

**2020 ALBANIAN OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP CONFERENCE:
GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION
IN THE DIGITAL ERA: STRENGTHENING THE PRINCIPLES OF
TRANSPARENCY, INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY MONDAY
6 JULY 2020 – 12.00-13.30**

**SESSION 1: STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY: THE IMPACT
OF COMBATING CORRUPTION AND ENHANCING GOOD
GOVERNANCE ON SECURITY, STABILITY AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH**

**DASG JONATHAN PARISH
SPEAKING NOTES:**

“COMBATING CORRUPTION IN THE SECURITY SECTOR”

Florian, thank you for that introduction.

[Prime Minister], Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen - good afternoon.

I am grateful to the Albanian Chairmanship for the invitation to contribute to this panel discussion. I have been asked to talk – briefly – about combating corruption in the security sector, and NATO’s role in that.

Unfortunately, the security sector is not immune to corruption and poor governance. And the consequences can be particularly dramatic and damaging.

Often, corruption in the security sector can be difficult to detect. Officials usually hide behind the wall of secrecy associated with security matters. This promotes a feeling of impunity, and protects them from the rigorous scrutiny and investigation, which could expose their criminal activities and lead to their prosecution.

As in other areas of public administration, corruption in the security sector can lead to the erosion of public trust and confidence. However, its effects can be even more dramatic when the institutions concerned are those we rely on to keep us safe, such as the military and the police. Corruption in these institutions kills. It kills when weapons are illegally sold to terrorist and criminal groups. It kills when a blind eye is turned to human trafficking. And it kills when military personnel are given equipment that is unsafe.

NATO's operational experience confirms that corruption in the security sector reduces the effectiveness of armed forces, when funds or equipment are embezzled. And in places like Afghanistan, we have seen that the lack of good governance and accountability impedes post conflict stability.

Indeed, the United Nations has acknowledged that, in some cases, the presence and activity of international peace-keepers, as well as the donations of aid, have fed systemic corruption at all levels of government and posed problems on the path to peace.

NATO has more than 70 years of experience working with ministries of defence and the armed forces of many nations, including in operational environments. This experience has taught us that we all need to have a better understanding of the nature and effects of corruption in the security sector. And we also need to have a better understanding of what we can do to prevent it.

So let me say a few words about NATO's Building Integrity Initiative.

This initiative dates back to 2007, and was launched at the specific request of NATO Allies and its partners of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. And it is worth highlighting that all NATO Allies, and many of its Euro-Atlantic partners, are also OSCE participating states.

This Building Integrity initiative is a key component of NATO's efforts to build capacity in the defence and related security sector. And it is specifically focused on raising awareness of the impact of corruption in this field and on assisting nations to enhance integrity, transparency and accountability in their security institutions.

Much of our work complements initiatives taken by nations and by other international organisations. Because the fight against corruption is challenging, it requires multilateral efforts, synergies and complementarity. Our cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank is developing. And I would welcome closer cooperation with the OSCE. We also work closely with Non Government Organisations and with the private sector, such as the International Forum on Business Ethics Conduct. But it is with the European Union

that we have a particularly close relationship. Indeed, two years ago, the European Union decided to partner and co-finance NATO's Building Integrity programme.

So, what added value does NATO bring to the efforts to fight corruption?

Many activities in the fight against corruption are aimed at investigation, prosecution and punishment. But at NATO, the focus is on prevention.

And the primary tool we use is education and training. This is to raise awareness about the risks of corruption in the security sector, and to assist nations to put in place the right structures, procedures, and personnel to ensure that good governance is applied and high ethical standards are set and maintained.

As a first step, nations complete a comprehensive questionnaire. And this is then reviewed by experts from other nations and institutions, as well as from NATO's own staff. This review provides the foundation to assess national gaps, highlight existing good practices and offer recommendations for reform.

The next step involves developing a detailed plan with the nation concerned. This plan is comprehensive, multidimensional, and addresses all levels, including political leaders and high state officials, members of the security institutions, and all ranks of the national armed forces.

The plan will include specialist courses to educate senior officials and officers; it will provide mobile training teams to train the trainer as well as peer-to-peer exchanges to share good practice; it offers standardized curricula so that high quality lessons can be delivered in the nation's own institutions; and it will provide high level technical advice on legal frameworks, procedures and practices, to support reforms and prevent corruption risks. Our advice is often focused in the areas of procurement, financial management and human resource management.

In addition, we have made a number of publications openly available on a dedicated website. These include a Handbook for military personnel deployed on operations so that they can recognise and counter corruption; a compendium of best practices, to share knowledge and experience; and a reference curricula, so that interested institutions can set up their own educational courses to help prevent corruption.

But irrespective of the support provided by NATO and by many other actors, rooting out corruption from the security sector requires the same essential commitment that is required to root out corruption from all the other sectors – political will. Ultimately, it is for national leaders and governments to take the initiative, to set the standards, and to lead by example.

And with that, Florian, I shall hand back to you.