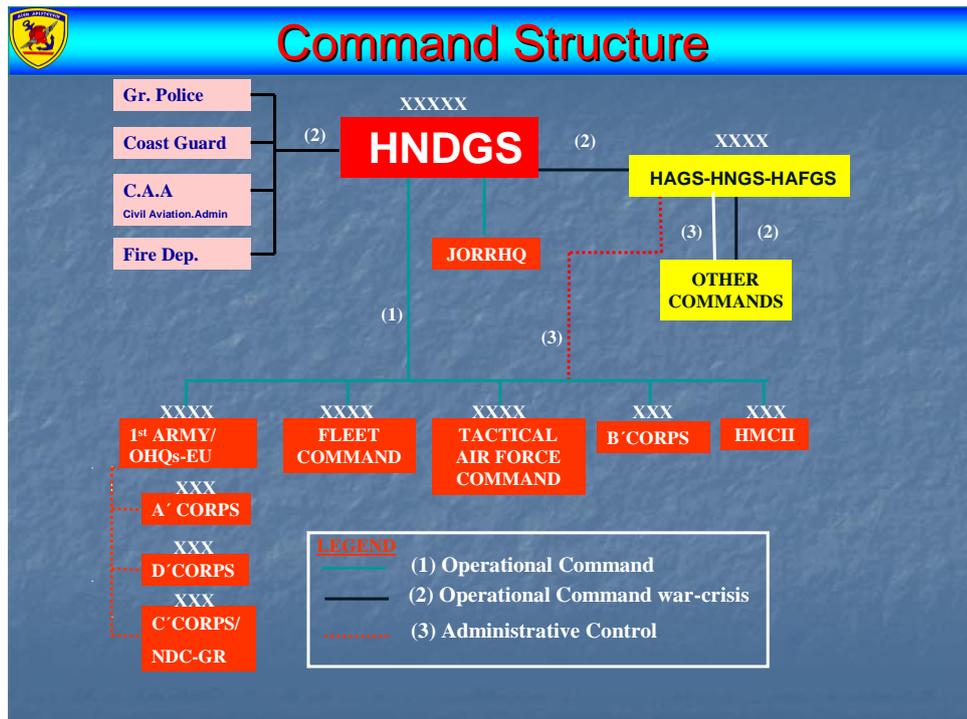


Greek Military

In order to become familiar with the Hellenic the Armed Forces, you can have a look to the Command Structure as it is shown on the slide below.



In specifics:

a. At Strategic Level, Operational Command is laid with the CHOD, supported by the General staffs of the three Services

b. At Operational Level there are "7" major HQs and the NDC-GR which is assigned to NATO as FLR HQ.

c. In addition there is Joint HQ for Rapid Response operations at Tactical Level.

d. In case of open hostilities the CHOD assumes Operational Command, of Police, Coast Guard, Border Police and the Fire Department

Furthermore, The Strategic Military Objectives and the Main Operational Tasks, as defined by the National Defence Strategy, can be summarized as:

a. Firstly, maintaining and further developing our ability to deter and should deterrence fails to defend against any kind of external threat, preserving the national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

b. Secondly, to promote regional and global Security & Stability, contributing to Crisis Management and to defence against asymmetric threats, enhancing military cooperation, maintaining regional presence, participating to international peace support operations and contributing to the development and implementation of confidence building measures.

c. Third, to support social welfare.

Within this framework we have set, as top priorities:

a. Adaptation of Hellenic Strategic concepts, doctrines and interagency cooperation.

b. The transformation and the consequent adaptation of our Armed Forces to cope with the emerging operational needs. This includes Command structure reorganization, Force Structure Reform to further promote the high operational stand of our Armed Forces, including the reorganization of the operational training and evaluation system and the consolidation of the essence of the joint operations.

c. The development of our operational capabilities through the adoption of new technology and doctrines and last but not least, to maintain and further develop our capability to support civil society.

The Hellenic Armed Forces in accordance with NATO efforts to transform its military forces to become more agile and expeditionary has reduced and reorganized its structure in order to improve joint capabilities and take advantage on technology. The restructuring, completed in 2006, permitted a smaller number of units to be manned at higher levels, assisted also by increasing personnel establishments. The General staff is also being reorganized to promote better inter-staff cooperation, to improve defense planning processes, to make better use of allocated resources. The aim is to develop a more cost-effective, flexible and efficient Force structure able to protect the integrity of National territory and to participate in the full range of alliance missions. More specifically:

a. Force Structure Reform:

-The Hellenic Armed Forces during the last decade has been in a constant reform to transition from conscript army into professional army. To this end, conscript manpower has been significantly reduced, during the above mentioned period, in terms of number of conscripts in service and by reducing the service time to one year.

- Nowadays, due to constitutional constraints and short time of service, conscripts are not posted to any international mission that Greece is participating in accordance with UN resolutions, in the framework of international organizations (UN, NATO, EU, OSCE etc). Instead, after appropriate legislative actions we are working out ways to overcome this need by using reserve conscripts of three year duration, who can be posted abroad.

- The Hellenic Armed Forces are in a constant effort to ensure that the variety of modern weapons are maintained and operated by well educated and competent professional experts personnel. So far, we feel confident that we achieve this goal, by keeping in mind that this is a continuous effort to improve the quality of our personnel in order to maximize our effectiveness and efficiency.

- It has been stated that the Hellenic Armed Forces are transitioning to professional army. To this direction it has been decided to increase the number of professional soldiers in the next five years by 15.000, summing up to a total of 50.000.

- The transformation and the consequent adaptation of our Armed Forces to the emerging theatre of operations is an ongoing process; therefore it remains at the top of our priority list. In that context, we will continue working for the operational upgrading, the mobility, the flexibility, the deployability and the sustainability of our forces, in order to face the new challenges.

- Another future plan is the reorganization of the operational training and evaluation system; upon the completion of which, we will be more confident for our forces, regarding their operational readiness.

- Finally, we would continue our efforts for the consolidation of the essence of the joint operations. The coordination of the three services, Army, Navy and Air Forces in all levels (tactical being the most difficult), is of paramount importance and therefore in the center of my future plans.

- Credibility, reliability and capability to fulfill of our international obligations and the successful participation in peacekeeping operation, were the main concerns. Therefore our effort is also into account both, the national and the Alliances needs and transformation aspirations.

b. Command Structure reform:

- Our primary effort focused on the continuation of the gradual transformation of the Hellenic Armed Forces. In that context, we have completed a thorough defense reform review process which, apart from challenging, was also very successful. Nevertheless, there is a lot more to be done. To be more specific it resulted in: The introduction of jointness has set in motion the most significant transformation initiatives within the Hellenic Armed Forces over the last years, in order to enable them to confront the 21st century's security threats and challenges. In this context, we have proceeded to specific evolutionary steps such as the implementation of a new Joint Command Structure, the issue of various joint doctrines, the revision of operational plans, the modernization of our readiness and crisis management systems, the promotion of joint training and education, the development of a new Defense Planning Procedure focused on interoperability and the adoption of a more effective mechanism for the operational assessment of our combat commands and elements. The transformation in the command structure, starting from the Hellenic National Defence General Staff. The newly adapted structure decreases the bureaucracy, decentralizes and deconflicts the responsibilities; thus promoting the effectiveness. Moreover, the new structure is more tailored to the standards set by the Alliance.

- Another issue, successfully tackled, was the increasing of the productivity of the personnel, through the upgrading of the work environment and conditions. In that context, we adopted a series of action and anthropocentric ideas, while the safety at work remained our top concern.

- The recent establishment of the evolution center under the direct authority of the Chief of the HNDGS. Its mission is "the constant promotion of the Hellenic Armed Forces operational capabilities, placing emphasis on human resources, through the exploitation of innovative concepts in both strategic and operational levels, the development of new capabilities and doctrines and the adoption of new technology".

- The success of the Evolution Project relies on our willingness to introduce important changes to all pillars of our military capabilities. Above all, we should be able to change our military culture and ethos and to cultivate a mindset, which will be perceptive to experimentation of concepts, tolerant in probable failures. An approach that seeks better ways and means, through innovative thinking. To consolidate joint, we need to adopt an attitude free of the traditional prejudice and perceptions of the services. This is a great challenge, which if managed carefully will lead to a stronger military, capable of confronting all current and future security challenges.

c. Capabilities objectives:

According to the National Defense Planning procedures, the implementation of our Midterm Armaments Program for the Period 2006-2010, aims to improve the Rapid reaction capability, deploy ability, flexibility, mobility, and interoperability to fulfill our country's international commitments. The recently approved Joint Midterm Armaments Program is focused on the acquisition of main

weapon systems and means, force multipliers in conjunction with the reduction of the operational cost.

CHOD's operational requirements and priorities on main armaments programs stand as follows:

- a. Upgrade of communication capabilities, a key factor for conducting successful operations.
- b. Development of a Satellite communication system
- c. Procurement of transport Helicopters and wheeled/tracked vehicles for the Army.
- d. Procurement of Frigates, minesweepers, PGFG Maritime Patrol aircraft for the Navy.
- e. Procurement of Modern fighting / training aircraft for the Air Force.

The tendencies on the defense sector are closely related to and depend on the Defensive Doctrines. Following the rapidly evolving international environment, the Armed Forces constantly differentiate and adapt their mission to confront emerging challenges. Given that the participation to peace keeping operations, through out the globe, is expected to increase, the Joint Midterm Armaments Program 2006-2010, is being normally implemented and it is not affected by the recent global economic downturn, in order to keep the Greek Armed Forces ability to confront any upcoming challenge.

As far for the NATO operation and the Hellenic Armed Forces Contribution to them, I must note that for the Hellenic Republic the participation in humanitarian assistant missions and peace support operations is being a high priority. Greece participates to the most NATO and EU operations. Specifically Greece participates as follow:

a. Hellenic Contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The Hellenic Forces that were deployed on 19th of February 2002 were consisted off:

- A Hellenic Army Engineers Company for Peacekeeping missions.
- Support and security echelons.
- Two (2) C-130s in airlift/transport role (in Karachi, Pakistan).
- National Support Element-NSE (in Karachi, Pakistan).
- Small number of staff officers, in liaison role, at various ISAF headquarters.

Our forces operates until today for the following purposes:

- To assist the efforts of the Afghan Government to reconstruct the country, offering humanitarian aid, constructions and public services support.
- To enhance the level of cooperation between the Hellenic Armed Forces and the Forces of the other countries participating in ISAF.
- To participate, once again, in the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions.

At present time, the Hellenic Armed Forces participate in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan with ELDAF-2 (Hellenic Force in Afghanistan-2), as following :

The Hellenic Composite Battalion in Afghanistan (TESAF), includes an Engineers Company. Its manning counts 122 cadres with 46 vehicles and machinery. It is assigned to make infrastructure work, as following :

- Construction-reconstruction and widening of roads-bridges.
- Construction of support buildings for technical services at KAIA (Kabul airport).
- Works reinforcing the camp's security.
- Training of Afghan soldiers.
- Reconstruction of schools.
- Snowplowing works in winter.
- Earthmoving works in the whole area of the KMNB Area of Responsibility.
- Distribution of humanitarian aid.

Additionally, with 59 cadres command and operates KAIA since 01 Apr 2010, 20 cadres manning the ISAF Headquarters and the Regional Command Capital-RCC and 3 officers at OMLT 201 Corps/ANA. **More recently 2 Medical Teams** contributed to the ISAF operation regarding Afghanistan national elections.

At the past, Greece has contributed with :

- Twenty eight (28) Officers at SEEBRIG Headquarters that undertook command of the KABUL Multinational Brigade, from February to August 2006.
- From December 2005 to March 2006, Greece had the responsibility of the Command, Organization and Operation of the KAIA. Thirty nine (39) additional cadres were assigned for this purpose.
- Also from the 22nd of August 2005 the 299th Role 2 Hellenic Field Surgery Hospital (KIXNE), was deployed in KABUL until 02 April 2007, a medical-treatment unit of 30 beds capacity and 47 cadres, with operational function. The Unit / Hospital functioned operationally from within the KAIA (Kabul International Airport), the unit provided support to Hellenic and ISAF personnel. And organized training of specialized Afghan civilian doctors. Since the beginning of its operational status , and until the 02nd of April 2007, the hospital had conducted the following physical examinations:

| PHYSICAL EXAMINATION | NUMBER OF PATIENTS |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| International ISAF personnel | 2685 |
| Afghanis | 1875 |
| Other examinations | 899 |
| Laboratory examinations | 1729 |
| X-rays | 956 |
| Ultra-sound examinations | 239 |
| Dental | 976 |
| Surgery examinations | 363 |
| Surgery operations | 78 |
| Total of patients | 712 |
| Evacuations | 68 |
| Veterinary Examinations | 980 |
| TOTAL | 11560 |

In the frame work for Humanitarian Aid towards the Government and people of Afghanistan , the Hellenic Armed Forces have donated an array of means and materials such as; power generators , personal computers, forklifts, pick-up trucks, tents, GPS's, water purification equipment, uniforms, jackets and field rations to schools in Kabul and its environs, 13 fully equipped main battle tanks, various tank components and light weaponry as grant aid.

b. Participation of Hellenic Forces to KFOR

Greece has been participated with the "Hellenic Contingent in Kosovo" since 11 Jun.1999, with mission to create a secure environment for the population in Kosovo and ensure safe return of the refugees and those who had been displaced from Kosovo. In the beginning the 34th Mechanized Brigade of 1162 men was allocated to KFOR. Additionally, one (1) C-130 a/c with 10- crew members and 30 Officers and Soldiers were allocated to man Allied Staffs, HQs and Commands, as well as 157 Officers and soldiers to provide Host-Nation Support. The Contingent has also one (1) Infantry Company with Engineer Elements, as well as one Support Detachment and one (1) Facilities Detachment. The camps where the Hellenic Armed Forces stationed ("Megas Alexandros" in Kosovo- Polije, camp "Rigas Fereos" at Urosevac and camp "Tobacco Factory" at Mitrovica) were constructed in a short period of time by the Hellenic Army by the 34th Engineer Battalion.

The Hellenic Contingent in Kosovo conducted hundreds of reconnaissance, escorting, traffic security and control missions, contributed greatly to transportation, escort and delivery of humanitarian aid by "FOCUS" Organizations and additionally contributed in providing medical treatment to the local population. The medical personnel have examined more than 2.000 people in Urocevac and Kosovo Polije. The main achievement of the Hellenic Contingent was the discovery of an ammunition depot in which a great number of arms and ammunition were hidden. KFOR recognized the achievement as the second most significant and successful discovery that has been made in Kosovo so far.

Currently, after commencing the KFOR Deterrence Presence, the Hellenic Force is:

- 8 cadres to HQ –KFOR Pristine
- One (1) Mechanized Infantry Battalions of **275** men at MNTF-N based at Mitrovica
- One (1) Mechanized Infantry Battalions of **378** men at MNTF-E based at camp "Rigas Fereos" at Urocevac
- One (1) National Tactical Command of **12** men based at camp "Rigas Fereos"
- One (1) Liaison Mission Team of 6 men at MNTF-E based at camp "Rigas Fereos"

Additionally, Greece has allocated to NATO, since early 2005, one (1) General Transportation Company to transport Strategic and Operational Reserves to Kosovo, if required.

c. Participation in Active Endeavour

Greece was one of the countries that responded immediately to that operation which activated article v of the foundation agreement of the Alliance, in order to assist NATO Naval Forces Operations as part of the International Anti-terrorist campaign. Since Oct.2001 our participation was constant conducting:

- Naval Presence, Observations and Surveillance Operations
- Protection of High Value Units
- Control of Sea Lines of Communication
- Maritime Inspection Operations
- Maritime Counter-Terrorism Operations

In that operation the Hellenic Navy has participated more than 90 times with ships and with more than 550 maritime patrol aircraft sorties. In addition, the constant participation in SNMG2 and SNMCMG2, that contribute NATO to its capability for NRF or non NRF operations or other activities in peace-crisis-conflict periods, is depicted by the fact that in the last 4 years, 11 frigates and 15 vessels of mine sweepers participated to SNMG2. We must mention also the on time involvement of the Hellenic Navy during the conflict between Israel and Hesbolah (Jul 06) and that first of all 2 landing ships and 2 frigates reached the conflict zone and conducted a people evacuation operation for 2455 citizens from 35 nations. In addition to the above mentioned operations Hellenic Forces participate in peace keeping operations and missions of EU, UN, OSCE such as ATALANTA, ALTHEA, EUFOR CHAD, UNIFIL etc.

We also believe that the future security environment will generate more frequent need to respond to global threats. In this sense, Greece as a member of international security organizations, emphasizes the need for international co-operation and is willing to contribute to its efforts including by participating to Peace Support operations.

Concerning specifically our participation to ISAF, we have already decided to increase the personnel and our contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan with several ways. The Hellenic Composite Battalion in Afghanistan (TESAF) is considering to be moved to another operational area, the personnel of 201 OMLT's will keep their assignment to train the Afghan National Army. A new OMLT will be deployed in Afghanistan in October 2009 in order to provide training on logistic issues. Two medical teams will contribute to the ISAF operation regarding Afghanistan national elections. From April 2010 and for a period of six months Greece will have again the responsibility of the Command, Organization and Operation of the KAIA. Further more HQ NDC-GR is probable to be deployed in Afghanistan as HQ ISAF after completion of its mission in NRF-21.

It is necessary also to mention that because of the lack of stability in Balkans we are obliged to have a significant number of personnel in active duty. That means also that a significant amount of gross national product (GNP) is devoted to Armed Forces, and due to the demographic problem and the low birthrates in Greece which is supposed to be a general problem of the modern communities, it is the only one that affects the recruitment for the armed forces. In our country all men joins obligatory the Army for a period of 9 months according to the constitutional law. However, the public recognition of their significant role to the security, stability and peace both to domestic and international environment as well, pose the Armed Forces to a high level of appreciation that reaches 90% of the total population. Men in general are proud of serving the armed forces as part of Greek heritage.

In addition to their purely military role the Greek Armed Forces do also have activities in support of the Greek population. Within their Social role the Greek Armed Forces have committed a significant portion of their resources & capabilities to the following:

a. Disaster Relief

In response to natural disasters and other emergency situations threatening the society, the Armed Forces capabilities are of significant importance, and their utilization is decisive to enhancing the sense of security of people inhabiting frontier and insular areas. To this end, proper planning, procurements and coordination with relevant state authorities, is a continuous

process, so that these capabilities are being utilized to the maximum possible extent. In this respect we operate two Special Mobile Engineer Response Teams.

b. Mobile Military Medical Units

These units are established on a permanent base, they are consisted of military medical personnel and, transported by Military Means, they provide health care to the populations of remote Greek Islands

c. Search and Rescue (SAR) and Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC)

The Greek Armed Forces share a great part of responsibility in these two significant areas, by providing the majority of Air, Sea and land Assets, technical support and specialized personnel to the National SAR and MEDEVAC Coordination Centers:

d. Bush fire fighting operations:

Hellenic Air Force maintains and operates all airborne Bush Fire assets, while the Army provides personnel and assets to support Fire departments efforts.

Despite the fact that Greece is a small country, it hosts many NATO capabilities and facilities such as

a. NDC-GR HQ

NDC-GR is a deployable FLR, which is located in Thessaloniki (Northern Greece) and its mission is to provide the HQ capabilities for sustained and rotation for prolonged operations and must be able to fulfill the two broad functions of sustaining/rotating a HRF (LHQ) or as an AJFCC

According to NATO requirements and under SACEUR's strategic guidance, the HQ will be available for all Article 5 missions and for non-article 5 missions on a case by case basis, with up to four (4) division-sized subordinate formations and necessary Combat Support (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) units. The HQ will be kept in a state of readiness according to relevant NATO directives. The main activities contributing to that principle are the exercises and the seminars

The exercise STEADFAST JOIST- GORDIAN KNOT 09 was the main exercise which NDC-GR executed in 2009. The HQ moved from Thessaloniki and deployed at Litochoro Pierias where the execution phase performed.

GORDIAN KNOT 09 was focusing on the training of NDC-GR at Corps level within the context of a non-Article 5/CRO operation.

STEADFAST JOIST 09 (SFJT 09) was an Allied Command Operation (ACO) sponsored Command Post, 2 Levels, Combined Joint exercise designed to train JFC Naples and its Component Commands in planning and execution of a CJTF type operation after transitioning from NRF as initial entry enabling force.

NDC-GR HQ successfully participated in SFJT 09 as the Land Component HQ (LCC) of the Follow on Forces having a very demanding role related to the operational planning and being for the first time involved in a NATO STEADFAST series exercise.

The gained experience and Knowledge will be very useful for the forthcoming mission of NRF 21.

b. CAOC 7

The CAOC 7 is located at the area of Larissa and provides facilities that meet the high standards of the Alliance in order to conduct operations in the SE Europe. The installations (camp, bunker) totally constructed from 1999 to 2004. The bunker as a facility was certified as 1 out of 4 Static War HQs due to the robust building capacity, EMP & TEMPEST protection & finally the CIS infrastructure. As such, we were granted the authorization to conduct Nuclear operations. That given, in 2006 after the completion of a SHAPE inspection which certified both the rooms & the necessary equipment for NUCOPS (NATO Nuclear C2 Reporting System- NNCCRS). In May 2007 the bunker was evaluated from NACMA & ACSI against the ACCS requirements. Still on facility characteristics, the bunker has the capacity of NBC protection and over pressurization capability and is as well EMP and TEMPEST protected in all OPS areas in both floors. From those installations CAOC 7 can fulfill its mission that is:

- To plan, task, direct, coordinate and supervise the air operations of allocated forces, in peace, crisis and conflict.
- To liaise with land and maritime forces and
- To provide coordination between national and NATO agencies.

Concerning the Tasks and responsibilities, CAOC 7 is responsible for air policing. It has a backbone of static Control and Reporting Centers (CRCs) as its main air surveillance, identification and control facilities. It needs the RAP from these integrated CRCs, in order to conduct all day and night air policing Operations.

When it is ordered by the Higher NATO HQs, CAOC 7 is responsible for all activities contributing to crisis management.

In addition CAOC 7 collects information with the aim of making a correct assessment of the situation and target selection.

CAOC 7 is also responsible for planning, tasking and executing air operations, and furthermore coordinates these Air operations with Land and Maritime forces.

c. Hellenic Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre (MPSOTC)

The MPSOTC which is located in Kilkis, 45 Km from Thessaloniki was established in 1998 in order to provide multinational specialized knowledge and techniques for Peace Support Operations both in theoretical and practical training according to the most current international standards. Since 19 May 2000 it is officially recognized by NATO as one of the 11 NATO PfP training centers. Personnel from NATO members countries, Mediterranean Dialogue and other countries according to bilateral agreement have been trained in MPSOTC.

d. NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC).

The NMIOTC is located at the Naval Base of Souda Crete. In 25 June 2008 the North Atlantic Council approved the activation of NMIOTC as an International Military Organization (IMO) after successful process of tests and evaluation which conducted by SACT and ACO teams. Its mission is to conduct the combined training necessary for NATO forces to better execute surface, sub-surface, aerial surveillance, and special operations activities in support of Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO). The NMIOTC fulfils the following roles:

- Improves Allied Naval Units MIO expertise through specific training programmes
- Promotes skills, interoperability and cooperation among Naval Units through sea training and simulation

- Contributes support to ACT in the development of MIO tactical Maritime Doctrines, training directives and manuals as well as ACT research, experimentation, modelling and simulation in support of MIO for the Alliance. In addition to the above, it provides similar services to PfP, MD and ICI Nations

e. NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI)

The NAMFI is a tactical firing range for Air Defence Systems that was established in 1968 at Akrotiri area nearby the city of Chania. Crete, as a training facility for Air Defence Systems. Its mission is to conduct TACTICAL or other kind of firings and operational evaluations of USER NATION UNITS according to SHAPE's criteria. After extensive reconnaissance and relative studies by the NATO Advisory Group for Aeronautical Research and Development, the Akrotiri area was finally selected as the best place for the following main reasons:

The orientation, the general layout and the size of the area, allow the utilization of the maximum range for the weapons systems.

The good meteorological conditions, allow the operation of the range throughout the year.

The NAMFI was constructed by NATO funds from 1964 to 1968 and since then, it is in continuous operation. Today it is used by 4 countries, BELGIUM, GERMANY, GREECE and the NETHERLANDS. NAMFI is under the administrative control of Hellenic National Defense General Staff and under the control of SHAPE for issues concerning the evaluation of the units.

f. Athens Multinational Sealift Coordination Center (AMSCC)

The AMSCC is a multinational independent structure under CHOD. It was founded with a view to contribute in the coverage of means met in NATO and the EU as well in the field of Strategic Sealift. It was offered to NATO during the Constantinople summit (2004) to the EU during the informal summit of the Ministers of Defense (2004) and to the UN for the «Tsunami» destruction (2005). Its mission is to provide:

-Acquisition of sealift assets through tender and chartering Monitoring of chartered vessels

-The premises of AMSCC are located in Athens Greece at the same Camp with the MOD and:

- Is funded by the Hellenic Republic

- Is internationally staffed

- Serves UN, EU, NATO or other International Organizations and Countries, without any administrative cost, having the flexibility to support with the appropriate assets, the deployment-sustainment and redeployment of forces for operations and/or exercises, at a market competitive cost.

AMSCC using the search and rescue capability of the mercantile marine satellite communications can transmit a message open to the air, for immediate response of the vessels sailing in the areas of disaster and willing to provide support.

At the case of the "tsunami" disaster 127 vessels of all the categories responded within 12 hours.

At the case of the "Katrina" disaster 5 vessels responded within 2 hours.

In the context of NATO's support to Iraq, AMSCC coordinated the sealift of 81 tanks donated by Hungary from the port of Koper (Slovenia) and 36 Hellenic BMP-1 from SUDA BAY (Greece) to Ashshu'aybah (Kuwait).

During the previous crisis in Lebanon the AMSCC provided support to the USA through its Embassy for the evacuation of the American citizens. The AMSCC also supports the UN Humanitarian Crisis Response (UNHCR) through the EUMS (European Union Military Staff), for the transportation of material and Humanitarian aid.

In April 2008, upon completion of tender procedures, AMSCC coordinated a successful transportation of Polish forces in the EUFOR TCHAD/RCA from Szczecin (Poland) to the port of Douala (Cameroon).

AMSCC participated in NATO Exercise CMX-08, being part of the Hellenic response cell.

According to the decision taken by the Hellenic Ministry of Defense, in 2008, AMSCC is under transformation process in order to achieve a multimodal function. In this way AMSCC will be able to support and coordinate airlift and inland-surface transportation together with strategic sealift assets

g. The Naval Base of Souda

Provides its facilities to the NATO Naval Units that operates in the SE Europe, eastern Mediterranean areas and Middle East.

As NATO celebrates its 60th anniversary, I would like to remind you that by looking back in Greek history, you will find the first forms of alliance to be formed by the City States in Hellas. The main purpose of these alliances was the encounter of the different tribes who wanted to invade Hellas. Sometimes these alliances were also efficient, like the war in Troy and the campaign of Alexander the Great. Hellas, now days, having a deep historical experience of the advantages that such Alliance have, was one of the first to join NATO, and indeed, in security terms, it benefited the most through its participation, while at the same time it contributed to the overall European security and stability. Greek people are very sensitive to issues that have to do with principal values such as peace, freedom, democracy, justice human rights, equality. For those reasons Greece had fully supported all the major missions and operations under decision of UN, NATO, EU by providing assistance for ensuring and protecting the aforementioned values. Some of those missions that we can mention is Korea in 1950, Somalia, Congo, Pakistan, Sudan, Lebanon and lately helping stricken people by Katrina in the USA. Unfortunately and despite my country efforts for protection of primitive values, the majority of the Greek people have a feeling that in several occasions the policy and the sensitivity of NATO applied selectively and the confrontation of the problems is not in equal basis. For example the Cyprus, problem is a proof of a classic case of an international problem consisting in the invasion to a UN member country (Cyprus) by another UN member country (Turkey). It is also a case of constant fragrant and mass violation of basic human rights and freedoms by Turkey and a violation of the goals and principles of the UN charter as well as of the most important international agreements in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Since 1974 and despite a series of UN resolutions, Turkey continues to refuse to withdraw its military occupation forces from the island. Turkish troops are still illegally stationed in the northern section of Cyprus which the UN Secretary General has called one of the most militarized areas in the world. The Turkish invasion and occupation that forced 28% of the Greek-Cypriots to become refugees and the 1493 still missing people it seems that for NATO weren't issues of grate importance such as similar occasions in Kosovo or Kuwait in which NATO responded immediately.

Another fact that affects the public opinion is the relations between Greece and Turkey. Within NATO it is well Known that the Greek-Turkish relationships,

both allies within NATO are not at the level that the Alliance should prefer to be. Over the past few years there has been a steady improvement in our bilateral relations with Turkey. The rapprochement and collaboration between the two countries on issues of mutual interest that are not politically sensitive has gradually developed. Public opinion about NATO is guarded as far it concerns its neutral or policy to the Turkey's attitude towards Greece within NATO by challenging to the status of the Aegean Sea raising claims and obstacles related to

- The command and control of aeronautical operation in the Aegean.

- NATO's defense planning connection with the status of the islands of the Eastern Aegean (chiefly Limnos)

- Greek air space as failure to submit flight plans during NATO air exercise over the Aegean within the Athens FIR.

One more reason that affects negatively the public opinion is the willingness of many countries in the Alliance to accept as an equal member, a country that has unsolved problems with a NATO member country. The public opinion bothered with the attitude of some NATO member countries to reinforce accession of FYROM to the Alliance without considering the Greek position or the national sensitivities about the unsolved problem of that countries name. The problem is that the choice of the name Macedonia by FYROM directly raises the issue of usurpation of the cultural heritage of a neighboring country. The name constitutes the basis for staking an exclusive right claim over the entire geographical area of Macedonia. More specifically, to call only the Slav-Macedonians as Macedonians monopolize the name for the Slav-Macedonians and creates semiotic confusion, whilst violating the human rights and the right to self determination of Greek Macedonians. The FYROM insists on using exclusively the name Macedonia or Democracy of Macedonia is directed against the cultural heritage and historical identity of the Greeks.

To conclude I strongly believe that NATO is one of the main key players in the enforcement and retention of global security and stability. For the aforementioned reasons I think that in addition to military and security aspects, must take carefully into account factors such Historical sensitivities, cultural, economical etc equally important to safeguard its efficiency and credibility.