

### ATTACK THE NETWORKS

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#### PROJECT OVERVIEW

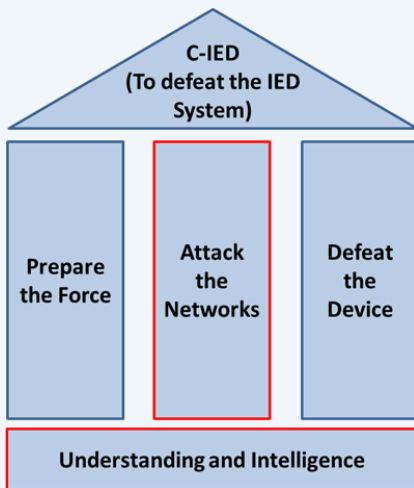


Figure 1: AtN in the C-IED Temple

Attack the Networks (AtN) is one of the three pillars of NATO's Counter-Improvised Explosives Device (C-IED) concept. However, despite being recognized as an essential capability for the Alliance, according to the Military Committee, progress to develop the AtN pillar of C-IED has been slow.

An earlier JALLC study on AtN, conducted in 2013, contributed to the revision of NATO's C-IED Action Plan by analysing NATO operational and strategic lessons in order to generate a broader and deeper rationale supporting AtN.

This follow-on study, jointly requested by the Deputy Assistant General of the Emerging Security Challenges Division of the International Staff and the Director of the Intelligence Division of the International Military Staff in 2014, was intended to identify the military requirements for a future AtN capability in NATO by analysing "NATO and national AtN military lessons and information collected at all levels, in order to identify the military requirements for NATO AtN."

#### ATN CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

NATO's AtN capability has not developed as effectively or as quickly as desired because AtN is still considered to be an integral part of NATO's C-IED capability and not an independent capability. In order to ensure the development of the AtN capability can effectively progress, that development must be harmonized with other NATO and non-NATO activities to counter threat networks (see figure 2).

However, for NATO to be able to ensure that harmonization process, it needs first to develop a broad counter-threat network concept, which the JALLC has termed a *Network Identification and Engagement (NIE)* for the purposes of this project. The specific AtN military requirements relating to the development of an AtN capability then form a subset of the broader NIE military requirements.

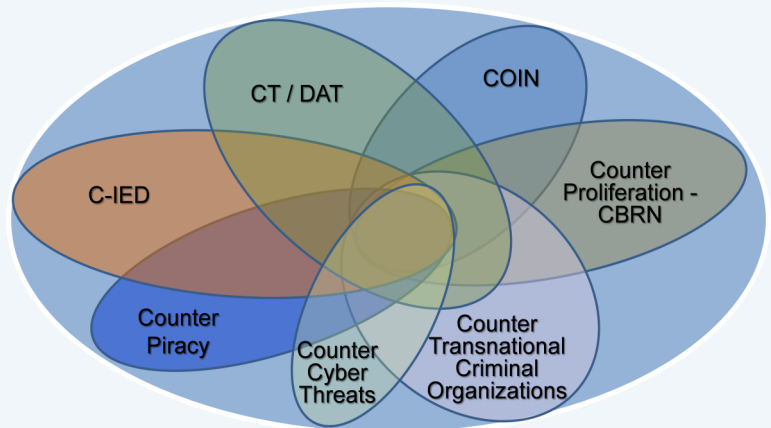


Figure 2: Interrelated Counter Threat Networks Activities

#### NETWORK IDENTIFICATION AND ENGAGEMENT CONCEPT

The NIE concept is intended to cover the full spectrum of counter-threat network activities conducted by NATO (see figure 3; overleaf). The project team believes that the development and institutionalization of such a concept would allow NATO to better coordinate all counter threat activities, resulting in more efficiency and effectiveness in operational planning and execution.





NATO  
OTAN



# NETWORK IDENTIFICATION AND ENGAGEMENT CONCEPT

(CONTINUED)

The overarching military requirements for a NIE (and therefore new AtN) capability identified by the project team fall broadly into the following categories:

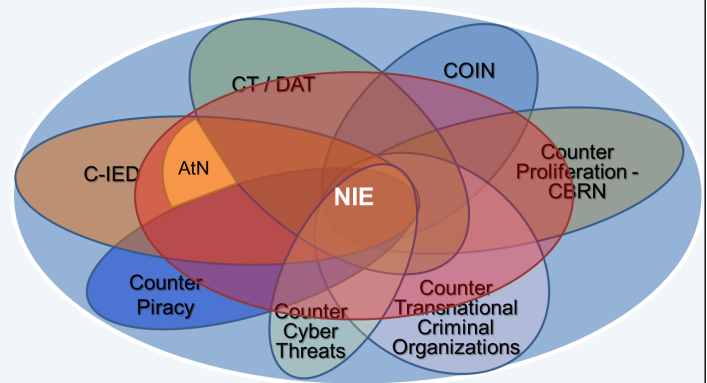
- Concepts and Standards;
- Education, Training, and Exercises;
- Organization;
- Materiel and Resources; and
- Information Exchange and Cooperation.

But more than just the development of military requirements will be necessary if NATO is to effectively develop its NIE capability; institutionalization of the proposed NIE concept (if endorsed) within NATO will be essential to ensure the development of the related capability.

Such institutionalization will require some effort as it involves not only changing and developing *capabilities* within NATO, but also changing and developing the current *mindset*. Such efforts could include, for example, improving AtN/NIE visibility in day-to-day tasks, improving NATO's ability to coordinate military capabilities dealing with threat networks, increasing understanding when it comes threat networks and countering them, and ensuring that AtN/NIE is adequately represented within collective exercises.

Efforts will also need to be increased to enhance information-sharing capabilities (including those with Non-NATO Entities) and the development of new related concepts and technologies, such as the new NATO Human Network Analysis and Support to Targeting (HNAT) concept which is fundamental to AtN and NIE. In addition, the Nations could consider making exploitation capabilities (such as forensics laboratories) more available to NATO as and when required.

Finally, NATO's training and education requirements for AtN/NIE will need to be (re)assessed and where necessary revised, on a continuous basis, to ensure that NATO remains aware and capable of countering all types of threat networks.



Network Identification and Engagement Concept

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