

**Community of Interest Conference “Projecting Stability”** Opening Remarks Dean, 14th May 18 ~13:15 (Auditorium)

Generals, Air Commodore,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

And especially the organizing partners of the conference. The CIMIC Centre of Excellence, Modelling and Simulation Center of Excellence, Security Force Assistance COE and the Southern Hub. All 4 key player institutes are represented by their directors.

It is my distinguished pleasure to have you all here at the NDC in Rome for the Community of Interest Conference with the umbrella topic “Projecting Stability”. The Conference is covering a lot of challenges that NATO faces in the strategic direction south. You can exchange views and engage in serious discussion, to develop answers to nowadays and future upcoming challenges.

We are particularly glad to have around 130 participants in, representing NATO, nations, but also nonmilitary partners like EU, governmental and nongovernmental organizations and the academic world.

Over the week, you will have the opportunity to engage with prominent experts, academics, as well as decision-makers. All of the speakers have been hand-picked because they are well-informed experts representing their headquarters or institutes. Their insights into the “who, why, what, where, when, and how”, will certainly open windows of opportunity for debate.

Our mission here at the NDC is to contribute to cohesion and effectiveness in the Alliance, to prepare men and women from member and partner states for their next international assignments. We believe in and we place our faith in the power of education: on pro-activeness, trust, transparency, team work, intellectual modesty, enlightened leadership, the sharing of cross-cultural perspectives and above all, in building strong relationships to prevent conflicts. Education or, if you will, lifelong professional education should recognize no boundaries and has a very important role to play in strengthening all the human qualities I just mentioned. That is where WE and YOU have a significant responsibility. I invite you to consider the NATO Defense College as a tremendous opportunity to establish firm relationships that will accompany you during your future assignments, and I would like to thank you all in advance for being here.

I wish the organizing institutes a successful conference and that all of you enjoy the hospitality of the NDC and of Rome. Roman history has been among the most influential to the modern world. From supporting the tradition of the rule of law to influencing the American Founding Fathers to the creation of the Catholic Church. I am quite sure that with history in mind and maybe in the evening impressed by some of the great monuments you will influence successful the next development steps.

May I give back the floor to the moderator COL Wagner, to introduce the next speaker? Thanks!