the intent of exploring the possibilities of reducing total costs and promoting operational effectiveness
2. Cooperation Area Human Resources & Education (COPA HR&E)
 - a. COPA HRE attempts to achieve an enhanced cooperation on military education within the Nordic countries, and facilitate the exchange of experiences between Nordic countries on policies and procedures in Human Resources & Education. The timeframe for the work is 1-10 years
3. Cooperation Area Training & Exercises (COPA TR&EX)
 - a. COPA TEX coordinates and harmonizes military training activities among the NORDEFECO countries and facilitates a combined and joint exercise plan for a continuation of five years
4. Cooperation Area Operations (COPA OPS)
 - a. COPA OPS is prepared to plan, coordinate and clarify force contribution, deployment/redeployment and logistics support to operations. In contrast to other COPAs, COPA OPS is event driven
5. Cooperation Area Armaments (COPA ARMA)
 - a. COPA ARMA is to explore the possibility of achieving financial, technical and/or industrial benefits for all the member countries within the field of acquisition and life cycle support

¹⁶⁵ ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2012’, p. 18, ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2013’, p. 24

¹⁶⁶ ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2012’, p. 18

¹⁶⁷ ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2011’, http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco_ar_lo-res.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 4

¹⁶⁸ All cooperation area descriptions are quoted from: ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report of 2014’, http://www.nordefco.org/Files/NORDEFECO_arsrapport_2014.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, pp. 16-38

All COPAs have their own COPA Management Group, which is comprised of subject matter experts for the various areas.¹⁶⁹ The goal of the organisation is to be a framework for cooperation rather than an organisational entity. Therefore, the regular chains of command assume responsibility for completing tasks and activities in the framework.¹⁷⁰ The framework divides its work into three separate sections: Studies, projects and implemented activities. The NORDEFECO organisation assumes responsibility for studies and projects that, when complete, are handed down to the chains of command for implementation. The studies focus on cost-benefit analyses, while projects serve to assess what needs to be done to implement suggestions for cooperation. Keeping the bureaucracy side of all these activities to a minimum is a goal for the framework,¹⁷¹ which ties into a desire for the process to remain lean and pragmatic.¹⁷²

Notable achievements

Cross-border training

Cross-border training (CBT) of combat aircraft was one of the earliest fruitions of Nordic cooperation that was lauded in NORDEFECO. Established already in its first operational year in 2010, CBT became one of the products of the framework that politicians turned to when referencing what NORDEFECO could bring to the table.¹⁷³ The CBT project grew from a bottom-up movement from the air wings' need for regular training with aircraft different from their own.¹⁷⁴ This was then 'pushed through NORDEFECO channels' in order to facilitate agreements.¹⁷⁵ Hailed as an initiative that is 'in the spirit of Nordic Defence Cooperation', the idea behind the CBT initiative is that the combined exercises are conducted with as little administration as possible, in any of the three countries air space, without

¹⁶⁹ 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2012', p. 4

¹⁷⁰ 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2010', p. 6

¹⁷¹ 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2011', p. 4

¹⁷² 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2012', pp. 5, 22

¹⁷³ Ine Eriksen Søreide, 'Speech at Nordic Defence Industry Seminar, Sundvolden, May 20th 2014', *speech by Defence Minister Søreide*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/nb/aktuelt/Speech-at-Nordic-Defence-Industry-Seminar-Sundvolden-May-20th-2014-/id760341/>, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

the need for diplomatic clearances in every instance.¹⁷⁶ The CBT system is divided into two geographic regions, CBT North and CBT South, where the northern region holds exercises for Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish aircraft, and the southern region holds exercises for Swedish and Danish aircraft.¹⁷⁷ The CBT has likely benefitted from the changes to European airspace structure that occurred in 2005 under the name 'Flexible Use of Airspace'. The changes were implemented by EUROCONTROL, the European governing agency for all air-traffic operations, requiring all nations to:

[E]stablish with neighbouring Member States one common set of standards for separation between civil and military flights for cross-border activities.¹⁷⁸

With such a requirement already in place, the road to the Nordic CBT initiative is likely to have been much smoother after 2005. This begs the question whether CBT came about because of NORDEFCO, or if it would have materialised anyway. This is a question that is difficult to answer, but because CBT was one of the first projects to reach fruition, it is likely that it was well underway before NORDEFCO was founded.

Nordic Cooperation on Tactical Air Transport (NORTAT)

This project, although it has not materialised completely, is also often brought up as an example of successful cooperation in the Nordic domain. In 2012, the Policy Steering Committee stated that:

Tactical air transport capabilities has the potential to be not only a flagship for NORDEFCO but also an icebreaker for other initiatives within the NORDEFCO family. At the defence Ministers' meeting in November in Skagen, the Ministers signed a 'letter of intent' declaring the determination to pursue an ambitious and close cooperation on Nordic tactical air transport, including pooling and sharing, common training and maintenance. This cooperation project exemplifies the fine potential for Nordic cooperation. It was initiated during the

¹⁷⁶ 'Nordisk forsvarssamarbeid gir gode resultater', *Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence webpage*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/nb/aktuelt/nordisk-forsvarssamarbeid-gir-gode-resul/id717886/>, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ 'EUROCONTROL Specifications for the application of the Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA)', <https://www.eurocontrol.int/sites/default/files/publication/files/20090110-fua-spec-v1.1.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015

Swedish chairmanship, Norway was lead nation, and the letter of intent was signed during the Danish chairmanship one year after initiation. Expected economic gains and increased operational effect are significant.¹⁷⁹

On the surface, this seems like a lofty goal, and the Letter of Intent can be seen as a milestone. However, the project is progressing relatively slowly. In 2014, the Norwegian Minister of Defence stated: ‘The Nordic Air Transport program, NORTAT, is generally progressing according to plan. On the operational side most of the milestones have been met.’¹⁸⁰ Despite achieving these milestones, the most tangible public result of NORTAT, in the span of four years, is the Danish-Norwegian deal on ‘Life Cycle Support’ for the maintenance of the C-130J Hercules transport aircraft. This deal yields savings of about 7%.¹⁸¹ Kampenes characterised this contract as ‘massive’, expressing that the 7% saved on maintenance was considered significant.¹⁸² Progress has yet to be made in areas of pooling and sharing or common training, and the maintenance deal still only contains two out of four countries in the framework, calling into question the ‘Nordic-ness’ of the endeavour.

Major roadblocks

Failed procurement of the ‘Archer’ self-propelled artillery

The NORDEFECO annual report of 2010 lauded the Swedish-Norwegian deal to jointly procure the Archer artillery system as an example of what could be done within the framework of Nordic cooperation.

The field artillery system Archer: A good example of system similarity, enabling significant savings and quality gains by common development, logistics and training. Calculations made by the Swedish Headquarters estimate savings in the region of 50 million Euros for each country, as an effect of sharing the burdens of development cost, acquisition and life cycle support. The future possible savings on

¹⁷⁹ ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2012’, p. 20

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 17

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 25

¹⁸² Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

common training, logistics, operations etc. are not brought into this calculation, and will come as extra bonuses.¹⁸³

The project was initially started in 2008, before the foundation of NORDEFECO, with a contract being signed in December 2008 for the development of the Archer system. The contract contained a Norwegian option to purchase 24 units.¹⁸⁴ For Norway, the Archer system was to replace the old M109 artillery system that is set to be phased out in 2020.¹⁸⁵ However, the deal encountered several issues that highlight the more general challenges facing such initiatives, which I will highlight later on. The deal was in the end terminated by the Norwegian Minister of Defence, stating in a press release that:

The government has concluded that the artillery system Archer will not fulfil the Armed Forces' needs within the available time, we are therefore withdrawing from the contract.¹⁸⁶

The MoD officially cited issues regarding delays in delivery, due to technical difficulties related to firing and ammunition handling, among other issues. The termination was a rather abrupt end to a long and very public project, that already had seen NOK 500 Million invested in by the Armed Forces. The debacle spurned significant media attention, but the fact that the money was wasted went largely without notice in Norway, apart from a MoD representative saying to the press: 'we'll see how much of these funds we can have returned [ed. trans]'.¹⁸⁷ In Sweden the failed deal received significantly more attention with newspaper articles calling the situation a 'political battle' between the two

¹⁸³ 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2010', p. 12

¹⁸⁴ 'St.Prop 1S (2009-2010)', *Proposition to the Storting from the Ministry of Defence on the 2010 defence budget*, https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/e0dc7a14380841c7bc469d3878d1b44d/no/pdfs/prp200920100001_fdddpdfs.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 28

¹⁸⁵ St.Prop 84S (2013-2014), *Proposition to the Storting from the Ministry of Defence on investments in the Norwegian Armed Forces*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/7ab74483a951457590003a414bb18edc/nno/pdfs/prp201320140084000dddpdfs.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015, p. 3

¹⁸⁶ 'Norge avslutter kontrakten om artillerisystemet Archer', *Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence Press Release*, 6 December 2013

¹⁸⁷ Jan Harald Thomassen, 'Forsvaret avslutter svenskehandel', *NRK Troms*, <http://www.nrk.no/troms/forsvaret-avlyser-svenskehandel-1.11402746>, accessed 13 September 2015

countries.¹⁸⁸ A Swedish politician attributed the failure to the fact that Norway was a NATO member with ‘other priorities than Nordic defence cooperation’.¹⁸⁹ The fact that a project that lasted over such a long period of time could result in a cancellation was an obvious setback for the framework.

National Defence Industry

In a general sense, the issue of protectionism in relation to national defence industry is one of the major issues to any defence cooperation enterprise, be it Nordic, NATO or otherwise. There are no politicians saying that NORDEFECO will benefit any national industry, they are focusing on the mantra of ‘optimum resource allocation’ and cost-effectiveness found in the NORDEFECO MoU. However, for the officials working directly on projects within the NORDEFECO framework, the story is different as they experience first-hand how the countries behave with regard to their industry:

Sweden has traditionally had a very strong connection to their defence industry. It’s hard for us to be a player in that relationship. The Swedish position tends to be more in the way of: ‘We have some on-going projects in Swedish industry, would you like to take part?’ Whereas our own position tends to be one of first deciding what our needs are, then finding partners to work with, before finally looking for suppliers that could respond to this need.¹⁹⁰

This represents a fundamental difference in approach and of goals for the interaction. There is an understandable disparity between the Norwegian and Swedish position. This disparity is based on the fact that Sweden has been a neutral country for so long, and has therefore had to build up a defence industry that covers the entire spectrum of military equipment, whereas Norway in comparison only has a niche industry.¹⁹¹ This asymmetry or disparity is one of the biggest issues facing the framework, especially for projects that are centred on Norway and Sweden. For Sweden to accept a situation of parity between the two

¹⁸⁸ Jonas Fröberg, ‘Norge vill förhandla sig ur artilleriprojekt’, *SvD Näringsliv*, http://www.svd.se/naringsliv/branscher/industri-och-fordon/norge-vill-forhandla-sig-ur-artilleriprojekt_8904690.svd, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁸⁹ ‘Ett bakslag för det nordiska samarbetet’, *Sveriges Radio*, <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=83&artikel=5726621#>, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁹⁰ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

¹⁹¹ Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

countries would be tantamount to accepting that Sweden would have to assume a greater burden than Norway,¹⁹² which is understandably not desirable.

Of course, Norway also wants her industry to benefit from deals made with other countries within any framework. In a speech at a logistics seminar in 2009, then Minister of Defence Anne Grete Strøm-Erichsen referenced a 2006 strategy that the Norwegian government produced for collaboration between the government and the industry, which had as one of three main goals to strengthen the ability for Norwegian industry to partake in international equipment collaboration. The Defence Minister was also quoted saying that she considered it ‘right and natural that procurement for the NAF resulted in contracts for Norwegian industry [ed. trans]’,¹⁹³ indicating that Norway did indeed consider such priorities in negotiations. However, there are no examples that I have been given access to that indicate that such considerations have led to deals being scrapped, indicating that this is a Swedish problem more than a Norwegian one.

Norway’s approach to Nordic cooperation

The Defence White Paper 2007 provides some degree of insight in the thoughts and ideas regarding MDC before the advent of NORDEFECO or ‘Smart Defence’. The report pointed out that Norwegian participation in various MDC initiatives was nothing new, and that Norway had participated in MDC through the NATO and UN organisations for decades.¹⁹⁴ The authors acknowledged the role of MDC as being:

[...] central to exploit the possibilities of closer cooperation with other countries within the full breadth of military matters, from development and procurement via education and exercises, to joint military capabilities and operations. [ed. transl.]¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Anne Grethe Strøm-Erichsen, ‘Fokus på logistikk’, *speech by Minister of Defence Anne Grethe Strøm-Erichsen*, 8 May 2009, <https://www.regjeringen.no/nb/aktuelt/foredrag-under-flos-logistikkonferanse-7/id560575/>, accessed 13 September 2015

¹⁹⁴ ‘Defence White Paper 2007’, *‘Et Styrket Forsvar’*, NOU2007:15, (Oslo: Statens forvaltningstjeneste, 2007), p. 43

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

This acknowledgement gave way to an expression of concern regarding the consequences of tight integration with other nations, was also present in the Defence White Paper 2000. The main concern was related to an eventual ‘reduction in national authorities’ freedom of action to utilise their military when and where they are needed. [ed. transl.]’¹⁹⁶ This concern led the authors to conclude that the choice of partners in deep-level MDC was critical in order to mitigate some of the challenges involved with such efforts. In addition to the importance of the choice of partners, the authors laid down three guidelines that they felt should govern the selection process of possible MDC initiatives:¹⁹⁷

- The degree of limitations in Norwegian authorities’ control over the capacity and use of Norwegian forces
- Possibilities for sustainment and development of operational ability and sustainable centres of competence
- Possibilities for economic savings¹⁹⁸

Influences from the Defence White Paper 2007 and the Possibilities Study could be seen in the MoD’s proposition 48 (2007-2008) to the Norwegian Parliament regarding the next long-term plan for the structuring of the NAF:

The [Possibilities] study shows that there is a significant potential for cooperation with Sweden, with regard to logistics, training, exercises, education and several other areas. [ed. transl.]¹⁹⁹

It went on to say: ‘There is an increasing tendency towards European defence cooperation and integration. [ed. transl.]’²⁰⁰ This could signify that the ministerial level was now more willing to approach new avenues to save money. In the proposition, the MoD also reinforced the fact that NATO remained the main partner for Norway by saying that any initiatives for cooperation with

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 45

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ St.prop. nr.48 (2007-2008), ‘Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier’, *Proposition to the Storting from the Ministry of Defence on the development of the Armed Forces*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/93a935d7abc149509595f5e873a38041/no/pdfs/stp200720080048000dddpdfs.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015, p.158

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

Sweden (which was the main object for cooperation in the Possibilities Study) should only be a supplement to existing agreements for cooperation.²⁰¹

In response to such statements, Gen. Diesen continued his efforts in support of MDC in the Nordic space. In an article for the Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* titled 'Why Nordic defence cooperation? [ed. transl.]' Diesen credited prop. 48 with acknowledging 'two determining prerequisites for having Armed Forces in the future [ed. transl.]'.²⁰² These prerequisites were firstly 'that the defence budgets have to follow the development of costs in the defence sector [ed. transl.]', and secondly that 'small nations like Norway - even with a positive budget development - can no longer bear the growing costs of maintaining a complete military defence alone. [ed. transl.]'²⁰³ In Gen. Diesen's mind the last of the acknowledgements meant that the country would have to enter into:

[L]ong-term strategic partnerships with another state that consist of sharing of the costs of military forces and capacity, which are too expensive for small nations to maintain on their own. [ed. transl.]²⁰⁴

He then went on to describe how the Nordic countries in the future would become dependant upon one another in order to 'equip, train and bring forces to battle readiness. [ed. transl.]'²⁰⁵ Aware of potential criticism to such endeavours due to the role of NATO in Norwegian security policy and the fact that Sweden and Finland were not members of NATO, Gen. Diesen presented three reasons as to why such integration was in fact acceptable:

1) No other countries are experiencing the issues now acknowledged by the Ministry to such an extent that they would be willing to commit to 'the necessary political and military compromises necessary to make it work [ed. transl.]'²⁰⁶ 2) The different bases for the Nordic countries' security policy are of 'declining priority compared to the importance of common strategic interests

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Sverre Diesen, 'Hvorfor nordisk forsvarssamarbeid', *Dagbladet*, 12 January 2009, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikker/Hvorfor-nordisk-forsvarssamarbeid-6607851.html>, accessed 2 July 2015

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

due to common geography [ed. transl.]²⁰⁷ The 'Nordic interest community' [ed. transl.]²⁰⁸ was so important according to Gen. Diesen that it was 'far more important than our differing allegiances' [ed. transl.].²⁰⁹ 3) National control of training/exercises, supplies is no longer as relevant as before, due to the reduced endurance of small states' armed forces. Gen. Diesen argues that because of lacking endurance, whether or not an ammunition depot is in Norway or Sweden is of little interest.²¹⁰ It is interesting to note how far Gen. Diesen takes his statements compared to the statements from the Ministry. In all the publications available regarding MDC and Nordic cooperation, Gen. Diesen is providing the most specific examples of how this could materialise, and provides a clear and concise argument for why Norway should commit to such cooperation. In his mind, cooperation can only work if you are trying to solve the same problems, toward the same end-state, with the same means.

Although Diesen was a significant voice in the debate, he was the only one at his level advocating MDC so strongly. And while his reports and arguments were gaining traction in the Ministry, it did not gain the attention of a wider audience. Furthermore, there were still few traces of the political momentum resulting in MDC becoming a priority for the ministry when discussing the future of the NAF. General Diesen left the position as Chief of Defence in 2009, and his successor, Harald Sunde, was not as vocal a supporter for extensive measures to further cooperation with the Nordic countries. The impending decision to procure a new fighter aircraft for the Royal Norwegian Air Force remained the major focus for the Defence Minister at the turn of the decade. This discussion, along with the question of where the aircraft should be based, dominated the debate.²¹¹ After Diesen left, he continued to advocate Nordic defence through

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Strøm-Erichsen, 'Fokus på logistikk', see also speech by Defence Minister Grete Faremo at Oslo Military Society, 4 January 2010, http://www.oslomilsamfund.no/oms_arkiv/2010/2010-01-04_Faremo.html, all accessed 1 July 2015

various newspaper articles,²¹² and the publication of his book on the development of the NAF toward 2020.²¹³

For the Ministry, it has been an apparent priority to continually maintain that despite engagement in NORDEFCO, NATO is the cornerstone of Norwegian security. In May of 2009 Strøm-Erichsen stated that some observers have gone too far in their interpretations of what the Nordic cooperation efforts really meant, feeling the need to reiterate NATO's importance for Norwegian security,²¹⁴ something her successor also continued doing.²¹⁵ Such a reassurance may be warranted considering how far some have drawn the possibilities in the Nordic dimension. A prominent example being the Finnish CHOD Admiral Juhani Kaskeala presenting the idea at a defence seminar in 2009, of radical specialisation within the Nordic space. He envisioned a scenario where Norway assume responsibility for Sea Power, Sweden for Air Power, and Finland for Land Power.²¹⁶ Such fantasies led to strict responses from the U.S., as the American ambassador to Norway Benson K. Whitney was quoted saying: 'the U.S. should remind Norway where its security guarantee comes from'.²¹⁷ This statement leaves no room for interpretation, and makes the efforts from the minister to reassure onlookers of NATO's position in Norwegian security thinking understandable.

In late 2010, the Defence Minister departed from the efforts to emphasise NATO's importance for Norway, and presented a rare acknowledgement of NORDEFCO's raison d'être by saying:

Many countries are experiencing cuts in their defence budgets, and more and more countries are seeing how multinational defence

²¹² Sverre Diesen, 'Framtidens forsvar', *Dagbladet*, 16 February 2011, <http://www.dagbladet.no/2011/02/16/kultur/debatt/kronikk/forsvaret/15444456/>, accessed 3 July 2015

²¹³ Sverre Diesen, *Fornyelse eller Forvitring? Forsvaret mot 2020*, (Oslo: Cappelen, 2011)

²¹⁴ Strøm-Erichsen, 'Fokus på logistikk'

²¹⁵ Søreide, 'Speech at Nordic Defence Industry Seminar'

²¹⁶ Kjell Dragnes, 'Eventyrlig forsvar i nord', *Aftenposten*, 14 January 2009, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kommentatorer/dragnes/Eventyrlig-forsvar-i-nord-6607991.html>, accessed 13 September 2015

²¹⁷ 'USA bør mine Norge på hvor landets sikkerhetsgaranti kommer fra', *Aftenposten*, 20 December 2010, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/uriks/wikileaks/USA-bor-minne-Norge-pa-hvor-landets-sikkerhetsgaranti-kommer-fra-5356210.html>, accessed 13 September 2015

cooperation is needed to sustain national defence structures with sufficient depth and quality. *For a small country such as Norway close cooperation with our neighbours is very important.* [ed. transl. and emphasis]²¹⁸

This statement was given on the verge of Norway's chairmanship of NORDEFECO in 2011, which may explain the statement in terms of timing and content. Norway's priorities for her chairmanship were outlined in the annual report for 2011, where the chairman pointed out that emphasis was given to achieving results using a 'step-by-step strategy rather than an approach that creates high expectations of 'quick wins.''²¹⁹ This somewhat cautious approach is also found in the ministry's proposition 73S 'Et Forsvar for vår tid' ('A defence for our time' [ed. transl.]), where previous statements regarding the importance of exploring avenues of cooperation in the Nordic space were reiterated, but no specific results, initiatives or on-going projects were mentioned.²²⁰ Understandable in 2007, such lack of specific detail of results or priorities were curious in 2012 considering that the Ministry has had for the last five years expressed, albeit in vague terms, high hopes for Nordic cooperation. The Norwegian Armed Forces annual report for 2010 provided some insight into the thinking behind the Norwegian approach to MDC, indicating that participation could in itself be a goal:

It should be pointed out that for a small country like Norway - and in light of a changing security environment - it is in our fundamental interest to cooperate closely with both NATO, the EU and the Nordics. It is therefore important that we avoid, by conducting cross-prioritisation, establishing criteria that seem absolute or excluding. [ed. transl.]²²¹

²¹⁸ 'Ønsker bredt samarbeid i nord', *Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence web article*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/onsker-bredt-samarbeid-i-nord/id623890/>, accessed 1 July 2015

²¹⁹ 'NORDEFECO Annual Report 2011', p. 2

²²⁰ St. Prop 73S (2011-2012) 'Et forsvar for vår tid', *Proposition to the Storting from the Ministry of Defence on the development of the Armed Forces*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/e6b0d7ef3c26457ab6ef177cd75b5d32/no/pdfs/prp201120120073000dddpdfs.pdf>, accessed 13 September 2015, pp. 139-141

²²¹ 'Forsvarets Årsrapport 2010', *Norwegian Armed Forces Annual Report*, http://www.nsd.uib.no/polsys/data/filer/aarsmeldinger/AN_2010_56989.pdf, accessed 4 July 2015, p. 94

This may indicate that the motivation of economic savings or gains in capability were not the only thing that drove the Ministry's internal processes on MDC. Security policy and the maintenance of relations with both NATO, the EU and the Nordics also seems to be of concern, and for good reason. This is further amplified later on in the text:

The motives underlying multinational defence cooperation are complex, and multiple factors play a role. Optimal cooperation would occur in a situation where *both security- and defence policy along with military and economic circumstances speak for cooperation*. [ed. transl.]²²²

The document describing how the Armed Forces would implement 'A defence for our time' was very clear in its formulation of how and with whom Norway should cooperate:

Multinational cooperation in the capability or security policy domain shall be especially directed toward close, allied, great powers such as the U.S., Great Britain and Germany. Also Holland, Denmark, Iceland and the Baltic countries, in addition to our close partners Sweden and Finland, shall be given priority. [ed. transl.]²²³

From the previous three quotations it is interesting to pose the question: what, in the security policy domain, speaks for relying on any other international entity than NATO? The conflicting expressions of support for and prioritising of Nordic cooperation on one hand, and the need to reassure of NATO's importance to Norwegian security is a dynamic that is interesting, and I will attempt to expand on reasons why a closer connection with the Nordics may be useful for Norway in a security policy mind frame.

In the Norwegian Strategic Concept published by the MoD in 2009, called 'Capable Force', the MoD recognised that the threats Norway might face in the future could be placed in a grey area between war and peace, giving examples ranging from terrorist attacks to attacks on Norwegian sovereignty by another

²²² Ibid.

²²³ 'St. Prop 73S (2011-2012)', p. 42

sovereign state.²²⁴ The same document also outlined the special legal status of Norway's holdings in the High North, which is referred to not by name but by the generic formulation 'certain geographic areas'. Likely referring to Svalbard, the MoD here acknowledges that Norway might be faced with undue pressure from nations, namely Russia, wanting to challenge the legal basis for Norwegian sovereignty over the archipelago. One example of a conflict that might escalate is the conflict over the Fishery Protection Zone around Svalbard, which the Russian Government does not recognise. Russian officials have already publicly questioned the legality of the zone, saying:

Norway knows perfectly well that Russia does not recognise the Fishery Protection Zone. They are pressuring us by escalating and exceeding existing treaties [ed. transl.].²²⁵

The threat assessment for 2011, published by the Norwegian Intelligence Service did not indicate that the Russian military posed any immediate threat to Norwegian security, but acknowledged the unpredictability of Russia with the following:

However, Russian foreign policy will still be characterised by a lack of predictability due to the country's great power ambitions, lack of transparent decision making process, and vulnerable economy. [ed. transl.].²²⁶

Because of this lack of predictability, it is possible to assume that the Ministry expected that, in the event of a 'grey-area' conflict with Russia, support from the Nordic countries may be more likely than support from NATO as a whole, or any of the major powers individually. I have not been able to verify this assumption with my sources, however considering that this was at the time of the American 'pivot' to Asia, which I will discuss in more depth later on, such a reasoning is certainly probable. Moreover, 'The Nordic Declaration of Solidarity

²²⁴ 'Capable Force', *Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces*, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fd/dokumenter/capable-force_strategic-concept.pdf, accessed 13 September 2015, pp. 17-22

²²⁵ *Aftenposten*, 10 February 2012 p. 20

²²⁶ 'Fokus 2011', *Norwegian Intelligence Service Annual Assessment*, http://forsvaret.no/fakta_/ForsvaretDocuments/FOKUS-2011.pdf, accessed 4 July 2015

[ed. transl.],²²⁷ of 2011 assures that if either of the Nordic countries were to fall victim to ‘natural or man-made disasters, digital attacks or terrorism’,²²⁸ the other nations would ‘assist by relevant means’.²²⁹ This does not encompass any ‘grey areas’ that Norway might face from Russia, but it is certainly a step towards a tighter bond between the countries with regard to security. One explanation of Norwegian behaviour could be that she is moving as close as she can to the Nordic nations, without compromising her relationship with NATO.

The narrative of emphasising Nordic cooperation while reaffirming the role of NATO in Norwegian security was maintained by the Ministry toward 2014. The Defence Ministry’s proposition for the 2014 defence budget explained that:

Nordic defence cooperation is characterised by a high level of activity and good development on all levels. The cooperation is primarily divided into two areas. Through close dialogue regarding security policy and operations the political roadmap is discussed or operationalised. The other area is capability development through cooperation on equipment, logistics, education, training and exercises [ed. transl.].²³⁰

The text continued by acknowledging that Norway would hold the chair of NORDEFCO for the second time in 2014, stating that the goal was to ‘develop the cooperation on capabilities and operations further’.²³¹ Bearing in mind that this was less than a year after Norway terminated the Archer contract, the text did not acknowledge any conflicts or setbacks at all.

The Norwegian statements regarding Nordic cooperation notwithstanding, Norway’s actions spoke louder than words according to Swedish representatives. The failed Archer contract and Norway recalling staff officers from the Swedish high command in January 2014 were met with disappointment in Sweden. One

²²⁷ ‘Den Nordiske Solidaritetserklæringen’, *Ministry of Defence webpage*, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/ud/vedlegg/nordisk-samarbeid/den_nordiske_solidaritetserklaeringen.pdf, accessed 4 July 2015

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ ‘St.Prop 1S (2013-2014)’, *Proposition to the Storting from the Defence Ministry on the 2014 defence budget*, https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/4004a02eb11e4f939c7efbb8c205db9d/no/pdfs/prp201320140001_fdddpdfs.pdf, accessed 4 July 2015, p. 35

²³¹ Ibid.

spokesperson, Allan Widman, claimed that this marked the end of Nordic cooperation, because Norway had made it very clear that she does not wish to cooperate deeply with non-NATO countries.²³² The statements from the Swedish spokesperson prompted a reaction from Norwegian politicians as well. In a debate in the Norwegian Parliament on 30 January 2014, one opposition representative hoped that the Minister would ‘calm our Swedish friends on this [...] There cannot be an impression that we do not prioritise cooperation with non-NATO countries [ed. transl.]’.²³³ Another representative queried the Defence Minister by asking: ‘what ambitions does the Defence Minister have for the Nordic defence cooperation? [ed. transl.]’.²³⁴ The Defence Minister, Ine Eriksen Søreide, responded to these questions in familiar fashion by avoiding the question of Swedish concerns entirely. Rather, she stayed on message by saying that Nordic defence cooperation was a ‘success story’, largely because of the extent of Norwegian participation, where ‘we have, in 70 different areas, a close cooperation both in materiel, exercises, training and other areas. Many of them within cooperation on materiel.’ [ed. transl.]²³⁵ This could indicate that the Minister sees Norway’s goals as achieved due to the level of participation, not the economic savings or military output gained.

Concerns of differing alignments are understandable from both sides of the argument. For the Swedish, the Norwegian standpoint means that NORDEFCO will never contain the same guarantees of security that members of NATO enjoy. For Norway, moving too far toward the Nordics may cause concern regarding Norway’s loyalty to NATO. This dilemma is not only a political one because as restrictions and caveats are applied, those who are working on projects in NORDEFCO find it challenging, as Mr Kampenes explains:

It is pretty clear that the more you depend on everyone else, with differing allegiances - NATO and not NATO, the EU and not the EU, EDA and not EDA - it becomes more difficult. People become

²³² Love Benigh, ‘Norskt beslut försvårar NATO-samarbetet’, *SvT Nyheter*, <http://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/norskt-beslut-forsvarar-nato-samarbete>, accessed 5 July 2015

²³³ ‘Stortinget – Møte torsdag den 30. januar 2014 kl. 10’, *Meeting in the Storting 30 January 2014*, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2013-2014/140130/1/>, accessed 4 July 2015

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Ibid.

sceptical, there are too many caveats for anything to happen. It is both a political and a military dilemma.²³⁶

This challenge becomes even more evident the more you move toward combat units, as they say in Norway ‘the pointy end (of the spear)’. Work to create a joint combat unit, referred to in the NORDEFCO framework as ‘Battalion Task Force 2020’,²³⁷ has been underway since the beginning of NORDEFCO. Not surprisingly, the non-NATO members of NORDEFCO, Sweden and Finland, has long supported creating the force, citing that such a force would be used ‘in common defence of Finnish, Swedish and other Nordic territories’.²³⁸ The NATO countries Denmark and Norway, however, has expressed scepticism. My source was able to expand on this:

We have done a study over three years named ‘Battalion Task Force 2020’, where we looked at the possibility to combine and build up forces, in order to field a Nordic integrated ‘Battalion Task Force’. It simply became too complicated. You know, [combat units] are controversial in a political sense, and when you have soldiers inside and outside of the Alliance, it becomes even more controversial and complicated. It is difficult enough doing this in Afghanistan at the company level. We ended up taking this step-by-step, by planning a combined exercise in 2016 with [a task force] in mind.²³⁹

This inability to produce a joint task force adds insult to injury for observers in Norway hoping to see definitive output from the NORDEFCO framework. Along with the Archer incident and slow progress of NORTAT, the list of disappointments of a public nature grows longer than the list of public successes. This makes it easy for those who would criticise and say that Norway is not doing the right thing, enough of the right things, or that Norway’s approach to all this is wrong. What is interesting to note is that despite having two different coalition governments and five different defence ministers since 2009,²⁴⁰ the Norwegian approach seems steady: Emphasise participation in the

²³⁶ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

²³⁷ Gerard O’Dwyer, ‘Sweden proposes Nordic Battalion Force Plan’, *Defence News*, 25 July 2013, <http://archive.defensenews.com/article/20130725/DEFREG01/307250013/Sweden-Proposes-Nordic-Battalion-Force-Plan>, accessed 6 July 2015

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

²⁴⁰ Anne-Grethe Strøm-Erichsen (2005-2009), Grethe Faremo (2009-2011), Espen Barth Eide (2011-2012), Anne-Grethe Strøm-Erichsen (2012-2013) and Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide (2013-)

NORDEFCO framework, but reiterate NATO's role as our prime security guarantor.

When comparing the goals and potential that were described in the Possibilities Study, it is obvious that in the seven years that followed the publication of the Possibilities Study very few of the main areas of cooperation have been explored, considering that most of the areas incorporated colocation and alignment of planning processes, something we have yet to see in NORDEFCO from 2009 to 2014. It is interesting to ask why such avenues have not been explored, however when discussing these matters with my sources, there is a sense that when even the less integrated and less complicated projects such as the Archer program fails, a sense of hopelessness can surface, increasing the inertia of the entire framework.²⁴¹ Moreover, it seems obvious that the old concern of national control still underpins Norwegian behaviour, as Kampenes confirms when discussing what is needed to achieve more in the realm of MDC:

[...] Norway will also have to renounce certain things; we will have to forego some national sovereignty [...], and for such things as the transport-cooperation [NORTAT, ed.] this is momentous stuff. [ed. transl.]²⁴²

In this chapter we have seen how the Possibilities Study, the Stoltenberg Report and Gen. Diesen's drive toward cooperation, primarily between Norway and Sweden, helped create NORDEFCO. The motivation for cooperation was primarily saving money and retaining capabilities, and the idea was that the common size, geography and culture would make cooperation more likely to succeed. However, apart from certain acquisition programs that have had a greater scope than before, NORDEFCO's practices represents no real departure from previous practices. Despite its ambition of being 'comprehensive', few signs point in such a direction even after almost five years of running. The framework sets out to work as a low-threshold bottom-up style framework, but many initiatives are primarily top-down such as NORTAT and other procurement programs. Moreover, the procurement programs have been troubled by national efforts to promote its own industry, rather than solely focusing on the most efficient solution.

²⁴¹ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 11 September 2014

²⁴² Ibid.

For Norway, two limiting factors quickly present themselves: Alignment and level of integration. It seems to be very important for Norway to reassure NATO allies that NORDEFECO does not represent any sort of shift in priority or understanding of where the foundation of Norwegian security is based. When queried about NORDEFECO's role, the Defence Ministers of the period have been steadfast in their emphasis on NATO's role in Norwegian security policy. The level of integration seems to be limited by a fear of losing control or assured access. While studies show that deep integration would yield the most savings, it is evident that the loss of control that such integration entails is not considered to be worth the trade. Despite these issues, Norwegian Defence Ministers have called the NORDEFECO framework a success. The basis for this success seems to be founded in the level of participation and not any metric of savings or increased capability, which was an ambition for NORDEFECO. This represents a disconnect that is interesting, especially when considering that participation was utilised as a means to an end during the 1990s, when Norway believed that participation in international operations would increase the likelihood of support in crises and war.

3 ‘Smart Defence’

In this chapter I will describe NATO’s ‘Smart Defence’ initiative, its origins, inner workings and how Norway approaches the initiative. I will highlight some of the underlying factors that motivated the Secretary General to engage NATO in this effort, how it has been implemented, and what output NATO has seen in the period. I will also describe how certain issues have posed a challenge for the Alliance since its foundation, and how these issues underpin many of the decisions and initiatives the past 15-20 years. I will describe the three main pillars in the concept: prioritisation, specialisation and cooperation, and I will describe how these ideas, that were meant to permeate the ‘Smart Defence’ concept, have given way to an emphasis on achieving short-term goals, rather than the long-term change that the concept demands. To better describe this focus on short-term results, I will outline the experiences of the project manager of the only Norwegian-led project in the ‘Smart Defence’ portfolio. In addition to a description of the broader reactions to the initiative, I will describe Norway’s approach to ‘Smart Defence’ based on Norway’s behaviour, statements and participation in projects within the initiative.

NATO challenges in the past

In order to understand the origin of Smart Defence, it is useful to understand some of the main issues that NATO has faced since its foundation. The more persistent and dominant debate concerning the internal workings of NATO is that of burden-sharing. In essence, burden-sharing relates to the division of cost and commitment of forces between the member nations. Referred to as the ‘transatlantic bargain’, the initial agreement was that the U.S. maintained a commitment of strategic and naval forces toward the defence of Europe, while European nations, on the other hand, worked to increase their contributions toward the same enterprise.²⁴³ Concerns that some of the European nations were ‘free-riding’²⁴⁴ arose when it became known that the ratio of U.S. to European

²⁴³ Charles A. Cooper and Benjamin Zycher, ‘Perceptions of NATO Burden-Sharing’, *The Rand Corporation*, (1989), p.2 and preface

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.6

relative burden rose to 75-25 respectively.²⁴⁵ The challenge of addressing the burden-sharing issue was centred around the fact that even though legitimate reasons existed as to why the European contribution should be increased, there were also legitimate reasons why the European contribution was actually at an appropriate level already.²⁴⁶ Another aspect to take note of is that burden-sharing does not exclusively relate to monetary cost and budget allocation. Despite the fact that such factors are easy to measure and compare between nations, Cooper and Zycher argues that since different nations achieve a different degree of 'defence output' from their allocations, it is more prudent to compare output rather than input.²⁴⁷ This leads the debate to include not only how much money that is allocated to defence spending, but also how it is spent and what is produced as a result.

This leads us to the challenge relating to the actual defence output and the ability of allies to partake in operations. This became a concern after the end of the Cold War when the alliance became involved in several operations outside the territory considered to be the operating area of the alliance. These so-called 'out-of-area'²⁴⁸ operations began with the different operations relating to the conflict in the Balkans, continuing with the Afghani and Libyan operations. These operations highlighted a disparity in participation, with some countries taking part in most or all of the operations and some countries opting out,²⁴⁹ and a disparity in ability, with some countries being wholly unable to conduct certain offensive operations.²⁵⁰ The interesting point is that the countries that choose to partake the most are not always the ones who spend the most on defence,²⁵¹ suggesting that there is an imbalance in will as well as an imbalance in funding.

²⁴⁵ Joyti Khanna and Todd Sandler, 'NATO Burden Sharing: 1960-1992', *Defence and Peace Economics* (1996), p.126

²⁴⁶ Cooper and Zycher, 'NATO Burden-Sharing', p.7

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p.12

²⁴⁸ Gareth Winrow 'NATO and out-of-area: A post-Cold War challenge', *European Security*, Vol 3, Issue 4, (1994), pp. 618-620.

²⁴⁹ Keith Hartley and Todd Sandler, 'NATO Burden-sharing: Past and Future', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 36, Issue 6, (1999), p. 673

²⁵⁰ 'Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report', *Report to Congress*, 31 January 2000, <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/kaar02072000.pdf>, accessed 19 April 2014, p.25.

²⁵¹ Hartley and Sandler, 'NATO Burden-sharing', p. 673

Another related aspect of burden sharing is whether or not the alliance has been able to deploy all the equipment and manpower necessary to conduct a successful military campaign anywhere in the world, and operate successfully together in a combined operation.

Already in 1977, concerns were raised indicating that despite ‘continuing enormous investment’, the Alliance was unable to properly integrate the systems of the different nations together in what is called ‘fusion’.²⁵² The challenges to such integration were especially evident in the areas of tactical communications and intelligence operations.²⁵³ Operations such as heavy airlift, intelligence collection/dissemination and large-scale logistic operations have always relied heavily on U.S. participation.²⁵⁴ Before the end of the Cold War, this was less of a concern for NATO, because the whole premise of the organisation was that all nations would be called to arms in the event of a conflict, therefore it was unlikely that the European nations would need to duplicate these assets to make them available both with and without U.S. involvement.²⁵⁵ Using Operation Allied Force (Kosovo Air Campaign, 1999) as an example, the disparities become evident: The European allies were shown to lack the capability to conduct the operations necessary to sustaining a force outside their own borders.²⁵⁶ The European nations did not lack capabilities in just one area or a narrow set of areas. They lacked capabilities in every aspect of the operation, from strategic airlift to aerial refuelling to all-weather and precision fighter operations.²⁵⁷ These gaps had to be filled by the U.S., which became a concern on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition to the lack of capabilities, the operation identified interoperability issues as well. Examples ranged from a lack of secure communications capabilities to compatibility of American aircraft to refuel using British tankers.²⁵⁸

²⁵² Robert Komer, ‘Ten Suggestions for Rationalizing NATO’, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, volume 19, issue 2 (1977), p. 69.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Sir John Weston, ‘NATO: The Euro-Atlantic Alliance’, *The RUSI Journal*, 138:2 (1993), p. 10

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ John Peters et.al., ‘European Contributions to Operation Allied Force: Implications for Transatlantic Cooperation’, *RAND Project Air Force* (2001), pp. 61-68.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Peters et.al., ‘European Contributions’, pp. 55-57.

To summarise, NATO has struggled with disparity since its foundation. There are three disparities that I would like to emphasise: 1) Disparity in funding, 2) disparity in ability, 3) disparity in will. These disparities can all be bundled into the burden-sharing debate, but it is useful to consider these disparities individually when studying the Smart Defence initiative and its origins.

The Economy, Libya and ‘The Pivot’

The events leading up to 2011 when ‘Smart Defence’ was launched, were dramatic and encompassed significant dimensions including strategic, operational and financial areas. To understand why Secretary General Rasmussen felt the need for an initiative such as ‘Smart Defence’, it is useful to understand the economic and security political events that immediately preceded Rasmussen’s push for change in the NATO community. The principle events were the economic developments of 2008 and onward, the Alliance’s experiences in the Libyan campaign of 2011, and the loom of an American ‘rebalancing’ toward the Asian theatre as opposed to the European. I will now highlight all three of these events.

The Economy

From 2008, continuing to beyond 2014 for some countries, Europe experienced a wave of budget crises-to-bailout cycles. What has been called ‘The Great Recession’²⁵⁹ has several complex root causes, with the arguably largest cause lying in the American housing bubble of 2006 and the Investment Banking crisis of late 2007 and throughout all of 2008. The largest contributing factor to this crisis was a dramatic drop in value of a financial construct called sub-prime mortgage bundling.²⁶⁰ This recession in turn siphoned into the so-called Eurozone Crisis beginning in 2010, also a debt crisis, where some of the largest countries in the Euro-zone, and also in NATO, found themselves unable to balance their budgets while continuing to service their debt. Starting with Greece in 2010, and continuing with Ireland, Portugal and Spain, confidence in the European

²⁵⁹ ‘The Great Recession of 2008-09: Year in Review 2009’, <http://global.britannica.com/topic/Great-Recession-of-2008-2009-The-1661642>, accessed 13 September 2015

²⁶⁰ Angela Hausman and Wesley J. Johnston, ‘Timeline of a Financial Crisis: Introduction to the Special Issue’, *Journal of Business Research*, volume 67 (2014), pp. 2667-2670

financial system declined, and the countries involved received massive interest hikes on their loans, leading to the need for bailouts to avoid insolvency.²⁶¹ When recession hits, it is understandably hard to advocate spending money on security if the public does not consider their security as threatened as their jobs or their welfare. What followed the Great Recession were strict austerity measures, as Rasmussen noted in the speech that ended up launching the initiative,²⁶² which affected defence budgets throughout Europe.

The budget cuts were dramatic. Between 2009 and 2011 European defence budgets were reduced by \$22 Billion, or 7.3%. As Terlikowski notes, the cuts in defence spending that followed the end of the cold war were never as dramatic as this, only reaching 5,6% in the 93-95 period.²⁶³ For some countries the reduction in spending from 2007 to 2012 is even more radical. In this period, Latvia reduced their spending from USD 552 million to USD 252 million,²⁶⁴ a 54% reduction.²⁶⁵ The trend repeated itself, albeit not so dramatically, in the other new NATO countries, with reductions ranging from 35% for Lithuania, 31% for the Czech Republic, and 26% for Slovakia.²⁶⁶ The larger European countries were not spared from the downward trend in budgets in the same time period, although the figures were nowhere near as dramatic. France saw a reduction of about 5%, while the number was close to 1% for the UK.²⁶⁷ Considering the increasing cost of military equipment and training for the same period, the reduction in military output would be larger than the percentages indicate. Consequentially, nations were forced to face large cuts in a relatively short period of time. When cuts reach north of the 10% mark in a matter of years, it is safe to assume that militaries are unable to absorb cuts through reorganisation, pay cuts or reduction in training alone. Removal of structural elements would be the only

²⁶¹ Matthew Higgins and Thomas Klitgaard, 'Saving Imbalances and the Euro Area Sovereign Debt Crisis', *SSRN Electronic Journal* (2011), p. 2

²⁶² Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 'NATO After Libya' *Foreign Affairs*, July/August (2011), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/2011-07-01/nato-after-libya>, accessed 20 September 2015

²⁶³ Terlikowski, 'Not as smart as it could be', p. 2

²⁶⁴ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, using US dollars at constant 2010 prices. This data was extracted from <http://portal.sipri.org/publications/pages/expenditures/country-search>, accessed 4 April 2014

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

way to absorb such a massive cut, and the choice becomes not *whether* to cut, but *what* to cut. When making these choices without consulting NATO or considering how their choice would affect the Alliance, Rasmussen meant they were doing ‘specialisation by default’.²⁶⁸ He wanted nations rather to consult NATO before cutting specific capabilities, and through that consultation perform the specialisation by ‘design’ rather than ‘default’, in order to avoid a decline in the overall ability of the Alliance to reach its goals.²⁶⁹

The Libya Campaign

The Libya campaign highlighted in a very clear way some of the challenges facing the Alliance when conducting complex and resource heavy operations such as Operation Unified Protector (second phase of the Libya operation) demonstrated. Traditionally, the United States has provided the bulk of the assets required to conduct a modern military operation. Once again observing Operation Allied Force: ‘Three-quarters of the aircraft, four-fifths of the ordinance, and most of the intelligence were provided by the U.S.’²⁷⁰ In Operation Unified Protector, the U.S. with its massive force of drones, intelligence and targeting systems, air assets, air-to-air refuelling assets, assumed the core coordinating function of the operation, while the other allies contributed with what they could manage and what they could stomach dependant on their ability and will. NATO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador, Claudio Bisogniero, explained this situation in no unsure terms: ‘[...] the success of that operation depended on unique and essential capabilities in key areas which only the United States could offer.’²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, ‘Remarks at the Allied Command Transformation Seminar, Washington DC’, 28 February 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_84689.htm, accessed 19 April 2014

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Andrew Michta, ‘NATO After the Kosovo Campaign and the KFOR Peacekeeping Operations: What Has Changed?’ *The Wilson Center*, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/218-nato-after-the-kosovo-campaign-and-the-kfor-peacekeeping-operations-what-has-changed>, accessed 7 December 2013

²⁷¹ Claudio Bisogniero, ‘NATO’s Smart Defence Initiative’, *Speech in Tallinn 15 December 2011*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_83096.htm, accessed 10 October 2013

The disparity between what the U.S. and its European counterparts could provide was also very clearly stated by then Secretary of Defence Robert Gates' last speech in office:

[...] However, while every alliance member voted for Libya mission, less than half have participated at all, and fewer than a third have been willing to participate in the strike mission. Frankly, many of those allies sitting on the sidelines do so not because they do not want to participate, but simply because they can't. The military capabilities simply aren't there.²⁷²

Coming from the U.S. Secretary of Defence, these are powerful words of frustration. Moreover, the similarities between the Libyan and the Kosovo campaigns are strikingly similar, which might add to the frustration because so little has apparently changed in 12 years. What must have been obvious for any NATO official was that for NATO to restore faith in the abilities of the European side of the transatlantic community, these issues would need to be addressed.

'The Pivot'

The American 'pivot' to Asia has been a source for concern for proponents of the transatlantic community since it was first dubbed in then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's article 'America's Pacific Century'.²⁷³ In this she emphasises the growing importance of the Pacific region as 'a key driver of global politics', and the importance of U.S. involvement in its future.²⁷⁴ Although she states very clearly that Europe still is a high priority, the article caused concern in the European community. One scholar summed up the shift: 'What the pivot means for Europe is most likely an eventual softening of U.S. security guarantees for the continent.'²⁷⁵ Despite such pessimism, there are those who consider the pivot

²⁷² Robert Gates, 'The Security and Defence Agenda', *speech in Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2011*, <http://archive.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1581>, accessed 7 December 2012

²⁷³ Hillary Clinton, 'America's Pacific Century', *Foreign Policy*, 11 October 2011, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/>, accessed 14 September 2015

²⁷⁴ Aaron S. Kesselheim and Rahul Rajkumar, 'Who Owns Federally Funded Research? –The Supreme Court and the Bayh-Dole Act', *New England Journal of Medicine*, volume 365 (2011), pp. 1167-1169

²⁷⁵ Nicholas S. Siegel, 'As the U.S. Pivots Toward Asia, Europe Stumbles', *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, <http://www.gmfus.org/commentary/us-pivots-toward-asia-europe-stumbles>, accessed 14 September 2015

to be influencing the transatlantic relationship in an insignificant way. Michael Rühle contends that:

The U.S. 'Asian pivot' will not change the fact that no continents are more like-minded and more geared toward cooperation, including in the military domain, than Europe and North America.²⁷⁶

Assuming that the pivot implies that the U.S. will, to a lesser degree than before, prioritise the needs of its European partners; then NATO has to plan for the possibility of having to operate without American support, a necessity that fuels the 'Smart Defence' initiative.

The economic development, the experiences of Libya, and the fear of American abandonment were powerful motivations for the Secretary General to act. Alarming enough one by one, these events prompted Rasmussen to act to avoid his fears of a security crisis being realised.²⁷⁷ Not all the challenges that Rasmussen highlighted applied to Norway as much as others. But given Norway's reliance on NATO as a security guarantor, and the importance of U.S. involvement in NATO, an American shift of attention to Asia would definitively be of concern for Norway.

The launch of the 'Smart Defence' initiative

The concept of the 'Smart Defence' initiative itself can be argued to have stemmed from the declarations in the Lisbon Summit in 2010, where the NATO countries agreed on a new strategic concept that would form the framework for the alliance's transformational work toward 2020. Officially called: 'Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', or 'NATO Forces 2020' for short.²⁷⁸ NATO had for several years acknowledged that the organisation did not possess the means to achieve the requirements it set for itself, expressed in

²⁷⁶ Michael Rühle, 'The Future of the Transatlantic Security Relationship', *American Foreign Policy Interests*, volume 3, issue 5 (2013), p. 287

²⁷⁷ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 'Building security in an age of austerity', *speech at the Munich Security Conference, 4 February 2011*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_70400.htm, accessed 12 July 2015

²⁷⁸ 'Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/pdf/Strat_Concept_web_en.pdf, accessed 13 March 2014

both the Lisbon and Chicago declarations and in earlier reports from NATO, reports describing shortfalls in several areas considered critical capabilities in NATO.²⁷⁹ The Lisbon declaration contained an explicit task for the Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and the North Atlantic Council to reform the organisation in order to better address these shortfalls:

We task the Secretary General and the Council to take forward the reform process in all necessary areas without delay, including the implementation of: Reviews of the Agencies and NATO Command Structure; comprehensive Resource Management Reform; Headquarters Reform, including the new Headquarters project; and an end-to-end rationalisation review of all structures engaged in NATO capability development.²⁸⁰

The Secretary General then coined the term ‘Smart Defence’ in his speech at the Munich Security Conference in February 2011, and hailed it as a means of facing some of the challenges that were identified during the Lisbon Summit. In his speech, the Secretary General focused on the on-going economic challenges in Europe, and how ‘Smart Defence’ can help ensure a more cost-effective way of thinking about security issues and paving the way for a more efficient alliance. This would in turn ‘prevent the economic crisis from becoming a security crisis.’²⁸¹

The Secretary General followed up the statements from Munich with an article in *Foreign Affairs*, in the midst of Operation Unified Protector in Libya, detailing some of the challenges facing the alliance as a result of reduced defence spending, and how he proposed these challenges be faced.²⁸² Although Rasmussen focused on the positive aspects of the operation and NATO’s progress, he conceded that there existed both a ‘spending gap’ due to declining budgets, and a developing ‘security gap’ due to the rise of emerging powers such

²⁷⁹ ‘Lisbon Summit Declaration’ *NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release 155*, (2010); ‘Chicago Summit Declaration’, *NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release 62* (2012). For reference on critical capability shortfalls see Ragnheidur Arnadottir, ‘Current and Future Capability Priorities for the Atlantic Alliance’, *report to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Committee 2008*, <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1474>, accessed 13 March 2014. See also ‘NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement, *analysis and recommendations of the group of experts on a new strategic concept for NATO*, <http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/expertsreport.pdf>, accessed 13 March 2014

²⁸⁰ ‘Lisbon Summit Declaration’

²⁸¹ Rasmussen, ‘Building security in an age of austerity’

²⁸² Rasmussen, ‘NATO After Libya’

as Brazil, India, Russia and China. As a response to these challenges, Rasmussen reaffirmed his position from Munich by stating that Europe should ‘pursue a ‘Smart Defence’ approach’.²⁸³ Rasmussen contended that broad-spectrum capabilities were too costly for most nations, and that nations therefore should group together to develop capabilities from which they all could benefit,²⁸⁴ and also avoid ‘uncoordinated cuts’ from ‘jeopardizing the continent’s future security’.²⁸⁵ To solidify his commitment to this initiative, Rasmussen appointed two special envoys to promote ‘Smart Defence’ in the Alliance, Deputy Secretary General Claude Bisogniero and General Stephane Abrial, whose purpose was to assist the nations in implementing the policies derived from the ‘Smart Defence’ initiative.²⁸⁶

When all 28 NATO countries met for the Chicago Summit in 2012, ‘Smart Defence’ was very much part of the discussion, even though most of the outside attention was aimed at NATO’s plans for withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. The Chicago Summit declared that it would commit to ‘Smart Defence’, and during the summit 20 multinational projects were presented as part of the solution to avoid capability gaps in the alliance.²⁸⁷ Later referred to as part of the ‘Chicago Defence Package’,²⁸⁸ the proposal swelled by October 2013 to 28 smaller projects and four larger, strategic projects.²⁸⁹ The smaller projects are listed below:

1. Multinational Aviation Training Centre
2. Immersive Training Environments
3. Individual Training and Education Programmes
4. Multinational Military Flight Crew Training
5. Centres of Excellence as Hubs of Education and Training
6. Computer Information Services E-Learning Training Centres Network

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Henius and MacDonald, ‘A Critical Appraisal’

²⁸⁷ Terlikowski, ‘Not as Smart as it Could Be’

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ ‘Multinational Projects’, *NATO webpage*, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_10/20131018_131022-MediaBackgrounder_Multinational_Projects_en.pdf, accessed 12 March 2014

7. Pooling & Sharing Multinational Medical Treatment Facilities
8. Pooling of Deployable Air Activation Modules
9. Pooling Maritime Patrol Aircraft
10. Pooling CBRN Capabilities
11. Multinational Cyber Defence Capability Development
12. Multinational Logistics Partnership - Fuel Handling
13. Multinational Logistics Partnership - Mine Resistant Ambush Vehicle maintenance
14. Joint Logistics Support Group
15. Multinational Cooperation on Munitions
16. NATO Universal Armaments Interface
17. Deployable Contract Specialist Group
18. Multinational Joint Headquarters Ulm
19. Female Leaders in Security and Defence
20. Development of Personnel Reserve Capabilities
21. Theatre Opening Capability
22. Dismantling, Demilitarization and Disposal of Military Equipment
23. Counter IED - Biometrics
24. Remotely controlled robots for clearing roadside bombs
25. Establishment of a Multinational Geospatial Support Group
26. Harbour Protection
27. Alliance Defence Analysis and Planning for Transformation
28. Defensive Aids Suite

The larger, strategic projects are as follows:

1. NATO's Missile Defence capability
2. Alliance Ground Surveillance programme
3. NATO Air Policing over Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia
4. Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

The strategic projects promoted in this package were at this point already long-running, and considered 'flagship' projects that could function as symbols of NATO's progress toward filling its capability gaps.²⁹⁰ The rest of the projects are mostly aimed at mitigating issues and rationalising processes relating to logistics, munitions and armament, and the training of personnel.

²⁹⁰ Lisa Aronsson and Patrick Keller, 'British-German Defence Co-Operation in NATO: Finding Common Ground on European Security', *RUSI Occasional Paper*, May (2012), pp. 15-16

Soon after Chicago, NATO had worked to formalize the principles of the 'Smart Defence' initiative. They identified three key components that would form what they called 'the constituents' of 'Smart Defence': Prioritisation, specialisation and cooperation.²⁹¹ These 'constituents' were nonetheless absent from the discussion in Chicago, and in the Press Release after the summit, emphasis was given to the possibility of an *increase* in capabilities, rather than on how to avoid the uncoordinated cuts mentioned in Rasmussen's Foreign Affairs commentary.²⁹² On the other hand, one NATO official was quoted in a Centre for European Reform Policy Brief as saying: 'There are very few joint purchases of new equipment among the proposals; most are about maintaining and rationalising existing assets'.²⁹³ The constituents that NATO considers the framework for 'Smart Defence' seeks each to face challenges long observed in NATO, exemplified by the reports leading up to the Lisbon Summit.²⁹⁴ I will now expand on these three constituents.

The concept: Prioritisation, specialisation and cooperation

In the context of 'Smart Defence', prioritisation requires nations to:

[A]lign their capability development primarily with the NATO Strategic Concept of 2010 and the capability requirements for NATO Forces 2020 that are derived from them.²⁹⁵

Nations will need to both prepare for the future needs of the alliance, and remove assets that are no longer needed in the NATO framework,²⁹⁶ and also accept and adopt NATO's concept and requirements as their own. Rasmussen said very clearly in his Foreign Affairs article what he expected each nation to do:

²⁹¹ 'Smart Defence', *NATO webpage*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_84268.htm, accessed 20 April 2014

²⁹² 'Summit Declaration on Defence Capabilities: Toward NATO Forces 2020', *NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release* 64 (2012)

²⁹³ Claudia Major, Christian Mölling and Tomas Valasek, 'Smart but Too Cautious: How NATO Can Improve Its Fight Against Austerity', *Center for European Reform* (2012), p. 3

²⁹⁴ Arnadottir, 'Current and Future Capability Priorities'

²⁹⁵ Daniel Mockli, 'Smart Pooling', *CSS Analysis in Security Policy* (2012), p. 2

²⁹⁶ 'Strategic Policy Issues', *Strategic Survey*, volume 113, issue 1 (2013), p. 53

Keeping a deployable army, a powerful navy, and a strong air force costs money, however, and not all European countries can afford to have a bit of everything. So they should set their priorities on the basis of threats, cost-effectiveness, and performance -- not budgetary considerations or prestige alone.²⁹⁷

The challenge remains of how to convince nations to commit to such an alignment into the NATO framework, if the nations themselves do not see the need for it. The paradox may remain that, as Henius and McDonald so bluntly puts it: 'Many governments would rather have autonomous and useless militaries than integrated and capable ones.'²⁹⁸ This perpetuates the disparity in ability.

Specialisation, on the other hand, requires nations to focus on niche capabilities, and then receive capabilities from other nations when required.²⁹⁹ An example could be that a nation with a well-proven Special Operations capability abandons assets that are not as needed in the Alliance, and utilising the surplus funds to hone and enhance the well-proven Special Operations capability. NATO implies that such a specialisation already occurs by default, because budget pressures require them to abandon certain costly capabilities. What NATO wants to see is specialisation 'by design',³⁰⁰ but they do not explain who will be the designer and what entity will govern the design process, only noting that NATO expects the process to be done with NATO functioning as an advisor and facilitator.³⁰¹ This uncertainty may explain why specialisation has been so absent from the discussion.

The principle of cooperation, however, is more intuitively understood and more naturally implemented in the NATO daily life. Cooperation in training, exercises and operations has been the cornerstone of NATO's work since its inception. Even after the end of the Cold War, the discussion of multinational cooperation has surfaced time and again. Lt.Col. Gerhard Stelz wrote the following in 1996 which exemplifies the issue:

²⁹⁷ Rasmussen, 'NATO After Libya'

²⁹⁸ Henius and MacDonald, 'A Critical Appraisal', p. 19

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 23

³⁰⁰ NATO webpage, 'Smart Defence'

³⁰¹ Darrell Driver, Tim LaBenz and Paul Johnson, 'Smart Defence: Brave New Approach or Déjà Vu?', *Naval War College Review*, volume 66, issue 3 (2013), p. 48

The integration of national contingents into multinational structures has advantages and disadvantages, advocates and opponents. Both sides are able to give sound reasons to substantiate their arguments. Considering the matter from merely one point of view would not do justice to the subject.³⁰²

The situation today is not one of whether or not NATO should operate in multinational structures or not, but how to do it most efficiently. However, in the 'Smart Defence' debate there is obviously a great deal of emphasis on cooperation in procurement, maintenance and training facilities in order to cut expenses and gain capabilities. The question remains whether or not nations intentionally ignore the other aspects of the initiatives, which I will expand on later.

Adhering to the three constituents is obviously challenging. Arguably the hardest to address is how to convince the member states to begin to prioritise and specialise their defence spending and planning in such a way that they focus on areas that are lacking, not in a nation-centric perspective but in a NATO-wide perspective. Naturally, this is a contentious issue due to the fact that in order to comply with these constituents, nations will have to shift their focus from preparing to defend themselves while being able to assist in helping other allies, to considering how they best can contribute to the defence of the alliance as a whole. This will require them to accept the fact that the only entity able to defend them from the multiple threats a nation-state faces, is the alliance.³⁰³ From this, one would expect countries that have 'surplus' capabilities that previously have formed the backbone of any armed forces, such as tank and infantry, will have to be removed in a given nation due to the fact that NATO does not need it in that specific nation. Conversely, nations that are in a strategically significant position requiring a certain capability will have to acquire or expand that capability in order to satisfy the needs of the alliance. A dramatic example would be nation foregoing an entire service branch, because it is not strictly needed. Once such a decision is made and effectuated, it takes an enormous amount of time, money and training to rebuild.

³⁰² Gerhard Setlz, 'Multinational Force Structures in NATO', *Strategy Research Project at US Army War College*, submitted 22 March 1996, p. 6

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 8

NATO has expressed that ‘Smart Defence’ will ensure that NATO avoids capability gaps, unnecessary acquisition, and would achieve economy of scale.³⁰⁴

Inner workings

As already mentioned, when ‘Smart Defence’ became a matter-of-fact NATO initiative, two special envoys, the Deputy Secretary General and the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, were tasked to promote the initiative throughout the alliance. Allied Command Transformation (ACT) was tasked with running the daily work on the initiative, and ACT created a ‘core team’ to manage ‘Smart Defence’, led by the special envoys.³⁰⁵ ACT wanted to identify as many MDC initiatives as possible to contribute in achieving the goals in ‘Smart Defence’.³⁰⁶ Suggestions came in from all directions, and it was soon decided that there was to be a list of ‘Smart Defence’ projects. Every single suggestion ended up in this list, and the number of projects became a metric of success, along with other quantifiable indicators of progress such as how many workshops had been conducted. Focus on the size of the list became so prevalent that old projects that, as Lt. Col. Seierstad noted, ‘began long before anyone had ever mentioned the words ‘Smart Defence’ were reborn as ‘Smart Defence’ projects.’ [ed. transl.]³⁰⁷ It was a process of picking ‘low-hanging fruits’ in order to deliver something substantial. One curious, and symptomatic observation came when Seierstad saw that Norway had been added to a list of participants in a project without any representative from Norway ever expressing an interest in it, ‘just because some staff officer assumed that Norway might be interested.’ [ed. transl.]³⁰⁸ When the projects were collected, they were categorised into three tiers based on how close they were to execution. Tier-1 projects were projects that were close to execution, or already underway. That included having identified a willing ‘lead nation’, having participants ready, having agreements such as Letter of Intent and Memorandum of Understanding signed, and so on. Tier-2 were projects that were relatively mature, but lacked a significant

³⁰⁴ NATO webpage, ‘Smart Defence’

³⁰⁵ David Auerswald et.al., ‘Smart Defense: A Good Idea Destined to Fail’, *AHS Smart Defence*, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2483879>, accessed 15 July 2015

³⁰⁶ Information from Mr Knut Are Seierstad, 11 June 2014

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 1:23:30

element before being ready for execution, such as an identified ‘lead nation’. Tier-3 were all the other suggestions. The projects were categorised according to seven capability areas: Prepare, Protect, Project, Sustain, C3,³⁰⁹ Engage, Inform. In mid-2014 there were well over 100 ‘Smart Defence’ projects being considered.³¹⁰

As part the effort of having quantifiable progress on the ‘Smart Defence’ project list, ACT had goals of 40 ‘Tier-1’ projects by a given date, without any emphasis on what type of project they were, or whether they contributed in any way toward the overarching goal of ‘Smart Defence’.³¹¹ When the project list was established, it was then up to either ACT or any given so-called ‘sponsor committee’³¹² to promote progress in the project. For the people managing these projects, the process could be at times long and thorny, as a researcher at the Norwegian Defence Research Institute, Sigurd Glærum, experienced when he assumed the chair of the only ‘Smart Defence’-project led by Norway: ADAPT.³¹³

ADAPT

ADAPT stands for ‘Alliance Defence Analysis and Planning for Transformation’, a project to utilise a computer program created by NATO in 2003 as a tool to assist in long-term planning, ADAPT was started as a bilateral cooperation project between NATO Communication and Information Agency (NCIA) long before ‘Smart Defence’ started, but was quickly suggested as a ‘Smart Defence’ project following 2011-12. Glærum, who became head of the project, is very clear that becoming a ‘Smart Defence’ project wasn’t important to him, but since being a ‘Smart Defence’ project would make the project multilateral instead of bilateral, the overhead cost that were necessary to maintain bilateral agreements could be reduced by bringing in more nations.³¹⁴ The decision was made quickly, but the decision did bring with it some problems:

³⁰⁹ Command, control and communications

³¹⁰ Ibid., see also Auerswald et.al., ‘Smart Defense’, p. 4

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² This was usually a committee responsible for the given field that the project dealt with. This could be for example the armaments committee for projects dealing with armaments.

³¹³ Information from Mr Sigurd Glærum, 11 September 2014

³¹⁴ Ibid.

Becoming a 'Smart Defence' project was, well [Smart Defence] had a lot of attention, so why not call it a 'Smart Defence' project? [...] Since then it has been a long and thorny road.³¹⁵

According to Glærum it was important that Norway became lead nation for a 'Smart Defence' project, and was able to 'tick that box'.³¹⁶ The initial plan was to get nations interested, sign a statement of interest, and proceed to sign an MoU in order to finalise what the project would look like and encompass. The process of signing an MoU was according to Glærum not easy:

It has been a painful process. It is a legal document where nations commit to things, and committing to things is scary. It is not the first time someone creates an MoU in a 'Smart Defence' context, there existed some that we thought we could use as a template. But it is very dependant upon what people attend the meetings. Especially lawyers, they have opinions about things, while the lawyers that made these other MoU's they had other opinions about things, so certain nations have been difficult here. [...] Even if the commitments of the MoU only amounts to €10.000 per year, an extremely low risk, they still bring all these formalities. [ed. transl.]³¹⁷

When I spoke to Glærum he had worked to finalise the deal for three years, and it was still not complete and signed. His goal was to complete the process in the fall of 2014, and declare a formal start to the project from the start of 2015.³¹⁸ The process was completed on 24 February 2015, with only Norway, Finland and Germany as participants.³¹⁹ For a project that actually *increased* the amount of money spent by Norway on this tool, and may not be used by more than three nations in the Alliance, it would definitely present an interesting cost-benefit case analysis. What it does do is provide some insight into the challenges of every day life of officials working in a NATO setting, and why many of them become frustrated with lack of progress.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ 'Nations sign up to NATO defence analysis project', *NATO NCIA webpage*, <https://www.ncia.nato.int/NewsRoom/Pages/150311-MN-ADAPT.aspx>, accessed 14 July 2015

The list and the vision

Eventually, the project list became synonymous with ‘Smart Defence’. As one NATO official was cited saying: ‘NATO’s Smart Defense initiative boils down to a series of short-term pragmatic projects and a long-term vision for building capabilities.’³²⁰ The list was the here and now, and the vision was long-term. The question remains: what is happening with the vision? It seems as the problem of implementing change quickly hits the wall of sovereign freedom of action. David Hobbs, the Secretary General of NATO’s Parliamentary Assembly touches on this and the issue of defence industry, in a video interview published by NATO:

If it had been easy, it would have already been done. And there are some thorny issues. For example, it’s all very well to say that we will all be better off if we could have a better division of labour in our defence procurement. But if you’ve got a munitions factory in your constituency then actually you would like to keep that open. What we’re talking about with ‘Smart Defence’, are pooling capabilities, pooling resources, and that’s going to require, if you like, a new level of trust. The buzz phrase is ‘guaranteed access’. If I own a certain capability, and I want to do something with it, nationally, I don’t have a problem. If, however, I’ve only got that capability because I’ve developed that jointly with an ally or collection of allies, then there has to be some rules of the road about how I can, how we all can make use of that capability when we need it.³²¹

Mr Hobbs’ remarks echo the concerns of Norwegian officials as we will see later on, but also other, larger, nations of the Alliance such as Germany. In her paper ‘Bundeswehr 3.0: The political, military and social dimensions of the reform of the German Armed Forces’, Justyna Gotkowska claims that:

Germany will not be ready to become involved in cooperation which could result in a permanent interdependence between partners with regard to capabilities used in international operations. This applies above all to units of the army, air force and the navy conducting combat operations. Germany is concerned that interdependence in such capabilities shared with its main partners (France and the UK) may lead to political pressure for Germany to engage in operations

³²⁰ Julian Hale, ‘NATO’s ‘Smart Defense’: Short-Term Projects, Long-Term Vision’, *Defence News*, 1 February 2012, <http://archive.defensenews.com/article/20120201/DEFREG01/302010008/NATO-8217-s-8216-Smart-Defense-8217-Short-Term-Projects-Long-Term-Vision>, accessed 14 July 2015

³²¹ David Hobbs, ‘Smart Defence: the parliamentary angle’, *video interview available on NATO webpage*, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2012/smart-defence/Smart-Defence-Parliamentary-Angle/EN/index.htm>, accessed 15 July 2015

supported by these countries but not necessarily convergent with German interests.³²²

Gotkowska also says that for precisely the same reason, France and the UK will not cooperate with Germany, painting a picture of deep-seated mistrust.³²³

Although the vision of 'Smart Defence' is admirable, it seems obvious that the most far-reaching goals are hard to achieve, due to the hurdles described in Hobbs' statement. These considerations are very understandable, as access to military capabilities, and concerns of having a nation's hand forced are serious issues.

Reactions to the 'Smart Defence' initiative

Rasmussen's remarks regarding 'Smart Defence' can be considered broad, not very specific, and not very new. As we have seen, the alliance struggled to mitigate issues relating to interoperability and cooperation already in the late 1970s. The concept of working to increase the sharing of resources and increasing interoperability, cooperation was already a NATO priority in the early part of the 1980s, as the burden-sharing debate highlighted that it was a priority for the Alliance to 'develop areas of practical co-operation', in addition to evening out the gap in defence spending across the Atlantic.³²⁴

Throughout the 1990s ideas of 'pooling and sharing' and closing capability gaps were prevalent both in NATO and EU circles, as European defence budgets continued to decline and the campaigns in Bosnia and Kosovo highlighted significant shortfalls in the European community's capabilities.³²⁵

Notwithstanding, the initiative can be seen as paving new ground in that NATO was, at least initially, throwing its weight behind it. The problem is the lack of a clear way forward, any form of road map or framework, and this fact has caused NATO to receive stark criticism. The criticism has mostly been focused on two things: money and sovereignty. Even before Chicago, critics questioned the

³²² Justyna Gotkowska, 'Bundeswehr 3.0: The political, military and social dimensions of the reform of the German Armed Forces', *Point of View*, 28 (2012), p. 32

³²³ *Ibid.*, p. 33

³²⁴ Alan Tonelson, 'NATO Burden-Sharing: Promises, Promises', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 23 (2000), p. 42

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.50.

economic arguments of the initiative. Antonin Novotny put it bluntly by saying that ‘the ‘Smart Defence’ initiative risks allowing European countries to believe that they can do more with less, when in actuality they will be doing less with less.’³²⁶ Marcin Terlikowski reaffirms this position by noting that:

‘Smart Defence’ is too focused on savings, and many Allies openly admit that a financial motive drove the project selection process. The impression arose that what really mattered to governments was either the hope that someone else would pay—at least partly—to sustain the most expensive capabilities (or to gain access to new assets) or a willingness to use participation in ‘Smart Defence’ to improve leaders’ political images, badly struck by deep cuts.³²⁷

Other scholars have reacted with scepticism regarding the challenges to national autonomy and sovereignty in the initiative. This relates most of all to the specialisation principle. In a ‘food for thought’ paper, the International Institute for Strategic Studies said the following regarding specialisation:

Politically, nations would worry that they might be asked to provide capabilities to a mission in which they did not want to take part, or that countries on which they depended for a certain capability would not make it available.³²⁸

In a sense, the situation that is described in this paper already existed in 2012. With the shifting and uncertain future of American priorities, the European countries already find themselves in a situation where they cannot be certain that the U.S. will support them with the critical capabilities that Europe does not possess. Thusly, one can argue that nations, in actual fact, are left with no other choice: They will have to swallow the disadvantages of compliance with the initiative in order to avoid the negative consequences of doing nothing.³²⁹ Although there is broad agreement that action is needed, Andrew Michta argues that NATO has to stop focusing on buzzwords such as ‘Smart Defence’, and

³²⁶ Antonin Novotny, ‘Smart Defence – A New Way of Looking at the Capabilities of the Alliance’, *Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs*, <http://cenaa.org/analysis/smart-defence-a-new-way-of-looking-at-the-capabilities-of-the-alliance/>, accessed 15 September 2015

³²⁷ Terlikowski, ‘Not as smart as it could be’, p. 2

³²⁸ ‘Smart Defence, Specialisation and Assured Access to Capabilities’, *The International Institute for Strategic Studies* (2013), http://cms.polsci.ku.dk/nyheder/iiss/NATOs_Smart_Defence_Initiative_Nov_2012.pdf/, accessed 15 September 2015

³²⁹ Henius and MacDonald, ‘A Critical Appraisal’, pp. 46–48

commit to real action that produces results. In his mind initiatives such as ‘Smart Defence’ are useless:

We have come to the point that NATO has been reduced to something like the Transatlantic family’s used, somewhat beat-up second car. Everyone admits that we still need it, but no one wants to be the family member stuck driving it. [...] There is no great mystery about what needs to happen to keep NATO from becoming finally a victim of its own Cold War success. It needs to inject some strategic and fiscal reality into the conversation and consign buzz words like ‘smart defense’ to the hell of academic conferences. NATO members need to multiply real resources, not conceptual abstractions. Above all, the alliance needs to define a task that it can succeed at in the near term.³³⁰

Michta’s comments may be the ones closest to what Norwegian policy-makers themselves think about ‘Smart Defence’ and the developments in the transatlantic community. As we will see, it seems like Norway doesn’t want to drive beat-up second car either.

Norway’s approach to ‘Smart Defence’

The Norwegian reaction to ‘Smart Defence’ after Rasmussen introduced the initiative has been less vocal compared to that of NORDEFCO. Nordic cooperation was discussed in the three major studies of 2007-8, the Possibilities Study, the Defence Study 2007 and the Defence White Paper 2007, but ‘Smart Defence’ has not been discussed in any equivalent study. At most, the initiative has been referenced in the information sections of the 2013 and 2014 versions of the proposition to the defence budget from the Defence Ministry. Here one could read that the initiative would ‘address, among other things, NATO’s long-term capability needs’ [ed. transl.]³³¹ The Ministry went on to affirm that:

Norway will, in the follow-up of the defence package, actively support work on ‘Smart Defence’. The government will increase its emphasis on training and exercises, and contribute to a more appropriate defence planning process in NATO to ensure that the alliance

³³⁰ Andrew A. Michta, ‘NATO’s Last Chance’, *The American Interest*, Vol 6, issue 5, May (2011)

³³¹ ‘St.Prop 1S (2012-2013)’, *Proposition to the Storting from the Defence Ministry on the 2013 defence budget*, https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/ca40a987b274f4aba5dfb6f8523d4c5/no/pdfs/prp201220130001_fdddpdfs.pdf, accessed 12 July 2015, p. 117

continues to develop a balanced structure that is aligned with the level of ambition. [ed. transl.]³³²

Apart from the sparse mention in official documents, the initiative has been referenced by officials in several speeches since the Munich conference in 2011. In April 2012, one month before the Chicago Summit, State Secretary Roger Ingebrigtsen outlined the Norwegian perspective on 'Smart Defence', as it was understood at the time. Mr Ingebrigtsen indicated that the core components of the initiative were nothing new, the difference was 'the pressing requirement for results'.³³³ Interestingly, Mr Ingebrigtsen said the following about national control over capability development:

'Smart Defence' requires a change in the national and NATO cultures of cooperation. The easy option is to hold on to what we have - national control over all aspects of capability development, national industry, national facilities. In order to gain the capabilities we need for the future, some of this may have to be sacrificed.³³⁴

This is a surprising acknowledgement that Norway would have to forego some degree of control over capability development, something the country has not been willing to do in the past. However, as is often the case with politicians, Mr Ingebrigtsen immediately presented a caveat in his understanding of 'Smart Defence':

'Smart Defence' is therefore about striking a balance between legitimate and important national concerns - and the benefits we could obtain from a new culture of cooperation in the alliance and with important partners.³³⁵

Mr Ingebrigtsen went on to discuss how Norway felt the constituents of 'Smart Defence' should be approached in practice, before delving into what he noted as the obstacles and limitations to 'Smart Defence'. In this part of his speech, Mr Ingebrigtsen made quite a few surprising admissions:

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Roger Ingebrigtsen, 'Speech at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies Seminar', 24 April 2012, <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/smart-defence--the-norwegian-perspective/id679432/>, accessed 12 July 2015

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

In our case, as for most Allies, we have certain national tasks and responsibilities that must be handled on a national basis. Therefore, shared units in the force structure are currently not on our agenda. The same goes for specialization in critical capabilities. We have decided to maintain a full spectrum of basic military capabilities in order to remain capable to deal with vital national requirements. This should however not be in the way of significant multinational cooperation in capability development.³³⁶

What Mr Ingebrigtsen is saying is that the only aim that Norway expects to achieve through MDC is to save money through coordinated procurement, effectively ignoring a very large portion of the recommendations in the Possibilities Study and Defence Study 2007 that relate to colocation and shared assets. The Defence Minister at the time, Anne-Grethe Strøm-Erichsen also provided some insight into Norwegian thinking at a military seminar in December 2012:

Allies, in dire economic straits, feel compelled to cut quickly and in many cases, unilaterally. We also see that common funded or multilateral projects come under pressure. The total defence expenditure in NATO is certain to drop further in the short term. Obviously, we cannot simply continue business as usual. The Chicago Summit earlier this year launched 'Smart Defence' and the Connected Forces initiative as a response to reduced budgets and reduced operational cooperation in Afghanistan. In such times of austerity, multinational solutions are the apparent answer, both in relation to capabilities and training.³³⁷

Ms Strøm-Erichsen and Mr Ingebrigtsen both point out that NATO was at a turning point requiring new thinking, and a departure from business as usual. Both point to multinational solutions, but there is a certain contrast in that Mr Ingebrigtsen excludes multinational capability development, and Ms Strøm-Erichsen highlights it as a response to reduced budgets. This contrast indicates that in 2012, Norway had not entirely made up its mind regarding the initiative, and what it would mean for Norway and the Alliance.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Anne-Grethe Strøm-Erichsen, 'Threat images and NATO's neighbourhood – A Norwegian perspective', *Speech at The Military Power seminar, 6 December 2012*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/foredrag-ved-militarmaktseminaret-6-dese/id709279/>, accessed 13 July 2015

In order to make good on the promise of actively supporting ‘Smart Defence’, the Ministry appointed a coordinator for the ‘Smart Defence’ initiative to coordinate ‘Smart Defence’ projects and possible Norwegian participation, Lt.Col. Seierstad was the first such coordinator, succeeded by Olav Magne Joli in mid-2014.³³⁸ Seierstad was responsible for coordinating meetings with the Defence Staff, and participated in NATO planning meetings on Norway’s behalf. The project coordinator became very influential in the process of choosing which projects Norway supported or actively participated in, as the decision to indicate interest or not in many cases depended on the active facilitation of the coordinator. Decisions to participate or not were however ultimately in the hands of the responsible staffs, Conference of National Armaments Directors representatives and so on.³³⁹ A ‘Smart Defence’ coordination group was established in the Ministry of Defence and Defence staff. Initially, the group met on a monthly basis. However, as the ‘Smart Defence’ project list became more static, the group met less frequently. For the people actually working on ‘Smart Defence’, enthusiasm was hard to come by. Lt.Col. Seierstad compares it to ‘trying to whip a dead horse’.³⁴⁰ The problem was the list, and the incessant focus on delivering projects to the list.

Seierstad provides an interesting perspective on the contrast between the Norwegian perspective vs. the NATO one. In Seierstad’s mind, successful undertakings such as the F-35 Lightning II fighter jet procurement project have an unparalleled degree of MDC at the core of its concept, from acquisition to logistics and maintenance. As such it is fulfilling all the ideas and visions for ‘Smart Defence’, at a level which makes a real difference for NATO capability development. However, the F-35 procurement is ‘absolutely not a ‘Smart Defence’ project, and neither should it become one.’ [ed. transl.]³⁴¹ For Norway, the focus is rather on Smart Defence at a conceptual level, leading to more efficient multinational capability development to meet NATO’s shortfalls in the prioritised capability areas. As Seierstad says: ‘That will decide whether ‘Smart

³³⁸ Information from Mr Knut Are Seierstad, 11 June 2014

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

Defence' is a success' [ed. transl.]³⁴² The main purpose of 'Smart Defence', as interpreted by Norway, was to produce and preserve capabilities that are useful for NATO in a more cost-effective way.³⁴³ According to Seierstad, the work that has gone on in NATO since the start of the initiative had departed from that purpose, because of what he referred to as an 'excessive focus on the list of 'Smart Defence' projects, which in a way has been a dead-end.'³⁴⁴ This is because of the nature of the projects which he felt didn't contribute to achieving the concept of 'Smart Defence', pointing out that:

Even if all the Tier-1 [highest priority. ed.] 'Smart Defence' projects were to be successful, they wouldn't make much of a difference for NATO, because they are on such a detailed level that they wouldn't matter much in the grand scheme of things anyway. [ed. transl.]³⁴⁵

When you accept the premise than 'Smart Defence' has decomposed into a list of projects and not a concept for how to work within the Alliance, it is understandable that nations, including Norway, become pragmatic in what projects they choose to participate in. As Lt.Col. Seierstad explains, Norway participates in projects that either have been identified as having a potential to contribute to Norway reaching her capability goals, or where it would be likely that Norway could make a unique contribution to Alliance capabilities, such as in the ADAPT project.³⁴⁶ The project list became too short-sighted, and Norway wanted to see more long-term change that would result in more defence for less money in 15 years rather than aim for minor changes happening next year.³⁴⁷

Already at the beginning of the 'Smart Defence' project Norwegian officials stated that existing efforts that the Norwegian military was involved in, were in effect 'Smart Defence'. Especially NORDEFCO became a way for Norway to highlight existing efforts in the MDC space, saying that 'NORDEFCO stands out as

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Espen Barth Eide, 'Speech at Norwegian Defence Research Institute seminar', 4 September 2012, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/en-effektivitetsorientert-kultur--et-sma/id698353/>, accessed 14 July 2015

a good example of “Smart Defence”³⁴⁸. Espen Barth-Eide went even further when he claimed that the foundation of NATO, the AWACS system and the F-16 collaboration project, European Participating Air Forces, were ‘Smart Defence’, stating that certain allies have a ‘somewhat simplistic approach to “Smart Defence”’,³⁴⁹ further indicating that Norway wanted to see more output from the initiative than what had been seen so far. He also reiterated the by now familiar point of retention of national sovereign control, by noting that Norway needed to be sure that she possessed all necessary elements of ‘the military toolbox’ at all times.³⁵⁰ It is clear that a certain scepticism was tied to ‘Smart Defence’ in the Ministry, and a fear that excessive cooperation might compromise national freedom of action. Another fear that became evident was that ‘Smart Defence’ would become an excuse for allies to reduce spending further than what was warranted, reflecting the age-old burden-sharing debate.³⁵¹

The idea that NORDEFCO was ‘Smart Defence’ has been adopted by NORDEFCO itself, when in their annual report for 2012 described NORDEFCO’s ‘unbureaucratic’ cooperation was to a large extent ‘Smart Defence’, and dubbing it ‘Smart Defence - Nordic style’.³⁵² This impression has been further emphasised by Ann-Sofie Dahl in her paper: ‘NORDEFCO and NATO: “Smart Defence” in the north?’, pointing out that ‘as far as “Smart Defence” goes, NORDEFCO could be considered something of a success’.³⁵³ Given that NORDEFCO is ‘Smart Defence’ in a less bureaucratic package, it is not hard to understand why Norway seems to prefer working in the NORDEFCO framework, and why Norway is highlighting work in NORDEFCO as part of its work to promote ‘Smart Defence’. If NORDEFCO is ‘Smart Defence’, Norway can avoid having a two-pronged approach in multinational cooperation, while working in a framework that provides a great deal more relative influence. This is due to the many advantages of cooperating with Nordic countries, that I have already described:

³⁴⁸ Roger Ingebrigtsen, ‘Smart Defence – The Norwegian perspective’

³⁴⁹ Barth Eide, ‘Speech at Norwegian Defence Research Institute’

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ine Eriksen Søreide, ‘Et åpnere forsvar, en mer bærekraftig forsvarspolitik’, *speech at Oslo Military Society*, 6 January 2014, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/-et-apnere-forsvar--en-mer-barekraftig-f/id748832/>, accessed 15 July 2015

³⁵² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2012 pp. 1, 20

³⁵³ Ann Sofie Dahl, ‘NORDEFCO and NATO: ‘Smart Defence in the north?’, *Research Paper, NATO Defense College*, Rome no. 101, May (2014)

Cultural similarities, geographic closeness, language similarities and more. With this approach, Norway can legitimately say that she is supporting and participating in promoting 'Smart Defence', while defining her own avenues of achieving her capability goals of possessing the full spectrum of military capabilities without any restrictions in sovereign freedom of action. This way, Norway doesn't have to drive the family's beat-up second car, but hitch a ride with the likeminded neighbour instead.

In this chapter we have seen how the global economic decline of 'The Great Recession', mounting tensions regarding burden sharing, and a potential American shift away from Europe, motivated Secretary General Rasmussen to launch the NATO 'Smart Defence' initiative. The recession caused military spending in Europe to plummet, and the Secretary General wanted to mediate the consequences of such a decline by attempting to implement coordinated *design* into the process, as well as making an effort to change the methods and mentality of the organisation so as to be more integrated, coordinated and oriented toward the common goals of the Alliance. As we have seen, Rasmussen's efforts have not yet produced the desired effect, as the drive to produce tangible results led to an overemphasis on a list of multinational projects. Reactions to the initiative have been widely negative, saying that the initiative is too focused on savings, rather than actually producing relevant capabilities. Such negativity can also be heard from the project manager of ADAPT, Smart Defence's only Norwegian-led project. For Norway, an initial pledge to actively support represents the bulk of attention directed at the initiative from Norwegian policy makers, in stark contrast to the attention given to NORDEFCO. This can indicate two things: Firstly, Norway could feel obliged to support a large NATO initiative such as 'Smart Defence' in order to be seen as a loyal ally. Considering her long tradition of emphasising participation as a means to an end, this is a logical assumption. Secondly, Norway could have little faith in the initiative itself, thus limiting her participation to the bare minimum required to be noticed. With this in mind, it is easier to understand why politicians have even gone so far as to reference projects in NORDEFCO as part of Norway's contribution to 'Smart Defence'. This is interesting also because of the role participation has previously played in Norwegian policy, as mentioned in previous chapters. The question is: why isn't 'Smart Defence' smart? As we have

seen, my sources lament NATO's emphasis on the project list and the bureaucratic methods prevalent in NATO as an organisation. This is may be the reason why Norway has chosen to focus more on NORDEFCO; Norway may see more potential to achieve the desired effect in the Nordic space than in the NATO space.

Summary of the Norwegian approach to MDC

As we have seen in this and the previous chapter, there are certain characteristics that can be argued to be the 'Norwegian approach' to MDC after 2005. These are characteristics that have been consistent regardless of which initiative I have observed, be it 'Smart Defence' or NORDEFCO. Norway's tendency for pragmatism has been reiterated by many of my sources. Although not simply adopting a 'what's in it for me'-approach, Norway avoids engagement in projects that 1) cannot provide any gains toward capability goals, or 2) doesn't provide some benefit for the NATO community. Although a certain degree of scepticism can be traced in Norway's behaviour in both the Nordic and the NATO areas of cooperation, the country is sticking to the frameworks, attempting to develop them further, indicating a long-term perspective focused on *participation* as a means in and of itself.

Furthermore, Norway seems determined to retain *freedom of action*, despite evidence that small sacrifices in this aspect could reap great rewards. Put another way, Norway prefers to reap rewards in areas where it can avoid tying knots of commitment, preferring à la carte MDC over the chef's five course MDC meal. As we have seen, this behaviour has caused reactions, such as Widman's claim that Norway doesn't really want deep cooperation with Sweden.³⁵⁴ The situation, and Norway's behaviour, echoes Olav Riste's point of Norway's tendency for ambivalence in her posture, as well as her desire for setting requirements for others without accepting any herself.³⁵⁵ It seems as though the long lines of Norwegian policy are firm in this respect also. Whether or not this firmness is evidence of any sort of grand strategy is unclear, and not something

³⁵⁴ Benigh, 'Norskt beslut försvårar NATO-samarbetet'

³⁵⁵ Riste, '*Isolasjonisme og Stormaktsgarantier*', p. 44, and Riste, '*Norway's Foreign Relations*', p. 214

that can be derived from my research. It is, however, something that appears to shape policymaking and behaviour in the frameworks I have studied.

4 Norway going forward

Toward the end of 2014, when Norway and the rest of the world had been witness to the first conflict between two sovereign European countries since WWII, as Russia annexed the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea and pursued further land-grabs in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk,³⁵⁶ the general mood and rhetoric in Norway changed significantly. Although a declaration of war has yet to be announced there are few who now doubt that Russia is actively involved in the fighting using a tactic dubbed ‘Hybrid Warfare’ in the west, a term which is not necessary new.³⁵⁷ The conflict served as a wake up call as the ‘Crisis in Ukraine’ brought the idea of European inter-state conflict back into people’s minds, and the idea of Russia as a major threat to Norwegian security back on the table.

For NATO, the crisis in Ukraine became a dominant topic, during which the heads of state of alliance met in Wales in September 2014, calling the moment in time ‘pivotal’ following Russia’s actions:

[We] have gathered in Wales at a pivotal moment in Euro-Atlantic security. Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine have fundamentally challenged our vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace.³⁵⁸

Although the ‘Smart Defence’ initiative was mentioned in the declaration, it was only mentioned in relation to successful multinational projects, not as any sort of fundamental strategy for future development of NATO’s capabilities. Arguably, that role had been assumed by two other commitments. Firstly, the German-made Framework Nations Concept, which received a NATO-wide endorsement at the Wales Summit, would focus on:

³⁵⁶ ‘Ukraine Crisis in maps’, *BBC Online* 18 February 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27308526>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁵⁷ Michael Kofman and Matthew Rojansky, ‘A Closer Look at Russia’s “Hybrid War”’, *Kennan Cable*, 7/April (2015)

³⁵⁸ ‘Wales Summit Declaration’, *NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release* 120, (2014)

[G]roups of Allies coming together to work multinationally for the joint development of forces and capabilities required by the Alliance, facilitated by a framework nation.³⁵⁹

A further development and evolution of the 'Smart Defence' initiative, the Framework Nations Concept (FNC) was meant to produce 'coherent sets of forces and capabilities, particularly in Europe.'³⁶⁰ FNC would create so-called 'clusters of cooperation' around the major powers in Europe, primarily Germany and the UK, much like NORDEFCO had been in the Nordics. Although not aiming as high as 'Smart Defence' did in lifting perspectives from the nation to the entire alliance, FNC aimed at creating regional sets of countries that were aligning their capabilities in a coherent manner. Secondly and more importantly, the alliance agreed to:

[R]everse the trend of declining defence budgets, to make the most effective use of our funds and to further a more balanced sharing of costs and responsibilities.³⁶¹

In essence, the nations would have to increase spending right away, and 'move toward the 2% guideline within a decade'.³⁶² Compared to the Chicago summit's 'do more with less' mentality, NATO now focused on ramping up expenditure. Although all 28 nations committed to the declaration, the following year, only six of the major NATO nations, among them Norway, had increased their budgets, while Germany and the UK reduced their budgets, and France had a flat development.³⁶³ The most tangible response to the Crisis in Ukraine came in early 2015, when NATO pledged to create a new reaction force to counter Russian aggression. Hailed by the new Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg as 'the biggest reinforcement of collective defence since the end of

³⁵⁹ Ibid. 67th paragraph.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 14th paragraph.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Denitsa Raynova and Ian Kerns, 'The Wales Pledge Revisited: A Preliminary Analysis of 2015 Budget Decisions in NATO Member States', <http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/medialibrary/2015/02/20/04389e1d/ELN%20NATO%20Budgets%20Brief.pdf>, accessed 16 July 2015

the Cold War',³⁶⁴ the effort was an attempt to reassure former Soviet countries that are now a part of NATO that their security was in fact guaranteed by NATO. The quick-reaction force would be able to be mobilised in only 48 hours.³⁶⁵ The effort of reassurance was also the basis of the establishment of command and control elements in the former Soviet states Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, along with Poland, Romania and Bulgaria.³⁶⁶

The Wales Summit and NATO's actions in early 2015 solidified two things that we have seen are of importance to Norway: Russia is the major threat, and increased spending is necessary to gain capabilities. For a country that shares a border with Russia, and has a history of both tension and cooperation with the aspiring superpower, such a focus will bring more attention to Norway and Norwegian relations with Russia and is an obvious advantage. Because Sweden and Finland are in such close proximity to Russia, the events in Ukraine were also cause for concern for not only NATO but them as well. This led to the Crimean Crisis and Russian aggression funnelling into discussions in the NORDEFCO-framework. In the foreword of the 2014 NORDEFCO Annual Report, Ine Eriksen Søreide said the following:

Russia's annexation of the Crimea and its intervention in Eastern Ukraine has changed the European security landscape, with implications also in our own region and we have discussed how we can adopt our defence policies to this new situation. The Nordic nations have had to reconsider their security policies and their relationship with Russia.³⁶⁷

The report also highlighted that Russia's actions meant that the scope and intensity of Nordic dialogue was increased, and that it created a need for further exchange of information regarding emergency planning and preparedness.³⁶⁸ For the Swedish Prime Minister Hultqvist, the situation meant that a neighbour that

³⁶⁴ Damien Sharkov, 'Biggest NATO Reinforcement Since Cold War' Sets Frontlines Against Russia', *Newsweek*, 5 February 2015, <http://europe.newsweek.com/biggest-nato-reinforcement-cold-war-sets-frontlines-russian-threat-304722>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁶⁵ Jim Garamone, 'NATO responding to Russia's actions against Ukraine', *US DoD News*, 23 March 2015, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=128429>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ 'NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014', p. 2

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 10

has previously been known to violate Swedish territorial integrity³⁶⁹ and has done so recently,³⁷⁰ was now also a 'more provocative, unpredictable and destabilising Russia that has lowered the threshold to use military force'.³⁷¹ A Norwegian representative to the Nordic Council went even further, claiming that 'trust in Russia is broken'.³⁷²

The response to Russia's actions were, although limited, strong in Norwegian standards. On the one hand, Norway supported Ukraine financially through a humanitarian aid-package of NOK 100 million, signed by Prime Minister Solberg in Kiev in the fall of 2014.³⁷³ In conjunction with the financial support, Prime Minister Solberg denounced Russia's actions, saying:

Norway has expressed firm support for Ukraine's territorial integrity, condemning Russia's annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of Eastern Ukraine [ed. transl.].³⁷⁴

On the other hand, Norway expressed a need to improve in three critical areas in order to counter a threat similar to what was seen in Crimea, these were: higher readiness and responsiveness, adequate situational awareness, and a reassessment of contingency planning for the defence of Norway.³⁷⁵ According to the Defence Minister, these challenges ultimately meant that:

³⁶⁹ See Gordon McCormick's 'Stranger than Fiction' from *RAND* for information on Soviet incursions in Swedish waters during the cold war.

³⁷⁰ Elias Groll, 'Swedes find definitive evidence of submarine, Russians call them unmanly', <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/11/15/swedes-find-definitive-evidence-of-submarine-russians-call-them-unmanly/>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁷¹ Peter Hultqvist, speech at the U.S.-Sweden Defence Industry Conference 3 June 2015, <http://www.government.se/speeches/2015/06/speech-at-the-u.s.-sweden-defence-industry-conference/>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁷² 'En varig endring i forholdet til Russland', *conference proceedings in the Storting on Nordic Defence Cooperation*, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Hva-skjer-pa-Stortinget/Nyhetsarkiv/Hva-skjer-nyheter/2014-2015/--En-varig-endring-i-forholdet-til-Russland/>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁷³ 'Norsk Støttepakke til Ukraina', *The Prime Ministers Office webpage*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/Norsk-stottepakke-til-Ukraina/id2340860/>

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ine Eriksen Søreide, 'NATO Back in Europe – a Return of Geography?', Speech at the Military Power Seminar 2014, 20 November 2014, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/NATO-Back-in-Europe--a-Return-of-Geography/id2341075/>

[T]he need for multinational cooperation is greater than ever. This goes for all aspects of warfare; from procurement, via maintenance, training, and exercises, to operations.³⁷⁶

Interestingly, on top of the turmoil following Russia's actions in Ukraine, reports surfaced indicating that the Norwegian approach to MDC yielded very little actual output, calling into question the administration's entire approach to MDC. In December 2014, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (NDRE) released a 'Fact Sheet' about MDC, that suggested steps Norway should take to reap greater benefits from MDC.³⁷⁷ The report referenced another NDRE publication that claimed that MDC had produced only NOK 35 million in savings related to internal streamlining/increased efficiency.³⁷⁸ The Fact Sheet premised that MDC had failed to produce significant savings for the Norwegian military, and suggested that Norway emphasise areas for cooperation that have a larger potential for savings than what they had done in the past. As the author explains:

Benefits from economies of scale are largest in cases where the countries own production apparatus are small. This is often the case for the Norwegian Armed Forces, who in several areas have a small number of units. Moreover, the economies of scale will be large where the portion of fixed costs are significant. In effect this will apply to areas where a significant start-up cost is associated. In other words, it gives little meaning to cooperate on boot camps, which require minor start-up costs. Cooperating on, for example, specialised maintenance services, training demanding a great deal of competency, or even cooperation on operational capabilities, will have significantly greater economies of scale.³⁷⁹

This essentially meant that the Ministry's claim to success due to the large number of active initiatives was inherently counterintuitive. Smaller, deeper and more comprehensive cooperation initiatives where the entire 'production chain' was identified as the most beneficial, indicating that typical NORDEFCO projects

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Sverre Kvalvik, 'Internasjonalt Forsvarssamarbeid', *FFI*, December 2014, http://www.ffi.no/no/Publikasjoner/Documents/FFIFakta_Internasjonalt_forsvarssamarbeid.pdf, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁷⁸ Elisabeth Lindseth Åmot, 'Tiltakene hadde kommet uansett' – erfaringer fra intereffektiviseringen 2009-2012', *FFI*, <http://www.ffi.no/no/Rapporter/15-00765.pdf>, accessed 16 July 2015

³⁷⁹ Kvalvik, 'Internasjonalt Forsvarssamarbeid'

such as ‘investigating joint acquisition of CV-90 rubber tracks’, or establishing a forum for distributive learning were essentially meaningless, punching a hole in the Ministry’s argument of quantity as an adequate measure of success.³⁸⁰ Furthermore, projects should be carried out with a small number of participants, due to the associated cost of an excessive number of participants,³⁸¹ indicating that ACT’s efforts to bring as many nations into as many ‘Smart Defence’ projects as possible were also essentially counterproductive.

In April 2015 a new defence white paper, ‘Unified Effort’, was released. The paper discusses the changed security environment, the state and future of the Armed Forces, MDC and more. The report acknowledged the new threat and risk environment, claiming that the new situation demanded significant measures to strengthen Norway’s defence, with the underlying premise that Russia would be the ‘defining factor’ of Norwegian defence planning.³⁸² The report emphasised the importance of realising the consequences this would have for the possible scenarios Norway might find herself struggling with. Scenarios were outlined that placed Norway in a predicament where she would have to act alone to face diplomatic and military pressure in the High North, or assume a disproportionately large role in protecting the Baltic states over extended periods of time.³⁸³ Such scenarios would demand more from the Norwegian Armed Forces than what it is currently able to achieve, requiring such ability to be built up.³⁸⁴ The report placed a great deal of emphasis on the relationship with the U.S., through bilateral agreements, NATO through collective defence, and NATO’s largest members, the UK and Germany through the Northern Group and FNC, firmly placing Norwegian security in these hands.³⁸⁵ Although the report reiterated the traditional view of Norwegian security, it also noted that when it comes to saving money, there are many possibilities that were so far left unused:

³⁸⁰ ‘NORDEFECO Annual Report 2013’, p. 12

³⁸¹ Kvalvik, ‘Internasjonalt Forsvarssamarbeid’

³⁸² ‘Defence White Paper 2015’, ‘*Unified Effort*’, <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/fd/dokumenter/unified-effort.pdf>, accessed 15 September 2015, p. 5

³⁸³ Ibid., pp. 55-57

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 44-47

If multinational cooperation is to have a sizeable economic effect, financial savings must be a clear aim. Usually, the biggest gain will be in areas with few and costly units. We should not limit ourselves to support activities, but also include operational capacities. The successful co-operation on the F-16 aircraft illustrates this. The procurement of, for example, new combat aircraft and new submarines can provide similar and perhaps even better opportunities. Also, for Norway to finance the new maritime patrol aircraft it may be necessary to co-operate with other allies. [...] The Expert Commission believes that there is a large unexploited potential to create cost effective solutions through the increased use of multinational cooperation, even if such solutions can be challenging to establish. This potential will increase in step with the gradual trend towards fewer and more expensive units in Western armed forces. Therefore, economic savings through this type of measure are particularly relevant in the longer term.³⁸⁶

Once more a political study emphasises that Norway should not exclude cooperation on operational capabilities from its list of areas for cooperation with other countries, a stark contrast to the Ministry's restrictive policy on the matter. This report, along with the NDRE reports and the Possibility Study meant that evidence had been mounting for a while regarding the possibilities of MDC, and what is necessary to do in order to achieve real savings. However, there are few indications that Norwegian behaviour will change.

Arguably, the events in Wales played right into the hands of Norway, seeing as she is one of the few countries that have both proved a loyal ally through continuous participation, and one of few who is making good on a promise to increase defence expenditure. Also, for a country that has expressed scepticism and pragmatism when faced with initiatives that sought to 'achieve more with less', an emphasis closer to 'you get what you pay for'³⁸⁷ is more along the lines of what Norway prefers. This can allow her to avoid being dragged into projects and initiatives that she sees little value in, all the while a focus on spending can place Norway in a positive light due to her favourable economic outlook and potential for budget hikes. This removes any necessity for deep cooperation restricting national freedom of action.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 96

³⁸⁷ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Press Conference, 5 September 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_112891.htm, accessed 16 July 2015

But if the history that I have described is any guide, promises of funds for the Armed Forces have since the Cold War seldom resulted in actual, meaningful increases in the defence budget, even if the situation is described as a crisis. Moreover, even if the budgets were to increase, there is no guarantee that they could be spent where they are most needed, due to regional politics and political horse trading. Since Norway hasn't changed her attitude toward integration by now, it might not be likely that she does so anytime soon. According to Gen. Diesen, the reason why this is happening this way is not complicated to explain, but very difficult to remedy:

The political leadership of the Armed Forces and the Armed Forces themselves perceive this to be difficult and uncomfortable. Politicians prefer to do what they do best, which is to push the problem in front of them, not taking into account that the problem is actually growing as they push. That is part of the challenge here, the longer we wait the worse it gets. Within the forces themselves, most people are naturally reluctant to lose units and bases, not only because they wish to maintain a strong defence, but also because it affects such things as career opportunities, the sustainment of specialised skills etc. The rank and file are more concerned about their own service or branch in the short term than they are about the long term future of the forces overall, which is only human. But that is why reforms like this can only be implemented top down by politicians with the overview and ruthlessness of statesmen.³⁸⁸

Never one to mince his words, Gen. Diesen indicates that the lack of willingness to do what is, at least in Diesen's mind, pressingly necessary is not only found in the political community, but also the military. Traces of such experiences can be seen among my sources, as Col. Kampenes explains:

The reason why this is not possible is really found further down in the organisation. It is hard for us to achieve more cooperation, because some do not see the benefits. Some times they are unwilling to try. Of course, they have a lot of other things to do in the same timeframe, causing them to prioritise. Some initiatives tend to disappear, because there are some who just don't see the point, and work to reduce its priority in the organisation. It is actually quite interesting when you sit where I'm sitting, and can see who's in charge. It's certainly not the Minister, or the chief of defence.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

³⁸⁹ Information from Mr Inge Kampenes, 8 December 2014

It is also highly plausible that other pre-conceived notions can function as contributing factors to shape decision-making. According to Gen. Diesen such mechanisms as national prestige, self-image, tradition and force of habit fundamentally influence how nations still approach these questions, as is proved by the reluctance of the major European powers to accept a greater degree of joint defence planning and procurement - despite the fact that this would increase their capabilities significantly.³⁹⁰

Assuming the premise that Norway is actually ignoring beneficial advice from both scholars and Generals due to some pre-conceived notion or truth, Nina Græger provides some interesting insight into other instances of the same situation in the Norwegian Armed Forces:

In the Norwegian defence discourse, there have been attempts at delegitimising carriers of alternative representations by characterising them as naïve, marginal, misinformed, unrealistic etc. and therefore as irrelevant or even potentially damaging to Norway's special security needs.³⁹¹

Although Græger discussed issues before 2005, the idea of a stringent maintenance of truths may apply to Norway's approach to MDC as well, given that the idea continues to be maintained that deep integration with another country, such as the 'Possibilities Study' suggests, will ultimately lead to loss of national freedom of action. Græger states that the carriers of alternative truths, or 'representations' as she puts it, often have been delivered by researchers, younger officials and officers who have participated in international operations and therefore have been exposed to alternative narratives.³⁹² This means that the ones that are in power seldom present alternative solutions or radical ideas, with the exception here being Gen. Diesen. Powerful individuals championing radical ideas, strategies or policies is not uncommon. There are many cases where reform processes or efforts promoting change are spearheaded by the strength of the individual to an equal or greater extent than the strength of the argument. Marshal Tukhachevsky, a star in the Soviet Army who fell victim to

³⁹⁰ Information from Mr Sverre Diesen, 5 January 2015

³⁹¹ Nina Græger, 'Norway between NATO, the EU, and the US: A Case Study of Post-Cold War Security and Defence Discourse', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, volume 18, issue 1 (2005), p. 87

³⁹² Ibid.

the purge in 1937, promoted his ideas both through compelling argument as well as through a compelling persona. He is described to have had ‘attracted to himself the bright innovative spirits of a whole generation of officers like a magnet’.³⁹³ Whether or not Tukhachevsky died because of his ideas or his persona, it was clear that he was an undesirable element in the Red Army. His ideas were nonetheless adopted, possibly indicating that the problem lay with the person rather than the idea itself.

Comparing Tukhachevsky to Diesen might be a bridge too far, however Diesen is certainly a charismatic figure whose ideas have been resisted. Given that Diesen was victim of bureaucratic inertia and resistance to change, it begs the question whether attitudes toward integration and MDC will change now that Diesen is less and less active in the debate, and if Norway will change her approach in the future. There are certainly enough proponents for deeper integration with other nations. However, such integration does come at a cost, and many nations, including Norway, are reluctant to accept that cost. National sovereignty, freedom of action, and assured access to capabilities are, as we have seen, the primary blockers for most nations. In order to achieve the full potential of MDC, nations will have to trade control and freedom for economies of scale, a trade that most nations, let alone Norway, are unwilling to make.

³⁹³ William McGranahan, ‘The Fall and Rise of Marshal Tukhachevsky’, *US Army War College*, (1978)

Conclusion

The period from 2005 to 2014 and beyond has seen a lot of attention given to multinational defence cooperation. The Norwegian Armed Forces entered the period with significant problems stemming from two decades of inadequate funding and obsolete materiel, as well as an overly ambitious mission as an 'Invasion Defence' force. The events following the end of the Cold War brought about change, but not the change needed to structure the Armed Forces so that it was able to solve its mission, nor balance its budget. Surprisingly, these events occurred with little or no debate in the public sphere. On the contrary, politicians regularly expressed that the foundations of Norwegian security were firm, referring both to her steadfast reliance upon NATO and the U.S., but also her relatively unchanged security and threat perception. This effectively says that since everyone agrees on this, there is no point debating it.

When Sverre Diesen was became Chief of Defence in 2005, he soon produced and co-produced two major studies that promoted the potential benefits of MDC and deep integration between Armed Forces. The studies, along with Gen. Diesen's personal efforts, ultimately promoted MDC as a viable strategy in the mind of officers and politicians in Norway. The Armed Forces were already facing challenges, and 'techflation' and 'critical mass' exacerbated these challenges. Motivated primarily by prospects of cost reduction and capability retention, Norway participated in two main MDC initiatives from 2005-2014: The NORDEFCO initiative and NATO's 'Smart Defence' initiative.

In NORDEFCO, Norway found an initiative where it enjoys a great deal of relative influence but little room for action, for fear of conflicting or duplicated efforts in NATO, and for giving the impression that NATO is now less important for Norway. Studies have shown that because of shared borders, culture, attitudes, size and composition of their Armed Forces, the Nordic countries are well suited for cooperation efforts. Despite this apparent match, projects have failed, and others have enjoyed only limited progress. These issues, along with power struggles and industry protectionism have called into question the viability of the endeavour. It is possible that Norway participates in NORDEFCO as a hedging effort, attempting to create support and a bond between the nations without signing too many contracts limiting their freedom of action. Because Norway

emphasises participation rather than output, it is possible that her rationale for efforts in NORDEFCO mirrors her rationale for international operations: an expectation of reciprocity in form of support from the other nations in the framework. The rationale being that Norway might need this support in the event of 'grey area' conflicts where an opponent (Russia) might seek to put pressure on her to change her policies or behaviour.

In NATO's 'Smart Defence' initiative, Norway has found an initiative where it enjoys very little relative influence, and where even the smallest projects can find themselves slowed down by bureaucracy. The core tenets of the initiative have been somewhat ignored in favour of excessive focus on a list of projects that have not necessarily been chosen with the core ideas of the initiative in mind, causing the limited enthusiasm that was there early on to dissipate. The initiative is arguably a response to deep-rooted problems of the NATO Alliance, requiring a lot more than a list of projects to solve. Norway's efforts in 'Smart Defence' can be seen as a continuation of its policy of participation as an effort to put 'loyalty money' in the NATO (U.S.) bank, making the U.S. more likely to secure Norwegian interest even in challenging scenarios. This is much in the same way as with NORDEFCO.

My findings suggest that the Norwegian approach to MDC is characterised by two main traits: 1) Norway is a pragmatic, sometimes ambivalent, partner, who participates as a means to gather 'loyalty points' with her partner. 2) Norway willingly participates, but only if participation brings with it few or no strings attached. These traits are arguably based on a desire to both minimise its own commitments while maximising the potential of receiving help when needed.

After 2014, events in the Ukraine have changed the security climate, bringing the prospect of war in Europe into people's minds. Norway's response has been to propose that NATO focuses on its core area and ability to reassure Allies of its Article 5 commitments. Norway has focused on increased spending as a solution for increased capabilities rather than lofty claims of economies of scale from deep integration. In the Nordics, Norway has promoted the idea of Nordic solidarity as a counter to Russian aggression. At the same time, studies show that Norway's participation in MDC has yielded less than desired savings and capability retention. In order to really save money, deeper integration is

needed. According to Gen. Diesen, the implementation of such integration requires uncomfortable and tough decisions, decisions only a ruthless statesman is able to make. It begs the question whether Norway's politicians are really avoiding the integration that Gen. Diesen advocates. As the current policy is a continuation of a longstanding Norwegian policy, history might deem it wiser and more statesman-like to stand firm in the chosen approach, rather than to depart from it.

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