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Patronage System - NATO Member States Supporting Higher Military Education Institutions in the System of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine

The implementation of Ukraine's strategic course towards accession to the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter - NATO) requires the reform implementation process to be expedited in order to achieve compliance with the NATO membership requirements and the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other defense forces components to promptly achieve interoperability with the NATO member states' counterpart organizations. With the goal of achieving a high level of interoperability, bringing decision-making, planning, and operational procedures in line with NATO standards, and manning the Armed Forces of Ukraine with motivated, professional, and educated personnel, Ukraine's military education system must follow the trends and adopt the best practices of the relevant institutions of partner NATO countries. In this context, military education is the basis for deepening interoperability through the integration of Western military theory, models, and procedures into the defense sector and the performance of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Among the main tasks of the transformation of the military education system of Ukraine, established by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated December 30, 2022, No. 1490 "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated December 15, 1997, No. 1410", are:

- establishing a multi-level professional military education system in accordance with NATO standards, best domestic and foreign practices, domestic experience of conducting combat operations;

- achieving interoperability of the professional military education structure designed to train the military specialists for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other defense force components with the corresponding NATO member states structures;

- accelerating the process of introduction of modern information, information and communications technology, and distance learning technologies;

- aligning the level of faculty and instructors development with the aim and content of professional military education;

- ensuring a sufficient foreign language proficiency in service members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other defense force components to the extent necessary for implementation of NATO policies and standards in the activities of all levels of military command and control and effective participation in international defense cooperation events, international peacekeeping and security support operations, and education abroad;

- organizing educational process using new, modern types of weapons and military equipment, simulators, training systems, complexes, training laboratories, simulation centers and ensuring effective use of available resources of military education institutions designed to train military specialists for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other defense force components;

- expanding cooperation between Ukrainian military education institutions and military education institutions of NATO and European Union member states.

The patronage system as an enhanced cooperation format between military education institutions of Ukraine and those of NATO member states has the potential to be the most effective one for implementation of western practices and NATO standards into the educational process, which, on one hand, can be the impetus for changes in the functioning of education institutions, and, on the other hand, can serve as a basis for changes in the military theory, transition to the Western model facilitating the mentality shift in officers and NCOs following current requirements.

The aim for introduction and establishment of the patronage system is development of a NATO-interoperable professional military education system and post-war restoration of military education institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine.

This aim should be considered in the context of short-, medium- and long-term planning.

For the aim to be achieved, following tasks need to be implemented:

- assessing the needs in assistance of military education institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, delineated by potential lines of cooperation and professional military education levels (tactical, operational, and strategic);

- appointing responsible officers in the stakeholder bodies of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the military education institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine;

- coordinating and establishing mechanisms for interaction, coordination, feedback and allocation of material and advisory assistance, sharing warfare experience;

- developing and implementing the Roadmap for the Patronage System Implementation – NATO Member States Supporting Higher Military Education Institutions in the System of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, clearly stating necessary actions, and delineating lines of responsibility for the project's participants;

- informing appropriate representatives of NATO member states, Centers of Excellence, Defence Education Enhancement Programme (NATO DEEP Programme), and other interested parties on the potential lines of cooperation and assistance to higher military education institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine in the framework of the patronage system.

For the patronage system to function effectively, the suggestion is to concentrate efforts of partner NATO countries by **lines of assistance** dividing them into **three groups: education component, training of personnel, and material assistance**.

Lines of assistance in the patronage system:

1. Education component

- assistance in establishing professional military education Quality Assurance system as well as in preparing professional military education courses to be certified in accordance with the NATO Bi-SCD 075-007 “Education and Individual Training”;

- launching joint education and research projects as well as welcoming new partners to already established initiatives;

- sharing information and lessons learned from combat actions;

- improving foreign language training system;

- improving curricula in accordance with NATO requirements.

Assistance in preparing professional military education courses to be certified can be organized by three levels of military education, defining leading NATO member states ETFs to act as “patrons” for military education

institutions when it comes to the large-scale implementation of NATO standards in the military education system of Ukraine.

It would be most suited to delineate the coordination responsibilities among the partner ETFs by service branches and professional military education levels: L-1A, L-1B, L-1C and L-2, continuing close cooperation with the military education institutions of NATO member states that have already facilitated development of professional military education courses under NATO DEEP Programme.

Cooperation with other partner military education institutions should be organized in accordance with the type of training provided. Moreover, this format envisages the possibility of broad cooperation with specialized NATO member states military education institutions on the issues of the development and implementation of new curricula (modules, topics), conducting joint command and staff exercises and war games.

It would be beneficial to continue cooperation between the National Defence University of Ukraine and the Baltic Defence College on operational and strategic levels of military education, BDC being the main patron in the development and synchronization of professional military education courses curricula. The system would also benefit from a wide range of partners, within each of the levels (L-3, L-4 and L-5 for the improvement of individual curricula components (modules)) in accordance with the area of expertise and competence of NATO member states' ETFs; in particular NATO Defence College, US, Canada, and UK National Defence Universities.

NATO member states ETFs and COEs should be informed on the lines of training provided as well as on promising research in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine to pinpoint potential priority lines of cooperation in the framework of the patronage system. Interested institutions should be familiarized with the work in progress by the area of expertise (military education institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, as well as in the framework of DEEP, Bureau for International Language Coordination (BILC) etc) to select the most suitable avenues of engagement.

Assistance in developing foreign language training system should account for the Roadmap for Foreign Language Training Enhancement in the Armed Forces of Ukraine for the period of 2021 – 2025. This line of assistance can focus on the following:

- developing capabilities of Foreign Language Training Courses in military education institutions;
- reviewing foreign language training programs for officer-cadets at the tactical level;

- English language instructors and testing specialist development under DEEP and BILC umbrella.

Efforts to improve professional military education courses curricula in accordance with NATO requirements should be based on experience and recommendations provided by NATO experts within the framework of previous institutional audits of the military education system; thus, facilitating certification (accreditation) of professional military education courses according to NATO standards.

2. Personnel training:

- military education institutions faculty training to teach planning and decision-making procedures in accordance with the NATO standards (Troop Leading Procedures, Military Decision-Making Process, Operational Planning Process);

- English language courses for faculty, cadets, and students of military education institutions;

- expansion of the student exchange and faculty mobility between military education institutions of Ukraine and those of NATO member states.

Activities in these lines of assistance should account for already established cooperation efforts for personnel development in the framework of NATO DEEP Programme.

3. Material assistance in the short term will focus on the modernization of the educational and physical infrastructure of military education institutions with modern types of weapons and military equipment, simulators, educational and training systems, complexes, laboratories, simulation centers, the introduction of new technologies for education such as augmented reality – XR (eXtended Reality), to include application of individual components (VR, AR and MR), the related concept of using artificial intelligence for training, and in the medium and long term – post-war reconstruction (facilities reconstruction, computer equipment, distance learning tools, software).

Therefore, organizing the patronage system – NATO member states supporting military education institutions of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine will facilitate prompt transformation of professional military education system to fit NATO standards and requirements, interoperability with the armed forces of the NATO member states, and capability development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to address modern challenges.

Potential cooperation mechanisms

- on the higher level – **a joint committee** to harmonize activities of coordination groups, separate parties in the field of military education of

Ukraine and of the NATO member states. From Ukrainian side, general coordination efforts should be led by the Department of Military Education and Science of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine involving experts from NATO Representation to Ukraine.

- on the middle level – the joint committee should include **three separate coordination groups** divided by the lines of assistance in the patronage system. Each group should have an appointed secretary, a representative from the Ukrainian side.

- on the lower level – each military education institution in the system of the Ministry of Defence in Ukraine should have a **working group** established. The working groups can involve representatives of partner military education institution and the NATO patron state representative.

The following military education institutions in the system of the ministry of Defence of Ukraine are to be involved in the patronage system:

1. Ivan Cherniakhovskyi National Defense University of Ukraine;
2. Ivan Kozhedub Kharkiv National Air Force University;
3. Hetman Petro Sahaidachnyi National Land Forces Academy;
4. Ukrainian Military Medical Academy;
5. Military Academy (Odesa);
6. S. P. Koroliov Zhytomyr Military Institute;
7. Heroes of Kruty Military Institute of Telecommunications and Informatization;
8. Military Tank Forces Institute of the National Technical University Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute;
9. Military Institute of the Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University;
10. Naval Institute of the National University Odesa Military Academy;
11. Military Law Institute of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University.

Expected results:

- facilitating the implementation of a multi-level professional military education system in accordance with the NATO standards, best domestic and western practices, own combat actions experience;
- achieving interoperability of the professional military education structure, designed to train military specialists for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other defence force components, with those of NATO member states;

- organizing and maintaining joint centralized operational and strategic-level officer training for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the other defense force components, constantly updating professional military education curricula content;

- developing and implementing updated curricula into the educational process of military education institutions focused on shaping new style of military leadership, integrity, and increasing the level of practical performance and readiness for professional activities taking into consideration NATO integration requirements and domestic combat experience;

- establishing a new educational environment that would motivate service members for continuous self-improvement; implementing “Career-long learning” principle into the Armed Forces of Ukraine;

- accelerating the process of implementation of modern informational, informational and communications technologies as well as distance learning technologies;

- aligning the faculty and instructors development level with the aim and the content of professional military education;

- maintaining quality assurance for military education;

- conducting consultations on aligning task organization to the relevant ones of the NATO member states;

- expanding cooperation between Ukrainian military education institutions and NATO member states ETFs;

- facilitating implementation of the Roadmap for Foreign Language Training Enhancement in the Armed Forces of Ukraine for the period of 2021 – 2025.

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