Barriers to the Implementation of the ‘Smart Defence’ Concept

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Outline

- ‘Smart Defence’ highlights
- Background
- Barriers
- Critical steps

‘Smart Defence’ highlights

- Prioritisation – ‘core capabilities’
- Specialisation – within NATO and EU, ‘pooling and sharing’ within the national security sector
- Multinational acquisition and maintenance of defence capabilities
- Focus of efficiency
- Comprehensive approach – “Do that at what you are best; cooperate with others.”

Background

- Difficulties in adapting Bulgaria’s defence establishment to the post-Cold war realities during the 1990s
- Missed opportunities for advancing defence management upon NATO membership
  - Limited emphasis of ‘high priority’ deployable capabilities
  - No visible specialisation
  - No cohesion among component defence policies
Integration of the defence technological and industrial base
High expectations, but meagre outcomes of the offset policy
Anecdotal experience in managing industrial participation in multinational projects

- Defence budget framework
  - Nominal budget
  - Defence expenditures, PPP, per personnel

**Barriers**

- Rational, objective comparison of options; selection of options that are more efficient
- Efficiency: effective operation as measured by a comparison of production with cost; ratio of the result to the energy, time, and money used to deliver it
• Do we know how to measure results? Which results? In what timeframe?

‘Juste Retour’?
• Strong expectations that investments in defence will be beneficial to ‘society’ as well
• Changing one essentially administrative mechanism (offset) with another one – managing participation in multinational projects
• On the ‘upper’ or ‘lower end’ of technological and industrial contribution?

Accountability and Oversight
• While not entirely mature, the capacity of society and parliament for democratic oversight of defence has been growing for two decades
• ‘Smart defence’ – transfer of decision making on substantial defence policy issues to a multinational framework
• How to preserve transparency and accountability?

Pooling and sharing
• Psychological aspects of ‘relying on others’ in situations less demanding than an Article V scenario
• Commitment to assist others
• Can we credibly reconcile potentially urgent operational demands and political decision making processes?

Critical steps
• Define promising ‘towers of excellence’
• Decide on specialisation
• Advance an environment for ‘pooling and sharing’ (laws, procedures, training, exchange, multinational exercises, joint units, incl. in operations, …)
• Open the defence establishment for cooperation with national and international partners
• Increase substantially investments in defence R&D, with focus on participation in multinational projects and programmes
Conclusion

- A promising concept
- Number of challenges need to be addressed so that it could be implemented

- Questions?