

Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME

Dr. Cornelius J.E. Wientjes, NATO Research and Technology Agency Executive: Dr. Wientjes is a human factors psychologist focused on the psycho-physiology of stress who works at NATO Headquarters. Before coming to work in NATO's Research organization in 1998, he was a researcher at TNO in the Netherlands. His primary goal is to foster as much cooperation as possible between NATO and Partner Nations. He emphasized that Russia is an important partner, as well as the Ukraine and other countries in the former Soviet Republic, Europe and Mediterranean region.

Valery Krasnov, Director of the Psychiatric Institute in Moscow (belonging to the Ministry of Health Care): Dr. Krasnov is a professor and chair of the Russian society of psychiatrists. He carries out clinical work, dealing with severe depression and stress disorders. He is very involved in collaborative activities with the US and other European countries, largely focused on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These activities include various conferences focused on psychological or psychiatric problems. He is primarily interested in collaborative efforts to produce ways and means of preventing or minimizing such problems as PTSD within the framework of Russia-NATO cooperation. He also explores preventative measures in emergency situations. He noted that Russia has experience with Counter-Terrorism (CT) and that many of their medical psychologists have experience in supporting CT operations. The Psychiatric Institute Dr. Krasnov directs also aims to help civilians deal with troubled individuals and the psychological aftermath of inter-ethnic conflict. The Institute does not have data on veterans, but it does deal with individuals affected by the Chernobyl incident, including first responders and those tasked with making a tunnel under the reactor (the "liquidators"). Dr. Krasnov notes that treating veterans is challenging: they are not well understood by the public and don't get the attention they need. Thus, they confine themselves to a small circle of fellow veterans. These groups' dynamics often exacerbate the psychological challenges veterans are dealing with. Over time, such groups often become closed, and outsiders are not let in to help. Such veterans, whose codes of behaviour differ so widely from others', need wider acceptance and require help from outside factors.

Sergey Aleksanin, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Nikiforov Russian Centre of Emergency and Radiation Medicine: Dr. Aleksanin has worked as a therapist and served as a military academy doctor for fifteen years. He has been to Afghanistan several times and evaluated the psychological states of combatants in the arena. The centre was created in response to the Chernobyl disaster. He has been at the Emergency Medicine Center for over fifteen years and has been involved in assessing those responsible for liquidating Chernobyl after the incident. The Center is intended to not only provide prompt medical care, but also to provide care for caregivers, who are also often deeply affected by what they witness.

Viktor Yuryevich Rybnikov, M.D., Ph.D. (Medical Sciences and Psychological Sciences), Deputy Director for Research and Education, Nikiforov Russian Centre of Emergency and Radiation Medicine: Dr. Rybnikov served in the Russian military's submarine services, first as an operator and then as a military doctor, in which capacity he provided support for submariners. He has extensive experience in working with combatants. His work focuses on extreme psycho-physiology and behaviour under stress and the rehabilitation of victims. He is the editor of a journal on psychotherapy and the psychology of terrorism.

Nadezhda (Nadya) Tarabrina, Ph.D., Department Head, Institute of Psychology, Russian Academy of Sciences: Dr. Tarabrina is a clinical psychologist and the director of a laboratory in Moscow, founded in the 1990s that focuses on PTSD research. She stated that psychologists are exceptionally suited to engage in the serious study of emergency situations. She talked about previous studies of post traumatic stress, including the first cross-cultural study (in conjunction with Harvard University) that compared psychological aspects of PTSD with veterans of the wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan. Her laboratory has adapted methodologies and developed psychometric approaches. Her group has conducted studies on individuals and groups involved in Chernobyl and terrorist threats and on vulnerable populations in other areas of the Russian Federation.

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Valery Nichiporenko, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Psychiatrist, Department of Military Psychiatry, St Petersburg Military Academy: Dr. Nichiporenko has been in the military for 32 years. His Ph.D. studies focused on suicide. In addition to supporting the military, he is also responsible for providing aid to civilians in emergency situations.

Vasily Varus, M.D., Ph.D., Director of Research Institute of Military Medicine of the Ukrainian Armed Forces: Dr. Varus is also a Colonel, with previous experience in the Institute of Air and Space Medicine, which traditionally focused on the care of pilots, both in combat and peacetime. He moved to the Ukraine and focuses on care, aid during deployment, disease prevention in servicemen and medical support to deployed armed forces. His thesis focused on rehabilitation and mitigation to servicemen in the pre-deployment stage.

Major Dennis McGurk, Commander of the Army Research Unit in Europe: Major McGurk focuses on the development and validation of mental health and resiliency training, specifically on a program called “Battlemind”, and has deployed twice to Iraq to do theatre-wide mental health assessments.

Albert Jongman, Ph.D., Terrorism Analyst for the Ministry of Defence: Dr. Jongman is a sociologist and worked at Leiden University for fifteen years where he focused on conflict monitoring and human rights violations. He currently serves the Ministry of Defence in counter-intelligence capacities. He develops threat assessments for the Netherlands, including threats to military forces deployed abroad. He asserted that, due to the nature of such campaigns, incidence of PTSD is higher in veterans of asymmetric warfare. Dr. Jongman has published a report on the rising tide of suicide terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq. He states that Afghanistan is currently ranked second globally in the number of suicide terrorism incidents. As this behaviour is alien to Afghani culture, Dr. Jongman is interested in the roots of this behaviour.

Tone Danielsen, Research Social Anthropologist for FFI, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment: Ms. Danielsen deals with psychologically sound, healthy people and is currently developing concepts and doctrines for the Ministry of Defence. She has done fieldwork in the Middle East. Her work currently focuses on fostering cooperation between civil and military agencies. She is interested in understanding why people engage in suicide terrorism and what we can do about it. She recently wrote a report entitled “common sense is not common”.

Anne Speckhard, Ph.D., Clinical and Research Psychologist specializing in terrorism, radicalization, deradicalization and resilience of military and civilian populations: Dr. Speckhard is an adjunct professor in the Psychiatry Department of the Medical School at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. She has conducted over 300 interviews with extremists, terrorists, radicals, dispatchers of suicide terrorists, would-be suicide bombers, hostages of suicide terrorists and the close associates and family members of suicide terrorists in the Middle East, Russia and Europe. She has also worked extensively and conducted research with victims of terrorism. She designed and oversaw the psychological and Islamic portion of the detainee rehabilitation program in Iraq that was pilot tested and used for over 20,000 detainees held by US forces in Iraq. She also conducted research regarding the psycho-social resilience of civilian and military workers in high security threat environments (Iraq).

Laurie Fenstermacher, the Adversary and Behaviour Modelling Lead for the Anticipate and Influence Behaviour Division of the Human Effectiveness Directorate of the Air Force Research Laboratory: Ms. Fenstermacher works on various computational modelling research efforts focusing on unintended consequences and terrorism as well as discourse analysis research.

Colonel Radostin Mutatoff, German Liaison to NATO: Col. Mutatoff worked for ten years for the German military training civilians. His academic discipline is Business Management.

1.1 WELCOME

Dr. Valery Krasnov and Dr. Anne Speckhard, co-chairs of the joint NATO-Russia Human Factors and Medicine Panel (HFM-172) Workshop on “Social Sciences Support to Military Personnel Engaged in Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism Operations” welcomed the participants to the opening of the Workshop held at the Russian Centre of Emergency and Radiation Medicine in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Dr. Krasnov emphasized that the NATO-Russia group is interested in identifying, understanding and applying psycho-social approaches, both medical and non-medical, with the goal of counteracting terrorist acts and their social impacts. Dr. Krasnov emphasized that NATO members and Russia have been cooperating since 2002, jointly participating in workshops, seminars, and conferences. He commented that this Workshop was this group’s third meeting, with relatively consistent participation from members since the start, and stated that St Petersburg was an ideal location for the meeting and for making decisions regarding future collaboration, in that the Institute of Emergency Medicine has expertise in dealing with emergencies and the consequences of international events. He thanked Dr. Speckhard for organizing the NATO members’ participation in the Workshop. He complemented Alexei on his skills as an organizer and scholar of radiological and emergency medicine.

Dr. Anne Speckhard thanked the meeting’s hosts and presented its agenda. She expressed regret that some members (both current and future) such as Ariel Shalev from Israel who had taken ill, were unfortunately unable to attend due to last minute circumstances. She mentioned that Dr. Tayseer Elias Shawaf, a clinical psychologist that works with the military in Jordan, had created a counter-radicalization program for the military and might be joining the group in the future. Also, Dr. Christopher King of the US Human Terrain System Program had been planning to come but had problems with funding. She expressed hope that would be future meetings when these participants could be present.

Dr. Wientjes recalled that the collaboration between NATO members and Russia on counter-terrorism began when Russia’s then President Putin visited NATO in 2001 after 9/11. The decision made at that time, between NATO and Russia, was to work together as friends and partners to combat terrorism. Dr. Wientjes commented that experts from NATO and other Partner Nations had been organized together in 2002 in the first NATO-Russia Advanced Research Workshop which was held at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium on the Social and Psychological Consequences of Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Terrorism. The Workshop was co-chaired by Simon Wessely and Valery Krasnov. The Workshop was the first step in the NATO-Russia collaboration that has continued to the present.

Dr. Aleksanin welcomed the Workshop participants on behalf of the Institute of Emergency Medicine and the city of St Petersburg. He said that, although there have been many advisory panel meetings, the full group has only met twice previously, with the last meeting being four years ago. He expressed his hope that the meeting would be fruitful, lead to lasting collaboration and wished all success in the work.

