



NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE  
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



12 May 2014


MC 0411/2 (Final)

**FINAL DECISION ON MC 0411/2**

**NATO MILITARY POLICY ON CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC) AND CIVIL-MILITARY INTERACTION (CMI)**

1. On 5 May 2014 the North Atlantic Council approved MC 0411/2, NATO Military Policy on Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Civil-Military Interaction (CMI). PO(2014)0286-AS1 refers.

**FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE:**

*For*   
Sir Christopher Harper  
Air Marshal  
Director General  
International Military Staff

Note: This Final Decision Sheet shall now be attached to MC 0411/2 as the top sheet. Page numbering of the complete document when this decision is attached is as follows:

MC 0411/2 (Final)	- Page 1
MC 0411/2 (Military Decision)	- 1 page
MC 0411/2	- 11 pages

Distribution: As for basic document



NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE  
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



28<sup>e</sup> March 2014

MC 0411/2 (Military Decision)

SECRETARY GENERAL, NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION

**MILITARY DECISION ON MC 0411/2**

**NATO MILITARY POLICY ON CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC) AND CIVIL-MILITARY INTERACTION (CMI)**

1. On 25 Mar 14 the Military Committee endorsed MC 0411/2, which is now submitted to the North Atlantic Council for approval.
2. This document clears IMSWM-0030-2014, 27 Jan 14, and all SDs thereto.

**FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE:**

Sir Christopher Harper  
Air Marshal  
Director General  
International Military Staff

Enclosure

1. MC 0411/2, NATO Military Policy on Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and CIVIL-Military Interaction (CMI).

Copy To  
Action Officers

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MC 0411/2

NATO MILITARY POLICY ON CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC) AND  
CIVIL-MILITARY INTERACTION (CMI)

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**NATO Military Policy  
on Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Civil-Military Interaction (CMI)**

**SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

**BACKGROUND - ENVIRONMENT**

1. Since the publication of the last revision of this document, NATO's practical cooperation with non-NATO organizations, both local and international, has progressed markedly. Intense experience and cooperation in response to crises have brought NATO and other organisations closer together than ever before. International organisations now invite each other to participate in training and their staffs informally consult each other frequently, both regarding operations and when developing policy and doctrine. Additionally, international organisations place increasing importance on the essential role of domestic government and civil society in stability and in resolving crises. A diverse array of national governments and international organisations now seek to create or enhance a comprehensive approach to crisis management among them.

2. Alliance military forces engaged in an operation will contribute to resolving that crisis alongside non-military contributions from a diverse array of sources, mostly outside the Alliance. NATO's engagement in operations has consistently underscored the mutual dependence and synergy between military and non-military contributions to resolving crises. Often, it is these non-military contributions that can best address the underlying causes of a conflict and help to prevent a relapse to instability. Given such an inter-dependent operating environment, communication and interaction are important to achieving a wider comprehensive approach, as is close collaboration as appropriate with interested, reciprocating non-military actors.

**BACKGROUND – NATO POLICIES**

3. The changes to NATO's top-level policy documents since 2001 reflect this marked progress and inter-dependent environment. The capstone policy document is the Strategic Concept (Ref A). References B through D contain North Atlantic Council (NAC) approved guidance for its implementation and specific requirements for NATO military bodies. These include specific tasks to improve the coherent application of NATO's own crisis management instruments as well as dialogue and, to the extent possible, practical cooperation at all levels with relevant International Organisations (IOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local authorities in the planning and conduct of operations. Mutually reinforcing and sustainable strategic NATO partnerships need to be further strengthened at all levels<sup>1</sup>.

4. These specific tasks from Council and conditions in the operating environment require NATO military bodies and personnel to be prepared to work with non-military actors. This should foster a mutual appreciation of, and respect for, the decision-making autonomy, respective strengths, limits, mandates and roles of relevant actors. NATO military bodies must therefore take account of these actors' (NATO

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<sup>1</sup> PO(2010)0169, The Alliance's Strategic Concept, 19 Nov 10.

and non-NATO) separate but inter-dependent contributions through enhanced interaction with them. The Alliance's command and force structures must also be able to interact effectively with other actors, at the appropriate levels, as decided by the Council.

5. NATO military forces participate in this evolving environment of civil-military interaction (CMI, see Section 2, below) to meet those requirements described above for implementing NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach by the wider international community, aiming to increase both effectiveness and efficiency (see Section 3, below). Therefore, NATO's participation in CMI involves all military functions and disciplines, harmonised by the suitable supporting process, endorsed by the commanders and facilitated / supported by the dedicated CIMIC capabilities. Those CIMIC capabilities need to adapt to this new framework and be further developed building on the Strategic Concept, as tasked in References B through D.

6. NATO will undertake all its activities related to other international organisations and non-governmental organisations in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan (References B and C) and the decisions taken at the Lisbon Summit (~~Reference F~~).

7. Developing crises are always subject to a variety of political considerations and dynamics. Nations have given NATO Headquarters (HQ), the capability for interactions that occur at the early stages of crisis management, as part of its' focus on interactions to build confidence and mutual understanding between international actors, including developing modalities for better cooperation.

## **AIM**

8. This policy aims to enhance NATO military contributions to crisis response by improving NATO's military ability to interact at the most appropriate levels with non-military actors and to employ NATO CIMIC capabilities.

- a. To this end, this document primarily sets policy for NATO military bodies.
- b. Secondly, this document could also serve as a reference to familiarize other actors with NATO's policy, but does not seek to guide any organization, entity or person other than NATO military bodies.

## **SCOPE**

9. This policy is applicable for NATO military bodies in collective defense, cooperative security, crisis management, collective training and preparation for these, for civil – military interaction at all military levels. It also highlights the essential enabling role of CIMIC capabilities.

10. This document does not cover NATO-internal political-military relations, which are relationships of authority and responsibility between superiors and subordinates.

11. Interaction between the military and civilians within NATO HQ, are outside the scope of this policy and are governed by other NAC-approved documents.

12. Interactions between the wide variety of non-military actors (civil-civil interactions), while important to military operations, cannot be the subject of a military policy. These are not addressed here.

## SECTION 2 – TERMINOLOGY

### DEFINITIONS

13. Civil-Military Interaction (CMI). CMI is a group of activities, founded on communication, planning and coordination, that all NATO military bodies share and conduct with international and local non-military actors, both during NATO operations and in preparation for them, which mutually increases the effectiveness and efficiency of their respective actions in response to crises.

14. Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC). CIMIC is a joint function comprising a set of capabilities integral to supporting the achievement of mission objectives and enabling NATO commands to participate effectively in a broad spectrum of CMI with diverse non-military actors.

### RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER NATO POLICIES AND CAPABILITIES

15. Civilian Crisis Management Capability. As a general rule, elements of stabilization and reconstruction are best undertaken by those actors and organisations that have the relevant expertise, mandate and competence. However, there can be circumstances, which may hamper the other actors from undertaking these tasks. For that reason, Allies agreed in the Strategic Concept that an appropriate but modest civilian crisis management capability be formed in NATO to interface more effectively with non-military actors, building on lessons learned from NATO-led operations. This capability may also be used to plan, employ and coordinate non-military activities, until other actors are able to fulfill these activities.

16. Civilian Capability in the NATO Command Structure. An appropriate, but modest number of civilian experts, commensurate with operational needs, is being closely integrated with existing military staffs. This civil-military expertise supports the planning as well as the conduct of operations. CIMIC personnel and these integrated NATO experts must collaborate closely.

17. Stabilisation and Reconstruction (S&R). Primary responsibilities for stabilisation and reconstruction normally lie with non-military authorities and other non-military actors. Therefore, any form of military support to Stabilisation and Reconstruction (S&R) will require close communication between military and non-military actors, both within NATO and outside. Through Civil-Military Interaction (CMI), CIMIC can link the non-military and military tasks and responsibilities in S&R. Consequently, CIMIC personnel and appropriate civil experts described below can be expected to play a key role in such activities and must be able to facilitate the military contribution to them.

18. Operations. Operations are being conducted within the framework of the Comprehensive Approach. This requires significant non-military and military involvement similar to that described under S&R, above. In such cases, CIMIC

capabilities should therefore also play the key roles described above in the implementation of CMI.

19. Civil-Emergency Planning (CEP). The NAC has agreed five roles for Civil Emergency Planning in NATO (Reference F): Civil support for Alliance military operations under Article 5; Support for non-Article 5 crises response operations; Support for national authorities in civil emergencies; Support for national authorities in the protection of populations against the effects of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Co-operation with Partners. CIMIC personnel should assist their command to gain and integrate this non-military expertise, whenever relevant, during all phases of preparation and execution of NATO operations.

20. Comprehensive Approach Specialist Support (COMPASS). NATO has established a database to provide trained, experienced civilian stabilisation and reconstruction experts to the NATO Military Authorities (NMAs). The use of such experts should be considered during preparation for, and execution of, operations. These civilian experts could assist NATO planners to assess the impact of military operations on the political, economic, civil, and social domains of the conflict and vice-versa. Therefore, CIMIC personnel should assist their command to gain and integrate this non-military expertise, whenever relevant, during all phases of preparation and execution of NATO operations.

21. Host-Nation Support (HNS). HNS concerns the provision of civil and military assistance in the form of materiel, facilities, services and administrative support to military forces. CIMIC's role in the logistic field is complementary to those involved with the provision of HNS. CIMIC personnel should assist with arranging access to local civil resources and ensure that such access does not compromise the needs of the local population or other non-military actors involved. Civil-military interaction within HNS, should always be managed in full consultation with the appropriate military and non-military authorities of the HN.

22. Strategic Communications. NATO's Strategic Communications approach for an operation establishes the broad political-military guidance to synchronize operations and the messages they send to audiences in support of NATO's aims and objectives; CMI is informed by this guidance. CIMIC personnel will frequently directly inform leaders and organizations regarding NATO's activities and goals in order to minimize friction between organizations. For these reasons CMI and supporting activities (including CIMIC) must be closely harmonized by staffs at every echelon where they are employed with the Strategic Communication related disciplines.

## **DIVERSITY OF NON-MILITARY ACTORS**

23. There is no blueprint for future operations; circumstances can differ considerably from case to case. Therefore retaining an appropriate degree of flexibility is essential. Non-military actors generally comprise local, regional and international; IO, GO and NGO; development and humanitarian. Due to their great diversity, techniques for effective interaction with one type of actor will often be very different from those with another. Some non-military actors may be reluctant to work closely with military actors. With regards to the military domain this requires primarily NATO CIMIC capabilities to constantly adapt to their environment and to flexibly embrace a broad spectrum of interaction, from mere situational awareness and

limited dialogue to cooperation. CIMIC and CMI could pave the way conducting a military operation in concert with non-military actors in a comprehensive manner.

24. Humanitarian Agencies. Most Humanitarian agencies, including those of the UN system, will follow the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence as set-out in UN General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 of 1991 and 58/114 of 2004. NATO forces must always employ due respect for humanitarian agencies and activities in accordance with references A and E. CIMIC personnel assist NATO forces to de-conflict actions with these agencies as appropriate and employ the stated respect.

25. Development Agencies. Military support to stabilisation and reconstruction will often imply interaction with non-military actors involved in the restoration of national systems, structures and infrastructure, access to and delivery of education, economic stabilisation and governance. These national or international bodies are not necessarily subject to the same principles as humanitarian agencies.

26. Law Enforcement Authorities. Law Enforcement (LE) authorities are another kind of important non-military actor but are not 'civilian'. Examples include: police, customs, gendarme, correction facilities and national law enforcement. Such LE authorities are also important counterparts and specialists who contribute to security and governance. Military Police have similar skills to LE. Non-military LE tasks are of course best conducted by the official, trained, experienced authorities. Therefore, CIMIC personnel should consider LE authorities in assessments, planning and liaison.

27. Local Actors and Authorities. This broad category of non-military actors includes the governing authorities of the nation(s) directly impacted by NATO operations. They may include authorities at the national, regional and local level, and will usually include civil society organisations, local media, informal leaders, or semi-official authorities and religious leaders respected by the local population. CIMIC arranges CMI with such local actors in coordination with other involved HQ military functions/capabilities including gender advisors in order to consider gender perspectives in support of local initiatives and the promotion of ownership by these relevant national authorities.

### **SECTION 3 – MILITARY GUIDANCE**

#### **GENERAL**

28. NATO military interaction with non-military actors will be based upon specific guidance from the NAC and the MC. The NAC will determine the parameters for the involvement of a military force in non-military activities. At Military Strategic Level, NATO Strategic Commanders, in coordination with NATO HQ, will develop CMI with appropriate international and regional non-military authorities, in agreement with NAC/MC guidance. At operational and tactical level, within the Joint Operations Area, in-theatre CMI with local actors and authorities will be led by NATO operational and tactical commanders, in agreement with the responsibilities defined in the OPLAN and operation orders.

29. Nations will continue to be the primary source of NATO's CIMIC capabilities. To be effective in an inter-dependent operating environment, NATO requires these to



be resourced, adapted as necessary, educated and trained, preferably jointly with their respective civil counterparts.

30. The development of a CMI mindset requires appropriate education and training for all military actors, as well as rehearsals and shared experiences between military and non-military personnel. NATO Training Planning has to include training opportunities and scenarios that involve CMI events.

## **NATO GOALS IN CIVIL-MILITARY INTERACTION**

31. Each participant, in any interaction, has their own goals. NATO military forces will always seek to link their actions and objectives to the NAC-agreed strategic aims (i.e. end-state and objectives). Through CMI, NATO commanders seek to ensure that military operations are as compatible as possible with the actions of those actors which are not NATO's opponents, within the NAC-agreed mission. This should minimize interference or unintended conflict between interested actors, increasing their respective effectiveness and efficiency.

32. Effectiveness. Friction between military and non-military actors can delay, degrade or impair essential security, governance and development actions. Clear communication among them, however, can reveal opportunities for military forces to facilitate those non-military actors that can best address the root causes of the crisis and thereby restore lasting stability, allowing each actor to focus where they can be most effective.

33. Efficiency. Designing NATO's operations requires a careful prioritisation of military human and financial resources. By increasing the military's understanding of non-military actors' goals activities and methods and vice-versa, CMI enables each actor to avoid wasteful duplication and maximize their contributions in their own area of responsibility and expertise. By facilitating this mutual understanding and harmonization, CIMIC personnel contribute to efficient use of military resources.

## **PRINCIPLES**

34. In accordance with References B through E, their respective terms of reference, and the NATO OPLAN when in an operation, NATO military bodies should apply the following key principles as guidance for preparing, conducting and implementing CMI.

- a. Understanding of non-military actors and respect of their autonomy in decision-making and so encouraging their counterparts to do the same.
- b. Engage proactively with all non-military actors involved in the operation. Particularly, NATO military commanders are to maintain continuous and effective communication with their correspondent interlocutors at local, regional, national and international levels.
- c. Facilitate interactions based upon mutual respect, knowledge of respective roles, trust and transparency; institutional familiarity, credibility and reliability are key.

- d. Be able to adapt to evolving and specialised non-military expert advice and factors.
- e. Promote local ownership and building of local capacity, ensuring timely and smooth transition to local ownership as soon as practical.
- f. Ensure internal NATO military coherence and consistent NATO messaging in interacting with non-military actors.
- g. Take on non-military tasks in compliance with References B through E, develop and implement a transition plan from the outset to ensure transition to civilian ownership as early as possible.
- h. Promote cooperation, reciprocal information-sharing and unity of purpose as a desired method to achieve overall strategic aims, end-state and objectives.
- i. Operate within the framework of their mission, responsibilities, authorities and legal obligations.

#### **APPLICATION: CIMIC AS MAJOR FACILITATOR OF CMI**

35. A wide range of NATO personnel can be involved in CMI with non-military actors depending on the issue. However, CIMIC personnel and civilian experts, as enablers and facilitators of the CMI are trained for the mission.

36. Facilitation and conduct of CMI by CIMIC personnel will differ across NATO's Strategic, Operational and Tactical levels of command. This is due to the different focus, responsibilities and scope of coordination at each of these levels. The different roles of CIMIC at these levels will be detailed in the appropriate NATO doctrine.

37. CIMIC personnel and assets support, facilitate or directly conduct CMI through activities including especially: civil-military liaison and civil assessment, as well as planning, coordination with other capabilities/functions involved in CMI and enabling local legitimized authorities in the resolution of the crisis. These specialists also enable or facilitate interaction by the entire command, helping bring together the appropriate military and non-military actors for any given activity. This may include direct support to the implementation of a civil plan, only if there is no available solution. These activities are interdependent and must be synchronised. Ultimately, military actions in support of local authorities or other actors must be based on thorough assessment, coordination and planning.

38. Planning for and conducting NATO missions and operations requires consideration of diverse non-military actors and domains (political, economic, social, infrastructure, etc.). CIMIC and civilian experts in NATO military structures will place emphasis on ensuring understanding of these in the area of operations and application of this understanding in planning, decision-making, execution and assessment. Thorough assessment (both of the full non-military situation and the long-term impacts), liaison and informed command decision-making are pre-requisites to providing military support to local authorities or other actors.

**SECTION 4 - RESPONSIBILITIES**

39. The Military Committee, in accordance with References B and C:
  - a. Advises the NAC and implements its guidance and direction;
  - b. Ensures that CMI and CIMIC aspects are considered, where appropriate, in developing policy documents;
  - c. Provides military direction for the interactions with non-military actors in NATO military operations, doctrine, education and training;
  - d. Fosters NATO military bodies' coherence to NATO policies in interactions with non-military actors.
  
40. The Supreme Allied Commander Europe, in accordance with References B and C:
  - a. Conducts and manages all CMI in close coordination with NATO HQ and regularly reports the outcome of these interactions;
  - b. Develops, adapts and/or improves capabilities (especially CIMIC) and procedures within ACO headquarters in order to enable effective CMI;
  - c. Employs those CMI concepts and plans which nations approve to implement comprehensive approach elements throughout plans and operations;
  - d. On invitation, participates in NATO HQ, pre-operations consultations on assessment, international design and planning with possible relevant players in accordance with NAC authorization;
  - e. Coordinates with international actors, in the overall planning for operations in which a large degree of CMI will be required.
  - f. Integrates CMI-related requirements and CIMIC capabilities in operations planning and execution;
  - g. Considers support to non-military objectives of the international community's efforts during operations planning, in accordance with the NAC Initiating Directive;
  - h. Actively promotes regular dialogue on and in ongoing NATO operations and preparation with willing and relevant non-military actors;
  - i. In accordance with the applicable OPLAN and any strategic political-military plan, including the NAC Initiating Directive, empowers and tasks deployed NATO force commanders to undertake effective cooperation and coordination with indigenous local legitimized authorities and in-theatre principals from other international actors as well as NATO civilians;
  - j. Forwards to NATO HQ, requirements for civil expertise;

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k. Within ACO, acquires, captures and disseminates CMI related observations, lessons identified and best practices in support of NATO's lessons learned processes;

l. Initiates requests for NATO research and development for the improvement of CIMIC capabilities and CMI activities;

m. Supports NATO education and training process by defining CIMIC and CMI requirements.

41. The Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, in accordance with References B and C:

a. Gathers, analyses and reports to the MC on observations and lessons identified on CMI and supporting CIMIC capabilities for further utilization by NATO military bodies and national forces;

b. In close coordination with NATO HQ, plans, proposes to nations, and conducts research and concept development for the improvement of CIMIC and military actions in CMI;

c. Ensure coherence of CIMIC doctrine development with policy;

d. Provides education and training regarding CIMIC and CMI based on ACO requirements;

e. Develops and executes military education and training to implement this policy; and

f. Conducts all CMI in close coordination with NATO HQ and regularly reports the outcome of these interactions.

**TABLE OF REFERENCES**

- A. PO(2010)0169, The Alliance's Strategic Concept, 19 Nov 10.
- B. C-M(2008)0029-COR1, Proposal on a Way Ahead on Comprehensive Approach, 2 Apr 08.
- C. PO(2011)0045, Updated List of Tasks for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan and the Lisbon Summit Decisions on the Comprehensive Approach, 7 Mar 11.
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- E. MC 0343/1 (Final) NATO Military Assistance to International Disaster Relief Operations, 21 May 02.
- F. PO(2000)30-REV2, Role of Civil Emergency Planning in NATO Reform of SCEPC, 18 Jul 00.