



Report

Simulation NATO Trilemma: Strategic Direction South



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Simulation is the closest tool we have between combat and debate. It provides the safe environment, where experimenting with new concepts can be paid for with intellectual capacity, not real losses. The following report summarizes the conduct¹, conclusions and evaluation of a table-top simulation supporting analysis of Projecting Stability with Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) actions in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Strategic Direction South (SDS)². Simulation of the stabilization efforts have provided a testbed for new approaches that can be proposed to improve security and development, while recognizing the impact of human dimension. NATO Trilemma³ brings the impossible choices to the table – requiring a balanced strategy and adaptation to the conditions on the ground.

¹ Simulation has been conducted 20 times, with culminating iterations at the CIMIC and CMI Community of Interest Conference in Rome, 14-17 May 2018. Further 12 iterations are planned until end of 2018.

² Strategic Direction South is geographically synonymous to the Middle East North Africa region.

³ Trilemma is a dilemma with three options to choose from.

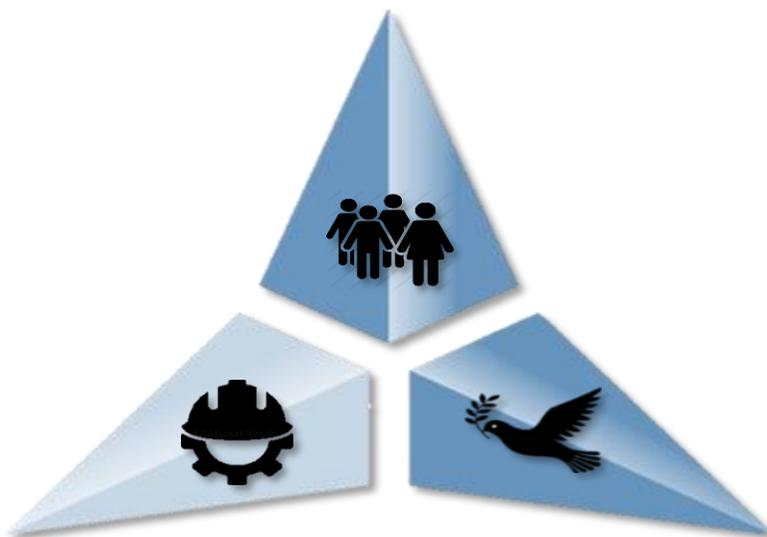


CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
NATO Trilemma.....	3
Introduction	3
Background	4
Time	4
Space	4
Participants	4
Model.....	4
Main Factors.....	5
Winning.....	6
Actions.....	6
Resources.....	6
Objectives	7
Simulation	8
First Steps.....	8
Second Dance	9
Third Chances	9
Tempo	10
Outcomes.....	12
Concept	12
Training.....	13
Developments.....	13
Conclusions.....	14
Team and Participants.....	16
List of Abbreviations	17



NATO Trilemma Stabilization effort can be measured by different metrics – spent time and resources, executed activities and trained people. The effects of stabilization have to be more specific: how did the situation improve? To see how we can respond to such question, the NATO Trilemma model and simulation has been designed. It takes into account three outcomes that are desirable and not possible to achieve without each other: improved security, improved development and population (acceptance and validation of actions).



Picture 1. NATO Trilemma.

INTRODUCTION

Approaching the topic of Projecting Stability in the Strategic Direction South is raising a lot of question marks. Although Stabilization is not a new concept, practice has proven it requires further refinement. In the simplest of terms, the simulation has aimed to stimulate thinking about effective approach to projecting stability. To this end, all relevant data on the status of the region has been reflected in the exercise.



BACKGROUND

TIME The starting point of the simulation was year 2018. The simulation proceeds in turns. Average duration of 4-players iteration is approximately 60 minutes.

SPACE The board represented the SDS/MENA region and the risk level of particular area. There are three categories (see picture below), marked as high risk (RED), medium risk (YELLOW) and low risk (GREEN)⁴. This distinction also dictates possible actions of the participants.



Picture 2. Strategic Direction South and respective risk levels.

PARTICIPANTS This simulation is designed for 2-4 players. The participants have to assume the role of a decision-maker in the region. They will choose between possible actions and try to balance the strategy in three aspects: security, development and population.

MODEL A successful strategy requires a balance between security, development and population. This means, that all actions affect the three elements, providing the view on effects in military, civilian and local perspective.

⁴ Risk levels have been based on the assessment of RiskMap2017/2018 in the MENA region.

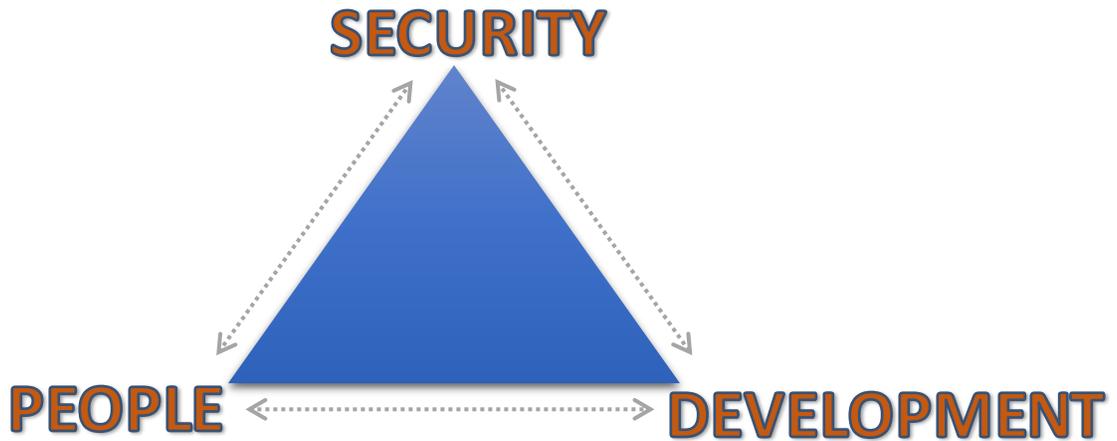
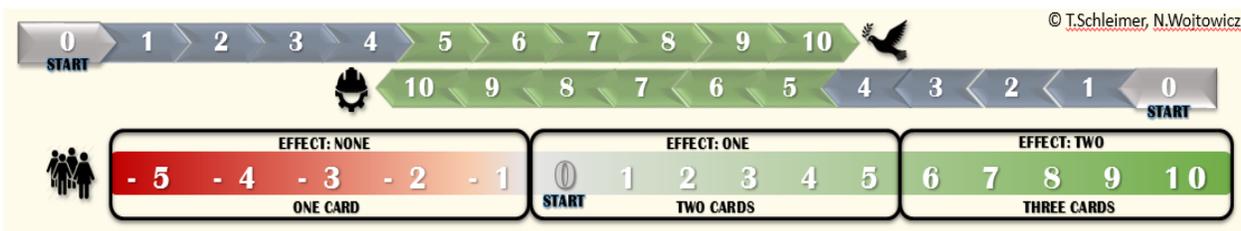


Illustration 3. Model of projecting stability in the Strategic Direction South

The general goal is to improve security and development in the region while simultaneously achieving the acceptance of the local population. This goal is supported by resources available to the participants and action which can be undertaken by paying the indicated price.

MAIN FACTORS Improvements are tracked by a scale, ranging from 0 to 10. All participants are starting the simulation at point 0 and can move up the scales. Population is a special scale, which affects the effects of the actions. If the population is not accepting the player, the action remains without effect. In case of neutral attitude, the effect is normal. If the player manages to become recognized as friendly to the population, the effects of improvement are doubled.

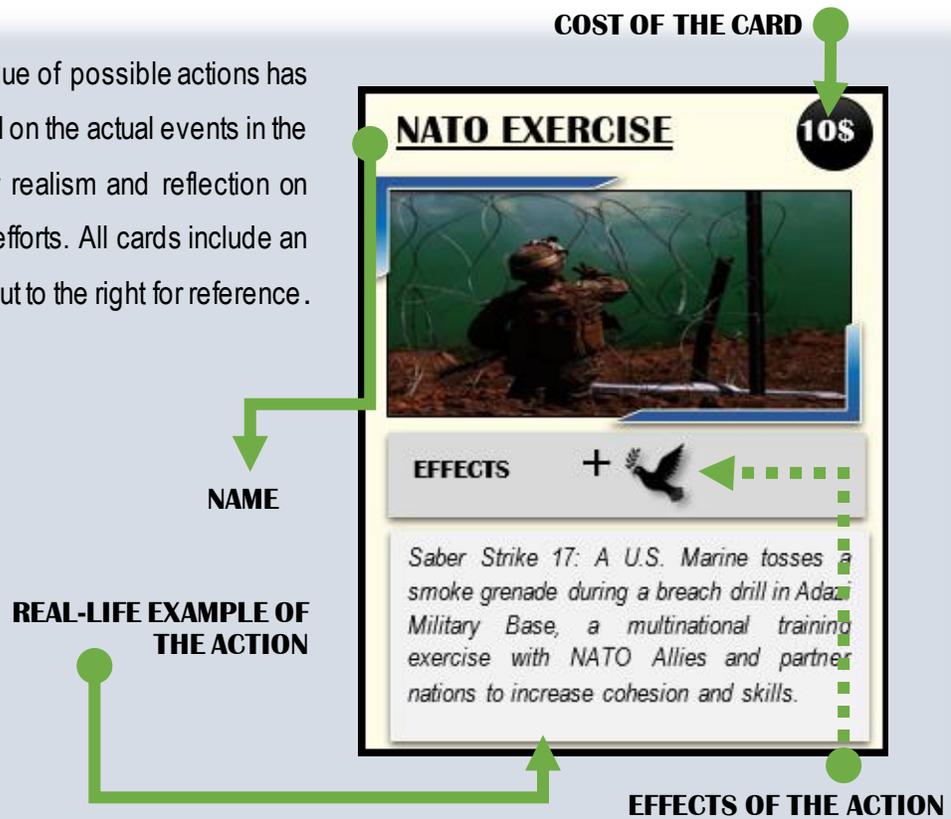


Picture 4. Scales of the NATO Trilemma: Strategic Direction South.



WINNING The winning player has to achieve 15 points on two scales in any combination – for example 10 security and 5 infrastructure. When his pawns meet in the green areas of both scales, he becomes the winner.

ACTIONS The catalogue of possible actions has been developed based on the actual events in the region. This allows for realism and reflection on the effects of existing efforts. All cards include an example – see the layout to the right for reference.



Picture 5. Example of an action card.

RESOURCES To play an action card, participants have three resources to use: funding (money), personnel and supplies. Those are the costs of possible actions and improvements. To receive more resources, participants have to come back to the Headquarters.



OBJECTIVES

The simulation has been designed to respond to training and analysis objectives. Participants, which took part in the described iteration, have noted a higher understanding of uncertain situations and recognition of impact of action on the population. During the simulation, the universal and context-dependent factors were identified, allowing for basic skills and advanced knowledge to be perfected.

Using the simulation as an analysis tool was intended as a vehicle to stimulate new approach to the situation in the region and effect-based operations. Merging perspectives of civilian and military participants creates a new, population-inclusive view.

Out of the complex problems enlisted in the document – Effective CIMIC, Projecting Stability and Strategic Direction South – specific gaps were identified:

- 1) Knowledge gap – What is SDS? Which factors are prevalent to stabilization? What is projecting stability? How to achieve it?
- 2) Understanding gap – What does projecting stability mean in practice?
- 3) Thinking gap – New approaches to the SDS; Linking associated concepts together;
- 4) Implementation gap – Experimenting with new approaches in a safe environment; Knowing which actions are effective and which have to be reconsidered to limited conditions;
- 5) Evidence gap – Provision of quantitative and qualitative data that supports strategic thinking and operational planning;



SIMULATION

The conference has provided a 2-day venue for a simulation and associated briefings. The first day was opened with a discussion on existing approaches, strategies and challenges to be faced. The expectations of participants ranged from actively contributing to development of simulation, through curiosity to desire to survive the day and retire to the hotel. As far as the first two could be met, the third did not leave much room for achievements.

FIRST STEPS Explanation of the rules and winning to the participants remains the cornerstone of success of any simulation.



Picture 6. Capt. Tim Schleimer (standing up) provides the group with rules and guidelines.



SECOND DANCE A lot can be said about tango, swing and folk dance. The truth is it has to be tried out to grasp the movement. The same rule applies in the simulation – the participants usually are comfortable with their actions around third turn, when they try out all available options.

“I’m going to go on the local radio to get some votes”

Participant during action



Picture 7. Four-player simulation at the starting phase.

THIRD CHANCES Participants usually recognize their options and steps ahead after the initial dance is familiar. This gives them the chance to mix, match and balance the possible actions .

“I need to build up riot control capacity.

Security is improving and I am getting popular”

Participant during action



TEMPO The tempo of the simulation is increasing and participants recognize the individual strategies. Even though, the overall objective is to improve the region, players also compete for resources .

“I have nothing to offer if somebody wants to steal from me, but I can steal...”

Participant during counting



Picture 8. High tempo phase of the simulation.

“I would be happier to spend money in this province, but they don't need any more NGOs.”

Participant during play

“I have a card –make the life impossible for the green player-.”

Participant vaging his options on cooperation



Picture 9. Participants reaching green areas of security and development scales. Note: one of the players have been rejected by the population and his actions take no effect (negative value on population scale)

“This is the Titanic strategy – If I sink, everybody sinks.”

Participant considering non-cooperative approach

“After I did capacity building, I am going to equip local forces.”

Participant preparing a sequence of actions



"I am a CIMICer."

*Participant declaring his strategy as using CIMIC
to maximum*

When the simulation was concluded (by a winning player), the choice was given to the group to re-play. The time has allowed for half an iteration to be executed. The outcomes of the first day session are captured below.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes are based on a questionnaire conducted prior to the simulation and afterwards. To capture all contributions, additional observations of facilitators and evaluator are included.

Concept – using the simulation as a supporting method for projecting stability in the Strategic Direction South has been validated as a complementary tool. In the questionnaire, participants have agreed that there is a benefit of using this simulation and that it supports new way of thinking⁵.

Participants have not recognized different perspective to the problem, which might be associated with one main role given in the simulation. The knowledge gap of SDS seems to also be not filled – almost all participants noted the same level of information on the topic. This could be caused by more reflective character of the simulation, not necessarily transmitting information, rather processing its effect.

The shortcomings are recognized by the authors and they will be resolved with an advanced version of the simulation (see details in future developments). The benefits of the simulation noted by

⁵ On the scale of 1-5, all participants have agreed (4) with the statement that there is a benefit to this simulation. New ways of thinking have been supported by the rank of 4,375 out of 5.



participants remain a pride for the designers, which will be further shared with next users of the simulation.

Training – As a training tool, simulation has a potential due to universal elements of CIMIC and civilian environment. The security-development-population model provides a solid framework for analysis of effectiveness of strategies of stabilization. The following Units and Nations have indicated interest in M&S solutions for their respective personnel:

- Poland (CIMIC Directorate);
- Slovenia (Ministry of Defence);
- Netherlands (1CMI Command);
- NATO Landcom (G9 Division);
- Denmark (Military Academy);
- NATO SHAPE (J9),
- Latvia (CIMIC training to the Joint Staff);

If you would like to request the simulation please contact Ms. Natalia Wojtowicz (Wojtowicz.n@cimic-coe.org) with details of your organization. The request will be granted by the CCOE Command Group if capacity is available. Priority is given to Sponsoring Nations of CCOE and NATO Force and Command Structure.

Developments

The second day of the conference provided a chance to discuss developments in the M&S support to CIMIC. Developments were divided into:

- 1) Extended version of NATO Trilemma: SDS. Additional elements include the new roles – Local Government, NATO, UN, NGO, Armed Groups; and a collective goal of comprehensive approach. Immediate improvement which has been proposed by the participants has been included already in



the version 2 of the simulation: markers which indicate who raised security and infrastructure, with bonuses for the progress.

- 2) Simulation with focus on Mali – 50% of the participants have declared the interest in a similar solution for post-conflict reconstruction in Mali. This developments will be continued over the next year (2018-2019). If you would like to join this effort, please contact Ms. Natalia Wojtowicz (Wojtowicz.n@cimic-coe.org).

CONCLUSIONS

Although the simulation is devoted to an experience of the particular groups, several conclusions can be offered to the general public and practitioners in the area. This observations have been validated with diverse group of participants, allowing for a reality-check of assumptions. As outlined in the objectives, NATO Trilemma was designed to stimulate new ways of thinking. In this terms, I was able to note the following:

1. You can't prepare strategy ahead of time – the conditions change and actions of other players can enable/block your intentions;
2. It requires more resources to stabilize areas at further distance – reaching an area can be possible, but establishing a lasting improvement not;
3. In the rotational system of missions, personnel is always understaffed. It is better to focus on a specific goal than to overstretch resources pursuing numerous objectives at the same time;
4. Without shared understanding of the common goal, there will be no cooperation. The common denominator for all participants was local peace. The ownership of the problems and solutions needs to be transitioned to achieve sustainability.
5. Luck and initiative – although not quantifiable – do play a role. Showing credible willingness can speed up the process of stabilization.
6. The most successful strategies are adapted to the conditions on the ground. Most of the failures are caused by trying to *transplant* a) foreign constructs/governance, b) standard solutions from other places, which are working for the local population.



7. Importance of sequence – In the high risk areas, the security has to be improved first. At frequent rate, the international forces have built up infrastructure which was destroyed in air strikes afterwards. In the low risk areas, there is no need for reinforcing security – there focus needs to be shifted on relevant infrastructure.
8. Clusters – Most of the participants have “nested” their efforts – started with one improvement and branched out to the neighboring areas. This provides a possibility to deconflict the stabilization efforts and move forward. During the discussions, the question of a successful intervention has been posed. There was no instance, where everybody could agree on one case of success. This makes it complicated to perceive the good scenario/outcome. When a cluster starts from a successful example, it can be continued with adjustments.
9. Human dimension – In terms of civilian environment and own personnel. Performance of the personnel can only be effective if there is enough resources and local population recognizes this as valid.

Conclusions remain an opened catalogue as new groups of participants share their observations. This conclusions will therefore be updated after next 12 iterations. If you have comments or suggestions pertinent to this paragraph, please contact Ms. Natalia Wojtowicz (Wojtowicz.n@cimic-coe.org).



TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

The team for this simulation consisted of developers: Ms. Natalia Wojtowicz and Capt. Tim Schleimer. Proud authors would like to thank all participants and valued supporters for their contributions.



Picture 10. Capt. Tim Schleimer and Ms. Natalia Wojtowicz

Among them, special thanks to Capt. Ralph Gauderer, who has facilitated the simulation and evaluated the participants' inputs.



Picture 11. Capt. Ralph Gauderer



The team was also joined by representatives of Modelling and Simulation Centre of Excellence – MAJ Tobias Kuhn and LTC Walter David. They have shared their experience and presented different simulations available in NATO.



Picture 12. Maj Tobias Kuhn (left) and LTC Walter David (right)

Most importantly, we would like to thank the engaged, active and challenging group of participants, who made this experience very high in value. New methods always come with certain risks – in this case it paid off due to enthusiastic and forward-thinking group.



Picture 13. Participants of NATO Trilemma simulation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. CIMIC - Civil-Military Cooperation
2. CMI – Civil-Military Interaction
3. NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization
4. SDS - Strategic Direction South