

PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSORTIUM OF DEFENSE ACADEMIES AND SECURITY STUDIES INSTITUTES AND ADVANCED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Petar MOLLOV

The participation of Rakovski Defense College in the activities of the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes creates an opportunity for effective implementation of advanced information technologies in the educational and research activities of the College and promotes the reform in the military education system. It also contributes to the active participation of the Republic of Bulgaria in the “Partnership for Peace” (PfP) program and assists Bulgarian preparation for joining NATO. Knowledge of the purpose, aims, tasks and structure of the Consortium allows Rakovski Defense College, as well as other governmental and non-governmental, military and civil organizations and individuals, working in the sphere of security and defense, to take active and productive part in the process.

Background

The Partnership for Peace program was adopted at the summit of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels, Belgium, in January 1994¹. This program introduced new means for cooperation among NATO members and partner countries. PfP aims at improving the peacekeeping capabilities of the participating countries by means of combined planning, education, training and increased interoperability of the armed forces. During the summit of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council of Defense Ministers on June 12, 1998, the U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen presented new vision about the education and training in PfP. He suggested the establishment of:

- Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes;
- simulation network for exercises focused on peace support operation scenarios;
- cooperative network of nationally sponsored PfP training centers.

The First Annual Conference of the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes took place in Zurich, Switzerland, in the period from 19 till 21 October 1998.

Consortium and Advanced Information Technologies

The Consortium is the major initiative of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in the sphere of education and training in PfP². Its main purpose is to improve the proficiency level in defense matters by expanding institutional cooperation in education and defense preparedness. It is envisaged that the utilization of advanced information technologies is a very important factor that affects network capabilities enhancement. The creation of a Consortium website was planned as an immediate task, followed by publication of an electronic magazine. The best chance of enhancing the efficiency of future work and saving resources in this area are provided by the agreement between Internet-based International Relations and Security Network (ISN) and US Defense Department's Partnership for Peace Information Management System (PIMS). Top priority is the development of Internet supporting instruments for civilian, governmental and non-governmental organizations, dealing with defense and security policy.

Participation in the Consortium is open for all organizations from the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council member countries that agree to the adopted principles and desire to support or participate in it.⁷

Organization of the Consortium

The Consortium consists of members, Work Groups and Secretariat. Official languages of the Consortium are English, French, German and Russian. The main structural elements of the Consortium are:

Participant – a person, affiliate or supporter of the goals of the Consortium;

Member of the Consortium – a military/defense academy or a security studies institute from a country participating in EAPC, which supports the principles of the Consortium's charter and has declared its desire to be a member of the Consortium;

Affiliate of the Consortium – an organization from a country participating in EAPC, other than military academy or security studies institute, which supports the principles of the Consortium's charter and has declared its wish to be Affiliate of the Consortium;

Supporter - an organization from a country participating in EAPC, which accepts the principles of the Consortium, but does not wish to be recorded as participant or adherent of the Consortium;

Secretariat – staff with international participation, which leads and coordinates the work of the Consortium;

Work group – a group of participants, members, adherents and supporters, who jointly work for the realization of tasks, projects or interests.

The supreme body of the Consortium is the Annual Conference.

The principles, declared by the participating countries, and functional-administrative activities of the Consortium are not officially committed documents.

IT-related working groups

The activities of some of the Working Groups are closely related to the advancement of Information Technologies to achieve the goals of the Consortium. Their mission can be summarized as follows:

Advanced Distributed Learning. To establish and maintain an open source, web based environment that links consortium member organizations in a collaborative network facilitating the development of Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL). To that end, plans and prototypes will be developed to include recommended architectures, functional requirements, technical standards, and other informational tools that will foster development and exchange of educational content by contributing members of the Consortium.

Archives Working Group. To help its members gain from training in modern archival working methods and to facilitate the exchange of experience. To serve as a clearinghouse for information on availability and accessibility of documents. To facilitate the preservation of and access to documents by providing the necessary technical assistance. To seek support for research, including identification, selection, and reproduction of the most important documentary sources. To promote public knowledge and understanding of past and current security issues by sponsoring translation and publication of selected documents, with analytical and interpretive commentaries, in both print version and online. To encourage the scholarly study of the military dimensions of the Cold war and its consequences for the current processes by organizing international conferences and workshops where new archival evidence is analyzed, interpreted, and presented for discussion.

Curricula. The work group on curriculum development seeks to contribute to the EAPC efforts towards creation of a cooperative network in security education by promoting excellence in curriculum development and course accreditation. For this purpose it will create, on a multilateral basis, a network dedicated to development, accreditation, validation and electronic distribution of curricula in defense management and security policy. Through its work and by assuring diverse views on

curricula development and teaching, the group will foster civil-military relations, dialogue and understanding in the EAPC area. Given the current drive towards joint military and security policy education, the work group will attempt to create common EAPC standards for courses and other training activities.

Digital Library. The working group enhances cooperation in research and education through development of a comprehensive, international web-based digital library for political and military education.

Information Technology; Web Services. The workshop represents an ongoing effort to address all related concerns of participating institutions in the consortium. Emphasis should be laid on three primary pillars:

- Defining user requirements.
- Developing teaming relationships between organizations to address those requirements.
- Focusing on achievable, practical measures and short- to near-term projects.

The scope encompasses everything from organizations that can not even reach the web site (and so need either computers or communications means) to organizations that have large bodies of information (say their curricula) that need assistance in developing technical tools (databases, etc.) to help them manage and exchange the information.

Lessons Learned. The work group will focus on methodologies, technologies and content of lessons learned, and more generally, on what is needed to support an army, or other military or military-political institutions, as a learning organization.

Military History. Work group responsible for maintaining regular contact between official institutions and other scholars interested in cooperating on projects and sharing information related to military history.

Modeling and Simulation. This work group coordinates modeling and simulation, computer-aided exercises (CAX), and other simulation tools that facilitate training activities.

Publications. To provide a family of publications, covering the full range of security studies, to an international standard of excellence, serving military, civilian and academic needs of members of the Consortium.

Research. To link existing research sites, resources and personnel of consortium participants and to promote the establishment of common research projects in order to enhance security, defense, and military policy education and to facilitate knowledge and information sharing among EAPC nations.

Participation of “Rakovski” Defense College in the Consortium

The adoption of the National Security Concept in 1998 and the Military Doctrine in 1999 created conditions, for the first time since 1990, for a real and purposeful reform in the armed forces of the Republic of Bulgaria. A Plan for the organizational build-up of the Ministry of Defense by 2004³ was worked out on the grounds of these documents and the comprehensive study on the status of the Bulgarian Armed Forces, the prospects for world and regional development.^{4,5} The above mentioned documents enabled the development and adoption of the *Concept for development of Rakovski Defense College, military academic education and scientific research*, as well as plan for its realization.⁶ One of the basic functions, stipulated in the Concept, aims at introduction of modern technologies and training programs. The fulfillment of this function requires that the “G.S. Rakovski” Defense College perform the following tasks:

- To participate in the international academic cooperation aiming at developing interoperability in the military education, improving the forms and methods of education and expanding the modern military, technical and political knowledge.
- To take part in the international information exchange and represent Bulgaria in the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, i.e., in the area of security analysis.

The active role of Rakovski Defense College in the Consortium commenced after its Second Annual Conference. Under the leadership of the Deputy Commandant the Defense College, a brochure extensively covering the aims and basic principles of the Consortium’s functioning was published. On 28th December 1999, the Defense College organized a meeting with the personnel, delivering information on the Consortium and providing the Defense College leadership with vision for the future development and required organization for effective participation in the Consortium. An Application Form for participation in the Consortium was offered. On 13th January 2000, the first association meeting of applicants from the Defense College took place. A Vision (presented in Appendix 1 to this article), general program and an academic organizational structure (Appendix 2) were adopted. In accordance with the program, the Commandant of the Defense College provided offices for the Consortium academic work groups. The Information Technology Work Group through its Co-Chair, PIMS Liaison to PFP Consortium, donated three computers, two printers, a web server and other hardware equipment.

This equipment has been of great use to the course participants and teaching staff in the Defense College. At that time, a great number of the computers that were in use in the Defense College were out-of-date and had no access to the Internet. The first

Internet connection was established on 15th March 1999. Only the Interoperability Center and Education Department had Internet access. Most of the Defense College faculty members were not able to operate with advanced software products, e-mail or the Internet. This explained the eagerness of the participants in academic work teams to be involved in the work of the Consortium and in computer courses with respect to the above mentioned computer skills. With the assistance of the PIMS representative in Bulgaria all computers were connected to local and global networks by 14th January 2000. This enabled the continual access to the Internet. The equipment could be used 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

On 20th January 2000, Rakovski Defense College was registered in the Consortium website. Later on, the registration of individual participants was carried out. On the grounds of the submitted application forms a data base was developed for the addresses, abilities and needs of the applicants taking part in the Consortium activities. 131 application forms have been submitted up to now. Contacts for cooperation on Consortium issues have been established with other governmental, non-governmental, civil and military organizations. Part of the academic participants are from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, General Staff, Bulgarian Armed Forces, History Association, National Sports Academy, etc. Several foreign representatives in the Consortium took part in two of the general meetings. These meetings were extremely beneficial for the Defense College activities and gave answers to a number of current issues concerning the Consortium's activities. The assistance of the British Council representative was also essential. Since the end of February 2000, the Deputy Commandant of the Defense College and Director of the National Security and Defense Department took over the management of the Consortium's activities. His participation in the Secretariat WG and his experience will play a crucial part in future activities. Defense College representatives took part in work meetings of the following groups: Military History (4-5 April 2000, Garmisch, Germany); Syllabus (14 April 2000, Geneva, Switzerland); Digital Library (18-21 September 2000, Garmisch, Germany); Advanced Distributed Learning (September 2000, Rome, Italy; January 2001, Geneva). Three officers from the Defense College took part in the Third Annual Conference of the Consortium, Tallin, Estonia (19-21 June 2000). Rakovski Defense College hosted the first session of the leadership of the "European Security and Defense Identity" work group (12-13 May 2000), as well as a work meeting of the developers of the Learning Management System project (4-8 September 2000). Representatives from eight countries participated. The Rakovski Defense College personnel were invited and given the opportunity to work in the group. Representatives from the General Staff of the Bulgarian armed forces, the Ministry of Transportation and private companies were also invited to participate.

The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- To review the Program Management Plan.
- To review the development methodology to be used by developers across PfP organizations wishing to participate in this development project.
- To review the agreed upon schema for this phase of the development process, leading to a prototype that validates the users' requirements for subsequent development.
- To formulate questions to be answered by the development team, as well as requirements by eventual users of the system, that would affect development in the foreseeable future.
- To introduce new courses that validate our technical approach into new prototype database system.
- To provide a diagram of the system in its current state.
- To review procedures for setting up local copies of the entire distribution, working on a module, and submitting a module for consideration by the core technical lead team.

The Academic Curricula WG prepared an answer for the Curricula Questionnaire – Existing Courses and some of the syllabi of Rakovski Defense College, in relation with PfP, are included in the database of the Curriculum working group of the Consortium. Using the Consortium's equipment a Website of the National Security and Defense Policy Department was created.

In September 2000, the Information Technology Working Group provided nine additional computers to the Rakovski Defense College and ensured their connection to the Internet. This contributes to the more efficient participation in specific projects. Furthermore, we intend to create a Website of the College and to take more active part in activities of Advanced Distributed Learning and Lessons Learned working groups.

In November 2000, the academic Lessons Learned WG representatives took part in the Workshop in the Center for Army Lessons Learned, Kansas, the United States. The group intends to create a national system to gather information for the Consortium PfP database. The participation in this initiative will ensure exchange of experience among partner countries gained during their participation in PfP exercises and operations.

In January 2001, at the ADL WG met in Geneva to discuss testing the Learning Management System at four sites. Rakovski Defense College is one of the places where the English Skills for Staff Officers course will be tested by instructors with the

help of residential students.

An information bulletin about the activities of the Consortium and the participation of the Defense College was published, along with publications by authors from the College. We plan on participating in future work meetings, with an increased number of participants, in the separate projects of the Consortium. In this way, Rakovski Defense College contributes to the implementation of the Partnership for Peace Program.

Appendix 1

VISION

for participation of the “Rakovski” Defense College in the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes

In accordance with the newly developed PfP Training and Education Enhancement Program (TEEP) of the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) the Leadership of “Rakovski” Defense College intends to organize the implementation of the principles of the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes within the College and to contribute to building regional and international security. To achieve these goals the following activities have been planned:

- To establish an appropriate organization;
- To register “Rakovski” Defense College for participation in the Consortium;
- To assist registration of individuals;
- To educate and train the participants;
- To provide necessary materials for participants;
- To establish preconditions for effective participation and contribution of the Defense College to various working groups’ activities (without duplicating the Working Groups of the Consortium);
- To adapt the programs and teaching methods of the College to PfP Concepts and NATO standards;
- To participate in Annual Conferences of the Consortium and to actively promote new initiatives and specific suggestions;
- To prepare official statements of the Defense College about the participation in national and international activities within the framework of the Consortium;
- To extend contacts with other organizations;

- To maintain direct contact with the Secretariat of the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutions.

Appendix 2

ACADEMIC COORDINATION COUNCIL

The Academic coordination council does not duplicate the functions of the Secretariat of the Consortium of defense academies and security studies institutes. It does not restrict participants of academic working groups from direct contacts with the participants in international work groups of the Consortium. It directs the activities providing the necessary conditions for work in separate academic working groups that achieve the aims of the Consortium at the academic level.

To realize these functions, the following organizational structure is suggested:

- leadership;
- coordinators /co-coordinators/ of academic work groups.

Leadership includes a chairperson and a secretary. *The Chair* is a member of the College leadership - Commandant or Deputy Commandant of the College. He or she directs the overall activity of participation of the College in the Consortium. *The Secretary* is a member of the College staff. He or she organizes the activities of the Academic coordination council. The secretary is in direct contact with the coordinators of the academic work groups, summarizes the participants' requirements and provides information and material support. He also manages the procurement cell.

Coordinators of the academic work groups are identified by the Leadership of the Academic Coordination Council. They are specialists in specific areas and work on projects related to defense either in the College or other institutions. If the coordinator is a member of another institution, a co-coordinator is selected. The latter is a member of the College. The coordinators manage the participants' activities in the respective academic work groups. They develop a program for participation in certain activities of the international work groups of the Consortium.

Academic Work Groups. The academic work groups consist of participants, members, and supporters, who work together according to their interests, specific tasks and projects. They realize in practice the activities, planned in the general and individual programs. They have access to information and materials provided for the Consortium's activities. They are self-managed cells and define their own program, the structure for its realization, the time and place of their meetings. They are not limited in their contacts with the international work groups of the Consortium. The

number and type of work groups corresponds to those accepted at the Annual Conference of the Consortium.

The academic working groups are supported by a “Supply Cell.” It includes an assistant secretary, a system administrator and a person responsible for the materials. They are College members and are appointed by the Commandant.

Participant in an Academic Work Group is each person or supporter of the Consortium objectives, who has expressed his or her willingness to take active part in the Consortium activities.

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PETAR MOLLOV is born in 1956. Colonel Mollov is pilot in the Bulgarian Air Force. He holds M.Sc. degree from “G. Benkovski” Airforce Academy (1979), Master degree (Operational art, 1989) and Ph.D. (Air Fire Deserting of Ground Targets, 1998) from “Rakovski” Defense College, Sofia (1989). Since 1999 he is associate Professor with over forty publications in the field of fight efficiency. Currently, Colonel Mollov is Chair in the Interoperability Department of “Rakovski” Defense College and Co-Chair of “Lessons Learned” Working Group of the Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes. Address for correspondence: Rakovski Defense College, 82 Evlogi Georgiv str., 1504 Sofia, Bulgaria. E-mail: mollov@yahoo.com.