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14. ABSTRACT The Multinational Interagency Strategic Planning (MNISP) focus area sought to provide a solution to the difficulties of multinational interagency planning through the development of a flexible and iterative decision-making process that produces a unified strategy and associated implementation guidance. The proposed process is described in a document called the Strategic Planning Guide (SPG), which was written for the use of civil and military strategic planners. This concept is intended to facilitate the development of a truly comprehensive strategy in response to a crisis or conflict by providing a framework to implement a Comprehensive Approach at the highest level.					
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**High Level Overview Document for the
Multinational Interagency Strategic Planning (MNISP) activity**

PURPOSE:

The MNISP focus area sought to provide a solution to the difficulties of multinational interagency planning through the development of a flexible and iterative decision-making process that produces a unified strategy and associated implementation guidance. The proposed process is described in a document called the Strategic Planning Guide (SPG), which was written for the use of civil and military strategic planners. This concept is intended to facilitate the development of a truly comprehensive strategy in response to a crisis or conflict by providing a framework to implement a Comprehensive Approach at the highest level.

The SPG offers a framework for high level mechanisms when a coalition engages in crisis or conflict resolution based on the following building blocks: analysis and assessment of the situation; identification of the desired transition points and the appropriate strategic objectives leading to them; and initial considerations for achieving and assessing progress towards certain transition points.

KEY RESULTS:

- The SPG was deemed a useful tool to enable civil and military governmental actors to come together in order to build a comprehensive strategy.
- The process described in the SPG can facilitate the formation and the cohesion of a coalition of willing actors.
- There is a need for a high level policy group and a strategic planning group to carry out the process described in the SPG. There should be constant iteration between the high level contact group and the strategic planning group
- The process of developing national situational assessments and then a Coalition Strategic Assessment is considered useful to improve communication and shared understanding; the best way to undertake this process should be further explored.
- A strategic guidance that is too detailed may hamper subsequent planning efforts.
- An iterative process allowing frequent interactions between planning and decision-making levels could be an effective way of implementing the strategic intent while taking into account the realities of the field. There needs to be a very active relationship between the strategic level and the coalition special representative (who will lead the Interagency Implementation Forum in CIP) in order to coordinate the parallel work of different actors. The interplay between the coalition special representative and the political contact group should be very intense and dynamic.

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- The guide should also refer more systematically to the numerous interactions that would have to be developed with other actors as well as to the importance of taking into account local perspectives.

IMPACT:

1. The MNISP experiment successfully widened the MNE5 community with much greater civilian participation than in previous experiments, and in particular that of senior civil servants, and raised awareness and interest in the Comprehensive Approach. A very large proportion of participants in the MNISP experiment noted that “Participation in this event (MNISP MIE) has increased my belief in the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach.”
2. The MNISP focus area contributed to the development of an interagency community of interest in the Comprehensive Approach within France. The SPG motivated representatives from the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister’s *Secrétariat Général de la Défense Nationale* (SGDN), and the French development agency (AFD) to work together on the subject of civil-military strategic planning.
3. Work on the SPG brought to light some of the challenges of developing national situational assessments, of building a shared understanding of a crisis or conflict within a coalition and of linking assessment and planning activities. The MNISP experiment showed that it is not always beneficial to try to develop a single common assessment, which may be based on compromise and therefore less rich in content and less useful for subsequent planning efforts. Furthermore, the linkages between conflict analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation are made stronger if assumptions and logic behind strategic and implementation plans are explicitly documented.

WAY AHEAD:

- Following MNE5, the CICDE developed a new version of the SPG, taking into account analysis from the two major experiments. France will pursue work on strategic planning in an interagency context.
- The iterative nature of planning processes is often emphasized in discussions and concept papers, but has never been experimented in the MNE environment due to time constraints and the pressure to produce outputs. In the future, it would be useful to experiment these iterations, in particular when dealing with separate, yet interdependent focus areas. This would lead to greater overall coherence.
- The issue of situational analysis/assessment was deemed to deserve further exploration. It would also be useful to explore how to better tie situational assessments with planning activities.

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