

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

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2010-2011 NATO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY STRATEGY

Note by the Deputy Secretary General

1. The Committee for Public Diplomacy (CPD) has finalised its work on the 2010/2011 NATO Public Diplomacy Strategy and approved the document under a silence procedure on 2 December 2009.
2. The strategy identifies a number of critical communications challenges that the Alliance is facing and proposes two priority areas that deserve special attention in NATO's communication efforts over the next two years: NATO's role and achievements in operations and missions and the Alliance's identity and strategic direction. Against this background the strategy lays out a broad range of communication approaches and tools that will help the Alliance to generate public support for its policies, operations and missions and ultimately improve NATO's public image and reputation.
3. I believe that the 2010/2011 Public Diplomacy Strategy represents a solid framework for further enhancing our strategic communication efforts that are key for the Alliance's success.
4. Unless I hear to the contrary by **18.00 hrs on Thursday, 10 December 2009**, I shall assume that Council agrees to the proposed strategy.

(Signed) Claudio Bisogniero

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2010-2011 NATO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY STRATEGY

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. NATO's public diplomacy efforts in 2010-2011 will as a matter of principle remain closely aligned to the Allies' decisions and policies. As the Alliance's agenda continues to evolve, the North Atlantic Council, supported by the Committee for Public Diplomacy (CPD) and other NATO bodies, will provide concrete guidance on what key messages and political themes will require a dedicated communication effort.¹ NATO's communication activities will thus actively and efficiently contribute towards fostering trust and support for the Alliance and strengthening its public image and reputation.

1.2. If NATO wants its voice to be heard and to influence today's global information environment, we need to vigorously modernise our communication tools and approaches, become more responsive to public audiences and prioritise our programmes according to the most important communication challenges, within the limits of NATO's financial and human resources. NATO civilian and military bodies and the Allies must commit themselves to addressing these challenges jointly and pro-actively, by reinforcing each others' efforts and contributing to the consistency and coherence of NATO's messages at all levels.

1.3. In this regard, the NATO Strategic Communications Policy² represents a major step forward by making public diplomacy and strategic communications an integral part of NATO's policy planning and execution and by enhancing civil-military cooperation based on a common vision within NATO across the board. For 2010-2011, it will be key to implement all aspects of the Strategic Communications Policy as fast and efficiently as possible in order to enhance the effectiveness of NATO's external communications, and to contribute its overall transformation process.

1.4. The 2010-2011 NATO Public Diplomacy Strategy sets out two key priority areas that deserve a special effort, namely in support of NATO's role and achievements in areas of operations and missions and the Alliance's identity and strategic direction. The Alliance's overall public diplomacy efforts will continue to aim at promoting awareness of and building understanding and support for NATO's policies, operations and missions in the short, medium and long term and in complement to the national efforts of the Allies.

¹ Such as the Public Diplomacy Strategies for 2009/2010 for the MD and ICI countries (C-M(2009)0129 and C-M(2009)0130), respectively.

² PO(2009)0141 approved by the NAC on 30 September 2009.

II. THE PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT

A. NATO's Communication Challenges

2.1. The current transatlantic environment will continue to challenge NATO's ability to carry its messages proactively and engagingly to diverse audiences across the globe, but it also entails a number of positive trends on which NATO's future communication efforts should build. From a broader perspective, the public climate in Europe and North America has recently become more supportive of a close transatlantic security relationship compared to previous years. As the 2009 Transatlantic Trends³ survey shows, the Alliance has regained public support in many, albeit not all Allied countries. Moreover, NATO's 60th anniversary, the NATO Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl, the arrival of a new Secretary General in late summer and the launching of a public debate about NATO's new Strategic Concept have spurred broader public attention and interest in the Alliance.

2.2. But notwithstanding growing European and North American support for transatlantic security cooperation, the public in NATO nations remains highly concerned with the situation in Afghanistan. Compounding the effects of an increasingly challenging security situation, a lack of good governance and the damaging fraud of the recent elections, is the continuing struggle to counterbalance this with effective communications of significant progress across a wide range of areas in the country.⁴ As a result, misunderstanding about the real status of mission progress is evident amongst key International Community partners and within some ISAF member nations. The prevailing wish among the public in many European countries is to see the number of their troops reduced or to have them entirely withdrawn, since they fail to see a credible political perspective in Afghanistan. Given the growing number of NATO casualties in the country, large majorities in Europe oppose the use of military 'hard' power in general, and consequently of combat troops in Afghanistan. Furthermore, public interest in the Alliance's successful operations in the Balkans and in combating terrorism in the Mediterranean remains limited, thus adding to doubts about the Allies' resolve in providing security and stability beyond NATO's borders.

2.3. In general, as social and economic security has increasingly replaced national security as a major public concern, interest in and understanding of the Alliance's roles and policies have become significantly weaker. National and international surveys continue to demonstrate that the post-Cold-War generation knows very little about NATO's concrete activities and its *raison d'être* as well as the transatlantic values that NATO stands for. The lack of appreciation for the Alliance often coincides with stereotypes and misperceptions of it in broader parts of the public in both Allied and partner countries. Hence explaining NATO's strategic rationale to the public at large, and specifically to

³ The Transatlantic Trends 2009 (www.transatlantictrends.org)

⁴ For the Agreed Military Strategic Campaign Objectives (MSCO) defined in OPLAN 10302 (Revise 1) see C-M(2009)0032(INV). See also the Autumn 2009 Periodic Mission Review and Report on the Comprehensive Strategic Political-Military Plan Implementation PCG(ISAF)N(2009)0100.

young audiences, must remain a top communication priority in the future in order to strengthen NATO's identity and reputation. Ultimately, we need to convince our public that the Alliance is relevant to their security concerns and pursues an effective strategy to meet current and future security challenges in close co-ordination with other international organisations.

B. NATO's Communication Opportunities

2.4. The Allies' decision to launch work on a new Strategic Concept in the period leading up to the next NATO Summit, due to take place in 2010 in Portugal, provides a unique opportunity to underscore the Allies' resolve to render the Alliance fit to meet the challenges of the 21st century in the most effective way. The general public in our own countries and across the globe expects the new Strategic Concept to provide a clear vision about NATO's future strategic direction, how it will address multiple security challenges and threats in an increasingly insecure world and how it seeks to develop its partnerships and relations with other nations, international organisations and international actors. NATO's concrete responses to these and other critical questions will be decisive for its future public image and credibility.

2.5. The Secretary General's and military leaders' (CMC, SACEUR, SACT) public activities, NATO ministerial meetings, NAC and MC visits, military exercises and other high-level NATO meetings in 2010-2011 will provide additional communication opportunities to carry NATO's story and themes to our public in multiple ways.

III. KEY COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES IN 2010-2011

3.1. Explaining the values and principles that NATO stands for, first and foremost the principle of Allied solidarity, will feature prominently in NATO's communication and outreach efforts, in particular towards the young generation. In 2010-2011, PDD will proactively support the Alliance's policies across the transformation agenda and towards partner countries, international organisations and international actors. Within the broad spectrum of themes and messages that NATO will communicate in the next two years, a special emphasis will be given to two priority areas that deserve a dedicated effort.

A. Explain and promote NATO'S role and achievements in areas of operations and missions

3.2. The successful execution of the Alliance's objectives in Afghanistan depends on strong public support in NATO nations. To counteract declining support and lack of understanding for the ISAF operation and NATO's wider engagement in Afghanistan, NATO will increase its efforts to acquaint audiences in Member countries, and where possible partner and troop-contributing nations, with the full range of the Alliance's roles and activities in Afghanistan. It will aim to explain why the success of these efforts matters at home and what more is needed to succeed, with a view to generating support for

NATO's continued engagement in order to achieve a successful transition, where the Afghan authorities will assume full responsibility for protecting their country's citizens. Ultimately, NATO's strategic communication efforts should help shape a clearer public understanding that the Allies remain fully committed to the ISAF operation until all requirements for the successful transition to Afghan ownership and leadership have been met in both military and civilian spheres.

3.3. Building on NATO's current media operations and public diplomacy efforts in support of the operation in Afghanistan, NATO will pursue more targeted and expanded communication activities to generate broader and more comprehensive reporting on what NATO's operation has already achieved in Afghanistan in all relevant areas, and in particular in the field of training the Afghan security forces. In order to counter continued misperceptions and doubts about the success of NATO's engagement, a stronger narrative will be elaborated to explain to our public that the Alliance and the international community need to stay engaged in Afghanistan, not only to provide support for stability and reconstruction in the country but primarily for the sake of our own security. NATO's new narrative should stress that the way forward is linked to the development of conditions allowing for the successful transition to Afghans taking the lead, which NATO will continue to support in multiple ways, and in particular through the NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A).⁵ The narrative will have to be resilient and robust, especially against undermining and adverse events.

3.4. Consequently, NATO's communication activities will focus on making its concrete support for Afghan capacity-building known to the wider public, including through visual material. Moreover, in order to demonstrate the importance of the regional dimension of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan, we will increasingly explain the Allies' evolving relationship with Pakistan, which is based on a three-pronged strategy.⁶ Last but not least, NATO will expand its programmes to explain that NATO's military and civilian engagement is embedded in a wider international effort, and that the Allies remain committed to improving cooperation with other international organisations/actors and partners as part of the Comprehensive Approach.

⁵ The Implementation of the Comprehensive Strategic Political-Military Plan for Afghanistan sets out four priorities for NATO for the remainder of 2009 and for 2010: improving the protection of the Afghan people; building Afghan National Security capacity and facilitating their lead role in security; facilitating governance and development and engagement with Afghanistan's neighbours, particularly Pakistan (PO(2009)0150).

⁶ The three main elements for the relations between NATO and Pakistan are a.) furthering of our political dialogue; b.) stepping up practical cooperation and c.) multiplying our public diplomacy efforts (SG(2009)0125 (INV)). NATO's concrete public diplomacy efforts envisaged for 2010 are part of a dedicated public diplomacy strategy.

3.5. Envisaged means of achievement in support of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan in 2010-2011 will include:

- (a) Expanded outreach tours to Afghanistan for journalists and senior opinion formers from Allied nations (TOLAs, MOLAs), the pro-active dissemination of key products (e.g. media lines, rolling brief, weekly media analysis) generated by the PDD Media Operation Centre (MOC) to NATO and Allied staff and a more aggressive and targeted effort to market web-based videos, news stories, reports and footage through the NATO TV Channel on the internet (NITV).
- (b) Moreover, NATO will expand the range of diversified in-depth documentaries, multimedia products and publications and, where possible, translate them into Dari and Pashto.
- (c) Engaging national media representatives and Parliamentarians in advance of important parliamentary discussions and subsequent decisions in relation to ISAF will be important to support an informed discussion in the public. Consequently, NATO will work even closer with Delegations and national authorities to help explain the Allies' civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan.
- (d) Facilitating discussions and networks between young Afghan and European and North American leaders will be another priority in 2010-2011. To this end, NATO will engage young audiences both in theatre and in Allied nations.
- (e) Wherever possible, NATO will seek to tell the 'Afghan story', with the aim to demonstrate and support Afghan ownership in the process of enhancing security and stability in the country. Afghan journalists will also be invited to contribute reports and stories to be broadcasted on NITV designed to reach out to the Afghan public.
- (f) NATO will intensify its efforts to further develop the 'Silk Highway-Afghanistan' project through the Science for Peace and security programme (SPS), aimed at providing internet connectivity to provincial universities across Afghanistan as well as to 15 Kabul institutions, including the Afghan Governmental Media Center.
- (g) Finally, in order to enhance NATO's ability to communicate effectively in any given crisis, PDD will reinforce its efforts to improve the awareness and crisis management skills of its staff.

3.6. On Kosovo, NATO aims to convey the message that the UN-mandated KFOR presence remains crucial to maintain security and help build a democratic, multiethnic and efficient Kosovo Security Forces (KSF). Our public diplomacy efforts will be based on explaining the Allies' continued resolve to foster stability, security and multiethnicity in Kosovo that will have an important impact on the security of the wider Western Balkans

region. As KFOR moves through the stages of transition, PDD will elaborate a specific strategic communication plan to explain NATO's new role to the public in Kosovo as well as to regional audiences.

3.7. In order to generate more public interest in and better understanding of NATO's other operations and missions, in particular its mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's Training Mission in Iraq and NATO's counter-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa, NATO will intensify its engagement with media representatives and other opinion formers. Likewise, NATO will enhance its efforts to disseminate news stories, footage, reports and multimedia products about these operations and missions, primarily through the NATO TV Channel on the internet and the NATO website.

B. Explain and promote the Alliance's identity and strategic direction

3.8. Given the growing sense of unpredictability and uncertainty in the current strategic environment it will be important that NATO convincingly explains the process leading towards the new Strategic Concept and the final outcome. In our outreach efforts we should stress that the new Strategic Concept will help NATO to make the right political choices, to better fulfil our tasks, to clarify the political and military tools that we need to have available and to better identify the resources needed to fulfil them. By defining a new common vision, the new strategy should become a key tool to re-engage all Member countries to the principles, roles and policies of the Alliance. Ultimately, the new Strategic Concept will help to better explain NATO's identity and to promote its reputation to the public in NATO Member states and towards partners.

3.9. NATO's key messages about the Alliance's new strategic direction should refer to its unique identity as collective defence organisation, its democratic legitimacy and the Allies' resolve to pursue their policies and operations efficiently and in cooperation with the international community. The meaning of Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty in the 21st century environment, the enduring importance of NATO as a transatlantic consultation forum, the previous rounds of enlargement, the Allies' ongoing commitment to the 'Open Door policy' and its relations to partners should be central points in our narrative about NATO's future strategic direction.

3.10. Our partners have been, and will continue to be, instrumental in NATO's transformation. Since the 1990s NATO's partnerships have successfully contributed to reinforcing stability across the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond and thus to the development of a united Europe, whole and free, by supporting domestic democratic transformation and working on interoperability and capability issues. In our public diplomacy efforts towards audiences in partner countries, we will put emphasis on explaining NATO's multiple partnerships tools and programmes and the Allies' continuous commitment to work closely with partners across a broad range of issues, including operations and missions. Furthermore, we will stress the Allies' commitment to forge a constructive partnership with Russia, based on mutually shared interests and challenges, respecting all the principles of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the Rome Declaration.

3.11. NATO's public diplomacy efforts in Allied and partner nations will pro-actively counterbalance public fears, correct misperceptions and challenge public opinion and media commentary suggesting that the Allies would compromise their core principles, are less than fully committed to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and lack a joint political vision and the resolve to meet current and future security challenges in the most effective way.

3.12. From a public diplomacy perspective it is of paramount importance that the new strategy will be converted into a compelling narrative telling NATO's 'core story' in a simple and persuasive way and resonating with a multitude of audiences. Envisaged means of achievement in 2010/2011 will build on the dedicated campaign that PDD launched following the public introduction of the Group of Experts in early September 2009.

- (a) Public conferences, workshops, seminars and online discussions will help to stimulate public discussions in Allied and partner countries culminating in a targeted media and outreach campaign in support of the next NATO Summit in Portugal.
- (b) NATO, in close co-ordination with the host nation, will organise a series of media and web-based activities in connection with public events in Allied nations to influence public commentary and discussions in favour of the Summit. PDD will also seek ways to involve specific target groups directly with the Summit to demonstrate the participatory approach of the Strategic Concept.
- (c) After the 2010 Summit it will be key to make use of all cost efficient information channels efficiently in order to familiarize the media and larger audiences in Allied and partner countries with the key aspects of the new Strategic Concept. In this respect the narrative will be a key tool to explain and promote the Alliance's new strategic direction.
- (d) PDD will mobilise its networks in partner countries to acquaint audiences with NATO's new strategic direction through multiple, cost efficient information tools. In addition, NATO will pay particular attention to aspirant countries by helping them to continue to build national communication capacities and, where required, to manage public expectations.

IV. TARGET AUDIENCES AND COMMUNICATION PARTNERS

4.1. Building renewed understanding and support for the transatlantic Alliance among the young generation of Europeans and North Americans is vital for NATO. Our emphasis should be on explaining what NATO concretely does and will continue to do in the years to

come to meet current and future security challenges. Likewise, we should stress the continued importance of transatlantic values as well as the benefits of addressing the multifarious threats and challenges to our security within a multilateral, transatlantic framework. The latter implies that PDD and Allied nations should jointly develop and apply a dedicated narrative for young people in a modern and appealing language.

4.2. In 2010, PDD projects such as Summit-related Youth Forums, the NATO-Afghan Student Forum, established summer schools and university courses, conferences, workshops for students, essay and film competitions as well as NATO-sponsored online discussions will be merged under a unified brand called 'Young Network NATO', which will allow NATO to engage these audiences in a more systematic and sustained fashion. 'Young Network NATO' will have professionally designed web modules, including links to the Secretary General's Corner, on Facebook, Linked-In and other social media, and will regularly offer reports about upcoming events, NATO stories, as well as a portal for online discussions.

4.3. Wherever possible, NATO will seek to give young political leaders a prominent role in discussing NATO and its policies directly with the Secretary General, senior civilian and military NATO representatives and Alliance leaders. The 2010 NATO Summit, forthcoming ministerial meetings as well as the discussion about a new Strategic Concept are excellent opportunities to demonstrate that NATO is keen to take the views of young audiences on board, be it through special events or web-based programmes that can be linked to NATO meetings.

4.4. Generating broader interest in NATO among young people will only be successful if their school education includes background information on transatlantic security issues and educators have sufficient knowledge of and material on NATO. To this end, NATO will work closely with the respective national authorities and the Atlantic Treaty Associations (ATAs) to engage educators through special programmes such as summer schools and virtual training programmes for educators, and to identify the best ways to improve curricula at schools. The NATO Defence College and the NATO School in Oberammergau will be invited to join this particular outreach effort towards educators.

4.5. NATO will continue to survey and monitor public trends in Member and partner nations to be able to identify the most important and suitable target audiences in the respective countries. Taking into account the specifics of the political and public environment in each country, NATO programmes will aim to be as tailored and efficient as possible. Prime movers of information such as political leaders, parliamentarians, think-tankers, security experts, journalists, academics and representatives of influential NGOs will be first on NATO's list of target audiences across Allied and partner countries. In particular, PDD will seek to reach out to critical voices as well as to young women who, according to the results of the focus study conducted in 2008, represent an important target group for NATO. In addition, PDD will use new media applications to reach out to broader segments of the public.

4.6. Further, NATO intends to make better use of the Information Centres/Points and Depository Libraries that operate successfully in many Partner countries, and will seek to organise more regular gatherings of the key staff involved to exchange information on planned activities, best practices and lessons learned. At the latest by the end of 2010, all Information Centres/Points and Depository Libraries should be equipped with VTC capabilities, allowing them to interact with each other, NATO officials and Allies at the NATO Headquarters on a more regular basis. In addition, the role of the Contact Point Embassies in assisting our communication efforts vis-à-vis partner countries will be enhanced. In order to reinforce NATO's messages toward selected audiences, NATO will also pursue the more systematic use of activities under the Science for Peace and Security Programme (SPS) to engage researchers and scientists in partner countries.

4.7. The ATA and their national chapters, local think tanks, research institutions, NGOs and universities will remain important partners in Allied and partner countries to help foster public awareness of the Alliance and facilitate public discussions and networks. In working closely with them, PDD will advise them to make best use of the entire spectrum of communication tools, in particular new media and web applications

V. TOOLS AND APPROACHES

5.1. To be effective and innovative, NATO's public diplomacy efforts will be pursued on two key pillars: communicating through TV, radio, websites and the media to explain the policies at hand, and engaging through direct exchanges, visits to NATO HQ, discussions and events to build long-lasting relationships and networks. To this end, NATO will make effective use of all communication channels, including the traditional media, digital outreach and public engagement. Wherever feasible, NATO will also use projects under the SPS Programme to communicate NATO's messages to larger audiences. In addition, PDD will seek to take advantage of the NATO internship programme to attract the interest of young professionals.

5.2. Based on the lessons learned in 2008/2009 and within budgetary means, PDD will continue to apply corporate communication approaches and techniques. These could include, for example, advertisements in social media applications and foreign policy journals, NATO exhibits as part of special national days and photo displays in public sites. Moreover, NATO will further develop the range of multimedia products and seek more efficient ways of disseminating, embedding and sharing them with the most popular website and blogs.

5.3. In summer 2010, the NATO TV Channel on the internet (NITV) will be fully transitioned from the Danish Media Center to the NATO Headquarters. By then, NITV will be fully resourced and manned, thus enabling NATO to disseminate and market its multiple products effectively to global broadcasters.⁷ Together with the NATO website,

⁷ A comprehensive description of the transition is provided in the PDD Progress Report on the NATO TV Channel on the internet from 10 November 2009 (AC/52-N(2009)0021).

which will be further improved and modernised as a portal in order to provide all civilian and military NATO bodies with a collective and professional framework to communicate their respective areas of responsibility, NITV will be NATO's key communication tool to distribute news stories, videos and reports to the global public.

VI. ASSESSMENT

6.1. Monitoring the management and performance of NATO's public diplomacy programmes in 2010 and 2011 will be done through various evaluation tools, including the application of lessons learned reports from broad events such as NATO ministerial meetings and flagship events; the analysis and application of data collected from visitors to better shape programmes for the some 14,000 visitors PDD hosts annually; the systematic analysis of media and press coverage and other by-products generated by individual NATO-sponsored communication projects; regular assessment of statistics on the use of the NATO website; analysis and application of CPE activity reports and regular assessment of e-publications read online and print publications requested via the NATO website, Information and Press officers and other means. The NATO Strategic Communications Policy Board will also review the performances of NATO's communication activities effectively and systematically.