

## NATO's Regional Focus Initiative - Exploiting Regional Expertise

### Project Overview

*"We have agreed on a framework for a new NATO Command Structure, which will be more effective, leaner and affordable. It will also be more agile, flexible, and better able to deploy on operations, including Article 5 contingencies and providing visible assurance. ... It will have a new relationship with our national headquarters, and will also ensure a regional focus."*

(Lisbon Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon on 20 November 2010)

The Regional Focus (RF) Initiative emerged out of the 2010 Lisbon Summit as NATO's approach to advance the exploitation of regional expertise.

The Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) was tasked by Supreme Allied Commander Transformation to provide a thorough evidence-based description of the RF Initiative's intent and mechanism in order to ascertain whether a regional dimension is being effectively incorporated into current NATO activities such as the Readiness Action Plan (RAP); probably the most prominent NATO activity with a regional dimension not only today but also for the foreseeable future.

The project team analytically derived the RF Initiative's composition and developed a suitable benchmark for the alignment of the RAP with the RF Initiative from the evidence collected in connection with the project. The project team further conducted a qualitative content analysis of the evidence. Using a combination of categorization methods, the project team developed a Framework of Analysis providing a consistent context for the description of the RF Initiative's and the RAP's compositions.



*After the Wales Summit, NATO agreed a Readiness Action Plan to ensure the Alliance is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to new security challenges. This is the most significant reinforcement of NATO's collective defence since the end of the Cold War.*

### Three Key Conclusions

The project team identified three key conclusions which relate to the following topics and are discussed in detail in the report and summarized overleaf:

- The RF Initiative's Intent;
- The RF Initiative's Mechanism; and
- The RAP-RF Initiative Alignment.



**"One of many factors essential to ensure the sustained security of the Alliance and its members is the effective exploitation of regional expertise."**

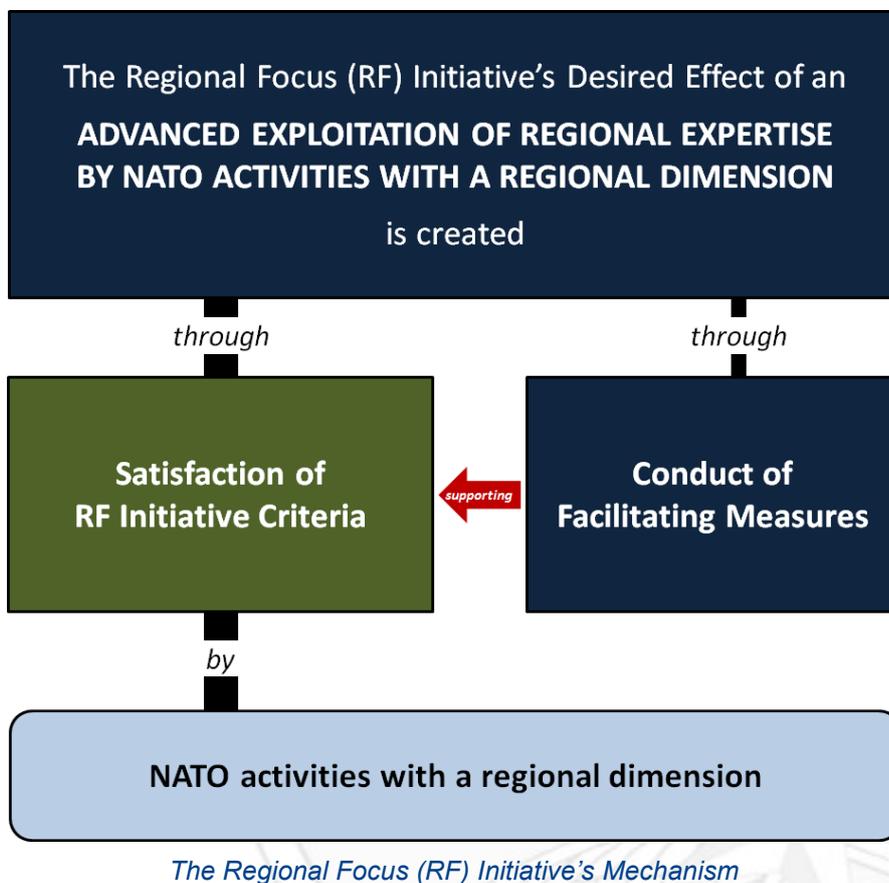


## RF Initiative's Intent

The RF Initiative's desired effect is to advance the exploitation of regional expertise; its objective can be described as enhanced situational awareness, advance planning, and NATO profile; its end-state is represented by more effective collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security capabilities.

## RF Initiative's Mechanism

To create the desired effect of an advanced exploitation of regional expertise, the RF Initiative applies a two-fold approach mechanism: (1) the satisfaction of RF Initiative Criteria by NATO activities with a regional dimension; and, (2) the conduct of facilitating measures to support this satisfaction.



## Project Team

Dr Henrik Heidenkamp  
DEU CIV, Research Analyst

LTC Elegijus Paulavicius  
LIT A, Military Analyst

LTC Rafal Chmura  
POL F, Military Analyst



## RAP-RF Initiative Alignment

The RAP supports NATO's ability to effectively exploit regional expertise.

## Key Recommendations

Based on the conclusions the project team identified two key recommendations:

**Match the RF Initiative's Intent:** Ensure that future NATO activities with a regional dimension encapsulate the RF Initiative Criteria within their respective compositions in order to match the RF Initiative's Intent.

**Assess the Alignment:** Regularly assess alignment between NATO activities with a regional dimension and the RF Initiative.



Phone: +351 21 771 7007/8/9

Fax: +351 21 771 7098

E-mail: [jallc@jallc.nato.int](mailto:jallc@jallc.nato.int)

[www.jallc.nato.int](http://www.jallc.nato.int)

Avenida Tenente Martins – Monsanto  
1500-589 Lisbon  
Portugal

