

NATO MISSION IRAQ

ADVISOR HANDBOOK

BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY TOGETHER



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Baghdad (Iraq)

This document was prepared by:

OF-2 (Captain) Tiziano ZIINO (ITA - Army), NMI HQ - J5 Staff Officer (Plans)

OF-3 (Major) João Carlos Goncalves dos REIS (PRT - Army), NMI HQ - J5 Staff Officer (Plans)

Graphic design / Layout by:

OF-4 (Lieutenant Colonel) Mario MARKOVIĆ, NMI SRCO - Staff Officer (Media Plans)

Any correspondence should be sent:

tiziano.ziino@esercito.difesa.it

reis.jcg@exercito.pt

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Foreword of COM NMI

NATO Mission Iraq's Advisory Handbook is a tool for advisors being assigned to NATO Mission Iraqi to better understand and develop apposite procedures and behaviour from the earliest stage. The handbook was produced in theatre as a joint venture between experienced mission advisors and the joint staff and will be updated as necessary.

Not all advisors had participated in NATO's pre-deployment training programme at Joint Force Training Centre; hence, some did not have the knowledge how to plan engagements in a NATO Mission Iraq context or how to interact with interlocutors in an Iraqi context.

The Advisory Handbook gives a brief historical lead-in on the current Iraqi conflicts, the political situation and the culture for a better understanding of the context the advisors must navigate.

Moreover, it introduces the advisors to NATO Mission Iraq's Advisory Plan, which describes the Lines of Efforts, as well as to the structure, based on four Divisions.

Lastly, the handbook guides the advisors through areas of responsibility, the role of the advisor and systematic checklists related to planning, execution and reporting.

As an NATO Mission Iraq advisor, you are key to the mission's success.

The intent is to hand out the advisory handbook to mission newcomers, either when attending the pre-deployment training courses or when arriving in theatre.

Thanks to all contributors for sharing your experiences and thereby creating the foundation for a successful mission for all future NATO Mission Iraqi advisors.

Commander, NATO Mission Iraq



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Executive Summary of content

Advising tasks cover a wide range of subjects. Therefore, the purpose of this Handbook is to provide a holistic view on NATO Mission Iraq's (NMI) advisory. In preparing the Handbook, we faced two challenges:

- to present a guide with generic information that would be useful for new advisors; and,
- to include as much detailed information that would be also useful to senior advisors.

Keeping in mind that it is difficult to explain the NMI advisory mission in detail in only a few pages, this first version is comprehensive and therefore provides a holistic view of the mission. The Handbook is designed to be pocket-size, easy to use and understand, as well as suitable for a large audience. The Advisor Handbook 1.0 assists in every stage of advising, starting from the preparation before arriving in the theatre of operations, helping on the job and support in all manners linked to the advising area in general.

This Handbook consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the NMI (i.e., purpose, objectives, and key values). Chapter 2 focuses on the general external context, namely the history, politics, culture, and society of Iraq. Chapter 3 presents a short overview of the content of the advisory plan, which is the overall document leading the advisors work in NMI. Chapter 4 refers to the organization and pillars of the NMI, namely MAD (Ministerial Advisory Division), PSE (Professional Security Education), TDD (Training Development Division) and SCRO (Strategic Communication, Representation and Outreach). Finally, Chapter 5 focuses on the processes used for NMI advisor interactions. The handbook concludes with some closing comments and suggestions for further reading.

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Purpose, Principles and Core Values of NATO Mission Iraq

CHAPTER 1



Chapter 1: Purpose, Principles and Core Values of NATO Mission Iraq



NATO Supreme Allied Headquarters Powers Europe (SHAPE) coat of arms

At the NATO Summit in Brussels in July 2018, following a request from the Iraqi government, allied leaders issued direction to launch a new training mission in Iraq called NATO Mission Iraq (NMI). This new mission was established in Baghdad in October 2018.

NATO Mission Iraq falls under the authority of the Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples, which is one of NATO's two operational-level commands that stands ready to plan, conduct, and sustain NATO operations across the full spectrum of military response.

Purpose – As a non-combat advisory mission, NMI conducts high-level advising, education and training in order to increase the capacity and effectiveness of Iraqi Security Institutions (ISI) and Forces (ISF). NMI conducts institutional-level advising, performed by extensive NATO experience, primarily within the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and down into the Service Command Headquarters. NMI is also engaged with the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) and the Prime Ministers National Operations Centre (PMNOC). Since August/September 2020 Iraqi authorities

expressed their desire for NMI to continue and expand advisory engagement to other ISI's, such as the Ministry of Interior (MoI), and provide specialized training opportunities, as conditions permit. Ultimately, NMI envisions an ISI/ISF enterprise that can conceive, develop and generate an effective force structure.

Principles¹ – NMI principles are slightly different from the ones that advisors are following (chapter 5). The NMI principles are generally related to sustainability, local facilities, contributions and continuity/flexibility.

- **Sustainable steps** – NMI work is to strengthen the level of Iraqi governance and the utility of Iraqi capabilities one-step at a time. NMI needs to consider that organizational, structural and cultural changes are difficult in all organizations. NMI must realize that small sustainable steps forward are better than huge, one shot, unsustainable leaps.
- **Facilitate local solutions**² – NMI individual sets of experiences from NATO respective countries and NATO individual professional careers are not one-to-one applicable in the Iraqi context. NMI's aim is to enhance the ability of our Iraqi hosts to do their jobs – not to do their jobs for them. NMI empowers and promotes Iraqi-led decision-making and implementation. NMI awareness and appreciation of the local context and the cultural dimensions is essential.
- **Do not undervalue your contribution** – Do not discount the experience you bring to the NMI mission. Offer what you know – and then work with your interlocutor to “*adjust the fit,*” as necessary to make things work in the Iraqi context. Similarly, do not shy away from dialog and advice holding our interlocutor accountable for results. The Iraqi government has asked for NMI advice.

- **Continuity and flexibility** – NMI does not start on a blank sheet of paper. NMI is going to continue the work of its predecessors, on their knowledge and experiences, expanding and progressing the work. However, on the individual level, each of NMI's personnel must be flexible and adjust to changing circumstances. Continuity and flexibility must be balanced.

Core Values – According to the NMI SOP 002, the NMI personnel should base their actions on the following core values.

- Integrity, as NMI does what is ethically right;
- Honesty, NMI is transparent and open for dialogue in order to reach the best solutions;
- Mutual respect, as NMI brings different perspectives, experiences and insights, both within NMI and in the engagement with Iraqi hosts;
- Cultural awareness, as NMI taps into the Iraqi culture as the foundation of any solution, and NMI understand that NMI's actions are influenced by NMI's own cultures;
- Professionalism, as NMI are competent and reliable;
- Open-minded, as NMI learns from mistakes and listens to Iraqi interlocutors.

All NMI personnel must follow the purpose, principles, and core values, in particular advisors, as they are in close contact with the Iraqi interlocutors and have added responsibilities to get across the messages described above. All advisors need to be pro-active and persistently engage with the interlocutors to develop tailor-made and sustainable solutions. Through strong and direct links to NATO Command Structure and other partners, NMI seeks rapid external Subject Matter Expert (SME) support in order to create an agile advisory environment.



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Overall Context of NMI





Satellite view of Iraq (© LeadDog Consulting, LLC)

Capital and largest city: Baghdad (pos. 33°20'N 44°23'E)

Official languages: Arabic, Kurdish,

Recognized regional languages: Neo-Aramaic, Turkish, Armenian

Main ethnic groups: 75% Mesopotamian Arab, 15% Kurd, 10% Others (incl. Turkmen, Assyrians, Yazidis, Mandaeans)

Religion: 95% Islam, 5% Christianity, Mandeism-Yazidism, Judaism, Yarsanism, Zoroastrianism

Area: 438,317 km²

Chapter 2: Overall Context of NMI

2.1: History with Regard to Current Conflicts



Restored Ziggurat Ancient Ur Sumerian Temple (@Homophoticus)

Iraq is often viewed as the cradle of civilization. The first known major cities and empires all sprung up from the fertile plains between the two rivers that mark this country, the Euphrates and Tigris. That is why the Greeks called it land between the two rivers, Mesopotamia. Iraqis to this day are still proud of the biblical Abraham who came from Ur, or cities like Babylon and Nineveh, once seats of mighty empires. Geopolitically, this plain has always been influenced by the good trade relationships with the cities to the East and to this day many Iraqis view Syrians favourably. Moreover, the relationship with the peoples of the mountains to the East has always been tricky. Either Mesopotamia is a united empire that blocks them from coming down from the Zagros Mountains or they are part of it. The tribes to the South have always been a great cultural influence. The current political and social problems are highly influenced by this geopolitical history and this old history is still alive.



The Great Mosque of Samarra (جامع سامراء الكبير) (© TrekZone)

The early Islamic Caliphate conquered Iraq in the mid-7th century. Soon thereafter a succession crisis emerged over who would lead the Caliphate. This was the continuation of the succession crisis that had beset the Caliphate after Prophet Mohammed died. When the fourth Caliph, Ali ibn Abi Talib died, his sons claimed the leadership. Those that supported their claim came to be known as the Party (Shi'at) of Ali or Shi'as. Ali's son Hussein was ambushed and killed near today's Karbala where the holiest Shrine of Shi'as stands until today. The Shi'a religious institution and most important seminary is located nearby in Najaf.

The origin of Shi'as lies in Iraq. Shi'a leaders have ruled Iran since the early 16th century. The Shi'a ideology that Iran promotes since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 is different from that in Iraq. One of the splits within the Shi'a population is thus between the pro-Iranian and Iraqi nationalist Shi'a beliefs. The Shi'a seminary in Najaf, called the Hawza, is led by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who is a revered and influential Shi'a spiritual leader. On the other side the Badr Organization, Kataib Hizbollah or Asaib Ahl al-Haq are Shi'a militias and at the same time political groups that support the Iranian religious-political system known as *Velayat-e Faqih* (Arabic/Persian – 'Guardianship of the Jurisprudent') of Supreme Guide Ayatollah Khamenei.

When Islam conquered Persia, the Persian culture strongly influenced Islam. An internal coup led to a new dynasty, the Abbasids, which moved the capital of the Caliphate to Baghdad. They founded the city for that very purpose. The Golden Age of Islam is the time when Islam and Persian culture fused. Think '1001 Nights'; a compilation of Persian stories written in



Map of the Abbasid Caliphate (© Encyclopedia Britannica)

Arabic. Over the next centuries, the Caliphate decayed through internal corruption. Almost no caliph died of a natural cause. In 1258, the Mongols besieged and destroyed Baghdad. Between 250.000 – 1.000.000 million people died in this catastrophe. Muslim scholars theorized what had caused this catastrophe. Ibn Taymiyya believed it was because the Muslim nation departed from the original Islam of the Prophet and first generation. His conclusion was that Muslims had to restore the original practices as well as the Caliphate and they especially had to fight all internal deviations from it. This line of thought was reborn several times throughout later centuries and is the historical origin of Salafism and Wahhabism. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Daesh) is the most recent acolyte and rebirth of a group utilising this ideology. A weak and destroyed Iraq ended under Ottoman rule in the 16th century. After World War I and the end of the Ottoman Empire,

Iraq was under British mandate and became independent under a British-installed Hashemite king. Several bloody coups ended with the reign of Saddam Hussein in 1979. Saddam relied on networks of Sunni officers and officials. As the Sunnis were the demographic minority, he was ruthless and acted pre-emptively against any potential challenger.



The Swords of Qādisīyah ("Victory Arch" - قوس النصر) in Baghdad (© Pickvisa)

Institutionally, he implemented a strategy of compartmentalization, splitting the security forces into multiple centres of power, all dependent on him and had intelligence agencies to watch the people, the security forces and the other intelligence agencies. Everyone spied on each other. The legacy of this institutionalized paranoia and organisational culture still haunts security agencies and dampens coordination efforts.

Saddam Hussein started a brutal war with Iran from 1980-1988, and many of the current military leaders started their careers during this war. The pro-Iranian paramilitaries have their origin in the resistance to Saddam and this war. Shi'a exiles and Prisoners of War that the Iranians had taken and trained gradually were melded into the Badr Organisation. Politically, the Dawa party was the centre of gravity of Shi'a resistance at the time and most of the Shi'a parties and militias today are splinters of these two. After the US-led assistance activity of 2003 and the ouster of

Saddam, the Shi'as gained power and positions, but their leaders struggled to stay united and deal with the influx of so much power, positions and prestige. Now, the Shi'a leaders are in a political conflict over power, sometimes aligning with Sunni and Kurdish forces, sometimes banding together against them, depending on the situation.



Sunni Muslim insignias
(© Wikipedia)

*Shi'a Muslims gathered
in prayer at Karbala*
(© Wikiwand)



2.2: Politics

The political situation in Iraq cannot be viewed separately from the sectarian division in the country. Iraq historically faced two intertwined internal divides, an ethnic one between Arabs and Kurds, and a sectarian one between Shiite and Sunni. Until the US-led assistance activity in 2003 that led to the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Sunni minority had a privileged position in the country. Saddam's pan-Arab Baath party had ruled Iraq for decades, but over time Saddam favoured Sunnis, especially his own family and tribe while he divided all others to control them better, Shi'a beliefs were suppressed. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Shi'a majority became the dominant political factor in the country. Many Sunnis perceived this as marginalization. Sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shi'a flared up regularly since the US assistance activity to the country. Violent extremist Sunni organizations like Daesh profited from these growing tensions, which resulted in the establishment of the Islamic State in large parts of the country in 2013-2014. The Kurds have their own regional government, parliament, budget and security institutions. The oil revenues

are shared between the KRG and the Iraqi government. The Kurds receive ca. 17%, which roughly represents their share of the population. The Kurdish forces of Iraq are called Peshmerga (Kurdish – ‘*Those Who Seek Death*’). The Kurds also maintain their own intelligence and police forces.

As the three main social groups are the backbone of Iraq, the post-2003 political system splits power between them. This ethno-sectarian power sharing is known as the *Muhasasa* system. At the top, the President of the Republic is a Kurd, the Prime Minister of the country is a Shi’a and the Speaker of the Council of Representatives – the Iraqi parliament – is a Sunni. The President has few real powers, but is nominally the highest authority in the country and his major function is to appoint the Prime Minister. The Shi’a Arabs are the majority of the population and the Prime Minister is the most important position in Iraq, however, the Shi’a are not united in one party or faction. Competition between the Sadrists, the Dawa party, Badr Organisation and other smaller powers is fierce and the same is true for the Sunnis. There are currently two prominent political forces representing them, Taqadum and Al Azm, but the Sunni tribes remain strong local, social and political actors. They are often more disunited and intra-tribal conflicts that occur regularly. The Kurds are organised into two main parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, each of these groups are also beset with internal power struggles that can at times be violent. It is important to understand that many of those political groups control militias; some have territorial control and represent distinct local groups.

The Prime Minister is the Commander-in-Chief and The Parliament (Council of Representatives – CoR) has 329 members, which are directly elected. The CoR elects the President, which appoints the Prime Minister who appoints the Ministers and controls the government.

In the *Muhasasa* system, parties bid on ministries and (nominally) independent agencies according to how many seats they have in Parliament. However, ministers are sometimes weakened by the rise of more permanent deputy ministers and senior bureaucrats, so-called special grades. Iraq consists of 19 governorates and the governors are very influential, with local and national politics being highly intertwined. The governors are elected by governorate councils, which in turn are directly elected. The governorate councils represent political parties, tribal leaders, and increasingly business interests. At the district level, tribal politics and governance fuse. Some local conflicts, for example those over control of Nineveh or Kirkuk, are of immediate national concern. The question over Kirkuk is an unsolved constitutional question; it is connected to the question of where the Kurdish controlled areas end and control by ISF begins. The disputed territories where the Kurdish Peshmerga and Iraqi forces struggle to dominate is currently the hiding ground for Daesh. The Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) have become a part of the political structure since the war against Daesh. The core of these militias are made up of pro-Iranian Shi'a militias sometimes known as *Muqawama* (Arab – 'Resistance'). There are other militias integrated into the PMF, but the pro-Iranian factions control the institutional framework and almost all important positions and command posts. The *Muqawama* militias have their own parties and through alliances also good relationships with some of the Iraqi regular forces and police.

2.3: Culture and Society



Ancient city of Babylon (@ Reuters)

The population of Iraq is approximately 40,222,503. Iraq is a Middle Eastern country bordering Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria. The land of ancient Iraq was part of Mesopotamia and is considered the cradle of advanced civilization. The modern capital, Baghdad, was the cultural and economic epicentre of the Islamic world for centuries. However, the legacies of Iraq have been overshadowed by the international and civil conflicts that have overwhelmed the nation for the past few decades. The political turbulence has set the country back massively and is likely to continue to do so. Iraqis commiserate about this. However, despite dire situations, the Iraqi people take a lot of pride in their nation and consider themselves special to have such a rich and prestigious history. Broadly, Iraqis show solidarity for their country at national events and celebrate their sovereignty.

Iraq has one of the world's oldest cultural histories and hosts a rich heritage. It has long reflected cultural diversity and although Iraqis generally are

religious and conservative people, there are strong secular tendencies in the country. Iraq is a Muslim nation with Arabic and Kurdish as its official languages and as such, Islamic holidays are celebrated. Other holidays include the *Newroz* (Persian New Year) and the Iraqi Army Day (6th January). Weekends in Iraq are Friday and Saturday, as opposed to the Western version of Saturday and Sunday. There are many values that are honoured in the Iraqi culture, including generosity and humility. Men commonly hold hands or kiss when greeting each other, but this is typically not the case for men and women. Respect is given to the elderly and women, especially those with children.

Islam is the official religion of Iraq, and the majority of the population is Muslim (97%). There are also small communities of Christians and Yazidis. Religion is deeply intertwined with daily life, government and politics of Iraq. However, the numbers of non-Muslim minority groups have declined dramatically in recent decades as the country has been riddled with sectarian tensions and conflict. This is reflected in the statistics of religious affiliations of Iraqi refugees in English-speaking countries; the majority of those who have fled and been resettled belong to minority religions in Iraq. The Iraqi Muslim population is particularly complex as it has large populations of followers from both the Sunni and Shi'a sect. It is estimated that 55-60 % of the population is Shi'a whilst roughly 40% are Sunni Muslims. Indeed, Iraq is the only Arab state in which Shi'a Muslims constitute the majority. However, many Sunnis dispute their minority status, and do not trust religious estimates.

Most Shi'a Muslims are ethnically Arab, but there are some Turkmen and Kurdish Shi'a Muslims as well, and of the Sunni Muslim population, it is estimated 60 % Arabs, 37.5 % are Kurds, and 2.5 % are Turkmen.

Iraq has struggled with sectarian tensions between its Sunni and Shi'a populations. Sunnis and Shi'as differ theologically in that they hold different beliefs over who should have taken power after the Prophet Muhammad's death. However, today the contemporary differences generally centre around government representation and entitlement to political power in Iraq. The Sunni-Shi'a relationship deteriorated further during the US-led assistance activity to the country of Iraq and subsequent intervention into the country's politics. Daesh has harnessed the disputes between Sunnis and Shi'as to further their campaign. As a Sunni fundamentalist group, they have been able to mobilize support against the largely Shi'a Iraqi military. It is difficult to determine how much political authority tribes and sheiks still exercise. There is, however, a consensus among experts that tribal traditions remain culturally important to many Iraqis.

It is considered an honour to host guests; therefore, invitations to attend dinner or occasions at Iraqi homes are often offered quite early on in friendships. People may also be deeply proud of their friends or family and may invite people over to 'show off' their inner circle'. As Iraqis take pride in their hospitality, be sensitive to this fact throughout your visit and avoid making any comment that could be perceived as a slight on their generosity. It is important to respect the age hierarchy and to stand up when someone older than you enters the room and offer him or her your seat if there are none available. Be aware that if you show admiration for an item or compliment a possession, an Iraqi may feel obliged to offer the item to you as a gift. Thus, it is best to avoid making too many comments on objects that are portable and expensive in people's homes.

It is common for Iraqis to be late. Punctuality is not highly important in Iraq and unpredictable incidents can disrupt daily schedules.

Events and appointments also often run overtime as people usually try to give each other as much attention and respect as possible. Therefore, it can be a good idea to allow more time for an arrangement with your counterpart than you normally would. Show an Iraqi respect by dressing modestly and correctly (i.e., covering tattoos and remaining sensitive and polite). Iraqi officers place honour and virtue on being presentable, well-groomed, and correctly dressed. Therefore, it is important that advisors maintain similar behaviour. If you do not look professional in the eyes of Iraqi officers, you will not be perceived as a professional. An unprofessional appearance undermines your role and the credibility of NMI.

However, it is okay to be informal and relaxed and in doing so is likely to make an Iraqi feel well received and more comfortable around you. You can expect an Iraqi to take your words literally, so try to be genuine and sincere when you speak.

Football (soccer) is the most common sport in Iraq and the Iraqi football team has had many major achievements. These include going to the finals in the FIFA World Cup in Mexico in 1986, winning the Asian Cup in 2007.



Iraq Football Association

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Advisory Plan



Chapter 3: Advisory Plan



NMI Ministerial Advisory Division (MAD) workshop (@ NATO Mission Iraq)

The NMI Advisory Plan (AP) provides a context-relevant description of NMI’s advisory efforts within the Mission’s Lines of Operation (LoO).

NMI AP articulates the principal activities NMI plans to undertake as well as the effects and objectives it has to achieve in order to work towards the Mission’s Strategic Objectives connected to advising. Within the **LoO1 “Build Capacity”**, which is the main focus of the AP, NMI provides support to the ISI and ISF under control of the GoI, in order to assist in the development of a more effective national defence and security structure. **LoO2 “Coordinate”** addresses the requirements to coordinate with all relevant actors to align Iraqi needs and NATO objectives as well as to prevent duplication of efforts. **LoO3 “Sustain”** focuses on establishing a safe and secure environment for NMI’s mission.



NMI advising activity to ISI / ISF (© NATO Mission Iraq)

Within LoO1, NMI operates along four **Lines of Effort (LoE)**: Advise, Educate, Train and NATO Partnership Development^{3,4,5}.

LoE 1.1: Advise³

This LoE primarily focuses on the institutional-level of advising, currently ongoing with the MoD. MAD mainly conducts this effort and it may expand to other ministries and services if requested by the GoI and approved by the Alliance.

LoE 1.2: Educate⁴

The “Educate” LoE focuses on NMI’s PSE division engagement with the MoD’s Professional Military Education (PME) institutions.

Future growth could see NMI providing advice within security education institutions belonging to other ministries. NMI’s educational engagement focuses on three key themes: Faculty Development, Curriculum Development and Institutional Reform.

LoE 1.3: Train

As NMI expands, TDD and PSE Division will enhance their training activities, pending Iraqi demand and NAC approval. Achievements on training, include

but are not limited to Train-the-Trainer courses on NATO-Cross-Cutting Themes, such as Building Integrity, Human Security, Human Rights as well as Woman, Peace and Security.

LoE 1.4: NATO Partnership Development^{3,4,5}

NATO partnership activities and specialised programs such as Defence Capacity Building (DCB), Human Security (including Human Rights, Woman, Peace & Security, Building Integrity) and Defence Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) enable the successful implementation of capacity building efforts. Furthermore, leadership development and non-commissioned officer (NCO) reform will support sustainment of both improved capabilities and increased capacities.

In the field of advising, NMI is focussing on the Long Term Objectives (LTOs) of the Iraqi Chief of Defence (CHOD). This approach acknowledges the importance of the Iraqi goals for NMI advisory efforts.



The LTOs are divided in mid-term objectives (0-3 years) and longer-term objectives (4-6 years). In order to reach the end-state of the Iraqi Security Forces, a self-sustained force, the LTOs can be adapted/updated in cooperation between NMI and the Iraqi CHOD.

In accordance with the agreed LTOs, the advisors are to plan their advising objectives and periodical assessments ensuring the progress and success of NMI's efforts. The Quarterly Assessment Board, co-chaired by the CHOD and COM NMI, reviews progress and solves obstacles along the way. The Iraqi counterparts show a high degree of ownership of this process.



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NMI Divisions



Chapter 4: NMI Divisions

NMI is broadly organized into a Command Group and Headquarter, a Ministerial Advisory Division (MAD), Professional Security Education (PSE), Training Development Division (TDD) and Strategic Communication, Representation and Outreach (SCRO). The Headquarter of NMI supports the advising activities of the divisions for example with Mobile Advising and Training Team (MATT) management and the Lesson Learned process. Since this handbook is specifically focused on advising activities, the following pages focus on the Divisions activities and roles, recognising the key role of the NMI HQ.

4.1: Ministerial Advisory Division – MAD

The MAD is a collection of highly specialized advisory teams nested underneath the Director of Ministerial Advisory Division⁶. Each advisory team, which is led by a senior advisor, consists of a multi-national group of advisors whose expertise and efforts are coordinated throughout NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) in order to increase the capacity and effectiveness of



Iraqi Ministry of Defence

the Iraqi Security Institutions and Security Forces. Specifically, as the central implementing actor of the LoE 1.1 “Advice” and support to the “Partnership Activities & Specialised Programmes” effort, MAD is directly responsible for all high-level, non-combat advising efforts within the Iraqi MoD and other ministries, when requested/approved. Furthermore, MAD supports actions of other divisions, which need ministerial support.

The senior advisors serve as liaison officers to the Iraqi institution they support and provide several critical functions. They focus on key leaders

within the organization to which they are assigned and the internal command relationships, while ensuring the connection between organizations whose cooperation is necessary for effective operations. The senior advisors are the gatekeepers to ensure that requests for advisory support meet the intent and spirit of the advisory themes, their specific LoE and the COM NMI's intent. Additional advisors within the advisory team support the senior advisors. The tasks of these advisors are e.g. acting as a subject matter expert (SME) for a specific topic, coordinating advisory matters with other advisory teams or interacting directly with Iraqi interlocutors. The main effort of the advisors is to support their senior advisors. Senior advisors within MAD coordinate relevant efforts with all advisor efforts in NMI.

Conceptually, the MAD senior advisors serve as reference within their own areas of responsibility; at the same time, they need to be informed about the SPCO themes and other cross-cutting areas (i.e., Readiness) to ensure they implement these areas in their advising efforts.

Additionally, in-theatre subject matter experts dedicated to specific themes within the LoE support the advisory teams. Furthermore, in an effort to provide additional support in the execution of their complex tasks, advisors can also count/request reach-back through the chain of command to NATO Centres of Excellence, NATO training organisations and NATO member states for the provision of additional support and advice.

The senior advisors will have regular liaison and information exchange responsibilities and they are the first point of contact for new Iraqi initiatives. The senior advisors are assigned to support and foster the relationship with the ministerial departments and their respective subordinate organisations, as shown in the quad-chart in the next page.

NON SENSITIVE INFORMATION RELEASABLE TO THE PUBLIC



Advisory requirements are not static. As requirements are refined and identified, at the request of the Iraqi Government (GoI), NMI is planning to broaden its advisory field in the future. NMI has experienced such growth and has recently included the following Iraqi institutions within its advisory portfolio: the Directorate General for Intelligence and Security (DGIS) under the Minister of Defence, the Prime Minister's National Operations Centre (PMNOC), and the Special Division (SD) under the Prime Minister. NMI's advisory mission will continue to expand.

MAD provides support to NMI's first priority – building Iraqi capacity – through focused advising within the following five constructs: Policy and Strategy, Force Development, Force Generation, Resource Management, and Service Commands.

1) Policy and Strategy

P&S advisors support MoD in their functions. The Iraqi MoD consistently implement national policy and strategy through direction and guidance at the ministerial level and below. They develop credible and actionable plans to meet the government's national security objectives. Force structure decisions and resulting programs strive to meet strategic demands within political and fiscal constraints. The Ministry implements a programme for SSR with clearly defined goals and sustainable outcomes. This programme takes integrity, transparency and accountability, human security, human rights and gender mainstreaming as its guiding principles.

2) Force Development

The MoD strengthen the effectiveness, readiness and interoperability of ISF through a systematic approach to training as well as organizational and doctrinal development with defined procedures, roles and responsibilities. The MoD has specifically taken steps to develop the two Intel Directorates and the Gol's ability to conduct Crisis Management.

3) Force Generation

The MoD is to employ the clearly defined readiness standards expected from all ISF. In turn, ISF force generate, sustain and recover force elements in a repeatable and sustainable cycle that seeks to maximise value for money. The MoD is currently capable of conducting brigade-level exercises and has begun to exercise basic joint capabilities in accordance with its own developed doctrine. Through-life capability management process is completed by a security and defence logistics organisation, including delivery and supply chain management that is consistently sustaining the identified needs of the MoD in order to meet its required level of readiness.



MAD Resource Management Workshop (© NATO Mission Iraq)

4) Resource Management

The MoD incorporates integrity as a core value of their organisational culture. ISI rationalise as well as expend human and financial resources with a discipline that seeks maximum value and return on investment. Personnel trained in finance and management conduct resource planning, budgeting and forecasting in a disciplined and sustained manner. Reform of the Human Resource Management (HRM) focus area require general terms of reference setting forth guiding principles for the MoD management in the delivery of human resource policies, services, programmes and best practices in a transparent, equitable and consistent manner.

5) Service Commands

Service Command roles, functions, and responsibilities are fundamentally interconnected with the functions carried out by the Ministry of Defence. The Service Commands contribute to the development of strategic policy, support and influence strategic decision-making, and implement the policies and processes determined by the MoD. The SCs are where operational

capability and joint interoperability is pursued to help solidify the linkage between institutional reform efforts and actual combat capability.

4.2: Professional Security Education – PSE

The PSE Division sets out to strengthen Iraqi Professional Security and Military Education Institutions through three main lines of effort: Institution, Curriculum and Faculty development⁶. The PSE Division currently works with key institutions, which are fundamental to the professional military education pipeline in Iraq. Through regular advisory engagements, the PSE Division seeks to support self-sustainable, long-term reform that is ‘NMI-advised, partnered and shaped; Iraqi-endorsed, owned and led’. The shared vision for the future of Iraqi professional military education (PME) is for its Officers, NCOs and Civilians to receive continuous education, through career learning that generates the intellectual skillset to combine the moral, physical and conceptual components of fighting power into an effective plan of military action. Officers, NCOs and Civilians should be knowledgeable in the principles of leadership, ethics, human rights and the Law of Armed Conflict, supported by coherent and relevant course curricula that develop the right understanding at the right time in sufficient numbers of the right people. PME Institutions should be able to learn from their own mistakes and those of others and must be staffed with teachers and instructors skilled in modern teaching methods. The institutions should be able to independently assure and sustain the processes, policies and facilities required to support effective and modern PME/PSE, in line with a recognized standard. In parallel, we will promote links with and between the international PME communities, including like-for-like partner institutions, in order to set conditions for reform long after NMI departs.

Education vs Training – To understand the work that the PSE Division does, it is important to understand the difference between training and education. *Training* seeks to enable an individual to learn a new skill or behaviour; it focuses on skills and attitude and teaches a person ‘what’ to do. *Education* is about developing knowledge and allowing better understanding: it provides a person the ability to think, dealing with uncertainty. It is within PSE, therefore, that the ability to think critically and to develop intellectual agility, innovation and creativity is refined and matured. This, in essence, is the purpose behind PME in Iraq - and while the structures that enable it are in place – and the existing PME pathway compares to many western military models – it needs a concerted advisory effort to improve it. The PSE Division works towards establishing the following enduring conditions within each of three advisory themes: Faculty Development, Curriculum Development and Institutional Reform.

Faculty Development – “How to teach”

The institution has an adequately staffed faculty, who are supported by established and appropriate professional development and an external accreditation process that together ensures that they are qualified and experienced in mature learning.

Curriculum Development – “What to teach”

The institution has a system of curriculum review that periodically refines course content to maintain relevance and coherence with defined learning outcomes.

Institutional Reform – “Set the conditions for learning”

The institution has a functional quality assurance process which evaluates the learning outcomes, infrastructure, policies, performance and governance, and identifies actions to achieve continuous improvement.

Key to institutional development is a project called the “*Training System Process (TSP)*”. This is a system approach to training, based on a NATO model but refined and adjusted to accommodate the current developing Iraqi model. PSE Division are championing the adoption of TSP through the delivery of a series of training modules to create a cadre of trained Iraqi personnel. The pilot of this system will be focussed on the Military Academy.

Beside the three main development themes, PSE is coordinating within NMI and NATO on Partnership Development, Technology Enhanced Learning and English Language Proficiency. Underpinning these efforts are NATO partnership activities and specialized programs such as Defence Capacity Building; Human Security (Human Rights; Women, Peace and Security; Building Integrity); and Defence Education Enhancement Program as well as the crosscutting themes of Leadership and NCO Development. These efforts will help set the conditions and foundation for an enduring NATO-Iraq partnership that can exist independently of NMI’s presence in theatre. The PSE Division is also trying to improve the provision of Internet connectivity, with the help and coordination of MAD, as a basic requirement for all students and faculty in a modern learning institution. The longer-term goal is the introduction of a learning management system that supports blended and distance learning. In February 2021, the PSE Division launched an initiative to develop an English language learning capability across all supported institutions as well as a Joint NCO Course and Leadership Course. Finally, PSE Division is leading on a project to create the first meaningful Iraqi Armed Forces Leadership Doctrine. This project will bring to a modular development and publication of leadership doctrine, accompanied by a focussed programme to exploit the doctrine through teaching packages in all relevant PSE institutions.

4.3: Training Development Division - TDD

The TDD supports Iraqi Military Schools and training Institutions in order to optimize their Training programs. TDD will provide advice according to NMI's Advisory and Training Delivery Concept to nominated schools, including dedicated Training Advisory Teams (TAT) and Mobile Advising and Training Teams (MATTs) as required⁶. TDD will also support designated Training Centres and provide assistance to distinct tactical-level training to enhance highly specialized capabilities of the ISF, upon specific Iraqi request (Liberated Units and Special Forces).

In order to achieve this, TDD teams will advise the Schools Directors and conduct Instructor Development/Train the Trainers (TtT) Courses, while updating curriculum in order to improve the preparation of the schools' cadre of teachers and to increase the effectiveness of schools. All Iraqi Armed Forces (IAF) training enhancement requirements at Branch and Service School level, Training centre and highly specialized units, will be analysed in order to identify training and capacity gaps within the supported institutions and coordinated the support to be provided.

The TDD Training Teams will develop and implement the agreed in-country unit-level and above training program, including preparation, deployment of MATTs and training delivery. Upon completion of the training related to any given need, TDD will assess the outcome and the Iraqi instructor's capability to sufficiently fulfil their role and the necessity of adequate the training solutions.

4.4: Strategic Communication Representation and Outreach – SCRO

In NMI, there was a shift from training predominantly at the tactical and operational level to focusing on higher-level advice at the request of the GoI. This shift in focus to the strategic level requires an increased effort to align NMI's activity with the GoI, the International Community (IC) and NATO. To achieve this level of synchronization and coherence, COM NMI created a second line of effort to “coordinate” with the GoI, the IC and the Alliance. The best ways and means to achieve this were through the creation of a post manned by a senior diplomat, which would conduct NMI high level outreach. It is critical that there is regular outreach to the NATO member embassies, as they will directly inform their capitals who will ultimately decide the future of NMI through the NAC and NATO leaders' summits. Where MAD, PSE and TDD focus their efforts on advising down and within the ministries and educational establishments, SCRO provides the up and out strategic level synchronization with International Partners such as the UNDP, UNAMI and EUAM-I. SCRO comprises distinct elements that deliver the LoO 3 “Coordinate”, as detailed below.

The Political Advisory Group (PAG)

Headed up by the NMI Political Advisor to the Commander (POLAD), the PAG informs and advises on all high-level engagements with the IC and the GoI. This ensures that the senior leadership is properly briefed and informed prior to Key Leader Engagements. They organize NMI Ambassadors days to support messaging and provide an opportunity for open dialogue with the International Community. They conduct bi-lateral mapping of the IC's and bilateral efforts in Iraq to ensure synchronization and coherence of activity.

The Security Sector Reform Group (SSRG)

This is the high-level SSR coordination and advisory effort to the GoI. They focus their advisory efforts on the SSR High Committee and then align the international community's efforts with support at the Joint Technical Planning Committee. This again complement the work of the MAD, which focuses the majority of their efforts down and within the ministries, by taking a cross-governmental approach to SSR.

STRATCOM

The Strategic Communication (STRATCOM) branch falls within the NMI current mandate and comprises three sections: Public Affairs, Key Leader Engagements, and Information Environment Analysis.

Public Affairs Office (PAO)

The PAO is responsible for NMI engagement on social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). It focuses on showing the NMI core business: advising, assisting and training. The PA office uses international and regional media sources to analyse the information environment. It monitors multiple social media platforms also to complete its analysis. The PA office also develops communication plans for internal and external issues and develops "Lines to take" and Key Messages to be used by all NMI members for both crisis communications issues and for managing more general issues. The Chief PAO advises NMI Senior Leadership on communications and how to effectively conduct media engagements.

Joint Implementation Body (JIB)

Based on the Exchange of Letters (EOL), engagement between GoI and NMI on overarching issues that affect the mission, takes place within the Joint Implementation Body, chaired by the NSA and COM NMI. SCRO manages the JIB from NMI side.

Key Leader Engagements (KLE) in NMI

KLE are personal interactions - within the NMI's Area of Responsibility (AOR) - primarily between NMI (advisors) and its Iraqi counterparts, also known as "interlocutors". Meetings and visits within the chain of command are not considered KLE.



NMI - Iraqi authorities coordination meeting (© NATO Mission Iraq)

KLE may be conducted with actors who have a different degree of power. These actors also have unvarying perceptions towards the training and advisory mission and our presence in the AOR. In addition, it is important to note that not every visit or meeting involving the NMI Commander is a KLE, depending on the objectives and aim, that must be consistent with the NMI Lines of Operation: build capacity, coordinate and sustain. NATO specific KLE activities include meetings and engagements, speeches and conferences. Once the key leader that NMI wants to engage has been

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identified, NMI has to gather as much information as possible (background, work experience, religion, culture, family, motivation, leadership styles, ...). Inter-dependencies and relationships between different key leaders must also be identified. Biographic information of the interlocutor are to be provided by the advisor in SharePoint and by the Divisional Super User into the Advisor Network Tool (ANET).

Information Environment Analysis (IEA)

The IEA section is not yet active within the STRATCOM branch, but NMI still has IAE capability through other branches, including J2 and PA.





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Guide for Advisors

CHAPTER 5



Chapter 5: Guide for Advisors

NMI conducts high-level advising in order to build a sustainable, transparent, inclusive and effective security institutions and structures⁷ in Iraq. Hence, advisors as key elements of NMI are expected to help ISI/ISF to be self-sustainable and adhere to international laws⁸. Their purpose in Iraq is to create a professional and trusting relationship with their interlocutors, in order to develop institutions and forces in a pragmatic, realistic and sustainable way.



NMI - Iraqi representatives coordination meeting (© NATO Mission Iraq)

As NMI is a non-combat mission⁹, advisors do not work alongside Iraqi forces in combat operations. In practical terms, advisors work with Iraqi defence and security officials in the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Office of the National Security Advisor (NSA) and Prime Minister's National Operations Centre (PMNOC). Furthermore, NMI advisors cooperate with Iraq's

professional security and military education institutions in the Greater Baghdad area (GBA). The advisors' specific areas of focus include Policy and Strategy; Force Generation and Development; Resource Management; Women, Peace and Security; Leadership Development; Faculty, Institutional and Curriculum Development; and good Governance in the Security Sector.

As advisors observe, guide and report on the performance and needs of their assigned Iraqis interlocutors, this chapter provides general guidelines for further professional development of the advising individual capabilities. To do so, we started by providing a conceptual distinction between advising, training and assisting; together with the main advisors' characteristics, the principles that should govern their activity and the daily challenges they may face. This chapter is designed to be used as an informative tool for Iraqi institutions, newly nominate advisors, and the general public, as well as a guide for active advisors and the rest of the NMI community.

5.1: Roles of an Advisor

Advising is about counselling, recommending a particular decision, or providing information to a third party. According to the military literature, an advisor is a *“subject matter expert who serves with foreign security forces, or their ministerial-level security institutions, to advise, counsel, and assist their partner nation interlocutors”*¹⁰.



Iraqi Army Badge

An advisor's primary purpose is to create professional relationship that will inspire and influence their interlocutors, and their interlocutors' organization to become *“more effective and accomplish their missions, while putting in place sustainable processes that will endure beyond their tour as an advisor”*¹¹. In light of the above, the NMI's main effort focuses on providing ministerial-level advice on SSR, offering special NATO programs to build effective, transparent and sustainable institutions.

NMI has Advisors and Liaison Officers (LNO) to Institutions based on the situation of the advised entity. Advisors are used to train and assist their interlocutors. In this regard, training concerns the implementation of a doctrine that allows the development of military readiness, which is in line



Counter Terrorism Service

with above definition (PSE sub-chapter). This may include the developing and running education and development programs for military leaders at all levels. In turn, assistance programs aim at developing the recipient nation's capacity to assume responsibility for its own security⁵. The role of advisors includes developing a positive relation with their interlocutors, influencing the

actions of the ministries they are working with. However, there is a small difference in the case of NMI, since it is a demand-driven advisory mission, the advisors are providing guidelines, suggestions and recommendations, rather than strictly influencing the decision-making process. The advisors have three roles, which involves different responsibilities. First, NMI advisors work under a well-defined chain of command (top-down); second, they are assigned to an Iraqi Security Institution (ISI) or Force (ISF) interlocutors; third, they link NMI and their interlocutor (bottom-up). The following section is going to focus on the set of characteristics that advisors must have and the principles they should follow, as well as the challenges they may encounter while performing their roles.

The following information is particularly important for newly assigned advisors as they receive little to any training in advising skills and principles prior to deployment.

5.2: Characteristics, Principles and Challenges

Characteristics

The competences of the advisor as well as the consultant's experience and degree of technical expertise are the main conditions for success. In other words, without a well-defined set of competencies, it is highly likely that the advisor will not be able to perform their functions properly. However, a good advisor should also have a set of skills and personal qualities, as well as follow a series of principles to succeed. On top of that, there are NMI-related challenges that advisors must be aware of and need to find mitigation or overcoming strategies.

- **Language / Communication**

Advisors must be able to convey advice in an easily understandable way. To do this, they should be good listeners, paying attention to details and needs of their interlocutors. Secondly, they should have the ability to communicate information (verbally and in written form) within their organization, so that the output of the advising sessions will have a tangible, quick result.

- **Negotiation**

One of the relevant issues in advising is negotiation, as it involves the discussion and resolution of problems, so that both parties consider it (at least) acceptable. This means that negotiation can involve giving in, when one party tries to persuade the other to agree with its point of view. The ultimate goal of the negotiation is the acceptance of the outcome of a discussion topic by both actors.

- **Experience**

Experience is a relevant quality for the after times of an advisor. NMI realised that expertise is a door opener and goes beyond rank or military expertise. Therefore, it is recommended that the selection of advisors take into consideration their domain in a particular area of knowledge or technical expertise. For instance, if the advisor is going to carry out an activity in the field of Faculty Development, it will be useful to have technical skills in providing education and coaching to faculty members in their own countries. This way, they will be more capable in performing their role in particular areas of interest such as in teaching, grant writing and conducting research. However, expertise may not be enough, so knowledge usually goes far beyond a specialty. In other words, the advisors' knowledge must include political, social and cultural dimensions that can alter the balance of influence. This means that advisors must be prepared to perform technical roles and have a comprehensive view of where they will work in.

- **Enabling**

This characteristic is largely associated to expertise and capacity building. In that regard, the advisors' objectives should be to keep the ISI/ISF focused on their mission, building their confidence and providing the necessary assets to ensure their success. However, it is acceptable to say "no" when advisors cannot facilitate or perform certain tasks.

- **Mediation**

Advisor might be asked to be a mediator in a dispute of interlocutors as well. In such a case, the advisor cannot impose an outcome but rather assists the disputing parties in reaching their own agreement.

Principles

In order to ensure consistency between advisors and differing styles, a set of NMI advisory principles have been developed. Advisors should be cognizant of these principles during both planning and conducting of advisory activities. These principles are key to setting the conditions for successful advisory engagements.

- **Rapport**

Rapport is a technique that may be defined as understanding, respect, trust or empathy¹². It aims to establish harmony in order to communicate and argue in favour of an idea with its interlocutors. Effective rapport will allow advisors to more successfully complete their mission.

Rapport should be built based on mutual and professional respect¹³. To gain interlocutor trust and confidence, rapport must be genuine. You cannot fake it. Rapport is comprised of three components:

- Understanding (based on cultural studies, language training, equipment and doctrine familiarization, observing and asking questions);
- Respect (Advisor demonstrates expertise and professional performance, and look for things to genuinely respect in their interlocutor);
- Trust (grows over time, advisor should not promise any support that possibly cannot be delivered).

Since all the components of rapport are reciprocal, the advisor has to be willing and able to share things about their own culture, language, and experiences. It is important to remember rapport building requires the

advisor to establish a personal level of understanding with the interlocutor to be effective¹⁴.

- **Respect**

Respect is a condition to be gained. It starts firstly by understanding that the interlocutor will not likely fit the official NMI model and sometimes adjustments are needed. By way of example, this may happen because the interlocutor may not have had any Western military training or education (the opposite is also true). Thus, NMI advisors cannot forget that ISI/ISF are in the lead, while the advisors' mission is to guide and assist them obtaining Iraqi development goals. In short, mutual respect grows through shared experience on joint understanding.

- **Patience**

The "military mind-set" creates pressure to achieve results, is fundamentally impatient, and rewards a bias for action⁵. Iraqis can be incredibly patient when dealing with the institutional reforms; therefore, advisors must be aware of the need to slow down eventually in order to accelerate progress.

- **Sustainability**

When giving advice, advisors must keep in mind that their suggestions can and likely will affect the ISI/ISF in the long run. In practical terms, there are two types of advice and only one of them brings sustainable results. Transactional advising uses quid pro quos, meaning something in return: "I will give you X, as long you give Y". This approach will not bring lasting results, as the relationship is an exchange, defining what the other party must do. Transformational advising focuses on encouraging the interlocutor to think about solutions: "let's see what possibilities exists and let's discuss the best option". In this latter situation, the

interlocutor is led to think for him/herself and to make decisions, which exist as support and as a possibility for brainstorming.

Challenges & Solutions

This section attempts to shed some light on the challenges associated with advising in Iraq. What we do know is that advising is a very intense task and sometimes can be frustrating, as progress is slow and sometimes even non-existent. Be aware of challenges and mitigate them. Due attention should be given to NATO cross-cutting topics, such as:

- **Corruption**

Corruption is defined by the European Commission as the abuse of power for private gain – *“corruption takes many forms, such as trading in influence, abuse of functions, but also hide behind nepotism, conflict of interest, or revolving doors between the public and the private sector (...) it constitutes a threat to security, as an enabler of crime and terrorism”*¹⁵. Corruption poses a serious threat to the mission of the ISI/ISF and the legitimacy of the GoI. Corruption has been a barrier to economic growth, impeding sustainable development. One possible way advisors can help with fighting corruption in Iraq is to make the defence sector more accountable and transparent¹⁶. With resource to the control of financial funds and the accountability of public servants for the use of resources allocated to them and the way in which they are spent.

- **Fatigue**

There are many national and international players in the SSR landscape (e.g. UN, EUAM, Allied Missions) and, therefore, there is a risk that ISI/ISF becomes fatigue by all the different agencies seeking to ‘help’, ‘support’ or ‘partner’ with them. The advisors must understand that Iraqi institutions and International Partners are already doing a valuable job in

the MoD. Thus, the NMI advisors should seek to add value on top of the work made by other advisors, instead of looking for radical changes to their interlocutor *modus operandi*.

- **Gender responsiveness**

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognizes equal rights for men and women. Therefore, discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or religion cannot be accepted. Advisors have an added responsibility to discourage such practices. As far as we know, social



Women, Peace & Security workshop (@ NMI)

norms are evolving, so there is room for change in line with the UDHR. In light of the above, advisors have a significant role in incorporating the universal values in societies to which they belong.

- **Bureaucracy**

In addition to having a set of regulations in the GoI, they are sometimes misaligned, making it difficult to perform tasks within a complex and poorly organized network, which can lead to frustration. For this reason, advisors need to work with their interlocutors to streamline processes and make things happen.

- **Expectations management**

Currently, NMIs offer is unlikely to match Iraqi expectations and currently MoD lacks staff capacity and coherent planning processes. Therefore, NMI advisors must speak with one voice to explain the NMI's value

proposition, which is rather institutional building than training delivery. The advisors are required to identify quick wins, consistent with the NMI's offer, whilst building consensus for the longer-term offers.

5.3: Advisory Checklist

One of the most pertinent questions in an Advisor's Handbook is how the process of advising local forces works. Before becoming an advisor, there is a preparation phase that all advisors should have. This preparation phase includes an in-country training, combined with the pre-deployment training at the NATO Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC).

The mandatory in-country training consists of two different trainings; the first one is the "Basic Induction Training" (BIT), the second one is the "Comprehensive Interpreters and Advisors" (CIA) training. NMI J7 branch is responsible for coordinating and conducting BIT and CIA. Both trainings are normally in monthly bases.

BIT is focused on current situation in NMI in order to give to all newcomers' up-to-date information about situational awareness, accomplishments, main concerns and way ahead but also about NMI functioning and practical details about life in the mission.

CIA-training is to provide new advisors with the required knowledge, skills and competences needed to efficiently work with interpreters in preparing, conducting and evaluating meetings, workshops etc. in order to maintain and improve the efficiency level of more experienced interpreters and advisors.

The latter preparation may include the following subjects:

- (1) situational awareness of the host nation;

- (2) understand the international policy towards the region;
- (3) government and institutional structure;
- (4) nonverbal communication;
- (5) cultural knowledge;
- (6) contact with active advisors,

and, among other topics, to get familiar with important documents, for example the Operation Plan (OPLAN), Operations Order (OPORD), Advisory Plan (AP) or Standing Operation Procedures (SOP).

NMI's approach to build advisory with Iraqi interlocutors is conceptually divided into four general phases:

Phase I – Plan the meeting

(in case of First engagement)

- The advisor should get the interpreter involved by participating in the meeting's rehearsal (pre-meeting). This will allow the advisor to understand their dialect (work-related background, linguistic proficiency) and to brief them on the topic, goals and reason for the meeting, as well as informing them about the interlocutors participating;
- Make a search on ANET (Advisor Network Tool) database and look for information about the advisor's interlocutor. As the systems do not include all the information, and there may be loose ends, another option is to collect information within the NMI;

Meet the interlocutor and find out what his/her interests are (e.g. honour, safety and power), as well as his/her identity (e.g. religion),

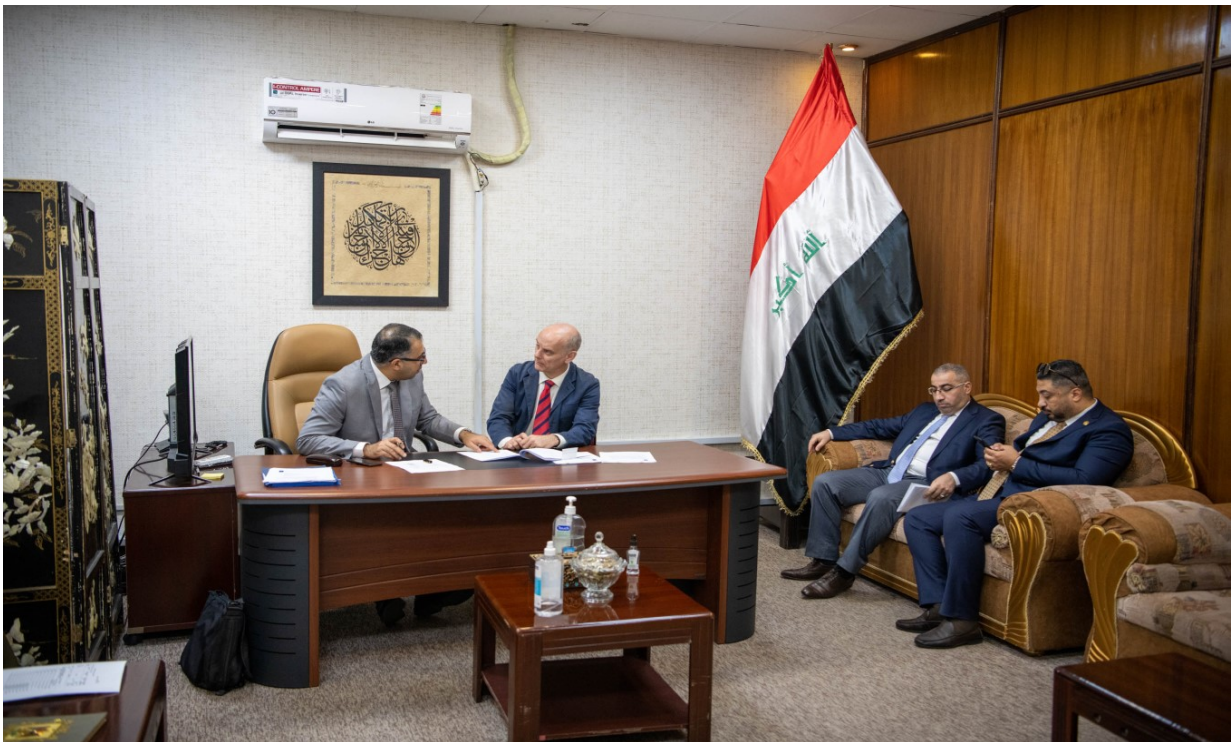
social network and type of leadership (which leader influences the interlocutor);

- Establish a network of contacts within NMI (e.g. advisors, NMI staff);
- Undertake a PMESII assessment, that considers Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information and Infrastructure conditions.

(in case of Subsequent engagements)

Before each meeting, the advisor needs to follow several procedures:

- Reconfirm the meeting with the interlocutor;



NMI - Iraqi authorities coordination meeting (@ NATO Mission Iraq)

- Confirm the meeting schedule, duration and location. Advisors must keep in mind that the meeting schedule might not follow all the previous requirements, depending on the availability of the interlocutor;
- Plan the ground movement and connect with the force protection (FP), through the respective Division office and J3;

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- Provide the FP with all the relevant information (through Division office and J3), such as show time to leave the base, meeting place, type of environment (e.g. military facility, ministry), the physical settings of the meeting (e.g. office, conference room) and the specifications regarding the safety rules (e.g. are weapons allowed on the inside or not?);
- Create the meeting in ANET;
- Review last existing meetings;
- Prepare the interpreter (things that he/she should do and must remember);
- Get reference material translated;
- Make an agenda and have it translated for the interlocutor;
- Coordinate with external/internal SME if required;
- Plan a backup if the meeting is cancelled on short notice;
- Plan to bring relationship-building items for the interlocutor.



NMI PSE workshop (© NMI)

Phase II – Conduct the meeting

While conducting the meeting there are several steps that advisors must have in mind:

- Be patient and ready to connect to the POC interlocutor;
- Meeting cycle;
- Typically starts with conventional etiquette (i.e. greetings, seating and positioning of participants), followed by an icebreaker (food and drinks);
- Own the meeting and use the interpreter instead of leaving the conversation up to the interpreter. Be patient with various, frequent and unplanned interruptions;

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- Handout documents (Agenda) and reference material as required;
- The discussion of the main agenda items should be included right after the icebreaker, in order to carry out the interview in a relaxed but serious way;
- Take notes and share afterward in the NMI team;
- Agree on next steps;
- Set objectives and deliverables for both sides;
- Summarize the meeting and way ahead;
- Try to agree on the next meeting (date, time and ways of the meeting confirmation) and further coordination with POC;
- Farewell and let the interlocutor walk you out, if he wishes to.

Phase III – Debrief



Iraqi officer during an opening speech

(© NATO Mission Iraq)

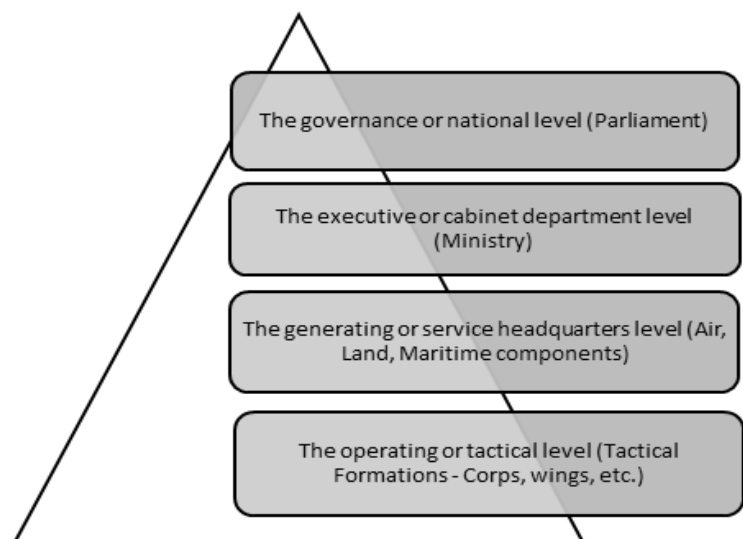
- Debrief with the interpreter immediately after the meeting (e.g. contents, atmosphere, impression, non-translated facts, etc.). Ask interpreter to providing minutes/written records from the meeting (sometimes, just points are useful);
- Debrief the NMI Team once back;
- At the end of each meeting, there should be a discussion (debrief) regarding the interlocutor message (written/verbal/non-verbal).

Phase IV – Report

- Provide an engagement report (ANET) that must be completed never later than the next day.
- The advisor should collect all the important lessons for follow-up. Once the contributions have been gathered and discussed, the advisor must complete the report in the ANET. The advisor should talk to all stakeholders again, especially the interpreter, for feedback and their point of view of the meeting.
- Make the necessary improvements.
- Advisors must focus on achieving effects, rather than just feeding the report system. That is why, in addition to writing reports and building a reliable database, it is necessary to perform an after-action review. That is, trying to understand with the stakeholders what went wrong in order to implement corrective measures.

5.4: Advising Levels

NMI advisors execute their duties at the following functional levels¹¹ of advising: NMI conduct institutional level advising, informed by NATO experience, primarily under the Iraqi MoD. Therefore, the



NMI advisors operate primarily at the executive level. At the Governance level, SCRO advice on high-level engagements with the International Community and the Government of Iraq.

Regarding the executive level, MAD provides advice along the Lines of Effort (LoE)¹¹ as described in chapter 4.1. PSE responsibilities cover currently the advising of the professional security and military education institutions under the Iraqi MoD.

PSE advisors are focusing on three main development themes along LoE “Educate” (Faculty development, Curriculum development, and Institutional reform) as described in chapter 4.2. Finally, yet importantly, TDD directly supports the Iraqi Military Schools and training Institutions in order to optimize their training programs and activities, supporting the designated Training Centres and providing assistance in order to enhance highly specialized capabilities of the ISF.

5.5: Advising Stages

Advisors should adopt the following framework to help structure their advisory activity during their tour of duty.

1. CONNECT – ESTABLISH RAPPORT and UNDERSTAND THE INSTITUTION’S MISSION

The aim of this stage is twofold: first, to develop a strong relationship between the advisor and the interlocutor, developing rapport, understanding and building trust. This requires advisors to focus their initial engagements on relationship-oriented activities at the expense of advisory ones. Care should be taken to exercise proper cultural awareness, as well as good manners. It is not only discourse, but also attire and appearance that are crucial to building a good relationship. Secondly, to really understand an institution as a whole, the advisor must work hard to be given access to the information and documentation relating to its mission, curriculum, output, faculty and organizational structure and other relevant detail.

This is not easy and cannot be achieved on first meeting. It might require the winning of influence through a transactional approach – i.e. you might need to do something for them first. In sum, this phase could take many visits and many weeks before an advisor feels ‘connected’.

2. ANALYSE: GAPS AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

During this stage, advisors have to identify and assess those needs and gaps preventing the institution from achieving its mission in regards to members, resources and rules, from a quantitative and qualitative point of view. This analysis should be conducted with the Institution to produce a combined picture. It will be essential to advise interlocutors on how to conduct this analysis, so that both the NATO advisor and the Institution leaders agree the overall picture. There are many ways to analyze an institution and advisors should have enough experience and skills to adopt an approach that best suits them. Sometimes our Iraqi colleagues are unable to self-assess effectively -they may not have the breadth of perspective of NATO advisors or the frame of reference regarding ‘what good looks like’. The role of advisor is to provide options and advice. To help this process, the comparative case study of similar NATO institutions can be helpful. Interlocutors also may not want to share (for cultural reasons) perceived deficiencies and weaknesses. Advisors have to be patient. NATO is not here to make judgements or criticize but to assess the overall institution and to help shape the vision, strategy, objectives and tactics that comprise an advisory plan and also the institutional development plan.

3. DESIGN AND DEVELOP: HOW TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

Advisors must work shoulder to shoulder with interlocutors to develop a plan to bridge the gaps and be able to accomplish the mission. This plan must establish an overall goal, which is achieved through the

articulation of a strategy, a series of objectives, and milestones that can act as stepping-stones to the strategy and then a number tactical actions that allow the objectives and milestones to be achieved. Therefore, an advisory plan should consist of:

- **Goal.** The top-level intent of the plan. This is normally related to the key mission of the institution being advised and should include reference to self-sustaining excellence.
- **Strategy.** This defines, in broad terms, how the goal is going to be achieved. It may have a number of strands which help the planner to describe its holistic nature. Success completion of each strand of the strategy means the overall goal has been reached.
- **Objectives and milestones.** By dividing the strategy into a number of more clearly defined objectives and milestones, it allows the advisory plan to take shape across a broad array of lines of development. Some objectives will not be solely achievable by one advisor/intuition (access to the internet for example) and may rely on engagement that sits in another part of HQ NMI.
- **Sub-Objectives.** Sub-objectives are distilled from objectives and milestones and therefore their successful completion contributes to achieving each objective or milestone.
- **Tactical actions.** This is the description of those actions that advisors conduct with institutions to create effects and, consequently, reach the objectives. It is important for advisors to be wary of planning TAs that do not contribute to the achievement of a sub-objective / objective. If this is the case, the action is likely wasted effort.

4. IMPLEMENT: EXECUTE THE PLAN

Once interlocutors have agreed a plan (which may take many meetings, conversations and plan versions – so be patient), advisors must implement the plan systematically, by splitting tactical actions into advisory activities. Activities can be conducted by different ways by applying the advisory tools or enlisting support of internal and external experts (MATT, SME, OoCA, meetings, seminars, workshops, working groups, lectures, overseas visits and courses, provision of new equipment, updating curricula, infra, etc.). Sometimes coordination across the whole mission is needed which may require additional time, reserves and resources. As a result, every single activity should be part of a whole action, which must create or contribute to create a desired effect (or change). Such activities shall be aligned with Lines of Efforts and long-term mission objectives. Every single activity must have a specific purpose, related to actions and effects.

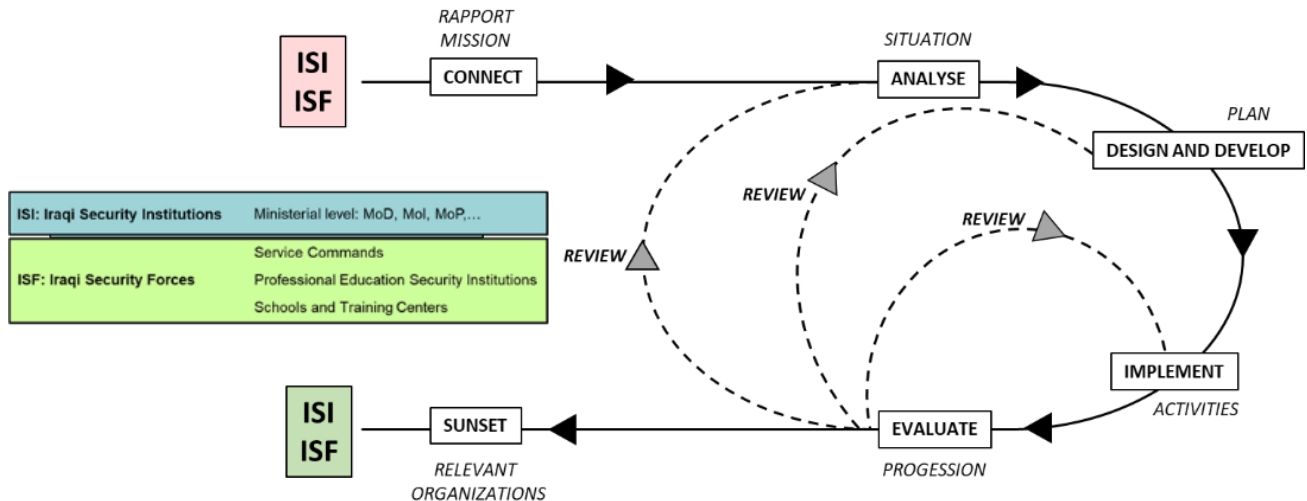
5. EVALUATE: ASSESS THE PLAN

Actions and effects must be assessed periodically and must be suitable for both sides. This evaluation will enable advisors and interlocutors to review the progress, examine the need to create new objectives/sub-objectives or identify new ways of fulfilling tasks. Evaluation should be qualitative and quantitative and must be culturally sensitive.

6. SUNSET: SELF-SUSTAINING EXCELLENCE

Part of any advisory plan should be the connection of institutions with international peer organizations. This will further broaden horizons and act as an accelerant to international body accreditation and recognition for excellence on a regional or even global stage. The ultimate goal for any advisory plan should be Iraqi self-sustaining excellence, making any additional advise unnecessary. While this may be many years off for some

institutions, there may be some areas of maturity, which require a much lighter touch than others – allowing for focusing elsewhere.



This process (advisory stages) is not linear but cyclical and can be conducted on the institution as a whole or on specific areas. A newcomer joining NMI will have to initiate the *Connect* stage, generating rapport and understanding the institution, while at the same time managing the inherited and ongoing advisory plan for this institution.

5.6: Advising Rules

Currently, dedicated NMI personnel are conducting advising, training and education efforts. Together with SMEs, the advisors engage with their assigned Iraqi interlocutors in order to carry out activities at Ministerial areas and/or a prioritized area/element of reform. Overall, Advisors and SMEs serve with foreign security forces or their ministerial-level security institutions, to advise and assist their partner nation interlocutors.

Advisors must comply with below rules/procedures¹²:

Evidenced-based¹²

One of the most important rules for an advisor is to follow the procedures that were previously defined (i.e. protocol). The advice must be based on

proven results and lessons learned, rather than just an opinion. On the other hand, when advisors report their activities on ANET, they must do so based on triangulation. That is, advisors should not only report the discussion from the meetings with their interlocutors, but also combine them with the surroundings information (e.g. atmospherics, non-verbal, ...). The more useful elements ANET includes the better quality of the report and future advising.

Forward-looking¹²

An additional priority for advisors is to think ahead of their time. For example, since SSR is a long-term process, the advisor needs to bear in mind that security needs might exist in the year to come and how the security sector should be adjusted accordingly.

Inclusive¹²

The advisor has to be inclusive and remember that he/she should not perform executive functions. The problems and solutions do not belong to the advisor, he/she can help identifying them, make proposals and recommendations, but the ultimate decision and changes to the procedures belongs to the interlocutor.

In addition to this, we know that there are many others that could be added to this Handbook. However, in our understanding, this is an ongoing work that needs more maturity and, therefore, we prefer to acquire more knowledge before disclosing a more complete list of activities and rules.



NMI advising activity to ISI / ISF (© NATO Mission Iraq)

5.7: Further Advising Tools

An adviser will not always be the expert in all areas and topics where their interlocutors are asking for support. Internal and external experts can be used as “further advising tools” to receive the required support. The following three tools are briefly introduced to provide a general idea on where and how to get support:

- **Mobile Advising and Training Teams (MATT).** Can be used in support of existing advisory activities and training efforts – mostly when sufficient expertise is not available within NMI – NMI will request support from non-NMI mobile teams from outside Iraq (MATTs) for a temporary period, typically off-site and in a venue provided by the recipients. MATT are established on request from a contributing Nation, partner country, unit or establishment, private or public contractor or COEs.
- **Subject Matter Experts (SME).** SME can be sourced via the Specialised Programs Coordination Office (SPCO) within MAD or using the knowledge and skillset of personnel within the mission employed to other roles. The SPCO consists of Defence Capacity Building (DCB), Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) and Cross-cutting themes, which are

Building Integrity (BI), Human Security/Rights (HS/HR) and Women, Peace and Security (WPS). These NATO Partnership Activities and Specialised Programs aim at strengthening Iraqi Security Forces, developing and reforming professional security education institutions, addressing the risk of corruption in the defence sector and protecting civilians as well as cultural properties. It is important to develop relationship within NMI to be able to use the expert knowledge within the organisation itself.

- **Out-of-Country Activities (OoCA).** In order to develop a long-term sustainable relationship with NATO, it is important that ISI/ISF develop bilateral relationships with international partners. In order to achieve this aim, NMI's OoCA office is responsible for external courses, workshops, participation in exercises and visits, and can be used for demand driven support outside of Iraq provided by allied countries, partners, NATO Command Structures, COEs or NATO Education and Training Facilities.

5.8: ANET

The Advisor Network (ANET) is an online tool designed to aid NATO Mission Iraq (NMI)²⁰ to advise and assist the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Iraqi Ministry of Defence (MoD). It does this by giving advisors an easy way to record the outcomes of their engagements, and share that information across the mission as needed. ANET's advanced search capabilities make it easy for advisory organizations and mission leadership to gain context on engagements, which can shape future decision-making. ANET was created specifically for NATO's Advising Missions and therefore supports advisor engagements by helping them to schedule future meetings with their interlocutors and recording all interlocutor engagements.

In other words, it explicitly tells who was involved, where and when, what was discussed, under which mission objectives, with what atmospherics, key outcomes and next steps, as well as any other mission-specific information needed. Further, ANET is a useful tool for Hand Over/Take Over (HOTO), which means that since the entire mission record is in one place, outgoing personnel do not need to do extra work besides documenting their labour in ANET²⁰. Understanding what ANET is, how ANET is to be used and what functionality ANET has, is mandatory for someone to who wants to properly perform an advisory role.

Entering engagements in ANET is important as it reflects the work being done by you and by your advising cell. Drafting good and precise reports is important because they become part of the formal historical record of the mission and reflect on the work we have performed together with our partners. Each mission has specific guidelines on how to draft a good engagement report and the KLE team can provide you additional guidance. Be concise and precise, enter the full attendance of the engagement and accurately capture the essence of the engagement. If there is a reason – the tool is not user friendly or you have already made a report elsewhere and do not want to enter it again – please let the KLE team know, we can see how to improve the tool or improve exports in other formats.

5.9: Useful Advice

This section includes some helpful advice that came from the experience of NMI advisors.

When working with your interlocutor:

- Remember that your interlocutor has its own tasks and that your advice is just a small part of his/her daily work. Respect the daily rhythm, family situation and interlocutor habits. Ask for a day schedule if available;
- Timing and first impression (e.g. proper appearance) is crucial to be well accepted;
- Your interlocutor has different cultural habits. Therefore, do not consider it rude if he/she answers the phone during a meeting, as this is perfectly acceptable in the Iraqi culture;
- Consider submitting a Curriculum Vitae (CV) so that your interlocutor can know a little more about you. The exchange of CV/information may be a good option to tighten ties;
- Know your interlocutor needs and expectations. Furthermore, try to show your interlocutor that you are achieving tangible results and measurable goals with him/her;
- Let your interlocutor do the talking (especially during the first meetings) to learn about them and for example their needs, knowledge, skillset, problems and advisor experiences. Do not end the meeting without your interlocutor's ideas and opinions;
- Most matters must be dealt with in person to ensure communication is successful. That is, when possible, physical presence can be better than an email or phone call;

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- Always consider that your interlocutor or somebody in the room can speak English/your language;
- Be patient about cultural differences – do not set up too ambitious goals and do not be frustrated if the progress is not as you would expect;
- Never promise anything that you cannot fulfil/deliver!
- Understand the Iraqi military institutions do have their own chain of command and procedures – and you have to respect them;
- The interlocutors appreciate showing care and appropriate interest in personal and national matters, such as birthdays or national days;
- Respect all cultural, religious, political and historical matters is always appreciated. This shall be automatic. Especially the interlocutors rank and treat them accordingly;



NMI - Iraq meeting (© NMI)

- Using host nation systems and processes is always advised as they are based on historical, cultural, and other experiences. The advisor/subject matter expert (SME) is there to enhance/enable, not to disrupt;
- Pay attention to sensitive issues and find a way to put them in an acceptable way. For instance, the (NATO) screening and vetting process includes some personal questions that may hurt sensitivities. Make sure you explain the process/intent to your interlocutor;

NON SENSITIVE INFORMATION RELEASABLE TO THE PUBLIC

- Serve some food/drinks if you host your interlocutor if possible and make him/her feel welcome. Make sure the meeting room/office looks inviting and clean;
- Remember the cultural dos and don'ts. In addition, use humour!
- Ask your counterpart for a schedule. Advising activities within the training framework should follow a schedule that is discussed regularly. In addition, whenever you start a class you should always define the session rules and analyse the audience.

When working with your interpreter/linguist:

- Try to have regular interpreters who are used to your behaviour and language. However, you should be aware that the linguistic support section might not always be able to provide you the same linguist;
- The interpreter is your voice, and you need to know each other to have success in our mission – if your experience is good, try to use same interpreter for longer period, in order to keep/track history and memory of what has been happening, remembering the topic terminology and having situational awareness;
- It is always essential to prepare the linguist supporting you, on the topic, goal and key vocabulary (subject) of the meeting, to ensure that they are able to provide the best possible support in an environment with a very broad and complex military terminology and vocabulary;
- You should have signals/code words with the interpreter and FP for specific situations for example: we need to end the briefing, change the topic or we have a safety issue;

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- Translations and interpretations shall be to the point, concise, accurate, while avoiding emotional, personal or other judgements;
- Give your interpreter time to adapt to your intent and speak in a way that the Iraqi audience understands;
- Coordinate with your Division linguist coordinator for interpreter support. The Division Linguist coordinator is the main POC to plan linguist's daily tasks and de-conflict upcoming events;
- Keep in mind that your interpreter's normal working hours are SUN-THU 0800-1700. If you need interpreter support outside normal working hours, do plan ahead with your Division linguist coordinator;
- Give honest performance evaluations for your interpreters, to provide knowledge about necessary improvements, if needed. Also for general behaviour if you observe questionable actions of the interpreter, for example eating while a meeting;
- Your linguist is also your cultural and behaviour support. However, don't forget that it works in both ways. So provide your linguist with advice and guidance using your experience of working with other nationalities and cultures to educate and avoid offence to either parties;
- You own the conversation with your interlocutor. Interpreters are there to translate information between you and your interlocutor. The interpreters are the advisor's tongue for interpretation.

When working with other stakeholders/further advice:

- Collaborate and learn from other advisers/stakeholder's continuously. Look for the subject matter support of other Branches/Divisions, Missions (e.g. OIR, ...) or other IOs/GOs/NGOs;

- Make use of further adviser “tools” like Out-Of-Country Training and use the expert knowledge for example of NATO’s Centres of Excellence or by using Mobile Advising and Training Teams (MATTs);
- Everybody in your team (FP, Interpreter and *Guardian Angel*) is important and should be treated as such, especially when you are in meetings;
- Everybody of the advising team needs to know all key points, goals, and timelines in advance to talk about in a meeting;
- You have to be prepared because interlocutors can take pictures or videos during meetings or training sessions. Before each session, advisors must be careful not to use the badge or relevant information in sight;
- If you are training and using PowerPoint, you should use English and Arabic so that everyone is on the same page;
- To close up, smile and be confident, as you are part of a strong cohesive team and you are making the difference!

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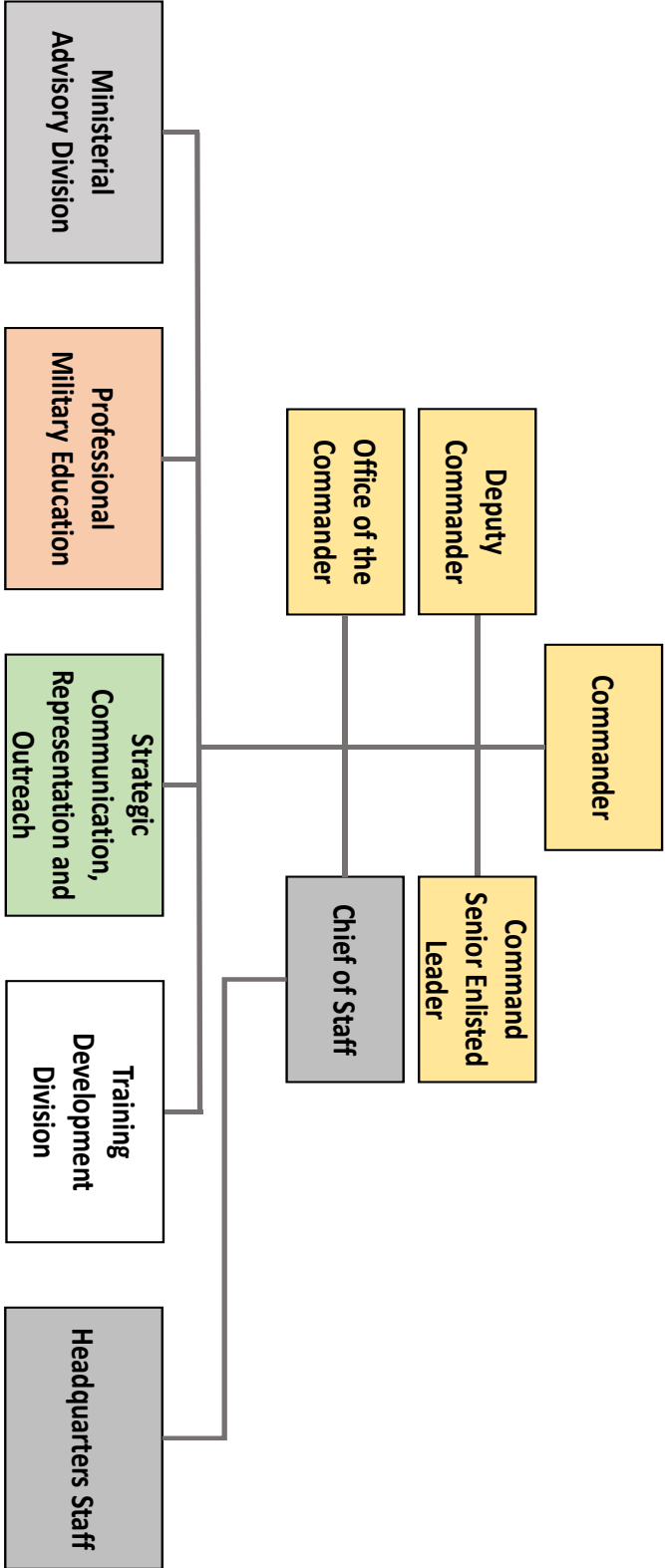
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Glossary

ANET – Advisor Network Tool
BIT – Basic Induction Training
CHOD – Chief of Defence
CIA – Comprehensive Interpreters and Advisors Training
CV – Curriculum Vitae
DCOS – Deputy Chief of Staff
DG – Director General
DGIS – Directorate General for Intelligence and Security
ETAT – Embedded Training Advisory Teams
EUAM – European Union Advisory Mission
FP – Force Protection
GBA – Greater Bagdad Area
GoI – Government of Iraq
IAF – Iraqi Armed Forces
IEA – Information Environment Analysis
ISF – Iraqi Security Forces
ISI – Iraqi Security Institutions
JFC – Joint Force Command
JFTC – Joint Force Training Centre
KLE – Key Leader Engagement
LNO – Liaison Officer
LoE – Line of Effort
MAD – Ministerial Advisory Division
MATT – Mobile Advising and Training Team
MoD – Ministry of Defence
MoP – Ministry of Peshmerga
OoCA – Out-of-Country Activities
OPLAN – Operation Plan
PA – Public Affairs
PAG – Political Advisory Group
PAO – Public Affairs Officer
PDCA – Plan, Do, Check, Act
PLOAD – Political Advisor
PME – Professional Military Education
PMNOC – Prime Minister’s National Operations Centre
PSE – Professional Security Education
RM – Human Resource Management
SCRO – Strategic Communication, Representation and Outreach
SD – Special Division (SD)
SECGEN – Offices of the Secretary General
SME – Subject Matter Expert
SOP – Standard Operation Procedure
SPCO – Specialised Programme Coordination Office
SSR (G) – Security Sector Reform (Group)
TCN – Troop Contributing Nation
TDD – Training Development Division
TtT – Train the Trainer
UDHR – United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP – United Nations Development Program

NATO Mission Iraq



Personal Notes

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معا لبناء الامن والأمان



BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY TOGETHER