

Stability Policing

A new concept supporting NATO Operations

The genesis of Stability Policing

Stability Policing has its roots in the Multinational Specialized Units (MSU), regimental-sized military units endowed with peculiar civil policing capabilities, whose framework organization and leadership have been provided by the *Arma dei Carabinieri* (Carabinieri Corps). The first MSU deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1997¹. Subsequently, the Carabinieri deployed MSUs also to Albania, Kosovo and Iraq. They all have been integrated by specialized forces chiefly offered by the Member States, mainly, but not only, Gendamerie-type forces.

The duties of the MSU increased over time, from the original job of patrolling and crowd and riot control to training the Host Nation (HN) police forces and providing operative support to their activities, even including tasks requiring a high degree of specialization (*the protection of cultural heritage sites in Iraq, for example*).

Over the years, the capabilities and the operational idea underpinning the MSU have been captured in the NATO doctrine²⁻³, in particular in the doctrine series of the Allied Joint Publications – 3 (AJP-3). In addition to making the capacity range of the MSU visible and recognising its significance, the elaboration of doctrinal references gave it a starting point for entry into the catalogue of NATO capabilities through the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP)⁴, which is the overall procedure through which the Alliance identifies future capability requirements and promotes the development and acquisition of the relative “capabilities”⁵ by the Member States, in order to reach the objectives of security and collective defence. The MSU, in short, had become a requirement and capability of the Alliance.

The next step was to give a collective name to this range of capabilities, until that moment called, in a non-exhaustive and not very satisfying manner, with the name of the Unit that represented them. “Stability Policing” was therefore applied, which had already been used for a while in international specialist studies, and which echoed the name of the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoESPU) of the Carabinieri.

In the same way as with the MSU, Stability Policing remained an operational idea, without a reference doctrinal publication that would offer a regulated, harmonious and organic vision of its use in the Alliance’s operations, and which would become a requirement for the creation of a new, formal capability that would absorb the MSU. The gap was filled by promulgation

¹ Andrea Paris, “Le *Multinational Specialised Unit* della NATO”, in *Rivista di Polizia*, I, gennaio 2003 (italian)

² AAP-6: “*Doctrine: Fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application*”

³ Andrea Paris, “*Overview on the development of a doctrine for the Multinational Specialized Units*”, in *Rassegna dell’Arma dei Carabinieri*, Supplement to n.4/2004, at <http://www.carabinieri.it/editoria/rassegna-dell-arma/la-rassegna/anno-2004/supplemento-al-n-4/english-version/iiird-session/maj-andrea-paris>

⁴ A description of the process can be consulted on https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/topics_49202.htm

⁵ The term “*capability*” is intended as the ability to develop a used line of action or to obtain a desired result. An official NATO definition of the term, however, does not exist.

of the AJP-3.22 “*Stability Policing*” by NATO. Promoted by the General Headquarters of the Carabinieri, which is also the NATO custodian of it, the publication is currently the main doctrinal reference for the matter⁶.

Stability Policing, then, had changed from an operational idea into an organic doctrinal idea, but was not yet a new capability because the formal one remained that of the MSU, nor was it supported by an Alliance “*Concept*”⁷, that is a shared intellectual solution aimed at filling a capability gap, to which the doctrine has to be conformed. In the hierarchy of the Alliance, in fact, Concepts are documents superior to the doctrine, and can influence the whole DOTMLPFI spectrum (*doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel, facilities, interoperability*).

In a parallel manner, to strengthen the doctrine, the Carabinieri General Headquarters had also promoted the use of the expression Stability Policing as a formal NATO term, aware that the definition formulated in AJP-3.22 during elaboration would have, and effectively does have, significance confined to the publication itself. After a 2-year process that ended in March 2017, NATO finally also accepted a general indisputable definition of Stability Policing (NATO agreed term): “*Police-related activities intended to reinforce or temporarily replace indigenous police in order to contribute to the restoration and/or upholding of the public order and security, rule of law, and the protection of human rights*”⁸. Briefly, it establishes that Stability Policing consists of supplying policing and the protection of public order and human rights to the civil population, and reconstructing local police forces in the NATO intervention areas.

The establishment of the NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence and the premise for the conceptual and capability development of Stability Policing

The establishment of the NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence (NATO SP COE)⁹ is included in this articulated process, which has lasted more than ten years.

The NATO Centres of Excellence (NATO COEs) are multinational, highly specialised bodies that are hubs of expertise for the Alliance in the specialities assigned to them. The COEs, however, do not belong to the NATO Command Structure (NCS) or to the NATO Force Structure (NFS). They are, on the contrary, the expression of a strengthened cooperation between Member States: NATO accredits them and coordinates their actions through the Allied Command Transformation (ACT)¹⁰ but does not have command authority over them. This is done, for each Centre, by the *Framework Nation (FN)*, namely the founder Member State, and the *Sponsoring Nations (SNs)*, in other words the Allies that are interested in the speciality

⁶ The publication was promulgated by the *NATO Standardization Office* on 14 July 2016, at the end of the approval process. See Pietro Carrozza, “La polizia di stabilità – *stability policing*”, in *Rassegna dell’Arma dei Carabinieri*, 4/2016, at <http://www.carabinieri.it/editoria/rassegna-dell-arma/la-rassegna/anno-2016/rassegna-n-4> (italian)

⁷ The term “*Concept*” is defined by the AAP-6 publication: “*Concept: In NATO concept development and experimentation, a solution-oriented transformation idea that addresses a capability shortfall or a gap*”

⁸ AAP-6 “*NATO Glossary of terms and definition*”

⁹ More information can be obtained from the Centre’s web site <http://www.nspcoe.org/>. The COE, in addition, has a *twitter* and a *facebook* account (for both: @NSPCOE), where large amounts of information can be found on the activities and operation products

¹⁰ A review of the NATO COEs can be found on https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_68372.htm

and which contribute to the financing, supply of staff, and definition of the strategic direction.

The NATO SP COE was accredited as a NATO military body by the Military Committee on 9 November 2015. The North Atlantic Council recognised its status under the Paris Protocol of 28 August 1952, on 9 December 2015. The Centre is the Alliance's reference for the specialty of Stability Policing. Italy is the FN, taking part with all the 4 branches of its Armed Forces (*Army, Navy, Air Force and Carabinieri*). In this context, the *Arma dei Carabinieri* is the so-called Lead Service. The SNs are, at the moment of writing, the Czech Republic, France, Poland, Romania, Spain, The Netherlands, and Turkey, which take part through their respective Gendarmeries or Military Police.

The FN and the SNs assigned to the NATO SP COE the task of developing Stability Policing (SP) within the Alliance, and of integrating it with the conceptual, doctrinal and capability process described above.

The Carabinieri also supported the collective effort by voluntarily sending an Officer to ACT, as the Subject Matter Expert (SME) of SP. This initiative was not only sensible, because the Allied Command is the driving force behind the conceptual innovation and capacity transformation processes of the Alliance, but also resolute, because ACT is the owner of the development process of the Alliance "Concepts" (*NATO Concept Development & Experimentation - CD&E*).

In this context, the coordinated action of NATO SP COE and SME at ACT made it possible to propose a development plan for a NATO Concept regarding SP and the connected new capability of SP, in the context of the NDPP¹¹.

Development of the NATO Stability Policing Concept

The CD&E project was started in 2016 under the name of "*NATO Stability Policing in emerging security challenges*", following a proposal of the SME at ACT. All its development was supported on the intellectual, organisational and, partly, financial level by NATO SP COE. The initiative is connected to the decisions made at the meeting in Warsaw between the NATO Heads of State and Government (8-9 July 2016) to adopt a policy and measures that would be suitable for projecting the stability of the risk areas (*projecting stability*), and it is, in fact, one of the first implementing acts.

The project, even the financial aspect, was managed by the SME of the Carabinieri at ACT. It was organised following the two traditional phases of CD&E: conceptual development and experiment. The first had a time horizon of December 2017 and the second was to be developed in 2018.

The CD phase was, in turn, organised into 3 areas: the "military campaign", with the aim of identifying the so-called military requirements for the contents of the Concept, "academic research", aimed at supporting the contents of the Concept with scientific research, and the "on-line forum", which would enrich the contents with a debate open to the widest audience

¹¹ Vittorio Stingo, "*Challenges and opportunities of developing a NATO Stability Policing Capability*", in *Three sword magazine*, no. 32/2017, available on http://www.jwc.nato.int/images/stories/news_items/2017/StabilityPolicingThreeSwords_July17.pdf. See also Massimo Pani, "*Stability Policing: towards new operational capabilities*", in *Everywhere Rapidly*, no.3/2016, on <http://www.nrdc-ita.nato.int/66/NRDC-ITA-MAGAZINE->

possible. In order to avoid intellectual contamination or convergence of interests that could alter the genuineness, the work carried out in the 3 areas was kept separate.

NATO SP COE was identified by ACT as the external coordinator of the military campaign, in turn organised into 4 international technical workshops and the same number of high-level international conferences. The workshops and the conferences were held in Rome (24-27 October 2016), Bucharest (27 February–2 March 2017), Amsterdam (15-18 May 2017), with the last one being held once again in Rome, on 7-10 November 2017, at the *Scuola Ufficiali Carabinieri* (*Carabinieri Officers School*).

By merging the results obtained from the 3 CD project areas, it was possible, in only one year, to finalise the “NATO Stability Policing Concept”, which defines the nature, characteristics, players, capacities and functional limits of SP. The final document was presented during the conclusive workshop and conference held at the *Scuola Ufficiali Carabinieri*. The two events had these purposes: to further consolidate the specific community of interest, which was already being created through coagulation, during the project; to illustrate, and disclose in advance, the harmonised contents of the document, recognised in their entirety only by ACT; and finally, to give international visibility, in an significant institutional framework, to the “NATO Stability Policing Concept”, a crucial realisation for the Alliance factually obtained thanks to the commitment of the Carabinieri.

The final document will be examined by the Military Committee and the Member Countries. The latter can give their comments, which could influence the final drafting, before the document is approved by the Military Committee. Contextually, in 2018, the Concept experiment phase will begin. The CD&E, therefore, has not yet ended and is still *sub judice*.

The current contents of the NATO Stability Policing Concept

The Concept that was finalised during the project does not relinquish the experience matured with MSU, but makes it its own and enhances it with innovative and extremely interesting contents for the multi-dimensional approach of the Alliance towards crisis management (*the so-called comprehensive approach*¹²). The latter hypothesises a future operation environment that is complex and chaotic, and a scenario that is globally “characterised by uncertainty, multilateralism and strong complexity, (which) can and will lead to the overlapping and potential commingling of the functions that were traditionally divided between civilians and the military during a campaign planned and put into practice to solve a crisis”¹³, in which only the combination of political, civil and military tools and connections with other international, governmental, non-governmental, and local (*including judiciary*) Organisations can lead to success. Central to the matter is the war/crime overlap which, already anticipated in the Strategic Concept of the Alliance “Active Engagement, Modern Defence” 2010, was then developed more extensively in various studies, among which the “NATO urbanization conceptual study”¹⁴, which

¹² For the *comprehensive approach* see https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_51633.htm

¹³ “*Comprehensive approach – Approccio nazionale multidimensionale*”, speech made by the Head of SMD, Gen. Biagio Abrate, at Ce.Si.Va. dell’Esercito, Civitavecchia - 28 June 2012, in *Informazioni della Difesa* no.4/2012 (italian)

¹⁴ See www.act.nato.int/urbanisation-a-growing-challenge-in-the-future or www.difesa.it/SMD/Eventi/Pagine/Concluso-NATO-UPE.aspx

describes the development characteristics of the conflicts until 2035. NATO SP COE gave a rich intellectual contribution to this concept, in which policing skills play a supporting role alongside the conventional military ones.

The elaborated document inserts Stability Policing into this general context, and defines its civil-military nature, attributing it with a key role in the prevention of crisis escalation into a major engagement or the re-ignition of combat activities after the conflict. The Concept has inclusive purposes and tends not to exclude, in the multi-dimensional approach perspective, any possible operator: if the Gendarmeries are considered as the centre of gravity of SP because most suitable for its behaviour, the Military Police and also conventional military forces or civil forces, including even contractors, when suitably trained and equipped, can supply an appreciated contribution. The considered operational environment is extremely widespread and varies from permissive to non-permissive, taking into consideration the two traditional hypotheses of replacement, with executive powers, of the local police forces and their reconstruction, in addition to the whole spectrum of possible blending of the two, thanks to the flexibility and operative adaptability that the SP structures must have. Even the variety of tasks is extremely wide, and includes all the normal police duties, in addition to contrasting guerrilla warfare phenomena.

Concept application is expected to have an effect on the whole DOTMLPFI spectrum. It would be interesting, in this respect, to analyse the executive recommendations of the Concept in relation to all the functional areas. For presentation economy reasons I will, however, limit myself to stopping on two aspects that are related to each other and which are particularly important for the future development of the speciality.

The first is the organization aspect, in relation to which the Concept recommends the creation of staff positions for SP experts in the NCS and the NFS, in addition to the creation of national SP structures to be configured as a plug-in capability, adaptable to any type of mission. The fostering of these measures would make it possible to professionally manage the SP aspects in staff processes referring to operations and training, in addition to the structured participation of SP organic assets in both.

The second, instead, outlines the education and training (*E&T*) of NATO staff (*or possible non-NATO contributing countries*), both aimed at satisfying the organization needs. The hybrid nature of SP causes the relevant E&T area to become extremely complex, and in my opinion establishing an autonomous “Discipline”¹⁵ dedicated to the SP (*as occurs, for example with Military Policing*) is essential. Each Discipline, in fact, identifies its own lines of development and coordinates education and training. If a subject is not represented by an autonomous Discipline, it is included in one of the already-existing Disciplines and is managed and coordinated by the governing bodies of the latter.

Intuitively, the problem is important for developing Stability Policing, with the decision

¹⁵ The E&T is organised into 29 *Disciplines* (*in turn, divided into 4 categories*). The list of *Disciplines* is reviewed each year by two Strategic Commands and is approved by the *Military Committee*. Two governing bodies are established for each *Discipline*: the *Requirement Authority (RA)*, which identifies the training needs, and the *Department Head (DH)*, who coordinates the training activities carried out by anyone along the lines indicated in the *Strategic Training Plan* formulated by ACO and ACT. For each *Discipline*, in addition, the RA and the DH are responsible for the interchange with the discipline *community of interest*, and for formulating analysis and address documents and yearly final reports for the two Strategic Commands.

making involving the two Strategic Commands and the military and political top levels of the Alliance.

Finally, an objective of the Concept is the creation of a specific capability to be included in the NDPP. This has already been partly realised, in parallel with the Concept contents elaboration, through the temporary overwriting of the existing MSU capability during the current planning cycle, while waiting to consolidate the new capacity of SP supported by the Concept, and to connect it with the new four-year planning cycle.

Alongside the conclusive conference in Rome, NATO SP COE symbolically gave ACT (*which became the customer when the initiative started*) a draft Joint Analysis Report that captures the initial results of an extensive research carried out under its own initiative, at the same time as the Concept development, by the *Lessons Learned* Branch of the Centre on “how much”, “how” and “with what results” the Stability Policing instrument has been used when planning and carrying out the past and current NATO campaigns. The main contents of the Analysis Report (*which involved dozens of international institution representatives and is the first of its kind in a NATO sphere*), condensed into numerous observations from which recommendations for the Alliance arise, anticipate many of the Concept contents and are aimed at supporting its approval.

Conclusions

The Alliance’s Concept for Stability Policing, as it will be presented to the Member States, fully incorporates SP into NATO operations, creating the need for this tool but also supplying an indication on how to satisfy it: through its inclusion in the NDPP and with the establishment of a specific capability which would reflect on the organization of the NCS and the NFS (*possibly as NRDC-ITA has already done, with the creation of an SP section in its staff, separate from the Provost Marshal*).

It is an innovative Concept that recognises the civil-military nature of the future capability of SP, while placing it clearly in the military chain of command and control. While indicating the Gendarmerie forces as the organisations on which it is centred, it does not exclude other military or civil contributions, and it also declares the joint nature of SP. All the premises for an overall and integrated development of SP, of which the Carabinieri are an unquestionable leader, have therefore been presented.

In conclusion, please allow me to express a personal aside. In my previous works, more particularly in a speech I made during an international seminar on the MSU held at the *Scuola Ufficiali Carabinieri* on 30-31 March 2004, I supported the civil-military hybrid nature of the then MSU capabilities, defining it as a military capability of policing that was different from, but which did not rival, the “military police” and which was not competing against it. The two capacities, in fact, carry out their actions in different operational environments and are characterised by professional contents that can only be partially overlapped, and which do not make them mutually interchangeable. These ideas, which have ripened within the Italian Defence for a while, present elements of divergence between some Allies but, in my opinion, they become even more true if referred to the new Stability Policing tool, which defines a military capability of policing and civil-military interaction circle that is even wider and more important, absorbing what used to be the MSU dimension in the NATO campaigns.

The *Concept* identifies these themes as part of its main architecture, and recognises them, finally, as the basis for a line of innovation, not only capability-wise but also for the

purposes of the Alliance. Declarations, however, are not enough to trigger an innovative idea about conceiving the policing dimension inside a consolidated military structure: a Stability Policing culture has to be advanced within the Alliance. And this will be the real challenge.