

Communication

**from the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for
Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the
Future***

**Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's
Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future**

Final Report

* Established by decision of the German Bundestag, 5 July 2022, Bundestag printed paper 20/2570.

Foreword

Ladies and gentlemen,
Readers,

Over and above the major wars and conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, crises are proliferating around the world. Data from leading research institutes, such as the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research and Uppsala University, show that the number of wars, particularly the number of international conflicts, is rising. While the influence of the Global South is growing at the expense of the West, vacuums have formed in many regions which regional powers and, increasingly, violent non-state actors are using to expand their power.

It is not yet possible to foresee all the long-term effects of those profound changes. What is already clear, however, is that rising powers like China and India are confidently asserting their aspirations with regard to shaping the international system. Even if such claims for greater influence are in many respects legitimate, they have far-reaching ramifications for global institutions and norms. In part, moreover, they are opposed to our liberal values and the rules-based international order we would wish to see.

Looking at the BRICS group, which expanded at the start of 2024 to include Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates, we see on the one hand an example of that development, but we also see, on the other hand, how heterogeneous the group and their various interests are. Not infrequently, they support different sides in conflict regions and pursue divergent objectives. We must assume that instability and vulnerability to crisis will increase and characterise the 21st century, a multipolar age. It will take time until the global order has stabilised and international institutions have been adapted and reformed to take account of the changes.

Direct threats and conflicts in Europe's immediate neighbourhood have led to the Federal Government's National Security Strategy putting national and collective defence back at the top of the agenda. That is the logical response, but it must not be at odds with international crisis management, which, in an amended form and coordinated at the European level, remains indispensable as a tool of Germany's foreign and security policy.

Setbacks such as the involvement in the Sahel and, not least, the strategic failure of the 20-year operation in Afghanistan, which led to the creation of the Study Commission, underscore the need for a comprehensive or integrated approach in our foreign and security policy. Our humanitarian, development, diplomatic and, where necessary, military instruments need to operate in even closer conjunction if we intend to contribute to crisis management in conflict regions.

That approach can only succeed if future decision-makers take the lessons of past operations seriously. That begins with interministerial coordination, particularly in Berlin, but also means according genuinely equal value to civil and military instruments. Not least significantly, international crisis management, just like national and collective defence, will not be free; it all costs money.

If we neglect international crisis management, the costs will end up disproportionately higher. Many of the conflict regions around the world are in our geographical neighbourhood and cannot simply be ignored. If we do not get involved, others will involve themselves all the more strongly, with every conceivable consequence. Crisis management that is embedded in Europe, adequately funded and guided by realistic objectives is therefore in our basic strategic interest.

The conclusions and recommendations set out in the following final report as a cross-party effort and in collaboration with expert members, after three years of

work, supply the Bundestag and future German Federal Governments with guidance for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future. The report identifies specific proposals for improving cross-ministerial work, coordinating information and not only couching objectives and strategies in more realistic terms in future but also reviewing them on an ongoing basis.

However, the report is also addressed to the numerous governmental and non-governmental organisations involved, the personnel deployed and, not least, the interested public. If Germany and Europe wish to continue playing a role on the world stage and are to contribute to a more peaceful world, then the global changes we are facing and questions about how we deal with them affect us all.

Michael Müller, Member of the Bundestag

Chairperson of the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future

1 Introduction

In this final report, the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany’s Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future sets out its recommendations for action regarding Germany’s contribution to international crisis management. Prior to this report, the Commission published its analysis of the 20-year operation in Afghanistan and the lessons to be drawn from it in an interim report on 19 February 2024 (Bundestag printed paper 20/10400).¹ The interim report was discussed in the Bundestag on 23 February 2024 (minutes of plenary proceedings 20/155).

Conclusions drawn in the interim report

The most important conclusions drawn in the interim report included the following findings:

Fundamentally, there was no coherent strategy that was realistically possible to implement, the objectives set were too ambitious, and continual, self-critical stocktaking was lacking. The personnel provided, particularly civilian and police personnel, were also insufficient, a problem that was exacerbated by the inadequate adaptation of the equipment and capabilities of the German armed forces (Bundeswehr). In addition, the report concludes that cooperation between the ministries, although it did improve, nevertheless remained insufficient over all, and the maintenance of ties within the Bundestag was likewise inadequate. Furthermore, the competing interests of the numerous stakeholders rendered the coordinated allocation of resources difficult at the international level. There was moreover an inadequate degree of consideration for the culture, history, religion and traditions of Afghanistan.

The Study Commission came to the conclusion that Germany and its international partners failed at a strategic level in Afghanistan. The multinational operation took a great toll in terms of human casualties, and the costs were vast. The Commission did also note that there were partial successes in the course of the operation which led to improved living standards for the people in Afghanistan and to progress on infrastructure and in the healthcare and education sectors. They did not prove lasting, however, because of the Taliban’s return to power. The members of the Study Commission expressly commended the personal and professional dedication of the German personnel deployed. Although the Commission has ended its work on Afghanistan in producing its final report, it remembers the casualties of the operation, including the German servicemen, federal police officers and members of German aid and development organisations who fell or lost their lives, and it has not forgotten Afghanistan and its people or the catastrophic humanitarian situation there.²

Thematic working groups to develop recommendations

On the basis of the lessons from the 20-year operation in Afghanistan that were set out in the interim report, the members of the Study Commission formed five working groups (“cluster groups”) on the following topics: strategy and mandate creation; international coordination; parliament and coordination of the executive; knowledge, monitoring and evaluation; capabilities, implementation and effectiveness. In accordance with the Study Commission’s mandate (Bundestag printed paper 20/2570), the cluster groups formulated general recommendations for action, on the basis of the Afghanistan operation and beyond, regarding Germany’s contribution to international crisis management in the context of Germany’s future comprehensive engagement in foreign and security policy.

The Study Commission and its cluster groups conducted public and closed hearings as part of that work. The members of the Commission thank all the external expert witnesses who participated for their expertise and proposals. The Commission is also grateful for the suggestions provided by the operation personnel who took part in the discussion event Lessons from Afghanistan – the Perspective of Operation Personnel held on 19 March 2024.³

¹ Alongside the Study Commission, which has examined the full duration of the operation in Afghanistan, the Bundestag established a Committee of Inquiry (Bundestag printed paper 20/2352). The Committee of Inquiry looked at the period from the conclusion of the Doha Agreement on 29 February 2020 to the end of the mandate for the deployment of German armed forces for the military evacuation on 30 September 2021 and the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

² A dissenting opinion on this sentence was delivered by the expert members Winfried Nachtwei and Egon Ramms, the Bundestag Members Philip Krämer and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see section 4.1). A reply to this dissenting opinion was delivered by the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see section 4.1.1).

³ Records of the public hearings and the event held with operation personnel (in German) can be found on the Bundestag’s website: https://www.bundestag.de/ausschuesse/weitere_gremien/enquete_afghanistan.

From the comprehensive approach to integrated security

Under the comprehensive international engagement which the Study Commission examined, the intention is for military, police, diplomatic, development, humanitarian and economic instruments to operate in conjunction in the context of international crisis management and peace missions. In view of the changing security environment, that approach is now being further refined into the concept of “integrated security”. This encompasses international crisis management and national and collective defence as well as new challenges such as defence against cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns and sabotage.

Altered context for crisis management

The Study Commission was aware that its work on the recommendations was taking place against the backdrop of fundamental change in the security situation in Europe. Russia’s attack on Ukraine on 24 February 2022 marked the end of the European security order that had prevailed hitherto. For Germany as for others, this means new threats and risks which have ramifications for security and defence policy. National and collective defence has been at the top of the agenda ever since.

The altered context for international crisis management includes the partial obstruction of the United Nations Security Council. It must nonetheless not be permitted to leave the international community incapable of responding to threats to world peace and international security. Those states which stand by the rules-based global order should credibly uphold and defend the fundamental tenets of the UN Charter and avoid double standards. The fundamental tenets of the UN Charter remain key: the principle of settling disputes by peaceful means, the prohibition of aggression, the maintenance of international peace and security, and collective measures to suppress breaches of the peace.

International crisis management still a high priority

In the assessment of the Study Commission, next to national and collective defence, participation in possible future international operations should retain great significance. Germany should be able and prepared to contribute to missions of international crisis management alongside its allies and embedded in international coalitions. The international community expects Germany to continue to shoulder responsibility in future.

Recommendations and their implementation

As a result of its work, the Study Commission presents 72 recommendations on many different areas and proposals for their implementation. They include institutional and organisational proposals on better preparation, on staffing and equipping operations, on more efficient coordination within the German Federal Government and on stronger parliamentary oversight.

The recommendations are primarily directed towards the German Federal Government, the *Länder* and the Bundestag. One of the Study Commission’s findings is that more public discussions about foreign, development and security policy are needed and more information should be available to that end. The present report is in part intended to serve that purpose.

The Study Commission exists only for the duration of the 20th electoral term and cannot itself ensure that the recommendations are implemented. That will require the efforts of future German Federal Governments, the parliamentary groups in the Bundestag and civil society, which can raise, comment on and expand the recommendations and push for their implementation. It would be useful if the ministries and Bundestag committees concerned with international crisis management were to review, during the second half of the next electoral term, to what extent the Commission’s recommendations have found expression in political practice or what has prevented such change.⁴

⁴ A dissenting opinion on section 1 was delivered by the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see section 4.2).

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2 Executive Summary

Despite the focus on national and collective defence, Germany will continue to play its part in international crisis management in future. Building on the lessons from Germany's 20-year operation in Afghanistan which were set out in the interim report, the Study Commission has formulated specific recommendations for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future.

The recommendations are based on the conclusions drawn in the interim report, the findings subsequently gleaned from the work of five thematic working groups within the Study Commission, the hearings with experts from the armed forces, politics, academia and civil society and the specialist knowledge brought to the Commission by its expert members and Bundestag Members.

Future operations will need a fully articulated strategy that specifies clear, verifiable and realistic objectives and intended effects. In line with the mission's stage of development, an exit strategy coordinated with our allies must be decided on. Independent evaluations must also be carried out on a regular basis. Key factors in successful implementation are ongoing coordination and cooperation at the national level, between the ministries and the parliament, and at the international level, particularly with the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), and regional and local partners. The strategy should clearly state German interests and define interim objectives but should also be able to adapt to the developments on the ground and realistically take into account our own capabilities and impacts.

Operations should be accompanied by clear communication from the German Federal Government. That, too, requires the setting of short- and long-term objectives and collaboration across ministries. To combat disinformation campaigns, analysis capabilities should be enhanced, particularly on social media platforms, and the cooperation of security authorities should be intensified, between the federal and *Land* levels as well as internationally. Our communications in the country of deployment should be tailored to the target audience and take account of the cultural and religious context.

In the interests of identifying crises early on and being able to respond strategically, it is essential to maintain a broad knowledge base and cultivate pooled expertise. That will require a long-term funding architecture for university and non-university institutions and a more intensive exchange of ideas between academia, politics and practice. To enhance the cultivation of ties and foster a shared contextual understanding, academics should be accorded a greater role in ministerial work. Similarly, greater use should be made of practitioners' experience in academic institutions. During operations, as much local knowledge as possible should be collated and systematically analysed. When creating a common operational picture, it is advisable to process additional information from personnel returning from deployment, allies and partners in civil society and channel it into ongoing planning and implementation. If artificial intelligence is used, its use for systematising the knowledge base should be considered. At the same time, potential savings should be exploited on an interministerial basis and redundant duplicate structures should be eliminated.

Successful international engagement requires a harmonised institutional monitoring and evaluation structure. Independent evaluations should be conducted during and after every integrated operation. Communication between personnel deployed on operations and those in the political or strategic sphere also needs to be intensified. Institutional learning from operational experience should be spread as widely as possible across the organisation in question and should also be incorporated into basic and continual training for future operations by making use of personnel returning from deployment with experience to share.

The interim report noted that improvements are needed, particularly at the political and strategic level, for Germany to achieve coherent foreign, development and security policy action. In the interests of better interministerial strategic planning and implementation of crisis management operations, the Commission recommends establishing a new Cabinet committee or expanding and intensifying the regular security policy meeting of state secretaries. Both options would involve a joint situation centre where strategic situation assessments, analysis and prognoses are compiled into an interministerial overall picture.

The regular flow and exchange of information between the ministries and the Bundestag should be intensified. For example, the German Federal Government should give the Members of the Bundestag a classified security and strategic foresight report once a year.

To enable the parliament to exercise its power of oversight more effectively and compile a cross-portfolio situation assessment of its own for its own purposes, a separate committee or subcommittee on comprehensive or integrated crisis management operations should be created. In the case of follow-on mandates, the Bundestag should make

greater use of the scope for parliamentary participation and review effectiveness and the achievement of objectives more strictly. Debates on mandates and discussions in specialised committees should give due consideration not only to the military aspects but also to the civil, diplomatic and police components of operations.

The UN remains a key player in the pursuit of international agreement. To safeguard the UN's effectiveness for the future, reform efforts should be supported and the UN should be provided with the material and human resources it needs. At the European level, greater capacity for action is needed for crisis management. Germany should advocate in that context for closer liaison with the aim of using Europe's influence more meaningfully within NATO and around the world.

For international operations, a donor register would facilitate the best possible allocation of resources, not least with a view to not overloading the recipient country's absorptive capacity. A sense of ownership on the part of the local society and greater consideration of women are key to the success of an operation and should be taken into account and continually reviewed by international coordination mechanisms at all levels.

For combating and preventing terrorism, organised crime and corruption, Germany should prioritise joint EU action and specifically foster partnerships with non-EU countries in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures at all levels by means of collective action.

To organise international crisis management more effectively, it is advisable to have standard operating procedures that apply for all the ministries involved and define requirements specific to the operation so that its effectiveness can be measured and adjustments can be made. For financing projects in the country of deployment, the possibility of long-term process support rather than short-term project funding should be investigated.

In pursuit of self-sustaining reform and reconstruction processes, greater consideration should be given to non-state actors and civil society players in the country of deployment as well as smaller projects that can be implemented on the ground and are embedded in the local population. Selecting them with the aid of institutionalised context and partner monitoring could improve the legitimacy, local ownership and sustainability of support measures. The dedication of local workers should have support from the German Federal Government, the treatment of local staff in particular should be organised on an interministerial basis, and the extent of Germany's responsibility should be transparently communicated to the relevant parties.

With a view to responding to crises at short notice, it is advisable to build up a strategic reserve of civilian personnel. In the Bundeswehr, international crisis management capabilities of relevance to operations should be maintained and the associated funds for training, equipment and preparations secured. Given their shared responsibility for looking after ill or injured personnel, the German Federal Government and Bundestag should continue to expansively express their public appreciation and support for the personnel deployed on international crisis management.

The submission of this final report marks the end of the work of the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future. Numerous conflicts, global power shifts and growing instability in many regions of the world have a direct impact on Germany and Europe. Adapting Germany's crisis management to new developments and challenges is urgently necessary in view of the experience gathered in Afghanistan. In the lessons from 20 years of engagement set out in the interim report and the recommendations proposed in this final report, the Commission has supplied future German Federal Governments and the Bundestag with numerous specific means of improving Germany's international crisis management. From the 21st electoral term onwards, their implementation should be monitored on an ongoing basis in the ministries and committees concerned.

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3 Recommendations

3.1 Strategy and mission

3.1.1 Strategy and mission formation

1. **Future engagements of the German Federal Government abroad (whether integrated or conducted by individual ministries) will require a clear, fully articulated strategy that, apart from an objective specified in substantive terms, also defines the intended impacts that are to be achieved once the desired target status has been reached.**

Grounds:

Strategic orientation, patience and political stamina are the fundamental prerequisites for the successful conduct of (international) stabilisation and crisis management operations. The simultaneously targeted and results-driven development and implementation of strategies will put in place the conditions for the effective management of future commitments, opening up options for strategic adjustments (changes of course) to be made and exit criteria to be modified flexibly on the basis of impact monitoring and evidence (impacts achieved v. impacts not achieved). The strategic capacity required for this purpose when such operations are conducted demands that the desired end status be taken as the starting point for the definition of clear, credible, verifiable strategic objectives for the operation as a whole that are amenable to consensus. It must be possible for these objectives to be pursued/achieved in a well-planned fashion with a longer-term temporal horizon, deploying the requisite resources in political, military and civil fields of activity. Germany's strategic capacity can be strengthened by continually assessing medium and longer-term developments in security policy, and constantly being aware of anticipated problems, challenges and opportunities.⁵

The objectives must always be coordinated jointly by the ministries. Stronger networking between the Bundestag's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Internal Affairs and Community, Defence Committee, Committee on Economic Affairs and Development and – depending on the situation – other committees is vital for coherent action, as is also an interministerial expansion of early crisis detection instruments and structures. Overall, a shared interministerial understanding of civil-military cooperation on foreign operations is a *conditio sine qua non*.

Implementation:

What are essential for the successful implementation of a national strategy are improved coordination and cooperation between the ministries, and early, vigorous contributions that help shape European and international political initiatives and mandates within the EU, NATO and the UN. A comprehensive approach is required that goes beyond the purely military aspects of security. Civil engagement must be an integral component of this strategy from the outset. The motives for participating in an operation and its objectives should be discussed and decided on openly, honestly, transparently and comprehensively in accordance with international legal requirements. They must entail an understanding of what may, in certain circumstances, be a distant temporal horizon, and have to be combined with exit criteria that could trigger the termination of the operation. Strategic success demands that every operation be thought through from its envisaged end point.

As described in the 2023 National Security Strategy, judgements about a strategic situation require Germany's interests to be developed and specified for definable regions of the world, and national strategic interests pooled with allies and partners within the framework of international legal requirements and in the interests of collective security. Germany's interests must be articulated emphatically at an early stage in the bodies within international organisations that deal with these matters. This should be done on an ongoing basis in a process of coordination between the crucial ministries, so that action can be taken at short notice both by the government and by parliament. Apart from the interests of the German Federal Republic formulated in the National Security Strategy as a guiding compass, joint ministerial country-level strategies with concrete objectives should be formulated for, and drawn on in, the strategy process for foreign engagements. Additionally, information from area and cultural studies about potential theatres of operations should be acquired, prepared, presented and regularly updated. It should also be possible for such information to be made available under severe time pressure.

⁵ A dissenting opinion on this section was delivered by the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, and the expert members Professor Carlo-Antonio Masala, Jörg Vollmer and Dr Ellinor Zeino (see section 4.3).

The steps by which these objectives should be achieved are to be specified on this basis: with a timetable and defined interim objectives, for instance benchmarks whose feasibility and effectiveness are to be regularly reviewed. The timetable and objectives should specify and coordinate the ministries' responsibilities. This means answering questions such as: Which ministry will take charge of which tasks? What is to be achieved by the deployment of particular resources? And how will each contribution support the integrated approach? Without coordination of this kind, the individual ministries' engagement in the country of deployment may prove counter-productive, with resources also being used inefficiently overall.

Objectives can only be effective when they are adjusted to take account of developments in the country of deployment. The regular review of all parties' objectives in the light of the dynamics of ongoing conflicts should be part of strategic planning. Objectives need to have a corresponding degree of flexibility. Additionally, the progress made towards the objectives that have been set is to be evaluated regularly and independently, and adjustments are to be made as necessary (cf. recommendations 44 and 67). If an operation is probably going to fail or its objectives have been achieved, it should be ended in an orderly fashion in consultation with international and civil partners (exit strategy).

2. The preparation of complex comprehensive operations and German engagements demands strategic foresight gained by continual observation and assessment of the global security situation. Preparations should be made conflict-sensitively in accordance with local circumstances.

Grounds:

Continual monitoring of situation assessments is absolutely essential in order to avoid being surprised by sudden developments and compelled to act at short notice. Accordingly, a realistic political-military situation assessment and understanding of the conflict, an impact and risk assessment, and the identification of possible constructive partners in the conflict country or conflict region are necessary before any decisions are taken about an operation (cf. Recommendation 36).

Implementation:

It is necessary to clarify national, alliance and multilateral interests, the urgency of the matter from the perspectives of peace and security policy, Germany's own capacities and how activities will be coordinated with partners in the conflict area. For these purposes, the findings reached by the Federal Foreign Office (AA), the Federal Intelligence Service (BND), the military intelligence services and other ministries (including the BMZ, the BMI and the BMWK), as well as the findings reached by allies or organisations such as NATO must be surveyed at the first signs a crisis is escalating, and evaluated or assessed on an interministerial basis. The aim is to gain time to react and prepare. Relevant committees and bodies of the German Bundestag are also to be given access to the flow of information at an early stage. Strategic capacity should be strengthened at the political-strategic decision-making level.

In addition to the abstract objectives of the operation and its mandate within the specific multilateral operational framework, the overall objective to be achieved by German participation in an operation should be specified jointly by the ministries at the earliest possible date – based on a well-founded understanding of the context and the conflict (cf. Recommendation 61). This involves clarifying what Germany wishes to achieve under a shared, national, interministerial objective, while respecting the autonomy of the government in the country of deployment and consulting with partners at the international level.

National interests will always influence the framing of an international mission. It is in Germany's interests to bring its concerns to bear in the relevant bodies, including those within the UN, NATO and the EU. The tensions between clearly definable national interests and international solidarity have to be balanced. All operations have to be aligned with our alliances' overarching strategic objectives (NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, EU Civilian CSDP Compact, EU Strategic Compass), as well as the strategic objectives set out in the National Security Strategy (cf. Recommendation 17).

3.1.2 The law relating to foreign operations

3. **The international community’s ability to act effectively against threats to international security and global peace within the framework of international law should also be guaranteed at a time when the UN Security Council is partially deadlocked.**

Grounds:

According to the ruling handed down by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1994 (BVerfGE 90, 286), Germany is able to deploy armed military forces outside its alliance area within the framework, and in accordance with the rules, of a system of mutual collective security. Such “out-of-area” operations require the constitutive consent of the Bundestag. As argued in the Federal Constitutional Court’s 2015 Pegasus ruling (BVerfGE 140, 160) on the evacuation operation from Libya, this requirement of parliamentary consent applies for every foreign deployment of the German armed forces, including unilateral deployments. The partial deadlock in the UN Security Council and its decision-making stalemate do not inevitably have to result in the international community becoming impotent in the face of threats to international security and world peace. When armed forces are deployed on international crisis management activities, it remains essential that the operation is embedded in collective security structures. In future too, the activation of Article 87a (1) and (2) of the German Basic Law (national defence) in conjunction with the right to self-defence provided for in international law should merely be applied as an exceptional constitutional mechanism if there is no clear, unambiguous mandate from the United Nations Security Council.

Implementation:

The UN Security Council bears the “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” (Article 24 (1) UN Charter). Even though 77 missions are ongoing around the world at the moment (including twelve special political missions, eleven UN peacekeeping missions, eleven African Union and African sub-regional missions, two NATO missions, 23 EU missions – of which eight have military components –, 13 OSCE missions and five others) and the Security Council has extended the mandates for numerous UN missions, there is an unmistakable trend towards increasing deadlock and a decision-making stalemate in the Security Council (figures: ZIF world map of peace operations 2024/2025).

Responding to this by relativising the international legal order itself would only accelerate its slide into “might is right”. To ensure that the international community, Germany and its allies are not held back from acting effectively when elementary national and collective security interests are threatened, ways must be found to legitimise military crisis operations legally that are congruent with international law. Collective self-defence (Article 51 UN Charter) in the shape of emergency measures or the Uniting for Peace mechanism provided for by the UN General Assembly resolution of 3 November 1950 (UN Doc. A/RES/377 (V)) could offer a way of this kind for some deployment scenarios.

4. **Ad hoc coalitions (“coalitions of the willing”) outside collective security systems have become a reality in view of the extensive new challenges faced in recent years and should be taken seriously with their interests, opportunities and risks.**

Grounds:

According to the case law of the Federal Constitutional Court, German armed forces may be deployed out of area within the framework, and under the rules, of a system of mutual collective security. Ad hoc coalitions outside such systems are problematic in constitutional and international law – and, in so far as this is the case, pose a challenge to the national security culture of the Federal Republic of Germany, with its attachment to systems of collective security. As cooperative projects parallel to the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy, such coalitions run counter to the fundamental tenets of Germany’s European policy. In the eyes of some of Germany’s allies, however, ad hoc coalitions can open up additional options for politically willing states to act with greater flexibility and rapidity than, for example, the EU.

The experience of earlier ad hoc coalitions is that political oversight has often been exercised intransparently, while their operational frameworks have been vague. Informal coalitions have found it difficult to coordinate the different ideas about their envisaged political objectives. This increased the risk that attention would revolve mainly around individual alliance partners’ national interests.

Implementation:

Faced with the dilemma of how to maintain the capacity for effective security policy action against threats to international security while tying deployments of the German armed forces to systems of collective security, a compromise could be found in the activation of Article 44 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which has never been invoked to date, but allows a group of Member States to be entrusted with the conduct of a military operation/mission by a unanimous decision of the European Council.

3.2 International involvement

3.2.1 International coordination under the comprehensive approach

Complex, large-scale deployments with various mandates and missions have to be coordinated at several levels. One enduring key challenge for international crisis engagements is the parallel presence of major multinational organisations, within which there is frequently little willingness to coordinate activities, the consequence being that engagements and operations are fated to incoherence. In view of the large numbers of actors, objectives and interests international engagements bring together, international coordination, management and involvement are of outstanding significance for the success of international crisis operations.

5. Germany's international coordination with allies, partners and stakeholders should be scrutinised and adjusted on an ongoing basis.

Grounds:

Germany's international coordination with allies, partners and stakeholders at the international, European and local levels requires continual consultation about coherence, efficiency, solidarity (burden-sharing) and acceptance. The experience of the Afghanistan mission was that objectives, interests, expectations and situation assessments were not formulated and cross-checked with sufficient clarity, resources and processes were not always coordinated with one another efficiently, capabilities and burden-sharing were sometimes unbalanced, obligations to provide information and duties of care were not always respected sufficiently by partners, and the international engagement did not meet with local acceptance to the same extent everywhere.

Implementation:

The following parameters should be applied to help weigh up decisions and make assessments both when political decisions are taken on whether or not Germany should participate in multilateral operations, and for the assessment and constant improvement of Germany's coordination and networking with international partners and allies:

- the coherence of interests, objectives and expectations, and the shared basic values of the alliance partners and other involved actors;
- alliance solidarity and balanced burden-sharing among the partner countries and institutions that are involved (incl. the UN, NATO, the EU and regional partner countries);
- the efficiency with which civil-military capabilities and resources are pooled, and coordination processes conducted among the various partners;
- societal acceptance and the key local stakeholders' willingness to cooperate.

3.2.2 United Nations crisis management

6. Germany should support the reform efforts being made by the UN secretary-general so that the United Nations are better able to perform their central role of international coordination during complex and comprehensive operations.

Grounds:

Past operations lacked a unified leadership and command structure, above all during the initial phase of the comprehensive approach. This can be explained by, among other things, the large number of actors (international organisations, governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)), even within the UN (special envoys in contrast to other UN organisations). Since it holds the mandate for action in these situations, the UN should also be better supported in the international coordination of future comprehensive operations. Should there be a UN mandate for the creation of a safe environment again when comprehensive operations are conducted

in future, possibly supported by police personnel, cooperation will have to be regulated within the hexagon of “fitness to govern – reconstruction – domestic security – external security – development – relations to neighbouring states”. In particular – as the example of Afghanistan shows –, the constructive involvement of relevant neighbouring and regional states is indispensable for sustainable stabilisation and development in crisis areas. As the civil side of an operation, the UN must integrate the organisational structures of the military and police components that are present to a greater degree. Despite positive developments in the United Nations’ coordination work over the years since 2010, this will depend on the coordination of such integrated missions being improved even further at the highest levels of the United Nations hierarchy.

Implementation:

The Study Commission welcomes the reform of this field launched by Secretary-General António Guterres, which he recommended in July 2023 with Action 8 of the New Agenda for Peace. Furthermore, it should also be examined how far the positions of UN special envoys can be strengthened and, with a view to their powers, personal staffs, and situation assessments, resourced so that they are able to ensure the best-possible international leadership and coordination in civil-military operations.

7. Germany should maintain its reliable support as one of the UN’s biggest contributors⁶ and, at the same time, strategically pool its leverage with its international partners.

Grounds:

With the fundamental norms of the UN Charter and its commitments to the global common good, the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council for the preservation of world peace and international security, its fundamentally strong global legitimacy, its integrated missions, and its holistic array of principal and subsidiary bodies, programmes, funds and specialised agencies, the UN system remains indispensable for the peaceful co-existence of states and peoples around the world. Even though the UN has been significantly weakened by geopolitical polarisation and partially hindered from performing its central task of preserving world peace and international security, the UN system must continue to occupy a key role in international crisis management. There are many crisis areas where UN subsidiary organisations provide the last safety net of humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

Implementation:

A higher proportion of non-tied voluntary contributions would be of central significance in enhancing the UN programmes and specialised agencies’ capacity for action. As a leading contributor to the UN, Germany should set a good example here.

At the same time, Germany should use its role as an important contributor to give voice to its values and interests more strongly together with its international partners. These include, for instance, greater efforts to uphold and guarantee women’s and girls’ rights in crisis areas. Apart from groups of friends concerned with particular topics and countries at the UN, international contact groups are useful formats for exerting influence that offer international actors opportunities to hold informal discussions about concrete peace and security crises, and coordinate their approaches as necessary. These flexible formats should continue to be used by Germany. In view of the partial deadlock in the UN Security Council and at a time when the UN General Assembly is politically polarised, this can be done above all by pursuing a strategic policy of influencing appointments in the UN agencies.⁷ In this field, Germany’s UN policy should be oriented pragmatically and more proactively towards realistic opportunities to wield influence and pool its influence with international partners.

8. Crisis prevention and preventive diplomacy should be strengthened by continuing reliable support for the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in the fields of operational and structural crisis prevention.

Grounds:

When UN secretary-general António Guterres took office in 2017, crisis prevention became a key part of his agenda. The first two of five areas of action in the New Agenda for Peace are devoted to prevention. Some

⁶ Germany is the fourth-largest contributor to the UN in terms of assessed contributions and peace missions, and the second-largest payer of voluntary contributions (source: figures from the Federal Foreign Office, December 2024).

⁷ Cf. Bierling, in German Bundestag (2024d).

measures have been initiated since then (e.g. a more integrated structure for prevention activities within the UN Secretariat). Action 16 of the UN Pact for the Future reiterates the United Nations' role in preventive diplomacy, and recommends that its operations be intensified and resourced appropriately.

Implementation:

The instruments of operational crisis prevention include the German peace and development consultants posted to fragile countries, mine clearance projects, small-arms and arms control programmes, special political missions, UN special envoys, the UN Mediation Support Unit and projects involving German professionals or supported by Germany. Structural crisis prevention encompasses a broad spectrum of policy fields and measures, such as human rights policy, the promotion of human security and education. Since different population groups have different (security) needs in crisis settings, these should always be taken into consideration when measures are implemented; for instance, sustainable services and support for women and girls. Evaluations of the implementation instruments that have been mentioned are necessary to ascertain which measures have been most effective in which contexts.

9. Germany should work within the UN for human rights to be respected when counterterrorism activities are carried out and for this to be monitored by the Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights, and should drive these goals ahead with civil society involvement.

Grounds:

Counterterrorism measures taken during international crisis operations must respect human rights. In the past, however, this was not ensured by all countries in the international community equally. Any infringement of human rights is conducive to conditions under which violence can arise and be perpetuated. When UN-mandated missions are conducted, respect for human rights is central to the acceptance of the military forces and civil personnel participating in these operations on the ground.

Implementation:

Prior to counterterrorism measures under the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, Germany should always speak out clearly in favour of agreement being reached on respect for human rights standards. In addition, the Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights should be strengthened in his role monitoring the observance of human rights, in which respect Germany should make representations calling for him to be given access to the information relevant for his work. The Special Rapporteur should also involve civil society intensively in his work in this field.

10. To strengthen UN peacekeeping, Germany should work politically for realistic, unambiguous mandates that define priorities and are equipped with sufficient resources. This can only be done credibly if UN peace missions receive relevant material and personnel support from Germany.

Grounds:

Recommendations formulated in key UN documents on enhancing the effectiveness of peace missions (e.g. the 2000 Brahimi Report) have been given only insufficient consideration by the Member States to date. Here, there is a clear need to strengthen the backing that is given – also at a time when attention is being refocussed on national and alliance defence. The UN secretary-general's New Agenda for Peace and Action 21 of the UN Pact for the Future represent a renewed attempt to tackle this issue.

Implementation:

International credibility and burden-sharing are not solely dependent on the reliable payment of contributions, but must also be underpinned with human resources. The numbers of personnel provided by Germany for UN missions have been diminishing again since the end of the MINUSMA mission. This decline is certainly attributable to the transformed security threat situation, which requires the Bundeswehr to be engaged far more in national and alliance defence. With the Cabinet decisions on new German policing contributions to the UN missions on Cyprus and in South Sudan, and the posting of several police officers to take up leadership functions, the German policing contribution to UN peacekeeping is beginning to become rather more substantial again.

The recommendations made in the New Agenda for Peace and the UN Pact for the Future on the strengthening of peace missions should also be heeded during the mandate approval and mission formation processes for German contributions. A national level of ambition with capacity targets should be defined for UN missions, including an increased willingness to take on leadership positions.

11. Germany and the EU should continue, and do more, to promote security and peace cooperation between the UN and regional organisations such as the African Union (AU), in particular on peace missions and capacity and capability building within the framework of regional peace and security architectures.⁸

Grounds:

Following the termination of UN and EU missions by military regimes in West Africa, the promotion of regional arrangements and institutions pursuant to Chapter VIII of the UN Charter may come to be accorded growing significance. In the past, the deployment of armed forces for international crisis management was usually predicated on a mandate from the UN Security Council. The polarisation between the veto powers has now gone so far that it is inconceivable today a UN mandate would be granted for a mission comparable to Afghanistan, and this appears very unlikely for any new operations.⁹

When it adopted Resolution 2719 of 21 December 2023, the UN Security Council decided that missions of the African Union and subregional African organisations could be cofinanced from the UN peacekeeping budget in future. Fundamentally, peace missions conducted by the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) will be more important in future, in part as a means of dealing with new conflict dynamics (e.g. due to climate risks).

Implementation:

In view of how geopolitical tensions have grown around the globe, cooperation between the Bundeswehr United Nations Training Centre at Hammelburg and the multinational peacekeeping networks in Africa and other regions of the world is particularly valuable as a means of maintaining a low-threshold dialogue in spite of geopolitical tensions and possible strategic disagreements, allowing these networks' efforts to be supported with targeted action, and regional or subregional tensions to be eased with regional ownership.

3.2.3 European Union crisis management

12. The EU requires clearly increased capacity for effective action to manage crises. For long-term crisis prevention and stabilisation, Germany should coordinate even more closely with its EU partner countries in order to strengthen their joint bargaining power and deal with countries of operation on an equal footing.

Grounds:

The prevalence of crises in Europe's neighbourhood has further increased with the termination of multinational crisis operations in West Africa, Russia's hybrid warfare against its neighbours to the west and south, and the escalation of tensions in the western Balkans. Against this background, the capacity for foreign and security policy action under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is all the more vital. In reality, however, its capabilities remain far weaker than would be expected from a community of states with the economic weight of the EU. This is becoming more significant than ever today in view of how the focus is moving back to national and alliance defence in NATO and at the nation state level. If integrated security is to be implemented successfully, it will be necessary to practise international crisis management and national and alliance defence within alliances with effective burden-sharing in place. Crisis diplomacy and crisis management have to demonstrate their value, particularly in Europe's southern and eastern neighbourhood. Germany should exploit the influence it possesses as the biggest EU economy and a mediator that enjoys international esteem in many parts of the world to strengthen Europe's negotiating power when the most important actors coordinate their interests in a crisis setting. Local needs and capabilities should be identified together during crisis management activities, and incorporated into the preparation and implementation of EU missions and projects. Sustainable, structurally informed approaches to – in particular civil – crisis prevention should be accorded a high degree of significance in order to defuse crises in good time and so avert new conflicts and threats.

⁸ Cf. German Federal Government (2023a), pp. 80–1.

⁹ On the legitimisation of crisis operations in conformity with international law despite the partial deadlock in the Security Council, cf. Recommendation 3.

Implementation:

With its EU special representatives, missions and operations, sanctions, the European Peace Facility and the EEAS Crisis Response Centre, the EU has a broader spectrum of capabilities and instruments at its disposal for crisis engagements under the CFSP and the CSDP than practically any other multilateral grouping. The deployment of the EUNAVFOR ASPIDES maritime operation was the first time an EU mission has been tasked with taking action against an armed aggressor to protect international and maritime law by military force. Jointly with the European pillar of NATO, the EU must be in a position to contribute independently and as rapidly as possible to efforts that prevent violence from escalating in its neighbourhood, in the western Balkans for example.¹⁰ In this respect, there should be no duplication of capabilities and headquarters between the two organisations. Germany should use its own influence even more insistently to promote Europe's collective influence over strategy, concepts, staffing and material resources with the aim of halting escalated violent conflicts. The (strategic) interests of the country of deployment and the EU should be treated equally as part of a transparent negotiating process, and both sides should benefit from the sharing of knowledge and know-how. Germany should consult its EU partners on common fundamental standpoints prior to important bilateral negotiations with third states, and also demand the same consistently from the other EU partners.

- 13. When CSDP training and crisis operations, and civil and military crisis prevention measures are carried out, Germany should work together with its EU partners in seeking to ensure their effectiveness is reviewed self-critically. Such reviews should, in particular, take account of local needs and new (non-)state security providers.**

Grounds:

Despite the strategic setbacks suffered by the CSDP training missions and EU crisis management in West Africa, self-critical effectiveness reviews have been lacking to date (cf. Recommendation 44). These are indispensable if missions are to be more effective. For instance, apart from geopolitical competition with Russia, the EEAS's Strategic Review of EUTM Mali and EUCAP Sahel Mali paid too little attention to its own omissions, for example its poor adjustment to the needs of its Malian partners.

Implementation:

It is also sensible for such evaluations to involve comparisons with measures taken in other contexts, and not just a review based on individually specified criteria.

Critical effectiveness checks on international crisis management activities should, above all, also look at how responsive training measures are to local needs. In order to be able to have the best-possible stabilising and peace-building impacts, local crisis management needs must be identified and incorporated into the EU's mission and support planning in coordination with significant actors in the crisis countries. The identification of local needs should take account of the repercussions measures have for women and children, and involve women on the ground. It is not sufficient merely to offer instruments and measures from Germany's own tool box. The identification of local needs is a particular challenge because it is not enough for them to be reported by local gatekeepers and elites alone.

Furthermore, critical effectiveness analyses must increasingly factor in geopolitical competition in the relevant crisis regions strategically from the outset. On the one hand, increased competition imposes possible geopolitical constraints on local actors; on the other hand, it also opens up a new selection of offers for them from state and non-state actors.

- 14. As part of the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact, Germany should define quantitative and qualitative capacity targets for significant subcapabilities that would constitute a national level of ambition, and should promote the further development of the integrated approach.**

Grounds:

The EU's new Civilian CSDP Compact of May 2023 emphasises, among other things, the better integration of security sector reform, demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration into civilian EU missions, as well as capability development at the systems and resource levels. The EU Member States were due to present national

¹⁰ The EU has conducted more than 30 missions in Europe, Africa and the Middle East since 2003, and it currently has 15 civil and eight military missions ongoing (source: ZIF world map of peace operations 2024/2025).

plans for the implementation of these goals in 2024. The integrated approach was supposed to be pursued consistently on EU missions throughout the process – in knowledge management and in implementation – and serve as a basis for EU mandates in crisis settings.

Implementation:

As part of the capability development process demanded of the Member States, these plans are intended to define needs-based, quantitative and qualitative capacity targets for significant subcapabilities (e.g. mediation, policing/IPMs, SSR, the rule of law (RoL), institution building, the mainstreaming of human rights, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) that would constitute a national level of ambition. A country of Germany's weight should be able to make commitments for all significant subcapabilities. Non-binding declarations of intent proved to be futile long ago (cf. section 3.2.2, "United Nations crisis management", recommendations 6 to 11).

Knowledge centres such as the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management can make important contributions to the improvement of civil crisis management capabilities. Civil crisis management is a comparatively young policy field and, in the absence of private and business interests, dependent on reliable public funding.

15. Apart from the provision of capabilities necessary for mission fulfilment, the effective deployment of operational capabilities should be ensured within the EU by conducting joint exercises.

Grounds:

Apart from the institutional interlinkage of military and civil capabilities at the EU level, it must also be ensured that operational cooperation functions in practice on the ground in order to guarantee operations run smoothly. Apart from the capacities necessary for mission fulfilment in the EU and NATO, this also depends on joint exercises practising the deployment of operational capabilities. They would enable the EU to provide consolidated, combined capabilities for international operations and, in this way, become a bigger player in the coordination of international activities.

Implementation:

The personnel, material and logistical operational readiness of the CSDP structures that already exist and are being built up (5,000-strong rapid reaction force) at the EU level must be secured for practical purposes. But, in order that these forces can be deployed effectively when an integrated operation is carried out, regular exercises should be conducted in addition to this, bringing together the EU's civil and military capacities. In particular, the possibility of hybrid threats is to be allowed for and corresponding exercises conducted.

The regular, cooperative civil-military exercise Common Effort, which was initiated in 2010 by the 1 German-Netherlands Corps and, with the Common Effort Community, has also become a training and knowledge-sharing platform, is a good example of how this can be done. More than 60 governmental, civil society, police, military and private-sector organisations now work together under Common Effort.

3.2.4 NATO crisis management

16. When complex operations are conducted together with the UN, NATO and the EU, future German Federal Governments should make increasing and sustained use of realistic capability analyses to ensure that strategically feasible missions and sub-missions are assigned to capable organisations within this triangle.

Grounds:

NATO emphasises in its Strategic Concept of 19 June 2022 that, apart from deterrence and defence, crisis prevention and management are, and will remain, core tasks for it too.¹¹ Greater cooperation with the United Nations and the European Union in this area of activity is also expressly emphasised, and the application of the experience gained from the many years of engagement in Afghanistan for civil crisis management highlighted as well. NATO

¹¹ Cf. NATO (2022), p. 3. These core tasks are defined precisely and discussed in detail in the section of the Strategic Concept on "Crisis Prevention and Management" (NATO (2022), p. 9).

wishes to enhance both its military and civilian capabilities, and its civil-military planning and coordination capabilities.¹²

From a German perspective, the triangle consisting of the United Nations, NATO and the European Union offers the most powerful constellation for crisis prevention and crisis response (crisis management). Political, civilian and military resources can be concentrated and pooled within this triangular structure, provided strategically feasible (sub-)missions have previously been assigned on the basis of a realistic capability analysis.

Implementation:

It would be desirable for crisis engagements to be implemented “under one umbrella”, which could also be done at a level below a UN mandate. In view of the great weight organisational interests and cultures have in political practice, this objective will only be achieved with difficulty. Should one of the organisations drop out because it has not been granted a mandate (e.g. due to a veto in the UN Security Council), or should an organisation not be in a position to take on leadership and coordination tasks, their duties must be assigned to an organisation that is able to perform them in accordance with a legally sound national and international political decision (cf. recommendations 3 and 4).

- 17. With a harmonised, joint strategy previously coordinated between the necessary ministries, Germany’s future comprehensive engagement should bring national objectives and measures “under one umbrella” on an interorganisational basis in the international environment (integrated approach (UN)/comprehensive approach (NATO)).**

Grounds:

An integrated engagement with a large number of nations involved (e.g. there were up to 49 nations participating in Afghanistan) in a complex civil-military operation requires a joint approach.

Implementation:

Apart from national coordination between the ministries concerned (cf. section 3.1, “Strategy and mission”, and section 3.3, “The roles of the Bundestag and the German Federal Government”), the process for the definition of strategic parameters at the international level (EU, NATO, UN and the country of deployment) must be continued so that the most consistent possible basis for joint action in the country of deployment is created with the civil and military strategy to be defined for that specific country. The German Federal Government should ensure that these measures are initiated and carried out vigorously. The ongoing evaluation of the whole civilian and military operation may make it necessary to reconfigure the strategic approach and adjust it to take account of the situation.

3.2.5 Terrorism prevention, and combatting financial and organised crime

- 18. Germany should work for a common EU strategy on extremism and terrorism prevention, and promote partnerships between the EU and third states for this purpose.**

Grounds:

The prevention of terrorist violence must increasingly be thought of as a local and global challenge. For instance, radicalisation must be countered in societies at an early stage. In such situations, prevention measures and action to counter disinformation can be important ways of complementing measures that combat the financing of terrorism and military conflicts with armed groups.

Implementation:

Third states in which terrorist networks are active are to be supported in preventing extremist radicalisation. The financial flows and illegal sources of money behind terrorist organisations’ propaganda, recruitment and training structures must be identified and combated. The EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator is, among other things, responsible for improving communication between the EU and third states. He is supposed to perform a coordinating role in the process of drawing up a common EU strategy for the prevention of international terrorism, and is to be strengthened so that he can successfully perform his role ensuring the EU acts as one in its counterterrorism partnerships with third states.

¹² Cf. NATO (2022), p. 9.

19. In operation settings where transnationally operating terrorism and/or organised crime groups are highly active, there should be international coordination of financial controls, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards should be enforced, and steps should be taken to empower local investigative agencies.

Grounds:

Terrorism-linked financial crime, organised crime, money laundering, corruption, and the financing of terror and proliferation are important factors in the internal destabilisation that can be seen in fragile settings. In the most unfavourable case, they form a parallel economy that enables actors to drag out conflicts almost indefinitely and, at the same time, weaken legitimate political forces.

The internationally coordinated surveillance of foreign financial transfer services in the country of deployment should be an elementary component of a deployment outside Germany, and should be facilitated from the outset with the aid of the divisions responsible for FATF membership within the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF) and the Federal Financial Supervisory Authority (BaFin).

Implementation:

For more effective cash controls in crisis areas, the FATF's regulations and minimum standards should be implemented, and the international money transfer services active there (e.g. MoneyGram, Western Union) involved and held accountable. Incentives should be created for the registration of unregulated providers of informal cash transfer services. The implementation of the FATF Standards should restrict civil society actors' scope for action as little as possible.

In order to guarantee transparency about money flows and the identification of customers in the mobile-banking sector (money transfer by mobile telephone), the local authorities should be supported in regulating the sale and registration of local SIM cards in accordance with international standards. Furthermore, German authorities should cooperate with local and international partners to train the implementing organisations and security agencies on the ground and involve them in checks, as well as conducting independent investigations into financial crime or the suspected misappropriation of international resources.

In this connection, close cooperation with the local authorities should also be built up in order to investigate, observe and disrupt as much as possible any unintended outflows of humanitarian funds and goods, in particular to terrorist structures. Where this is still not customary practice, national and international humanitarian organisations should be urged to show the utmost transparency in their public accounts so that potential outflows can be estimated as accurately as possible and, where applicable, compensation demanded. The United Nations should extend its risk management units, as they are known, which register and investigate local implementation partners and review whether they are violating sanctions regimes, to all UN missions in crisis and conflict areas. Apart from the UN organisations, these risk management units should make the results of their work available to other verified international aid organisations as well in order to further reduce unintended outflows.

3.3 The roles of the Bundestag and the German Federal Government

3.3.1 National strategic cooperation and management

20. National decision makers should cooperate more closely to ensure engagements are better integrated and the German Federal Government's international activities are more coherent.

Grounds:

In particular at the political-strategic level, further improvements are necessary in order to enhance the coherence of foreign policy activities in international crisis management and peacebuilding. Successful national coordination is predicated on clear mandates, viable structures and efficient, robust work processes.

In its interim report, the Study Commission found a series of learning processes had taken place with regard to the national coordination of the German engagement in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021. This is not only visible from the way the meetings of state secretaries were placed on a more permanent basis or the joint Federal Foreign Office/Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg) training initiative, but also from the Federal Foreign Ministry/Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) "nexus-chapeau approach", which permits the joint financing of various parts of a project that have a shared objective, so countering the long-standing criticisms of the strict segregation of financial resources. The establishment of the meetings of state secretaries

certainly represented an improvement in interministerial political-strategic cooperation during the Afghanistan mission. Nevertheless, these meetings were frequently limited to exchanges of information about the current status of plans and projects. Ministerial priorities and directives could have been coordinated better. There was no real joint coordination.

These experiences suggest the ministries should coordinate more closely in future, share more information and work harder towards the joint assessment of the situation that is required in order to achieve more effective cooperation in the spirit of integrated security policy. The National Security Strategy (NSS) offers a sensible point of departure for this. The improvements in strategic cooperation and management proposed in the National Security Strategy must now be implemented in order to guarantee coherence and rigour in the German Federal Government's foreign policy activities, including international crisis management.

Implementation:

In order to make such a coherent, rigorous approach possible, strategies and objectives will first have to be jointly developed. There is a need for a forum that brings together the officials responsible to regularly undertake strategic assessments of the overall situation in a crisis setting and the German engagement there, as well as identifying possible risks. Objectives, instruments, resources and activities are to be reviewed regularly in this forum, partly with a view to the adjustments that may be needed, as well as potential opportunities and risks.

In addition to pure information-sharing, this form of “partnership-based cooperation” must also mean decision makers conducting joint deliberations, identifying joint approaches to the resolution of problems and jointly preparing decisions in order to ensure the coherence of foreign policy action in advance. The principle of ministerial autonomy – the independent responsibility of each ministry's leadership for its affairs – can also be upheld when this is being done. The principle of ministerial autonomy would continue to apply without reservation, while the ministries would remain able to take the initiative to formulate policy within their areas of jurisdiction and responsible for its implementation. On account of the complex security policy challenges and in the spirit of integrated security, the ministries should cooperate more closely than they have in the past. The permanent participants in interministerial work should consequently include the Federal Chancellery (BKAm), the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI), the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK), the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), the Federal Ministry of Justice (BMJ) and other actors as necessary. It is to be examined whether the merging of project funding streams from various ministries concerned with peace, security, development and stabilisation (AA, BMVg, BMZ, BMI) into a single interministerial budgetary item could lead to increased strategic coordination between the ministries and contribute to greater coherence and efficiency in the disbursement of public funds.

- 21. In order to improve the interministerial strategic planning and implementation of integrated crisis management, and the cooperation on its implementation, either a new Cabinet committee on integrated crisis management should be established (Option a) or the work of the regular security policy meetings of the competent state secretaries should be further expanded and intensified (Option b).**

Grounds:

The Study Commission has intensively discussed possible solutions for the problems raised by Recommendation 20; for instance, whether improvements in the regular security policy meetings would be sufficient or whether it is necessary to strengthen the interministerial strategic planning and implementation of integrated crisis management by establishing a new institutional format. There was substantive disagreement on this point within the Study Commission: a large group favoured Option (a), while a small group preferred Option (b).

Option (a):

More effective security policy action and better integration of the activities undertaken by individual ministries within the German Federal Government can be achieved best by the permanent establishment of a body for interministerial strategic management in this field. As the central locus for political discussion and the preparation of decisions about integrated crisis management, an additional, independent Cabinet committee should be established to strengthen the hitherto informal interministerial sharing of information at the regular meetings on security policy, and place it on a more permanent basis. As an alternative to the establishment of a new Cabinet

committee, the Federal Security Council (BSR) could serve as an interministerial management instrument because, according to its Rules of Procedure (GO BSR), it is already a Cabinet committee and deliberates on matters of security policy (Section 2 GO BSR).

Both bodies should carry out the necessary preparatory work for political agreement and decision-making across ministerial boundaries, without the principle of ministerial autonomy being abandoned. They would guarantee that the individuals with political responsibility entered directly into dialogue with one another in order to jointly lend momentum to cooperative solutions and the implementation of long-term strategic objectives. At the highest political level, such a Cabinet committee on integrated crisis management would involve the relevant ministers and the federal chancellor. Permanent representatives of the *Länder* (federal states), deputed by the Bundesrat at the level of the minister presidents, would ensure the competences of the *Länder* were given due attention. The chief of staff of the Bundeswehr and, where necessary, other actors would usually attend on an ad hoc basis.

The committee would prepare Cabinet decisions about integrated crisis management, and would require an administrative bureau to support it in the performance of its tasks, which would also work on an integrated basis. Without replacing the work done by the ministries, this bureau would be responsible for taking the initiative and mobilising resources to organise strategic processes and coordinate the ministries' work on central topics in foreign and security policy.

The core tasks of the administrative bureau would be to function as a secretariat preparing and following up on the meetings of the political coordinating committee, drawing up and preparing strategic German Federal Government documents in a permanent strategic cycle, and cooperating with external experts and the academic community. The administrative bureau would be led by a senior political civil servant from the Federal Chancellery, who would be appointed national security advisor and act as an interface between the political and administrative decision-making levels. The bureau's organisational features should help to create a stronger interministerial culture, foster mutual understanding, and strengthen the coherence of foreign and security policy. The administrative bureau should therefore be staffed and personnel appointed to it by secondment from the participating ministries.

More liaison officers should also be deployed in future in order to intensify interministerial dialogue. Over the years, this would create a larger pool of individuals with experience and contacts from interministerial cooperation, who would take this experience back to their own ministries and thus contribute to a long-term cultural transformation, as well as more coherent foreign and security policy action. This would be encouraged by the secondment of academics with appropriate specialist expertise from think tanks, non-university research institutions and universities, as well as individuals with experience of previous engagements.¹³

Option (b):

Looking back at the Afghanistan mission, the Study Commission found that meetings of state secretaries should not be limited to merely inquiring about the competences of individual ministries (negative coordination) and discussing topical issues. The regular security policy meetings of the state secretaries from the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Finance, and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development have been further developed since 2021 (and can be expanded on an ad hoc basis to include the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection). They provide a platform for interministerial planning and deliberation on security policy topics. Not only are decisions prepared for the ministerial level, but political-strategic decisions are also taken, for instance on the amendment of Bundeswehr mandates and negotiating lines for international summits. Nevertheless, there is need for further improvement because the regular security policy meetings are intended to plan and prepare the development and deployment of the individual ministries' various instruments on the basis of, and in conformity with, the Cabinet's political-strategic directives, and to ensure their implementation is coordinated between the ministries. This includes closer joint strategic operation planning for integrated crisis management. Furthermore, the preparatory meetings of the Sherpas should be integrated better, with formats that address an expanded understanding of security; and the preparation of decisions should be preceded by joint interministerial situation analyses.

The work of the regular meetings of state secretaries on security policy issues is to be expanded in future into a "security policy situation conference". This should be tasked and empowered to coordinate the deployment of

¹³ A dissenting opinion on Recommendation 21, Option (a) was delivered by the Bundestag Members Christian Sauter and Knut Gerschau (FDP), and the expert member Egon Ramms (see section 4.4).

each individual ministry's resources and instruments jointly in order to strengthen their impacts and reduce silo thinking. If they are to cope with these additional tasks, the meetings would have to be held more frequently and also on an ad hoc basis (basically every two weeks instead of monthly as at present). The chair of the meetings should rotate every six months around the participating ministries. A *Länder* representative should be deputed by the Standing Conference of the Interior Ministers of the *Länder* to feed in their concerns.

The preparations for, and follow-up work on, the regular meetings should continue to be performed by an inter-ministerial working group drawn from the participating ministries, the Sherpa meetings of the heads of directorates and the competent divisions. The units responsible in the ministries would need to be resourced with sufficient personnel to handle the additional effort of these tasks and the more frequent pattern of meetings. In order to promote coherent working by the ministries, even stronger integration of the meetings with the various ministries' competent working and coordination groups should encourage better "nexus thinking". Apart from this, the meetings of state secretaries should more frequently initiate cross-governmental surveys of the ministries and supreme federal authorities that make it possible to gain a comprehensive overview of their activities, methods and analyses of the joint ministerial work that is being done. Enquiries could also be made to find out where there was potential to conduct even more intensive dialogue with other ministries and get them involved. One opportunity for this would be the publication of the Crisis Prevention Guidelines in 2025.

Furthermore, secure communication should be guaranteed between the ministries. Meetings should take place subject to the necessary security precautions. "Red networks", via which data classified as "confidential" can be communicated, should be expanded so there are no technical barriers in the way of a spontaneous telephone conversation.¹⁴

22. A networked situation centre should be established to draw up strategic interministerial situation assessments, analyses and forecasts.

Grounds:

The review of the Afghanistan mission revealed that situation assessments were often not collated and analysed adequately and comprehensively. The German Federal Government currently has a large number of situation centres (BKAmt, AA, BMVg, BMI etc.) that sometimes share situation assessments, for example the Crisis Response Centre at the Federal Foreign Office, which responds at the operational level to changes in the security situation for Germany's diplomatic missions abroad. However, these situation assessments are still not being cross-checked and collated as a joint basis for decision-making and action at the political-strategic level. Divergent analyses attributable to the ministries' different temporal and goal horizons are to be avoided in future at the strategic decision-making level. The information and analyses contributed by the various ministries must be made available to all participating ministries in the same way.

Implementation:

A unit working on (situation) analysis and interministerial strategic foresight should be established as a situation centre at the Federal Chancellery. It should concentrate on the daily analysis and assessment of topical, security-relevant developments. It would pool information from existing situation centres and specialist divisions in the ministries, including the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Federal Intelligence Service, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) and the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI), in order to generate an integrated overall situation analysis. The focus should be placed on the real-time observation of trends, the identification of immediately security-relevant events and the use of this information to produce recommendations for short to medium-term action. The results would be circulated to the ministries and to inter-ministerial bodies such as the divisional heads' coordination group or the state secretaries' regular security policy meetings, and would be used for short-term decision-making.

To complement the situation centre, the previously established Working Group on Early Warning (AG KFE), with its focus on strategic foresight, should be strengthened and endowed with greater dynamism. Security-relevant trends and future challenges that could have repercussions for German foreign and security policy over the medium to long term would be anticipated and forecast within the bounds of the possible using quantitative and

¹⁴ A dissenting opinion on Recommendation 21 was delivered by the expert members Professor Hans-Joachim Gießmann, Professor Anna Geis and Dr Katja Mielke (see section 4.5).

qualitative early crisis detection models. Where feasible, AI-supported models should be examined for the synthesis and prioritisation of data (cf. Recommendation 32). The emphasis would be placed on coordinated, practically relevant and concrete recommendations for action on preventive measures, the implementation of which would be overseen with monitoring and evaluation for a period of 18 to 36 months into the future. In this respect, academic expertise is to be drawn on systematically, as is already being done in the ministries. This would include fundamental academic research and contract research, as well as analytical products of the kind provided by the Bundeswehr University Munich with its Institute for Strategy and Foresight (Metis) and Center for Crisis Early Warning. Unlike the situation centre, the Working Group on Early Warning would therefore pursue a strategic perspective that foregrounded structural and preventive measures. While involving the ministries (BKAm, AA, BMVg, BMI, BMZ) and their specialist divisions, the two units would complement each other and create a coordinated basis for interministerial decisions through the combination of topical and long-term analyses.

The two units' results would be presented to interministerial meetings, such as the divisional heads' coordination group on "crisis prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding", which is to be further strengthened, the state secretaries' regular security policy meetings or a strengthened forum for state secretaries concerned with security policy, then drawn together in a Cabinet committee, if such a body were to be established (cf. Recommendation 21). The results should also inform the development of strategies that make it possible to respond to various security threats in the future and supply answers at an early stage.

23. The German Federal Government should intensify its relations with parliament and its reporting to parliament on its strategic, comprehensive assessments, and place them on a more permanent basis.

Grounds:

In order to uphold parliamentary oversight over integrated foreign policy action, regular dialogue with the German Bundestag must take place. This would be particularly important if a new Cabinet committee were to be established (cf. Recommendation 21, Option a).

Implementation:

The better flow of information and sharing of information with the German Bundestag called for on many occasions in the Study Commission should be ensured by a liaison element within the Bundestag Administration. The statutory anchoring of parliamentary oversight could, in particular, be guaranteed by the new (sub)committee on comprehensive crisis management operations that is to be established and a more onerous duty to report to parliament.

In any event, the parliamentary rapporteurs should be briefed regularly about strategic decisions relating to operations. A report on the security policy situation and strategic foresight should be submitted to the Bundestag as a classified document once a year. This could be linked with a debate about security policy in the Bundestag. Transparency and public involvement would be guaranteed in this way.

3.3.2 The role of parliament and parliamentary oversight

24. Since it contributes to the adoption of the Bundeswehr's deployment mandates and takes decisions about the federal budget, the German Bundestag should fulfil its responsibility for operations and perform its contributory role more effectively when Germany participates in comprehensive international engagements.

Grounds:

There is hardly any other national parliament with rights to take part in decision-making as far-reaching as the Bundestag's. According to a ruling handed down by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1994 and the 2005 Parliamentary Participation Act, operations of German armed forces outside the alliance area require the constitutive consent of the Bundestag, if it is to be anticipated they will be involved in armed hostilities. The Bundestag's role has been strengthened by long-standing government and parliamentary practice, with efforts being made to obtain consent from well beyond the ranks of the governing coalition. In the process of political opinion-forming on German participation in a multinational crisis operation, the coalition parliamentary groups and the Bundestag Members specialising in the field, in particular, have considerable opportunities for influence.

The Bundestag is not able to amend a motion requesting a mandate that has been tabled by the German Federal Government. However, it is able to review whether that mandate is judicious and warrantable, and back it up with political decisions.

Implementation:

Since initial mandates are often deliberated and decided on under pressure to act and time pressure, as well as being subject to numerous uncertainties, it is of essential significance for the German Federal Government to provide information meticulously, honestly and promptly.

The Bundestag Members responsible for policy in this field face the challenge of examining whether a German engagement is necessary in security policy terms, whether the operation is legitimate under international law, whether its mission is clear and realistic, whether it is embedded in a political concept, and whether Germany's military and civilian contributions are affordable and warrantable. Domestic political pressures are not supposed to be decisive. Considerations of alliance policy have great weight, but are not supposed to take precedence over the key questions about the judiciousness of an operation and its prospects of success.

25. More effective parliamentary oversight of complex operations requires in-depth expertise about the region in question and interministerial perspectives, and, apart from the operation's implementation, should be concentrated above all on the political-strategic level and the effectiveness of the deployment.

Grounds:

Fundamentally, there are significant options for parliamentary oversight over a comprehensive civil-military engagement, from the tactical level to the political-strategic level. At least in principle, the requirement of parliamentary consent for follow-on mandates gives the Bundestag an opportunity to exert influence over their formulation. The evaluation of the engagement in Afghanistan by the Study Commission showed that, as it was then constituted, the Bundestag was generally overwhelmed at a structural level. The reasons for this were the complex situation in the country, a fragmented society shattered by war, and the international community's contradictory and, in some respects, overambitious objectives when it intervened there. In addition, there was the tightly scheduled multitasking of parliament's routine daily business, which makes it difficult to oversee operations carefully. In order to be able to grasp appropriately the complexity of a conflict country, take steps that advance the mission and guarantee knowledge is passed on from one electoral term to the next, it is indispensable to have reliable, independent academic advice and draw on experiential knowledge (cf. recommendations 47 and 63).

Implementation:

Contingent operations and larger-scale comprehensive engagements, in particular, require ongoing parliamentary supervision, which has to be expressly cross-portfolio in nature.

Serious parliamentary oversight requires the government to provide information about the security situation that describes trends and priorities, as well as indicators relating to the status of the "secure environment" in the country of deployment (e.g. freedom of movement, civilian casualties when an armed conflict is taking place). To improve the understanding of a specific conflict, it would be sensible for intercultural advisors working on the deployment to be involved when Members of the Bundestag visit a theatre of operations.

The Bundestag could also help to promote a failure and learning culture (cf. section 3.5.2, "Failure culture and institutional learning") if certain political ground rules of routine parliamentary business (e.g. the rejection of opposition motions as a matter of principle) were suspended. The Bundestag should make sure the impacts of major civil-military engagements are analysed and/or evaluated at the time and after the event, both internally and externally (cf. Recommendation 45). It should be examined whether Section 6 of the Parliamentary Participation Act (which governs the German Federal Government's duty to inform parliament) ought to be amended to this end.

Parliamentary participation contributes significantly to the formation of public opinion at the beginning of an operation, and subsequently to transparency, above all about military operations abroad. In this respect, its significance for strategic communications about the operation should be factored into the actors' thinking (cf. Recommendation 38).

The Bundestag should ensure that the missions specified in mandates and laid down by the non-military ministries are broken down into operationalised, verifiable objectives in follow-up documents.

- 26. When follow-on mandates are adopted, the Bundestag should seek to ensure that, in addition to the situation in the theatre of operations, they describe the degree to which objectives have been achieved and base the number of personnel to be committed on the requirements of the mission. As an operation continues, the Bundestag should pay attention to the development of an exit strategy within the multilateral coalition.**

Grounds:

During the Afghanistan deployment, German ISAF mandates were still referring to its peacekeeping mission when peace had broken down in parts of the area for which Germany was itself responsible and peace was having to be imposed. While the debates about mandates were dominated by justificatory discourses, opportunities to take stock honestly and change course in good time were frequently missed.

When follow-on mandates are formulated, the necessary capabilities and manning levels identified by the contingent (cf. section 3.7, “Capabilities, implementation and communication”) to protect and ensure its impact should be a decisive factor. The provision of capabilities and equipment to meet these needs is essential if there is to be any prospect of success in fulfilling the missions specified for an operation.

Implementation:

In order for comprehensive engagements to be overseen more effectively by the Bundestag and to contribute to their improved effectiveness, better use should be made of the scope for parliamentary participation. During the deployment to Afghanistan, there would have been opportunities for the coalition parliamentary groups to make their consent to follow-on mandates conditional on the effectiveness evaluation that had been demanded for a long time.

What is decisive in the run-up to decisions extending and amending mandates is how open to advice the German Federal Government is, and how determined to exercise oversight the specialist policymakers in the coalition and opposition parliamentary groups are.

All the experience suggests that international crisis management operations require reliability and strategic patience, but should not become never-ending. Exit strategies are counterproductive in the early days of an operation because they signalise unreliability. As an operation continues, however, an exit strategy has to be developed with Germany’s partners that ties options for the reduction of the commitment and withdrawal to the progress achieved towards its objectives, and makes it possible to review whether an operation can be ended because it has achieved its objectives, or ought to be ended or modified because it is failing. The signals sent out by an exit strategy are to be considered in this respect.

- 27. In debates about mandates, the civilian and policing components of comprehensive engagements should also be set out clearly with their objectives, staffing levels and resources.**

Grounds:

One permanent problem in relation to comprehensive civil-military engagements is that – encouraged by the components’ very different levels of visibility, acceptance and contentiousness – there is also an overwhelming tendency for them to be perceived superficially as military operations, both by the public and in parliament. This is encouraged by the fact that only the implementation of the executive function, the deployment of armed forces, has to be deliberated on and approved by the Bundestag in each individual case.

In view of the fundamentally major significance of civilian components for the chances of a crisis operation achieving results and having success, the disproportionately little attention such components receive in parliamentary participation is a considerable disadvantage.

Implementation:

The mandating of the civilian components of an international crisis management operation as well is expressly to be rejected. This would be highly problematic constitutionally, would complicate operations counterproductively in view of the specific ways other fields of policy function and, not least, would massively increase the amount of work that had to be done by parliament.

In debates about mandates for priority operations and engagements, the German Federal Government should present the Bundestag with a report for its information that describes and justifies the mission, its essential objectives

and the commitments of forces and resources that are planned (cf. section 3.1, “Strategy and mission”, and section 3.7, “Capabilities, implementation and communication”) for this engagement in the context of the relevant German/multinational strategy or political concept.

The diplomatic, civilian and policing contributions to comprehensive priority engagements should be dealt with appropriately at the level of the specialised committees, in particular the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which has the lead role on these matters.

Visits by Bundestag Members to countries of deployment require more dialogue with actors of all kinds involved in the comprehensive approach.

28. A committee on crisis management operations should be established, focussing on in-depth cross-portfolio supervision and impact monitoring, in particular of comprehensive priority operations, which would guarantee political-strategic oversight over deployments of this kind.

Grounds:

The complexity of conflict countries and multinational, civil-military operations and engagements, and the Bundestag's responsibility for operations require substantive, in-depth, close cross-portfolio parliamentary oversight, in particular of priority operations. This can only be guaranteed with difficulty using the procedures followed hitherto for deliberation by the specialised committees with their diverse responsibilities. A committee on crisis management operations would guarantee the other competent specialised committees were afforded more substantial support as they formulated their opinions.

Implementation:

Apart from the six committees of the Bundestag stipulated in the Basic Law and prescribed by statute, its other committees are established afresh in each electoral term. Any decisions about the formation of a committee on crisis management operations are to be taken against the background of the scale and intensity of German participation in comprehensive multinational operations. The committee on crisis management operations could be formed as a specialised committee or a joint subcommittee under Rule 55 (4) of the Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag.¹⁵ The committee on crisis management operations should consist of members (rapporteurs, possibly group coordinators) of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Defence Committee, the Committee on Internal Affairs and Community, the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid. The members representing each individual parliamentary group should, if possible, be appointed by several (at least two) specialised committees. On the committee, a rapporteur should be nominated as the official contact for submissions relating to operations from non-state and civil society groups involved in comprehensive engagements.

The procedure by which the specialised committees deliver their opinions on a proposed mandate, with the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the lead role, would remain in place. It would merely be supplemented by a committee on crisis management operations that would be equally entitled to deliver an opinion or a subcommittee that would contribute indirectly to the full committees' deliberations. In view of how the committee on crisis management operations would concentrate on this single topic, it would have particular significance for parliament's responsibility to help shape operations.

The committee should meet on an ad hoc basis. Regular briefings by the ministries, some of them confidential, would guarantee its members were well informed.

In order to be able to grasp the complexity and impacts of an engagement seriously and keep track of it over lengthy periods of time, reliable, sometimes independent academic support is indispensable (options: external academic expertise assigned to the committee's secretariat; the possibility of an independent academic advisory council).

¹⁵ A dissenting opinion on this statement was delivered by the expert member Winfried Nachtwei, the Bundestag Members Schahina Gambir and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see section 4.6).

29. The German Federal Government should report annually to the Bundestag and the competent committees on combined multilateral military capabilities.

Grounds:

German armed forces are usually deployed for international crisis management activities under the auspices of systems of collective security, which, in the case of NATO and the EU, are characterised by progressive multilateral integration and burden-sharing. This burden-sharing is apparent in multinationally staffed and operated structures and forces, as well as national specialisations. AWACS, the EU Battlegroups, the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) and the European Air Transport Command, which pools national capabilities, are examples of such combined multilateral capabilities. Multilateral burden-sharing creates mutual dependencies and can only function if the partners are able to trust in the reliable provision of national subcapabilities organised on this basis.

Implementation:

The requirement for the Bundestag to give its constitutive consent to deployments of German armed forces would remain unaffected. The annual communication of information to the Bundestag about combined military capabilities would, however, make the political actors aware of the dependencies and obligations consequent upon integration. Attention was drawn to this in 2015 by the Commission on the Review and Safeguarding of Parliamentary Rights regarding Mandates for Bundeswehr Missions Abroad (“Rühe Commission”) with a recommendation in its final report.

30. In the second half of the 21st electoral term, it should be reviewed how far the Study Commission’s recommendations have found acceptance and been reflected in political practice or what has stood in the way of this.

Grounds:

One of the Study Commission’s central concerns was the promotion of institutional learning about comprehensive international crisis management. The Study Commission established by the German Bundestag therefore has a strong interest in its recommendations not just being taken note of, but also being accepted in political practice, and the process of institutional learning being continued.

Implementation:

As part of the parliamentary oversight of crisis operations, the committees of the German Bundestag that are responsible for this field should initiate a review in the second half of the 21st electoral term that would look at the extent to which the Study Commission’s recommendations had been accepted and implemented, (potentially) doing so in consultation with the ministries concerned with international crisis management.

3.4 Knowledge and strategic communications

3.4.1 Knowledge base and early crisis detection

31. There should be an expansion of university and non-university research, teaching and (basic and advanced) training for specialists on topics relevant for international crisis management and peacebuilding.

Grounds:

Germany will take part in international crisis management and multilateral peacebuilding activities in future too. In order that the various German actors can take quick, wide-ranging action in a rapidly changing field of policy, the knowledge about the causes, progression and repercussions of wars and violent conflicts in various regions of the world should be bolstered at German higher education institutions, non-university research institutions and think tanks. This would involve gathering specialised knowledge about different countries, understanding such conflicts in historical-cultural and political-economic terms, and carrying out in-depth studies of societal (incl. religious) and political conditions in (potential) countries of deployment and partner countries, as well as the geostrategic context, which can be decisive for the effectiveness of an external intervention.

Implementation:

In systemic crisis settings, it is not possible to spend months or a few years acquiring, maintaining and passing-on knowledge and experience. Academic research and advanced training for the actors in relevant fields (e.g. development studies; peace and conflict studies; regional studies, incl. eastern/east-central-European studies; strategic studies) require longer-term structural support and delivery so that up-to-date expertise can be made permanently available. Secure, long-term career prospects are to be created in order to retain academics and prevent them leaving for other sectors or countries. Support for university courses on these subjects would make it possible to provide basic and advanced training for experts, who would also supply the necessary expertise to the government and think tanks. Suitable federal financing instruments should be created or expanded for relevant subject areas (e.g. the special initiative launched by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)); where there is a need for specific research, the ministries could take targeted action by putting research contracts out to competitive tender.

- 32. To strengthen strategic decision-making capabilities for international operations, the German Federal Government should establish an AI-supported interministerial procedure for the effective acquisition, collation and analysis of relevant information from internal and external sources.**

Grounds:

The availability of relevant information on an interministerial basis and joint situation assessments based on it are essential for strategic capacity. The synthesis of all available data and relevant findings into a coherent situation assessment, which is to be further developed in a dynamic process, will make it possible to avoid sources of error. Easier access for operation personnel to information they need for their specific activities, improved coordination between the ministries involved and coordination with – and between – the various operation personnel will promote the strategy's implementation at the tactical level with good chances of success. Artificial intelligence (AI) should be used in a suitable fashion for this purpose.

Implementation:

Ideally, the joint situation assessment should include information from local sources and the experiences of personnel returning from the operation, and be used, further developed and regularly evaluated in cooperation with Germany's allies, civil society partners and local actors. Such experience should also be utilised positively for other missions, with operation concepts generally being adapted to the sociocultural conditions on the ground. Artificial intelligence methods should be examined for the synthesis and prioritisation of the data. When this is done, attention is to be paid to the responsible, ethical handling of AI. A procedure of this kind requires a basic structure for the systematic acquisition and updating of data and findings from outside the operation about security-relevant topics and crisis regions. A targeted research and development initiative to create a powerful, protected cyberspace for classified information is recommended for this purpose. Existing structures in the ministries should be evaluated and used interministerially in order to remove undesirable redundancies. Mission-related surveys and temporary structures (e.g. task forces) can complement this process.

- 33. The potential, processes and structures for early crisis detection and situation assessment found in all the ministries, including the relevant subordinate authorities, should be strengthened and scrutinised to identify duplicated structures in the ministries and potential savings.**

Grounds:

The fundamental significance of early crisis detection is undisputed at the Federal Chancellery and in all the ministries. But it is also clear that the potential, processes and resources available in all the ministries for the joint assessment of critical situational developments on the basis of shared criteria are only integrated sustainably to a certain extent. This would, however, be the prerequisite for the efficient networking of government activities.

Implementation:

The structures already in place at present in the ministries and their subordinate authorities, such as the Federal Intelligence Service (BND), should be evaluated jointly by the ministries to identify potential savings with the aid of suitable national and international institutions (above all the EU and NATO), and drawn on for situation assessment and evaluation activities coordinated at a new interministerial situation centre (cf. Recommendation 22). Superfluous redundancies should be eliminated.

The aspiration should be national coordination with a clear mandate, robust structures and efficient work processes. Selected countries and regions should then be analysed on this basis with coordinated priorities. Additionally, it is recommended that within two years the German Federal Government present the German Bundestag with an implementation report based on an external analysis.

34. Dialogue between the academic community, politicians, and civil and military practitioners on further training and the improvement of joint situational/contextual understandings should be promoted using targeted formats, whether they are to be developed from scratch or have been tried and tested elsewhere.

Grounds:

Actors from the academic community, politics and operation practice possess very different kinds of experience and diverse knowledge. The potential for more systematic dialogue has by no means been exhausted, which may be due to, among other things, time pressure, overload, routine activities and career paths that offer few incentives to join crisis management operations. A change in attitudes would therefore also be required in the academic community and among practitioners, which would make it possible to create more positive incentives to take part in knowledge-sharing.

Implementation:

In order to promote knowledge-sharing in a targeted fashion, the direct involvement of academic institutions and their expertise in the work of different ministries should be expanded and promoted to a greater extent. The knowledge transfer hubs in the Federal Foreign Office's Directorate-General S are good examples of how this can be done. At the hubs, academics are directly involved in the ministry's work for a certain period, while simultaneously keeping in close contact with their academic institutions. It would be recommendable to establish such institutional innovations as research transfer hubs for other ministries as well, with more academic institutions taking part. It should also be guaranteed that expertise gained from practice in operation settings is fed back systematically to the ministries (for example, via the Stabilisation Platform).

By the same token, more use should be made of the experience gained by actors in politics and international operations at academic institutions concerned with pertinent topics. Even more knowledge from practice could be conveyed at universities by increasing the numbers of practically oriented teaching modules and corresponding professorial appointments, as has been done in some subject areas for a long time. The aim should be to deploy more academics and practitioners in relevant units within the ministries, so they can learn at first hand about the ministries' needs and logics when it comes to integrated engagements, as well as the necessary strategy formation and situation assessment activities. More opportunities should also be created for practitioners to work for a period in academia, for example under fellowship programmes. This would enable them to study topics specific to their specialisms at a high level and, in return, feed experience from the practice of conflict operations into academic studies.

In addition, conventional career paths (e.g. job rotation arrangements) in ministries and for foreign-affairs specialists in organisations should be rethought, and innovative models for the specific selection of personnel for their country and conflict expertise reviewed. Switzerland could offer a worthwhile model in this regard: experts who are not civil servants are seconded to Switzerland's embassies in priority countries for Swiss foreign policy, where they work in specialist units or as mediation consultants.

Furthermore, the German Federal Government should promote greater exchange between the ministries by having civil servants from key ministries seconded more frequently to work at other key ministries. In addition, incentives should be created that make it easier to transfer between ministries, their subordinate authorities and implementing organisations.

35. During an operation and/or engagement, "local knowledge" from the country of interest should be collated for all German actors involved in the integrated approach on an ongoing basis.

Grounds:

The systematic evaluation of local media and local knowledge supplies important information about discourses and concerns relating to social policy in a country of interest, as well as perceptions of Germany's engagement at the grassroots. Evaluations should focus particularly on criticism and the diagnosis of problems, allowing dissatisfaction to be identified among the population at an early stage.

Implementation:

The acquisition of local knowledge should be founded on the broadest possible basis. The findings of all the ministries involved in an operation (e.g. BMVg, BMI, BMZ, AA) are to be used for this purpose. Local, foreign-language media (incl. social media) could be evaluated even more comprehensively and systematically in all areas, including Germany's diplomatic missions abroad, as could the findings of the German political foundations' local offices, locally active non-governmental organisations, local resource persons and analyses by academic actors in the country of interest.

At the same time, drawing on a broad spread of sources should rule out the possibility of being taken in by misinformation. Technically, this resource-intensive work could also be supported efficiently with the help of suitable artificial intelligence tools, although they cannot replace expert interpretation by individuals with knowledge of the country. The evaluations should be centrally coordinated and shared with all actors participating in the comprehensive approach.

36. In order to promote the sharing of “local knowledge” between countries of deployment, partner countries and Germany, suitable instruments that support academic research structurally should be used both in the country of interest and in Germany.

Grounds:

Countries of deployment and Germany's partner countries should be given more systemic, longer-term consideration in university and non-university research and teaching, which will also require the more targeted integration of knowledge and experience from these countries.

Implementation:

For this purpose, it would be necessary to examine the extent to which barriers can be lowered by cooperation at the international level, for instance on the equal cofinancing of foreign partners so as to strengthen long-term exchanges of academics and partner structures. Targeted action could also be taken to involve students and academics from the country of interest in teaching and research at German universities and research institutions for limited periods by awarding grants (for instance, through the German Academic Exchange Service).

The federal support for German academic, cultural and educational diplomacy should continue to be funded and expanded. Steps should also be taken to boost research into the situations, roles and perspectives of diasporas, both in countries of interest and in Germany, as well as questions about their treatment. Different life realities and conflicts of interest between diasporas and locally rooted populations should be taken into consideration here as well. The potential offered by diasporas could also be used to a greater extent to produce media formats in Germany and disseminate knowledge.

3.4.2 Strategic communications

37. Information about international crisis management activities should be communicated realistically, frankly and credibly from the strategic level to the implementation level.

Grounds:

The German Federal Government defines strategic communications as communications planned over the medium to long term as part of official government public relations work, and intended for domestic and foreign audiences. The Federal Foreign Office explains that strategic communications involve “conveying reliable information consistently and appropriately for different target groups in order to make the values and interests of German foreign policy visible and German positions comprehensible across the whole public sphere, including the digital domain, but also in direct contact with people in Germany and other countries.”

During international crisis management operations that are intended to win hearts and minds among the local population in a country of interest, it is to be borne in mind that, apart from the messages sent to the local population, the implementation of operational measures and the conduct of operation personnel in the country of interest always send out messages to Germany's own population as well. The communicative dimension of operation leadership and practice is therefore a significant component of strategic communications during crisis operations.

The public perception of German contributions to international engagements in crisis areas is strongly focussed on deployments of the Bundeswehr, as was the case during the engagement in Afghanistan. But very little is

actually known about the Bundeswehr's operations abroad. The wider public should therefore be familiarised better with the multidimensional, comprehensive character of international engagements in crisis areas, with more account being taken of different population groups' various levels of access to information.

Clear, credible, targeted communications about engagements in crisis areas are decisive in seeking to gain support and understanding for work that is necessary, but complex and entails risks, promote the allocation of resources for this purpose, inspire personal engagement (e.g. from individuals who wish to be posted or seconded to international peace missions or operations) and, in this difficult context, ensure the discussion about the engagement is not merely conducted by the government side, but in dialogue with civil society and as a broad public debate.

Implementation:

Information about crisis operations mandated by the Bundestag should be communicated realistically, honestly and credibly by the German Federal Government, from the strategic level to the implementation level. It is important to manage expectations too. This is also true for communications about changes and adjustments to the strategy for an operation. In view of the enormous increase in hybrid attacks, communications should be understood and used more strongly as an instrument of security policy at the strategic level.

38. Strategic communications should be coordinated and improved on an interministerial basis.

Grounds:

There is a need for the objectives of the German engagement to be formulated coherently across the whole government and an overall, interministerial political-strategic objective defined. The approach taken to strategic communications should derive from these objectives. Interministerial coordination of strategic communications that factors in the individual ministries' objectives, which sometimes differ in substantive-policy terms, is required in order to conduct and justify international crisis management in a targeted, credible fashion. Strategic communications must do justice to the German public's right to be informed.

Implementation:

In general, clear short and long-term communications objectives should be defined between the participating ministries. The interministerial communications strategy must be drawn on to arrive at consistent, coordinated wording. The ministries' task should be to ensure the strategy and the operation's objectives feature more prominently in reporting, which can be done, for instance, by giving informal press briefings or arranging trips to the theatre of operations for journalists, as happened in Afghanistan. Apart from this, it should be clearly communicated by the German Federal Government why Germany is intervening in which crisis regions; strategic necessities have to be justified.

The interministerial wording should additionally be used to comply with the commitment made under the international Open Government Partnership initiative, and provide more accessible information and dialogue formats for the population (e.g. the formats used by the AA, such as its "town hall meetings" or its Diplomacy Goes to School scheme), particularly in the digital domain (social media). The objectives of the operation, its strategy, but also problems that arise while it is being conducted should be explained and communicated comprehensibly for the public using these formats. The rich potential offered by civilian and military practitioners from the operation and the Bundeswehr Operational Communication Centre's resources must be used systematically for this purpose.

Strategic communications must be modernised in particular when it comes to analysis and social media monitoring. For this purpose, the Federal Foreign Office should expand its own analytical capacities in this field and direct strategic communications in the digital communication space at new target groups with regional priorities. The Bundeswehr's (communicative) capabilities in these fields also have to be strengthened – specifically for foreign operations.

The implementation of the communications strategy should be evaluated regularly by the ministries (possibly with the assistance of external communications experts) and adjusted as necessary.

39. The national communications strategy should be coordinated closely with international allies.Grounds:

Close coordination and cooperation with international allies (such as the UN and NATO) are of great relevance for Germany in international crisis management. As became evident in Afghanistan, the different strategic priorities of Germany's allies have to be taken into account, which makes effective coordination and communications more difficult at the international and national levels.

Implementation:

The German Federal Government should coordinate its strategic communications with the decisions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UN Doc. S/PRST/2022/5) and reciprocally with NATO's Strategic Communication Center of Excellence (StratCom COE), which was founded in 2014, and the European External Action Service (EEAS) of the EU to ensure that inconsistent messages are not sent out internationally. This means maintaining regular contacts with Germany's international alliance partners in order to compare the content and objectives of communications, avoid contradictions if possible, and – in spite of the diverging national interests of Germany's partners – also communicate objectives and strategies jointly and efficiently to the country of deployment and its population/government.

40. If Germany is to maintain or achieve information dominance, its capabilities in the field of disinformation analysis should be strengthened.Grounds:

The digital domain (social media) is increasingly being used by state and private actors (China, Russia etc.) to disseminate targeted misinformation and disinformation, and deliberately undermine trust in state institutions and democratic processes. These tactics damage societal cohesion within Germany, but can also become a threat during international crisis management operations. The Taliban and Al-Qaida used disinformation campaigns to foment uncertainty among the local population in Afghanistan and shatter trust in the international actors.

Implementation:

For the purposes of early detection, the German Federal Government should intensify its networking with the EU (Rapid Alert System), the G7 (Rapid Response Mechanism), NATO and other partners in the field of misinformation and disinformation so that it is possible to respond promptly in appropriately adapted forms. At the European level, the Digital Services Act must be implemented consistently.

Interministerial cooperation should also be strengthened in a targeted manner and given a higher priority in tackling foreign disinformation. The establishment of an interministerial unit dedicated to the early detection of disinformation, which took up its work in the summer of 2024 under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, is welcome. Well-resourced, better-staffed security agencies are required in order to be able to tackle the current situations appropriately, as well as more effective cooperation between security agencies, not just at the federal and *Land levels*, but also at the EU level and internationally.

Apart from this, the ministries should strengthen the population's resilience with targeted projects on media skills. These will have to pay very close attention to social media in order to raise the population's awareness of intentionally false information.

41. The specific features of the communication structures in the country of deployment, in particular those connected with religion and culture, should be taken into account in strategic communications.Grounds:

The provision of precise communications content in the local languages too, in consultation with the national authorities, is essential in order to improve understanding of an operation on the ground, manage expectations, and gain the trust and support of crucial stakeholders – in particular the country of deployment's government and local communities.

The experience of Afghanistan suggests it is important to also take account of the significance religion has for the country of deployment in Germany's strategic communications, and factor this into communications activities. The accommodation of the religious and cultural dimension during international engagements in crisis areas is

therefore fundamental in order to address the specific local population and achieve strategic successes in the country of deployment.

Implementation:

The German Federal Government should address the full breadth of the local population in line with its strategic objectives, and also do so using social media.

Additionally, where a dialogue is taking place with local religious communities, this would have to be intensified. Such communities have networks – on the ground and internationally – that support peace, justice and solidarity.

The neutralisation of hybrid threat scenarios and the clear distinction between national discourses and foreign disinformation campaigns require a holistic approach within Germany (including the *Länder* and municipalities, above all in the education sector) and internationally.

42. Strategic communications should be closely coordinated with the action taken on the ground.

Grounds:

Irrespective of the explicit communications about the crisis engagement delivered through the media, every action taken or not taken by servicewomen and men, police officers and civilian operation personnel on the ground has a communications aspect.

Incorrect or contradictory implementation on the ground will counteract coherent, credible strategic communications.

Implementation:

It makes sense to raise operation personnel's awareness of communications issues, but this should not result in (self-)censorship. Sensitive elements of an operation (the military, intelligence services) are self-evidently subject to different communications guidelines than those for the civil engagement. It remains important that the civilian organisations involved (e.g. the political foundations) are able to express their opinions freely and critically without fear of sanctions.

3.4.3 Conveying knowledge about Germany's civil and military engagement

43. In order to increase levels of knowledge about Germany's military and civil engagement in the world among the German population, civic education formats and topics should be designed more appropriately for specific target groups with the participation of actors from civil society, the academic community, politics and the military.

Grounds:

It is not only the task of the executive or parliament's public communications work to ensure people are better informed, and thus spread knowledge among its population about Germany's civil and military engagement around the world. Such knowledge could, for example, also be presented even more persuasively for the population using social media and other digital formats that can be designed appropriately for various target groups too.

Implementation:

Thanks to digitalisation, there are now technical options available to raise the prominence of actors from the country of interest through online video interviews or podcast recordings, for example in communications about academic research and at public civic education events. Institutions such as the Federal Agency for Civic Education, the *Land* agencies for civic education, the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS) and the German political foundations could contribute to this as multipliers. Suitable formats for different target groups should make it possible to report authentically on the practical experiences of civilian and military personnel posted abroad, featuring as many different voices as possible – for example in interviews specifically targeted at young people with individuals who have witnessed recent events –, and also for a wide range of different actors from the country of interest to be given greater prominence.

3.5 Evaluation and failure culture

3.5.1 Monitoring and evaluation

- 44. The German Federal Government should appropriately configure the concomitant progress assessments already being carried out in some of the ministries in line with the requirements of its comprehensive engagement.**

Grounds:

Continuous concomitant observation and impact analysis are prerequisites for purposeful guidance and coordination at the political-strategic level. They make it possible for the effectiveness of any integrated engagement to be judged on an interministerial basis and the German Federal Government's strategic activities adjusted or corrected pre-emptively. Hitherto, the – more or less mature – monitoring and evaluation structures that exist in some ministries have been used above all to provide advice and support for individual ministries' operational activities.

Implementation:

Effectively integrated engagement requires an interministerial, institutional monitoring and evaluation structure, in which the ministries concerned would be involved and collaborate on an equal basis. Controlled feedback loops could strengthen the ministries' political-strategic management and collaboration, uphold and support parliament's rights of participation, and also take account of cooperation with allies, partners and local actors.

Observation standards and assessment criteria should be harmonised between the ministries in order to enhance comparability, and allow risks and unintended consequences to be anticipated better across ministerial boundaries, for example in joint working groups (e.g. red teaming).

The expertise of national and international experts should be tapped into on a case-by-case basis. In a culture of sharing, reports are to be forwarded to all ministries and parliament. The actors should report transparently and, where possible, publicly to parliament about the implementation of the recommendations set out in such evaluations.

- 45. Independent evaluations should be conducted following the conclusion of every engagement – and concomitantly with the processes that take place during long-term operations. In addition, the German Federal Government should inform the Bundestag about the implementation of the lessons that have been learned.**

Grounds:

The Study Commission welcomes the fact that the German Federal Government will evaluate every mandate annually in future. In addition, transparent, independent evaluations that are conducted in accordance with academic assessment criteria and released for publication will contribute to the development of a constructive failure culture in the political sphere. This reduces the likelihood of ministry affiliations and individual decision-making powers encouraging blinkered ways of seeing the issues or the tendencies towards whitewashing in reports and performance measurement identified during the Afghanistan operation. At the same time, the changes of perspective associated with an unvarnished view "from the outside" lead to divergent and consequently controversial assessments, which will stimulate discussion and the optimisation of strategies across the whole spectrum of future integrated engagements.

Implementation:

Independent strategic evaluations should be conducted following the conclusion of an operation and concomitantly with the processes that take place during long-term operations. If not on an ad hoc basis (as previously), this should be done regularly at least every five years, with the results being published. The remit and composition of the evaluation group should correspond to the comprehensive engagement's strategic objectives and conflict-related challenges. In particular, political decision-makers, academic experts and former operation personnel involved in all aspects of the integrated engagement should be appointed to the evaluation group(s).

It should be examined whether a permanent institution with an established constitution and adequate personnel and material capacities would be better suited for this purpose than the ad hoc appointment of experts from the academic community and expert practitioners on the basis of specific decisions. There are valid arguments for both models – for instance, the permanent structure of institutions such as SIGAR or a publicly funded evaluation institute.

The objectives and criteria for an evaluation should be developed in accordance with academic standards, tailored to the specific case and anchored in terms of reference. The evaluation group should report publicly to the German Bundestag.

Relevant ministries should – as under the Dutch model – be obliged to provide information regularly about the measures taken to implement lessons learned and recommendations from evaluation reports.

Where evaluations are conducted, robust procedures should be introduced for the explicit acceptance, rejection or modification of their recommendations, and to track and report on their implementation, while existing procedures should be improved. The evaluation criteria set out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), which provide for the assessment of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, may serve as guidance for this purpose.

3.5.2 Failure culture and institutional learning

46. To promote a constructive failure and learning culture, it should be made possible for civilian operation personnel to submit information specifically about misconduct or perceived undesirable developments in operations.

Grounds:

To date, there has been no nominated contact for civilian operation personnel, implementing organisations, NGOs, their staff, local employees and other civilian actors who are affected by issues of this kind. The reasons why misconduct on operations is not reported are sometimes structural (lack of instruments and incentive systems that encourage learning processes) and sometimes personal (worries about career or other disadvantages if criticisms are expressed). Organisations' existing internal procedures are inadequate in many cases, especially where misconduct is detected within an organisation. Passing on information could allow problems to be addressed immediately and resolved as rapidly as possible.

Implementation:

The recording and processing of the information and experiences that are reported could, in themselves, promote institutional learning during an operation and strengthen a constructive failure culture. Anonymity and protection for whistleblowers are to be guaranteed. It should be examined whether and how tip-offs from civilian operation personnel could be recorded, processed and dealt with on a case-by-case basis. This could be done within existing structures (for instance, by committee rapporteurs at the German Bundestag) or, where necessary, also by creating a suitable new structure. The development of ineffective, but costly new bureaucracies should definitely be avoided.

47. Better use should be made of the knowledge available about the impacts of the German engagement in order to avoid errors, and adjust strategic objectives and operation plans. A structured approach to knowledge management should be established for this purpose.

Grounds:

A country of deployment's history, culture and value system should be studied sufficiently in advance and understood. When crises occur unexpectedly, not all the knowledge that is needed will be available; such knowledge is constantly to be enlarged. Simultaneously, every operation is an ongoing learning process. In this respect, a particular focus should also be placed on possible differences between urban and rural areas, as well as the roles of diasporas. This knowledge should be given sufficient consideration during the planning of operations and projects, and the preparations for an engagement on the ground, thus ensuring it is sustainable and effective.

The efforts made in the ministries to process more knowledge about early crisis detection, crisis management, and the handling of risks and undesirable side effects are already having noticeable effects (as examples, mention may be made of the PREVIEW-Portal, stabilisation-risk analysis, foreign policy context monitoring, and joint analysis and coordinated planning). The introduction of knowledge management systems (e.g. the AA's Portfolio.Atlas, which is intended to cover all internationally oriented federal support measures, or the BMI's interministerial GovLabDe knowledge portal) would be a necessary step, but not enough. The fact more knowledge is being shared via technical systems does not necessarily mean it is actively being used.

Implementation:

The transfer of knowledge and experience from ongoing and concluded engagements should be further improved within the ministries, interministerially and in the implementing organisations. The development of a structured interministerial approach to knowledge management would involve the introduction of knowledge management systems that should be backed up with measures to organise the ministries' work in ways that transform their knowledge and learning cultures.

The establishment of specialist knowledge management systems should be underpinned with the requisite time and human resources, so that the structures and capacities needed can be built up, maintained and utilised. Technical knowledge management solutions should also be combined with personnel development measures and/or internal incentive systems within organisations if they are to be capable of making a real impact. Learning and reflection should be included in the job descriptions for relevant personnel in future.

In order to be able to start developing a culture of sharing and interministerial learning, communities of practice could also be founded for operational fields and regions between which dialogue takes place across established ministerial boundaries. With this in mind, internal incentives should be created within organisations that allow staff to become part of such communities. Interorganisational forums could be established for this purpose that would range from small, informal, confidential, temporary forums for dialogue between the ministries about specific operations and projects to a culture of large-scale, public conferences in Berlin for longer-term dialogue with the specialist audience and the academic community.

The building and expansion of specific competences should be driven ahead, with staff (research officers) working in suitable divisions at the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to seek and supervise dialogue with researchers.

48. It should be possible for the German Bundestag to extend statutory retention periods and deletion deadlines for strategically relevant German Federal Government documents on the planning and conduct of comprehensive international crisis management operations.

Grounds:

The strategic assessment and evaluation of protracted international crisis management operations is currently hampered by the sometimes inconsistent archiving practices followed across the German Federal Government and, above all, what are on the whole overly short retention periods. The Study Commission's work uncovered many gaps in the documents on the 20-year Afghanistan operation, with records missing that would have been important for more in-depth analyses. It is also indispensable for further-reaching strategic and comparative evaluations that data and archival holdings on the German Federal Government's strategic processes and decisions should be as complete as possible and go as far back as possible in time.

Implementation:

The German Bundestag should be able to decide on the extension of retention periods and deletion deadlines for German Federal Government documents that relate to the planning, strategy, international coordination and performance of leadership roles for individual international crisis management operations. The nature and extent of the documentation to be preserved, and the duration of the extension should be specified on a case-by-case basis. Data should be stored by the lead authority in digitalised forms and passed on to the Federal Archives after the deadline expires. Where it has been decided to conduct concurrent or summative evaluations of comprehensive operations, the access to the data holdings this requires should be guaranteed under the statutory provisions.

3.6 State reconstruction and economic development in conflict and post-conflict settings

3.6.1 International coordination of development cooperation and humanitarian aid

- 49. During international operations, the responsibility for information-sharing and the reconciliation of conflicting interests between participating development cooperation, humanitarian-aid and stabilisation donors should be discussed openly. A suitable coordination mechanism should, if possible, be put in place jointly with the recipient country.**

Grounds:

In Afghanistan, various donor countries, partner countries, and international and non-governmental organisations were often working in parallel to one another. The unintended consequences were donor-recipient dependencies, misallocation of resources, misappropriation of resources and corruption. Many of these negative impacts of aid and support funding are problems that occur due to inadequate information-sharing about, and cross-checking of, the donor countries and organisations' interests and capacities.

Furthermore, global geopolitical competition is being mirrored increasingly in the current donor-actor landscape. As the “donor markets” become more crowded in a multipolar world, successful international coordination will have a crucial influence on an operation's impact.

Implementation:

If UN institutions such as a resident coordinator have a coordinating function, it must be ensured this role is performed effectively. Otherwise, the responsibility for coordination must be clearly discussed by the participating donor and recipient countries specifically for each operation because it depends a great deal on the actor landscape. The result should prevent parallel activities, mutual obstruction and the misdirected use of resources, as well as making it possible to respond rapidly to crises. If Germany enjoys international trust on the ground, has the potential to exert influence, and has a presence as a partner country and “honest broker”, it could utilise these assets to coordinate the interests of donor countries, and mediate between donors and the recipient country. At the same time, Germany must realistically assess its own position and leverage on the specific donor market so it can make reasonable “offers”. Meanwhile, given the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, the role of pre-emptive humanitarian aid should be strengthened and financed appropriately to meet the needs that exist, for instance in the fields of food security and climate impacts.

- 50. Germany should work to ensure different donor countries and organisations on the ground enter into voluntary commitments to make information about projects, approaches and funding allocations accessible transparently in digital forms (“donor register”). This should be combined with the implementation of general minimum standards for datasets.**

Grounds:

A comprehensive, constantly up-to-date donor register is indispensable for the funding providers' strategic planning, the efficient, effective allocation of resources, and corrections to the distribution of aid and support funds. Parallel funding structures can be reduced and potential savings achieved.

The transparent presentation of these data will help additionally to prevent the misappropriation of resources and corruption.

Implementation:

A donor register must make it possible to gain an up-to-date, time-critical overview of the funding allocations made by allies, partner countries and partner organisations in order to guarantee the best-possible allocation of funding, including in the short term. Where possible, it should also cover funding allocations made by local and regional donors, as well as politically critical actors (who are to be observed suitably).

The potential of digital technologies should be exploited to generate a pooled overview of the civilian engagement on the ground. For this purpose, a survey of existing registers and mapping tools should initially be conducted in order to guarantee the relevant actors can use a joint register with their technical facilities. Existing structures, such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard and Official Development Aid (ODA) reporting, should be built on.

The pooling of information on each specific crisis setting in this way can be incorporated into the coordination mechanism discussed above.

At the beginning of new engagements in crisis settings and during an ongoing engagement, the major donor countries should seek to put in place a harmonised standard and reporting cycle for the transmission of data on humanitarian aid projects and development cooperation – provided this is justifiable and does not compromise the security of anyone involved on the ground. The inclusion of gender-sensitive data should be promoted. The German side should take account of the projects conducted by all the ministries relevant for the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus.

51. Germany should proactively counter corruption and the misappropriation of resources in further operations, and develop a mechanism that combats misallocation with its donor partners.

Grounds:

There is often no local capacity to absorb international aid and support funds in crisis settings on account of their weak state (and rule-of-law) structures or the sheer size of the funds allocated. This results in unintended outcomes such as relations of dependency, local recipients concentrating permanently on how to compete for aid funds or other allocations and meet international needs, the misappropriation of resources, corruption and capital flight to other countries. On the donor side, essential local needs are often not surveyed realistically and met, since there are no ways of making contact with local communities in need or this is prevented by local elites and stakeholders.

Implementation:

A responsible donor community must examine the absorbability and allocation of its funds regularly and critically, and redirect them accordingly. In further operations, Germany should proactively counter, and refuse to tolerate corruption and the misappropriation of resources either by local actors or by international or seconded personnel. To reduce the volumes of resources misdirected, it would be imaginable to define indicators for misallocation and absorption capacity, and to calculate upper limits (benchmarks) for resources and funding allocations in the various subsidiary fields. Benchmarks should also be recommended for local salaries and fees, or existing benchmarks critically reviewed in order to prevent price distortion on local markets. When this is done, suitable benchmarks are to be oriented towards enabling local ownership and are to be calculated with input from the local population (e.g. in the form of regular discussions with local actors). The OECD should set standards for such benchmarks and oversee compliance with them. If possible, non-OECD states should also be persuaded to sign up to apply these benchmarks. A mechanism that flags up the duplication of funding structures should be integrated into a digital donor register (cf. Recommendation 50).

3.6.2 Police and justice building

52. The objectives, mandates and competences for international police and justice building support, and interface work between the security and justice agencies should be agreed bindingly with close participation from the partner country at the beginning of the operation, then evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Grounds:

International missions to strengthen the security sector require a clear mandate supported by the participating international and national actors. The experience of the Afghanistan operation indicates that insufficient international coordination hampered the mission. For instance, there was an absence of effective coordination between the international support missions charged with building the security agencies (i.e. the military, police and secret services) and those building the justice sector, which weakened the cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Even within the police building effort, coordination was felt to be inadequate. The main actors providing support for police training, Germany and the USA, followed what were, in some respects, contradictory role understandings (a focus on classic policing duties and the pursuit of medium and long-term objectives v. a focus on counterinsurgency operations and the rapid deployment of newly recruited police officers). Furthermore, apart from international coordination, the German police building engagement was inadequate right from the start in terms of its staffing and financial resources.

Implementation:

Comprehensive operations with their own international objectives are marked by tensions about the urgent necessity for local actors to take on responsibility. Only the increasing assumption of responsibility by local groups creates sustainable exit options. The politically relevant actors in the partner country should therefore be involved in international coordination mechanisms at all levels, both for the formulation and regular review of the mandate and for the formulation and management of international support requirements. The partner country should participate closely or, where state structures are absent, local power structures should be considered right at the beginning of an operation. It should also be ensured that the interface work between local security and justice agencies is carried out effectively.

3.6.3 Fighting corruption

- 53. In future crisis operations, the ministries involved should treat corruption, clientelism and patronage as a central challenge, and deal with it as a horizontal issue between the ministries. This is not just a matter of using resources for their intended purpose, but also the affected population's trust in the credibility of the crisis operation.**

Grounds:

The repercussions of corruption, clientelism and patronage in Afghanistan were enormous, and hindered the country's reconstruction immensely. The massive amounts of resources made available encouraged rentier behaviours on the part of the Afghan state, as well as state and non-state actors. Clientelistic structures were funded. It will therefore be necessary to develop a coherent understanding of how to handle corruption, clientelism and patronage, and have it coordinated between the ministries in future international crisis management operations – ideally before a deployment begins. The ambition for the crisis operation – whether it is intended merely to stabilise the situation or to have transformative effects on the ground – is decisive as far as this is concerned. A jointly coordinated approach should prevent particular interests and the pursuit of short-term stabilisation objectives from creating incentives for selected political processes or actors that pose a risk of corruption and undermine the overall approach. Successes in fighting corruption contribute to the resolution of conflicts, bolster trust in institutions among the population and enhance the standing of international crisis management personnel.

Implementation:

Apart from standardised oversight mechanisms for the monitoring of money flows (cf. Recommendation 51) and the progress projects have made (cf. Recommendation 50), a shared understanding of how to handle corruption, clientelism and patronage should be established at the international and national levels, not only to ensure that the financial resources provided are used for their intended purpose and benefit the projects to be funded to the greatest extent possible, but also particularly to prevent local and international actors from enriching themselves by unfair means. Ideally, this would be predicated on all the ministries reaching a clear position during the run-up to an operation as to whether its objective should be stabilisation or transformation. This requires constant review.

The Study Commission commissioned an academic report on (combating) corruption, which can be downloaded from its website at https://www.bundestag.de/ausschuesse/weitere_gremien/enquete_afghanistan/Gutachten. An extract from the report has been translated into English and can be downloaded from the same page.

3.6.4 Reconstruction and economic development in conflict and post-conflict settings

- 54. In the absence of infrastructure, systematic agriculture and commerce, reconstruction and economic development in conflict and post-conflict settings should initially concentrate on meeting the population's basic needs and developing an attractive economic environment.**

Grounds:

In conflict and post-conflict settings, it is elementary for permanent stabilisation to support the sustainable supply of goods and services for the whole population, as well as the development of a sound economic environment that will make the location structurally attractive for investments in future as well. Equally, steps should be taken to prevent economic development measures that consist of purely capital-oriented investments and scaling measures achieving no more than modest employment effects and therefore only a small proportion of the population benefiting. The risk of conflicts breaking out again would rise if this were to happen.

Implementation:

In order to realise these objectives, state development cooperation resources have to be used systematically, pragmatically and efficiently. At the beginning, the economic-reconstruction measures financed in this way should focus on inclusive steps that boost the subsistence economy and make the general economic environment more attractive. Generally, the expansion of employment opportunities for the broad population is to be supported. The formation and further development of local structures that possess capacities for the development of economic policy measures should also be driven ahead. Where the private sector expresses an intention to make investments, this should be encouraged appropriately by providing attractive lines of financing, coordinated and integrated with development cooperation measures under public-private partnerships. In these contexts, more-competition-oriented economic development activities that make less use of dirigiste instruments should not be carried out until the population's basic needs are being met, an attractive environment has been created for private investment and the economy is growing and more competitive.

- 55. Apart from basic public-sector services (healthcare, public administration, education), the reconstruction strategy should also take account of the future economic model. Economic development work should aspire to improve the general environment for private investments, and strengthen the private sector and trade both locally and regionally.**

Grounds:

In order to sustainably support the economic development of the specific post-conflict setting in moving towards profitability and self-sustaining, sustainable growth, economic reconstruction should be part of the overall strategy for a (post-)conflict country from the beginning. Once the population's basic needs are being met and the first development phase of economic reconstruction – dominated by projects with development cooperation funding – has reached its conclusion, competition should be promoted and the location made more attractive for local, national and international private-sector investments – provided consideration is given to the rule of law and minimising corruption. What is important in this respect is to identify the economic sectors that can contribute to sustainable growth in the country over the medium and long term, and make it possible for the economy to integrate into the regional and international divisions of labour. One indicator of success in this field is whether local actors regard the environment as attractive enough for them to invest there themselves.

Implementation:

Economic development should take account of previous local economic structures, sectors and locational factors (e.g. a historic focus on the farming sector). A strategic approach should be taken, developing economic reconstruction concepts at an early stage so they can be given consideration when public investments are made. Under the right conditions, public-private partnerships can further stimulate the private sector's interest in making investments. However, Afghanistan showed that a (perceived) lack of security can also deter investors. Here, the use of guarantee and hedging mechanisms, and access to finance are decisive in minimising the risks of private investments. Equally, despite this, the efforts to build an economically attractive environment should also continue to be supported by donor countries where necessary, and investments should be made in measures that reconcile the local population's interests with sustainable economic policies. The donor countries should also support sufficient diversification of the economy that is being rebuilt, particularly if it is partly founded on the extraction of non-renewable mineral resources. Finally, when private investments come from their own countries, donor governments should utilise appropriate funding incentives or investment guarantees to ensure these investments are profitable for both sides, thus allowing the recipient country's integration into global trade structures over the long term, stimulating the growth of local employment opportunities and promoting the integration of competitive technologies into local production mechanisms.

- 56. Private investors and businesses can make important contributions to sustainable reconstruction in conflict and post-conflict countries, and should therefore be factored into peace and stabilisation operations to a greater extent.**

Grounds:

Investments by private-sector actors in conflict and post-conflict settings can make important contributions that, over the long term, support the development of a self-sustaining economic environment designed with production, services and profit in mind. Their role should therefore be factored in to a greater extent during future comprehensive engagements.

Implementation:

A stronger focus on investment protection may help create an environment that is more attractive for private investments. The German Federal Republic's diplomatic missions abroad should therefore serve as points of contact for German private-sector investors and entrepreneurs in conflict and post-conflict countries, offering support within the limits of the politically possible, provided the investment projects in question serve the stabilisation concept and the sustainable expansion of the local economy. By contrast, there must be absolutely no direct interference in the recipient country's domestic political affairs. Apart from this, the German Federation should use the network of German chambers of commerce abroad, its diplomatic missions and the political foundations to provide better advice – about economic and political risks – for private businesses that are willing to make investments. Foreign trade promotion instruments can also contribute to this aim.¹⁶

3.6.5 International coordination of economic development

57. Engagement in the field of economic development should be better coordinated in settings where the economic environment is not yet attractive and a large number of international partners are engaged. International, regional and local actors and public and private-sector investments should be integrated.

Grounds:

As long as an engagement in the field of economic development is concerned with supporting basic provision for the population and promoting the development of an attractive economic environment in the recipient country, it is sensible to coordinate the plans and activities of the broad actor landscape in order to ensure the engagement is coherent, efficient and resource-effective.

Apart from international, regional and local private-sector actors, international public-sector actors are to be coordinated here. The World Bank, regional development banks, national development agencies, the International Monetary Fund, economic forums like the G7 and the G20, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) will all back up engagements in economic development. With the objective of integrating structures that exist on the ground into the efforts to develop the economy, particular weight is also to be accorded to the involvement of actors from the local and regional economies in coordination activities.

Implementation:

Within the framework put in place by the above-mentioned international institutions and forums, an outline agreement should be reached concerning objectives and strategies, with the most-extensive possible participation on the part of the country of deployment.

As long as the engagement is still concentrating primarily on meeting the population's basic needs and an attractive environment, publicly funded development cooperation in particular will be highly significant.

What are known as public-private partnerships should, however, soon be encouraged, and subsequently coordinated and integrated with public-sector development cooperation measures. Further instruments, such as investment or credit guarantees should then be deployed as well.

As far as possible, the actors should be coordinated within the state structures of the post-conflict setting in question. If the local state structures are too unstable to permit this, an international coordination point should be established as part of suitable international structures, for example within the local UN organisation or under the auspices of the international development banking system. In this case, moves should gradually be made to transfer responsibility to local partner structures.¹⁷

¹⁶ A dissenting opinion on recommendations 54, 55 and 56 was delivered by the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group, and the expert members Winfried Nachtwei and Dr Katja Mielke (see section 4.7).

¹⁷ A dissenting opinion on recommendations 55, 56 and 57 was delivered by the CDU/CSU parliamentary group (see section 4.8).

3.7 Capabilities, implementation and communication

3.7.1 The German Federal Government's capabilities, instruments and communication

58. Effective participation in international crisis management requires a standardised joint ministerial modus operandi for the whole German Federal Government.

Grounds:

The comprehensive prevention and management of complex international crises require the strategically coordinated deployment of the resources and instruments the German Federal Government has at its disposal, using a permanent modus operandi agreed jointly by the ministries.

Implementation:

As the foundations for such a modus operandi, standard operating procedures (SOPs) should be developed for consultation and coordination within the German Federal Government. These procedures should support the formulation of higher-level objectives, joint ministerial planning and delivery, above all at the strategic level, and productive impact and effectiveness monitoring in order to achieve the objectives that have been set. Standard operating procedures are general, verifiable instructions that ensure individual tasks are carried out consistently and correctly, and available resources and instruments are coordinated and deployed optimally in line with the objectives adopted. The Common Effort Community, a knowledge-sharing and coordination platform formed jointly with the Netherlands in 2016, represents an interesting format for higher-level impact monitoring in the nexus of public-sector and civil society cooperation. It shows that joint standard operating procedures can be developed and implemented for the different actors during complex operations as well. The procedure already applied by the Federal Foreign Ministry and Federal Ministry of Defence for joint decision-making on interministerial support for the development of the security sector in partner countries should be extended to other related fields of work dealt with by the German Federal Government ministries concerned with international crisis management.

59. The ministries should formulate minimum requirements specific to each operation for their own international crisis management instruments.

Grounds:

It is initially incumbent upon the ministries involved to determine minimum requirements for the suitability of ministry-specific international crisis management instruments. These requirements should be assessed holistically, taking account of possible synergies, but also unintended consequences, to ascertain their strategic relevance, and adjusted and coordinated context-specifically so they interact optimally with other ministries' instruments (cf. Recommendation 21).

Implementation:

The individual ministries' specific instruments include, for example, the instruments that build structures for financial, technical and political cooperation deployed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; the Federal Foreign Office's stabilisation measures; and the joint international policing missions, security sector regulation and reforms, equipment and training assistance, and civil defence and disaster preparedness projects implemented by the Federal Foreign Office and Federal Ministry of the Interior. Deployment-related minimum requirements should be concerned with the analysis of the concrete conditions for instruments' implementation in the country of deployment, and should be reviewed on an ongoing basis with scalable impact and effectiveness monitoring. If instruments are insufficiently effective, they should be adjusted, and decisions taken at an early stage about the development and deployment of alternative instruments, strategic adjustments or, where applicable, the ending of the operation at an appropriate point in time. The tools necessary to arrive at a realistic contextual understanding (e.g. the AA's PREVIEW Portal for early crisis detection, brief political-economic analyses) should constantly be further developed, and their evidential value and practicality improved (cf. Recommendation 47).

3.7.2 Deployments and the law, mission implementation and personnel on the ground

- 60. A strategic reserve of civilian personnel should be built up and kept available in sufficient numbers for the future planning and delivery of comprehensive operations, and the assumption of leadership tasks in international crisis management.**

Grounds:

Germany's shared responsibility for the civil-military Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan may offer some useful learning experiences that illuminate how collaboration on comprehensive operations can be managed better. One of these experiences was the realisation that there was a striking imbalance between military and civilian operation personnel in the composition of the teams throughout the operation, to the disadvantage of the civilian element. The PRT commanders said this deficiency had been reported repeatedly. It was not remedied, and the consequences of this failure became apparent: a lack of civilian capabilities led, among other things, to an overextension of the task spectrum for the military commanders stationed on the ground. Germany was, and is to the present day, also underrepresented in international operation command structures. Fundamentally rectifying these deficiencies will require sufficient numbers of civilian personnel to be available over the longer term. The development and provision of, in particular, personnel for civilian and civil-military leadership tasks in international crisis management is time-consuming and, furthermore, has often remained unsatisfactory in the past, partly because there were insufficient incentives for staff to show interest in assignments of this kind.

Systematic strategic foresight (cf. recommendations 2 and 32) can support long-term national planning processes for the delivery of – and participation in – comprehensive international crisis management operations. Nevertheless, many decisions about operations will have to be taken at short notice in response to changing situations, and will require time-critical action on the part of trained civilian personnel.

Implementation:

A federal-level strategic leadership reserve for civilian operation personnel should be formed for the delivery of – and German participation in – comprehensive international crisis management operations.

The long-practised use of civilian planning targets offers a suitable general approach to the requirements of such a pool. The same also applies for the support required from the ministries relevant for such operations. Apart from training for leadership tasks in the national strategic and operational management of comprehensive operations, particular attention should be paid to the requirements of effective civil-military cooperation, as well as preparation for civilian and civil-military leadership tasks in international organisations and on international missions, in order to build up the reserve and prepare civil leadership personnel for operations.

The successful recruitment of civilian leadership personnel for international operations requires transparently communicated incentives. Foreign postings must not be fundamentally detrimental to their career progression, but should support and promote it as much as possible. The criteria for promotion should take account of this appropriately. Furthermore, apart from federal civil servants, *Land* civil servants and suitably qualified employees should also be able to volunteer to join the strategic leadership reserve.

- 61. International crisis management should, in principle, be delivered jointly by the ministries, holistically and conflict-sensitively in accordance with local circumstances.**

Grounds:

The failure to allow for local circumstances and inadequate coordination with international crisis management partners helped to exacerbate the conflict in Afghanistan. In order to significantly reduce the risk of this happening in future, cultural sensitivity and an informed understanding of the conflict will be required for action on the ground from the very beginning. All measures should be designed to treat local circumstances, cultures, religions, customs and social structures respectfully, and take account of their significance for conflict management. There tended to be quite rapid rotation of personnel at the operation's leadership levels, both in Germany (e.g. Operations Command, the Crisis Response Centre, the AA and the BMI) and in the region of deployment, which made it more likely knowledge would keep on being lost, and hampered efforts to build confidence among the local population and Germany's partners in the host country.

Implementation:

In order to build trust permanently in the country of deployment, account should be taken of principles such as local ownership and the civilian do-no-harm rule throughout the operation's delivery. Longer rotation cycles – in particular for leadership personnel – and flexible tours of duty should also be implemented. This would allow continuity and local knowledge (including that held by individuals) to be guaranteed in contact with the local population. One example that points the way ahead here is the "village sergeant" concept, under which the Air Force Force Protection Regiment had the village elders in its mission area in Afghanistan shadowed by permanent contacts with whom they could deal as equals. Context-sensitive concepts like this are to be fleshed out drawing on specialist expertise about the sociocultural conditions in the country of deployment. Ideally, this would be done before the first operation personnel are deployed, but at the latest when the security situation starts to stabilise, making continuous contacts with the local population possible.

Better use than in the past should also be made of the strategic dialogue with German civil society organisations, whose staff have often been in the countries of deployment for a long time, enhance an operation's cultural and conflict-sensitivity with their additional knowledge, usually command a certain degree of trust among the local actors and, on account of their cultural competences, are able to contribute a tremendous amount to conflict-sensitive interaction. Increased context-sensitivity should be accompanied by the communication of the engagement's objectives in the country of deployment using a local frame of reference, consequently earning more acceptance and trust. Attention should also be paid to the roles of local authority figures, some of whom may be religious actors, in societal transformation processes (cf. Recommendation 41).

62. Deployment-relevant Bundeswehr capabilities should be identified suitably in view of the situation and kept available as required for the mission.Grounds:

In Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr's equipment and capabilities were sometimes not adapted dynamically enough to the development of the threat situation. Especially at the beginning of the operation, the Bundeswehr was only inadequately resourced for its mission. For instance, armed drones, aircraft, defensive capabilities against shell and rocket fire, and initially even German artillery to protect the camps were either not available or inadequate.

Mobile counterinsurgency and long-distance combat capabilities are necessary in addition to military peace and stabilisation capabilities during international crisis management operations, which frequently involve asymmetric operational scenarios. In order to have sufficient capabilities of this kind at its disposal, the German contingent was reliant on support from other nations on past missions such as Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, these capabilities were either provided for limited periods in particular threat situations, close air support for instance, or made available to the contingent for longer periods, helicopter units for the transportation of forces and surveillance balloons to protect the camps for example. It was not always possible for the gaps to be compensated for by other nations, and this essentially contradicted the directives that came from Germany anyway.

Implementation:

In consultation with the ministries, the objective to be achieved should be defined and broken down into sub-objectives and intermediate steps – including a roadmap for the realistic deployment of available resources (equipment and capabilities).

The armed forces' mission during a crisis operation is to establish and guarantee security. This can include combat operations against the enemy and is also to be ensured with the capabilities required for that purpose, which depend on the precise nature of the mission. Even if the focus on the Bundeswehr's core mission – national and alliance defence –, is appropriate in view of the current threat situation, the Federal Ministry of Defence should keep the capabilities necessary for crisis management available – putting them in place pre-emptively and adapting them to changing technical challenges. It is one of the chief of staff's responsibilities to contribute to the provision of political advice on, and the planning and conduct of, future international crisis management operations. During crisis operations, the mission and the security situation should determine the size of the forces committed and therefore the capabilities that will be required. The protection of Germany's own operation personnel is to be accorded the highest priority, and operational capabilities should be dynamically adjusted to take account of the security situation at any time. This expressly includes long-range lethal weapon systems.

Usually, an operation will always be conducted together with partners from NATO, the EU or other states. According to Section 31 of the Legal Status of Military Personnel Act, the German state is responsible for guaranteeing the protection and operational readiness of its servicewomen and men, and complying with its duty of care. Robust capabilities should therefore be considered and, if necessary, deployed and authorised for use. The practice of mutual support and substitution, which is already being implemented, should be used systematically with Germany's partners to strengthen operations' impact, for instance by improving logistics and troop coordination.

63. Knowledge and experience from engagements should be used systematically on a joint ministerial basis as an early-warning system.

Grounds:

The multidimensional nature of every integrated engagement and the practically unavoidable rotation of personnel on operations, at diplomatic missions abroad and in ministries require a great deal of knowledge and large numbers of trained personnel to be kept available. The systematic supply of fresh findings from operations – for example via the internal Bundeswehr Mission Experience Information System (InfoSys EEBw), which is to be assessed positively – provides a wealth of experience of these matters that has hardly been exploited to date. Experiential knowledge should be used as an “early-warning system” for local developments and to gain critical feedback on the situation. The knowledge and experience acquired by skilled personnel in crisis areas should be utilised systematically on an interministerial, interorganisational basis for a collective learning process.

Implementation:

The experience of personnel returning from operations should be recorded by the various organisations responsible for seconding or posting them in systematic debriefings, evaluated, prepared for use and kept available as a knowledge base for basic and continuing training. As a result, common assumptions about logical frameworks can be verified and interrogated drawing on academic expertise. In the medium term, this knowledge should be available on an interorganisational basis, allowing it to be accessed via a database that facilitates its use by the ministries of Germany's international partners as well.

64. The training of operation personnel should be interwoven with lessons learned from deployment areas.

Grounds:

Where there are high rates of personnel turnover – on missions and operations, in mission areas, at diplomatic missions and in ministries –, the training of adequately qualified personnel is a continual task. It should be ensured that findings reached in mission areas are not lost, but inform the training of personnel who are to be posted there in future. New or alternative stocks of knowledge and critical perspectives should definitely inform the training of future personnel.

Implementation:

Better use should be made of lessons learned from mission areas for basic and advanced training, and mission-optimised courses. Trainers have to be able to continually review the extent to which the realities conveyed by their courses (still) correspond to the realities in mission areas and revise training concepts accordingly. The continual revision of training content requires sufficient resources and expertise at training facilities. If the smooth running of a comprehensive engagement is to be guaranteed, integrated training modules and preparatory courses are indispensable. Over the medium term, joint training facilities for integrated missions (e.g. based on the model of the Crisis Management Centre in Finland) should be provided for to sustainably increase the effectiveness of the training.

3.7.3 Effectiveness of the engagement

65. If necessary, the military should guarantee the necessary levels of protection in order to make civilian engagement possible in the first place. Mechanisms and new incentives should be created to strengthen cooperation between civilian and military actors.

Grounds:

During the Afghanistan operation, non-governmental organisations often viewed the aspiration to implement comprehensive security critically because, from their perspective, their own work could not be distinguished

clearly from military activities. This impression was reinforced by the fact that the military sometimes took on tasks that were not part of their usual portfolio (e.g. drilling wells and building schools). The aim in a future engagement should be to limit the military operation to its core tasks, in other words suppressing armed violence in the country of deployment, protecting the civil reconstruction engagement, supporting it as necessary, and improving information-sharing between civilian and military actors.

Implementation:

The duration of an international crisis management operation conducted with military support depends on the ability of the country of deployment to create reliably resilient structures that prevent the continued use of force. An aspiration of this kind is first and foremost a political challenge that, apart from military measures to ensure physical security, primarily requires civilian support. Such support will, however, only be forthcoming as long as the environment is stable and secure. Purposeful operational collaboration between military and civilian operation personnel should be based on trusting communication and careful consultation about the objectives, scale and approach of the engagement in the country of deployment's target area. In this respect, much can be learned from the experience of the PRTs in Afghanistan. In addition, close, partnership-based cooperation with civilian implementing organisations should be sought. This could, among other things, be guaranteed by the reciprocal establishment of direct contact points in the mission area. What is more, a permanent operational communication mechanism between the German Federal Government and the implementing organisations is recommended for the strategic level (cf. Recommendation 42).

66. Options for integrated crisis management that support processes financially should be examined instead of project financing.

Grounds:

In Afghanistan, the combination of project-based short-termism, expectations about the linearity of outcomes, positive reporting and a lack of strategic coherence increased the probability that the comprehensive engagement would become less and less effective. The adjustment of the public procurement guidelines for implementing organisations undertaken in 2024, for example with amendments to the time periods allowed for projects, is welcome – but it does not go far enough. In order to adapt funding arrangements time-critically to local needs and levels of absorption capacity, it is important to draw further-reaching conclusions from impact monitoring, evaluations and portfolio reviews.

Implementation:

The requirement that project-related funding applications for the continuation of measures always have to be innovative in comparison to the previous funding period should be reviewed. In justified cases, funding periods should be extended beyond the usual one or two-year term in the interests of the target groups and implementing providers or organisations, provided this is necessary and the objectives remain the same. Apart from options for extending the deadlines within which funds have to be disbursed, consideration could also be given to anchoring foreign-language applications and reporting to a greater extent than usual in the General Supplementary Provisions for Project Grants (ANBest-P) because many projects are developed and implemented in close cooperation with local partners, usually in English. Funding should in any case be aimed at guaranteeing the effectiveness and time-critical deployment of instruments, in order that public funds are spent efficiently. This requires a binding procedure within the German Federal Government by which conclusions that will guide further action are drawn from impact monitoring and portfolio reviews.

67. The political-strategic decision-making level and the operational implementation level are to be linked closely for effective comprehensive engagement.

Grounds:

A lack of knowledge about the actual situation in Afghanistan allowed a gap to open up between the political-strategic and operational levels. Throughout the operation, it remained difficult to generate a realistic picture of the extent to which political-strategic objectives were being achieved. For instance, it was hardly possible to make impacts identifiable at either level beyond the level of outputs. Some of the ministries also failed to conduct proper impact analyses. In consequence, not enough was known about whether, and to what extent, progress had been made towards the objectives set. Potential and unintended negative impacts were therefore hardly ever identified, and possible ways of dealing with them were missed.

Implementation:

The German Federal Government should ensure that its interministerial strategy is broken down into implementable, ministry-specific strategies, and the assumptions about their impacts on which they are based are underpinned with quantifiable indicators. There should be clarity about the assumed impacts of stabilisation measures, and they should be supported with indicators so it is possible to assess the envisaged objective realistically and ensure it remains systematically verifiable. Effective impact monitoring should be conducted jointly and regularly – at least once halfway through the mandate period and then at its end –, evaluated and concrete conclusions drawn from it (cf. recommendations 44 and 45). Impact measurement criteria (e.g. outcomes rather than outputs, the efficiency of instruments and resources, ownership) could be linked with outcome indicators (e.g. reductions in violence, improved governance, increased government legitimacy). In the ministries, the organisational units that are responsible for these fields should be sensitised to the benefits of thorough, regular, critical progress reviews.

3.7.4 Welfare of operation personnel and cooperation with local actors

- 68. Cooperation with non-state and civil society actors should be strengthened. Smaller projects that can be delivered on the ground in partnership with communities should be granted targeted funding and implemented.**

Grounds:

Intensifying cooperation with non-state and civil society actors optimises the exploitation of synergies by introducing different perspectives, resources and contacts. Smaller, more-easily deliverable, participative projects conducted in direct partnership with local communities can promote sustainable development if they take account of local needs and resources. This strengthens community spirit and contributes to the long-term effectiveness of the measures taken.

Implementation:

The creation of networking platforms and the targeted deployment of funding for community-based projects should be stepped up in order to strengthen direct partnerships. It should be ensured that training and capacity building are provided for local actors in order to guarantee they participate proactively in the implementation of measures. In addition, workshops, courses and network events should be organised to promote the sharing of proven methods and cooperation between state and non-state actors. Transparent, frank communication on the part of ministry representatives or implementing organisations on the ground and clear guidelines for cooperation can strengthen trust and the effectiveness of these partnerships. Another factor in their impact is the equal participation of women in such projects. Increasing the proportion of women among the operation personnel working in the civil-military field helps to retain the ability women have to make contact with particular groups in society, especially in conflict settings. The chances of sustainable peace and security are better where the decision-making processes about security policy are inclusive.

- 69. Every choice of partner should take account of local circumstances and be decided on the basis of a comprehensive, regularly reviewed understanding of the context.**

Grounds:

The careful selection of partners, from local and international NGOs to private-sector actors, based on a comprehensive, regularly reviewed understanding of the context, promotes mutual trust. It may seem easy to establish contact with some actors (e.g. because they have language or social skills), but they are often not best suited, or do not have sufficient backing in local communities, to implement projects on the ground in the common interest.

Implementation:

Institutional context/partner monitoring on the ground is an essential measure in order to ensure that the support provided in developing or crisis countries is effective and appropriate. The relationship between off-budget and on-budget support is an important aspect of this monitoring. Off-budget support is financial aid provided outside a country's official budgetary system, whereas on-budget support flows directly into the national budget. The relationship between multilateral funding instruments – usually trust funds – and NGOs doing humanitarian work should be reviewed regularly to ensure resources are being deployed to optimum effect. Adjustments may be required, depending on the changing contextual dynamics. It is also important to do systematic due diligence

checks on important potential partners and assess the potential costs of cooperation – including possible repercussions for the legitimacy of the engagement. Finally, NGOs' participation should be facilitated by making the relevant preconditions less bureaucratic. This may be done, for example, by simplifying application processes and making the administrative requirements to be met under the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development "private providers" budget item less stringent.

70. On account of their shared responsibility for the welfare of, and services for, mission casualties, the German Federal Government and the Bundestag should further strengthen their public expressions of appreciation and support for international crisis management operation personnel.

Grounds:

Operation personnel deployed to crisis countries on behalf of the German Federal Government and the Bundestag for peacekeeping and peacebuilding purposes are confronted with particular challenges, burdens, and sometimes also risks to life and limb. Politicians bear a particular share of the responsibility for acknowledging their commitment, for their welfare and for the services they depend on. Recognition and reliable care can, furthermore, contribute to the effectiveness and success of operational measures, and have positive impacts on operation personnel's motivation and performance. Their confidence that they will be constantly supported is increased. This strengthens the political and societal recognition for comprehensive engagements.

Implementation:

The proposal for the introduction of a National Veterans' Day on 15 June every year was passed by the German Bundestag with a cross-party majority in 2024. This important step towards clearer public, political and societal acknowledgement of the dedication and service shown by active and former members of the Bundeswehr will be celebrated for the first time in 2025.

The Day of Peacekeeping held annually since 2013 also offers an opportunity to publicise, prompt discussion of, and recognise the experiences and achievements of military, police and civilian operation personnel. What are required in addition to this, however, are a working environment and levels of service provision that support operations. These would include the mission-appropriate resourcing and equipment of military and police operation personnel, appropriate training and preparation for each operation, reliable, unbureaucratic care and aftercare when personnel suffer mission-related physical harms and mental problems, including psychosocial care, and access to resources and technology. The families of mission casualties should be supported in suitable ways. The decision adopted by the German Bundestag on 25 April 2024 is crucial for the implementation of these measures (Bundestag printed paper 20/11138). Politicians and social actors should be consistent in proactively helping to promote a positive narrative in society about the value and significance of the work done by operation personnel.

71. The treatment of local workers, above all local staff, should be regulated jointly by the ministries, and the individuals concerned should be informed transparently about the extent of Germany's responsibilities.

Grounds:

Local workers (including local staff employed by German government agencies) make it easier for German implementing organisations on the ground to establish contacts with the population, do translation work and supply important information. Germany will be dependent on the support of local staff during foreign engagements in future too. The treatment of, in particular, (at-risk) individuals and their families during the withdrawal from Afghanistan therefore holds out lessons for future operations because Germany proved to be insufficiently prepared to protect local staff who stayed behind in the country and their family members.

It would have been of decisive significance to specify clearly at an earlier stage who was entitled to resettlement, what legal foundations were applicable and what evidence would be required. Graduated measures for different scenarios should also have been considered, for example to manage the transition from the resettlement of qualifying individuals to a blanket resettlement programme. In view of the diversity of possible mission scenarios and areas, it is presumably difficult to develop a generally valid concept for the administration of contingents across several engagements. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that appropriate treatment of local staff is necessary in every mission area. This demands well-founded knowledge of the country, early crisis detection capabilities, the willingness to consider negative scenarios as well and preparations for the evacuations that may have to be carried out in a crisis.

Implementation:

The German Federal Government should be prepared for all scenarios for the ending of an operation and work out corresponding options for action together with its international partners. The same also applies with regard to the shared responsibility for local support workers that continues beyond the eventual withdrawal – in particular where there are possible threats to the lives and physical safety of both local workers and their immediate family members (nuclear families). The concrete levels of protection and care the authorities are responsible for providing will always remain dependent on whether the operation's objectives have been achieved, the circumstances under which the operation comes to an end and the security situation that consequently takes shape on the ground. Where necessary, promptly streamlined visa procedures that allow threatened former staff to leave the country or their dependants to follow them to Germany should be examined and applied as unbureaucratically as possible. The experience gained implementing the Federal Admission Programme for Afghanistan, which has been running since 2021, should now be reviewed with a view to the delivery of comprehensive operations and incorporated into future operation planning from the outset.¹⁸

72. Projects supporting transformation and reconstruction should communicate clear time frames, and actively involve target groups to promote ownership and lasting autonomy.

Grounds:

The clear communication of the periods for which support will be provided guarantees that participating communities understand their own roles and the time limits on external aid from the outset. This can contribute to the development of ownership and long-term planning skills. The continual inclusion of target groups supports the more-precise tailoring of measures to local communities' specific needs and circumstances – thus enhancing effectiveness and acceptance. In addition, targeted capacity building for local partner organisations can result in the growth of sustainable structures that also continue to exist after the withdrawal and strengthen community autonomy.

Implementation:

In order to implement these objectives effectively, all measures should be based on a comprehensive requirement analysis conducted with intensive participation from the target group in order to ensure the support achieves its aims. This analysis should be repeated at regular intervals in order to continually review and adjust the measures' relevance and suitability. Clear, comprehensible, regular communication about the progress made and the phases of the project is required in parallel to guarantee transparency and strengthen trust in support measures. For instance, basic and advanced training programmes should be developed for local partner organisations in order to strengthen their project management, resource mobilisation and sustainable development capabilities. Ideally, these strategic steps can help to ensure a robust, self-sustaining structure is left behind after the planned withdrawal of the supporting organisations.

¹⁸ A dissenting opinion on Recommendation 71 was delivered by the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, and the expert members Dr Ellinor Zeino and Jörg Vollmer (see section 4.9).

A dissenting opinion on Recommendation 71 was delivered by the Bundestag Members Schahina Gambir, Deborah Düring and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see section 4.10).

Replies to these dissenting opinions were delivered by the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see sections 4.9.1 and 4.10.1).

4 Dissenting opinions and replies

Each member of the Study Commission is able to deliver dissenting opinions on the final report. Members of the Study Commission or parliamentary groups can in this way express alternative standpoints on the whole report or parts of it. If, in the view of other members of the Study Commission or parliamentary groups, a dissenting opinion contains inaccurate statements of fact or assessments, they may deliver a reply to it. The content of the dissenting opinions, the replies and any source citations are the sole responsibility of the members of the Study Commission who delivered them.

4.1 Dissenting opinion of the expert members Winfried Nachtwei and Egon Ramms, the Bundestag Members Philip Krämer and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see page 4)

The Study Commission emphasises in the introduction that it has “not forgotten Afghanistan and its people or the catastrophic humanitarian situation there.” This is not an empty phrase, but, after more than two years of intensive work by the Study Commission on the German deployment to Afghanistan, its actors, impacts and human destinies, seriously intended.

The task assigned to the Study Commission by the Bundestag was to review the engagement in Afghanistan and formulate lessons for Germany’s comprehensive international engagement in future. It was not part of this task to formulate lessons for Germany’s future Afghanistan policy. That will be a matter for the German Federal Government and the Bundestag in the forthcoming electoral term. Against the background of Germany’s attachment to international law and universal human rights, and the shared German responsibility for the 20-year international engagement in Afghanistan, which was ultimately a strategic failure, it will have to be clarified how value, interest and results-driven foreign and development policies towards contemporary Afghanistan, its people and its de facto rulers should be framed. In view of the devastating humanitarian disaster and the particularly severe repercussions of the climate crisis in the country, German Afghanistan policy cannot be restricted exclusively to humanitarian aid. Where the Taliban leadership in Kandahar is pursuing a globally unprecedented disenfranchisement of girls and women with ever increasing radicalism, where many parents want a good school education for their daughters as well and, for example, more than 400 NGOs led by women carry on their work in spite of all the uncertainties, international opportunities to provide support should be used and not further diminished. Eyes, ears and personal contacts on the ground are indispensable in order to be able to do this realistically and responsibly. In view of the special, close relationship between Afghanistan and Germany that has now continued for 110 years, a German liaison office established in Kabul in consultation with our European partners and the EU Delegation to Afghanistan, and having a status explicitly below the level of diplomatic recognition, could be an important bridge to the reality of Afghanistan.

4.1.1 Reply of the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter to the dissenting opinion of the expert members Winfried Nachtwei and Egon Ramms, the Bundestag Members Philip Krämer and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see page 4)

The opening of a “*liaison office [...] in Kabul [...], having a status explicitly below the level of diplomatic recognition*” for the Taliban that is proposed at the end of this dissenting opinion, was previously put forward by the AfD parliamentary group in the Bundestag in September 2024 with a motion tabled for debate in the German Bundestag (see Bundestag printed paper 20/12973, “*Improvement of options for deportation – opening of a German liaison office in Kabul*”).

This motion demanded that, “*with the liaison office, a point of contact be created for German and Afghan business representatives,*” and “*it be made possible to coordinate the return of Afghan citizens from Germany.*”

The grounds stated, for example, that, “*Following the failure of the Western allies, supported by an Afghan Republic that excluded fundamentalist forces such as the Taliban, it is imperative in Germany’s national interest that the German Federal Government communicates step by step with the official Afghan government at the diplomatic level, without recognising it.*”

The motion continues, “*The German Federal Government must face the political facts and establish rational working relations with the Taliban government in Kabul, not least in order to gather information on the ground about security and migration policy developments in Afghanistan, and keep track of the situation.*”

In the plenary debate on this motion on 27 September 2024, by contrast, the Green Bundestag Member, Schahina Gambir, incidentally also the Greens' group coordinator on this Study Commission, took a quite different tack:

“Any rapprochement would also be a betrayal of our fundamental foreign policy principles. We must act strategically and pre-emptively, and always based on respect for human rights. This week, [...] our foreign minister [authors' note: Annalena Baerbock, Green] has already taken a further step in this direction with other partner countries. [...] She has made it clear that she will refer the Taliban to the International Criminal Court if the grave infringements of women's rights continue. These are the paths we have to go down in order to increase the pressure on the Taliban.” (See minutes of plenary proceedings 20/189, page 24635.)

4.2 Dissenting opinion of the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see page 5)

Without the willingness to free ourselves of illusions as we look ahead and the ability to take well-targeted action, there will be no pioneering German foreign and security policy with much chance of success following the debacle of Afghanistan and the return of war to Europe.”

Ambassador (retired) Hans-Ulrich Seidt, “Irrwege am Hindukusch: Ursachen und Folgen des westlichen Scheiterns in Afghanistan (2001–2021)”, in *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 2022, pp. 39–59.

As late as February 2021, the German Federal Government voted for an extension of the NATO mission in Afghanistan, praising the progress that had been achieved in the country. It stated that there were democratic elections and the educational opportunities for girls had improved enormously. Then, however, to the great surprise of those responsible for the matter in the government at the time, events moved at great speed. The NATO Council decided to end the mission on 14 April 2021. The Bundeswehr had to respond under considerable time pressure and concluded its operation when the last A400M landed at Wunstorf Air Base on 30 June 2021. Not even two months later, the Taliban were in power again in Afghanistan.

The SPD-FDP-Green “traffic light” coalition collaborated with the CDU/CSU to establish a study commission that would evaluate the whole mission in Afghanistan. Apart from reviewing the most casualty-intensive, most expensive foreign mission in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany so far, the Bundeswehr's future posture was supposed to be discussed by the Study Commission as well (Bundestag printed paper 20/2570). While German service personnel in Afghanistan fought for democracy and women's rights to no avail for two decades, the Bundeswehr's core mission, namely national and alliance defence, was utterly neglected by German politics.

From the beginning, the AfD criticised the motion establishing the Study Commission because its task was focussed too much on identifying individual “screws to adjust”. It would have been necessary to also ask the fundamental question of whether nation building in culturally alien environments, with the objective of imposing a different political system with democratic, Western standards from outside, and replacing traditions, customs and values, is a remotely realistic ambition. The findings arrived at in the interim report (Bundestag printed paper 20/10400) demonstrate that this is not the case. The Study Commission's main finding ought to have been that this ambition should not be pursued in the first place in future operations.

In the interim report that was published on 19 February 2024 and debated in the plenary of the German Bundestag on 23 February 2024, we made our positions clear in nine dissenting opinions and two replies, for example on the following topics:

- The failure to formulate, or even total lack of, German national interests in Afghanistan
- The need to return to national and alliance defence, and the disposition and resourcing of the Bundeswehr for full combat readiness
- The substantive watering-down of, and extension of the time frame covered by, the definition of “local staff” under the “resettlement programme for former local employees”, which entailed significant negative financial and security consequences for Germany
- The interests and influence of regional states, especially Pakistan
- Reflections on the findings reached by the Committee of Inquiry on Afghanistan, above all concerning the course of events in the last days before the handover of power to the Taliban in mid-August 2021
- The Taliban and the fact that they have been financed with tax revenues and indirectly legitimised by Germany

- The Afghan constitution of 2004 as an unstable foundation, for instance due to what is referred to as the “Sharia clause”
- The total costs to the Federal Republic of Germany of the missions in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, amounting to as much as 47 billion euros
- Afghanistan would have been better off with “trade not aid”!

It is expressly to be welcomed that additional time was granted for the investigation of events in the Hindu Kush from the beginning of 2024 until the final report was drawn up (at the turn of the year 2024/2025), during which we also continued to contribute constructively to the work on its recommendations for action, which were to be formulated in concrete terms, for instance the call for Germany to be armed for international crisis management with realistic strategies and a national security council, which will foreseeably become yet more important.

In particular, the AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag draws the following specific lessons and therefore formulates the following recommendations:

1. Germany’s security policy should primarily be oriented towards the interests of the German people, and must satisfy the constitutional aims of peace, freedom, security and prosperity for the German people. The interests of others, including Germany’s allies, must remain subordinated to this.
2. The attitude towards the Bundeswehr and the view of it held by politicians and society must improve rapidly, not only in relation to operations abroad, but quite fundamentally. The core characteristic that distinguishes service personnel from organisations such as the Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) or the Red Cross is ultimately their combat capability. Anyone who deploys service personnel must accept as much. In the past, German politicians have attempted to ignore this and present Bundeswehr personnel more as a kind of armed Federal Agency for Technical Relief. But men and women are needed who are ultimately prepared to defend Germany’s security and German interests by military means as well. We can be grateful to our armed forces personnel for their service. The Bundeswehr’s capabilities for national and alliance defence, and therefore its fully combat-ready disposition and resourcing must enjoy the highest priority.
3. The most fundamental guiding principle for the German state must be the preservation and promotion of peace in Europe. NATO will also be important in future as a system of collective security. But Europe must finally develop its own, credible military capabilities, irrespective of who is president in the USA. As a system of regional security, the OSCE in particular must also be strengthened at all costs, so it offers a platform for the peaceful, diplomatic resolution of conflicts in Europe again.
4. German interests outside Europe are to be pursued by diplomatic means. Deployments of the Bundeswehr for reasons other than national and alliance defence should only be approved by the German Bundestag in absolutely exceptional cases, if vital, existential German interests are jeopardised. The risks and prospects of success are then to be weighed up carefully and critically. Furthermore, there is a need for an interministerially coordinated strategy focussed on each country of interest with clearly defined and operationalised objectives, as well as an exit strategy formulated at an early stage. Should it not be possible to draw up an exit strategy *before* an operation begins for reasons of timing, it is *imperative* that this be done at the latest when its mandate is extended for the first time. Operations abroad that are recognisably not achieving their objectives must be ended. Canada and France did this in Afghanistan. In Germany too, it would have been possible to know by 2011 at the latest that the objectives of the Afghanistan mission were not being achieved.
5. International crisis management operations will be conducted in the future too. Strategies aimed at military and/or state or nation-building interventions that impose a new political system and/or Western values and norms in culturally alien environments have failed in the past, almost without exception. Their consequences have been, and are, lasting destabilisation, incalculable damage and migration flows towards Europe, Germany in particular, and they are therefore to be rejected. Future international crisis management activities must therefore set realistic objectives and must not pursue wishful, but undeliverable, political notions.
6. The ambition of a comprehensive approach was stressed by the ministries, but at no point was it explained in the course of parliamentary business. The debates concentrated overwhelmingly on the almost routine extension of the mandate for the Bundeswehr, and there was no overall analysis of the activities undertaken by the ministries involved. In order to counter this in future, the appointment of a parliamentary commissioner for every interministerial operation would be expedient. His or her task would be to coordinate and consult on parliamentary work and oversight.

7. The German Bundestag requires a well-founded basis of knowledge for its political decision-making and should establish a dedicated specialised committee on foreign deployments.
8. The Parliamentary Participation Act should be amended to the effect that the German Bundestag not only has to give its consent to mandates or can reject them, but is also able to make amendments to such mandates.
9. The German Bundestag's work and ability to act effectively around the granting, widening/narrowing, extension and ending of mandates must be made more flexible. It must be possible for special sittings to be convened on an ad hoc basis in case of doubt for the well-being of servicemen and women.
10. An evaluation of the half-yearly political reports from the Kabul Embassy from 2002 to 2022 reveals that central and systemic problems were ignored (drugs are mentioned for the first time in 2007 and migration for the first time in 2016, corruption only marginally before 2010; in this connection, reference is made expressly once again to the two academic reports commissioned by the Study Commission on the drug economy, and corruption, patronage and clientelism, whose conclusions the AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag fully shares). The focus on supposed successes and advances is evident, particularly during the years from 2008 to 2016. This can be characterised as internal "whitewashing", particularly within the Federal Foreign Office. Information flowed to the German Bundestag in "homeopathic doses". The "communications" submitted to parliament were inadequate, event-driven and often too positively worded as well. In order to prevent this, an independent external evaluation of whether objectives are being achieved should be carried out from the outset, for instance by an institution similar to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in the USA.
11. Our position is at variance with that expressed in the final report, since we are opposed to the Digital Services Act. It is not aimed solely at criminally punishable content, but is also intended to curb expressions of opinion that have not passed the threshold of criminal liability. This is detrimental to, and unworthy of, a democracy.
12. Many recommendations in the Study Commission's final report could only be implemented with additional financial resources (e.g. for personnel, organisation and structures). This implies, however, that insufficient account has been taken of the economic and budgetary-policy challenges that can be foreseen, and the spending constraints they will entail over the next few years. The permanent dismantling of duplicated structures, the elimination of existing redundancies, the pooling of competences and the exploitation of synergy effects would be the approach that is needed.
13. With this in mind, the AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag demanded back in the spring of 2022 a "*change of strategy in development policy*" and "*development cooperation in the interests of Germany*" (Bundestag printed paper 20/704). Consideration should also be given to the amalgamation of ministries, for instance the integration of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development into the Federal Foreign Office and/or the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action.

The often-raised demand for better integration and networking between the individual ministries within the German Federal Government can best be realised if a national security council takes over of the definition of national interests, the development of security strategy and the strategic coordination of the ministries. *"Against this background, it is the urgent task of the German Federal Government to immediately restructure the Federal Security Council into a permanent, interministerial national security council on the Austrian (National Security Council - Federal Chancellery, Austria), French or Japanese model with efficient, lean structures. This national security council would be chaired by the federal chancellor and include the members of the Cabinet with security-relevant portfolios. The national security council would have a permanent national security advisor attached to it with a staff in the Federal Chancellery. In order to democratically legitimate the executive's powers, a parliamentary control panel should be established. It is the urgent task of the German Federal Government to develop preventive, long-term strategies and solutions, and institutionalise their implementation in an overall German strategy."* (See the motion tabled by the AfD parliamentary group, Bundestag printed paper 20/1746, May 2022, page 2.)

4.3 Dissenting opinion of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, and the expert members Professor Carlo-Antonio Masala, Jörg Vollmer and Dr Ellinor Zeino (see page 14)

Grounds for a national security council on a German model

In the past, there have been repeated moves to upgrade the Federal Security Council into a coordinating Cabinet committee and implement the demand for a comprehensive/integrated approach in this way. The efforts to create a joint situation centre for the German Federal Government have also come to nothing.

The creation of a national security council on a German model in the Federal Chancellery would make it possible to pool and analyse all security-relevant information centrally, and thus help significantly to increase the coherence of international activities, security policy and measures to avert dangers to public security.

A national security council of this kind could lay the foundations for the integrated approach that is indispensable today if complex security policy challenges are to be dealt with better and coherent action taken.

This could noticeably improve the efficiency and speed of decision-making, in particular – but not only – in crisis situations that break out with little warning, where rapid, interministerial action is required. In view of the complex, dynamic global security situation, such a central coordination point is essential in order to make Germany more resilient in the face of threats and able to act effectively if a crisis occurs.

A national security council would be the logical and consistent corollary to the German National Security Strategy, which still displays striking gaps here. It could pool the numerous disjointed, small-scale security initiatives taken in Germany and ensure there was a coherent strategic focus. This would supply an answer to the previous structures and their challenges, and would also help significantly to improve protection, especially in critical fields such as cybersecurity and emergency response, where different actors have to collaborate not only at the federal level, but also at the *Land* level and, if necessary, the municipal level.

In addition, the current structures mean there is no joint discussion of strategy by the ministries and no joint institutional framework for the integrated preparation of decisions, decision-making and implementation. It is consequently no surprise that investments in prevention and stabilisation instruments to prevent crises remain unsuccessful at best – but have counterproductive effects at worst.

The experience of national security councils in other countries, such as the USA, the UK or the Netherlands, shows that bodies of this kind can decisively coordinate and strengthen national security policy. Germany could profit from the establishment of a similar body to strengthen its position at the international level and ensure it acts coherently, something all the more important at a time when geopolitical forces are realigning.

It appears practically sensible to upgrade the existing Federal Security Council into a Cabinet committee and expand it into a national security council that has a lean, but agile administrative bureau.

Recommendation

Based on the grounds set out above, the CDU/CSU parliamentary group in the German Bundestag recommends that a national security council be established in Germany that performs the following functions:

Collective political decision-making: The national security council must be the fulcrum for the German Federal Government's collective political decision-making on all essential matters of foreign, security, development and European policy. In contentious situations, the federal chancellor's power to determine the guidelines of policy should be exercised to bring about decisions, so guaranteeing this body's ability to act effectively.

Central processing of information and situation analysis: The national security council should possess the capability to gather all relevant information, analyse it and draw up a complete situation assessment in real time.

Strategy formation and foresight: The national security council would be the locus for the development of a strategic culture in foreign, security, development and European policy. It would take the lead role in drawing up a new National Security Strategy, which would be presented during a new German Federal Government's first year in office. The ministries concerned with foreign and security policy issues would be permanently involved in the national security council's work and would commit to joint, coherent action on the part of the German Federal Government in this spirit ("joined-up policymaking").

Crisis response capability: In crisis situations, the national security council would act as a body that draws joint political conclusions.

Cooperation and integration: The national security council should promote cooperation between the German Federation, the *Länder*, and other actors such as business, the academic community and civil society, and ensure security policy is informed by all relevant perspectives. The national security council should cooperate extensively with the governments of the *Länder* on a basis of trust, and examine which fields the federation and the *Länder* act jointly in or with a clear division of duties. This would allow gaps in Germany's security architecture to be closed, and the duplication of work and superfluous competing competences forestalled.

Central coordination point in the Federal Chancellery: In order to have close links to the highest level of the government and take decisions rapidly, the national security council would have to be based directly in the Federal Chancellery.

Integration of all relevant security actors: Where necessary, the national security council should draw on expertise from all the relevant ministries, federal authorities, the *Länder*, the academic community, business and civil society.

4.4 Dissenting opinion of the Bundestag Members Christian Sauter and Knut Gerschau (FDP), and the expert member Egon Ramms (see page 26)

The majority of the Study Commission's members clearly advocated a Cabinet committee for integrated crisis management; the parliamentary group of the Free Democrats in the German Bundestag understands this as an institutionalised national security council. The general opinion of the experts who were questioned about a national security council in the hearings held by the Study Commission on Afghanistan was also unambiguous: all the experts who were heard except one favoured the creation of a national security council.

Christoph Meyer, Professor of European and International Politics at King's College in London, identified the challenge that learning processes should not stop at recommendations, but, rather, clear responsibilities and a "robust mechanism" were required for their implementation. Sarah Bressan of the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) also took up a clear position: "What will be needed [...] in future will be a pooling of foresight, capacities and capabilities with links to a new central structure coordinating security policy, so as to deal with the deficiencies in ministerial coordination in future."

In the view of the Free Democratic parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, it is clear from the findings of the interim report and the recommendations in the final report that responsible, effective security policy requires a harmonised situation assessment and coordinated, binding, interministerial action. Germany needs clear competences for the implementation and further development of its National Security Strategy. In this respect, the national security council would have to be a permanent body in the Federal Chancellery that reported directly to the head of the Federal Chancellery and would be coordinated by a national security advisor. Its primary task would be the structured coordination of all ministries relevant for security policy, acting as a functioning early-warning system and supporting the preparations for alternative scenarios.

The Free Democratic parliamentary group in the German Bundestag agrees in particular with the statements made by the Study Commission on the model of a Cabinet committee for integrated crisis management that has been described, and feels that both the parliamentary group itself and its position paper "For a proactive foreign and security policy – establishment of a national security council" of 20 June 2023 have been particularly vindicated by the following points:

- The aim is for it to be possible for the necessary preparatory work to be done on a harmonised political situation assessment as the basis for decision-making across ministerial boundaries so the political actors can move on to an organised dialogue. The ministries' interests should be weighed up in a structured process and contribute to unified government decision-making for the implementation of long-term strategic objectives.
- The political decision-making level would consist of the Federal Chancellor and the ministries of relevance for security policy (AA, BMI, BMVg, BMJ, BMF, BMZ, BMWK, BKAm). The competences and interests of the *Länder* would be brought to bear by a permanent representative speaking on their behalf. The chief of staff of the Bundeswehr and, where necessary, other actors would attend meetings on an ad hoc basis.
- An administrative bureau would ensure the organisation of strategic processes and the coordination of the ministries' work on key foreign and security policy topics. The administrative bureau would be staffed and appointments made to it by the secondment of personnel from the ministries concerned.
- A position should be created for a senior political civil servant in the Federal Chancellery, who would function as a national security adviser, acting as an interface between the political and administrative decision-making levels. The national security advisor would oversee the necessary security policy decisions. In this respect, it would be his or her task to proactively drive ahead decision-making at the political level when processes were stagnating.
- Where required, appropriate specialist expertise from think tanks, non-university research institutions and universities, as well as people with experience from previous engagements would be drawn on.
- The situation centre at the Federal Chancellery would serve as an observation unit. To complement it, there should be an analysis centre to improve interministerial strategic foresight. The results should also inform the development of strategies, enabling the actors to respond to various security threats in future and supply answers at an early stage.

In addition to the plan for a Cabinet committee on integrated crisis management, the more efficient use of inter-ministerial working groups as permanent or ad hoc bodies for dialogue and coordination would, in the view of the Free Democratic parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, play an important role, particularly in work on topics that relate to multiple ministries.

Following the creation of a national security council and adoption of its rules of procedure, subject to consideration of the Federal Security Council's current responsibilities, the latter is to be dissolved and abolished, in order to avoid inefficient duplicated structures.

The Free Democrats in the German Bundestag have made it clear that the national security council would ensure our security architecture was rendered efficient and viable for the future. The last few years have shown that Germany needs to detect challenges earlier and be capable of acting more effectively in crisis situations. This will require both adapted structures for more rapid action and a strategically conceived overall political concept so that decision-makers are not reliant on ad hoc decisions and processes when a crisis breaks out, but can take well-planned, strategic action within a meaningful institutional framework.

4.5 Dissenting opinion of the expert members Professor Hans-Joachim Gießmann, Professor Anna Geis and Dr Katja Mielke (see page 27)

It is not expedient to regard a new Cabinet committee or improved cooperation between the ministries at the state secretary level as alternative options. The decision in favour of the one or the other option will not resolve existing problems in integrated crisis management, but cause new frictions. It is not possible for the views taken by the state secretaries, whose parochialism tends to be entrenched by their ministerial responsibilities, to supersede the overall political-strategic responsibility of the German Federal Government; nor will better coordination of their regular meetings inevitably result in more strategically coherent, integrated planning and delivery of operations. Only the Federal Cabinet or a committee mandated by the Cabinet in the form of a suitable body based at the Chancellery and responsible for central strategic management within the jurisdiction of the German Federal Government as a whole will be able to guarantee that the ministries' specific interests do not come to be the main criteria for coordinated action in the field of international crisis management. By the same token, however, it is also true that no centralised body for overall strategic management led by the Chancellery can supplant the principle of ministerial autonomy and ministerial competence when it comes to the development, planning and provision of suitable ministry-specific instruments. The ministries would continue to bear great and even growing responsibility in their own areas of jurisdiction for the strategic planning of deployments at the operational level, subject to the overall strategic directives of the Federal Cabinet or an institution mandated to issue such directives. What is needed for the coordination of their different specific instruments and working approaches is not just, as in the past, regular reciprocal briefing and consultation on the measures that are undertaken, but markedly more intensive strategic cooperation on planning, the provision of resources and implementation by means of a pre-emptive, deliberately results-oriented amalgamation of ministry-specific instruments and approaches in the deployment area.

In summary, both are necessary: the fulfilment of the German Federal Government's overall political-strategic responsibility and integrated (i.e. interministerial) management of the German contributions to crisis management by a corresponding Cabinet committee in the form of a new body or an appropriately reorganised Federal Security Council AND the planning, development and provision of the various ministry-specific instruments by the ministries concerned with an operation in ways that display great synergetic potential, complementarity and coherence, all geared towards the new structure that has been created.

Apart from overall strategic management, this will require greater operational cooperation and a widening of the spectrum of tasks dealt with by the regular meetings of the state secretaries, which have mainly concentrated on consultation and coordination to date.

In consequence, it would be objectively appropriate to establish a Cabinet committee for the integrated overall management of these activities with a bureau to support operations, as well as markedly intensifying the operational-strategic planning and development of ministry-specific instruments, and accordingly coordinating the cooperation between the ministries before and during operations. Mission-relevant information from the ministries should be combined with information from federal sources, and made available to the Cabinet and the ministries concerned as a joint situation assessment. The coordination of strategic interministerial and ministry-specific operational mission command activities would allow synergies that reinforced operations' impacts, and would at the same time be cost-effective and resource-efficient.

4.6 Dissenting opinion of the expert member Winfried Nachtwei, the Bundestag Members Schahina Gambir and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see page 31)

With regard to operations abroad, the Bundestag has a contributory role wider in scope than other forms of parliamentary oversight over foreign policy and, as a result, bears shared responsibility for such operations. In the assessment of the Study Commission, the particular challenges of comprehensive multinational crisis operations in complex conflict countries require in-depth, interministerial parliamentary oversight of the focus and effectiveness of, in particular, priority operations. It has not been possible for such oversight to be performed adequately with the deliberative structure of specialised committees on foreign affairs, defence, development, internal affairs etc. that has been in place till now. It demands the establishment of a complementary specialised committee that would contribute to deliberations as a committee on crisis management operations and be equal in status to the specialised committees that already give their opinions.

The alternative option of a subcommittee on crisis management operations does not appear expedient. In practical parliamentary business, subcommittees offer a space for the in-depth discussion of relevant subsidiary topics, but have less political weight in parliamentary opinion-forming and decision-making. Continual parliamentary oversight, especially at the political-strategic level, could hardly be guaranteed by a subcommittee whose function would merely be to contribute indirectly to deliberations. Given that the Study Commission is recommending a clear institutional strengthening of joint ministerial strategic coordination (Cabinet committee or expanded, intensified meetings of state secretaries) to the German Federal Government, a recommendation for a subcommittee on crisis management operations might be perceived as disproportionate.

4.7 Dissenting opinion of the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group, and the expert members Winfried Nachtwei and Dr Katja Mielke (see page 46)

In conflict and post-conflict settings, reconstruction efforts should be carried out under a holistic concept that takes account of the local population's diverse needs and the regional context. The reconstruction process should be organised in a sustainable, decentralised, inclusive manner and a spirit of partnership in order to ensure that all societal groups are actively involved. Economic reconstruction is a central component of the overall strategy. At the same time, economic development should be driven ahead in harmony with local circumstances and the country's specific needs. The development of local economic structures and the consideration of traditional forms of economic activity are just as decisive as the creation of an environment that benefits all societal groups and self-determined economic participation. In this context, small and medium-sized businesses and the local farming sector should be given equal consideration. In addition, private investors and businesses are able to make important contributions to sustainable reconstruction, and should therefore be integrated into the process.

4.8 Dissenting opinion of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group (see page 46)

On Recommendation 55:

Although we agree with the main thrust of the recommendation, we are of the opinion that, even if development cooperation projects are crucial in the first development phase of economic reconstruction, they should not necessarily bear the full burden of building the economy on their own. During this phase of economic reconstruction too, we believe German measures to promote foreign trade and investment should be thought about together with development cooperation, in accordance with the circumstances and objectives. Where there is fundamental German private-sector interest in making investments in particular sectors during the early stages of reconstruction, it should consequently be strengthened and promoted in a targeted manner at this point using appropriate instruments for the promotion of foreign trade and investment, and advice provided through the network of German chambers of commerce abroad, Germany's diplomatic missions and the political foundations. We advocate this position firstly on account of our conviction that measures to build the economy in conflict and post-conflict settings can be implemented more efficiently by the private sector and hold out the prospect of profitability for both sides, and secondly on account of the foreseeable limitation of the resources for state development cooperation in the near future. In this respect, we make reference to Recommendation 56.

On Recommendation 56:

Although we expressly agree with the main thrust of the recommendation, it is necessary to give greater prominence to the role instruments for the promotion of foreign trade and investment should have in reconstruction efforts. Apart from the implementing measures that are mentioned, the German Federation should offer protection

to businesses by means of investment guarantees for direct investments intended to sustainably build the economy in question. This is already common practice for many investments made abroad as part of the promotion of foreign trade and investment, but should be extended to more conflict and post-conflict settings

On Recommendation 57:

Although we agree with the general thrust of the recommendation, we would like to emphasise that the need to integrate private-sector actors into the international coordination of economic development measures becomes less acute as the proportion of investments coming from the private sector rises and markets are gradually opened. To promote competition, the instruments of state control should gradually be scaled back as economic activity starts to gather momentum. In this sense, the international coordination of economic development is not an end in itself, but a means by which to efficiently stimulate economic activity at the outset.

4.9 Dissenting opinion of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, and the expert members Dr Ellinor Zeino and Jörg Vollmer (see page 54)

A fundamental distinction should be drawn between local workers, who support foreign civil and security personnel in implementing measures planned jointly with the legitimate partner government and in this way serve the development of their own country, and local staff – for example, local embassy employees – who support foreign actors in implementing their own missions and in this way serve the interests of a foreign actor.

Germany did not act in its own national interests in a narrower sense – either in its civil cooperation or in its security cooperation –, but supported a legitimate partner government to build up its country. Everything the German Federal Government supported and implemented with local workers was planned and agreed with the Afghan government, and jointly implemented with professionals from that government. When the Bundeswehr's bases were being transferred to the Afghan security forces, there were already what were known as resettlement programmes for local staff from the middle of the 2010s on, under which threats were investigated and information communicated about them. It is therefore not correct to say that – as suggested in the grounds for the recommendation – Germany was completely unprepared. The resettlement programme for local staff that ran up to August 2021 and investigated the threats to individual staff could also have been implemented after August 2021 because experience showed there were very few members of staff indeed who were actually at risk.

A German employer has a responsibility to care for the employees who work for them. It is therefore right to review the potential threat that results from an employment relationship – as was done under the resettlement programme – and communicate the results. What matters is whether there is a threat to the individual greater than the general risk to life in a given country, and such a programme must not be conceived as Germany accepting a particular contingent. Following the victory of the Taliban in Afghanistan, it has not been discernible in retrospect that people who used to be employed by the former Afghan government or former local staff have been exposed to significant repressive measures or structural threats on account of the work they did in the past.

The recommendation should therefore be formulated as follows: The nature and scope of the duty of care for local workers, above all local staff, should be regulated on an interministerial basis and communicated transparently to the individuals concerned when they enter into a contract of employment.

4.9.1 Reply of the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter to the dissenting opinion of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, and the expert members Dr Ellinor Zeino and Jörg Vollmer (see page 54)

The AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag would like to expressly underline the following sentence in the dissenting opinion, with which it agrees unreservedly:

“The resettlement programme for local staff that ran up to August 2021 and investigated the threats to individual staff could also have been implemented after August 2021 because experience showed there were very few members of staff indeed who were actually at risk.”

However, the CDU/CSU parliamentary group in the German Bundestag evidently does not speak with one voice on this matter, which it raised here itself. In a plenary debate at the end of September 2024, one of its Bundestag Members made the following statement:

“Germany contributed to political and also economic stabilisation in Afghanistan with numerous partners between 2001 and 2021. Many local staff took part in this, working for Germany or international organisations.

They committed themselves to their country's development and are being persecuted by the Taliban for this to the present day." (See minutes of plenary proceedings 20/189, page 24633.)

4.10 Dissenting opinion of the Bundestag Members Schahina Gambir, Deborah Düring and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see page 54)

Local workers (including local staff) make it easier for the Federal Republic of Germany to maintain contact with the population on the ground, do translation work and supply important information. It was they who actually made the operation in Afghanistan possible in the form it took, sometimes at the greatest danger to their lives and physical integrity. In future, Germany will also be dependent on support from local workers when it embarks upon engagements abroad. One lesson for future operations must be that, in an emergency, Germany has to be prepared to protect local workers who stay behind in the country and their family members.

It would have been of decisive significance to define clearly at an earlier stage during the operation in Afghanistan who was entitled to protection, what legal foundations were applicable and what evidence would be required. Graduated interventions and trigger points for different scenarios ought to have been defined in order, for example, to clearly govern the transition from the resettlement of individuals to a blanket resettlement scheme. In view of the diversity of possible operation scenarios and areas, it is presumably difficult to develop a generally valid concept for the administration of contingents across multiple engagements. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that appropriate treatment of local workers is required in every deployment area. This demands well-founded knowledge of the country, early crisis detection capabilities, the willingness to also consider negative scenarios and preparations for the evacuations that may be carried out if a crisis occurs. Transparent decision-making structures are needed for this that clearly define who is responsible for what in any given situation.

Germany must live up to its duty of care for the security and well-being of local workers. The German Federal Government should be prepared for various scenarios for the ending of an operation and draw up appropriate options for action jointly with its international partners. In this respect, it must also be considered whether there is a German diplomatic mission in the country of deployment, including an operating legal and consular division. If this is not the case, alternative solutions for this must be provided that are practicable and reasonable for applicants. The challenges of the journey from Kabul to Islamabad or Delhi to apply for a visa because there is no legal and consular division at the Germany embassy in Kabul speak for themselves. Alternative solutions have to do justice to the number of possible applicants as well. They will also involve the keeping and administration of central, up-to-date records of persons who may be entitled to protection, including their contact details.

When weighing up between the interests of foreign, development and migration policy, and the lives and physical integrity of the individuals affected, the latter must fundamentally be given greater weight. For this purpose, it is necessary for them to receive all information about possible threats when they are appointed. In addition, this information should be updated regularly. If they report a threat, local workers should not suffer any disadvantages that could potentially deter them from making such reports. What is needed is an interministerial agreement that responsibility will also be taken for local workers who are employed through subcontractors or whose employment contracts have previously lapsed, and that the definition of the core family will be adapted to take account of the regional understanding of the family. In particular, single women who live in the same household as a locally employed person and are dependent on them both financially and for their security must be included in the employee's core family. This applies expressly for adult single daughters.

If necessary, streamlined or retrospective visa procedures should also be applied for threatened local workers. Furthermore, it should be made possible for the (core) family of an at-risk local worker to follow their relative to Germany under a streamlined, unbureaucratic procedure.

Apart from this, Germany must continue to take responsibility for Afghans who are exposed to concrete, individual threats as a result of the work they have done and/or due to a specific vulnerability. The Federal Admission Programme for Afghanistan began to implement this approach during the present electoral term. Individuals must also be admitted to Germany from Afghanistan on humanitarian grounds following the end of the present electoral term. On account of the slow start made by the Federal Admission Programme for Afghanistan, there are thousands of cases involving threatened Afghans who will meet the qualifying requirements for humanitarian admittance after this electoral term as well that have been processed but are waiting to be decided on by the federal authorities.

4.10.1 Reply of the Bundestag Members Jan Nolte and Joachim Wundrak (AfD), and the expert member Reiner Haunreiter to the dissenting opinion of the Bundestag Members Schahina Gambir, Deborah Düring and Merle Spellerberg (Alliance 90/The Greens), and the expert member Dr Katja Mielke (see page 54)

The AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag opposes the significant expansion of the core family proposed in this dissenting opinion. Its adjustment to take account of the regional understanding of the family could, for example, include second and third wives, as is the case for example in Afghanistan.

In the view of the Alternative for Germany parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, the definition of the core family is unambiguous: it comprises two generations, the parents (mother and father) and any natural, unmarried, minor children.

Furthermore, the AfD parliamentary group in the German Bundestag categorically repudiates the case made in this dissenting opinion for the collapsed traffic light coalition's failed Federal Admission Programme for Afghanistan, even though it was suspended for several months due to abuses relating to the issue of visas by the Federal Foreign Office, and even though its financing was clearly due to be cut in the 2024/2025 budget negotiations that were never ultimately concluded. This Federal Admission Programme deserves to be cancelled without delay.

4.11 Dissenting opinion of the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see page 67)

The Study Commission has heard a host of external expert witnesses and, as previously discussed in the interim report, also commissioned two academic reports on the drug economy in Afghanistan (DRA) and corruption, patronage and clientelism as illustrated by the example of Afghanistan and countermeasures in future crisis management operations (CCP). The Study Commission has expressly decided not to endorse the recommendations and suggestions made by the external expert witnesses as a whole, but has examined which recommendations it should formulate.

However, several statements, above all in the two academic reports, demonstrate very vividly the dilemmas that opened up during comprehensive operations, for both military and civilian personnel, between political ambitions and aspirations, and the reality in the culturally alien environment that was Afghanistan. For instance, German organisations sometimes made use of what is termed "petty corruption" in order to pursue their objectives (cf. CCP, pp. 66–72). And it is to be concluded from the report on the drug economy in Afghanistan that, "The Bundeswehr, which regarded itself as being on a stabilisation mission, had no wish to find itself caught up in combat situations over drug trafficking, and was therefore not ungrateful that ISAF troops and the drug dealers were able to steer clear of one another. As a result of this, however, it became complicit in local arrangements" (p. 41). Nor will it be possible to avoid such dilemmas on future operations, especially in culturally alien environments.

By way of example, a few of the conclusions that deserve to be discussed may be quoted here:

- "In particular, fields such as the drug economy are only to be addressed over the long term, if at all. This means the intervention has to be interrogated to ascertain whether what it brings about genuinely serves the higher-level objective of reducing the drug economy; if this is not the case, there is a danger of the mission becoming complicit in the drug economy. During future interventions, findings must therefore be given greater weight in political decisions than descriptions of the objective to be achieved in the ideal case" (DRA, p. 47).
- "In future crisis operations, the ministries involved should address 'corruption, patronage and clientelism' as a central challenge and treat it as a horizontal issue. Furthermore, there should be a coherent understanding of how to deal with it coordinated between the ministries" (CCP, p. 98).
- "In crisis operations, the first landmark decision taken is decisive. [...] The participating intervention actors therefore have to be in agreement before the operation how they view CCP and what position they will take on it. It is particularly important here to clarify how patronage and clientelism are to be dealt with and what degree of 'petty corruption' will be tolerated" (CCP, p. 6).
- "Especially when it comes to reviewing how CCP is handled, there is a need to establish an autonomous oversight institution, for example in the form of an ombudsperson's office that holds a clear mandate giving it the power to audit and investigate all projects independently of the German Federal Government and international donors, and that is able to make recommendations to the federal ministries" (CCP, p. 100).

Statements and conclusions of this kind, especially, deserve considerably more attention when future operations are considered and decided on than is expressed in the Study Commission's recommendations.

5 Public hearings with external expert witnesses

The Study Commission also heard external expert witnesses publicly in the second phase of its work. The agenda for its hearings covered the thematic priorities the Study Commission had set for the recommendations to be drawn up concerning Germany's comprehensive engagement in crisis management.

In all, eleven expert witnesses spoke at the seven public hearings, including academics, government representatives, members of the Bundeswehr, and representatives of think tanks and an organisation that recruits personnel for peace operations.

The central recommendations and suggestions made by the guests at the public hearings are summarised below.

The Study Commission expressly does not endorse the expert witnesses' comments.¹⁹ Its recommendations concerning Germany's future comprehensive engagement in foreign and security policy can be found in section 3, from page 14 on.

5.1 External inputs on the future of integrated engagement

The first public hearing on 19 February 2024 (34th meeting) revolved around questions about the strategic management of comprehensive operations, and the development and adjustment of strategies in view of the complex realities in countries of deployment. Furthermore, it dealt with the promotion of an interministerial knowledge and failure culture, and the significance of stabilisation in crisis areas.

The expert witnesses who spoke on these topics were Philipp Rotmann, Head of Peace and Security at the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin, and Robin Schroeder of the Stabilisation Platform, Security Sector Reform Advisor at the Federal Foreign Office.

Strategic action with realistic objectives

Philipp Rotmann explained that two mutually complementary elements were needed in order to arrive at integrated strategies that did justice to the reality in the deployment area. The first element was a systematic approach that, by means of country-specific policies, provided for "the targeted deployment of all relevant resources to achieve a concrete objective in the country of deployment." The second element was a "stream of necessary, context-specific analyses driven by the needs that had to be met for this purpose".²⁰

"Only once I know what I want to achieve on the ground, how the resources for this are supposed to interact, do I also know what I have to know in order to do it. [...] All [...] investments in analysis and knowledge and evaluation, and in the individual details of the implementation instruments will only have as much impact as the foundation for strategic political management will support."²¹

Philipp Rotmann, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin

For such strategic action, it was necessary to strengthen the understanding "at the top of the political pyramid, so in parliament and right at the top in the executive" of what were realistic objectives, how resources would interact to achieve these objectives, and how it could be identified when the resources deployed were insufficient or incorrect assumptions had been made about the context, and the direction of travel had to be changed.²² There was a need for leadership that "uses this stream of analyses to review the assumptions on which the strategy is based with the necessary expedition and willingness to accept criticism, and to change direction where necessary."²³

Integrated central structures in government and parliament

Rotmann stated that integrated central structures were required in the government for this purpose because the ministries could not handle the task either alone or jointly. Although the ministries possessed international crisis management capacities, these were not priorities in comparison to their principal tasks. There was therefore a need for a "central form of leadership attention so that these individual parts can come together as a functioning

¹⁹ A dissenting opinion on this statement was delivered by the expert member Reiner Haunreiter (see section 4.11).

²⁰ Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 5.

²¹ Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), pp. 5–6.

²² Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), pp. 5–6.

²³ Cf. Rotmann (2024), p. 4.

strategic engagement.”²⁴ In Rotmann’s view, the Chancellery would be the “logical place for an integrated leadership role.” Alternatively, consideration could be given to the model of a high-ranking special commissioner of the German Federal Government with a strong political mandate, and access to the chancellor and the Cabinet, supported by an integrated staff drawn from the ministries.²⁵

Parliament too required a central locus “where the overall responsibility for the success and failure of German efforts to deal with a particular crisis are dealt with substantively,” and in order to set incentives in future for “the ministries’ leaderships to be held more accountable for their learning, further-development and evaluation priorities, as well as the decisions that follow from them.” Parliament should entrust a body with this task that had the necessary weight to regularly question ministers and state secretaries in public, and deliberate with them on core strategic issues at non-public meetings. For this purpose, Rotmann recommended either the establishment of a joint committee, whose members would also be active on other specialised committees relevant for crisis management, or, given its leading role when it came to the mandates for Bundeswehr operations, the Committee on Foreign Affairs.²⁶

Targeted evaluation and willingness to adapt

Rotmann recognised that the ministries had been innovative in the field of knowledge and failure culture over the preceding ten to 15 years. However, research was “still not being done with the speed and purposefulness relevant for practice” or in the necessary depth about “what conflict management measures and strategies function, and their lessons brought together on an interministerial basis.” The right questions were often not investigated in the ministries’ evaluations because they were not linked effectively to the political level. Parliament should “vigorously demand stronger results orientation and a learning culture.” Furthermore, parliament and the executive should make more frequent use of contract research as an instrument when determining which questions were to be investigated.²⁷

It was also decisive for the expert witness from the Stabilisation Platform, Robin Schroeder, that the results from studies and evaluations of crisis operations also led to changes and changes of course being made in good time.²⁸ In order to promote outcome and solution-oriented action, he suggested that more posts be created for exchange officials and officers, and it be made easier to transfer between the ministries.²⁹

“Germany’s capacity for effective action is [...] dependent more than ever on well-coordinated interministerial cooperation. [...] Based on a good contextual understanding, [we have to] adapt joint ministerial activities rapidly and flexibly to changes in the situation and act pragmatically.”³⁰

Robin Schroeder, Stabilisation Platform, Berlin

Schroeder emphasised that, in the future, crisis management would have to be organised under framework conditions different from those in Afghanistan. There was a heterogeneous collection of actors who engaged in crisis areas and were not always of one mind. The USA would no longer be available to take the leading role in stabilisation as in the past, and there was a threat of the UN losing its significance for crisis management. The implication was that “a coordinating or even quite clearly leading role [will] be expected ever more frequently of Germany by our international partners.” This was why Schroeder advocated the creation of a national security council and approved of the proposals for this made by Philipp Rotmann.³¹

Stabilisation: reducing violence in crisis areas

The influence that could be exerted in conflict areas was, Schroeder continued, limited, even when extraordinarily large amounts of resources were ploughed in. It should not be presumed objectives would be achieved by a linear process. Furthermore, the starting point should not be the fundamental assumption that development would bring

²⁴ Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 6.

²⁵ Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 6.

²⁶ Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), pp. 6–7.

²⁷ Cf. Rotmann, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 7.

²⁸ Cf. Schroeder, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 8.

²⁹ Cf. Schroeder, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 10.

³⁰ Schroeder, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 8.

³¹ Cf. Schroeder, in Study Commission (2024a), p. 8.

freedom from violence, stability and peace. While the great majority of the population tended to behave peacefully, a small group of powerbrokers and their armed helpers would attempt to assert their interests with violence where there was no state monopoly on the use of force. The comprehensive approach therefore primarily had to find ways of changing violent actors' conduct in a targeted fashion and support the political resolution of conflicts. Even when these conflict solutions did not match up to "our ideals". Stabilisation attempted to have an impact on the crisis setting and reduce violence by means of tailored projects, and was the connecting link between security and development cooperation that had often been missing in Afghanistan. International security forces could "at best temporarily create a secure environment in limited areas." The local security forces were therefore the decisive factor, and measures for "the training, resourcing and reform of the military and civil security sectors" should be an "essential part" of the comprehensive approach.³²

Capability gaps in the Bundeswehr and police

In this connection, Schroeder pointed to capability gaps in the Bundeswehr and the German police. Apart from national and alliance defence, the Bundeswehr also had to be in a position to contribute to the military stabilisation of crisis areas and train local security forces with smaller contingents. As an example of such activities, Schroeder mentioned the USA's Green Berets, which specialised in this field. The capability gap was more fundamental in the police. The training of police personnel in the country of deployment was one of the most important contributions to the protection of the civilian population, but Germany could "only send a vanishingly small number of police trainers on such operations". It was therefore urgently necessary to create "a (federal) police unit specialised in training missions abroad", which would "exclusively be deployed for this purpose."³³

5.2 Early crisis detection and failure culture in foreign and security policy engagements

The topics for the public hearing on 22 April 2024 (36th meeting) were Germany's early crisis detection systems and an improved failure culture in the ministries and other bodies. The Study Commission had invited Christoph Meyer, Professor of European and International Politics at King's College in London, to talk about these issues.

Referring to the example of Ukraine in the years 2013/2014, Meyer gave an assessment of the weaknesses of German early crisis detection. His conclusion was that, following the war between Russia and Georgia in 2008, "warnings from central and eastern-European states about Russia's aggressive, revisionist policies" had been "extremely widely ignored, especially at the level of the political leadership."³⁴

Although he said German analysts had recognised in 2013 that Russia was opposed to Ukraine moving closer to the West and the EU, this opposition had been underestimated. Nor had it been expected that Russia would be prepared to break international law "in such an outrageous fashion with a forcible annexation".³⁵

Independent studies of foreign policy engagement

As the deeper cause for these misjudgements, Meyer mentioned, among other things, that relations with Russia had generally been assessed too positively.³⁶ In addition, there had been a lack of understanding of geopolitical risks and the vulnerabilities created by economic, trade and, above all, energy policies.³⁷ He had also observed a "cultural aversion in German foreign policy circles to thinking through worst-case scenarios" and the "dominance of over-optimism in foreign policy". Furthermore, the security and defence policy expertise in the field of strategic studies was underdeveloped in Germany.³⁸

Meyer explained it was possible to learn from the UK as far as the retrospective analysis of misjudgements was concerned. In their history, the British had suffered a number of foreign policy surprises, from which conclusions had been drawn. Independent inquiries were carried out, for instance, by the Joint Intelligence Committee, whose purpose was to supply political decision-makers with assessments of current and future threats to national security.³⁹ The Committee had far-reaching powers. It could, for example, question witnesses at public meetings even

³² Cf. Schroeder, in Study Commission (2024a), pp. 9–10.

³³ Schroeder (2024), p. 3.

³⁴ Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 5.

³⁵ Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 5.

³⁶ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 5.

³⁷ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 6.

³⁸ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 6.

³⁹ Cf. Meyer (2024), p. 6.

if the government was opposed to this, and it was usually allowed full access to the records.⁴⁰ Inquiries set up by the upper and lower houses of parliament shortly after events had occurred also helped the actors to learn from the causes of errors and achieve improvements in future foreign policy action.⁴¹

In 2010, the UK had also introduced a National Security Council as the highest body responsible for coordination and strategy. It was chaired by a national security advisor and supported by a “high-powered” secretariat.⁴²

British structures could not be transposed one to one to Germany, but the principles applied there were well suited to “mitigate Germany’s weaknesses in analysis, alerting, strategy and learning,” as Meyer put it.⁴³

Stronger strategic leadership

For a better failure culture in German foreign and security policy, it was important that the reporting of errors was not stigmatised, constructive criticism was institutionalised and learning efforts were networked with one another across ministerial boundaries. In addition, learning processes should not stop at recommendations; rather, there had to be clear responsibilities and a “robust mechanism” for their implementation.⁴⁴

“What is needed are strong, credible signals from the leadership that it has a pronounced interest in learning – including uncomfortable findings.”⁴⁵

Professor Christoph Meyer, King’s College London

Meyer concluded that the German structures required stronger strategic leadership.⁴⁶

He advocated a national security council in Germany as well. But this would need a reliable knowledge base, which meant a body had to be created that would work “on the basis of all-source intelligence”.⁴⁷ Civil and defence policy perspectives also had to be thought about together to a greater extent.

Furthermore, he argued for smaller commissions of inquiry to be set up promptly after “strategic surprises”. These could be supported by a new interministerial “director-general for evaluation and learning”. In addition, national learning activities should be networked internationally. High-level expert task forces with international memberships could investigate particular problems practically from interdisciplinary perspectives, Meyer continued.⁴⁸

Finally, Meyer suggested that experts be involved to a greater degree, and that it should be made easier for researchers to gain access to the records because without this it was impossible to search successfully for causal relationships.⁴⁹

5.3 Strategic capacity, strategy development and operationalisation for international crisis management

At its 38th meeting on 13 May 2024, the Study Commission dealt in depth with the topic of strategic competence. At this public hearing, it wanted in particular to learn what organisational and institutional innovations would be required in order to put German foreign policy on a better strategic footing when it came to international crisis management. The Study Commission also wanted to find out how this could be done successfully in view of the integration of civil and military action, and incorporated into a multinational framework. As an expert witness, the Study Commission invited Brigadier General (retired) Armin Staigis, the former vice-president of the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS), to the hearing.

At the beginning of his comments, Staigis stated plainly why the National Security Strategy could still be improved in his eyes. For instance, it failed to draw any conclusions about how the objectives that had been announced could be attained and pushed through. Furthermore, there was in his opinion a need for an “integrated

⁴⁰ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 7.

⁴¹ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 7.

⁴² Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 7.

⁴³ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 7.

⁴⁴ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 8.

⁴⁵ Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 7.

⁴⁶ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 8.

⁴⁷ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 8.

⁴⁸ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 8.

⁴⁹ Cf. Meyer, in Study Commission (2024c), p. 8.

security” strategy for every crisis and every conflict in which objectives, instruments and resources would be coordinated with one another, to be precise “taking account of the anchoring of German security policy in the multinational framework”.⁵⁰

In his introduction, Staigis also addressed the question of a national security council. Should this construct not be politically feasible as a leadership and structural element in Germany, “other options should be developed and put into effect to strengthen the implementation of integrated security while taking account of the underlying constitutional framework.”⁵¹

Values, not interest-driven policies

A further development of joint ministerial and interministerial basic and advanced training for leadership personnel, and a concept for the exchange of personnel between the federal ministries and the *Länder* that involved representatives of non-state institutions would be particularly important. In Germany, there was no tradition of professional development, of interministerial stretch and support. The country’s leaders came from different worlds and cultures, were socialised in different ways. There was therefore a lack of confidence building, understanding and empathy. Time and space had to be made for this. As far as Staigis was concerned, the answer to hybrid risks and threats was the “configuration and application of integrated security”.⁵²

“[An integrated security strategy] has to be applied not only when performing international crisis management tasks, but equally in national and alliance defence, where it is of particular importance, especially now.”⁵³

Brigadier General (retired) Armin Staigis

When asked how far national interests played a role in the formulation of a national security strategy, Staigis answered that he saw no difference between values and interests – they were intertwined, and the state should seek to ensure the values it adhered to were not affected by interest-driven policies, whatever their nature.

When the Study Commission inquired whether there was not a need for a national security strategy that would also supply concrete answers to particular crises, Staigis explained that, when a crisis occurred, there had to be a mechanism that flagged this up. And, as of the moment when the German Federal Republic started playing a role, it was necessary to set about developing a strategy for the specific crisis that was emerging from the very start – which was not really being done at present, in his view.⁵⁴

One member of the Study Commission picked out Staigis’s comments on training and professional development, criticising that one “reason for the Federal Republic of Germany’s problematic strategic capacity [is] our personnel’s lack of training in strategic thinking and action”.⁵⁵ No ministry could think strategically for Germany because its staff were not trained together and did not understand how others “ticked”. Staigis concurred with this remark and added that the language used in seminars and continuing-professional development courses was decisive, because every member had been socialised differently, and military personnel did not talk quite like diplomats. What mattered was laying shared foundations.

National Security Strategy without a roadmap

The Study Commission also had questions about the understanding of strategy – to be precise, whether it was to be viewed as consensual or disputed. They also wanted to know how Staigis saw the relationship of national and collective interests with respect to NATO, the EU etc. He answered that there were different opinions in Germany as to what such a strategy should look like. The National Security Strategy described its objectives clearly; what it lacked was how they could be attained. As for collective security, Staigis noted that Germany could only defend itself collectively, and also therefore only assert its values and interests in the world collectively.

⁵⁰ Staigis, in Study Commission (2024d), p. 6.

⁵¹ Staigis, in Study Commission (2024d), p. 6.

⁵² Staigis, in Study Commission (2024d), p. 6; General (retired) Staigis made it clear at the beginning of his statement that, instead of the expression “comprehensive approach” (*Vernetzter Ansatz*), he would use the term “integrated security” (*Integrierte Sicherheit*) – as in the National Security Strategy.

⁵³ Introduction by General Staigis at the beginning of his statement: Staigis (2024), p. 4.

⁵⁴ Cf. Study Commission (2024d), p. 8.

⁵⁵ Study Commission (2024d), p. 9.

One member of the Study Commission wanted to hear how non-governmental organisations could “be involved effectively in a strategy development process for international crisis management.”⁵⁶ Staigis explained that if there were a kind of analysis and situation centre, consideration could be given to getting “institutions such as employers’ associations, trade unions and NGOs” involved “in a rolling process as well”.

One expert member of the Study Commission raised the problem of the divergence of interests, which was found even among the closest allies. The expert member wanted to know how coherence could be enhanced on a multi-national scale and also how the interests of local actors in countries of deployment could be taken into account in a strategy. Another expert member’s questions aimed in a similar direction, but mainly referred to actors in the private sector.

The answer to the question of divergence was sobering, according to Staigis. He felt this problem had not been resolved. Staigis was open to both expert members’ pleas for local actors to be involved more – this was highly sensible because the inputs that came from entrepreneurs, especially, were different from merely political inputs.

Evaluation during ongoing processes

Another expert member of the Study Commission commented in his question on the lack of an analysis and situation centre. He wanted to know where Staigis saw the added value of such a forum, in response to which Staigis mentioned interministerial dialogue. This was not just a matter of ad hoc action, but often also of prevention and consequences. In Staigis’s view, such a centre should be based at the Federal Chancellery, at least organisationally. As a model, he had the Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre in mind.

In answer to one expert member’s question about greater results-orientation, Staigis remarked that this could also be equated to evaluation, but that was already required during the process. Logically, it also meant being allowed to talk about mistakes at the political-strategic level.

One Bundestag Member wanted to know whether there were “examples of good practice” for joint strategy development plans in the interaction between NATO and the EU, and “how we can put them on a permanent basis and strengthen them.”⁵⁷ The division of labour between the two headquarters in Brussels had become considerably better, according to Staigis. Now the different instruments available had to be directed “coherently towards the shared objective in a strategy”.⁵⁸

Another Bundestag Member asked whether it was possible to look at national and alliance defence together. He was, Staigis said, influenced by the first president of the Federal Academy for Security Policy, Dieter Wellershof, who had discussed this issue back in 1983. At that time, the idea of overall defence (*Gesamtverteidigung*) had been current – and the challenges were the same.

5.4 International coordination of comprehensive crisis operations

The Study Commission’s public hearing on 3 June 2024 (40th meeting) was devoted to the “international coordination of comprehensive crisis operations”. The expert witnesses invited were Martin Erdmann, ambassador (retired) and former NATO Assistant Secretary General, and Florian Laudi, Director for the United Nations and Counterterrorism at the German Federal Foreign Office.

The challenges of international coordination

At the beginning of the Afghanistan operation, Ambassador Erdmann remembered, NATO had found itself moving to the centre of the international engagement “step by step and without a defined timetable” as a result of the invocation of Article 5.⁵⁹ The North Atlantic Council had become the “machine room” and “nucleus of the operation leadership” for the international stabilisation and support mission (ISAF).⁶⁰ On account of the dynamic situation, which had not been “foreseeable or plannable” – as Erdmann said –, both the military and civilian

⁵⁶ Cf. Study Commission (2024d), p. 9

⁵⁷ Cf. Study Commission (2024d), p. 13.

⁵⁸ Study Commission (2024d), p. 14.

⁵⁹ Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 5.

⁶⁰ Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 5.

operation leaderships constantly had to “fly by sight”. Apart from the NATO member states, there had been approximately 30 other non-NATO states involved in ISAF, depending on the exact point in time. The civilian actors had been coordinated via the capitals of the participating nations.⁶¹

Given that there had been so many relevant actors, Erdmann described the coordination work done by NATO as “exemplary”, looking back on it.⁶² The Afghanistan mission had been unprecedented in its complexity. Many procedural processes had first had to be established and practised, and national approaches had had to be harmonised.⁶³ Complex multinational crisis operations such as those in Afghanistan or Mali were embedded in specific framework conditions and were therefore “not standardisable”.⁶⁴ No matter how good the international coordination and networking was, it could not alter the fact that the “suddenly occurring unexpected” was the rule, and the reality in the deployment area was shrouded by “a wall of fog”.⁶⁵

The future of international crisis management

Erdmann did not believe complex international crisis management operations on the scale of the engagements in Afghanistan or Mali would be conducted again in the foreseeable future:

“Fundamentally, [...] I am convinced that in the decades to come internationally broad-based crisis stabilisation operations with military backing will not take place again [...]. As a consequence of Russia’s war of annihilation against Ukraine and its fundamentally neo-imperial posture, [...] we will have to focus our security and defence policy strictly on deterrence and alliance defence.”⁶⁶

Martin Erdmann, ambassador (retired)

According to Florian Laudi, international crisis management would remain “an important pillar of German foreign and security policy”.⁶⁷ Resourcing and capabilities for crisis and stabilisation operations even had to be improved – without neglecting national and alliance defence.⁶⁸ However, such engagements would prove to be “less extensive” in future than the missions to Afghanistan and Mali, and would follow a “holistic” crisis prevention approach.⁶⁹

Security policy burden-sharing between the EU and NATO

Since, in the view of Martin Erdmann, national and alliance defence would have the highest priority on account of Russia’s revisionist ambitions, NATO remained the central organisation that guaranteed European security.⁷⁰ Without the USA’s military capabilities, the European Union would not only be “politically impotent”, but “also not materially capable of defending itself, indeed not even capable of deterrence”.⁷¹

Florian Laudi agreed that Europe’s deterrence and defence capabilities had to be guaranteed by the transatlantic NATO alliance.⁷² The EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) could, by contrast, make contributions to international crisis management.⁷³ Nonetheless, there was “not-insignificant potential for improvement” in this field.⁷⁴ For instance, partly due to the special interests of individual EU Member States, the number of missions was rising, and it was becoming ever more difficult to bring these missions to a conclusion.⁷⁵

⁶¹ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 5.

⁶² Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 5.

⁶³ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), pp. 5–6.

⁶⁴ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 6.

⁶⁵ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 6.

⁶⁶ Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 6.

⁶⁷ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 7.

⁶⁸ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 7.

⁶⁹ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 8.

⁷⁰ Cf. Erdmann in: in Study Commission (2024e), p. 6.

⁷¹ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 6.

⁷² Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 7.

⁷³ Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 7.

⁷⁴ Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 7.

⁷⁵ Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), pp. 7–8.

Erdmann mentioned as further disadvantages of the CSDP that, unlike in NATO, there was no leading nation in the EU, and the decision-making processes were too slow.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the CSDP had to be kept in readiness for crisis operations on Europe’s periphery – in the western Balkans for instance.⁷⁷

The United Nations’ role

Laudi made the point that it was becoming ever more difficult to obtain mandates for operations from the UN Security Council because of the general geopolitical “weather”.⁷⁸ However, alongside sanctions and the work of the Secretary-General, blue-helmet missions remained “a central instrument for the United Nations’ peace policy”.⁷⁹ In recent years, Germany had “earned itself an unusually high profile” in this field – above all thanks to its contribution to MINUSMA – and was due to take over the chair of the UN’s Peacebuilding Commission in 2025.⁸⁰

Germany’s role

Germany, Laudi said, was following its own interests by continuing to take on responsibility for the international order – in particular in its own neighbourhood. This was why it would continue to contribute to holistic crisis prevention and crisis management, even if “the age [...] of the big, land-based operations [is] over”.⁸¹

“We must, if we look ahead, adjust our level of ambition. [...] Then it is also easier to find the exit at some point.”⁸²

Florian Laudi, Director for the United Nations and Counterterrorism, Federal Foreign Office

5.5 The role of parliament in future engagements and Bundeswehr deployments

On 24 June 2024, the Study Commission conducted a public hearing (43rd meeting) on the role of parliament in future deployments and Bundeswehr operations. Professor Heiko Sauer, Professor of Public Law at the University of Bonn, and Dominik Mutter, Director for Security Policy at the Federal Foreign Office, appeared as expert witnesses.

The Bundestag shares responsibility for operations

Heiko Sauer explained that the Bundestag was assigned a relatively strong and also relatively clear role in German constitutional law.⁸³ Bundeswehr operations outside Germany required the prior consent of the Bundestag (constitutive requirement of parliamentary approval). It was “not for nothing” that, in its judgement of principle of 12 July 1994 (BVerfGE 90/286), the Federal Constitutional Court had spoken of a “parliamentary army” and “conjoint decision-making by the German Federal Government and the Bundestag”.⁸⁴ Measured against the oversight of other aspects of foreign policy, which tended to look back at past events and supervise from a distance rather than intervening on an equal footing with other institutions, the Bundestag’s position was considerably stronger when it came to Bundeswehr deployments abroad. It was an actor that bore a share of the responsibility for these operations.⁸⁵ The requirement of parliamentary approval was therefore not limited to giving consent on a single occasion, but the Bundestag also had a degree of responsibility for the deployment subsequently. For the Bundestag, this “parliamentary assumption of shared responsibility”⁸⁶ meant drawing the procedural and institutional consequences, if parliament was to be able to cope with its participatory role.⁸⁷

⁷⁶ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 16.

⁷⁷ Cf. Erdmann, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 18.

⁷⁸ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 8.

⁷⁹ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 8.

⁸⁰ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 8.

⁸¹ Cf. Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), p. 8.

⁸² Laudi, in Study Commission (2024e), pp. 8–9.

⁸³ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 5.

⁸⁴ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 5.

⁸⁵ Cf. Sauer (2024), p. 2.

⁸⁶ Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 5.

⁸⁷ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 17.

Expansion of the German Federal Government’s duties to inform parliament

Sauer recalled the deficiencies identified in the Study Commission’s interim report in terms of the information that was available and the evaluation of situations, as well as the difficulties assembling the wide-ranging information that was needed in the Bundestag when comprehensive operations were conducted. This could be countered by expanding the German Federal Government’s duties to inform parliament. A “realistic assessment”⁸⁸ could be rendered possible in this way. For this purpose, the German Federal Government could be obliged, pursuant to Section 3 (2) of the Parliamentary Participation Act, to set out the objectives of an operation, including its non-military objectives, “rather more specifically” when requesting mandates for foreign deployments.⁸⁹ In any comprehensive operation, there were quite diverse objectives, about which the Bundestag had to be informed so it could judge for itself whether they had been achieved. Furthermore, an amendment to Section 6 of the Parliamentary Participation Act could be used to place a duty on the German Federal Government to present an evaluation report when a mandate was extended. Complemented by hearings of expert witnesses, this report could be discussed by the specialised committees so that the Committee on Foreign Affairs would be able to state in its recommendation for a decision to the plenary whether it was following the interim evaluation or where it saw deficiencies.⁹⁰

“Before a parliamentary army’s deployment is extended, it would certainly be obvious for a stocktake to be carried out, which would look at whether the operation’s objectives were being met or even the reasons why they were not being met.”⁹¹

Professor Heiko Sauer, Professor of Public Law, University of Bonn

Institutional-organisational improvement of parliamentary oversight

Sauer recommended, furthermore, that it be examined whether the division of decision-making competences between the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Defence Committee was well coordinated with the German Federal Government’s current methods of briefing the individual committees.⁹² Sauer recalled that thought had already been given to an institutional-organisational improvement of parliamentary oversight when the Parliamentary Participation Act was being drawn up, and what had been referred to as a “committee on military deployments” had been discussed. However, decisions about foreign deployments could not be transferred to a committee, but had to stay with the plenary. Nor should the competences of the committee formed to oversee crisis management operations conflict with the constitutionally guaranteed decision-making competences of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Defence Committee.⁹³ A new body – whether constituted as a committee or a subcommittee – could therefore only be given a preparatory role, but, according to Sauer, it could “pool things differently, bring things together, maybe base itself on more materials and present the information they contained so that the decision-making committees could then take note of it”.⁹⁴ Strong parliamentary participation would therefore not prevent Germany from being a reliable partner in its alliances.⁹⁵

Bundeswehr contributions to international crisis management in the future too

The Federal Foreign Office’s Director for the United Nations and Counterterrorism, Dominik Mutter, stressed that, as the German Federal Government had declared in its National Security Strategy, the Bundeswehr would also make important contributions to international crisis management in future. At the same time, the right conclusions had to be drawn from the current situation and the “clear priority of national and alliance defence”.⁹⁶ For this purpose, the German Federal Government was carrying out an evaluation of all ongoing mandated foreign deployments.⁹⁷ More realistic objectives should be defined for operations in future. “Overambitious transformation objectives” could seldom be reconciled with reality, and “the era of large-scale, multi-year, land-based

⁸⁸ Sauer (2024), p. 2.

⁸⁹ Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 6.

⁹⁰ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 6.

⁹¹ Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 6.

⁹² Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 6.

⁹³ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 6.

⁹⁴ Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 14.

⁹⁵ Cf. Sauer, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 17.

⁹⁶ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 7.

⁹⁷ German Bundestag (2024c).

operations outside Europe” appeared to be over, at least for the time being.⁹⁸ If a conflict situation could be de-escalated so that people were no longer dying or starving, then something had been achieved at least. Such a return to the status quo ante was a more realistic objective.⁹⁹

“The interplay between the executive and the legislative must [...] above all [...] be about enabling the Bundeswehr to attend to both aspects: its core mission of national and alliance defence, and its mission to keep contributing to international crisis management.”¹⁰⁰

Dominik Mutter, Director for Security Policy, Federal Foreign Office

German Federal Government takes on board input from the Bundestag when implementing deployment mandates

Mutter said the example of the Bundeswehr’s participation in the EU Operation EUNAVFOR Aspidos in the Red Sea, which had been voted for in February 2024, illustrated particularly graphically how rapidly the German Federal Government and the Bundestag could put in place the mandate for a new foreign deployment, and that there was “already a broad range of formats for parliamentary participation” available “using briefings from the government about foreign deployments”.¹⁰¹ During the mandate approval process, the German Federal Government had provided information in several communications submitted to parliament by the Federal Foreign Office and Federal Ministry of Defence in various formats, and had taken Bundestag Members’ suggestions on board. This dialogue had not been limited to the mandate approval process, but had continued afterwards. The German Federal Government accepted input from parliament on an ongoing basis, both in relation to the amendment of mandates and their implementation.¹⁰² The mandate to be approved might relate to a military deployment, but the motions requesting a mandate always included introductory remarks explaining the background to the deployment, its objectives and the “wider scope” of the German Federal Government’s engagement.¹⁰³

Expansion of coordination within the German Federal Government

The coordination of deployments within the German Federal Government had been further developed since the Afghanistan mission. The periodic security policy meetings at the state secretary level had been expanded and placed on a more permanent basis. The meetings were now held “regularly, noticeably more frequently and with an extended group of participants”.¹⁰⁴ For instance, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development was now always represented at these regular meetings. Civil-military coordination also took place at the strategic level of the state secretaries.

Using existing information formats more intensively

Mutter was of the opinion that, both for coordination within the German Federal Government and for coordination between the German Federal Government and the Bundestag, “existing coordination formats” should be “used more intensively, instead of thinking about new formats.”¹⁰⁵ It was possible to base the approach taken to this on established instruments for the approval of mandates and the communication of information, or for greater use to be made of more informal dialogue formats, such as briefings given at short notice, sometimes by telephone, for representatives of the parliamentary groups (the “group coordinators”). On request, the ministries could even brief several committees together. The German Federal Government endeavoured to describe the situation on deployments abroad very realistically and unsparingly.¹⁰⁶ Mutter too was of the opinion that the requirement of parliamentary approval did not constrain Germany’s ability to contribute to its alliances. Germany’s partners were aware of the peculiarities of the German constitution and had a great deal of confidence in Germany’s reliability.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁸ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 9.

⁹⁹ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 15.

¹⁰⁰ Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 9.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 8.

¹⁰² Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 8.

¹⁰³ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 8.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 9.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 18.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Mutter, in Study Commission (2024f), p. 18.

5.6 The comprehensive civil-military approach in international crisis management: the role of civilian operation personnel and the application of German law in deployment areas

The Study Commission dealt with the role of civilian operation personnel and the application of German law in deployment areas at its 45th meeting on 1 July 2024. During this public hearing, the Study Commission wished, among other things, to learn from the expert witnesses who had been invited how the knowledge and insights of operation personnel could be heard more clearly by policymakers and society, and how local actors could be involved to a greater extent in the planning and delivery of international crisis management activities. The second main point the Study Commission was interested in was what legal challenges had been thrown up by the Bundeswehr deployments abroad undertaken to date, in the estimation of the expert witnesses to be heard, and where, if necessary, it was felt there was a need for the legislature to take action.

The Study Commission had invited two external expert witnesses to give evidence about these thematic complexes: Dr Astrid Irrgang, Executive Director of the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF), and Assistant Ministerial Counsellor Norbert Hausmann, a legal advisor at Bundeswehr Joint Forces Operations Command. ZIF prepares civilian personnel for international operations on behalf of the German Federal Government.

International mandates place heavy requirements on diplomacy and civil instruments

Astrid Irrgang referred at the beginning of her comments to the special character of international mandates: they were “the result of political decision-making processes, always with a very large number of compromises and limiting factors”.¹⁰⁸ What she was talking about were, for example, the “commitment of resources and [...] securing of political will in the capitals, even when there were changes of government”.¹⁰⁹ Any successes were hampered additionally by the “existence of external or internal actors who may have a great interest in perpetuating a conflict”.¹¹⁰ The same was true of international actors who did not maintain “equidistance to all conflict parties” and therefore undermined their own roles as “honest brokers”.¹¹¹

Irrgang made it clear that these special factors created “enormous challenges for the role of diplomacy and the requirements placed on our civil instruments”.¹¹² Examples of such requirements included “the greatest possible knowledge about conflicts, [...] regional and national situations, conflict parties, the opportunities offered by the time windows for negotiations and also the risks of escalation, so as not to be surprised by developments”.¹¹³

Under its “integrated approach”, ZIF endeavoured to bring together voices and experiences – what was referred to as “deployment knowledge” (*Einsatzwissen*) –, present them, and make them usable for future deployments and scenarios.

Different manifestations of the integrated approach

The integrated approach was to be understood as an approach “that is intended to focus various conflict management actors’ action on a common objective”.¹¹⁴ This could take on various forms on the ground during a concrete operation. The spectrum extended from “information-sharing [...] to coordination and cooperation, and integrated action”.¹¹⁵ It was necessary to analyse, among other things, whether the various different actors had the same objective in mind and how much was known about local circumstances.

“There is not one single, optimal integrated approach. This is why it is also possible to take good comprehensive action, but fail in spite of this because our own strategy and the measures chosen were not effective for its implementation. This has to be considered in particular when assessing the engagement in Afghanistan. The National Security Strategy is, from my point of view, a valuable step to promote the cohesiveness of the action taken. Germany has got better in this field on the whole.”¹¹⁶

Dr Astrid Irrgang, Executive Director, Center for International Peace Operations

¹⁰⁸ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5; cf. Irrgang (2024), p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹¹ Cf. Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹² Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹³ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹⁴ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹⁵ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), pp. 5–6.

In order to support the integrated approach and therefore peacebuilding operations, it was “helpful to bring together the different actors, wherever possible, so that they know about one another and are familiar with the foundations for each other’s work”¹¹⁷, Irrgang said. Joint training courses to prepare civilian, police and military personnel for operations were an important building block in this respect. They strengthened the effectiveness of peace missions in practice.¹¹⁸

Local ownership: the key to sustainable peacebuilding

From ZIF’s point of view, networking between external actors and locals on the ground in the deployment area was particularly important. The involvement of, and dialogue with, local actors promoted mutual understanding and, at best, opened up insights into local structures and traditions. Irrgang stressed that local ownership was “a key to sustainable peacebuilding”.¹¹⁹ However, she criticised the fact that its implementation was frequently limited to the country of deployment’s governmental structures and disregarded civil society actors.¹²⁰

Different legal foundations and mandates hamper the coordination of operation personnel

Assistant Ministerial Counsellor Norbert Hausmann described his observations and experiences as a legal adviser in the armed forces for the Study Commission. He discussed the example of the deployment in Afghanistan to make it clear that the legal parameters within which the Bundeswehr had operated had been complex. “Interministerial operations by integrated forces are easier if they are based on the same foundations of international and, where applicable, constitutional law, and the different parties’ mandates already provide for corresponding collaboration.”¹²¹ In Afghanistan, there had not been one operation, but several. It was challenging to coordinate forces that – as had been the case between the OEF, ISAF, UNAMA and RSM mandates – were based on different legal foundations with different missions and powers, Hausmann said.

“It is important to record and evaluate experiences, lessons learned. But I think the greatest challenge of all will be to bring the results of this evaluation to bear afterwards in future operations as well. In principle, what possibly didn’t go so well in past operations has to be taken into consideration when planning a deployment.”¹²²

Assistant Ministerial Counsellor Norbert Hausmann, legal advisor, Bundeswehr Joint Forces Operations Command

Hausmann warned against overwhelming personnel with tasks. Armed forces primarily acted militarily, the legal adviser said, and should therefore “not be the means of choice for humanitarian or policing tasks.”¹²³ In addition, the forces available had been limited, and it had not been possible to use a form of inter-agency assistance, even if the mandates and legal frameworks permitted it, on account of the sparse resources.

German law abroad

Fundamentally, Hausmann continued, German law was not immediately applicable abroad. On foreign deployments, the armed forces dealt with this by issuing administrative or service regulations. In order to be able to carry out the military mission and avoid “disproportionate effort compared to the benefits”, there were “optionality clauses that permitted exceptions”.¹²⁴ In operation practice, servicewomen and men initially had to familiarise themselves with the service regulations in force abroad because – coming from routine duty in Germany – they often did not yet have a great “wealth of experience” of how to conduct themselves in particular situations when deployed abroad.¹²⁵ In critical situations, where it was necessary to deviate from rules under certain circumstances, this was partly a matter of weighing up risks, when doing which it was important to have the support of legal advice on the ground. The significance of operational legal advice had grown since the Afghanistan mission.

¹¹⁷ Irrgang, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 6.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Irrgang (2024), p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Irrgang (2024), p. 2.

¹²⁰ Cf. Irrgang (2024), p. 2.

¹²¹ Hausmann (2024), p. 1.

¹²² Hausmann, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 7.

¹²³ Hausmann (2024), p. 1.

¹²⁴ Hausmann, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 9.

¹²⁵ Cf. Hausmann, in Study Commission (2024g), p. 9.

Rules of engagement

As far as rules of engagement were concerned, Hausmann clarified that he was using the term “in a military sense, that is to say as a particular format for operational guidelines in the military planning process and the military operation plan”.¹²⁶ Rules of engagement were coordinated in a multinational framework. He gave a cautious answer to the Study Commission’s question about joint rules of engagement for comprehensive deployments in which civilian and military personnel were involved. “Since rules of engagement are always based on the legal framework, the mission, and the other operational and political guidelines for the various forces, any attempt at interministerial harmonisation will probably come up against its limits before long”¹²⁷, Hausmann said.

5.7 National coordination of future comprehensive engagements and Bundeswehr deployments

At its last public hearing on 23 September 2024 (47th meeting), the Study Commission examined the coordination of future international crisis operations at the national level. The members of the Study Commission wanted to learn from the expert witness, among other things, how the coordination of civil and military engagements could be better integrated in her view. Furthermore, the Study Commission wanted to know what structures could be further optimised in order to strengthen strategic early detection or crisis prevention on an interministerial basis. Sarah Bressan from the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin was invited to the hearing as an expert witness.

Taking her cue from the Study Commission’s questions, Sarah Bressan commented on three topics: the most recent developments in integrated strategic capacity and national coordination; the strengthening of strategic interministerial early detection and crisis prevention arrangements; and the comprehensive approach’s role in current conflicts and the tendencies likely to be seen in future.

Developments in integrated strategic capacity and national coordination

Bressan saw it as progress that the German Federal Government had “drawn up a National Security Strategy based on a broad understanding of integrated security for the first time in this electoral term”.¹²⁸ However, the strategy had already been overtaken by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the emergence of new hybrid threats.¹²⁹ It was less a fundamental strategic document that would guide action than a “narrative superstructure”.

Despite numerous crises, strategic surprises and mistakes – for example, connected with the Russian attack on Ukraine, the Iraq War or the hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan –, a wide-ranging, in her view urgently necessary, reform of the German Federal Government’s security policy coordination structures had not hitherto been undertaken.¹³⁰ Looking at Afghanistan, Bressan commented that the “deficiencies in the German Federal Government’s coordination of its ministries in the foreign and security policy field” that had been described “have been documented thoroughly over the last few years and decades, not least in the Study Commission’s interim report”.¹³¹ The use of existing bodies such as the Federal Security Cabinet and various meetings of state secretaries had to be seen as improvisations in a crisis, but were not indicative of strategic capacity.¹³²

“What will be needed [...] in future is a pooling of foresight, capacities and capabilities linked to a new central structure coordinating security policy in order to counter the deficiencies in the coordination between the ministries.”¹³³

Sarah Bressan, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin

Strengthening of interministerial strategic early detection and crisis prevention

Strategic early crisis detection was essential in a complex global situation, Bressan said. The existing interministerial Working Group for Early Crisis Detection (AG KFE), which had the task of bringing together forward-looking analyses about future conflicts and crises from multiple ministries and drawing up recommendations for

¹²⁶ Hausmann (2024), p. 1.

¹²⁷ Hausmann (2024), p. 2.

¹²⁸ Bressan (2024), p. 1.

¹²⁹ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 5.

¹³⁰ Cf. Bressan (2024), p. 2.

¹³¹ Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), pp. 4–5.

¹³² Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 5.

¹³³ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 4.

action, was an important innovation.¹³⁴ Improvements were needed here too, the Working Group’s recommendations for action too rarely discussed concrete adjustments to German policy in crisis settings, for example, but there was generally no lack of good analyses. The main problem was rather that, “during the decision-making process”, good, “high-quality, structured analyses” were being put side by side with “less-well-founded analyses and opinions”¹³⁵, and “incentive structures for strategic conduct in bureaucratic systems and political considerations”¹³⁶ persuaded decision makers to “ignore even the best analyses”.¹³⁷

In order to overcome this, what would be needed, apart from improved foresight processes, would in particular be political leaders who factored the results of these academic analyses more into their own decision-making. It was problematic that insufficient pressure for action was coming from the existing coordination structures. Such pressure would have to be generated by the duties the government had to report to the German Bundestag, for example.¹³⁸

Role of the comprehensive approach in current conflicts and likely tendencies in future conflicts

Bressan’s analysis was that the lessons from Afghanistan pointed the way forward for Germany’s future comprehensive action, even if the underlying geopolitical conditions had changed. In the current case of support for Ukraine, for instance, the German side was mostly deploying the same stabilisation instruments as in previous operation and crisis settings.¹³⁹

Future crises and crisis operations would self-evidently differ from past operations, Bressan said. In particular, the exact contexts on the ground, which were particularly relevant, were hardly possible to predict. But some general trends were already identifiable – such as the strategic objectives of the democratic states’ opponents and the means they were deploying to undermine democratic societies. In addition, what had previously tended to be discrete aspects of domestic and external security were blurring ever more into one another (Sarah Bressan mentioned “hybrid” threats as a key issue). And managing these risks was becoming ever more important.¹⁴⁰ The “major weaknesses in the ministries’ coordination” were to be found at such interfaces, Bressan continued.¹⁴¹ At the end of the hearing, she particularly highlighted once again the urgent necessity of improving this coordination – partly by finding new institutional answers.¹⁴²

¹³⁴ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h) p. 5.

¹³⁵ Bressan (2024), p. 3.

¹³⁶ Bressan (2024), p. 3.

¹³⁷ Bressan (2024), p. 3.

¹³⁸ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 10.

¹³⁹ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 5.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 6.

¹⁴¹ Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 6.

¹⁴² Cf. Bressan, in Study Commission (2024h), p. 11.

6 Annexes

6.1 Decision on the establishment of the Study Commission of 5 July 2022 (Bundestag printed paper 20/2570)

Motion

tabled by the SPD, CDU/CSU, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP parliamentary groups

Establishment of a Study Commission on lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future

The Bundestag is requested to adopt the following motion:

The German Bundestag hereby establishes a Study Commission on lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future.

I. Background

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 marked a major turning point in Germany's international crisis management. No other violent incident between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Russian invasion of Ukraine has had a greater impact on the foreign, security and development policy of the Federal Republic of Germany than the terrorist attacks on the United States more than 20 years ago. In response to the attack by the terrorist organisation al-Qaeda on the United States of America, the NATO mutual-defence clause was invoked for the first time. Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder spoke in the Bundestag assuring the United States of Germany's unlimited solidarity; Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer emphasised that, when serious crimes were committed, action had to be taken, "including in world domestic policy". For two decades, Germany was engaged in Afghanistan within the framework of various operations and missions, mandated by the Bundestag and by Cabinet decision, to fight terrorism and stabilise the country, where the then ruling Taliban had harboured the responsible terrorist organisation, al-Qaeda. From the beginning, Germany's engagement was closely integrated into that of the international community of states. This was achieved by means of United Nations structures and on the basis of UN resolutions, but primarily within the framework of the operations organised and led by NATO, in which a number of other states took part alongside the members of NATO. These operations intensified international military cooperation, particularly within NATO but also between NATO and its partner countries, raising that cooperation to a new political level. German's engagement in its established form ended with the withdrawal of the Bundeswehr and allied states in summer 2021, as a result of the Doha Agreement negotiated between the United States under then President Donald Trump and the leaders of the Taliban and the withdrawal of US troops completed by the Biden administration.

Parliamentary review of the evacuation from Afghanistan will form the substance of the 1st Committee of Inquiry in the 20th electoral term (on the evacuation mission of

the Bundeswehr operation in Afghanistan – printed paper 20/2352), which the parliamentary groups tabling the motion consider necessary because the precipitous ending of the international operation was associated with danger to life and limb for people in Afghanistan as well as foreign policy damage to the Federal Republic of Germany and its partners. The Study Commission, on the other hand, is to be tasked with comprehensively inquiring into all of Germany's foreign, security and development policy engagement in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021. The intended aim of that comprehensive review with academic support is to draw lessons from the more than 20 years of Germany's multifaceted operation in Afghanistan, embedded in the international operation, for Germany's future military and civil international engagement and the comprehensive approach. The commission's mandate will therefore cover reviewing both the military and the civil engagement in its entirety. Regarding Germany's military involvement, the various phases of the deployments are to be investigated, i.e. its contribution to the fight against international terrorism in the context of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), deployment as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Resolute Support Mission (RSM). The military and the civil instruments, i.e. intensive diplomatic and development-policy efforts, were intended to complement one another as part of the comprehensive approach. The civil engagement comprised varied and intensive international and development-policy efforts to support the Afghan government in creating lasting security and stability and to pursue such aims as combating poverty, economic development, promoting the rule of law and improving governance for Afghanistan.

The Study Commission is to analyse the various phases of the whole of Germany's civil and military involvement in Afghanistan in terms of objectives set and objectives achieved. Particularly in light of the constant changing of objectives throughout the more than 20 years of engagement, the use of resources and the increasing interdependence, in the course of that engagement, between the military and civil elements in the context of foreign and development-policy measures, the focus is also to be on analysing the degree to which objectives were achieved. The question as to why the military and civil stabilisation measures did not contribute to a lasting establishment of peace in the country, after the evident success of the military deployment against the tyranny of the Taliban at the beginning of the operation and the successful fight against al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks, is part of that investigation.

An independent and comprehensive review of this nature into Germany's civil and military contributions is essential in the interests of formulating lessons for a future policy of strategic foresight, conflict prevention, crisis management, post-crisis rehabilitation and stabilisation as well as the fight against terrorism and the development of structures safeguarding democracy and human rights. It is simultaneously an obligation vis-à-vis the service personnel, police officers, diplomats and all those involved in humanitarian aid organisations or development cooperation who were deployed on a highly demanding and risky operation at the behest of the Federal Government and Bundestag.

At the core of Germany's international military and civil action is the comprehensive approach, whose genesis and development as a concept has been significantly influenced by Germany's engagement in Afghanistan. It comprises the coordination and agreement of military, police, diplomatic, development-policy and humanitarian resources to be deployed in a pooled, targeted and thus optimised manner. The dovetailing and synergetic effects of the following pillars should be highlighted in particular:

1. Security and stabilisation: fight against terrorism, military stabilisation and creation of a safe environment, development of effective Afghan armed and security forces;
2. Peacebuilding: diplomatic activities, regional integration, support for the peace process and civilian conflict management, reconciliation;

3. Development of state structures, good governance and instruments serving to promote democracy;
4. Combating of drugs and corruption;
5. Reconstruction and development.

Attention is also to be paid to the interaction between various players at the local, regional, multinational and international levels, the selection of cooperation partners, civil-military cooperation and the coherence of structures of leadership, coordination and responsibility.

The security, social, economic, legal and humanitarian advances achieved in Afghanistan have been greatly put at risk since the seizure of power by the Taliban and have in some cases already been reversed. The objectives we set for ourselves were not all achieved. The experience of the Afghanistan operation is therefore in part a severe setback for the Federal Government's international action and the principle of the comprehensive approach. At the same time, the comprehensive approach remains the guiding principle of the Federal Government's involvement in international crisis management.

A far-sighted politics should, in its decision-making, take lessons from the wealth of experience gained from the engagement in Afghanistan and so do everything possible to avoid mistakes, wrong turnings and conceptual as well as systemic problems in future. To that end, the Study Commission on lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future is to analyse its engagement in Afghanistan from an interdisciplinary perspective and – chiefly though not exclusively – on that basis develop lessons for the comprehensive approach and draw up recommendations – where necessary – for adaptation and evolution. In that endeavour, the Study Commission is also to draw up proposals for the development, addition and onward evolution of standards and systems for the ongoing and future evaluation of operations.

On the basis of the experience gained in Afghanistan, the Study Commission is to draw up proposals for efficient, cohesive and comprehensive cooperation and communication between the government departments involved. The Study Commission is moreover to seek dialogue with important international partners, particularly within the EU and NATO, the G7, UN organisations and the development banks active in Afghanistan, as well as important bilateral partners, and, where review has already occurred, to include this in its own analysis. Conclusions are also to be drawn regarding information-sharing and cooperation at the international and European levels.

Where justified, the Study Commission must have access to internal government documents. The Federal Government is called upon to examine which documents can be declassified and made available to the Study Commission.

II. Task

The German Bundestag hereby tasks the Study Commission – independently of and in addition to current legislative procedures and parliamentary decisions – with examining the comprehensive approach with reference to the engagement in Afghanistan as an example, and particularly to the Bundeswehr deployments and the associated challenges, and with putting together lessons from 20 years of engagement in Afghanistan, not least in order to draw conclusions from them for Germany's ongoing and future international military and civil endeavours:

A. Review of Germany's engagement in Afghanistan

Guiding strategies and interests

- Presentation of the overall strategy in each phase of the engagement
- Coordination and integration of the German approach within the engagement of

the international community

- Distillation of the national and international guiding interests that motivated the above-mentioned overall strategy
- Assessment of the initial conditions, including the Petersberg Conference of December 2001

Setting of objectives for military operations and for civil engagement in its various facets

- Definition of objectives
- Identification of conflicting objectives
- Assessment of the realistic and foreseeable achievability of the objectives
- Assessment of the agreement and coordination of objectives with local, regional and international partners

Adaptation of objectives and ongoing review of the engagement

- Review, adaptation or redefinition of objectives in view of time-related changes or alterations in the situation
- Review of monitoring and evaluation of the engagement and the situation assessment for the whole of Afghanistan
- Review of resources made available, their suitability and effect
- Review of the mechanisms for cooperation in the international and multinational context
- Interdependence of the various sources of evaluations and objectives within the Federal Government and with local and international partners

Instruments used

- Analysis of the various foreign, security and development-policy instruments in the specific circumstances of Afghanistan and their usability
- Analysis of the deployed national instruments and capacities in the multinational context and of the capabilities that may be lacking
- Development of the instruments over the course of the engagement and analysis of their adaptability to the specifics of the engagement and to the statement of objectives
- Review of the requirements placed on staff, the pre-deployment training – including intercultural competence – given to seconded personnel, the effects of fluctuations and the role of local staff
- Estimation of the effects of the engagement on the disposition, organisation and methods of the participating instruments of Germany's foreign, security and development-policy activity (including long-term consequences of psychological trauma resulting from deployments)
- Enquiry as to possible political limitations on the framework conditions for fulfilling mandates and achieving the objectives facing the organisations and instruments actively involved on the ground and the effects on the achievement of objectives

Organisation of operations

- Organisation and coordination mechanisms for the integration of Germany's engagement into that of the international community, particularly the UN and NATO
- Organisation and ongoing adaptation of structures, scale, capabilities and resources, including superordinate/central leadership/coordination of the engagement

- Interaction and communication of the participating government departments, subordinate agencies and intelligence services
 - Organisation of responsibilities/remits and of international coordination/liaison
- Continuation and possible end of operations

- Measurement and parameters of achievement of objectives, impact indicators
- Definition of possible termination criteria, timings and strategies
- Analysis of interdependencies between national decisions and decision-making processes and those of international partners and organisations

B. Lessons for Germany's comprehensive international engagement in the future

Potential and limits of the comprehensive approach

- Analysis of the specifics of Afghanistan to contextualise conclusions on the effectiveness of the comprehensive approach
- Enshrining and implementation of security and stability, democracy, pluralism, human rights, individual fundamental rights, inclusion for all, etc.
- Options for action between values-driven and interest-driven international action
- The time factor and temporal horizons, short-term versus long-term instruments and needs as well as their cost factors
- Burden-sharing, cooperation, the role of prevention, strengthening of resilience and human security
- Potential for opportunities and examples of best practice
- Recommendations for possible limited scenarios for purely security-related engagement if the situation demands it

Development of institutions

- Recommendations for action to develop operational institutions, administrations and decision-making structures (local, regional, national) based on the expectations of those affected
- Analysis of the influence of Afghanistan's formal and informal political structures
- Security sector reform, finance, development and support of armed and security forces, strengthening of democratic scrutiny
- Analysis of the effectiveness of the development of security forces
- Recommendations for action to hinder and prevent corruption in Afghan institutions and in the international engagement
- Importance and role of bilateral and international financial support and donor coordination, especially in the context of weak state partnership structures
- Strengthening of parliamentary, civil-society and also private-sector institutions as well as independent media

Empowerment and consideration of women and girls

- Recommendations for action for the lasting advancement of women and girls, not least with regard to protecting and guaranteeing rights
- Recommendations for action for greater consideration of women's role as key players within comprehensive engagement

Setting of objectives, analysis and evaluation

- Recommendations for action to define operation-specific objectives of the comprehensive approach
- Drawing up of operationalisable parameters for evaluation of the objectives associated with the comprehensive approach, including context-related, realistic

timeframes, and target indicators for the various phases and aspects of the comprehensive approach, not least with respect to the resources used

- Drawing up of interdisciplinary and comprehensive analysis mechanisms
- Evaluation of the Progress Reports on Afghanistan for their usefulness to the setting of objectives for, analysis of and continual evaluation of the engagement
- Parliament and the public: provision of information to parliament and strategic referral to the committees of the German Bundestag, use of the available sources of information
- Importance of the possibility of groupthink
- Recommendations for action for the development of exit strategies, including those for sub-components; necessary framework conditions for continuation of civil measures when the military component ends, role of civil endeavour to stay engaged for stabilisation and stability
- Proposals for targeted involvement of parliament in the strategic shaping of comprehensive engagement

Interplay of the comprehensive approach practised by Germany with other players

- Analysis of systems and aspects of the comprehensive approach among allies and multilateral organisations
- Identification of synergies and points of conflict

Interrelationships between the various aspects of the comprehensive approach

- Identification and analysis of tipping points which demand a reassessment of the resources and strategies required
- Interaction between non-military and military aspects of the comprehensive approach
- Basic security prerequisites for successful non-military engagement
- Positive and negative effects of non-military aspects on security and stability

Interaction with international players, alliances and the states of the region

- Interests and involvement of the central NATO allies and effects thereof on the development of Afghanistan and Germany's engagement
- Interests and influence of the regional states, especially Pakistan, on the development of Afghanistan and the chances of successful engagement by the international community
- Interests and influence of important global state actors on the development of Afghanistan and the chances of successful engagement by the international community
- Decision-making mechanisms and dynamics within NATO regarding the Alliance's objectives and engagement in Afghanistan
- Expectations placed on Germany and Germany's role within the international community's engagement in Afghanistan and their feedback effects on the formulation of German objectives and strategies
- Limiting factors for Germany's involvement within the international community's engagement

Interaction with the local population and local governance structures

- Identification of the mechanisms of meaningful approaches and constructively cooperative decision-makers with regard to the role and function of local, regional and also national power structures
- Drawing up of practical mechanisms to enable experience/requirements/expectations on the ground and in the local population to feed back into the future shaping

of operations, including at higher levels of leadership

- Significance and potential of participation as well as local and regional approaches for the various components of the comprehensive approach
- Assessment of the necessity and scale of mechanisms to engender flexibility in military and civil support

III. Recommendations for action

The Study Commission is intended to be a place where politicians alongside representatives of institutions involved in the engagement, experts from institutions charged with the operation and academics from the relevant disciplines reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the German military and civil engagement as well as the interplay of these in the context of the comprehensive approach – in view of the engagement in Afghanistan – pick up on proposals from practice, research, civil society and wider society, and develop specific ideas and recommendations for action for political decision-makers. Based on the outcome of its investigation, the Study Commission is to identify what state action is required at the national, European and international levels.

IV. Composition and public access

The Study Commission comprises twelve Members of the German Bundestag and twelve experts. The SPD parliamentary group will appoint three members, the CDU/CSU parliamentary group will appoint three members, the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group will appoint two members, and the FDP parliamentary group will appoint two members, the AfD parliamentary group will appoint one member and the Left Party parliamentary group will appoint one member.

A deputy member can be appointed for each Member of the Bundestag. The experts will be appointed by consensus among the parliamentary groups. If consensus cannot be reached, the parliamentary group will appoint them in line with the above key.

The ongoing acquisition of knowledge and the findings of the Study Commission are to be made accessible to the public in an appropriate form that takes account of the needs arising from particularly sensitive information and knowledge. Additionally, a website and other suitable digital channels are to provide information and documents in multilingual form. This may make it easier to connect back with Afghan civil society and our international partners.

To make the best possible use of the opportunities for learning from this review, the Study Commission is to draw up proposals for how the recommendations can be put into practice in accordance with a suitable timetable.

V. Schedule

The Study Commission is to be formed without delay and present its findings and recommendations for action after the parliamentary recess of summer 2024 at the latest.

Berlin, 5 July 2022

Dr Rolf Mützenich and the SPD parliamentary group

Friedrich Merz, Alexander Dobrindt and the CDU/CSU parliamentary group

Katharina Dröge, Britta Haßelmann and the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group

Christian Dürr and the FDP parliamentary group

6.2 Decision on the extension of the Study Commission's work of 20 February 2024 (Bundestag printed paper 20/10374)

Motion

tabled by the SPD, CDU/CSU, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP parliamentary groups

Extension of the work of the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future

The Bundestag is requested to adopt the following motion:

The Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future shall continue its work beyond the parliamentary recess of summer 2024, allowing it to fulfil the task set out for it in the decision by which it was established (Bundestag printed paper 20/2570).

The Study Commission should conclude its substantive work by the end of 2024, if possible, so that there is sufficient time and opportunity overall to deliberate both on the results from the work done by its cluster groups and on the Study Commission's concluding assessment, and to guarantee its final report is prepared appropriately for publication, in order that it may subsequently be deliberated on by the German Bundestag.

In derogation from Rule 73 (2) of the Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag, it is hereby determined that the Study Commission of the 20th electoral term on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future shall only publish the minutes of its non-public meetings where a decision to this effect has been taken.

Berlin, 20 February 2024

Dr Rolf Mützenich and the SPD parliamentary group

Friedrich Merz, Alexander Dobrindt and the CDU/CSU parliamentary group

Katharina Dröge, Britta Haßelmann and the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group

Christian Dürr and the FDP parliamentary group

Grounds

In response to a cross-party motion, the German Bundestag decided at its sitting on 8 July 2022 to establish a Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future, and tasked it with presenting its results and recommendations for action after the parliamentary recess in the summer of 2024 at the latest.

The Study Commission structured its substantive tasks such that they were to be dealt with in two phases. To date, it has been possible for the interim report on the first phase of the Study Commission's review of the engagement in Afghanistan to be presented. The next step is for lessons and recommendations concerning Germany's future engagement to be drawn up in five cluster groups. Against the background of the tasks that still remain to be carried out, it will not be feasible for the Study Commission's work to be concluded immediately after the recess in the summer of 2024. It is therefore necessary for the Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future to be granted the additional time that has now been requested so all the cluster groups that have been formed are able to conclude their substantive-technical work, and the Study Commission as a whole is able to fulfil its task in accordance with the decision by which it was established (Bundestag printed paper 20/2570).

The Study Commission on Lessons from Afghanistan for Germany's Comprehensive International Engagement in the Future examines sensitive questions of foreign and security policy. The request for a derogation from Rule 73 (2) of the Rules of Procedure is intended to give the Study Commission the ability to decide whether to publish the minutes of its non-public meetings in accordance with "the needs arising from particularly sensitive information and knowledge" (Part IV, p. 7 of the decision establishing the Study Commission, 8 July 2022, Bundestag printed paper 20/2570).

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6.4 List of abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (Federal Foreign Office)
AG KFE	Arbeitsgruppe Krisenfrüherkennung (Working Group for Early Crisis Detection)
AI	Artificial intelligence
ANBest-P	Allgemeine Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen zur Projektförderung (General Supplementary Provisions for Project Grants)
AU	African Union
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BAKS	Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (Federal Academy for Security Policy)
BfV	Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution)
BKAmt	Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery)
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Federal Ministry of Education and Research)
BMF	Bundesministerium der Finanzen (Federal Ministry of Finance)
BMI	Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat (Federal Ministry of the Interior and for Home Affairs)
BMJ	Bundesministerium der Justiz (Federal Ministry of Justice)
BMUV	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, nukleare Sicherheit und Verbraucherschutz (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection)
BMVg	Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (Federal Ministry of Defence)
BMWK	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action)
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
BND	Bundesnachrichtendienst (Federal Intelligence Service)
BSI	Bundesamt für Sicherheit in der Informationstechnik (Federal Office for Information Security)
BSR	Bundessicherheitsrat (Federal Security Council)
BVerfGE	Entscheidungen des Bundesverfassungsgerichts (Decisions of the Federal Constitutional Court)
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DPPA	United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building Mission
EUNAVFOR	European Union Naval Force
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
G7	Group of 7
G20	Group of 20

GO	Geschäftsordnung (Rules of Procedure)
GovLabDe	Die Zusammenarbeitsplattform der Bundesregierung (Cooperation platform of the federal government to simplify and accelerate cross-departmental projects)
GPPi	Global Public Policy Institute
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
InfoSys EEBw	Informationssystem Einsatzerfahrungen Bundeswehr (Bundeswehr Mission Experience Information System)
IPMs	International police missions
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
Metis	Metis Institut für Strategie und Vorausschau an der Universität der Bundeswehr München (Metis Institute for Strategy and Foresight at the University of the Bundeswehr Munich)
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PREVIEW-Portal	“Prediction, Visualization, Early Warning” – Early crisis detection and analysis support portal of the Federal Foreign Office (AA)
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RoL	Rule of Law
RSM	Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SSR	Security Sector Reform
StratCom COE	NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VJTF	NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZIF	Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (Center for International Peace Operations)

6.5 Members of the Study Commission

By resolution of the German Bundestag on 30 January 2024 (Bundestag printed paper 20/10197) the number of members of the commission was changed to eleven members of parliament, eleven substitute members and eleven expert members.

Chairperson	Deputy Chairperson
Michael Müller (SPD)	Serap Güler (CDU/CSU)

Members of the Bundestag	
Members	Substitute members
<u>SPD parliamentary group</u>	
Michael Müller	Professor Lars Castellucci (<i>until 21 November 2022</i>)
Christoph Schmid	Hakan Demir (<i>from 13 December 2023</i>)
Derya Türk-Nachbaur (<i>Group Coordinator</i>)	Sebastian Fiedler (<i>21 November 2022 to 13 December 2023</i>)
	Aydan Özoğuz
	Nadja Sthamer
<u>CDU/CSU parliamentary group</u>	
Peter Beyer (<i>Group Coordinator</i>)	Michael Brand
Serap Güler	Dr Marlon Bröhr
Susanne Hierl	Dr Katja Leikert
<u>Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group</u>	
Schahina Gambir (<i>Group Coordinator</i>)	Deborah Düring
Philip Krämer	Merle Spellerberg
<u>FDP parliamentary group</u>	
Knut Gerschau	Dr Ann-Veruschka Jurisch
Christian Sauter (<i>Group Coordinator</i>)	Frank Müller-Rosentritt
<u>AfD parliamentary group</u>	
Jan Ralf Nolte (<i>Group Coordinator</i>)	Joachim Wundrak
<u>The Left Party parliamentary group</u>	
Andrej Hunko (<i>Group Coordinator</i>) (<i>until 6 December 2023</i>)	Heidi Reichinnek (<i>until 10 May 2023</i>)

Expert members	
Professor Anna Geis	Professor of Political Science, Helmut Schmidt University/ Bundeswehr University Hamburg, Institute of International Politics, Hamburg
Professor Hans-Joachim Gießmann	Director Emeritus at the Berghof Foundation Berlin, Schenefeld, Schleswig-Holstein
Reiner Haunreiter	Colonel (retired), lecturer at the Technical University of Deggendorf, Bavaria
Dr Michael Lüders	Political scientist and Islamic scholar, Berlin <i>(until 19 February 2024)</i>
Professor Carlo-Antonio Masala	Professor of International Politics, Bundeswehr University Munich, Neubiberg, Bavaria
Dr Katja Mielke	Researcher at the Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies (BICC)
Winfried Nachtwei	Former Member of the German Bundestag, Münster, Westphalia
Egon Ramms	General (retired), former Commander of NATO Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum (NL), Meckenheim, North Rhine-Westphalia
Professor Ursula Schröder	Scientific Director of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), Hamburg
Jörg Vollmer	General (retired), former Chief of the Army, former Commander of NATO Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum (NL), Meckenheim, North Rhine-Westphalia
André Wüstner	Colonel, Chairperson of the Bundeswehr Association, Berlin
Dr Ellinor Zeino	Head of Foundation Office Turkey at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V., Ankara

6.6 Parliamentary group officers, staff of Bundestag members and expert members

Parliamentary group officers	
Johanna Polle	Officer, SPD parliamentary group
André Meyer	Coordinating officer, CDU/CSU parliamentary group
Dr Anja Seiffert	Coordinating officer, Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group (<i>until 1 November 2023</i>)
Tania Muscio Blanco	Coordinating officer, Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group (<i>from 1 November 2023</i>)
Moritz Plettau	Officer, FDP parliamentary group (<i>until 1 November 2023</i>)
Meret Steybe	Officer, FDP parliamentary group (<i>from 1 January 2024</i>)
Felix Henke	Senior officer, AfD parliamentary group
René Jokisch	Officer, The Left Party parliamentary group (<i>until 1 August 2023</i>)
Martin Hantke	Coordinator, The Left Party parliamentary group (<i>1 August to 6 December 2023</i>)

Staff of Members of Parliament and of parliamentary groups	
SPD parliamentary group	
Office of MP Michael Müller	David Kristen
Office of MP Christoph Schmid	Victor Bashkatov
Office of MP Derya Türk-Nachbaur	Dr Olivier Moliner (<i>until 1 November 2023</i>) Sylvia Wittmer (<i>from 1 November 2023</i>) Finn Callieri
Office of MP Hakan Demir	Joachim Rahmann
Office of MP Aydan Özoğuz	Lucia Preiss (<i>until 1 July 2024</i>) Lea Börgerding (<i>from 1 July 2024</i>)
Office of MP Nadja Sthamer	Nadine Milde
Employees of SPD parliamentary group	René Hoffmeister (Student Assistant) Lidia Krug
CDU/CSU parliamentary group	
Office of MP Peter Beyer	Melanie Meyer, Coordinating officer
Office of MP Serap Güler	Lynn Ossenbrüggen
Office of MP Susanne Hierl	Marie Schürmann
Office of MP Dr Marlon Bröhr	Iris Sudy
Employee of CDU/CSU parliamentary group	Dr Stefan Oswald

Staff of Members of Parliament and of parliamentary groups	
Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group	
Office of MP Schahina Gambir	Philipp Kruse Wiebke Vetter
Office of MP Philip Krämer	Frederic Auel Yannick Laßhof
Office of MP Deborah Düring	Eleni Ntokalou
Office of MP Merle Spellerberg	Leonie Hopgood Pauline Reineke
FDP parliamentary group	
Office of MP Christian Sauter	Christian Karl
Office of MP Knut Gerschau	Meret Steybe (<i>until 31 December 2023</i>) Jasmin Schwark (<i>from 1 March 2024</i>)
AfD parliamentary group	
Office of MP Jan Ralf Nolte	Jochen K. Roos
Office of MP Joachim Wundrak	Steffen Westermann
The Left Party parliamentary group	
Office of MP Andrej Hunko	Pascal Stüber (<i>until 6 December 2023</i>)

Staff of expert members	
Professor Hans-Joachim Gießmann	Theresa Breitmaier
Professor Carlo-Antonio Masala	Luisa Jooß, Personal Assistant
Colonel André Wüstner	Frederik Koch
Professor Anna Geis	Hannah Schnier (<i>until 15 September 2024</i>)
Professor Ursula Schröder	Mariella Werner

6.7 Commission Secretariat (partially translated)

Commission Secretariat employees	
MR Michael Hilger	Head of the Secretariat (<i>from 14 October 2022</i>)
Anja Wollny	Deputy Head of the Secretariat (<i>from 22 November 2023</i>), Officer (<i>from 1 August 2022</i>)
RDn Sabine Horvath	Deputy Head of the Secretariat, Officer (<i>1 September 2022 to 30 June 2023</i>)
RD Kai Mühlstädt	Officer (<i>from 1 August 2023</i>), Research assistant (<i>3 January 2023 to 31 July 2023</i>)
Dr Ingo Henneberg	Research assistant (<i>1 June 2023 to 31 December 2024</i>)
Dr Sebastian Lange	Research assistant (<i>from 1 August 2023</i>)
Dr Alexander Linden	Research assistant (<i>from 9 October 2023</i>)
Christiane Kahlert	Administrative officer/office manager (<i>from 1 August 2022</i>)
Andreas Graf von Bernstorff	Geprüfter Rechtskandidat (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>17 April 2023 to 31 January 2024</i>)
Lucas Dörsam	Geprüfter Rechtskandidat (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>from 1 February 2024</i>)
Salomon Merz	Geprüfter Rechtskandidat (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>from 2 September 2024</i>)
Sarah Olwig	Geprüfte Rechtskandidatin (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>11 January to 1 September 2023</i>)
Jana Orberger	Geprüfte Rechtskandidatin (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>26 February to 11 August 2024</i>)
Doreen Sattinger	Geprüfte Rechtskandidatin (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>3 April 2023 to 31 January 2024</i>)
Gabriel Schneider	Geprüfter Rechtskandidat (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>from 1 September 2023</i>)
Julia Schreiber	Geprüfte Rechtskandidatin (Candidate for the Final State Examination in Law) (<i>1 February to 11 October 2024</i>)
Melanie Behrndt	Commission secretary (<i>1 September 2022 to 1 October 2023</i>)
Kristina Rümmler	Commission secretary (<i>from 2 January 2024</i>)
Ramona Sebecker	Commission secretary (<i>8 September 2023 to 19 January 2024</i>)
Melek Evcil	Student assistant (<i>17 April 2023 to 30 September 2024</i>)
Helene Filsinger	Student assistant (<i>from 17 April 2023</i>)
Emely Tönnies	Trainee (<i>1 October to 31 December 2022</i>)
Johanna Frank	Intern (<i>6 March to 14 April 2023</i>)
Pauline Nöltge	Intern (<i>2 May to 23 June 2023</i>)

6.8 Members of cluster groups *(not translated)*

6.8.1 Cluster group 1 „Analyse, Wissen, Konzepte, Monitoring, Evaluierung“

Die Clustergruppe 1 hat seit Beginn ihrer Arbeit am 11.12.2023 bis zum 03.06.2024 insgesamt acht Sitzungen durchgeführt.

Koordinator (MdB): Peter Beyer

Federführende Sachverständige: Prof. Dr. Anna Geis

Fraktion	Mitglieder
SPD	
CDU/CSU	Abg. Peter Beyer
BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN	Abg. Schahina Gambir
FDP	
AfD	
Sachverständige Mitglieder	Prof. Dr. Anna Geis Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans-Joachim Gießmann Reiner Haunreiter Dr. Katja Mielke Prof. Dr. Ursula Schröder Dr. Ellinor Zeino
Sekretariat	Dr. Ingo Henneberg Anja Wollny Gabriel Schneider

6.8.2 Cluster group 2 „Strategie und Auftragsbildung, Recht zum Einsatz, Kommunikation (strategisch)“

Die Clustergruppe 2 hat seit Beginn ihrer Arbeit am 11.12.2023 bis zum 03.06.2024 insgesamt sechs Sitzungen durchgeführt.

Koordinator (MdB): Philip Krämer

Federführender Sachverständiger: Jörg Vollmer

Fraktion	Mitglieder
SPD	Abg. Aydan Özoğuz Abg. Nadja Sthamer
CDU/CSU	Abg. Susanne Hierl
BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN	Abg. Philip Krämer
FDP	Abg. Knut Gerschau
AfD	Abg. Joachim Wundrak
Sachverständige Mitglieder	Dr. Katja Mielke Winfried Nachtwei Egon Ramms Jörg Vollmer André Wüstner
Sekretariat	Dr. Alexander Linden Lucas Dörsam Salomon Merz

6.8.3 Cluster group 3 „Internationale Steuerung, Koordinierung, Einbindung“

Die Clustergruppe 3 hat seit Beginn ihrer Arbeit am 10.01.2024 bis zum 23.09.2024 insgesamt acht Sitzungen durchgeführt.

Koordinatorin (MdB): Derya Türk-Nachbaur

Federführende Sachverständige: Dr. Ellinor Zeino;
Winfried Nachtwei

Fraktion	Mitglieder
SPD	Abg. Derya Türk-Nachbaur Abg. Hakan Demir
CDU/CSU	Abg. Serap Güler
BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN	Abg. Merle Spellerberg
FDP	
AfD	Abg. Joachim Wundrak
Sachverständige Mitglieder	Reiner Haunreiter Winfried Nachtwei Egon Ramms Dr. Ellinor Zeino
Sekretariat	Dr. Sebastian Lange Julia Schreiber

6.8.4 Cluster group 4 „Rolle des Parlaments, Kontrolle, Akteursumfeld, nationale Steuerung, Koordinierung“

Die Clustergruppe 4 hat seit Beginn ihrer Arbeit am 22.04.2024 bis zum 04.11.2024 insgesamt neun Sitzungen – sowie ein nichtöffentliches Fachgespräch/virtuelles Hintergrundgespräch am 05.09.2024 – durchgeführt.

Koordinator (MdB): Christoph Schmid
 Federführende Sachverständige: Winfried Nachtwei (AG1-Parlament);
 Prof. Dr. Ursula Schröder &
 Prof. Dr. Carlo-Antonio Masala (AG2-Exekutive)

Fraktion	Mitglieder
SPD	Abg. Christoph Schmid
CDU/CSU	Abg. Serap Güler
BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN	Abg. Schahina Gambir
FDP	Abg. Christian Sauter
AfD	Abg. Jan Ralf Nolte
Sachverständige Mitglieder	Prof. Dr. Carlo-Antonio Masala Winfried Nachtwei Egon Ramms Prof. Dr. Ursula Schröder André Wüstner
Sekretariat	Dr. Ingo Henneberg Lucas Dörsam Jana Orberger

6.8.5 Cluster group 5 „Umsetzung, Wirksamkeit, Recht im Einsatz, Fähigkeiten, Instrumente, Personal, Kommunikation“

Die Clustergruppe 5 hat seit Beginn ihrer Arbeit am 08.04.2024 bis zum 23.09.2024 insgesamt fünf Sitzungen durchgeführt.

Koordinator (MdB): Knut Gerschau

Federführender Sachverständiger: Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans-Joachim Gießmann

Fraktion	Mitglieder
SPD	Abg. Michael Müller
CDU/CSU	Abg. Peter Beyer
BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN	Abg. Philip Krämer Abg. Deborah Düring
FDP	Abg. Knut Gerschau
AfD	
Sachverständige Mitglieder	Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans-Joachim Gießmann Reiner Haunreiter Dr. Katja Mielke Jörg Vollmer
Sekretariat	Dr. Alexander Linden Dr. Sebastian Lange (<i>bis 17.05.2024</i>) Gabriel Schneider

6.9 Summary of public and non-public hearings (not translated)

Date / Meeting No.	Topic / Experts
19.02.2024 34. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Externe Impulse zur Zukunft des integrierten Engagements“</p> <p>Externe Sachverständige:</p> <p>Philipp Rotmann, Direktor Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin</p> <p>Robin Schroeder, Berater Sicherheitssektorreform, Stabilisation Platform, Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin</p>
22.04.2024 36. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Krisenfrüherkennung und Fehlerkultur im außen- und sicherheitspolitischen Engagement“</p> <p>Externer Sachverständiger:</p> <p>Prof. Dr. Christoph Meyer, Professor für Europäische und internationale Politik am King’s College, London</p>
13.05.2024 38. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Strategiefähigkeit, Strategieentwicklung und Operationalisierung für internationales Krisenmanagement“</p> <p>Externer Sachverständiger:</p> <p>Brigadegeneral a. D. Armin Staigis, Ehemaliger Vizepräsident der Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (BAKS), Chemnitz</p>
03.06.2024 40. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Die internationale Koordinierung vernetzter Kriseneinsätze“</p> <p>Externe Sachverständige:</p> <p>Martin Erdmann, Botschafter a. D., ehem. Beigeordneter Generalsekretär der NATO für Politische Angelegenheiten, Scharrel/ Niedersachsen</p> <p>Florian Laudi, Beauftragter für die Vereinten Nationen im Auswärtigen Amt, Berlin</p>
24.06.2024 43. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Die Rolle des Parlaments in zukünftigen vernetzten Engagements und Einsätzen der Bundeswehr“</p> <p>Externe Sachverständige:</p> <p>Prof. Dr. Heiko Sauer, Lehrstuhl für deutsches und europäisches Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsrecht, Institut für Öffentliches Recht, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn</p> <p>Dominik Mutter, Beauftragter für Sicherheitspolitik, Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin</p>
01.07.2024 45. Sitzung	<p>Öffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Der vernetzte zivil-militärische Ansatz im internationalen Krisenmanagement: Rolle der zivilen Einsatzkräfte und Anwendung deutschen Rechts im Einsatzgebiet“</p> <p>Externe Sachverständige:</p>

Date / Meeting No.	Topic / Experts
	<p>Dr. Astrid Irrgang, Geschäftsführerin Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF), Berlin</p> <p>Norbert Hausmann, Rechtsberater Einsatzführungskommando der Bundeswehr, Potsdam</p>
<p>23.09.2024 47. Sitzung</p>	<p>Öffentliche / Nichtöffentliche Anhörung zum Thema „Nationale Koordinierung zukünftiger vernetzter Engagements und Einsätze der Bundeswehr“</p> <p>Externe Sachverständige: Sarah Bressan, Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin</p> <p>Nichtöffentlicher Teil: Vertreter Bundesministerium des Innern (BMI), Berlin</p>
<p>14.10.2024 49. Sitzung</p>	<p>Nichtöffentliche Präsentation zum Thema „Evaluierung der laufenden, mandatierten Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr“ durch das Auswärtige Amt (AA) und das Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg):</p> <p>Vertreter der Bundesministerien: Ministerialdirigent Dominik Mutter (AA) VLR I Boris Gehrke (AA) Ministerialdirigent Mirko Freitag (BMVg) Oberst i.G. Olaf Bölting (BMVg)</p>
<p>11.11.2024 50. Sitzung</p>	<p>Nichtöffentliches Fachgespräch mit Organisationen der zivilen und entwicklungspolitischen Zusammenarbeit</p> <p>Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer der eingeladenen Organisationen:</p> <p>Tarek Abdelalem, Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V. Köln</p> <p>Thomas ten Boer, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V., Afghanistan, Kabul</p> <p>Bodo von Borries, Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e. V. (VENRO), Berlin</p> <p>Dr. Birte Brugmann, International Psychosocial Organisation (IPSO gGmbH), Konstanz</p> <p>Felix Colmsee, Handicap International e. V., Berlin</p> <p>Ekkehard Forberg, World Vision Deutschland e. V., Berlin</p> <p>Sara Fremberg, medica mondiale e. V., Köln</p> <p>Joachim Heidebrecht, KfW-Entwicklungsbank, Frankfurt a. M.</p> <p>Dr. Astrid Irrgang, Zentrum für internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF), Berlin</p> <p>Christof Johnen, Deutsches Rotes Kreuz e. V. – Generalsekretariat, Berlin</p>

Date / Meeting No.	Topic / Experts
	<p>Verena Knaus, UNICEF Global, Berlin</p> <p>Charlotte Kneffel, Plan International Deutschland e. V., Hamburg</p> <p>Patrick Kuebart, Caritas international/Deutscher Caritasverband e. V. Freiburg</p> <p>Dr. Stefan Leiderer, Deutsches Evaluierungsinstitut der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit gmbH (DEval), Bonn</p> <p>Hila Limar, Visions for Children e. V., Hamburg</p> <p>Helena Lüer, International Rescue Committee Deutschland (IRC), Berlin</p> <p>Lea Meyer, Save the Children Deutschland e. V., Berlin</p> <p>Kayu Orellana, Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e. V., Büro Berlin</p> <p>Dr. Klaus Schilder, Bischöfliches Hilfswerk MISEREOR e. V., Berlin</p> <p>Jens Schwalb, Johanniter International/Johanniter Auslandshilfe, Berlin</p> <p>Dr. Julius Spatz, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Eschborn</p>

6.10 List of Commission printed papers (not translated)

Number	Publisher / Author	Content	Date / Distribution
20(28)01 bis 20(28)42		(siehe Bundestagsdrucksache 20/10400, Zwischenbericht der Enquete-Kommission, Kapitel 6.14, Anhänge)	
20(28)43	Sekretariat PA 28 Enquete-Kommission Lehren aus Afghanistan für das künftige vernetzte Engagement Deutschlands	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Externe Impulse zur Zukunft des integrierten Engagements“ am 19. Februar 2024	13.02.2024
20(28)44	Philipp Rotmann, Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Externe Impulse zur Zukunft des integrierten Ansatzes“ am 19. Februar 2024	15.02.2024
20(28)45	Robin Schroeder, Stabilisation Platform, Berlin	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Externe Impulse zur Zukunft des integrierten Ansatzes“ am 19. Februar 2024	16.02.2024
20(28)46	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Krisenfrüherkennung und Fehlerkultur im außen- und sicherheitspolitischen Engagement“ am 22. April 2024	15.04.2024
20(28)47	Prof. Dr. Christoph Meyer, King’s College London	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Krisenfrüherkennung und Fehlerkultur im außen- und sicherheitspolitischen Engagement“ am 22. April 2024	18.04.2024
20(28)48	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Strategiefähigkeit, Strategieentwicklung und Operationalisierung für internationales Krisenmanagement“ am 13. Mai 2024	07.05.2024
20(28)49	Brigadegeneral a. D. Armin Staigis	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Strategiefähigkeit, Strategieentwicklung und Operationalisierung für internationales Krisenmanagement“ am 13. Mai 2024	07.05.2024
20(28)50	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Die internationale Koordinierung vernetzter Kriseneinsätze“ am 3. Juni 2024	27.05.2024
20(28)51	Brigadegeneral a. D. Armin Staigis	Zusätzlich eingereichte Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Strategiefähigkeit, Strategieentwicklung und Operationalisierung für internationales Krisenmanagement“ am 13. Mai 2024	28.05.2024

Number	Publisher / Author	Content	Date / Distribution
20(28)52	Martin Erdmann, Botschafter a. D.	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Die internationale Koordinierung vernetzter Kriseneinsätze“ am 3. Juni 2024	30.05.2024
20(28)53	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Die Rolle des Parlaments in zukünftigen vernetzten Engagements und Einsätzen der Bundeswehr“ am 24. Juni 2024	17.06.2024
20(28)54	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Der vernetzte zivil-militärische Ansatz im internationalen Krisenmanagement: Rolle der zivilen Einsatzkräfte und Anwendung deutschen Rechts im Einsatzgebiet“ am 1. Juli 2024	25.06.2024
20(28)55	Dr. Astrid Irrgang, Zentrum für internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF), Berlin	Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Der vernetzte zivil-militärische Ansatz im internationalen Krisenmanagement: Rolle der zivilen Einsatzkräfte und Anwendung deutschen Rechts im Einsatzgebiet“ am 1. Juli 2024	25.06.2024
20(28)56	RD Norbert Hausmann, Rechtsberater im Einsatzführungskommando der Bundeswehr, Potsdam	Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Der vernetzte zivil-militärische Ansatz im internationalen Krisenmanagement: Rolle der zivilen Einsatzkräfte und Anwendung deutschen Rechts im Einsatzgebiet“ am 1. Juli 2024	25.06.2024
20(28)57	Prof. Dr. Heiko Sauer, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Rechts- und Staatswissenschaftliche Fakultät	Nachträgliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Die Rolle des Parlaments in zukünftigen vernetzten Engagements und Einsätzen der Bundeswehr“ am 24. Juni 2024	03.07.2024
20(28)58	Sekretariat PA 28	Fragenkatalog zur öffentlichen/nichtöffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Nationale Koordinierung zukünftiger vernetzter Engagements und Einsätze der Bundeswehr“ am 23. September 2024	17.09.2024
20(28)59	Sarah Bressan, Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin	Schriftliche Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen/nichtöffentlichen Anhörung zum Thema „Nationale Koordinierung zukünftiger vernetzter Engagements und Einsätze der Bundeswehr“ am 23. September 2024 [nachträglich eingereicht]	14.11.2024
20(28)60	Prof. Dr. Andreas L. Paulus, Institut für Völkerrecht und Europarecht, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen	Kurzstellungnahme für die Clustergruppe 2 „Strategie und Auftragsbildung/Recht zum Einsatz/strategische Kommunikation“ der Enquete-Kommission vom 26. April 2024	17.01.2025

Number	Publisher / Author	Content	Date / Distribution
20(28)61	Dr. Dirk Peters, Leibniz-Institut für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung, PRIF – Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt	Stellungnahme für die Clustergruppe 3 „Internationale Steuerung/Koordinierung/Einbindung“ der Enquete-Kommission vom 2. September 2024	17.01.2025
20(28)62	Prof. Dr. Jan-Hendrik Dietrich, Studiengangleiter Master in Intelligence and Security Studies (MISS), Hochschule des Bundes für öffentliche Verwaltung, Berlin	Stellungnahme zur nichtöffentlichen Anhörung (virtuelles Hintergrundgespräch) der Clustergruppe 4 „Rolle des Parlaments/Kontrolle/Akteursumfeld/nationale Steuerung/Koordinierung“ der Enquete-Kommission am 5. September 2024 (überarbeitete Fassung vom 18.12.2024)	17.01.2025
20(28)63	Prof. Dr. Heiko Meiertöns, M.Litt., Professur für öffentliches Recht, Schwerpunkt Sicherheitsrecht, Hochschule des Bundes für öffentliche Verwaltung, Berlin	Stellungnahme zur nichtöffentlichen Anhörung (virtuelles Hintergrundgespräch) der Clustergruppe 4 „Rolle des Parlaments/Kontrolle/Akteursumfeld/nationale Steuerung/Koordinierung“ der Enquete-Kommission am 5. September 2024	17.01.2025

6.11 List of Commission materials (not translated)

COM-Mat.- Number	Publisher / Author; Sent by	Content	Number of pages	Date / Distribu- tion
20(28)01 bis 20(28)41		(siehe Bundestagsdrucksache 20/10400, Zwischenbericht der Enquete-Kommission, Kapitel 6.15, Anhänge)		
20(28)42 VS-NfD	Auswärtiges Amt	Abschlussbericht Ressortgemeinsame Evaluierung des AA-BMVG-Engagements in Mali 2016-2021 im Rahmen der Ertüchtigungsinitiative der Bundesregierung vom 26.10.2022	102	31.01.2024
20(28)43 VS-NfD	Auswärtiges Amt und Bundesministerium der Verteidigung	Bericht der Bundesregierung zu einer Evaluierung der laufenden, mandatier- ten Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr mit einem Übersendungsschreiben der Bundesministerin des Auswärtigen so- wie des Bundesministers der Verteidi- gung	67	22.07.2024