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21 February 2011

INFO MEMO
PDD(SPK)(2011)0004

To : SHAPE Chief of Staff

Cc : Deputy Director of the Private Office
ASG/OPS
IMS Public Affairs
SHAPE Public Affairs Office
SHAPE Strategic Communications

From : Acting ASG/PDD; NATO Spokesperson

Subject : **2011 NATO Strategic Communications Framework in Support of Operation Ocean Shield**

1. You will find attached the Operation Ocean Shield Strategic Communications Framework 2011.
2. This document has been developed by the NATO Spokesperson in consultation with the International Military Staff, SHAPE, Allied Maritime Command Northwood and Joint Force Command Lisbon.
3. I recommend that the document be circulated to the chain of command.

(signed) Dr Stefanie Babst
(signed) Oana Lungescu

2 Annexes

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**2011 NATO STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR COUNTER-PIRACY
and OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD**

Current Situation

1. OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD was launched by the North Atlantic Council on 17 August 2009. NATO is conducting counter-piracy activities as part of an internationally recognised and supported effort in a region of strategic interest to the Alliance. NATO's commitment is as a complementary player in coordination with the other international counter-piracy actors including the EU's Operation ATALANTA, CTF-151, and individual nations.

2. In 2010, Allies agreed to prolong OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD to the end of 2012. In addition, they agreed to extend the Joint Operations Area, to increase the scope of port visits by deployed forces and to escort UN vessels to the harbour entrance of Mogadishu. Improved adoption of Best Management Practices (BMP) and the use self-protection measures by the merchant shipping industry has also had a positive effect. However, notwithstanding these initiatives and the combined efforts of the international counter-piracy actors, the scope and intensity of pirate activity off the Horn of Africa has continued to grow. While the incidence of piracy within the Gulf of Aden/Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor (IRTC) has been reduced to a low level, the total number of attacks has grown and the pirates' increasing use of mother ships is allowing them to act with impunity.

3. The operational challenges facing NATO and its international partners are further compounded by increasing levels of frustration on the part of the shipping industry and regional actors. At the end of 2010, NATO Allies agreed to conduct a strategic review of all aspects of NATO's counter-piracy efforts within the context of NATO's overall maritime operations. A final report with recommendations should be endorsed by NATO Defence Ministers at their June 2011 meeting. The outcome of this review may lead to subsequent amendment to this framework document.

StratCom Core Message

4. The guiding StratCom Core Message for OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD is that: "NATO is committed to a collaborative response to counter-piracy off the Horn of Africa in response to the UN request for protecting the safety of the commercial maritime routes and international navigation."

StratCom Objectives

5. Faced with a growing piracy challenge and the potential for critical media reporting of NATO's contribution to international counter-piracy action, the 2011 OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD StratCom objectives are to:

- a. clearly explain the scope and limitations of NATO's OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD counter-piracy mission, and win the understanding and active support of the population of the Joint Operations Area, Somalia and neighbouring states, Troop Contributing Nations' populations and the international community;
- b. demonstrate and illustrate the contribution being made to OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD in contributing to international efforts to disrupt acts of piracy off the Horn of Africa;
- c. dissuade audiences in the Joint Operations Area, Somalia and neighbouring states from conducting and supporting acts of piracy and armed robbery.

StratCom Themes

6. To be effective, messages, images and actions must be clear, coordinated and synchronized. Four themes are to be promoted during 2011. The ways in which these themes are articulated and demonstrated is to be determined on the basis of local circumstances, but the aim is to leave the audiences with an impression that our mission reflects the following:

- a. **NATO Responsiveness and Commitment** – Within the context of an international collaborative response, NATO has the resolve, capability and commitment to confront threats to international security. Piracy is a threat to regional maritime trading activities, and the strategic interests of NATO Allies, which must be vigorously countered;
- b. **Cooperation** - Maritime cooperation, coordination and complementarities with the other maritime Task Forces and individual navies are essential to fight piracy. The level of cooperation between these forces, and with merchant shipping organisations, is at an unprecedented high;
- c. **Capacity Building** – within means, and subject to the agreement of Allies, NATO is receptive to requests for support from regional states to build

regional counter-piracy capacity over the mid- to long-term in complementarity with other international efforts;

- d. **Realism** - piracy off the Horn of Africa is one symptom of deeper political, developmental and security issues in the region. Solutions to these deeper problems lie beyond the means of NATO and require a comprehensive approach by the international community. Moreover, the geographic extent over which acts of piracy are attempted and limited number of assets available means that while NATO ships are proving to be effective at disrupting acts of piracy, the threat itself remains an international concern.

Focus Topics

7. Communications resources are limited. Therefore, planned or anticipated events and activities used to promote and/or reinforce one or more of the themes identified above must be carefully managed.¹ To ensure effectiveness and common approach during 2011, the focus of Strategic communications efforts should be on:

- a. NATO's increasing interaction with the commercial and military maritime community. This demonstrates the role that NATO is taking in the management of the international community's response to piracy and armed robbery off the Horn of Africa;
- b. the rotation of NATO assets (SNMG) as an opportunity to highlight NATO's continued commitment to the operation, to counter-piracy more generally and the flexibility and utility of NATO's standing maritime forces;
- c. cooperation with other actors on counter-piracy activities as a demonstration of NATO's resolve to strengthen practical cooperation with other organisations and actors in the face of shared security interests;
- d. efforts to develop a NATO legal framework for OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD as a demonstration of NATO Nations' willingness to bring to justice those who conduct or support acts of piracy off the Horn of Africa;

¹ Some of the Focus Topics identified are still subject to discussion and agreement. They will be used, if and when, agreements are reached or where resources are made available.

- e. the support for Regional Capacity Building as a demonstration of NATO's willingness to help regional actors develop their own counter-piracy capabilities and capacity, which will in turn contribute to regional economic prosperity and help safeguard NATO's economic interests;
- f. coordination between NATO and a range of non-institutional partners (such as Pakistan, India and China) with shared concerns over maritime piracy, establishing relationships and building trust, as part of broader confidence building objectives for the Alliance;
- g. focused engagement with regional countries at strategic, operational and tactical levels in order to gain support across all four current lines of operation (disruption, integration, maritime community and capacity building).

StratCom Constraints

8. While this Framework is intended to support StratCom activities in line with the aspirations agreed by Allies in SACEUR's OPLAN 10710, a number of factors constrain its full delivery, including Force Generation shortfalls (including lack of a PSYOPS Support Element), limited public affairs capability and capacity afloat, and direct engagement with regional media outlets constrained to pre-arranged port visits.

Coordination

9. The StratCom function will be executed in accordance with NATO StratCom Policy.² Timely and effective coordination within and between headquarters will be essential to the delivery of NATO's StratCom objectives. Although there is no deployed StratCom staff element within the JOA, the JFC Lisbon Joint Effects Management Branch/JFC Lisbon StratCom Advisor will coordinate the activities of TF 508 in close collaboration with MCC Northwood. In turn, JFC Lisbon will coordinate StratCom activities through the existing StratCom focal points within the Office of Chief StratCom at SHAPE, and at NATO HQ within the IMS/PAA Office and the Public Diplomacy Division (Media Operations Centre). Vertical coordination will be conducted via periodic OOS StratCom VTCs. StratCom coordination between NATO, TCNs and international organisations, and in particular, the United Nations Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (Working Group 4) and the European Union Naval Force, will primarily be led by NATO HQ:

² See PO(2009)0141 dated 29 Sep 09, NATO Strategic Communications Policy.

- a. **Products, programmes and outputs.** Up-to-date key messages will be provided and promulgated periodically by NATO HQ to reflect contemporary issues and areas of focus. Attached at Annex 2 are OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD key messages promulgated at the beginning of 2011.

KEY MESSAGES – JANUARY 2011

- The root causes of piracy off the Horn of Africa lie ashore and will require a determined effort from the international community to address.
- In close coordination with other international organisations and individual nations, NATO is engaged in countering the piracy threat.
- NATO is conducting counter-piracy operations in support of UN Security Council Resolutions in order to deter piracy activities off the Horn of Africa.
- OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD is a clear sign of the Alliance's determination to play a role in the international efforts in the maritime field, and its flexibility in meeting the variety of challenges posed in today's security environment.
- NATO coordinates and complements its efforts with other nations and organisations engaged in counter-piracy activities in and around the Horn of Africa.
- NATO engages at the local, regional and international level in order to deter, prevent and disrupt piracy activities off the Horn of Africa.
- NATO's Standing Naval Maritime Groups are a multinational force that possesses the expertise, professionalism and experience to accomplish the mission. NATO welcomes contributions by other nations to join in NATO's counter-piracy efforts.
- NATO supports efforts to develop counter-piracy capacity in and around the Horn of Africa in order to enhance maritime security in the region within the framework of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia.
- NATO provides an effective and value-added contribution to counter-piracy efforts off the Horn of Africa, in coordination with and complementary to other nations and organisations.
- This operation continues the valuable contribution to maritime security made by NATO in support of World Food Programme humanitarian assistance activities during its earlier OPERATION ALLIED PROVIDER and OPERATION ALLIED PROTECTOR. NATO is open to further requests to provide similar support.
- NATO, through its activities and visible presence, is disrupting an increasing number of pirate attacks, although the total number of attacks continues to increase.