



MA Thesis
International Affairs

10 years of NORDEFCO

How successful has Nordic Defence Cooperation been?

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HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS
STJÓRNMÁLAFRÆÐIDEILD

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MA Thesis in International Affairs

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Abstract

The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) was established in 2009 by the Nordic states. NORDEFCO operates on a political and military level with the main purpose of strengthening the defence capabilities of the Nordic states. After being operational for only a decade, NORDEFCO consists of a rather small academic literature and is in need of further analysis. Thus, this research provides a new assessment, 10 years after its establishment, by analysing how successful has Nordic Defence Cooperation been? To this end, NORDEFCO's success will be scrutinised by using NORDEFCO's own goals from their *2020 Vision*, which put forth goals NORDEFCO intends to reach by the year 2020, as a measuring device. NORDEFCO's success in reaching these goals form the core of this thesis. Further, NORDEFCO's success will be put into the theoretical framework of 'security communities', considering where NORDEFCO's success positions the Nordic region according to this theoretical framework. The conclusion suggests that NORDEFCO has been moderately successful so far, reaching more success with goals concerning the Nordic region rather than their external goals, which concern Nordic efforts outside the Nordic region. It is, further, argued that Russia's intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in 2014, influenced NORDEFCO's development by making the Nordic states focusing on security in the Nordic region. The theoretical framework suggests that NORDEFCO's success has furthered and strengthened the Nordic region as a mature security community.

Útdráttur

Stofnað var til norræna varnarsamstarfsins NORDEFCO (Nordic Defence Cooperation) árið 2009. NORDEFCO sem starfar á pólitískum og hernaðarlegum grundvelli hefur það meginmarkmið að styrkja varnargetu Norðurlandanna. Lítið hefur verið um fræðileg skrif um samstarfið sökum þess hversu nýlegt það er. Því er sannarlega þörf á frekari rannsóknum á því. Markmið þessarar ritgerðar er að rannsaka NORDEFCO, tíu árum eftir stofnun þess og greina hvað áunnist hefur með samstarfinu fram að þessu? Í þeim tilgangi verður árangur NORDEFCO metinn í samhengi við markmið þess sem kynnt voru í skjalinu *2020 Vision* og fyrirætlað er að náist fyrir árið 2020. Þá verður greint hvaða áhrif NORDEFCO hefur haft á norræna svæðið sem öryggissamfélag (e. *security community*) í samhengi við kenningarlegan ramma um slík samfélög. Í meginráttum er niðurstaðan sú að NORDEFCO hefur verið hóflega árangursríkt sín fyrstu tíu ár. Með samstarfinu hefur náðst betri árangur varðandi innri markmið norræna svæðisins en þau ytri. Þar er átt við þau markmið sem snerta alþjóðlega svæðið utan hins norræna svæðis. Rök eru færð fyrir því að inngrip Rússlands í Úkraínu og innlimun Krímskagans árið 2014 hafi haft talsverð áhrif á þróun NORDEFCO. Svo er að sjá að þeir atburðir hafi þvingað Norðurlönd til að einblína á öryggi norræna svæðisins. Þá benda niðurstöður til þess að árangur NORDEFCO fram að þessu hafi styrkt norræna svæðið sem öryggissamfélag.

Preface

This thesis is my final assignment in the International Affairs Master's programme at the University of Iceland from the faculty of Political Science and accounts for 30 ECTS credits. The thesis was written in the summer and fall of 2018 for the graduation in February 2019.

I am full of gratitude for I am surrounded by great people. I thank Hekla Dögg, my love, who has shown me everlasting support through this process, been my balancing force in times of chaos and a guiding light forward. I would like to thank my parents for their unique insight on life, rather than the academy, which proved vital to advance my ambitions to the latter. I thank my friends for tolerance and good company in challenging times. Last, but far from least, I give my sincere thanks to Page Wilson, my instructor, for endless patience, encouraging guidance and thoughtful contribution to this work.

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Index of abbreviations

ACB – African Capacity Building
ACE – Arctic Challenge Exercise
ADL - Advanced Distributed Learning
ALB – Alternate Landing Base
APSA – African Peace and Security Architecture
ARMA - Armaments
CAPA – Capabilities
CBT – Cross-Border Training
CIS – Communication and Information System
CJNBEP – Combined Joint Nordic-Baltic Exercise Programme
CJNEP – Combined Joint Nordic Exercise Programme
COPA – Cooperation Area
EASF – Eastern Africa Standby Force
EASFCOM – Eastern African Standby Force Coordination Mechanism
EU – European Union
EUTM – European Training Mission in Mali
FINCENT – Finnish Defence Forces International Centre
HR&E – Human Resources and Education
ICG – Icelandic Coast Guard
ISAF – International Security Assistance Force
JTEC – Joint Training and Evaluation Centre
MCC – Military Coordination Committee
MCS – Military Coordination Staff
MINUSMA - UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
MTEP - Military Training and Exercise Program
NACS – Nordic Advisory and Coordination Staff
NAD – Norwegian Aeromedical Detachment
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NB8 – Nordic-Baltic Eight
NBAP – Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme
NBG – Nordic Battle Group
NCU – Nordic Combat Uniform
NODEFIC - Norwegian Defence International Centre
NORDAC – Nordic Armament Cooperation
NORDCAPS - Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support
NORDEFCO – Nordic Defence Cooperation
NORDSAMFN - Nordic Cooperation Group for military UN matters
NORDSUP - Nordic Support Structure
NORECAS – Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance

NORTAT - Nordic Tactical Air Transport
OPS - Operations
PfP - NATO's Partnership for Peace
PSC - Policy Steering Committee
PSCS - Policy Steering Committee Secretariat
SAC – Strategic Air Component
SWEDINT - Swedish Armed Forces
Technical Agreement (TA)
TR&E – training and Exercises
TTD – Table Top Discussion
UN – United Nations
UNIFIL – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon)
UNMIS – United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS – United Nations Mission in South Sudan

1 Introduction

The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) was established in 2009 by the Nordic states, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The Nordic states are known for sharing a similar history, culture and language, as well as their joint cooperative efforts, for example within the Nordic Council or the UN.¹ However, they have a short history of cooperation with respect to defence matters. During the Cold War, the states had a strictly limited Nordic defence cooperative relationship since Sweden and Finland pursued policies of neutrality while Denmark, Iceland and Norway joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). This divergence prevented defence cooperation being developed in the Cold War. Conversely, since the end of the Cold War, Finland and Sweden have increased their relationship with NATO, and the Nordic states have taken small steps in establishing a defence cooperation between themselves. This process culminated in the establishment of NORDEFECO, which is the topic of this thesis.

NORDEFECO provided the Nordic states with streamlined defence cooperation on both military and political levels. The cooperation's stated goal is: "to strengthen the participating nations' national defence, explore common synergies and facilitate efficient common solutions."² NORDEFECO defines itself as a cooperation structure, rather than a command structure, a regional cooperation which works on a political and military level with participation in its activities always remaining a national decision.

This rather new cooperation structure needs a comprehensive research and analysis. After its first decade, it is appropriate to look back and consider how successful NORDEFECO has been in reaching its goals. This is especially true since the Russian intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in 2014, which changed the outlook of the security situation in Europe according to the Nordic states.

This thesis aims to assess how successful Nordic Defence Cooperation has been? To answer this question, NORDEFECO's own goals as presented in the document Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020, referred to as the '2020 Vision' will be used as a measuring

¹ See Jakobssen, Peter Viggo, "The Nordic Peacekeeping Model: Rise, Fall, Resurgence?", *International Peacekeeping* 13:3 (2006), p. 381-395; NORDEFECO, "The basics about NORDEFECO", <http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco>; Nordic Co-operation, "The history of Nordic co-operation", <https://www.norden.org/en/information/history-nordic-co-operation>.

² NORDEFECO, "The basics about NORDEFECO", <http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco>.

device. NORDEFCO's success in reaching those goals will then be put into context with the theory of 'security communities'. To analyse this case, this thesis is split up as follows.

The second chapter introduces the theoretical framework of the thesis. The theory applied is that of a Security Community, particularly as proposed by scholars Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett. The theory deals with the concept of a geographical region reaching the status of a security community, meaning the states within the region and community thrive in peace. The theory provides different perspectives of security communities and Adler and Barnett propose three phases of developments of a security community. These factors will be considered in the context of NORDEFCO, keeping in mind the questions, how NORDEFCO has influenced the Nordic region as a potential 'security community', which phase the Nordic region belongs and what this means for NORDEFCO? Moreover, this chapter will introduce NORDEFCO's '2020 Vision', whose goals will be used as a measuring device to assess NORDEFCO's success. The document was published in 2013 and outlined goals that the cooperation aimed to reach by the year 2020. The 2020 Vision will be used as an analytical measuring device for the purpose of this thesis, splitting NORDEFCO's success in reaching the goals into internal achievements and external achievements, with each category discussed in a specific chapter. The theoretical framework of security communities, along with measuring NORDEFCO's success by using the 2020 Vision, form the analytical foundation of this thesis.

The third chapter discusses and explains, in theory, the methodology used throughout the research how it is applied in practice in the thesis. The methodology is qualitative, and the research design is a case study, with inspiration from exploratory qualitative studies. Moreover, the measuring device used to assess NORDEFCO's success is explained in the research design in the context of a methodological approach.

Chapter 4 further lays the foundation of the main analytical part of the thesis and expands on the discussion prompted in this introduction. It starts with a historical context of Nordic defence cooperation, addressing the questions of why NORDEFCO was established in 2009? Moreover, this part explains why an analysis on Nordic Defence Cooperation's success should indeed start with NORDEFCO. The latter part of the chapter explores NORDEFCO itself, analysing and discussing its nature and structure, specifically the Cooperation Areas. This discussion is a necessary prelude for the next chapters.

NORDEFCO's internal achievements in practice are assessed in chapter 5. NORDEFCO's achievements will be analysed directly in the context of each of the 5 goals concerning NORDEFCO's internal activities of the 2020 Vision, examining if NORDEFCO has managed to reach or contribute to the respective goal. Internal activities mean efforts that enhance cooperation between the Nordic states, within the Nordic region. Entangled in the development of NORDEFCO is the Russian intervention of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in 2014, which, as will be shown, had a noticeable effect on NORDEFCO. Research on official documents from NORDEFCO, in this case from 2014 onwards, showed that Russia's action had an effect on the Nordic's view on the security situation in Europe. In the context of NORDEFCO's progress with reaching their goals, Russia's actions will be considered, arguing that it had an influential role in the development of the cooperation. Lastly, the implications of NORDEFCO's success with these goals will be scrutinized.

Finally, chapter 6 considers NORDEFCO's external achievements in practice. While the previous two chapters are more focused on NORDEFCO within, this chapter expands the horizon towards NORDEFCO's relationship with outside states, institutions, and projects; the Baltic States, relationship with the UN, NATO, the EU and capacity building in Africa. NORDEFCO's ambition to contribute to international operations in the UN, NATO and EU is a part of the 2020 Vision's goals. Thus, they will be discussed specifically in this regard. Moreover, while not being mentioned in a specific goal, research for this particular goal led to the assumption that NORDEFCO's relationship with the Baltic states, which has been extensive, has had an influential role in NORDEFCO's success with external activities. In light of this, and the fact that the Nordic states claim that Baltic cooperation is important in the 2020 Vision, cooperation between NORDEFCO and the Baltic states will be considered. Finally, NORDEFCO set out the particular goal of facilitating international capacity building, which will be discussed by analysing their success in their capacity building efforts with the Eastern Africa Standby Force.

2 Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical framework applied to this thesis is the theory of a “security community”. The theory deals with the prospect of a geographical region becoming so peaceful that violent conflict or war between states within the region becomes, depending on the phase of the security community, unlikely or improbable. The theory provides a fitting framework for this thesis, as the Nordic region largely conforms to these ‘security community’ expectations. The focus of the security community theoretical framework will be based upon the contribution of scholars Adler and Barnett, specifically in their book *Security Communities*³ and their idea of three phases of the development of Security Communities. In addition, Karl Deutsch’s et. al. original contribution will be drawn upon. Adler and Barnett’s three phases of the development of Security communities will be introduced, and it is against this framework that NORDEFCO will be assessed in the concluding chapter.

The purpose of using this theoretical framework is to consider what the ‘security community’ literature can contribute to our understanding of the value and role of NORDEFCO at the general level, before delving into the specifics of the Nordic Defence Cooperation, particularly, how successful it has been. Moreover, how NORDEFCO has influenced the Nordic region as a security community and which phase the Nordic region belongs to will be scrutinized. This will be analysed throughout the thesis and discussed in the conclusion.

After introducing the theoretical framework, this chapter thoroughly introduces NORDEFCO’s ‘2020 Vision’, a document published by NORDEFCO in 2013 which put forth the goals that NORDEFCO intends to reach by the year 2020. The 2020 Vision provides the measuring device to which NORDEFCO’s success will be estimated. Thus, the document and its content will be discussed before listing the goals entirely. NORDEFCO’s progress with pursuing each goal will then form the core of the thesis, where each goal will be analysed specifically.

³ *Security communities*. Edited by Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Cambridge 1998).

2.1 Security communities

The Nordic states have been considered a prime example of a security community region⁴, but this statement has also been criticised for missing a sufficient empirical analysis. Ole Wæver, for example, claimed that the Nordic region is considered a prime example because it “has been seen as too easy or too self-evident” for research purposes, because “no one can *imagine* a war between these countries”⁵. Wæver claims this self-evidence is false, citing that from a historical perspective, it was not necessarily obvious that the Nordic states would form a security community, pointing out the fact that it was not until the nineteenth century that wars between the Nordic states declined considerably.⁶ There are also dismissed peculiarities, which include the fact there was a “deliberate absence of *security* institutions”⁷ in the Nordic region during the Cold War. Since a cooperation structure in the form of NORDEFCO has emerged, albeit not strongly institutionalized, a fresh analysis from the perspective of security communities is needed.

A ‘security community’ was first given a comprehensive conceptual framework by Karl Deutsch et.al⁸ in 1957 and later, in the mid-1990s, when revisited expansively by Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett. Deutsch and his colleagues defined a security community as a “group of people integrated to the point of real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically but will settle their disputes in some other way”.⁹ Deutsch further introduced two different types of security communities. The former one is an amalgamated security community, considered to exist when there is a “formal merger of two or more previously independent units into a single larger unit, with some type of common government after amalgamation”¹⁰. An example of this could be the United States.

⁴ See eg., Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 97; Wæver, “Insecurity, security and asecurty in the West European non-war community”, p. 70; Ditych, “Security community: A future for a troubled concept?”, p. 356; Browning and Joenniemi, “From fratricide to security community: re-theorising difference in constitution of Nordic Peace”, p. 483.

⁵ Wæver, “Insecurity, security and asecurty in the West European non-war community”, p. 72.

⁶ Wæver, “Insecurity, security and asecurty in the West European non-war community”, p. 72.

⁷ Wæver, “Insecurity, security and asecurty in the West European non-war community”, p. 73.

⁸ Deutsch, Karl, et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (New York 1957).

⁹ Deutsch, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, p. 6.

¹⁰ Deutsch, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, p. 6.

The latter is a pluralistic security community, which “retains the legal independence of separate governments” who share a “compatibility of core values derived from common institutions and mutual responsiveness – a matter of mutual identity and loyalty, a sense of “we-ness.””¹¹ A pluralistic security community exists in “a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful exchange”¹² and that differences in their relationship can be solved with means other than war or violent conflict.¹³

Adler has, further, argued that pluralistic security communities are socially constructed “cognitive regions” or “community-regions”, in which its people “imagine that, with respect to their own security and economic well-being, borders run, more or less, where shared understandings and common identities end”.¹⁴

Based upon this definition from Adler, and Deutsch’s claim of a “sense of community”, it is safe to relate the theory to the constructivist school of thought in International Relations theory, with its emphasis on social construction in the international arena (“we-ness” for example), values and identity.¹⁵ In fact, scholars Adler and Barnett are considered to have made a huge impact in reviving the theory of security community under auspices of constructivism after the Cold War.¹⁶ As Adler and Barnett

¹¹ Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 66.

¹² Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 73.

¹³ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 3.

¹⁴ Adler, “Imagined (Security) Communities: Cognitive Regions in International Relations”, p. 250.

¹⁵ Constructivism is based upon the idea that international relations are a social construction, emphasizing the importance of norms, rules and language in creating historical, cultural and political realities. Therefore, International Relations is a social construction rather than a reality existing independently of any human meaning or action. See Fierke, K. M., “Constructivism”, *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, p. 162-163 specifically; Wendt, Alexander, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge 1999); Wendt, Alexander, “Anarchy is what the states make of it: the social construction of power politics”, *International Organization* 46:2 (1992), p. 391-425; Hopf, Ted, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory”, *International security* 23:1 (1998), p. 171-200.

¹⁶ See eg. Koschut, “Regional order and peaceful change: Security communities as a via media in international relations”, p. 520; Tuscisny, “Security Communities and Their Values: Taking Masses Seriously”, p. 427; Browning and Joenniemi, “From fratricide to security community: re-theorising difference in constitution of Nordic Peace”, p. 486; Pouliot, “Pacification Without Collective Identification: Russia and the Transatlantic Security Community in the Post-Cold War Era”, p. 605; Cederman and Daase, “Endogenizing corporate identities”, p. 132.

did in their seminal work, *Security Communities*¹⁷, the idea of a pluralistic security community, as described in this chapter, will be the focal point for this theoretical context because it has more relevance to NORDEFCO and the Nordic region.

Further definitions are needed to apply the theory appropriately. Pluralistic security communities can be differentiated between two categories, loosely coupled and tightly coupled security communities. The categories are based on their “depth of trust, the nature and degree of institutionalization of their governance system, and whether they reside in a formal anarchy or are on the verge of transforming to it”.¹⁸ A loosely-coupled security community “observes the minimal definitional properties and no more”,¹⁹ meaning they are not as demanding and complex as tightly coupled security communities. Within a loosely coupled community, the states which inhabit it continue to have a dependable expectation of a peaceful change within its transnational region.²⁰ This peaceful change is simply when the respective actors neither expect nor prepare for organized violence to settle a dispute.²¹ The states can expect this due to the fact that within their community, they share a “structure of meanings and identity” which, further, makes hostile actions from other states within the loosely coupled security community unlikely.²²

Tightly coupled security communities are more demanding because they have a “mutual aid” society, where they “construct collective system arrangements”.²³ The act of mutual-aid then becomes a habit within the community which results in national identity being expressed through “merging of efforts”.²⁴ Moreover, the states possess a system of rule which lies somewhere between “a sovereign state and a regional,

¹⁷ *Security Communities*. Edited by Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Cambridge 1998).

¹⁸ Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 73.

¹⁹ Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 73.

²⁰ Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 73.

²¹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 34.

²² Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 30.

²³ Adler and Barnett, “Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities”, p. 73.

²⁴ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 56.

centralized, government; that is, it is something of a post-sovereign system, endowed with common supranational, transnational and national institutions” along with some form of a collective security system”.²⁵ The legitimacy of using force only becomes acceptable to external threats to the community, or possibly members of the community that “defect from the core norms of the community”.²⁶ This means that in case of an attack, a security community might respond as a “collective security system or even as an integrated military defence organization”.²⁷

Deutsch, along with Adler and Barnett, follows the idea that transnational and interstate interactions are able to produce a “transnational community with a governance structure that is linked to dependable expectation of peaceful exchange”.²⁸ The defining feature of a security community is that a stable peace is connected to the existence of a transnational community. This raises the question of what defines a community?

Since Adler and Barnett’s writings will be used for analysis, the definition of a community given by the two scholars will be considered. Adler and Barnett claimed that a community was defined by three characteristics which are based upon a definition originally given by Michael Taylor in 1982.²⁹ Firstly, the existence of shared values, meanings and identities define them. When a community has shared meanings, they perceive the same social reality and their understanding of norms. Secondly, the inhabitants of a community have “many-sided” and direct relations with each other and are used to some form of “face-to-face” encounters and other various relations in different settings, not merely indirect relation in specific domains. Thirdly, communities contain interchange that expresses “some degree of long-term interest and perhaps even altruism; long-term interest derives from knowledge of those with whom one is interacting, and altruism can be understood as a sense of obligation and responsibility”.³⁰ The latter two characteristics show an example of how mutually interest-based behaviour

²⁵ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 56.

²⁶ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 56.

²⁷ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 56.

²⁸ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 57.

²⁹ Taylor, Michael, *Community, Anarchy and Liberty* (New York 1982), p. 25-33 specifically.

³⁰ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 31.

exists amongst members in a community. These characteristics can be applied to the local, domestic and international level.³¹

2.1.1 Three phases of the development of Security communities

Adler and Barnett identify three phases in the development of security communities: *nascent*, *ascendant* and *mature*. The phases are chronological, which means that the first two phases, *nascent* and *ascendant* are a path towards the *mature* phase, where a security community comes into existence.³²

Nascent phase

The first phase is *Nascent*. Adler and Barnett state that during this phase, governments of states are not trying specifically to create a security community, but rather they are starting to consider how they might foster a relationship with other governments to “increase their mutual security; lower the transaction costs associated with their exchanges; and/or encourage further exchanges and interactions”.³³ Under these circumstances, states are likely to try to foster diplomatic, bilateral and multilateral exchanges. Adler and Barnett call this a “search” mission when the states are beginning to consider the level of possible cooperation with other states. Further, third-parties, such as institutions and organizations are established to strengthen the basis of trust.³⁴

This search for grounds of cooperation can be triggered by many factors, including a possible mutual security threat. According to Deutsch, war or a common threat is enough for an interest of a security community to form. Should states pursue cooperation, they recognize joint interests that “require collective action, and can mutually benefit from modest coordination of security policies”.³⁵ Such a security cooperation is likely to identify and develop actions that are not considered threatening and to foster policies with the aim of overcoming collective action problems and promote security goals that serve their mutual interests. That said, states often develop security ties not necessarily to establish a collective defence against a threat but simply to deepen “institutional and

³¹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 32.

³² Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 63.

³³ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 50.

³⁴ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 50.

³⁵ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 50.

transnational linkages that bind the states together”, to which Adler and Barnett conclude “This highlights that a broad effect of, if not the very intent behind, security organization is the general nourishing of mutual trust”.³⁶

Generally speaking, the triggers for starting the development of a security community are likely based on material and normative motives. This can include “rapid shifts in the distribution of military power; cataclysmic events that produce changes in material structures, mindsets and sensibilities, and new ways of thinking about organizing political life and, transnational, domestic, or international processes that generate common interests”.³⁷ Social, political and cultural homogeneity between states can also lead to greater interaction and, under such circumstances, create desire for the respective states to develop a security community: “people sharing cultural and social attributes across national borders frequently voice an interest in developing not simply a defensive strategic posture but rather an institutional form that is intended to give muscle to already existing expressions of mutual obligation”.³⁸ What this means is that a security community starts to emerge simply because a factor either pushed or pulled at the states which made them reconsider how to organize their relations.

To sum up, in the *nascent* phase, a dynamic and positive relationship between the states and their societies can be expected. Additionally, social institutions and organizations which are designed to increase the possibility of mutual trust emerge. A coalition of states is a probable facilitator as well as a stabilizer of the nascent phase, “for only such a state or group of states can be expected to provide the leadership, protection, material benefits and sense of purpose that is frequently required”.³⁹

Ascendant phase

The *Ascendant* phase is identified by cumulatively dense networks between the states as well as institutions and organizations which reflect either a tighter military coordination or cooperation and/or further decreased expectations that the other states represent a threat. The structures and levels of interactions formed in the *nascent* phase are

³⁶ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 50.

³⁷ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 51-52.

³⁸ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 51.

³⁹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 53.

strengthened and intensified when *ascending*. Furthermore, states in this phase consider their societies, through dense networks of relations, as “friendly”, which Adler and Barnett fail to further explain, but can reliably mean that the states do not consider each other as threats. Strengthened dynamic relations might also be furthered by a common perception of ideas of material progress and security, which centre on a key expectation between the states: “that material progress and security, broadly defined, can be best guaranteed only among members of the region.”⁴⁰

Increased interactions also encourage the development of various social institutions and organizations that reflect the shared interests of the states and even, possibly, facilitate a collective identity if one did not already exist. Increased interactions and intensified relations between societies and states also, simply, deepen mutual trust and responsiveness. Trust continues to develop where the key indicators of trust reside in the security sphere. Trust in military matters is notable in the instances when decisions on military procurement are reflected in interdependent military postures and when states begin to share intelligence information.⁴¹ Another indicator could be a step by step process to increase mutual trust. This process involves increasingly dismantling organizations that were designed for verification of trust but have, at this phase, become less important to maintain the cooperation; “therefore, there should be a change in bureaucratic structures that emerged in the nascent phase”.⁴²

The process of building trust is prominent in this phase, which is gained from social learning. Social learning furthers the knowledge between states about each other’s intentions and each other’s interpretations of “society, politics, economics, and culture”, as these factors become more known between states, and these interpretations are shared, since the “stage has been laid for the development of a regional collective identity.”⁴³

To sum up, this second phase is demarcated by its intensive and extensive forms of networks between the states which is likely to either produce or be a product of

⁴⁰ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 53.

⁴¹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 54.

⁴² Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 54.

⁴³ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 54.

cooperation in various institutions and organization. While functional organizations have been used to facilitate trust between the states, in this phase, changes can be expected due to increased trust. For *ascendant* security communities, it is becoming increasingly hard for the respective states to imagine resorting to violence to settle their differences, to which Adler and Barnett argue that they expect states to “have altered how it is they organize their security and define the threat”.⁴⁴

Mature phase

The third and final phase is *Mature*. The more the expectations of a peaceful exchange are institutionalised “in both domestic and supranational settings, the more war in the region becomes improbable”.⁴⁵ When states have reached this phase, they “share an identity and, therefore, entertain dependable expectations of peaceful change and a security community now comes into existence”.⁴⁶ This marks a certain threshold being crossed. It becomes more difficult for individuals of this “region” to “think only in instrumental ways and prepare for war among each other”. Here, Adler and Barnett bring up the loosely and tightly coupled variants of a security community, previously explained.

For this phase, Adler and Barnett put forth various indicators which reflect the high degree of trust that now reigns in the security community. The indicators also reflect the community’s shared identity and future, and the fact that by now there is a low or no probability that a conflict leads to a military encounter. The states within the community now differentiate between those within it and those who are outside.⁴⁷

Following are the indicators by Adler and Barnett:

Multilateralism: Where decision-making procedures and resolution of a conflict is more consensual than between other states. This is reflective of the trust that binds them.

Unfortified borders: While still having borders inside the security community, the borders are to secure other kinds of threats than military invasion.

⁴⁴ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 54-55.

⁴⁵ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 55.

⁴⁶ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 55.

⁴⁷ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 55.

Changes in military planning: There is no “worst-case” scenario planning since states within the community are not considered potential military enemies.

Common definition of threat. Self-explanatory.

Discourse and the language of community. A state’s normative discourse and actions reflect those of their community.

These indicators determine the existence of a loosely coupled security community. They also apply to tightly coupled security communities, but there are differences between the two, since the following indicators only apply to tightly coupled security communities, in addition to the earlier indicators:

Cooperative and collective security: Cooperative security which regards problems within the community and collective security which regards threats outside the community.

A high level of military integration: Adler and Barnett argue that the trust and shared identities of states at this point will result in a desire to pool military resources, “this will be particularly true if there was military cooperation in earlier phases of the emerging security community”.⁴⁸ This indicator does not only reflect a high level of trust but also that security is viewed interdependently by the community.

Policy coordination against “internal” threats: This means greater coordination of policy between states inside the security community to “patrol” and stand guard for internal threats, while “most working within the security community tradition point to the existence of external threats, many (territorially based) communities also derive their identity from internal threats to the community.”⁴⁹

Free movement of populations. Free movement and fewer characterizations of “us” and “them”.

Internationalization of authority. Public policies are shared, and other related practices can facilitate an informal system of rule. Authority might become internationalized or, states will try to harmonize their domestic laws.

⁴⁸ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 56.

⁴⁹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 57.

*A “Multiperspectival” polity. “Rule is shared at the national, transnational, and supranational levels”.*⁵⁰

Adler and Barnett conclude that pluralistic security communities have the potential to become a radical new form of regional governance which would be more complicated than its historical counterparts. This is specifically if the communities remain “somewhat permanent international (and transnational) actors whose boundaries are determined by shared understandings rather than geography”.⁵¹ The chances of survival, institutionalization and expansion of this regional governance structure, might be enhanced by the fact that “this type of governance system lies between, on the one hand, the anarchical arrangement of sovereign states – and national identities, and, on the other, a system of rule endowed with strong norms, institutions, transnational civic traditions, and trust and transnational identities”.⁵² This means that peaceful change can depend upon social cognitive and normative bonds, where people within the security community identify between themselves and therefore feel secure. As such, violent conflict can be eliminated by mutual identification. The possibility of a peaceful exchange being established through the institutionalization of mutual identification, transnational values, intersubjective understanding and shared identities is consistent with the constructivist theory. This approach acknowledges the role of knowledge in transforming international structures and security politics and is, therefore, most useful to analyse how an international community can shape security politics and create the necessary condition for a stable peace.⁵³ All the indicators of a tightly coupled, mature security community will be considered when examining NORDEFCO effect on the Nordic region as a security community.

2.2 NORDEFCO’s 2020 Vision

In 2013, NORDEFCO published a document titled ‘Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020’, subsequently referred to as the 2020 Vision. The document was to serve as the basis for political guidance for NORDEFCO by asserting the cooperation’s ambitions and listing

⁵⁰ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 57.

⁵¹ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 58.

⁵² Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 59.

⁵³ Adler and Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective”, p. 59.

goals intended for NORDEFCO to reach by the year 2020. The document is one of the foundational sources for the thesis since the goals listed in the document provide the measuring device to which NORDEFCO's success will be analysed and estimated, with the results being put in context with the theory of security communities. Before the goals of the Vision, its contents and context will be shortly scrutinized.

The 2020 Vision was put forth as a way to move forward with the cooperation after a reflection by NORDEFCO's Policy Steering Committee (PSC) of the cooperation's past 4 years. At the time, NORDEFCO had hardly any big projects of its own. In 2013, NORDEFCO's activities seemed more to revolve around already existing bilateral and trilateral commitments between the Nordic nations. After only 4 years, it could be considered quite normal. It is not expected that a cooperation such as this, which is limited in its ambition in the first place (in a way that it is kept broad and open, and steers clear of any potential collision with other international commitments the Nordic states might have), would already have completed ambitious achievements. This will be further discussed in chapter 4.

It is argued that in this environment, Finland, during its chairmanship in NORDEFCO, proposed the 2020 Vision for the Nordic states as a guideline in an effort to make sure that the already wide approach of NORDEFCO would have more focus and therefore more promising possibility for results. It should be noted that in 2017, NORDEFCO acknowledged that the 2020 Vision from 2013 has served NORDEFCO well for guidance. However, due to changes in the security environment since 2014 (referring to Russia's annexation of Crimea) and the fact that the next decade is approaching, Finland again, in 2017, proposed a new vision to be published in late 2018 or 2019⁵⁴. That said, NORDEFCO still follows the 2020 Vision, thus the document provides a fitting measuring device for an historical analysis. Finland's effort hints at the importance to which the Nordic state views NORDEFCO, showing initiative to provide guidelines for the whole cooperation. Arguably, Finland is the most sensitive Nordic state to dramatic changes in Russia's relations to the West.

The Vision begins by stating that the Nordic Ministers of Defence, who signed the document, believe that an increased Nordic defence cooperation will create

⁵⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 3.

opportunities for each Nordic country to “develop, maintain and use our military means more efficiently and in a more cost-effective manner.”⁵⁵ Additionally, it is specifically discussed that enhanced Nordic defence cooperation, despite the different membership obligations of the Nordic states, will complement each Nordic state’s effort in the UN, NATO and the EU. The document further emphasised the common challenges the Nordic states faced, according to NORDEFCO: “The unpredictability and complexity of the future security environment, combined with economical austerity, will affect the Nordic countries individually, as neighbours and as a part of the wider international community”.⁵⁶ Thus, regional cooperation as well as multinational cooperation with UN, NATO and the EU are considered important for the Nordic states and is, therefore, one of the aims of NORDEFCO. Finally, the Baltic States are specifically mentioned as important allies for security cooperation and the document states that NORDEFCO will be open to explore and adopt new beneficial possibilities for cooperation which could emerge.⁵⁷

Now that a short context for the 2020 Vision has been discussed, it is time to introduce the goals to which NORDEFCO’s success will be measured against in this thesis.

2.2.1 The goals of the 2020 Vision

The goals put forth in the 2020 Vision start by claiming that “using the capabilities we have and developing the capabilities we need, by 2020...” and then proceed to put forth the respective goal. Since each goal is put forth in a paragraph, they will be given a defining title which summarizes the goal in a concise but truthful manner. This title will then be referred to when discussing NORDEFCO’s progress in a respective goal. This is simply done to be able to give the discussion clarity and analyse the goals more efficiently. It should be mentioned that all of NORDEFCO’s main achievements so far, based on detailed research on NORDEFCO documents, can be related to a specific goal, meaning

⁵⁵ NORDEFCO, “Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Cooperation-2020>.

⁵⁶ NORDEFCO, “Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Cooperation-2020>.

⁵⁷ NORDEFCO, “Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Cooperation-2020>.

no big achievements are dismissed in the analytical part of the thesis because they did not relate to a specific goal.

The goals used for analysis in the 2020 Vision are seven. Since the first two goals have in common that they pursue external activities for NORDEFCO (i.e. objectives that pursue interests outside the Nordic region), they will be discussed together in chapter 6 under the heading NORDEFCO's external achievements in practice. The rest of the goals address NORDEFCO internally, so they will be discussed as NORDEFCO's internal achievements in practice in chapter 5. It should be noted that goals V (Facilitate Military Education) and VI (Support Veteran's Care) were combined into Goal V due to their similarity and the fact that they both adhere to NORDEFCO's Cooperation Area Human Resources and Education. Moreover, it is argued that analysing NORDEFCO's success in reaching their internal goals first gives a clearer and more linear analysis following the contents of chapter 4, then moving to the goals concerning external activities in chapter 6. What follows are the goals, with the defining title of the goal followed by a direct quote of the goal from the 2020 Vision.⁵⁸

NORDEFCO's external goals:

I) NORDEFCO as a facilitator for international operations

By 2020 transparency, consultations and coordination in planning for contributing to international operations will be established as routine. We share information of available force assets which facilitates Nordic contributions to international operations carried out by the UN, NATO or the EU.

II) International capacity building

By 2020 capacity building will be an integrated part of Nordic contributions to international engagements. The Nordic countries will have established a roster of specialists and military advisors to conduct capacity building and security sector reform tasks. The Nordic countries will be able to provide financial, material and advisory support.

NORDEFCO's internal goals:

III) Cross-border training, surveillance cooperation and increasing situational awareness

Coordinated training and exercise programmes contribute to maintaining and developing capabilities. By 2020 cross-border training and exercises will be conducted on a regular basis

⁵⁸ NORDEFCO, "Nordic Defence Cooperation 2020", <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Cooperation-2020>.

among the Nordic countries covering the whole Nordic area. Movement of personnel and material will thereby be facilitated. Cooperation in air and sea surveillance of the Nordic region will be enhanced. Enhanced exchange of surveillance data with the aim of improving situational awareness will be carried out. Nordic countries will also cooperate to develop rapid deployment capabilities to be used for the NATO Response Force and/or the EU Battle Groups.

IV) Increasing interoperability, armaments cooperation and pooling capabilities

By 2020 the Nordic countries will have deepened their capability cooperation with the aim to increase systems similarity, including armaments, interoperability and shared solutions to identified capability gaps and shortfalls. Possibilities for pooling of capabilities and resources will be actively sought and the principles created for Nordic Tactical Air Transport (NORTAT) will serve as an example also for other cooperation areas. Joint Nordic acquisition will be enabled by the establishment of common processes and routines. We have established an ongoing close dialogue with the Nordic defence industry.

V) Enhance cooperation on military education and training and veterans care

By 2020 the Nordic countries will work closely together through enhanced cooperation on military education and training. We build on experiences from the division of labour in conducting Nordic courses and the Nordic Centre for Gender. We also assess possibilities to establish Nordic combined education and competence centres.

The Nordic countries will exchange experiences on policies and procedures and coordinate efforts regarding veterans care.

VI) Establish a secure line of communication

By 2020 secure lines of communication for the exchange of classified information will be established between the Nordic defence administrations based on a common Nordic analysis.

VI) Regular dialogue between the Nordic capitals on security and defence and a more streamlined cooperation

By 2020 dialogue and consultations between the Nordic capitals regarding security and defence issues will be regular. Transparency, information exchange and coordination in long-term capability development will be well established. National procedures, rules and regulations will be streamlined as much as possible and obstacles removed in order to enhance Nordic defence cooperation.

These are the goals to which NORDEFCO's success after its first 10 years of existence will be measured. As will be further explored in the thesis and explained in the methodology, NORDEFCO's relationship with the Baltic states, despite not being mentioned in a specific goal, will be analysed in relation to NORDEFCO's external activities. The reason is that research for this thesis revealed that this region-to-region cooperation has been extensive and, arguably, influential in the development of the cooperation.

Analysing NORDEFECO's success in reaching these goals and discussing those results in relation to the theory of security communities form the analytical foundation of this thesis.

2.3 Summary

This chapter has introduced, explained and discussed the theoretical framework for the thesis, heavily based upon Adler and Barnett's writings on security communities. The theory offers different views of security communities which can be separated between an amalgamated security community and a pluralistic security community. The latter one, the focus of this thesis, can be further divided into loose or tight security communities. Three developmental phases of pluralistic security communities were also discussed but one of the objectives throughout this thesis is to consider what phase NORDEFECO belongs and subsequently what implications those results would have on the analysis of NORDEFECO.

NORDEFECO's 2020 Vision was also introduced and discussed, whose goals provide the measuring device to which NORDEFECO's success will be analysed in practice. The goals were separated into two categories, internal and external activities, arguing that this setup is necessary for a more concise analysis.

The theoretical framework of security communities and its three phases, per Adler and Barnett, provides a backdrop against which the value, role and success of NORDEFECO over the last 10 years can be put into context. This framework, together with analysing NORDEFECO's success in reaching the 2020 Vision goals in practice, form the analytical focus of this thesis.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a fresh assessment of NORDEFCO by analysing how successful the cooperation has been at an appropriate juncture in time, namely after its first 10 years. Established in 2009, NORDEFCO is a fairly recent phenomenon with a rather small literature. In addition, the studies before 2014 have a different perspective than post-2014. After the Russian intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, security matters and perceptions in Europe, including the Nordic region, changed. This means new circumstances have arisen in the international arena which the Nordic region is not exempt from needing a new analysis. The most in-depth writings specifically on Nordic Defence Cooperation was arguably last written in 2011 by Håkon Lund Saxi⁵⁹, only two years after the establishment of NORDEFCO. For these reasons, a new examination of the structure, workings, goals, success and implications of the Nordic Defence Cooperation is warranted. This thesis aims to contribute to this relative gap on the topic. In pursuit of this purpose, this chapter describes the methodology used in this thesis.

3.2 Research methods

3.2.1 Qualitative research

A qualitative research method is used for this thesis. The reason is that the characteristics of qualitative research, for example, focus on meaning and understanding, constructionism and phenomenology, are the most suitable way to fulfil the purpose of this thesis. The way qualitative research will be applied to the research is that it seeks to explain a phenomenon, namely NORDEFCO. Further, the aim is to gain an understanding of certain circumstances and context, in this case, Nordic defence cooperation in international relations, and understand the nature of the phenomenon in question; how NORDEFCO works and how successful it has been. Moreover, qualitative research frames the researcher as the primary instrument. For this thesis, the data was collected by the

⁵⁹ Saxi, Håkon Lunde, *Nordic Defence Cooperation after the Cold War*, Norwegian Institute For Defence Studies (Oslo 2011). Saxi has written more on Nordic Defence Cooperation, see for example: Saxi, *Norwegian and Danish defence Policy: A comparative study of the post-Cold War era*; Saxi, "Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO): Balancing Efficiency and Sovereignty, NATO and Nonalignment".

researcher and analysed by the researcher while benefitting from the flexibility which qualitative research allows through this process.⁶⁰ Additionally, qualitative methods allow an inductive process, which allows the researcher to structure a certain concept or hypothesis from the data collected. This is another reason why qualitative research was chosen, and this is done throughout the thesis: structuring the concept of how successful NORDEFECO has been. A rich description is also of a qualitative nature, used in this thesis, which in this case means that words rather than numbers are used to convey the analysis in question.⁶¹

3.2.2 Research design

Case study

The research design applied to this thesis will be that of a qualitative case study. It is generally acknowledged that the method does not follow one universal formula, in line with qualitative research,⁶² however, it is an efficient method when seeking answers to and explaining present circumstances with what/why/how questions. Additionally, this research design is specifically relevant when the research requires an in-depth description of a given social phenomenon,⁶³ in this case, NORDEFECO's success after its first 10 years compared to their own goals and its relation to the theory of security communities.

Further reasons to apply this method is that it is a helpful tool to guide an empirical analysis, fitting to this thesis. A case study as an empirical analysis is therefore used to investigate a "contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident".⁶⁴

⁶⁰ See Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource*, p. 11.

⁶¹ For further discussion see Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, p. 14-17.

⁶² Levy, "Case studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference", p. 2.

⁶³ Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, p. 17.

⁶⁴ Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, p. 3.

Furthermore, this research identifies as a single case study. The difference between a single case study and other case studies is namely that a single case study examines various and multiple pieces of evidence for a single unit, i.e. NORDEFCO, rather than looking across units. Thus, as Toshkov explains, the single case study is an analysis within rather than across cases. The latter one measures few variables for many cases but this research, as per single case study many observations are made about a single case.⁶⁵

Finally, it should be mentioned that this is an exploratory research, not a confirmatory one, i.e. the purpose is to further knowledge on NORDEFCO, but the subject has a relatively small literature, rather than confirming presupposed hypothesis on NORDEFCO, which would be confirmatory. Gerring argues that the research design of a single case unity (or study) is useful for these circumstances.⁶⁶ An example of the exploratory nature of this research in practice is including the Nordic state's reaction to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 as a potentially influential factor in the development and success of NORDEFCO. Given how extensively the event was either directly mentioned or referred to, it was necessary to taken into consideration when analysing the cooperation's success. Upon the same basis, NORDEFCO's relationship with the Baltic States will also be analysed in this thesis. This is also an example of the flexibility of qualitative research being utilised.

The 2020 Vision as a measuring device

To explain the research design further in practice, this case study is first and foremost based upon using NORDEFCO's own goals as presented in the 2020 Vision as a measuring device to estimate its success. Input from other independent commentators, such as academics or journalist will also be considered.

Using NORDEFCO's own goals to measure success has advantages. As of 2013, NORDEFCO had been operating for only four years and had not published a clear set of goals as discussed in the 2020 Vision, thus, this document is the earliest guideline/measuring device that is useful for analysis of success. As will be explored in chapter 4, the cooperation is flexible and broad in scope, meaning that using their

⁶⁵ Toshkov, *Research Design in Political Science*, p. 285.

⁶⁶ Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?", p. 352.

objectives from the original MoU from 2009 would be a measuring device too broad and too vague to estimate success: almost *anything* could be measured as a success against those objectives.⁶⁷

NORDEFCO's 2020 Vision goals give an appropriate estimate of the scope of the cooperation. By using these goals for analysis, unfair standards and/or comparison is prevented. The goals also give a context of what should be analysed in the first place when considering NORDEFCO's own success. If NORDEFCO was being considered in another context, other standards might apply, but since this thesis analyses how successful NORDEFCO itself has been, using their own goals is appropriate. Moreover, this approach proved to be a success because NORDEFCO's main achievement so far can all be related to a Vision goal.

Since NORDEFCO's official documents will be the main source for analysis, objectivity from the researcher is important. Regarding this, using NORDEFCO's own goals from the 2020 Vision for analysis allows the researcher to estimate, based upon 'concrete' achievements and actual activities, whether the respective factor contributes to their goals and success, rather than taking NORDEFCO's word that something is a success. Moreover, some of the goals are a bit broad but they are still concise enough for an estimation to be possible. Some of the goals, in their nature, might never be 100% reached, for example: to pool capabilities. Is it possible to pool enough capabilities? This goal, for example, is simply something that NORDEFCO contributes to or facilitates, so this specific goal and other goals of the same nature will be considered in this context. Also, some activities might be in development, which means a judgement call will be made (and argued) if they deserve to be discussed as a success at this point. Perhaps they are far enough in development that they will be realized, in which case, the respective activity will be given credit.

Another factor that needs to be addressed: The Vision came out in 2013, four years after the establishment of NORDEFCO. Thus, the question arises: Is it fair to use this measuring device for a 10 year period? Yes, because, as mentioned, the cooperation had not reached a voluminous amount of actual activities by then, but some of the 2020

⁶⁷ See NORDEFCO, "Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation", <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>.

Vision goals correspond to the original goals from the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) but in a more concise manner. In those cases, NORDEFCO's development will be considered in a 10 year frame, rather only since 2013, to keep it fair.

3.2.3 Analysis of data

The data used for analysis in this thesis were primary and secondary data. The primary data were four interviews, conducted with two officials from the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Icelandic Coastguard as well as the Danish Ministry of Defence. Rather than being the main source, the interviews provided useful background on NORDEFCO and a unique insight into the processes of the cooperation. Additionally, it provided the research with a separate, independent source which could then be corroborated with other sources.

The interviews conducted would be categorized as semi-structured in-depth interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to acquire specific data from the respondents, all of it related to further knowledge on NORDEFCO and gain more information to answer the research questions. Given the exploratory nature of the research, the interviews were guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored as well as questions being used flexibly, and the questions were therefore mixed with predetermined ones and spontaneous ones. The reason for using semi-structured interviews mostly revolved around the different nature of the respondents. It is given that flexibility was needed to accommodate the different background of the respondents and it is important to be able to respond to new issues or information during the interview and having predetermined questions as well as probing questions will allow such flexibility.⁶⁸

The primary data also include official documents from NORDEFCO itself, press releases or other official data from the respective country's various governmental ministries. The official annual reports from NORDEFCO form the main basis for the discussion on the cooperation. The reports are the only written source which provides official information about NORDEFCO. They cover, for example, the main achievements of a given year, progress on projects and activities and the cooperation's objectives for

⁶⁸ Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, p. 89-90; Wang and Park, *Student Research and Report Writing: From Topic Selection to the Complete Paper*, 177.

the future. Since the reports are official documents from NORDEFCO, they are analysed carefully, taking in consideration that the report is made by the respective country chair each year, so a possibility of bias is noted. The secondary sources are reports and academic reports, which were used for further corroboration and triangulation as well as providing context for a discussion if needed.

3.3 Validity

Given the qualitative nature of this research and the inevitable subjectivity of the researcher, it is necessary to address the importance of validity. In the case of this thesis, the method of triangulation will be used to ensure the validity of the research. The aim of such validity measure is to use multiple methods, multiple sources of data, multiple investigators and/or multiple theories to confirm findings. As has been described, the methods of interviews, primary data and secondary data will be used and in accordance with the triangulation method. The two different types of data were used to ensure the quality of the data. To research the topic, four interviews were taken with respondents from different backgrounds which leads to the interview data source ensuring different perspectives.⁶⁹ Additionally, the theory of a Security Community will lead the theoretical framework and further the triangulation. So, multiple sets of data, interviews, primary data and secondary data further the triangulation, resulting in a valid analysis because the researcher relies on a variety of approaches, not a single one.⁷⁰

3.4 Ethical matters

To ensure ethical standards are met, precautions will be taken. Since this thesis involves interviewing people, such is necessary. Voluntary participation is ensured by guaranteeing an informed consent from the interviewee, done by introducing respondents to the thesis and its purpose and explaining how the interview will be used. Additionally, it is hereby acknowledged that any wish from a participant, like remaining anonymous will be honoured.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, p. 215-216.

⁷⁰ Creswell and Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry", p. 127.

⁷¹ Wang and Park, *Student Research and Report Writing: From Topic Selection to the Complete Paper*, p. 146-148.

4 The Nordic Defence Cooperation

The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) is a defence and security cooperation structure established by the Nordic states in 2009. NORDEFCO combined three post-Cold War cooperation structures, namely, the Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support (NORDCAPS), Nordic Armament Cooperation (NORDAC) and the Nordic Support Structure (NORDSUP). Thus, NORDEFCO became a more robust and collective, strictly Nordic, defence cooperation than the Nordic states had previously worked with.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part shortly introduces Nordic defence cooperation in a historical context, examining the development and antecedents leading up to the establishment of NORDEFCO, including the three previous structures that combined into NORDEFCO. In the process of analysing this development, it will be analysed why NORDEFCO was established, and why analysing the success of Nordic defence cooperation should start with NORDEFCO. After laying the historical foundations, the second part will scrutinize the structure of NORDEFCO and how it operates. Discussing how the cooperation functions, specifically the Cooperation Areas (COPAs) is a necessary precondition to being able to estimate the cooperation's success with more clarity and efficiency in the subsequent chapters. The main achievements under a respective COPA will be reserved for the analysis in the subsequent chapters, as the COPA discussion will focus on introducing the structure.

4.1 Nordic defence cooperation prior to NORDEFCO

During the Cold War, the circumstances for Nordic defence cooperation were complicated since Sweden and Finland pursued a policy of neutrality whereas Denmark, Iceland and Norway joined NATO. In fact, the governments of Finland and Sweden outright banned security-related issues from the official agenda of any Nordic cooperation (including the Nordic Council⁷²), due to fear of compromising their neutrality. Thus, exclusive Nordic defence cooperation was absent. Some have even argued that looking over Nordic collective defence cooperation during the Cold War was a “sad

⁷² As stated on the Nordic Council's official website: “The Nordic Council is the official body for formal inter-parliamentary co-operation. Formed in 1952, it has 87 members from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.”, Nordic Co-operation, “The Nordic Council”, <https://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council>.

reading”.⁷³ That said, limited Nordic defence cooperation still took place through the UN with NORDSAMFN (Nordic Cooperation Group for military UN matters), a cooperation framework established in 1963 for UN peacekeeping operations.⁷⁴

After the Cold War, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Finland and Sweden aligned themselves further with the Nordic States and the rest of Europe. The countries joined NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) program in 1994, the same year it was first established.⁷⁵ The program, according to NATO, seeks to promote stability, reduce threats and strengthen the security ties between NATO and the non-members of the Euro-Atlantic area.⁷⁶ Subsequently, the Nordic states would establish three different frameworks for defence cooperation before combining them into NORDEFECO.

In 1994, the first cooperative framework for Nordic Defence cooperation was established, called the Nordic Armament Cooperation (NORDAC). The aim of the cooperation was to seek closer cooperation on acquisition and maintenance of materiel with the mutual exchange of national procurement plans. NORDAC was organized with a secretariat along with coordination and working groups.⁷⁷ The initiative existed for 15 years until it was included under NORDEFECO’s Cooperation Area Capabilities. According to NORDEFECO, NORDAC saved “an estimated 100 Million €.”⁷⁸ However, while NORDAC managed to acquire savings for the Nordic states, its main goal, producing materiel, never came to any fruition.⁷⁹

Another framework, the Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support (NORDCAPS) was established in 1997 but formalized in 2002 with a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding). The objective of NORDCAPS was to complement the Nordic countries’ participation in international peacekeeping operations,⁸⁰ which were increasing steadily

⁷³ Westberg, “The New Dynamics of Nordic Defence Cooperation”, p. 60-61.

⁷⁴ Leraand, “NORDSAMFN”, <https://snl.no/NORDSAMFN>.

⁷⁵ NATO, “Relations with Finland”, https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_49594.htm; NATO, “Relations with Sweden”, https://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/topics_52535.htm.

⁷⁶ NATO, “Partnership for Peace programme”, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm.

⁷⁷ Leraand, “NORDAC”, <https://snl.no/NORDAC>.

⁷⁸ NORDEFECO, “The basics about NORDEFECO”, <http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco>.

⁷⁹ Hagelin, “Hardware politics, ‘hard politics’ or ‘where, politics?’: Nordic defence equipment cooperation in the EU context” p. 169-171.

⁸⁰ NORDEFECO, “The basics of NORDEFECO”, <http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco>.

during the 1990s.⁸¹ This would be one of NORDEFCO's main objectives, too. The 2002 MoU stated that the purpose of the cooperation was to "adapt and further develop Nordic co-operation within the area of military peace support operations, utilising the proven ability of Nordic military interaction and enhancing the Nordic profile in such operations, in order to achieve more beneficial efforts to support international peace and security".⁸² While considered an improvement over NORDSAFMN, the Nordic EU Battlegroup, established in 2004, diminished the purpose of NORDCAPS because the Battlegroup overtook the role of coordinating pool forces and added the Baltic States and Ireland as members and became an EU framework. Moreover, bigger states began contributing to peace support operations, making it harder for the Nordic states to retain influence with their more limited resources. In turn, the Nordic states used NORDCAPS more like a discussion forum to try to enhance the profile and influence in peace operations, discussing and coordinating their contributions to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa as well as capability enhancements and security sector reforms in Africa, the Balkans and Ukraine. These efforts were then completely operated through the UN.⁸³ NORDCAPS became a lesser priority for Denmark⁸⁴ because Danish force would not be contributed to the Nordic EU Battlegroup because Denmark opted out of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.⁸⁵

The creation of Nordic Supportive Defence Structures (NORDSUP) in 2008 was a response to budgetary concerns. Two separate studies, one published in 2007, the other a year later pointed out this problem. Saxi stated that the studies identified rising costs, as well as the shrinking budgets of certain defence structures as the main challenge to Nordic forces and that cooperation might serve as a remedy. In the 2007 study by the Norwegian and Swedish armed forces, proposals were introduced to respond to the rising cost of military equipment with a view to allowing their respective armies to fully

⁸¹ The increase of UN peacekeeping operations during this time period is discussed in: Thomas, Nicholas and Tow, William T., "The Utility of Human Security", *Security Dialogue* 33:2 (2002), pp. 177-192.

⁸² Government.no, "NORDCAPS – MOU between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden", <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/NORDCAPS---MOU-between-Denmark-Finland-Norway-and-Sweden/id419404/>.

⁸³ Jakobssen, "Still Punching Above Their Weight? Nordic Cooperation in Peace Operations after the Cold War", p. 460.

⁸⁴ Jakobssen, *Nordic Approaches to Peace Operations: A new Nordic model in the making?*, p. 220-221.

⁸⁵ Rieker, "Europeanization of national security identity", p. 377.

maintain military capabilities. The main problem identified was that of “Critical mass”, which was defined as “the volume which allows a structural element to be developed, maintained, trained and operationally employed.”⁸⁶ Increased cooperation between the Nordic states with cost-effectiveness in mind was seen as a solution to this problem.

The second report, published by Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Chiefs of Defence further supported Nordic military operation and identified potential areas of cooperation which could begin in 2009. The report strongly suggested that if the Nordic states did not react to the loss of purchasing power of military equipment, caused by reduced defence budget and rising costs, they would not be able to sustain “complete and balanced armed forces”.⁸⁷ The report goes on: “To put it somewhat simplified we face two options: either to share capabilities with strategic partners on a bilateral or multilateral basis or face a future with fewer capabilities.”⁸⁸ The problem of maintaining military capabilities was also reflected in a report by Thorvald Stoltenberg in June 2008 where he claimed a closer Nordic defence cooperation was the answer to this problem.⁸⁹ The report was made after the Nordic Foreign Ministers asked Stoltenberg to draft proposals of closer foreign and security policy cooperation between the Nordic states.⁹⁰ The report received ‘enthusiastic reception’ by the Nordic states.⁹¹

On this basis, a MoU, creating NORDSUP, was signed by all Nordic Ministers in November 2008. NORDSUP was intended to complement the work being done in NORDAC and NORDCAPS.⁹² Representatives from each state’s ministry of defence were to form a Steering Committee. The MoU very clearly states that the cooperation should complement, not prevent, any prior commitments to NATO, EU or any other international commitments. With the objective of finding areas for mutually reinforcing structures,

⁸⁶ Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation after the Cold War*, p. 17.

⁸⁷ Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation after the Cold War*, p. 17.

⁸⁸ Saxi, *Nordic Defence Cooperation after the Cold War*, p. 17.

⁸⁹ Stoltenberg, *Nordic Cooperation on foreign and security policy*, p. 28.

⁹⁰ See Stoltenberg, *Nordic Cooperation on foreign and security policy*.

⁹¹ Nordic Co-Operation, “Enthusiastic reception for the Stoltenberg report”, <https://www.norden.org/en/news-and-events/news/enthusiastic-reception-for-stoltenberg-report>.

⁹² Government.no, “Memorandum Of Understanding on Nordic Supportive Defence Structures”, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/FD/Temadokumenter/MoU_Nordic-Support-Defence-Structures_netutgave.pdf.

states would always have the right to withdraw from any project at any time and participation was on a voluntary base, a principle which would also guide the MoU of NORDEFECO.⁹³ The purpose of these disclaimers was to avoid any competition or conflict with the states' existing security architecture.

NORDSUP was quickly scrapped, however. A press release from the first ministerial meeting of the Finnish chairmanship of NORDSUP in May 2009 stated that the ministers had decided to merge NORDAC, NORCAPS and NORDSUP into one comprehensive structure covering defence policy, capability development and crisis management operations. The goal was to create one streamlined, effective framework with a clear and simple structure. The aim was to have the new structure up and running in November 2009, with the purpose of increasing cost-effectiveness, decreasing overlaps with the existing structures and "allow a consistent political steering and military coordination in all areas of cooperation."⁹⁴ Based upon the discussion in this chapter, it can be argued that the Nordic states saw one collective, streamlined framework, more efficient to react to the issues they believed their militaries faced.

While this is a short review of Nordic defence cooperation prior to NORDEFECO, it shows that the cooperation was divergent and lacked a more robust structure and collective approach to reach success: that would be the role of NORDEFECO.

4.2 The establishment of NORDEFECO

The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) was established in November 2009 as a cooperation structure on a political and military level among the Nordic states. The official aim of NORDEFECO is to: "...strengthen the participating nations' national defence, explore common synergies and facilitate efficient common solutions."⁹⁵

⁹³ Government.no, "Memorandum Of Understanding on Nordic Supportive Defence Structures", https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/FD/Temadokumenter/MoU_Nordic-Support-Defence-Structures_netutgave.pdf.

⁹⁴ Puolustusministeriö, "Nordic Defence Ministerial in Kotka – Joint Statement", https://www.defmin.fi/en/topical/press_releases/2009/nordic_defence_ministerial_in_kotka_-_joint_statement.3969.news.

⁹⁵ NORDEFECO, "Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation", <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p. 2.

To formally establish NORDEFECO, the Nordic states signed a MoU on 4 November 2009. The MoU is 8 pages long and claims that it wishes NORDEFECO to build upon the spirit of partnership and cooperation which already exists between the countries while acknowledging prior obligations to the EU and NATO. Building upon the foundation of frameworks and experiences gained in NORDAC, NORDCAPS and NORDSUP, the MoU declares that through NORDEFECO, the countries will seek to develop and explore possible areas of cooperation “based on a political ambition of a comprehensive, enhanced and long-term approach to defence related issues.”⁹⁶

The objectives of the cooperation are outlined in nine different goals.⁹⁷ Roughly, the goals seek to identify areas for cooperation, thinking long-term as regards defence related issues, striving for resource allocation and cost-efficiency, increasing interoperability and the capability to act jointly, developing cooperation in multinational operations and capacity building in support of international peace and security and “strengthen[ing] cooperation on any other possible future area of cooperation”.⁹⁸ In fact, NORDEFECO includes all bilateral and multilateral activities between the countries which relate to security policy, operation, training and exercises, capability development and armaments on a military and ministerial level. Being open to bilateral or multilateral activities is expected to increase the chances of results with regards to the former outlined goals, specifically cost-efficiency and operational effectiveness.⁹⁹ To explain this further, this means that two or three Nordic states can cooperate on a project or activity on a bilateral or multilateral basis and use NORDEFECO for coordination.

This shows that the scope of the cooperation permits a wide spectrum of defence-related projects to be initiated under the auspices of NORDEFECO. Most projects that have

⁹⁶ NORDEFECO, “Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p. 3.

⁹⁷ NORDEFECO, “Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p.3.

⁹⁸ NORDEFECO, “Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p.3.

⁹⁹ *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014*, p. 6. See also a report from 2018 which discusses the Nordic States’ foreign and security policy in a changed security environment (meaning after Russia’s annexation of Crimea and the following crisis in 2014), where it is argued that bilateral relationship on defence matters can strengthen rather than weaken Nordic defence cooperation in general: Iso-Markku, Innola, Tilikainen, “A Stronger North? Nordic Cooperation in foreign and security policy in a new security environment”, specifically p. 45.

anything to do with defence cooperation between the Nordic states could, theoretically, be initiated within NORDEFECO. While the goals limit the cooperation to a certain extent, they still give a vague picture of the cooperation and what it really means. This can make it trickier to look beyond the official rhetoric of NORDEFECO in search of its achievements, but it is possible by looking at what gets done, more than what is said. This is also one of the reasons the 2020 Vision is used as a measuring device for success. However, this vagueness might be intentional as NORDEFECO's wide approach to defence issues could be looked at as a strength rather than a weakness in a sense that the cooperation is trying to keep as many options open as possible. Still, this is a double-edged sword. NORDEFECO's vagueness and broadness could be a strength in the sense that these circumstances do not prevent any initiative related to increasing defence and security efficiency because it might not fulfil a predetermined, narrow standard. On the other hand, this could be a weakness since these factors might prevent the streamlined, goal-oriented results NORDEFECO strives for exactly by being too broad and too vague to reach its objectives. Estimating how successful NORDEFECO has been under these circumstances is thus the primary purpose of this thesis.

A defining feature of the cooperation is its non-obligatory aspect which goes well with the broad scope of the cooperation. No Nordic country is obliged to participate in any project; they participate only if they want to. Moreover, unless there are specific precautions taken regarding the respective project, any participant can withdraw from any project or join in later at any stage if they so desire.¹⁰⁰

The driving force of NORDEFECO is to maintain national military capabilities in a more cost-efficient way through multinational cooperation between the Nordic countries. The concept of cost-efficiency is seen frequently in annual reports and other official NORDEFECO documents. This is arguably a reflection of one of the reasons NORDEFECO (and its predecessor, NORDSUP) was established in the first place, that reason being budgetary concerns from rising military costs after the Cold War which in contrast, saw decreasing government budget for defence spending as discussed before. In the 2011 Annual Report by Sweden, Odd Werin, that year's Chairman of the Military Coordination

¹⁰⁰ NORDEFECO, "Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation", <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p. 4.

Committee (MCC) identified a trend whereby states were looking for multinational solutions to maintain their military capabilities or were gaining help to develop new capabilities while the defence budgets were being cut down. Werin stated: “In NATO this is called “Smart Defence” and in the EU often referred to as Pooling & Sharing.” He then claimed NORDEFCO as a “Smart defence” structure.¹⁰¹

Another defining feature underscored by NORDEFCO is that it is a “structure for cooperation, rather than an organisation”.¹⁰² In this way, it avoids competition with organisations and institutions such as NATO and the EU; NORDEFCO defines itself as a cooperation structure, not a command structure. Every decision taken in NORDEFCO is consensus-based but does not need a consensus of every state because of its non-obligation aspect. NORDEFCO, therefore, seeks to distinguish itself by emphasising that it “does not challenge other forums [for example UN, NATO, EU] of cooperation but respects national security solutions and acknowledges any obligations through membership in the EU and/or NATO”.¹⁰³

NORDEFCO’s focus on cost-efficiency is reflected in its *modus operandi*. It limits bureaucracy, and duplication of projects among the countries by integrating NORDEFCO projects within the ordinary national chains of command as much as possible.¹⁰⁴ This is done specifically through the cooperation areas (COPAs) of NORDEFCO, discussed below.

4.2.1 The structure of NORDEFCO

NORDEFCO is operated through committees between the countries’ administrations, specifically the ministries of defence. NORDEFCO’s status as a structure for cooperation rather than a freestanding organisational entity means its activities are managed through national chains of command, in turn, this allows NORDEFCO to be closer to day to day business within the ministries.¹⁰⁵ NORDEFCO’s structure, therefore, allows a more efficient utilisation of the ministries’ limited resources. As per the flexibility and non-

¹⁰¹ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p.3.

¹⁰² NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 4.

¹⁰³ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 8.

obligation aspect of the cooperation, each national ministry manages its states' participation in NORDEFECO activities.

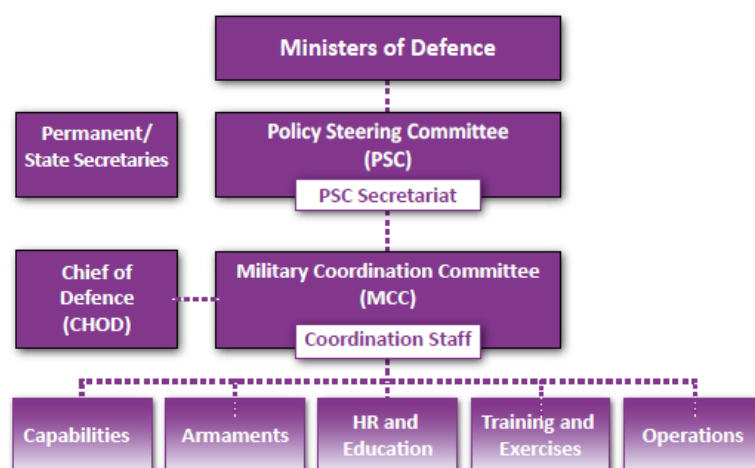
The chairmanship of NORDEFECO is held by one state and rotates annually between the four Nordic states, excluding Iceland.¹⁰⁶ NORDEFECO revolves around a meeting structure, traditionally with two yearly Ministerial meetings, although they can be more frequent. Then there is the Policy Steering committee (PSC) which consists of senior department officials like Policy, Capability and Armament Directors of the Defence Ministries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Iceland) who also meet twice every year. The PSC gives tasks down to the Military Coordination Committee (MCC) which is made up of the defence force's representatives such as generals or flag officers. Furthermore, the PSC Secretariat (PSC(S)) and Military Coordination Staff (CS) organize the work that takes place between the meetings and moves forward with the decisions taken in the line organisations. Finally, the Cooperation areas (COPAs) fall under the MCC. Each of the five COPAs (Capabilities; Armaments; Human Resources and Education; Training and exercises; Operations) facilitates cooperation within its respective area and is responsible for the implementation of the decisions taken by the MCC.¹⁰⁷ Usually, a NORDEFECO project starts as a study in its respective area and, if agreed by the MCC, the project is moved to the development stage where it is run by the MCC or relevant COPA structure. Once a Technical Agreement (TA) is signed or the project reaches its last stage, it is then run by the ordinary chain of command. Additionally, the chiefs of Defence meet twice every year and the Permanent/State Secretaries once a year. The following table explains this more effectively.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ This is due to Iceland being limited to the political level of the cooperation (given the simple fact that the country does not have an army) while the other Nordic countries participate in both the military and political level of the cooperation.

¹⁰⁷ *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2015*, p. 30; NORDEFECO, "The basics of NORDEFECO", <http://www.nordefco.org/the-basics-about-nordefco>.

¹⁰⁸ *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2017*, p. 4; *NORDEFECO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 9.

NORDEFCO Structure



The structure of NORDEFCO as seen in the 2017 Finnish annual report.¹⁰⁹

This structure means that NORDEFCO's activities and projects are shaped by each country's defence budget. As stated in the MoU, each participant will cover its own expenses on activities and projects unless otherwise agreed.¹¹⁰ There is no specific NORDEFCO budget. Arguably, this is exactly the reason for NORDEFCO's existence: to try and utilize each country's defence budget and resources more efficiently. Consequently, budget is hardly discussed officially within the NORDEFCO forum. When a study or project is put forth and a country does not participate, there is usually not any public reason given in the annual reports. It could be hypothesized one of the reason would be budgetary concerns, but obviously, the reason can range from the respective country not being capable to take on the project to simply not being interested in it.

At this point, it is reasonable to ask: Why is this framework considered the best one by the Nordic countries? Given how important the Nordic states view NORDEFCO, allegedly¹¹¹, it is interesting to consider why there is not a specific NORDEFCO budget and staff, could it not easily be argued that such actions would facilitate a more efficient cooperation?

¹⁰⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 4.

¹¹⁰ NORDEFCO, "Memorandum of Understanding on Nordic Defence Cooperation", <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, p. 5.

¹¹¹ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 3.

As a flexible cooperation, it might also look rather loose. It has a wide agenda, even quite unclear at times, with a completely free opt in/opt out option. Arguably, this is exactly the reason why NORDEFCO has the capability to grow and develop the way it has done for the 10 years it has been operative. A specific NORDEFCO budget or staff might hinder the development, both because it could increase the bureaucratic workload of each state and it would have the potential to result in a competition among each of the country's security obligations, for example in terms of resources and priorities, rather than being complementary. A loose structure like the current NORDEFCO allows flexibility vis-à-vis other security obligations from the Nordic states. A staff member of the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed on the flexibility of NORDEFCO in an interview but added that it is still structured enough to avoid *ad hoc* cooperation and produce more efficient results in defence cooperation.¹¹²

To avoid any collusion and security organization competition (between a respective Nordic state in NORDEFCO and its commitments to other institutions, where resources put into NORDEFCO might reduce resources to NATO or UN for example) NORDEFCO acknowledges prior obligations to NATO, EU and the UN and keeps its projects non-mandatory for the participating states. Despite the overwhelming willingness of the Nordic states to work together, it should not be automatically expected that the Nordic states are willing to risk the NORDEFCO cooperation being taken too far, for example by legally binding the Nordic states to a given military commitment and therefore changing the loose, flexible nature of the cooperation. The NORDEFCO rhetoric clearly shows that the Nordics are quite wary of this, given their how much they emphasise the non-obligatory, flexible aspect of cooperation and that NORDEFCO should complement not prevent international commitments. While it certainly might seem advantageous for the non-NATO members of Finland and Sweden to bind themselves closer to the Nordic NATO states through NORDEFCO, one should not forget the PfP program, which has really allowed closer cooperation with the NATO states. As of yet, nothing has indicated these two states want to push NORDEFCO too far since they too, just as Norway and Denmark (and possibly Iceland for that matter) think about the possible competition between NATO's PfP and NORDEFCO.

¹¹² Interview with a staff member of the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs (30 January 2018).

The point being made here is that the cooperation shows the willingness of the Nordics to work together in defence matters but the official agenda (with its emphasis on not conflicting other obligations) shows that they are wary of taking any risks that might reduce the Nordic's available resources to UN, NATO or EU by making NORDEFECO a more binding commitment. NORDEFECO is supposed to complement other obligations, not hinder them.

Ultimately what this discussion shows is that NORDEFECO has developed a working structure to coordinate cooperation on various defence matters with concrete results as will be further shown in this thesis. The Nordics firmly emphasize the loose nature of the cooperation as they consider it its strength and way to move forward with the cooperation and, perhaps most importantly, prevents harmful consequences to other obligations. To see how NORDEFECO seeks to produce their results, the Cooperation Areas need to be considered since NORDEFECO's achievements are all managed through the respective COPA.

4.2.2 NORDEFECO's Cooperation Areas (COPAs)

The most important aspect of the cooperation, which drives home the concrete results NORDEFECO strives for, is the cooperation areas which together cover the spectrum of defence forces. The cooperation areas (COPAs) are five and have handy acronyms; Armaments (COPA ARMA), Human Resources and Education (COPA HR&E), Capabilities (COPA CAPA), Operations (COPA OPS) and Training and Exercises (COPA TR&E). The COPAs are responsible for leading, managing and implementing the decisions made by the MCC, "thus providing a bridge between multinational and national organisations."¹¹³ Thus, all the activities and projects which will be analysed as achievements in the subsequent chapters are operated under a respective COPA.

Within the COPAs, the day-to-day activity takes place and through them the concrete results NORDEFECO boasts about and strives for are implemented. Participation in these areas is reached through international, voluntary *agreements*. Once a cooperation activity reaches a stage of implementation, the regular, existing national chain of command will supervise it in regard to the accepted framework. Sometimes there is a

¹¹³ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2015, p. 11.

lead nation for the activity which rotates annually or biannually, this could, for example, be a rotating host nation for major exercises or an educational program where responsibility is divided between each of the states.¹¹⁴ Overall, the COPAs all share the same goals, i.e. to find common ground for cooperation in its respective cooperation area.

Cooperation Area Capabilities (COPA CAPA) is an area which develops the countries' capability plans and processes and aims to identify potential areas for cooperation. COPA CAPA focuses on long-term planning, even 20 years in the future.¹¹⁵ Common needs are at the forefront of this area where the goal of mutual benefits leads the way to reduce total costs and promoting operational effectiveness.¹¹⁶ Research and Technology (R&T) is a vital part of this area because it adds "to the strategic dimension" of NORDEFCO. According to Col. Oscar Hull from Sweden who chaired this COPA in 2015, COPA CAPA oversees everything which relates to capability development in the participating countries, which is integral to any "military organisation". Referring to NORDEFCO as a military organization is an interesting point because NORDEFCO documents emphasize that it's a cooperation structure and a defensive one. Within this area, long-term strategic challenges are estimated and the procedures needed to face them, "COPA CAPA is thus the engine of NORDEFCO as it works towards turning these national ideas into common activities and projects".¹¹⁷ Screening of national studies and development plans are done within COPA CAPA to find areas for cooperation¹¹⁸. Moreover, this area is increasing its emphasis on cyber defence and seems to be doing so in accordance with NATO ambitions on cyber defence.¹¹⁹

Cooperation Area Armaments (COPA ARMA) seeks to achieve financial, technical and/or industrial benefits for the Nordic countries within the field of acquisition and life cycle support. This cooperation area was previously a part of COPA CAPA but was established as a specific COPA in 2013 in accordance with NORDEFCO's 2020 vision and

¹¹⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 6-7.

¹¹⁵ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 11.

¹¹⁷ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 15.

¹¹⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 16.

¹¹⁹ See NATO's Cyber Defence Pledge from 2016: NATO, "Cyber Defence Pledge", https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/official_texts_133177.htm.

achieves its aims through “screening process” where participating nations identify possible development programs for procurement and maintenance of already existing and emerging capabilities with the exchange of information. The defence ministers specifically emphasised this cooperation area in the 2020 Vision, claiming that they were committed to cooperation within this area and that they “seek to increase pooling of capabilities and to deepen cooperation in the area of life-cycle support of our defence inventories.”¹²⁰

The COPA has an annual yearbook and the 2017 yearbook stated that 58 projects went through a screening process that year. This kind of work in the COPA is done cooperation with the defence industry in the Nordic countries. Only 5 made it through the process, the other inputs being dropped due to timeline, budget, or simply not being suitable for the cooperation. After this process, the national line organizations which include the capability managers decided that 3 projects that showed promise of success would be continued. These include LEO 2 ammunition (DNK-FIN-SWE), Long Range Air Defence (FIN-NOR) and Mortar Ammunition (DNK-FIN-SWE). Furthermore, the capability area continued development with other projects in focus areas and further divided them into working groups.¹²¹

Cooperation Area Human Resources and Education (COPA HR&E) seeks to enhance cooperation on military education and aims to find common Nordic activities in the field “to gain operational benefits and optimized resources and to avoid duplication in order to achieve cost savings in the long term.” Additionally, it is a centre for experts in different areas to meet and exchange information and best practices, for example within Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL)¹²², veteran issues, diversity and foreign languages. From the establishment of NORDEFCO, diversity and gender issues along with matters for veterans have been a focus within this COPA. The COPA emphasises ADL or NORDEFCO Advanced

¹²⁰ NORDEFCO, “COPA ARMA Yearbook 2017”, [http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20\[print%20version\]%2020171221.pdf](http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20[print%20version]%2020171221.pdf).

¹²¹ NORDEFCO, “COPA Arma Yearbook 2017”, [http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20\[print%20version\]%2020171221.pdf](http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20[print%20version]%2020171221.pdf); NORDEFCO, “Annual Report 2017”, p. 14.

¹²² See the website of NORDEFCO’s ADL, NORDEFCO, “Advanced Distributed Learning”, <https://nordicadl.com/>.

Distributed Learning Forum of Experts, a training and education centre under COPA HR&E and its most prominent activity is an annual conference which is open to other participants.¹²³ ADL emphasises “sharing of learning content and lessons learned in the field of procurement, development, implementation and evaluation of technology-based learning concepts.”¹²⁴ NORDEFCO considers COPA HR&E necessary to enhance capabilities, interoperability as well as responsiveness of Nordic troops. The COPA must be able to give strong support to training and exercises for this purpose, as stated by NORDEFCO: “Without personnel proficiency, there is no force capability and readiness”.¹²⁵

Cooperation Area Training and Exercises (COPA TEX) has the goal of achieving better military training activities for the same resources or the same level of training for fewer resources among the Nordic countries and to enable a joint exercise program for a “continuation of five years”.¹²⁶ Moreover, the COPA aims to identify challenges in this area and strives to reduce bureaucracy to allow a deeper cooperation on training and exercises between the nations.¹²⁷ This area does not only facilitate NORDEFCO exercises. COPA TEX, in specific circumstances, also serves as a forum for the Nordic states to prepare for other exercises, for example within NATO. Noticeable Nordic exercises include the weekly Cross-Border Training (CBT), where air forces train together weekly, most commonly between Sweden, Norway and Finland. CBT is considered proof of operational and cost benefits facilitated by NORDEFCO.¹²⁸ NORDEFCO has extended an invitation to third parties to these exercises and the US participated in a few of them in 2015.¹²⁹ Since 2013, NORDEFCO has cooperated with the Baltic states in this COPA through the exercise program “Combined Joint Nordic-Baltic Exercise Programme” (CJNBEP), but as of 2017 titled Military Training and Exercise Program (MTEP), still including the Baltic states.

¹²³ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 15.

¹²⁴ See NORDEFCO, “Advanced Distributed Learning”, <https://nordicadl.com/>.

¹²⁵ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 17.

¹²⁶ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 18.

¹²⁷ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 18.

¹²⁸ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014*, p. 34.

¹²⁹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 22.

Within Cooperation Area Operations (COPA OPS), Nordic force contributions, deployment/redeployment and logistics support are prepared for international operations through the UN, NATO or EU. This COPA is more focused on current events in the world. A “Nordic network” of operational planners is maintained and close dialogue is kept up between the countries in order to monitor the global situation carefully and increase regional awareness.¹³⁰ Common contributions are facilitated within this area which seeks to find cost-efficient solutions along with operational gains between the countries. Information sharing and best practices are considered important by NORDEFCO to achieve this goal. Military planning with guidance from the political level of NORDEFCO is developed and the area coordinates “required activities through the respective countries’ line organization”.¹³¹ International crisis management operations are noticeable in this area. The COPA requires political acceptance in every single case because it can involve deployment or participation of a respective Nordic state military troops and it is event-driven, in contrast to other COPAs, meaning it focuses on current operations ongoing in NATO (for example the Resolute Support Mission, previously ISAF), EU or the UN (for example the MINUSMA mission).¹³²

This discussion of the COPAs of NORDEFCO has shown that the cooperation stretches over a great area of defence cooperation. This is in line with the flexible nature of NORDEFCO. The COPAs cover the wide spectrum of defence issues efficiently and it seems hardly any area is left out. The flexibility of NORDEFCO has allowed more integrated projects to develop, as will be further explored. Arguably, more integrated projects than other regional cooperation structures. By way of comparison, one could take a look at the Visegrad Group, a cooperation body between the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary formed in 1991 to pursue common interests. The V4’s main focus has been European Integration, but it has also focused on capabilities development and enhancing interoperability. In 2014 Visegrad created new cooperation areas and claimed to be

¹³⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 18.

¹³¹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 17.

¹³² *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016*, p. 20; *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 17.

moving forward with them, yet to date, they have not yielded the same results as NORDEFCO.¹³³

4.3 Conclusion

With minimal defence cooperation in the Cold War and three different cooperation structures after the Cold War, after Finland and Sweden aligned themselves more clearly with the Nordic states in terms of defence and security matters, Nordic defence cooperation had been rather divergent up until the establishment of NORDEFCO.

Due to rising military and defence related costs and shrinking budgets, along with fresh ideas proposing a more collective, streamlined defence cooperation effort, NORDEFCO was established in 2009. One of its main goals was cost-efficiency and seeking and providing solutions for areas of defence and security cooperation among the states. By simply combining three different structures into one, further coordinated and more organized cooperation effort to reach this goal was made possible. The establishment of NORDEFCO was particularly important because the history of its predecessor indicates they enjoyed hardly any notable success, whether individually or collectively. This is one of the reasons that analysing the success of Nordic Defence Cooperation begins with NORDEFCO, rather than before, because it can be stated that prior to NORDEFCO, Nordic defence cooperation was missing a robust structure that could convincingly be analysed for success. It was too divergent and mostly revolved around discussion between the Nordic states, without any specific frameworks or activities being established.

The means to reach success for NORDEFCO is to avoid collision with other international commitments made by the states and voluntary participation in projects, allowing a flexible approach where the states can pick and choose activities which benefits them. Given a long history of the Nordic states working together in other areas, a foundation of trust is in place, dismissing any need for monitoring devices or obligations which could dampen the cooperation. Additionally, to keep focus in this flexible approach and reach their goals, NORDEFCO consists of five cooperation areas (COPAs), examined closely in this chapter, which cover the spectrum of defence forces cooperation. It is the

¹³³ See Visegrad Group's homepage: V4, "Visegrad Group Defence Cooperation", <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/about/cooperation/visegrad-group-defence> and the including documents.

responsibility of the COPAs to follow through with activities or projects that have been agreed upon, and it is through the COPAs that NORDEFECO can earn its achievements.

5 NORDEFCO's internal achievements in practice

How successful has NORDEFCO been in reaching the goals of the 2020 Vision which relate to the Nordic region specifically? To consider this in practice, goals III-VII from the vision will be analysed in this chapter. These goals pursue a more intra-Nordic region based activities as discussed in chapter 2. The reason for beginning the comparison of NORDEFCO's success with the internal activities is that these achievements follow the discussion on chapter 4 more directly, resulting in a more concise analysis.

As previously explained, the Nordic state's reaction to Russia's annexation of Crimea will be considered in the context of analysing NORDEFCO's achievements. The reason is the significant referral to the event in NORDEFCO documents after it happened in 2014, so arguably, for a more accurate analysis, the event needs to be taken into consideration. It is considered whether Russia's actions have had an influence on the development, activities and success of NORDEFCO. Thus, this chapter begins by scrutinising the Nordic state's reaction to Russia's actions, setting up this potential factor for the subsequent analysis. Then NORDEFCO's success in reaching the 2020 Vision goals is analysed by evaluating each goal specifically and to what extent NORDEFCO has contributed to the respective goal. Finally, an analytical discussion on NORDEFCO's overall success in pursuing these goals will be discussed in the conclusion.

5.1 The Nordic states' reaction to Russia's actions in 2014

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 changed the Nordic states' perspective on defence and security matters in Europe. The following discussion lays the foundation for analysing the relation between Russia's action and NORDEFCO's success in reaching their goals in chapter 5 and 6.

Russia's actions were directly addressed in the foreword of the 2014 Annual Report by Ine Eriksen Søreide, Norwegian Minister of Defence. Søreide claimed that:

Russia's annexation of Crimea and its intervention in Eastern Ukraine have changed the European security landscape, with implications also in our own region, and we have discussed how we can adapt our defence policies to this new situation. The

Nordic nations are reconsidering their security policies and their relationship with Russia.¹³⁴

Moreover, Søreide stated that NORDEFCO was to serve as a forum for security policy dialogue during the “changing and challenging security situation in Europe”.¹³⁵ Russia’s increased military presence and activities made it necessary to exchange information regarding preparedness and to facilitate situational awareness according to Søreide.¹³⁶ This is just an example from NORDEFCO documents, but there are more instances where Russia’s action are directly or indirectly referred to.

In April 2015 the Nordic Defence Ministers addressed Russia’s 2014 action in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea in a specific joint statement. The statement, titled “Taking steps towards enhancing the cooperation on defence” claimed that which the title refers to is necessary due to the changing security environment in the Nordic region. The statement was published in a national newspaper in each country. It begins by addressing Russia’s “aggression” against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea as violations of international law and other international agreements. This is considered to have led to the deterioration of the security environment but while the Nordics consider the region of Northern Europe stable, the Nordics believe they have to “be prepared for the likelihood of crises and incidents ... there can be no ‘business as usual’ and we [Nordic states] are faced with a new normal”.¹³⁷

The Nordic states claimed that in the future, they have to consider Russia’s actions but not the Kremlin’s rhetoric. At the time, Russia had made an increasing investment in its forces, shown will to demonstrate force for political goals and increased its military exercises and intelligence operations in the Baltic Sea region and the High North.¹³⁸ The Nordics continue: “Russian military activities are occurring close to our national borders (and several violations of the territorial integrity of states around the Baltic Sea have

¹³⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 2.

¹³⁵ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 7.

¹³⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 7.

¹³⁷ The statement was published in the 2015 Annual report: NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 32.

¹³⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 32.

taken place)”, including violations of airspace.¹³⁹ This perspective of the security situation would definitely influence the development of NORDEFCO.

The Nordic answer to this changing situation was to “meet the present situation through solidarity and enhanced cooperation” via close cooperation with NATO and the EU as well as the Baltic States. Closer cooperation and the Nordic’s “solidarity” with the Baltic States were considered a way of strengthening the security in the region as “well as raising the threshold for military incidents to take place. As will be seen in chapter 6, the Nordic states have taken considerable steps to increase their cooperation with the Baltic States.

The Nordic countries vowed to act together in “a predictable and consistent way”¹⁴⁰ in order to further contribute to peace and security while distancing themselves from threats and use of military force. In relation to this, the defence ministers decided to “enhance the possibilities to monitor the development in our region. This includes both air- and sea- surveillance. The aim is to share information on activities in our air space, improve pre-warning communication and reduce the risk of unexpected events and possible misunderstandings.”¹⁴¹

To prepare for a possible future crisis, the statement claimed the Nordic states will further cooperation on training, education and exercises, goals in line with the 2020 Vision. The Nordic states already had great opportunities to strengthen military capabilities on land, sea and air with their close cooperation and specifically with air training with the Cross-Border Training (CBT) framework. Further, the Nordic states planned to organize more complicated exercises, with the NATO High Visibility Exercise, for example, so other countries would be become “more familiar with our region and its specific conditions”.¹⁴² Here, the Nordic states are clearly preparing a common area of defence. The statement went on to claim that the Nordic “ambition is to increase predictability, contribute to a peaceful development and avoid military incidents and conflicts.”¹⁴³

¹³⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 32.

¹⁴⁰ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 32.

¹⁴¹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 33.

¹⁴² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 33.

¹⁴³ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 33.

Aftenposten, one of the newspapers which covered the statement, interviewed a military analyst, Janne Haaland Matlary, who claimed that the statement sent a message of joint deterrence. Matlary stated that the “cooperation described [in the statement], including military exercises, is as far as you can go in pulling the non-NATO members Sweden and Finland into a community, without explicitly stating that it is a NATO-community.”¹⁴⁴ She even stated that this rhetoric indicated a preparation for a membership into NATO. Furthermore, this statement would be perceived as aggressive by Russia. She goes on to state: “It is very understandable that the Nordic and Baltic nations are building stronger military ties. This is no replacement for NATO, but still, they are connecting Sweden and Finland as closely as possible to NATO.”¹⁴⁵ At the time, Finland and Sweden held their exercises according to NATO standards, which Matlary perceived as a step forward on the road to the alliance. However, she admits that “there is no political basis for them to enter NATO; the opinion is not sufficiently «scared» and the question would require referenda”¹⁴⁶. She still perceived it as a step forward in NATO’s direction. Finally, Matlary claimed:

This is about building together as much as possible and deter as much as possible, regardless of NATO-membership. It is about showing a credible military presence, which means increased deterrence. In addition it will also demonstrate that the nations are concerned with each others’ security.¹⁴⁷

A report, published by Yale University in light of the events in Crimea in 2014, claimed that Russia’s annexation of Crimea led to more NATO talk on returning hard power to the region. Nordic and Baltic countries spoke of raising their defence budgets and politicians in Sweden and Finland “wondered out loud whether to end the ‘anomaly’ that they were

¹⁴⁴ Bentzrød, “Russian aggression: Nordic states extend their military cooperation”, <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/KmE7/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation>.

¹⁴⁵ Bentzrød, “Russian aggression: Nordic states extend their military cooperation”, <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/KmE7/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation>.

¹⁴⁶ Bentzrød, “Russian aggression: Nordic states extend their military cooperation”, <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/KmE7/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation>.

¹⁴⁷ Bentzrød, “Russian aggression: Nordic states extend their military cooperation”, <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/KmE7/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation>.

not members of NATO, beginning with more cooperation in NORDEFCO’.”¹⁴⁸ As is known, Sweden and Finland still remain outside NATO but as main achievements of NORDEFCO will show, Finland and Sweden have tightened their defence cooperation with the rest of the Nordic-NATO states.

Norwegian Defence Minister Ine Eriksen Søreide also answered questions about the statement. Søreide said it “underlines the importance of solidarity and cooperation in order to strengthen security in our region”, further emphasising the claim on securing the Nordic countries’ region. Asked about which mutual obligations the Nordic states have agreed upon, Søreide mentions the flexibility of the Nordic cooperation which “represents a supplement, not an alternative, to each nation’s membership in NATO and the EU”. So, no mutual security guarantees beyond the NATO framework.¹⁴⁹

The joint Nordic statement and the rhetoric quoted from the 2014 report, give a clear picture of how the Nordic states, in terms of security and defence, viewed the situation after the events in Crimea. Therefore, it should be considered when looking at the achievements and development of NORDEFCO, in case there is a possible link between NORDEFCO’s achievements and Nordic states’ reaction to Crimea.

5.2 III) Cross-border training, surveillance cooperation and increasing situational awareness

Coordinated training and exercise programmes contribute to maintaining and developing capabilities. By 2020 cross-border training and exercises will be conducted on a regular basis among the Nordic countries covering the whole Nordic area. Movement of personnel and material will thereby be facilitated. Cooperation in air and sea surveillance of the Nordic region will be enhanced. Enhanced exchange of surveillance data with the aim of improving situational awareness will be carried out. Nordic countries will also cooperate to develop rapid deployment capabilities to be used for the NATO Response Force and/or the EU Battle Groups.

In terms of this goal, the projects NOERCAS and Cross-Border Training (CBT) are the biggest achievements. As of 2018, NORDEFCO has taken a decisive step in enhancing air surveillance cooperation with NORECAS (The Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance). NORECAS is a project that was initiated in 2012 and reached a political

¹⁴⁸ Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What it means for the West*, p. 195.

¹⁴⁹ Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What it means for the West*, p. 195.

agreement in 2017. NORECAS is managed by COPA CAPA. The aim of the project is to increase situational awareness in the Nordic region by improving air surveillance cooperation and exchanging information, which is vital to strengthening Nordic cooperation according to NORDEFCO.¹⁵⁰ Situational awareness is a factor that is increasingly addressed in the forewords of the annual reports since 2014.¹⁵¹ When NORDEFCO saw immense potential in the project, NORECAS was put into step-by-step development. Initially it was agreed by NORDEFCO that air surveillance would be a very promising area for cooperation after two studies and a report being published in 2013 detailed the potential of exchanging radar data and simply enhancing air surveillance. In 2014 it was decided to push the project further and transform the “NORECAS study recommendations into solid plans and actions”.¹⁵² Considering the events of the same year, in hindsight, the timing seems appropriate. In 2015 development continued as well as in 2016 but that year the Nordic ministers decided that NATO should be consulted on the upcoming agreement on NORECAS. Finally, in 2017, a MoU was signed making it official that NORECAS had reached a political agreement. All but Iceland have signed a MoU which allows the exchange of air surveillance data *in peacetime*. A TA, which will finalize the program in its current form, is expected to be signed at the military level by end of 2018. NORDEFCO is still open to exploring further cooperation in this area. After reaching a political agreement, and a MoU, a project within NORDEFCO will definitely become operational since the military level is operated by the political level.¹⁵³

NORDEFCO argues that NORECAS will “further qualify the Nordic countries’ assessment of developments in the security environment.”¹⁵⁴ The vocabulary used by NORDEFCO is sometimes unnecessarily complicated, what this means is that NORECAS will increase situational awareness in the Nordic area. Strong Nordic surveillance gained increasing emphasis since the events of 2014 and in 2017, Norwegian Admiral and Chief of Defence Haakon Bruun-Hanssen claimed that Russia had been conducting more

¹⁵⁰ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 16.

¹⁵¹ See NORDEFCO’s annual reports 2014-2017.

¹⁵² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 14.

¹⁵³ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016, p. 10.

exercises in the Arctic area. Norwegian intelligence claims that a “new normality” began to appear in 2017 which implies more aggressive Russia behaviour in the “High North”, which include larger and more frequent exercises closer to Norway. In light of this, Norway stated that “the current security policy requires extensive and high-quality surveillance”.¹⁵⁵ That said, NORECAS does not only serve Norway but this is an indication of how the Nordics continue to view Russia as a potential threat and goes hand in hand with the Nordic claims that they need to increase surveillance in light of Russia’s actions.

Concerning Cross-Border Training (CBT), three Nordic states had already established a basis for CBT before the 2020 Vision was signed in 2013. From 2008 (then under NORDEFCO’s COPA TEX since its establishment), weekly air training between Norway, Sweden and Finland was already taking place in the High North, in Bodø, Kallax and Rovaniemi and still continue today.¹⁵⁶ As soon as 2010, the Combined Joint Nordic Exercise Programme (CJNEP) was established which would be the framework for CBT exercises. The objective of the programme is to coordinate training and exercise activities and establish a shared, transparent exercise programme.¹⁵⁷

In 2011, NORDEFCO provided the first exercise programme for CJNEP for 2012 as well as a five year program from 2013-2017. CJNEP was further to have a five year perspective plan.¹⁵⁸ The year after, CBT South was established to conduct air force exercises in the southern part of Scandinavia on a similar basis as the High North exercises.¹⁵⁹ Air wings from Denmark and Sweden conducted common exercises that same year, with plans for Finland and Norway to join in the “near future”.¹⁶⁰ The exercises are based on a TA signed in November 2012. When a TA is reached, a respective project or activity becomes fully operational.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁵ Berquist, “Nordic Defence Ministers Discuss Russian Exercise Activities”, <http://www.highnorthnews.com/nordic-defense-ministers-discuss-russian-exercise-activities/>.

¹⁵⁶ NORDEFCO *Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁷ NORDEFCO *Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 10.

¹⁵⁸ NORDEFCO *Military Level Annual Report 2011*, p. 26.

¹⁵⁹ NORDEFCO *Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ NORDEFCO *Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012*, p. 8.

¹⁶¹ NORDEFCO *Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012*, p. 17.

In 2013, after a NORDEFCO meeting with the Baltic States at the MCC level, it was decided to include the Baltic states in the CJNEP program, meaning the framework was open to their participation. Thus, the framework changed into the Combined Joint Nordic-Baltic Exercise program, and the Baltic states became full members.¹⁶² According to NORDEFCO, the Baltic states declared that they wanted to become fully fledged members of this exercise cooperation.¹⁶³

In 2014, the North and South exercises merged into the activity 'Cross-Border Training', thus covering the Scandinavian area. However, it is not clear how often per year exercises take place. NORDEFCO constantly mentions the successful North air wing cooperation almost every year, without any indication that it has developed further, just signalling its success on the same basis.¹⁶⁴ It is considered a success since it adds operational value by enhancing interoperability.¹⁶⁵ The Iceland Air Meet in 2014 brought CBT a step forward, according to NORDEFCO. Ine Eriksen Søreide, the Norwegian Minister of defence who was chairing NORDEFCO in 2014, said: "We concluded 2014 by agreeing to make the entire Nordic air space including Iceland's available for cross-border training".¹⁶⁶ Since then this area has continued to develop, with Iceland, through a new agreement, officially entering the CBT in 2016 "on par" with other countries by signing a TA.¹⁶⁷ Thus the whole Nordic region is now operational for CBT, fulfilling this part of goal III.

In 2015, since a "shift in the strategic environment"¹⁶⁸, referring to Russia's annexation of Crimea, NORDEFCO has increasingly emphasised third party participation. Thus, for example, the US participated in exercises on several occasions in 2015, focusing on training air combat and air-to-air refuelling.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 12.

¹⁶³ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 23.

¹⁶⁴ See NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 10; NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 9; NORDEFCO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 8; NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013 p. 29; NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 34; NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 21.

¹⁶⁵ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013 p. 29.

¹⁶⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 3.

¹⁶⁷ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 3.

¹⁶⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 22.

¹⁶⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 22.

It should be mentioned that CBT also takes place under the Arctic Challenge Exercise (ACE). COPA TEX has laid emphasis on the Arctic in terms of exercises, for example with the High Intensity Air Combat Exercise-Northern Flag where the development of an Arctic Challenge Air exercise has been prioritized. Arctic Winter Training is a project that has been under development but seems to have a hard time developing further.¹⁷⁰ Still, since 2014, the Arctic as an area of exercise has slowly picked up the pace. This was shown with a Letter of Intent which Finland, Norway and Sweden signed in 2014, and the three states have been trying to push for a higher level ACE (which has been held three times) and involve more third parties.¹⁷¹

In 2016, the Danish chairmanship stated that NORDEFCO continued to develop the project, but a substantial involvement of the US in a possible Northern Flag exercise would be a precondition. Finally, in 2017, the ACE took place with substantial US presence, which is one of the largest air defence exercises in Europe. Finland led the ACE and the goal is to make it a European high-quality exercise. That same year, James Mattis, US Secretary of defence joined the Northern Group ministerial meeting. His presence is considered to showcase that Europe and the US have a “shared interest in the security situation of Northern Europe”.¹⁷² This is also a case in point where NORDEFCO manages to coordinate further exercises.

NORDEFCO claims that COPA TEX has eased CBT to take place which, amongst other benefits, result in concrete savings. This is most notably done through the traditional common High North exercises between Finland, Norway and Sweden. It saves cost by allowing the air fighters to operate in a vast area without “deploying supporting forces”.¹⁷³ This effort is the biggest achievement in concrete savings.

COPA TEX mostly boasts about CJNBEP which has been operational since 2013 and has been one of the prime examples of successful exercises which NORDEFCO has worked to support. Cooperation with the Baltic states is greatly emphasized by NORDEFCO and the Baltic states have reciprocally shown enthusiastic interest in working with the Nordic

¹⁷⁰ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 38.

¹⁷¹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 20.

¹⁷² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 3.

¹⁷³ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013 p. 23.

states. In 2017 the CJNBEP was terminated “due to the fact that the countries’ exercises in the future will be planned by using the Military Training and Exercise Program (MTEP)” which is the new framework under COPA TEX.¹⁷⁴ All of this said, NORDEFCO documents show that the framework and exercise programme is in place for the whole Nordic Area (i.e. Through MTEP, previously CJBEP) but NORDEFCO has yet to utilise the program to its full potential since exercises on its basis are not frequent.

Concerning the latter part of this goal, to develop rapid deployment capabilities for NATO Response or the EU Battle Groups, there has not been a notable success. The Nordic states have participated in the NATO Norwegian lead Cold Response exercise which is held on a biannual basis. NORDEFCO has not notably increased the Nordic state’s capabilities to participate. In 2013 an idea of a Nordic Battalion Task Force was explored which would consist of a generic brigade but it has not come to fruition.¹⁷⁵ Despite the four armed nations of NORDEFCO have participated in the Cold Response Exercise, NORDEFCO has not coordinated the effort to a noticeable extent, besides Sweden, Finland and Norway of preparing their battalion tasks forces together for the 2016 exercise.¹⁷⁶ Besides some initial efforts in 2011, NORDEFCO has not facilitated nor coordinated efforts for an EU Nordic Battlegroup. EU relations will be further explored in chapter 6. Despite this, NORDEFCO has reached achievements with NORECA and the CBT framework, formerly CJNBEP but now MTEP, although NORDEFCO has yet to fully utilise the framework.

5.3 IV) Increasing interoperability, armaments cooperation and pooling capabilities

By 2020 the Nordic countries will have deepened their capability cooperation with the aim to increase systems similarity, including armaments, interoperability and shared solutions to identified capability gaps and shortfalls. Possibilities for pooling of capabilities and resources will be actively sought and the principles created for Nordic Tactical Air Transport (NORTAT) will serve as an example also for other cooperation areas. Joint Nordic acquisition will be enabled by the establishment of common processes and routines. We have established an ongoing close dialogue with the Nordic defence industry.

¹⁷⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 18.

¹⁷⁵ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013 p. 17.

¹⁷⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014 p. 3.

The most notable achievements contributing to this goal would be NORTAT and the Nordic Combat Uniform (NCU). To increase interoperability and pool capabilities, NORDEFCO established *NORTAT* (Nordic Cooperation on Tactical Air Transport) project. NORTAT is a project within COPA CAPA that seeks to use the Nordic countries' air transport more efficiently in terms of operational use, maintenance and for training and exercises. A TA was signed in 2016 by Denmark, Finland and Norway which made NORTAT operational, but with Sweden's signature in 2017, NORTAT became formalized. This means the project is operational and closed in the NORDEFCO development structure, meaning the cooperation will continue in line organizations. Despite having started development by the 2020 Vision, NORDEFCO's deserves credit for seeing it through by 2020. A steering committee oversees the body and a lead nation supervises it with a two-year rotation.¹⁷⁷ The project went through similar development as NORECAS where a study was first made which identified the area promising for cooperation before being developed in stages for the next few years. NORDEFCO claims the project has been highly successful in promoting operational efficiency and reducing costs.¹⁷⁸ The Danish annual report from 2016 additionally mentions that NORTAT could be used to transport troops and equipment "with the aim of saving costs and ensuring the optimum utilization of transport capacity in areas of joint operations or missions."¹⁷⁹ A small example of cost reduction is that in 2014, Norway and Denmark signed a bilateral framework agreement on maintenance and inspections of the C-130 transport aircraft used under NORTAT, saving up to 7% in services "due to larger service volumes."¹⁸⁰ This also relates to the III goal of the 2020 Vision, movement of personnel and material.

The Nordic Combat Uniform (NCU) started in 2015 under COPA ARMA and is the first and only procurement project which has reached this stage.¹⁸¹ It is in the later stages of its development and has the potential of significantly increasing NORDEFCO's interoperability. Thus, to date, it is the most successful common procurement activity within NORDEFCO. That said, it could be argued that the same fact shows that NORDEFCO

¹⁷⁷ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016*, p. 13.

¹⁷⁸ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016*, p. 13.

¹⁷⁹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016*, p. 11.

¹⁸⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013*, p. 25.

¹⁸¹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 38.

has not been very successful in common procurement. NCU involves common procurement of a complete battle dress for the armies of the Nordic countries, excluding Iceland. A TA was signed in May 2016 which sets up the framework for approaching a complete uniform system for the four participating states. The effort is done in cooperation with the defence industry. The uniforms will “have the same design and properties but all 4 nations will require their own camouflage pattern. No requirement documents will be made available before the tender documents are published”. After a screening process and test of uniforms, each nation will sign its own contract with the chosen supplier.¹⁸² As of 2018, the development is well underway, and this certainly looks as though interoperability and procurement are being taken even further.

The Norwegian Defence Materiel Agency called the agreement on NCU historical. It is the first time the Nordic states have reached an agreement on a joint procurement for soldier equipment of this size. Colonel Lars Torgeir Dahl, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the NCU claimed this showed that “the Nordic countries are able to come together when it comes to military procurements”.¹⁸³ The procurement is expected to cost a total EUR 290-425 million for all the Nordic countries but the Norwegian minister of defence, Frans Bakke-Jensen says NCU may reduce cost and give “efficient common solutions.”¹⁸⁴

Persons within the military branches of the Nordic states view the project positively. Sanna Laaksonen, special advisor to Finland’s Ministry of Defence stated: “At present, military organizations in each of the Nordic countries have their own combat uniform systems. In the future, there will be a common Nordic uniform and auxiliary equipment.” Further, Norwegian Major Ivar. B. Selvig claimed that the Nordic militaries operate in similar weather conditions, but Norway, Finland and Sweden have a greater need for

¹⁸² NORDEFECO, “COPA ARMA Yearbook 2017”, [http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20\[print%20version\]%2020171221.pdf](http://www.nordefco.org/files/Design/COPA%20ARMA%20Yearbook%202017%20[print%20version]%2020171221.pdf), p. 5.

¹⁸³ Strand, “Historical agreement of a Nordic Combat Uniform procurement”, <https://forsvaret.no/forsvarsmateriell/en/press-room/historical-agreement-of-a-nordic-combat-uniform-procurement>.

¹⁸⁴ Strand, “Historical agreement of a Nordic Combat Uniform procurement”, <https://forsvaret.no/forsvarsmateriell/en/press-room/historical-agreement-of-a-nordic-combat-uniform-procurement>.

Arctic prepared clothing than Denmark for example.¹⁸⁵ Swedish Armed Forces agreed, stating that the goal was to “equip the soldiers with a uniform that provides good protection in different operating environments”.¹⁸⁶ Danish Brig. General Peter Kølby Pedersen sees the projects fitting for NORDEFCO and that it has the potential of getting improved “quality for the same price or even better quality at a cheaper price”¹⁸⁷ which fits the NORDEFCO criteria. The different camouflage pattern is an interesting aspect of the uniform. While they are practically the same, each one will have their own pattern, even the ones who operate in similar weather climate. This might be because the project is practically driven, but maintaining national identities still remains important to NORDEFCO. Arguably, having the exact same looking uniform might be sending a signal of a combined army of the NATO Nordic states and non-NATO Nordic states.

In terms of joint Nordic acquisitions, the NCU would also be the biggest achievement but the establishment of COPA ARMA was also done in light of the 2020 Vision, meaning common processes and routines to achieve acquisitions has been reached. As for further armament projects, as mentioned in the discussion on COPA ARMA in chapter 4, in 2017 over 50 projects went through a screening process which resulted in only 3 projects seeing continuation. This shows that the COPA has a lot of development projects going on but few of them reach the latter stages of development and NCU remains the biggest achievement.

In terms of dialogue with the Nordic defence industry, the project developments in COPA ARMA are done in cooperation with the defence industry. The most notable effort concerning this, however, would be the Nordic Defence Industry seminar which is held on a biannual basis (since 2012), usually with around 300 participants. The seminar in 2018 was held in Sweden. The goal of the seminar is to “gather industry, government and academia for discussion and seminar on a range of armaments and industry issues”. In

¹⁸⁵ O’Dwyer, “Landmark agreement on combat uniform procurement deepens Nordic Collaboration”, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2017/12/08/landmark-agreement-on-combat-uniform-procurement-deepens-nordic-collaboration/>.

¹⁸⁶ Nilsen, “Nordic Soldiers to wear common uniforms”, <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2017/12/nordic-soldiers-wear-common-uniforms>

¹⁸⁷ O’Dwyer, “Landmark agreement on combat uniform procurement deepens Nordic Collaboration”, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2017/12/08/landmark-agreement-on-combat-uniform-procurement-deepens-nordic-collaboration/>.

2018 the focus was on “Ensuring Future Capabilities – Nordic Armaments Cooperation in a Competitive and International Context”.¹⁸⁸

5.4 V) Enhance cooperation on military education and training and veterans care

By 2020 the Nordic countries will work closely together through enhanced cooperation on military education and training. We build on experiences from the division of labour in conducting Nordic courses and the Nordic Centre for Gender. We also assess possibilities to establish Nordic combined education and competence centres.

The Nordic countries will exchange experiences on policies and procedures and coordinate efforts regarding veterans care.

Achievements concerning this goal are in the form of routine courses or conferences under COPA HR&E. As of 2018, NORDEFECO has managed to establish routine courses and/or conferences in ADL (Advanced Distributed Learning), Diversity, Foreign Languages, Veteran’s issues, personnel safety and more.

In 2013, when the 2020 Vision was signed, a few of the courses had begun their annual continuity. In 2012, a centre for Gender in Military Operations was established with the purpose of enabling coordination of joint activities regarding “all gender issues and relations to military cooperation”.¹⁸⁹ That same year, a joint Nordic-Baltic conference on veteran’s issues was held for the first time with 225 participants, after being in development since 2010. The first conference discussed how society should take care of soldiers and how to make use of their skills and experiences and sharing knowledge and best practices.¹⁹⁰ In general, the conference hosts professionals who work with veterans.¹⁹¹ This work has continued on an annual basis since 2012.

ADL is, in general, a method for attaining flexibility and efficiency in education and training.¹⁹² As mentioned in the COPA HR&E discussion, the NORDEFECO ADL conference has been held annually since 2013. The conference focuses on “sharing of learning content and lessons learned in the field of procurement, development, implementation

¹⁸⁸ NORDEFECO, “Nordic Defence Industry Seminar 2018”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-Defence-Industry-Seminar-2018>.

¹⁸⁹ NORDEFECO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 25.

¹⁹⁰ NORDEFECO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 8.

¹⁹¹ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2013, p. 21.

¹⁹² NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014, p. 29.

and evaluation of technology based learning concepts.”¹⁹³ In 2018, 139 participants registered for the conference with over 30 speakers. The participants were from all the Nordic states as well as other countries in Europe.¹⁹⁴

Other notable courses would be the courses Foreign Language and Diversity. The Foreign language program has three roles: “to explore the field of English for specific purposes, training in other languages than English and sharing information and experiences”.¹⁹⁵ The course has been held on an annual basis since 2015. The Diversity course has the objective of sharing knowledge on policy and how to put forth a strategy towards equality and diversity as well as finding more efficient ways to establish these strategies on a practical level within the military.¹⁹⁶ For example, in 2012, the meetings held in the courses dealt with several topics including the challenges of sexual harassment in the military.¹⁹⁷

In 2014 ‘Centres of competence’ was initiated as a project with the purpose of identifying centres of competence in “all four Nordic countries” (excluding Iceland) and divide them and combine them, saving infrastructure and preventing personnel overlap.¹⁹⁸ The centres of competence continued development in 2015 and should “act as hubs for Nordic cooperation around the chosen fields of expertise as well as arrange courses of common interest at an advanced level”.¹⁹⁹ However, they have not been established as of yet but was particularly mentioned here due to the goal.

In 2015, a Safety Officer course was formalized with a TA. The purpose of the course is to train each Nordic nation’s safety officers under common Nordic rule and understanding of the field of military in-service.²⁰⁰ The course has been implemented in the line organisation, so it has been fully operational since February 2015. According to Captain Pekka Varjonen, Finland’s chair of COPA HR&E, the Safety Officer course is a

¹⁹³ NORDEFCO, “Advanced Distributed Learning”, <https://nordicadl.com/>.

¹⁹⁴ NORDEFCO, “ADL conference 2018 in Denmark completed”, <https://nordicadl.com/news/adl-conference-2018-denmark-completed/>.

¹⁹⁵ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013*, p. 22.

¹⁹⁶ *NORDEFCO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012*, p. 16.

¹⁹⁷ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013*, p. 22.

¹⁹⁸ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014*, p. 31.

¹⁹⁹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 16.

²⁰⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 16-17.

success story for the COPA, resulting in multinational participants and “concrete results in terms of advanced knowledge in both fields and common procedures in the field of personnel safety”.²⁰¹

In 2017 the highlight within COPA HR&E was the Professional Military Education Exchange program which reached a TA, between the defence colleges of Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and finally the Baltic states.²⁰²

Finally, to give further examples of active courses, there are the Gender Advisor Course, NORDEFCO NATO/Partnership Multinational Tactical Planning Course and NORDEFCO Gender Training of the Trainers Courses operated by Swedish Armed Forces.²⁰³ The Norwegian Armed Forces oversee the Norwegian Defence International Centre (NODEFIC) which is an international military peacekeeping training centre which offers courses for military and civilian personnel from all over the world.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, FINCENT (Finnish Defence Forces International Centre) offers the courses NORDEFCO Integrated Crisis Management Course, NORDECO Safety Officer Course and more.²⁰⁵ These are courses available in 2018 but it should be noted that there are not always the same type or amount of courses available each year, it varies.

5.5 VI) Establish a secure line of communication

By 2020 secure lines of communication for the exchange of classified information will be established between the Nordic defence administrations based on a common Nordic analysis.

NORDEFCO's Communications and Information System (CIS) was established in 2016 after years of development through COPA OPS. The establishment of CIS, a concrete achievement, drives home one of the main goals of the 2020 Vision and further tightens the Nordic region as a security area by being able to communicate confidentially classified information and data through a specific NORDEFCO communications system.

²⁰¹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016, p. 17.

²⁰² NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 17.

²⁰³ See Swedish Armed Forces website: Swedish Armed Forces, “NORDEFCO”, <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/search/#!/all?query=nordefco>.

²⁰⁴ See the Norwegian Armed Forces website: Norwegian Armed Forces, “The Norwegian Defence University College”, <https://forsvaret.no/en/education-and-training/defence-university-college>.

²⁰⁵ See FINCENT, “Our Courses”, <https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/web/fincent/courses-and-application>.

The goal is to support the Nordic Network and as such CIS allows strategic communication “between NORDEFCO countries at the Ministry of Defence and Defence Command levels”. For the first time, NORDEFCO secure CIS allows the Nordic states to communicate in real time exchanging classified information. It is already actively used between the four military countries.²⁰⁶ However, with the Icelandic Coast Guard (ICG) receiving a higher budget from the Icelandic administration, CIS is expected to be implemented within the next few years at Keflavíkurflugvöllur where the ICG operates. The higher budget comes along with increased emphasis on defence matters within the Icelandic administration.²⁰⁷ Colonel Kari Pekka Rannikko from Finland, who chaired this COPA in 2015, claimed that without this COPA it would be more complicated for the Nordic countries to share their experiences and best practices. Moreover, the constant dialogue through COPA OPS has become part of everyday work in the Nordic armed forces and CIS will drive this work home and boost NORDEFCO’s capability to monitor regional awareness.²⁰⁸

As such, the activity also contributes to increased security dialogue, contributing to the VII goal. CIS is simply an example of a goal reached directly in line with the 2020 Vision, and, as will be argued, is a part of NORDEFCO’s achievement trend since 2014 which contributes to situational awareness, and in the process, to goal III too.

5.6 VII) Regular dialogue between the Nordic capitals on security and defence and a more streamlined cooperation

By 2020 dialogue and consultations between the Nordic capitals regarding security and defence issues will be regular. Transparency, information exchange and coordination in long-term capability development will be well established. National procedures, rules and regulations will be streamlined as much as possible and obstacles removed in order to enhance Nordic defence cooperation.

NORDEFCO has managed to reach two concrete achievements which streamlined the cooperation by reducing bureaucratic barriers and regulations through the projects Easy Access and Alternate Landing Base (ALB). Concerning regular dialogue between the Nordic capitals, it is argued that through the achievements mentioned here and

²⁰⁶ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016*, p. 27.

²⁰⁷ Interview with a staff member of the Icelandic Coast Guard (14 February 2018).

²⁰⁸ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 19.

previously in the chapter, the Nordic states have enhanced their dialogue on security and defence matters considerably. The Table Top Discussion effort by Finland in 2017 deserves a specific mention in this context.

The Easy Access Memorandum of Understanding was signed in November 2016 with further work already begun on implementation in 2017. The project aims to develop “arrangements to access each participants’ air, land and sea territory and specific air land and naval bases in peacetime”.²⁰⁹ The project also allows the Nordic states to increase their ability to move and operate with more efficiency and rapidness in the region, and, not less importantly, with fewer resources.²¹⁰

The aim of the project falls in line with other NORDEFCO projects, to “improve operational effectiveness” and quality of air, land and maritime operations as well as increasing situational awareness. These factors go hand in hand with one of the original and main goals of NORDEFCO which is to reduce bureaucracy and “harmonizing visit and transit procedures between the Nordic militaries”.²¹¹ There are complicated procedures that take place in airspace surveillance when aeroplanes fly over a state’s airspace. The aircraft has to ask for clearance and go through a certain process before it is either permitted or declined to land. Easy Access aims to make a single point of contact between the nations, so clearances happen extremely fast.²¹² There are initiatives like this which bring Finland and Sweden closer and closer to NATO through NORDEFCO, which is supported by the other Nordic NATO members.²¹³ In the Easy Access MoU, which was signed in November 2016, the Nordic Ministers of Defence stated that:

In light of the worsened security situation in our region, increased cooperation within NORDEFCO has become even more important. The Easy Access framework is

²⁰⁹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 7.

²¹⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 3.

²¹¹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 7.

²¹² Interview with a staff member of the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs (5 February 2018).

²¹³ Interview with Kasper Høeg-Jensen, Director/Undersecretary for Security Policy in the Danish Ministry for Defence (7 February 2018).

driven by the ambition to ensure unprecedented access for the Nordic countries to each other's territories in all domains, be it air, land or maritime.²¹⁴

Here, the worsened security situation refers to the post-2014 climate and thus it can be argued that Russia's action had a direct influence on this project.

The Alternate Landing Base (ALB) connects to the former projects mentioned in terms of tightening the Nordic region as a common area for defence and interoperability. The main purpose of the project is to allow the Nordic air forces to land aircrafts in each other's air bases or alternate landing bases. By the end of 2017, all the Nordic Countries had signed a TA, making ALB operational. The first ones to do so were Denmark, Norway and Sweden in 2016²¹⁵. According to a staff member from the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ALB is rather "harmless". Its main focus is to ease access to each other's airports, specifically if a problem comes up due to weather or malfunction. It might be safer and easier to land in a closer airport from another one of the Nordic states, for example during exercises. The military planes in question should be unarmed (but since the project's early development stage, exploring the possibility of including armed aircrafts have been in the picture)²¹⁶ and the idea is that in cases like this, the aeroplane can signal or call into the nearest airport, give up information quickly and gain a landing permit. While unarmed Nordic military planes could already land in other Nordic airfields, the agreement reduces the bureaucracy procedures needed for a landing permit, so the military planes in question are supposed to be able to gain permits as quickly as snapping your finger, theoretically.²¹⁷

In order to further security dialogue between the Nordic states more directly, Finland hosted NORDEFCO's first Table Top Discussion (TTD) in 2017. In other fora, TTD's have proven their value as a means for reaching a greater understanding of cooperation and developing it further according to NORDEFCO. NORDEFCO's TTD was organized in connection with the NORDEFCO PSC meeting in October 2017. The participants of the

²¹⁴ NORDEFCO, "Joint statement from the Nordic ministers of defence. Copenhagen 9 November 2016", <http://www.nordefco.org/files/Backgrounds/Joint-Statement-from-the-Nordic-Ministers-of-Defence-2016.pdf>.

²¹⁵ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017*, p. 7.

²¹⁶ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 4.

²¹⁷ Interview with a staff member of the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs (30 January 2018).

TTD included the Policy Directors and the MCC representatives from each Nordic country. The TTD reinforced the value of NORDEFCO as a forum for consultation and sharing situational awareness, “also in a time of crisis.”²¹⁸ This said, NORDEFCO has also managed to further the dialogue by reaching achievements like ALB and Easy Access and the ones discussed in the previous goals, NORECAS, NORTAT, NCU and CIS for example.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has measured NORDEFCO’s success by analysing their achievements and their relation to a specific goal of the 2020 Vision. This discussion shows clearly that NORDEFCO has successfully taken on projects which effectively tightens the defence cooperation between the Nordic states according to the 2020 Vision. All of the goals have been developed and furthered, although with varying degrees.

Regarding goal III, the NORECAS effort is a concrete achievement in terms of enhancing surveillance, situational awareness and pooling capabilities and is strictly a NORDEFCO effort. The CBT framework has been established through CJNBEP, now MTEP, which means coordinated training and exercise programme is in place and since 2014 when Iceland signed a TA, the programme now includes the whole Nordic region. However, the most regular exercises still seem to be the weekly exercises by Finland Norway and Sweden, which means the NORDEFCO has yet to fully utilise the MTEP framework.

Regarding goal IV, NORDEFCO has managed to achieve some concrete results. The formalising of NORTAT is a symbol of this, resulting in increased interoperability, operational effectiveness and increased situational awareness. Finally, the NCU is a solid indicator that despite some problems, NORDEFCO can produce equipment and have managed to do so with this project, so that is commendable. Admittedly, the goal is broad in scope, but it can be argued that with NORTAT, NCU and even the other achievements mentioned (CBT, NORECAS), NORDEFCO has managed to deepen their capability cooperation and pooled resources.

²¹⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 8.

For goal V, NORDEFCO has managed to establish routine courses and conferences which support the purpose of COPA HR&E and in the process goal V of the 2020 Vision. The courses are considered to be “working platforms for experts to meet regularly and exchange information and best practices” by NORDEFCO²¹⁹. Still, despite this success, it should be mentioned that the scope of the goal, as well as the COPA, seems somewhat lesser than the other ones. Admittedly, the discussion about these goals reads a bit as listing things, nevertheless, NORDEFCO has managed to reach considerable success by establishing and routinely holding these courses and conferences, including the specific support for veterans. The competence centres have not yet been established but are in development, so as of 2019, NORDEFCO does not get the credit the activity.

The VI goal of the 2020 Vision is the most concise goal, aiming to establish a secure line of communication, which was successfully done with CIS, which means NORDEFCO has 100% reached this goal. The establishment of the CIS shows another concrete feat of NORDEFCO which furthers the efficiency to which the Nordic states can monitor their region and share classified data, improving situational awareness.

Regarding the VII goal, it can safely be argued that NORDEFCO has taken decisive steps to streamline rules and regulations between the Nordic states with the Easy Access and ALB projects. However, while they directly contribute to this goal, NORDEFCO has not yet done this “as much as possible”, but the cooperation is moving in that direction. Moreover, these projects facilitate situational awareness and smoother CBT efforts (by reducing the barriers and potential bureaucracy between the countries) in line with goal III. Information exchange has been facilitated, particularly with CIS and NORECAS. Long-term capability development is one of the goals that is difficult to analyse directly due to its vagueness. Arguably, per NORDEFCO’s scope, the efforts mentioned here, NORTAT, NCU, increased CBT and the military education courses all contribute to increased capabilities. Moreover, by reaching these achievements, dialogue between the Nordic states have developed, more specifically with the TTD effort. Thus, it can be argued that NORDEFCO has furthered this goal and reached some of it concretely before 2020.

²¹⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016, p. 16.

There are more interesting aspects that should be discussed. Interestingly, NORECAS and Easy Access result in increased situational awareness of the Nordic region, *in peacetime* and increases flight safety. Peacetime is not given any definition but it can be expected this is put forth for political reasons. Omitting *peacetime* from the project might be seen as too bold for NORDEFCO and seen as a step towards formal military alliance otherwise. Furthering this project to include wartime might conflict or clash with obligations to other institutions (it is always necessary to keep in mind that Sweden and Finland are not NATO members), which goes against NORDEFCO policies (and probably one of the reasons it thrives). Saxi claimed in a recently published article that nearly all his interviewees, drawn from the respective ministries of defence in the Nordic states “expressed a strong desire to see the NORECAS agreement extended to apply in time of crisis and even wartime”²²⁰. This resulted in a complicated matter concerning Sweden and Finland and their non-military alignment and “the Norwegian preference for formal treaty-enshrined guarantees, has thus far made this difficult”.²²¹ Taking the project in this direction would move Finland and Sweden even closer to NATO than they are today. While there are actors, such as in the Ministries of Defence in the Nordic countries who want this, it should be considered that cooperation on Nordic defence matters is a delicate issue. Whether the Nordic states are willing to intertwine themselves to the degree, envisaged by an extended NORECAS is not clear. The Nordic states might be worried they would provoke Russia too much and send an aggressive message,²²² Russia might even start to consider NORDEFCO as a NATO proxy. Still, considering the stance Saxi’s interviewees have taken, including wartime and furthering the cooperation in this direction is still a chance in the future.

Most of the successful projects (NORECAS, NORTAT, CIS, Easy Access, ALB) fulfil the Nordic emphasis on situational awareness, in light of Russia’s action in 2014. Four of the five projects came to fruition after 2014 and directly deal with the challenges the Nordic states have discussed in relation to Russia’s actions. This emphasis has continued

²²⁰ Saxi and Karsten, “After Crimea: The future of Nordic Defence Cooperation”, p. 2.

²²¹ Saxi and Karsten, “After Crimea: The future of Nordic Defence Cooperation”, p. 3.

²²² Bentzrød, “Russian aggression: Nordic states extend their military cooperation”, <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/KmE7/Russian-aggression-Nordic-states-extend-their-military-cooperation>.

throughout the years and in 2018, during NORDEFCO's first meeting under the Norwegian chairmanship, Norway claimed the Nordic Defence Ministers wanted to establish even closer ties and strive further to simplifying access to each other territories and discuss Russia's military exercise activities, which they consider more and more aggressive.²²³ The Nordic states face the same security challenges according to Defence Minister Frank Bakke Jensen so there is will to move further in this direction.²²⁴ The steps that have already been take have built a strong foundation for these goals.

These most successful achievements all have in common that they further the Nordic region as a common front, or, possibly, a *security community*. The projects increase the capability and interoperability for the Nordic States to respond to a potential threat together, meaning they can respond more powerfully. This is a reflection of the emphasis laid out by the Nordic states in the statement in 2015, to further the security and Nordic Cooperation in the Nordic Region in response to Russia's aggression in 2014. Thus, it is argued that Russia's actions in 2014 directly influenced the development of NORDEFCO by forcing them to emphasise situational awareness and tightening the Nordic region as a common area of defence, to a more extent than they did before. The hypothesis, therefore, surfaces that these factors have furthered the Nordic region as a *mature* security community. NORDEFCO's common definition of Russia as a threat to the security situation in Europe, the steps they have taken to collective security with these projects and how it results in a high level of military integration, per the indicators of a *mature* security community, support this hypothesis. This hypothesis will be further kept in mind when analysing NORDEFCO's external achievements in practice.

²²³ Berquist, "Nordic Defence Ministers Discuss Russian Exercise Activities", <http://www.highnorthnews.com/nordic-defense-ministers-discuss-russian-exercise-activities/>.

²²⁴ Berquist, "Continue Working on Developing New Nordic Defence Vision", <http://www.highnorthnews.com/continue-working-on-developing-new-nordic-defense-vision/>.

6 NORDEFCO's external achievements in practice

This chapter analyses how successful NORDEFCO has been in pursuing their external goals, in accordance with goals I and II of the 2020 Vision, since they both relate to NORDEFCO's role as a facilitator for external projects, i.e. projects outside the Nordic region. Since NORDEFCO's establishment, one of NORDEFCO's main ambitions has been to facilitate a more effective participation in operations taking place under NATO, EU and UN auspices.²²⁵ Facilitating Nordic contribution to international operations with these institutions is also the I goal of the 2020 Vision.

Thus, in this chapter, NORDEFCO's success in facilitating a Nordic contribution to each institution will be analysed specifically. Moreover, as has been discussed, the exploratory nature of the research led to the decision to include the Baltic states in this discussion. Based upon NORDEFCO documents, it can be determined that NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states is of great importance and potentially an influential factor in NORDEFCO's success with external activities, so they need to be taken into consideration. While facilitating a cooperation with the Baltic states is not mentioned explicitly in a 2020 Vision goal, it is stated in the Vision that "close cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania continues to be important" while discussing NORDEFCO's ambition to deepen their relationship with international institutions and countries. This chapter will begin by specifically address this cooperation and then proceed to goal I and II.

Goal II of the 2020 Vision revolves around Nordic contribution to international capacity building. This has been done by supporting the Eastern Africa Standby Force. To estimate NORDEFCO's success in pursuing this goal, NORDEFCO's capacity building in Eastern Africa will be considered.

6.1 NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states

Ever since the establishment of NORDEFCO, the Baltic states have shown great interest in the cooperation. This interest has been reciprocated by the Nordic states. It should be noted that these states already cooperate through the Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8)

²²⁵ See the sixth objective of NORDEFCO's MoU, available at <http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf>, see also NORDEFCO "Military Level Annual", p. 9 and each years' annual report discussion on Cooperation Area Operations and finally the NORDEFCO 2020 Vision, namely objective I and II.

format²²⁶. The cooperation format has been active since 1992 and has brought together the eight countries to discuss “important regional and international issues in an informal atmosphere.”²²⁷ The format revolves around annual meetings of the states’ Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers. NB8 is not as comprehensive as NORDEFCO and is only based upon these annual meetings, so a specific structure or organization has not been established but instead, the work is led by one of the countries each year, which also sets the agenda for the respective year.²²⁸ During the last years, the regions have been cooperating more closely in a formal and informal way through their various relationships.²²⁹

In 2010, a study performed by a “wise men group” for the NB8 already identified NORDEFCO as a promising way to further defence cooperation between the countries. In addition to the NB8, and more prominently, the countries work together through NATO and EU operation as well as in bilateral and trilateral arrangements.²³⁰

So, the two regions have a history to build upon when considering increased cooperation in the defence sector. The Baltic interest in NORDEFCO was already notable in the first Ministerial meeting of the Nordic and Baltic ministers after the establishment of NORDEFCO in 2009. It was concluded that both sides would seek areas to cooperate and explore potential to deepen their defence cooperation. In the 2010 Norwegian chairmanship, Norway met with representatives from the Baltic states in an informal meeting and decided upon a “set of principles and criteria for a mutually beneficial cooperation, on a case-by-case basis”.²³¹ Further, the states were invited to “participate in the cooperation-projects on ADL²³², gender and veteran issues, and to continue the

²²⁶ The Nordic states, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden cooperate with the Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in this cooperation format.

²²⁷ Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Nordic-Baltic Cooperation (NB 8)”, <https://vm.ee/en/nordic-baltic-cooperation-nb-8>.

²²⁸ Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Nordic-Baltic Cooperation (NB 8)”, <https://vm.ee/en/nordic-baltic-cooperation-nb-8>.

²²⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, “The Nordic and Nordic-Baltic cooperation”, <http://um.dk/en/foreign-policy/nordic-baltic-cooperation/>.

²³⁰ Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs “NB8 wise men report”, <https://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/NB8WiseMenReport.pdf>, p. 18.

²³¹ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 14.

²³² The ADL project is discussed in chapter 5.

dialogue on future possibilities”.²³³ Cooperation in these areas has continued throughout the years.

In 2011, the Baltics were already invited to participate in certain activities at the military level of NORDEFCO.²³⁴ Things moved quite fast and by 2012, NORDEFCO established an annual NORDEFCO-Baltic meeting at the Military Coordination Committee level. This was seen as a big step to enhance region-to-region cooperation. At the first meeting, training, exercises and human resources were identified as promising areas of cooperation and indeed, cooperation in these areas came to fruition.²³⁵ As an example of the cooperation concerning veterans, Norway hosted a Nordic-Baltic veterans conference where the respective states discussed ways for their society to take care of their soldiers and families and to “to discuss and exchange views on how to appreciate and make use of veterans’ skills and experiences.”²³⁶ The course still continues on a yearly basis and contributes to goal V of the 2020 Vision as well.

Thus, from the beginning of NORDEFCO, Nordic-Baltic defence cooperation was already taking place, mostly on a “step by step” basis. A noteworthy step, since it shows the will of the regions to work together, was taken in 2013. The Combined Joint Exercise Plan (CJNEP) which was the framework for common Nordic exercises, operated under COPA TEX²³⁷ now included the Baltic states, then called the CJNBEP. This was decided after some NORDEFCO/Baltic states meeting at the MCC level in 2013.²³⁸ The Exercise program is active from 2014-2018.²³⁹ A TA was signed in order to provide the appropriate procedures for the activity.²⁴⁰ Thus, common exercises have proven to be a fruitful area for cooperation and this also contributes to the 2020 Vision, namely the III goal.

By 2014, the Nordic and Baltic states had already taken some steps to increase their cooperation but the events of 2014 furthered NORDEFCO’s cooperation to the Baltic

²³³ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010, p. 14.

²³⁴ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 10.

²³⁵ NORDEFCO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 2, 11.

²³⁶ NORDEFCO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 8.

²³⁷ See discussion on COPA TEX in chapter 4 and discussion on the iii goal of the 2020 Vision in chapter 5.

²³⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 3.

²³⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 7.

²⁴⁰ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 23.

states noticeably. An interviewee who works within the Danish Ministry of Defence claims that the Nordic and Baltic states have a long history of cooperation but found the need to increase their emphasis on developing their cooperation within NORDEFCO after the events of 2014, especially with regards to a geographical point of view.²⁴¹

Emphasis was now put on increasing the existing training and exercise cooperation to NATO exercise programs and to further their cooperation in this area with the Baltic States. Russia's increased military presence and activities, "especially in the Baltic Sea region"²⁴² further showed the need for exchange of information between the Nordic and Baltic regions, specifically "regarding emergency planning and preparedness".²⁴³ The security situation in the Baltic Sea region now received specific emphasis with regards to submarine traffic and the Baltics have a certain vision and experience concerning Russia which they are ready to share with NORDEFCO.²⁴⁴ Further, NORDEFCO claimed this emphasizes the importance of Nordic-Baltic defence cooperation and security dialogue.²⁴⁵

In light of this, a big step was taken in the region-to-region cooperation when NORDEFCO stated that "all activities under the military cooperation areas (COPAs) are now in principle open for participation by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. There is scope for enhancing cooperation in a number of areas, including secure communications, cyber defence, armaments, TEX and on capacity building".²⁴⁶ Given the activities that the Nordic states have achieved through the COPAs so far, this openness could have dramatic effects on the cooperation of the two regions. That said, it should be noted that as of 2018, the Baltics are not participating in any of the big activities, mentioned in chapter 5 (i.e. NORTAT, NORECAS, NCU, CIS, Easy Access and ALB for example). This means that in theory, the Baltic states now have an open door to the COPAs activities (for example the projects previously mentioned) but in practice, they have not joined any of these activities. This might be due to the emphasis on a "step by step" and "case by case" bases,

²⁴¹ Interview with Kasper Høeg-Jensen, Director/Undersecretary for Security Policy in the Danish Ministry for Defence (7 February 2018).

²⁴² NORDEFCO, "Annual Report 2014", p. 6.

²⁴³ NORDEFCO, "Annual Report 2014", p. 6.

²⁴⁴ Interview with a staff member of the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs (5 February 2018).

²⁴⁵ NORDEFCO *Annual Report 2014*, p. 8.

²⁴⁶ NORDEFCO *Annual Report 2014*, p. 13.

so this was only one step in that direction. Perhaps it is a certain scepticism or carefulness from the Nordic states or some particular state.

A report, published by the Copenhagen Centre for military studies, titled “Options for enhancing Nordic-Baltic Defence and Security Cooperation”, even suggests a “Schengen for Defence” cooperation, where the Baltic states would join NORDEFCO and the NB8 would be the main venue for defence and security dialogue. The purpose of a “Schengen for defence” would be to include all of the Nordic-Baltic states in a coordinated political and administrative effort to “identify and remove obstacles to the rapid deployment of troops and materiel across Nordic–Baltic borders via air, sea and land”²⁴⁷ and to ensure the necessary legal and political framework would be in place. With activities like ALB and Easy Access already agreed upon by the Nordic states, they have taken a certain step in this direction.

In 2015, the Nordic and Baltic states responded together to the Ukrainian crisis with a “declaration of solidarity” vowing to increase their cooperation to enhance security in both regions.²⁴⁸ Additionally, another specific Nordic-Baltic statement was published after a Nordic-Baltic Ministerial meeting. It should be noted that the meeting was also attended by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who participated in parts of the meeting and “discussed NATO partnership cooperation as well as the regional security situation”²⁴⁹.

The Nordic-Baltic statement builds upon a report led by Sweden and Lithuania as respective chairs of NORDEFCO and the three Baltic states. The statement highlights the Nordic emphasis of improving situational awareness and states that “in view of the strategic environment, the Nordic and Baltic countries continue to expand their security cooperation. The stability in the Nordic and Baltic regions can only be secured in a wider European and trans-Atlantic context, but the countries of the region also play an important role in underpinning and strengthening the overall security architecture.”²⁵⁰ Consequently, the Nordic and Baltic defence ministers, based upon the aforementioned

²⁴⁷ Breitenbach, “Options for Enhancing Nordic-Baltic Defence and Security Cooperation: An Explorative Survey”, p. 19-20.

²⁴⁸ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 32.

²⁴⁹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 22.

²⁵⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 22.

report, concluded that the states would seek to enhance cooperation in the following areas, taken directly from the report:

Improve situational awareness for the promotion of stability in our vicinity.

- By exercises provide a catalyst for interoperability and engagement in the region as well as a signal of ability to operate together.
- Cooperate in dealing with dynamic cross-border threats emanating from cyberspace.
- Consider possibilities for cooperation in current and future international operations.
- Contribute to capacity building and security sector reform.
- Enhance the bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas such as armaments and acquisitions and in support of hubs of knowledge in the region (such as Centres of Excellence or, NATO Department Heads, Defence Colleges and research centres).²⁵¹ By pursuing cooperation in these areas, the Nordic-Baltic regions' security will be strengthened according to NORDEFCO.²⁵²

A concrete example of NORDEFCO-Baltic cooperation would be The Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme (NBAP), started in 2014 but formalised in 2015. The aim of the programme is to provide mutual assistance in capacity-building with focus on anti-corruption; cyber defence; operations, training and exercises. So, it goes hand in hand with the aforementioned statement. To this end, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway deployed a Nordic-Baltic team to Georgia to assist the development of a joint training and evaluation centre which was opened by NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in August 2015. The centre has then continued to serve as a fundamental part of the extensive NATO-Georgia package which was agreed upon at the NATO Wales summit in 2014. To serve this purpose, the Nordic-Baltic states signed a declaration of intent in September 2015. This means that the project is operated under NATO auspices but coordinated by the Nordic states through NORDEFCO.²⁵³ This also contributes to the II goal of the 2020 Vision.

This increased emphasis on third-party cooperation is done in light of Russia's actions. NORDEFCO further states that the "shift in the strategic environment" has

²⁵¹ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 23.

²⁵² *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 23.

²⁵³ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015*, p. 8.

necessitated an emphasis on third-party participation in Nordic activities, like the CJNBEP.²⁵⁴

The NBAP was continued in 2016 and the Danish chairmanship continued to keep the dialogue open between the countries and actively seek areas of cooperation. Guidelines were developed to follow up on the agreed upon declaration previously made between the Nordic and Baltic states in 2015.²⁵⁵ The Nordic-Baltic states were actively engaged in projects in “Georgia and Ukraine, supporting defence capacity building efforts in the defence sector”.²⁵⁶ NBAP declaration to cooperation “on defence capacity building in third countries” was also signed.²⁵⁷

The NBAP effort continued in 2017 and, like the year before, was the most prominent indicator of the two regions cooperation along with CJNBEP. NBAP is identified as the umbrella for Nordic-Baltic defence capacity efforts in third countries. As of 2017, NBAP operates in three clusters: Support to the Joint Training and Evaluation Centre (JTEC) in Georgia, coordinated by Norway; Cyber Support to Georgia and Ukraine with the main focus on Georgia, coordinated by Estonia and finally anti-corruption support to Ukraine, coordinated by Denmark. The JTEC effort is a part of the NATO Defence Capacity Building effort.²⁵⁸

The discussion above has shown that an extensive cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic states has developed over the years with interesting possibilities open for the future. Russia’s actions in Ukraine in 2014 furthered this development and the trend seems to be an ever-closer cooperation. Opening up the COPAs to the Baltic states is a clear example of this, although so far, they have not joined any of the big projects already developed by the Nordic states. Given the emphasis on situational awareness by both sides, it can be hypothesised that the Baltic states might join The Communications and

²⁵⁴ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2015, p. 20.

²⁵⁵ Ministry of National Defence. Republic of Lithuania, “Nordic and Baltic countries announced the Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme”, https://kam.lt/en/news_1098/current_issues/nordic_and_baltic_countries_announced_the_nordic-baltic_assistance_programme.

²⁵⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016, p. 5.

²⁵⁷ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2016, p. 9.

²⁵⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2017, p. 9.

Information systems (CIS) first, but that was already discussed in 2016. If the cooperation continues on a step by step basis, that might be one step taken of many in coming years.

6.2 I) NORDEFCO as a facilitator for international operations

By 2020 transparency, consultations and coordination in planning for contributing to international operations will be established as routine. We share information of available force assets which facilitates Nordic contributions to international operations carried out by the UN, NATO or the EU.

6.2.1 NORDEFCO's cooperation with the UN

In addition to the 2020 Vision goal, participation in UN operations was one of NORDEFCO's original goals from its establishment. During the first years of NORDEFCO, besides the African capacity building project, NORDEFCO's actions with respect to the UN, only went as far as "exploring potential for common deployments" to UN operations. In 2010, NORDEFCO looked to operations such as UNMIS in Sudan (United Nations Mission in Sudan)²⁵⁹ and UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon)²⁶⁰ in Lebanon with the idea of deployment and supporting security sector reform and capacity building. A study conducted by a workgroup in NORDEFCO concluded that there was a potential for Nordic contribution, "however, economic realities and heavy commitments in both ISAF and the NBG (Nordic Battle Group) make a common contribution in 2011 less likely. Provided that the NBG is not activated in 2011, a contribution to the UN in 2012 is possible."²⁶¹ Priority was given to these projects, but this statement also highlights the budgetary concerns which have stymied the cooperation, specifically in its first years. It should be noted that UNMIS ended in 2011 when South Sudan declared independence. Subsequently, the Security Council mandated the UN Missions in South Sudan (UNMISS) to support the new nation.²⁶²

During these first years, NORDEFCO mostly served as a forum to explore possibilities of a joint Nordic contribution to UN operations. In 2012, a study was performed by

²⁵⁹ See more at United Nations Peacekeeping, "United Nations Mission in Sudan", <https://unmis.unmissions.org/>.

²⁶⁰ See more at United Nations Peacekeeping, "United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon", <https://unifil.unmissions.org/>.

²⁶¹ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 10.

²⁶² United Nations Peacekeeping, "United Nations Mission in Sudan", <https://unmis.unmissions.org/>.

NORDEFECO which claimed that the cooperation intended to use the Nordic cooperation in Africa as a guiding light, since it has provided “valuable experience in terms of Nordic Coordination, planning, and execution which can be transferred to a potential future engagements which could be a Nordic contribution to a UN activity”.²⁶³ NORDEFECO did not facilitate a common deployment but contributed to a more low key activity, for example with the “United Nations Staff Officers Course” which was conducted in Uganda and led by Swedish Armed Forces (SWEDINT). Further, FINCENT led an “Integrated Crisis Management Course” in Sudan with 30 students of EASF attending.²⁶⁴

In 2013, COPA OPs continued to research a Nordic Force Pool to UN operations. The aim was to give an assessment of this idea to the United Nations Stand-by Arrangements System. The Nordics were looking for ways to participate and prepare a Nordic (+) Force contribution to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, titled MINUSMA²⁶⁵. This was done along with an EU mandated mission, the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali.²⁶⁶

By 2014, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark were participating in the UN operations in Mali. MINUSMA was established in 2013 to support political processes in the country and support a variety of security related tasks and in general, stabilize the country, with specific regards to its unstable political climate. As of October 2018, a total of 15 personnel serve the mission.²⁶⁷ As an example of Nordic participation, Finland has participated with a maximum of 20 peacekeeping staff members in Bamako and with Sweden in Timbuktu. Additionally, Finnish police officers take part in the operation via civilian crisis management duties.²⁶⁸ Norway had around 20 officers in Bamako, including in the UN analysis unit and the Norwegian Camp Bifrost in Bamako, run by 10 Norwegian personnel. Additionally, in 2016 Norway contributed to the operation with a Hercules C-

²⁶³ NORDEFECO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 21.

²⁶⁴ NORDEFECO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 8.

²⁶⁵ See United Nations Peacekeeping, “MINUSMA Fact Sheet”, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma>

²⁶⁶ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2013, p. 24.

²⁶⁷ United Nations Peacekeeping, “MINUSMA Fact Sheet”, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma>

²⁶⁸ The Finnish Defence Forces, “Mali MINUSMA”, <https://ilmavoimat.fi/en/web/kansainvalinen-kriisinhallinta/mali-minusma1>.

130J aircraft²⁶⁹, carrying, transporting supplies and personnel including other transport mission, operating 800 flight hours.²⁷⁰ Sweden has a more substantial presence, with approximately 310 personnel participating, including in units of “Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance task force, a tactical airlift detachment and national support unit.”²⁷¹ Denmark has also contributed since 2014, with staff officers at the site and provided contribution with a Hercules C-130J aircraft twice. In 2016 Danish Special Operation Forces participated with the Netherlands in a “Special Operations Task Group” and finally, Denmark has provided “substantial” financial support to the operation according to their Ministry of Defence.²⁷²

To increase operational efficiency, Norway and Sweden reached an agreement, worked through COPA Armaments, where Norway would lease two complete base camp material sets to Sweden in order to support the mission. According to NORDEFCO, this “provides substantial cost savings for Sweden compared to the alternative of procuring the camp sets nationally”.²⁷³ Norwegian Armed Forces assisted the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) in setting up the camp which was located in Bamako. The two sets of material, more than 200 containers, were used by SAF. The agreement further included training and education related to the use of the material and Norway covered needs and requests from the Swedish mission through Norway’s National Logistics Command. According to NORDEFCO, “the agreement is vital in piloting the work COPA ARMA is carrying out regarding a TA for a common Nordic Pool of Base Camp Material in international operations.”²⁷⁴ The agreement further illustrates NORDEFCO’s emphasis on facilitating a joint Nordic activity.²⁷⁵ It is also an example of the cooperation achieving some of its cost-efficient ambition.

²⁶⁹ C-130J Hercules is an “all around tactical cargo aircraft” built for transporting personnel and equipment. See more: Norwegian Armed Forces, “C-130J Hercules”, <https://forsvaret.no/en/facts/equipment/c-130j-hercules>.

²⁷⁰ Norwegian Armed Forces, “Mali”, <https://forsvaret.no/en/exercise-and-operations/operations/mali>.

²⁷¹ Swedish Armed Forces, “Mali (MINUSMA)”, <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/activities/current-international-missions2/mali-minusma/>.

²⁷² Danish Ministry of Defence, “The Danish effort in Mali”, <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/TheeffortinMali.aspx>.

²⁷³ NORDEFCO *Annual Report 2014*, p. 12.

²⁷⁴ NORDEFCO *Annual Report 2014*, p. 12.

²⁷⁵ NORDEFCO *Annual Report 2014*, p. 38.

The work related to the Mali mission continued the next year and is NORDEFECO's main contribution to UN operations. A working group under COPA Armaments drafted a TA on Base Camp Material, which supports a common Nordic Pool of BCM for 2015 operations. Norway was to provide 12 complete BCM sets, "that can be drawn upon by the participating Nordic nations". It is repeated that this agreement is considered to provide substantial cost savings for the participating nations, "compared to the alternative of procuring the camp sets nationally". The TA was agreed in 2016.²⁷⁶ The pool does not seem so common Nordic as Norway seems to be the only Nordic state providing BCM.

A successful activity began in 2016 when the Nordics "set an example to be followed" regarding long-term contributions to the UN. A rotational arrangement was agreed by signing a letter of intent in June 2016 which ensures a tactical air transport capability to the mission in Mali on a rotational basis until the end of 2018. The arrangement is also an example of NORDEFECO's openness to third parties, in this case to Belgium and Portugal who were invited to join the agreement through the UN, considered to strengthen Nordic participation too.²⁷⁷

The arrangement means that the participating nations will take turns deploying a C-130 transport aircraft to the mission. This effort will be operated from the Norwegian camp Bifrost in Bamako where Norway has maintained and administered the camp during the rotational period. The effort will guarantee MINUSMA an important capacity for the participants and the UN from 2016-2018.²⁷⁸

Norway leads the rotation scheme which will strengthen the cooperation in Mali significantly, according to Norwegian Minister of Defence Ine Eriksen Søreide. Furthermore, Søreide claims that "the operation plays a key role in the fight against violent extremism in a region that is increasingly affecting European security." Aircraft transport is a vital part of UN operations, carrying personnel and equipment across a vast geographical area. This agreement allows for a faster and safer transport option. Søreide

²⁷⁶ NORDEFECO *Annual Report 2015*, p. 12.

²⁷⁷ NORDEFECO *Annual Report 2016*, p. 3, 5.

²⁷⁸ NORDEFECO, "MINUSMA-Signature of Letter of Intent", <http://www.nordefco.org/MINUSMA-Signature-of-Letter-of-Intent>; NORDEFECO *Annual Report 2016*, p. 10.

further claims that the scheme allows for a good use of resources and shows an example of how small states can cooperate and coordinate joint peace operations. The contribution was equally well received and praised by Hervé Ladsous, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, claiming that the participating countries send an important signal of support to peacekeeping and this strategic capacity will play a critical role in Mali. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for the UN Department of Field support, claimed that the transport aircraft will enable participants to provide support more efficiently to the MINUSMA mandate.²⁷⁹

The Danish chairmanship in 2016 had specifically been pushing for the establishment of a rotation concept, hoping that “this model of support to UN peacekeeping missions will be used by other UN nations” which would ensure stable long-term commitment to key capabilities of the UN. NORDEFECO mentions that the UN expressed “great satisfaction and gratitude” to the participating nations of the concept and specifically noted that this would facilitate stable long-term commitment to the UN.²⁸⁰ The NORDEFECO documents did not give any examples but the above discussion confirms this with comments from Atul Khare and Hervé Ladsous.

Finland assumed NORDEFECO chairmanship in 2017 but the chairmanship did not focus on any UN commitments but COPA OPS conducted studies on Nordic Force contributions to ongoing Crisis Management Operations and “mapping possibilities for cooperation focusing especially on possibilities to support UN peacekeeping missions.”²⁸¹ It should be noted that Finland was not a part of the rotational agreement, which is then reflected in the country’s chairmanship. 2017 was noticeable to focus more on the Scandinavian area and cooperation between the Nordics.²⁸²

Additionally, this could be an example of how focus and priorities are different from the countries and therefore differ each year, which might lead to less efficient results. Denmark in 2016 was very focused on MINUSMA but no such focus was seen from

²⁷⁹ Government.no, “New Norwegian led rotation in Mali for transport aircraft”, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/new-norwegian-led-rotation-in-mali-for-transport-aircraft/id2505238/>.

²⁸⁰ NORDEFECO, “MINUSMA-Signature of Letter of Intent”, <http://www.nordefco.org/MINUSMA-Signature-of-Letter-of-Intent>.

²⁸¹ NORDEFECO *Annual Report 2017*, p. 9, 17.

²⁸² See NORDEFECO *Annual Report 2017*.

Finland. That said, there might be other reasons, too. The rotational agreement was already up and running without Finland's participation and perhaps there was simply not an area for Finland to cooperate with the other Nordic states, thus, seeking areas for such a cooperation was sufficient for Finland. At any rate, this discussion has shown that NORDEFCO was hardly a strong facilitator for Nordic participation in UN missions up until MINUSMA, where the Base Camp Material agreement was established, but more notably with the tactical air transport rotational arrangement. This contributes to the 2020 Vision goal but over a period of 10 years, it becomes rather minimal.

6.2.2 NORDEFCO's cooperation with NATO

NORDEFCO's role in contributing and facilitating Nordic efforts within NATO revolve around participation in ISAF (International Security Assistance Force). This is managed through COPA OPS. ISAF was a mission in Afghanistan mandated by the UN, which NATO assumed leadership of in 2003 and was the longest-serving mission in NATO's history. The primary objective of ISAF was to "provide effective security across the country and develop new Afghan security forces to ensure Afghanistan would never again become a safe haven for terrorists"²⁸³. Onwards from 2011, transition of this responsibility was gradually moved from NATO to Afghan forces, which took a leading position in 2013 before finally assuming full responsibility at the end of 2014. Thus, the ISAF mission was declared complete. A new smaller non-combat NATO mission titled Resolute Support followed, to provide "further training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security forces and institutions".²⁸⁴

The Nordic states were prominent participants in ISAF and the Resolute Support Mission. NATO documents on troop contribution by member state from 2007-2015 show that the Nordic states had troops in Afghanistan during this period. Even Iceland contributed 5 "troops", although those were in all likelihood staff from Iceland's Peacekeeping Unit. Of the Nordic states, Denmark usually led the number of troops

²⁸³ NATO, "ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014) (Archived)", https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm.

²⁸⁴ NATO, "ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014) (Archived)", https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm.

throughout the years, with 400 in 2007²⁸⁵. That same year, Norway contributed 350 troops, Sweden 180 and Finland 70. In the ISAF “placemats” from NATO, the numbers are stated to be indicative and they can change a few times per year. The last numbers, from November 2014, just before ISAF ended, Denmark contributed 128 troops, Norway 60, Finland 91 and Sweden 12 with Iceland 3. Together the contribution amounts to 294 but at its highest point, the Nordic contribution was around 700 troops total, making the Nordic states the seventh largest contributor.²⁸⁶ These numbers serve to give a hint of the scale of the operation for the Nordic countries.

When NORDEFCO was established, the Nordic states already had a presence in Afghanistan. However, various studies were initiated in 2009 and 2010 within NORDEFCO to find ways to consider closer cooperation on “logistic support and possible common Nordic force structure for the transition phase for ISAF in Afghanistan”. A common force structure did not take place. In 2010, NORDEFCO oversaw a deal between Norway and Sweden on Swedish technical support to the Norwegian Aeromedical Detachment (NAD) in Meymane, Afghanistan and NORDEFCO claimed the deal had “proven vital for its sustainability”²⁸⁷. Another project was common pre-deployment training of personnel to the Observation Monitoring and Liason Teams (OMLTS), which have supported building a potent Afghan National Army.²⁸⁸

COPA Operations focused heavily on ISAF in 2011, likely due to the fact that this year marked the beginning of the “transition phase” from NATO security responsibility to the local Afghan government. A part of this work was to explore the possibility of preparing common Nordic activities for the “post-transition” phase and to seek ways to enhance their cooperation in a cost-efficient way.²⁸⁹

Cost-efficient cooperation had taken place on the “use of strategic transportation to and from Afghanistan, including coordination of the use of the assets available through

²⁸⁵ NATO, “ISAF Key Facts and Figures Placemat 2007”, https://www.nato.int/isaf/placemats_archive/2007-01-29-ISAF-Placemat.pdf.

²⁸⁶ NATO, “ISAF Key Facts and Figure Placemat 2014”, https://www.nato.int/isaf/placemats_archive/2014-01-15-ISAF-Placemat.pdf.

²⁸⁷ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 4.

²⁸⁸ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 9.

²⁸⁹ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011*, p. 30.

the Strategic Air Component (SAC) which has provided the nations with effective strategic lift solutions”.²⁹⁰ Further clarification on how this has been effective is not made clear but Finland, Norway and Sweden operated common Log-flights to Afghanistan on a weekly basis, saving running costs for the participating nations. Aforementioned activities also continued, the agreement between Norway and Swedish helicopter technicians to NAD, the training of personnel for the OMLTs again considered having proven a valuable support to build a “credible” Afghan National Army according to NORDEFCO.²⁹¹ This sounds like a capacity building measure, similar, in ways, to the African Capacity Building project.

A typical NORDEFCO effort to find ways to cooperate was done through a “feasibility study” initiated in 2011, which had the objective of finding possible common Nordic cooperation in the “post-transition” phase of the mission. Redeployment as a common Nordic activity was also put forth, with results from these ideas being expected in 2012.²⁹² Same goes for the idea of a “Nordic Logistics Concept” for future operations. In 2011, work was underway on a Nordic Logistic Coordination Board (NLCB) in Afghanistan. It was supposed to be effective in 2012, too. Finally, another goal was to “develop a procedure to ensure Nordic cooperation is considered an option when the Nordic nations are planning future operations”.²⁹³

Some of these activities came to fruition in 2012, as planned. The NLCB was established in Afghanistan after testing the concept in a NATO logistic Exercise and was to be implanted within each nation.²⁹⁴ Planning was “enhanced” for redeployment and a generic Nordic Logistic Concept for future operations along with the idea that Nordic cooperation would be considered “a more natural option when the Nordic nations are planning future operations”.²⁹⁵ NORDEFCO continued to pursue the goal of ensuring that Nordic cooperation would be considered an option when the Nordics are planning future operations but it remains very unclear whether this has influences Nordic efforts in ISAF.

²⁹⁰ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 30.

²⁹¹ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 5, 30.

²⁹² NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 5, 30.

²⁹³ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 30.

²⁹⁴ NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2011, p. 17.

²⁹⁵ NORDEFCO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 6.

During the Finnish chairmanship in 2013, Finland claimed that one of the objectives of NORDEFCO was to combine cost-effective Nordic contribution to international efforts for peace and security. NORDEFCO stated that “the best way to face contemporary challenges to peace and security is through collaboration”. So, deep and comprehensive cooperation was supposed to enable NORDEFCO to contribute to larger, more efficient and sustainable units to operations within the EU, NATO and UN.²⁹⁶ That said, activities during that year were very low key but included preparation for the Resolute Mission with pre-planning meetings.²⁹⁷ By this time, there were hardly any big, solid indicators of NORDEFCO’s role in NATO.

Still, the support mission in Afghanistan continued in 2014.²⁹⁸ According to NORDEFCO, by 2014, the Nordic countries had developed a “well-functioning cooperation in operations abroad”. ISAF is mentioned specifically, where the “common logistic flights to Afghanistan” are considered an economic and logistic success, but remain the only mention. NORDEFCO considers this activity to have led to higher flight frequency and “more flexibility for each country at less expense”. Furthermore, Finland, Norway and Sweden plan to use NATO’s SAC to conduct common flights by using Papa Airbase in Hungary for their hub. This fulfils the NORDEFCO goal of better utilization of available assets.²⁹⁹ This is a good example of Finland and Sweden using NORDEFCO to enhance their cooperation in NATO. In fact, Sweden’s ever closer cooperation with NATO has been considered to have manifested in their participation in ISAF and this discussion has shown that NORDEFCO makes Sweden’s participation in ISAF easier or at least, more efficient.³⁰⁰

Still, at this point, the strongest indicator of NORDEFCO’s ambition to facilitate contribution to NATO, besides the common log flights, is talk and studies to seek ways of enhancing the cooperation and preparing common Nordic activities. Hardly any solid indicators of concrete NORDEFCO efforts exist, except the willingness and openness of the Nordics to such an effort. Of course, this does not mean the Nordic states were

²⁹⁶ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 6.

²⁹⁷ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013, p. 24.

²⁹⁸ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 3.

²⁹⁹ NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014, p. 38-39.

³⁰⁰ Bjereld and Möller, “Swedish Foreign Policy: The Policy of Neutrality and Beyond”, p. 443.

effortless in ISAF or other NATO related missions, simply that the evidence supporting the hypothesis that NORDEFCO had a facilitating part to play in the participation is rather weak.

From 2015 onwards, there is a noticeable gap in NORDEFCO's involvement with NATO, including Afghanistan. The ISAF mission ended in 2014, but NATO's Resolute Support mission followed, "to provide further training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security forces and institutions".³⁰¹ As of 2018, the mission is still ongoing, after the decision taken at the Warsaw summit in 2016 to extend the mission. The same decision was taken at the Brussels summit in 2018, and the mission continues "until conditions indicate a change is appropriate".³⁰² The Afghan president, Ashraf Ghani claimed that NATO is supporting the government's aim for peace and that his government is committed to welcome aid to strengthen their security sector.³⁰³

Despite this fact, NATO and its Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan are not mentioned in NORDEFCO documents. The Nordics still have a presence in the mission, albeit it is not a prioritization within NORDEFCO. As of June 2018, there are approximately 16.000 troops total contributing to the mission in Afghanistan. Of the Nordic states, Denmark contributes 155, Finland 29, Iceland 2, Norway 55 and Sweden 29, a total of 270. Additionally, it would be fair to state that contribution to the missions is not only done by contributing troops, financial aid is also done.³⁰⁴

What this simply means is that there is no indicator of NORDEFCO facilitating or contributing to the Nordic's involvement in the Resolute Support Mission. The common flights and lessons learned activities were active during the Nordic participation in ISAF but NORDEFCO has not supported any continuation of the same or similar projects with

³⁰¹ NATO, "Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan", https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm.

³⁰² NATO, "Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan", https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm.

³⁰³ Niazi, "Ghani Welcomes NATO's Support To Afghan Peace Process", <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan/ghani-welcomes-natos-support-afghan-peace-process>.

³⁰⁴ NATO, "Resolute Support Mission", https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_06/20180608_2018-06-RSM-placemat.pdf.

the Resolute Support Mission. Mostly, NORDEFCO has served as a coordination and discussion forum in its relationship to NATO. The timeline is interesting because this is the same year, 2014, that Russia annexed Crimea and the Nordics became more aware and alarmed on their own regional security as discussed in chapter 5 and seen in the 2015 report, when NORDEFCO focused on “developing the Nordic network to achieve common situational awareness at both regional and global level”.³⁰⁵ Thus, NORDEFCO’s role a facilitator for NATO missions after 2014 has been practically non-existent, with minor achievements reached, most notably the common log flights. Consequently, it can be stated that NORDEFCO has not managed to successfully contribute to NATO operations.

6.2.3 NORDEFCO’s cooperation with the EU

As mentioned in the introduction, NORDEFCO’s relationship with the EU is rather thin but has still been mentioned shortly in several NORDEFCO documents. In 2010, the Nordic EU Battle Group was on standby from January 1 2011 until 30 June. Due to the NBG, Nordic contribution in the UN was considered unlikely by the Norwegian chairmanship in NORDEFCO due to economic strain and “heavy commitments in both ISAF and the NBG”.³⁰⁶ Under the Finnish chairmanship in 2013, the annual report mentioned under Cooperation Area Operations: “Cooperation and coordination of the Nordic Battle Group” and “Common preparations for European Union Training Mission (EUTM)”, without any further clarifications.³⁰⁷ Finland, Norway and Sweden participate in EUTM.

The European Union Training Mission in Mali was established by the EU in the framework of the UN with its first mandate 2013 with the main objective of training the Malian Armed Forces.³⁰⁸ The 4th and current mandate will last until 2020.³⁰⁹ The EU cooperation in Mali got a one sentence mention in the 2014 Norwegian membership,³¹⁰ otherwise, the training mission has remained outside the NORDEFCO framework. This

³⁰⁵ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014*, p. 18.

³⁰⁶ *NORDEFCO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 10.

³⁰⁷ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2013*, p. 24.

³⁰⁸ European Union External Action, “EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali)”, https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/csdp/missions-and-operations/eutm-mali/pdf/factsheet_eutm_mali_en.pdf.

³⁰⁹ EUTM Mali, “About us”, <https://eutmmali.eu/en/about-us/>.

³¹⁰ *NORDEFCO Annual Report 2014*, p. 2.

does not necessarily reflect the effort of Norway, Finland and Sweden but it clearly shows that the EU mission is not a priority within NORDEFECO. It should be noted that Denmark does not participate in EU-operations after Denmark voted “no” at the Maastricht referendum in 1992 and agreed upon a compromise when joining the EU.³¹¹

Subsequently, it can easily be stated that NORDEFECO has not been successful in facilitating participation in EU led operations in accordance with the 2020 Vision, there is no evidence for it.

6.3 II) International capacity building

By 2020 capacity building will be an integrated part of Nordic contributions to international engagements. The Nordic countries will have established a roster of specialists and military advisors to conduct capacity building and security sector reform tasks. The Nordic countries will be able to provide financial, material and advisory support.

This goal of the 2020 Vision will be focused on NORDEFECO’s support in building the capacity of the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF). This has been one of the more prominent outside projects supported by NORDEFECO. While also done within the framework of the UN, NORDEFECO documents, which are discussed in detail below, show that this effort is usually treated aside from other UN related activities.³¹²

The Nordic Defence Ministers agreed in 2008 to support African Capacity Building (ACB) by supporting the Eastern Africa Standby Force. In order to coordinate these projects, a military advisor group, Nordic Advisory and Coordination Staff (NACS), was established in 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya.³¹³ Furthermore, ACB is supported through the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)³¹⁴, which operates under the African Union and sub-regional organisations. When NORDEFECO was established, the

³¹¹ Danish Ministry of Defence, “EU – The Danish Defence Opt-Out”, <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/TheDanishDefenceOpt-Out.aspx>.

³¹² See for example the discussion in *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2016*, p. 11 and *NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014*, p. 11. Capacity building is discussed specifically, but not in context of UN related activities.

³¹³ Sallinen, “Lessons Learned from the Balkans, Ukraine and Georgie”, p. 47.

³¹⁴ APSA, under the African Union, operates around structure, objectives, principles and values relating to prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. See more, African Peace and Security, “The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)”, <http://www.peaceau.org/en/topic/the-african-peace-and-security-architecture-apsa>.

cooperation assumed the responsibility of the capacity building project and the coordination of NACS.³¹⁵

The Eastern African Standby Force is a regional organization tasked with increasing peace and security in the Eastern Africa region. EASF is one of the five regional and multidimensional forces of the African Standby Force. The goal is to use EASF as a regional mechanism to support capability for rapid deployment of forces to “carry out preventive deployment, rapid intervention, peace support/stability operations and peace enforcement.” The forces are one of the solutions for the African Union’s need for a common African Defence and Security Mechanism. EASF was established in 2005.³¹⁶

When NORDEFECO became operational in 2009, NACS started working under the direction of NORDEFECO. The main purpose of NACS is to “provide strategic level military advice to EASFCOM (Eastern African Standby Force Coordination Mechanism); Coordinate and support the Nordic projects in support of capacity-building for the EASF; Interact with and provide advice to the regional strategic/operational HQs of the EASF, and its subordinates structures; Interact with the national military authorities and PSO training facilities in EASF member states; Conduct other tasks as directed by the NMGC (NORDEFECO).”³¹⁷ The Nordic countries, excluding Iceland, work as one through NACS for these purposes. Simply, it can be said that NACS “provides and oversees funding, provides advice and technical assistance and reports home on the preceding two aspects of the ACB Programme.”³¹⁸

The main aim of this project is to contribute to regional and continental stability in Africa and “help develop African defence capabilities in order to increase the ability of the African countries to handle conflicts on the continent on their own”. NORDEFECO

³¹⁵ See *NORDEFECO Military Level Annual Report 2010*, p. 14.

³¹⁶ EASF, “About the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF)”, <http://www.easfcom.org/index.php/en/about-easf>.

³¹⁷ Hull, Skeppström, Sörenson, “Patchwork for Peace: Capabilities for Peace and Security in Eastern Africa”, p. 63.

³¹⁸ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 41.

claims it has developed a strong partnership with EASF and played an “important role in the development of EASF”.³¹⁹

NORDEFECO’s support was further detailed in the document “African Capacity-Building Perspective Plan for 2010-2015.” Along with the goals mentioned above, the perspective plan states that the main goal of the ACB programme is to “strengthen the African partner’s abilities to deploy peace operations as a collective sub-regional security organization and to ensure interoperability between Eastern African militaries”.³²⁰ Interestingly, this goal can easily be mirrored in NORDEFECO’s own ambitions with respect to its own region. Arguably, the Nordics are trying to promote regional stability to promote peace, since their own geographical area has greatly benefitted from regional stability in terms of peace. Furthermore, the perspective plan outlines three main areas:

1. Development of a land component – with an emphasis on integrating civilian police and military resources into an effective conflict management instrument;
2. Peace support operations training component; drawing on Nordic countries’ lessons learned and experience conducting peace operations;
3. Development of a regional maritime component, including establishing a maritime planning cell.³²¹

The EASF support has confronted some challenges concerning NACS as the Nordics give donations to EASF on a unilateral basis, coordinated through NORDEFECO. This means that NACS is more of a coordination forum among the Nordic states. While this coordination forum has proven valuable, “for example by providing education, support and the ability to find joint solutions”, bigger decisions on multilateral projects are more complicated due to different regulations in each country. Decision-making processes often prolong the decision on what projects should be supported.³²² In the following segment, NORDEFECO’s

³¹⁹ See NORDEFECO, “Nordic Progress in East Africa”, <http://www.nordefco.org/Nordic-progress-in-East-Africa>.

³²⁰ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 39.

³²¹ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 39.

³²² Jacobsen and Nordby, “Danish interests in regional security institutions in East Africa”, p. 18-19.

effort to capacity build in the EASF will be examined, from its establishment to the present day.

In 2010, the aforementioned five year perspective plan (2010-2015) was presented for the common Nordic effort to support EASBRICOM, then “Eastern Africa Standby Brigade Coordination Mechanism” but known today as EASFCOM (Eastern African Standby Force Coordination Mechanism).³²³ By 2011, NORDEFCO’s support was being done through a Framework Nation concept which was regulated in a TA between the four armed nations. The idea was to prioritize and streamline the support. This Framework Nation concept involved three areas; support to land forces (Denmark-led), support to maritime capacity (Norway-led) and support to PSO education (Finland-led).³²⁴

In 2012, the Danish chairmanship of NORDEFCO pushed the capacity building in East Africa forward under the aforementioned method of a working group in Nairobi and the Framework Nation concept. Denmark, further, clarified the goals and ambition of this Nordic support to EASF capacity building. The country has had the clearest ambition in terms of ACB, seen in NORDEFCO documents and on the website of the Danish Ministry of defence, where Danish efforts in Africa are discussed specifically, differing from the other Nordic states.³²⁵

The Danish chairmanship stated that ACB was an effort to promote and enhance regional cooperation and therefore stability. The activity is built upon “the explicitly desired African Union ambition to take greater responsibility for security matters on the African continent.”³²⁶ It is considered by the Nordic states that a strong EASF will minimize the need for international maritime and territorial presence to secure commercial shipping and protection of humans. Furthermore, the cooperation in Africa “provides valuable experience in terms of Nordic coordination, planning and execution” which the

³²³ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 39.

³²⁴ NORDEFCO *Military Level Annual Report 2011*, p. 9.

³²⁵ See Danish Ministry of Defence, “The Danish engagement in Africa”, <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/the-danish-effort-in-africa.aspx>.

³²⁶ NORDEFCO *Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012*, p. 21.

Nordic states hoped to be able to build upon when organizing future engagements to a UN activity.³²⁷

Moreover, in 2012, the Nordic Defence ministers decided that the support program should continue, focusing on support to EASF 2013 Field Tactical Exercise by the presence of Nordic experts and funds, enhancing “focus on maritime capacity component” and establishing courses on “human rights, gender issues, emergency management and peace negotiation.”³²⁸

This work continued in 2013 under the Finnish chairmanship but nothing new was put forth. In 2014, the Norwegian chairmanship stated that the EASF support is looked at as a prime example “of the added value of Nordic cooperation”³²⁹. The Nordics have provided “advisory and financial support to the EASF management, enabling the standby force to plan, organize and execute all relevant decision-making process.” Moreover, Nordic support has been “instrumental” in the build-up of EASF. The plan was to declare EASF fully operational in 2015 and it was to be expected that the force will play an important role in the African Union’s determination to promote stability and security in their continent.³³⁰

In November 2016, the Nordic Defence Ministers agreed to continue their support to EASF with the decision to put an emphasis on ensuring local ownership.³³¹ During the spring of 2016, the policy directors of NORDEFECO invited the management of EASF along with the director of the Secretariat of EASF, Ambassador Chanfi Issimail to a meeting in Copenhagen to discuss EASF’s development and cooperation with the Nordic states. This is the newest update on NORDEFECO’s support to EASF³³² but in 2017 at a meeting with Scandinavian technical advisors through NACS, EASF Director, Dr. Abdillahi Omar Bouh

³²⁷ NORDEFECO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 21.

³²⁸ NORDEFECO Military Coordination Committee Annual Report 2012, p. 22.

³²⁹ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014, p. 11.

³³⁰ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014, p. 11.

³³¹ NORDEFECO Annual Report 2014, p. 5.

³³² NORDEFECO Annual Report 2016, p. 11, 13.

“took the opportunity to thank the Nordic countries for the support they have accorded EASF over the years”.³³³

It might be particularly noteworthy to clarify that NORDEFECO decided to continue their support to EASF despite the plan to have the African Standby Force, of which EASF is a part, operational in 2015. Originally, the ASF was supposed to be operational by 2010, but this was pushed back to 2015. EASF became operational in December 2014³³⁴ but ASF was declared fully operational in 2016.³³⁵ Despite the declaration, the African Union has been criticised for hesitating to deploy the army in times of crisis, instead preferring ad hoc arrangements. Regardless of being declared operational, the framework is still developing.³³⁶

The Nordic contribution to EASF capacity building through NACS has been criticized for being too difficult to monitor in terms of its success and contribution. NACs representatives in Nairobi work in accordance with a very flexible plan, relying on “funding bits and pieces”³³⁷ of EASF plans. The disadvantage of this flexible approach is that it is more difficult to track progress and evaluate the extent of NORDEFECO’s ACB programme contribution to the objectives of EASF. The advantage of the NACS approach to EASF capacity building, however, is that their officers “are able to provide funding for technical assistance and inject resources when and where EASFCOM deems it needed the most”.³³⁸ So in that regard, the flexibility of the support could be considered an advantage.

This discussion has shown that the Nordic states have been able to use NORDEFECO to facilitate capacity building in EASF. It could be pointed out that the contribution has

³³³ EASF, “Management Holds Talks with Technical Advisors from Nordic Countries”, <http://www.easfcom.org/index.php/en/about-easf/9-news/338-management-holds-talks-with-technical-advisors-from-nordic-countries>.

³³⁴ Apuuli, “Establishing the Full Operational Capability of the East African Standby Force: Challenges and Opportunities”, p. 2.

³³⁵ African Union, “Declaration: 9th Ordinary Meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security”, <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/9th-stcdss-final-declaration-english-.pdf>.

³³⁶ ISS: PSC Report, “What is holding the African Standby Force back?”, <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/on-the-agenda/what-is-holding-the-african-standby-force-back>.

³³⁷ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 30.

³³⁸ Fleming, “Nordic support to Eastern Africa Standby Force: Perceptions, prospects and problems – and the way forward”, p. 30.

not been of a large scale but that does not seem to have been the intention in the first place according to the goal of the 2020 Vision. The previously discussed NBAP format with the Baltic states should also get a mention here since it also contributes to this goal of the 2020 Vision. Mostly, NORDEFCO has served as a coordination forum for this kind of support, making it easier for the Nordic states to support EASF. By these standards, which are in accordance with the 2020 Vision goal, NORDEFCO has served the Nordic states well.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed NORDEFCO's success in reaching goals I (NORDEFCO as a facilitator for operations within UN, NATO and the EU) and II (international capacity building) of the 2020 Vision, beginning by scrutinising NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states for context.

NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states has proven very fruitful with their "step by step" approach. The development of this cooperation has been marked by a tightened relationship between the regions. The Baltics have a common exercise program with the Nordic states operated through COPA TEX (contributing to goal III), were first invited to specific projects in NORDEFCO's COPAs before being invited to the COPA structure in general. Nothing has come of that big step so far and it leaves the question open if NORDEFCO was ready for that step, if the Baltic states can join the COPA's activities, what is the difference from that and becoming fully fledged members of the cooperation? That seems to be a real possibility in the future, but first, the Nordic states must show they are willing to do so by developing the participation of the Baltic states in their already established activities. It can be stated that NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltics is the most extensive effort they have followed through in their external activities.

NORDEFCO has had ambitions to facilitate a common Nordic deployment of forces to the UN and NATO but in both cases, such an effort has not come to fruition. That said, NORDEFCO has seen some success in its relationship to the UN with its support to the mission in Mali, MINUSMA. Agreements were made on base camp materials which have saved Norway and Sweden resources and money and have the potential of doing so for the rest of the Nordic states *if* they join the initiative, meaning so far it has only been a success for Norway and Sweden. Even more successful was the rotational program which

was coordinated through NORDEFCO and has proven cost-efficient for the participating states and is looked at as an example, both from NORDEFCO and UN, on how effective pooling resources can be. However, in the context of the extensive effort which NORDEFCO has put into coordinating these international contributions, as discussed in this chapter, the success becomes less significant. The result is that NORDEFCO has been moderately successful, in accordance with goal I of the 2020 Vision in facilitating the relationship between the Nordic states and the UN.

NORDEFCO has been even less successful in facilitating Nordic relationship with NATO. NORDEFCO has managed to promote some cost-efficient solution, for example with the common Log-flights to Afghanistan but the progress regarding NORDEFCO and NATO simply ends there and did not develop further. This means NORDEFCO's has hardly reached success for this part of the I goal of the 2020 Vision.

NORDEFCO had a hard time facilitating UN participation until they joined the MINUSMA mission. Interestingly, NORDEFCO supported the cooperation in NATO's ISAF mission up until 2014 when NATO operations were rolled back. Before 2014, hardly anything noticeable happened in UN participation, until 2014 when the Nordic states participated in MINUSMA, created the base camp material and established the rotational agreement. To put it simply, NORDEFCO was rather active in their efforts to support NATO before 2014, but UN after 2014. This could be related to its size. Considering resources available, the Nordic states maintain certain limits regarding defence and military capabilities, which is one of the reasons why they believe NORDEFCO is necessary in the first place. That said, if the size of the Nordic states is the reason for them not using NORDEFCO to increase their participation in UN and NATO operations effectively at the same time, the result is the same, NORDEFCO has not been a very convincing platform to serve this purpose.

Finally, NORDEFCO's relationship with the EU has been next to nothing. While Sweden, Finland and Norway have participated in the European Training Mission in Mali, no activities, studies study or coordination to facilitate participation in the mission has taken place via NORDEFCO. This means that the cooperation has completely failed to facilitate cost-efficient solutions and Nordic contributions to the EU according to goal I of the 2020 Vision.

Regarding goal II of the 2020 Vision, the capacity building effort, which is based on a Nordic support to EASF has been a rather successful project in and of itself. The Nordics have been able to use NORDEFCO to coordinate their support and set goals they were able to reach in accordance with the 2020 Vision goal. Moreover, the NBAP project contributes to capacity building in Georgia and is coordinated within NORDEFCO although operated under NATO auspices.

Overall, this means that NORDEFCO has managed to facilitate a Nordic contribution to international operations to a rather minimal degree. Out of the actors discussed, Baltic states, the UN, NATO and the EU, cooperation with the Baltic states has without a doubt been the most successful, followed by the base camp material and rotational arrangement for the UN operations. Interestingly, NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states regards the Nordic region as well, so when compared to the internal activities of NORDEFCO, it becomes apparent that NORDEFCO has been much more successful on that front. Considering the scope of NORDEFCO and the effort put in increasing NORDEFCO's relationship with the Baltic states, it can be argued that this cooperation hindered NORDEFCO's success in pursuing goal I of the 2020 Vision, by focusing their external efforts mostly on the Baltics, rather than the UN, NATO or the EU. Moreover, as was clearly shown, this emphasis on cooperation with the Baltic states relates to Russia's action in 2014, meaning, NORDEFCO has strengthened their relationship with the Baltic states to strengthen the defence and security outlook in their own region. The comparison of NORDEFCO's external and internal achievements will be further analysed in the concluding chapter.

7 Conclusions

The goal for this thesis was to analyse how successful Nordic Defence Cooperation has been after its first 10 years by using the 2020 Vision, their own goals, as a measuring device and to consider what implications this success has in the context of the theory of security communities. To follow this through, this thesis began by exploring the theoretical and analytical framework and the methodology used. From there, a short historical foundation was put forth and then NORDEFCO's structure was discussed, specifically the COPAs. This former part of the thesis laid the foundation for assessing NORDEFCO's success in practice. To this end, the 2020 Vision goals concerning internal achievements were analysed and put into context with Russia's actions in 2014. Subsequently, NORDEFCO's success with external achievements was analysed, including NORDEFCO's cooperation with the Baltic states, since this cooperation had an influential part in the development of NORDEFCO's external activities. The conclusion, as will be discussed in this chapter, is that NORDEFCO has been moderately successful. Looking solely at the internal achievements, NORDEFCO has been quite successful but the external achievements have been less impressive. Together this makes a moderately successful cooperation for its first decade. Given the nature of the theoretical perspective, the conclusions from chapters 4-6 will first be disclosed because those results are needed to analyse the findings in light of the theory of security communities.

Nordic defence cooperation had been rather divergent up until the establishment of NORDEFCO in 2009. After the Cold War, three frameworks, NORDAC, NORDCAPS and NORDSUP were established but reached relatively little concrete success. Moreover, the frameworks were lacking a more collective and focused approach. For these reasons, this thesis began its estimation of Nordic Defence Cooperation success with NORDEFCO, which is a more robust, streamlined and collective cooperation, in comparison to the older frameworks.

The Nordic states established NORDEFCO because they perceived the need and will to manage a more successful cooperation as a solution to the problem of rising military cost with reduced defence budgets. This was combined with the accepted need to pool resources to maintain military capabilities (as reports made by Norway and Sweden and the Stoltenberg report showed). Thus, the Nordic States established NORDEFCO, since

tighter cooperation efforts were seen as a solution for the states to have a reliable opportunity to pursue cost-efficiency and maintain military capabilities under these circumstances with a streamlined cooperation structure.

What defined NORDEFCO from the previous cooperative structures is a clear set of goals and its structure, the flexibility and non-obligatory participation, giving each state space to pursue their own goals and those of NORDEFCO as befits every state. The constant mention that NORDEFCO is supposed to complement not hinder other international engagements, in line with the flexibility of the cooperation, allows the Nordic states to allocate their resources more efficiently. Arguably, this is why NORDEFCO exists, to try and utilize each country's defence budget and resources more efficiently.

The COPAs are the most important part of NORDEFCO's structure. They are the driving force that has managed to lend NORDEFCO any success, giving the cooperation an arena to focus on a specific military aspect to reach success. Without the working process of the COPAs, it would be hard to see what else NORDEFCO would be than a structure for holding meetings. The COPAs drives the cooperation forward and allow for any results to be reached under the auspices of NORDEFCO.

NORDEFCO has managed to reach considerable success concerning internal achievements when compared to the 2020 Vision. NORDEFCO has contributed to all the five goals concerning internal activities, though some minor parts of some of the goals, like Centres of competence for goal V or deployment capabilities for the NATO Response Force or EU Battle Groups, part of goal III. Coincidentally, this small part of goal III technically relates to external activities. That said, NORDEFCO's biggest achievements, NORECAS, NORTAT, NCU, CIS, Easy Access and ALB all contribute to NORDEFCO's goals. By pointing out the titles of the internal goals, which summarized the goals' contents faithfully, it can be stated that these achievements all contributed to the main part of the respective goal. Military Education and Veteran's care has also been supported significantly since the 2020 Vision. While, perhaps, not their biggest achievements, the various courses and programs they have established facilitate the purpose of the goal. Here, it is appropriate to mention the scope of the cooperation. While, relatively, these projects might not be extensive, for a fair assessment, they should not be assessed in such a context. These projects should be measured against an appropriate standard for

the cooperation, like the 2020 Vision. This measuring device has served the purpose of this thesis well.

These 'internal' achievements were influenced by Russia's actions in 2014. The hypothesis was that the events influenced NORDEFCO's emphasis and focus since the Nordic states considered their security environment more dangerous. Repeatedly after 2014, the Nordic states mentioned they were dealing with a deteriorating security situation, even a new normality in the international arena. This led the Nordic States to increase their emphasis on NORDEFCO projects related to situational awareness and regional security which can be directly reflected in NORDEFCO's most significant achievements. Therefore, it is argued that Russia's action in 2014 directly influenced the development of NORDEFCO, making them pursue projects and activities which increased these two factors.

These achievements (NORECAS, NORTAT, The Easy Access MoU and ALB most specifically) all support the Nordic region as a common area of defence, vis a vis situational awareness and regional security. These projects reduce the barriers between the countries (they do not completely remove them, that is not the intention) while maintaining a Nordic front, something that also contributes to goal VII. Sweden and Norway, with participation in these projects, have not only taken steps to tighten their defence and security matters considerably with the Nordic states but with NATO members, too. This has shown that NORDEFCO can serve as a gateway for the states towards NATO, at the very least, the cooperation eases the access for Sweden and Finland towards NATO. The previously mentioned statement made in 2015, calling for closer Nordic Defence Cooperation, emphasised the need for a showing credible military presence and joint deterrence, and increasing each Nordic states' presence and participation in NATO exercises, furthering these claims.

To put it bluntly, the most successful projects which NORDEFCO has accomplished directly further the objectives which the Nordic countries saw most important after the considered change in the security environment after 2014: To increase surveillance, situational awareness and generally strengthen security in their region by tightening the relationship between the Nordic states and make it easier for the Nordic states to pursue this goal together by reducing bureaucratic barriers. While these achievements were in

line with the 2020 Vision, published in 2013, before Russia's actions, it cannot be dismissed that the most successful achievements directly reflect NORDEFCO's perspective of this deteriorating security situation. The goals which did not further NORDEFCO's emphasis on situational awareness and regional security fared less in reaching success.

As a facilitator for the Nordic states to increase their participation in international operations, with regards to goal I of the 2020 Vision, NORDEFCO has produced rather unconvincing overall results, albeit with a silver lining: The UN efforts in Mali. Concerning external activities, strengthening the relationship with the Baltic states was more noticeable.

NORDEFCO has increased Nordic relationship with the Baltic states considerably since its establishment. The analysis in chapter 6 revealed that the Nordic states have through NORDEFCO strengthened their ties significantly on a notable "step by step" basis. From the very beginning of NORDEFCO, the Nordic region on the one hand and the Baltic region on the other, showed great interest in increased cooperation on defence and security matters. Thus, small but cumulative steps were taken, for example, the annual NORDEFCO-Baltic states meeting, common training and exercises since 2013 and finally, which could have big consequences for the region-to-region cooperation, NORDEFCO invited Baltics to participate in activities within the COPAs. While the Baltics have yet to participate in any such activities, should that steps be taken, the Baltic region will become an even more important part for regional security in the Nordic region, given how the biggest activities under the COPAs have focused on with regional security. Activities such as secure communications, NORECAS, Easy Access MoU, to name a few, could then, in theory, expand towards the Baltic states as well. Moreover, the region to region cooperation vividly increased after the events of 2014, showing yet another example of Russia's action in Ukraine having a direct influence on the development of NORDEFCO. In light of Russia's actions, both regions gave out a unified statement vowing to increase security and defence cooperation, outlining specific cooperation areas which they would together seek to enhance. The trend seems to be an ever-closer cooperation between NORDEFCO and the Baltic states, to be influenced by Russia's activities.

NORDEFECO, in accordance with the 2020 Vision has not been able to noticeably strengthen participation in NATO or the EU but did better with the UN. Overall, there have been efforts of cost-saving measures, for MINUSMA the base camp materiel project and the rotational arrangement of the C-130 aeroplanes was a success. For NATO, the common log-flights in Afghanistan could be considered but they were already ongoing from 2010, NORDEFECO has been able to further facilitate NATO efforts. Considering 10 years of the cooperation and the goals NORDEFECO set out for, the cooperation has not been able to fulfil its 'external' ambition. One of its biggest goals, common deployment never took place for example. NORDEFECO's relationship with the EU is practically non-existent, furthering the claim that NORDEFECO has been successful in this regard. Finally, and quite interestingly, NORDEFECO does not seem to be able to focus on its relationship with these three institutions at once. NATO was noticeably the focus of NORDEFECO before 2014, with UN efforts hardly getting anywhere at all. After 2014 the tables turned, NATO focus dwindled while UN received more focus vis a vis the MINUSMA operation. NORDEFECO documents do not reveal any explanations behind this. The ISAF mission ended in 2014 which means the Nordic states might not have been as focused on Afghanistan anymore, but the Resolute Mission still continues.

NORDEFECO's obsession with not hindering but complementing each Nordic state's international commitments towards international institutions might be a consequential factor in this. The arrangement might be pushing away any collective focus on activities to support participation, resulting in no progress being made. Moreover, as mentioned, it allows each Nordic state to use their resources as befits them, as NORDEFECO does not require them to contribute efforts to NORDEFECO to increase participation in international operations. And what has this discussion shown? That the Nordic states use their resources to focus on their own region. The flexible nature of the cooperation has led the focus to be on furthering security in the Nordic region itself, not the international arena. So, the reasons behind the failures of this part of the cooperation relate strongly to the simple fact that this thesis has shown, that NORDEFECO has focused on defence and security matters in its own region, rather than the international arena, despite its official rhetoric of international participation is an important goal of the cooperation.

Concerning goal II, international capacity building was done successfully by supporting the Eastern African Standby Force. The Nordic states have pooled resources for the effort. It should be considered a success while it seems to be a rather minor operation, with NORDEFECO mostly serving as a coordination forum but they have achieved what they set out for, to support the EASF, mostly with consultation from Nordic experts and financial support. Arguably, the Nordic states want to reflect their own regional peace by furthering regional peace, under EASF, in Africa, which would further extend throughout the continent.

Based upon the analysis and conclusions in this thesis, it can be stated that NORDEFECO's actual role has been to enhance the Nordic's state security in their own Nordic region. Comparing the findings of NORDEFECO's internal achievements with NORDEFECO's progress with external achievements, it can be concluded that NORDEFECO has been more successful in facilitating and coordinating efforts between the Nordic states themselves, furthering security in their own region. The reason is the shift of emphasis from the cooperation's early ambitions of looking at the international arena to their own region's security, which the Baltic states relate to. The emphasis clearly relates to Russia's actions in Ukraine, shown by NORDEFECO's actions and their own rhetoric. Therefore, it is not likely that NORDEFECO will facilitate strong cooperation and/or participation with third parties, until the Nordics feel more secure in their own region, unless such cooperation would further security in the Nordic region, as is the case with the Baltic States. So, the formula for an activity reaching success in NORDEFECO is: It has to strengthen the Nordic region's defences.

Now that the main conclusions have been put forth, the theoretical framework of security communities can be applied to NORDEFECO, by answering the main theoretical question, how NORDEFECO has influenced the Nordic region as a potential security community, which phase it belongs to and what does that mean?

Aspects of the theory of security communities deal with circumstances which revolve around the very beginning of states within a geographical region starting to interact with each other. Obviously, the Nordic states were already at that point before NORDEFECO was established in 2009. It can also be stated that the Nordic region as of now, entertain a dependable expectation of peaceful exchange, i.e. the chances of them engaging in

violent conflict with each other are practically non-existent. Security communities, according to Adler and Barnett also expect multiple institutions to further the relationship between the states, for example within a tightly coupled pluralistic security community. NORDEFCO alone cannot account for that, but EU, NATO and The Nordic Council have a part in that and NORDEFCO pays a contribution, too. As Wæver stated in the late 1990s, the Nordic region was considered a prime example of a security community, but defence cooperation had not taken place during the cold war or, successfully after the Cold War, so far. After his argument, steps were taken towards such a cooperation, so what influence has NORDEFCO had on the Nordic region?

NORDEFCO has furthered the Nordic state's development towards a collective security arrangement, with tightened, strictly Nordic, military cooperation and in the process, taking steps in developing the Nordic region as a tightly coupled security community. This means the Nordic states form a tightly coupled mature security community, as will be shown by the following discussion.

Before addressing NORDEFCO as a mature community, it is enlightening to trace NORDEFCO's development since it relates to the three phases presented by Adler and Barnett. During the *Nascent* phase, a search for cooperation can be triggered by a coalition of states trying to overcome collective action problems or to simply promote security goals for their mutual interest. This is definitely the case for NORDEFCO. It was established to maintain military capabilities and for the Nordic states to be able to cooperate further on a defence level, to advance the Nordic region's security goals. Adler and Barnett note that people who share cultural and social attributes across national borders might take an interest in developing a defence strategic posture to "muscle" already existing mutual obligations, this could also fit the Nordic case.

The *ascendant* phase happens when tighter military coordination or cooperation take place along with more dense networks of institutional relations. As mentioned, the Nordic states already had such institutional relations but NORDEFCO has furthered the military cooperation aspect. Additionally, *ascendant* is characterized by growing trust in military matters, like military procurement (the Nordic Combat Uniform) and states beginning to share intelligence information (the Secure Communication project by NORDEFCO).

NORDEFCO fulfils many of the indicators presented for the *mature* phase. Multilateralism, unfortified borders, common definition of threat (NORDEFCO and Russia should be specifically considered) and discourse and the language of community (for example NORDEFCO documents) is prevalent for the Nordic states.

For tightly coupled security communities, they need to fulfil more indicators. For example, cooperative and collective security, but NORDEFCO clearly shows they identify themselves within a Nordic region and want to protect that region against external threats and have been able to operate collectively, reflected in the cooperation's biggest achievements. A high level of military integration (an indicator), is according to Adler and Barnett, when states desire to pool military resources. This is one of the very basis for the existence of NORDEFCO. There are a few indicators that NORDEFCO does directly support, like policy coordination against "internal" threats, free movement of populations, internationalization of authority nor "multiperspectival" polity. Conversely, other frameworks the Nordic states are bound by, for example, the EU (Norway and Iceland with the EEA), NATO (Sweden and Finland with the partnership for peace program) and the Nordic Council weigh against these losses.

This means NORDEFCO's success with internal achievements has furthered the Nordic region as a mature security community by establishing and tightening the military cooperation between the states, leaving other factors needed according to the theory to the other often mentioned institutional frameworks. Thus, NORDEFCO has filled the defensive and military cooperative gap that was previously missing. While the cooperation has been moderately successful, it has been more successful in facilitating defence cooperation within the Nordic region (raising situational awareness and responding to a potential Russian threat), which matters more for the security community framework. Therefore, the Nordic region has become a more mature and a stronger security community with its inhabitants considering themselves Nordic and as a community in the international arena, meaning a potential "Nordic actor" is prevalent in the international arena according to the theory. At least to a certain extent, as the Nordic states are not bound by simple unified will from all sides, but their common institutional commitments and participation by all the Nordic states in NORDEFCO has strengthened the Nordic region as a mature security community.

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