MONDAY 24 JUNE  

Opening Address: NATO and the MENA region in times of strategic change  
Speaker  
- General Knud Bartels, Chair NATO Military Committee  
Discussion Topic: The Syrian crisis and its regional ramifications  
Speakers  
- Major General Amos Gilad, Director of Policy and Political-Military Affairs, Israeli Ministry of Defence; Chair of Security Relations with Regional and Strategic Partners  
- HE Ambassador Esat Şafak Göktürk, General Director of the Policy Planning Department of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs  

TUESDAY 25 JUNE  

Discussion Topic: The fight against terrorism  
Speaker  
- General Eric Bonnemaïson, Deputy to the Director for Strategic Affairs, French Ministry of Defence  

WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE  

Discussion Topic: The challenge posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction  
Speakers  
- Lieutenant General Simon Vincent Mayall, Defence Senior Advisor for the Middle East, British Ministry of Defence  
- HE Dr Sameh Aboul Enein, Deputy Assistant to the Egyptian Foreign Minister - Disarmament and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy  

THURSDAY 27 JUNE  

Discussion Topic: The Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative at a crossroads  
Speakers  
- Dr Jaroslaw Skonieczka, Senior Director, Integration, Partnerships and Cooperation Directorate, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division, NATO HQ  
- HE Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah, Vice - President of National Security Bureau of Kuwait  
Keynote Speech:  
- General John R Allen, USMC (ret), Former ISAF Commander  

FRIDAY 28 JUNE  

Closing Address  
Key Note Speech: The Italian Defense posture in the future strategic scenario  
- Admiral Luigi Binelli Mantelli, Chief of the Italian Defence General Staff
MONDAY 24 JUNE

Opening Address: NATO and the MENA region in times of strategic change

The opening address to the Senior Executive Regional Conference will be delivered by General Knud Bartels, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee. He will be discussing the relationship between NATO and the MENA regions in the context of current changes and challenges faced by all partners.

General Knud Bartels was appointed Chairman of the NATO Military Committee in January 2012.

From 2009 to 2011 General Bartels served as Danish Chief of Defence, the highest ranking officer in the Danish Armed Forces and the principal military adviser to the Danish government. Prior to assuming command as Chief of Defence, General Bartels served as Denmark's Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee and the EU Military Committee from 2006 to 2009.

General Bartels enrolled as a soldier in 1972, and to a large extent soldiering has remained at the core of his career. His rise through the ranks from junior to general officer is dominated by operational duty at home and in missions, ranging from company to division commander, interrupted only by courses at the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre in Paris and at the US Army War College in Carlisle. Furthermore, he has held postings as instructor at both the Army Combat School and the Royal Danish Defence College, including an appointment as Director of the Army Command and General Staff Course.

In addition, General Bartels has held his share of positions in both national and international joint staffs, including Assistant Chief of Staff Plans, Defence Command Denmark, and Director for Operations at NATO’s International Military Staff in Brussels.

General Bartels is married to Inge, they have four adult children, two sons and two daughters — and have their home in Brussels. The General has an interest in history, in particular, military history, and he also enjoys art and music as well as old sports cars.
Discussion Topic: The Syrian crisis and its regional ramifications

Major General Amos Gilad, Director of Policy and Political-Military Affairs at the Israeli Ministry of Defence, and HE Ambassador Şafak Göktürk, General Director of the Policy Planning Department of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both come from countries neighbouring Syria. The two speakers will address the escalating crisis in Syria, focusing on the regional ramifications and possible implications.

Speakers

**Major General (Ret.) Amos Gilad** serves as the current Director of Policy and Political-Military Affairs at the Ministry of Defence and Chair of Security Relations with Regional and Strategic Partners.

Prior to this, General Gilad held several positions within the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) before he was discharged with the rank of Major General in July 2003.

From 2001 to 2003, and again from 2008 to 2009 General Gilad worked as the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories. Before that, General Gilad served as the Head of the Military Intelligence Research Division, and was responsible for the overall National Intelligence Assessment from 1996 to 2001. General Gilad received two awards from the American Defence Establishment, the "Legion of Merits" and the Defence Intelligence Agency Director’s Award. General Gilad holds an M.A. in Political Science and National Security Studies from Haifa University in conjunction with the National Security College.

**HE Ambassador Şafak Göktürk** is General Director of the Policy Planning Department of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His previous posts include Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Singapore from 2009 to 2011 and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Turkey to the Arab Republic of Egypt from 2005 to 2009.

He has also held the position of Minister-Deputy Director General at the Directorate General for the Middle East, as well as Head of Department at the Department of United Nations.
TUESDAY 25 JUNE

Discussion Topic: The fight against terrorism

In the context of the fight against terrorism, General Eric Bonnemaison, Deputy Director at the Directorate for Strategic Affairs at the French Ministry of Defence, will discuss French operations in the Sahel and the initial lessons learned.

Speaker

General Eric Bonnemaison has been Deputy Director at the Directorate for Strategic Affairs (Ministry of Defence) since the summer of 2012, after leaving the command of the Ecole de Saint Cyr at Coetquidan, the equivalent of West Point or Sandhurst. Prior to this he commanded the 9th Marine brigade consisting of six regiments of French Marines.

During his distinguished military career, he progressed from platoon leader, conducting counterinsurgency operations in Chad, to battalion commander in Bosnia, to Marine brigade commander in several locations, including Afghanistan. He is a former faculty member of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (at the National Defence University), and he served as Africa and Middle-East adviser to the French Minister of Defence.
WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE

Discussion Topic: The challenge posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction

Defence Senior Advisor for the Middle East at the British Ministry of Defence, Lieutenant General Simon Vincent Mayall will discuss the British position in the Gulf, including proliferation challenges and the possible threat posed by a nuclear armed Iran. Dr Sameh Aboul Enein, Deputy Assistant to the Foreign Minister – responsible for Disarmament and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy will present views from the MENA region on current WMD challenges.

Speakers

Lieutenant General Simon Mayall has commanded an all-arms brigade, including an operational tour in Kosovo, and has served twice in the Resources and Plans Division in the Ministry of Defence in London. He was the Deputy Commanding General of the Multinational Corps (Iraq) in late 2006 and early 2007 and, after two years as Assistant Chief of the General Staff (ACGS), became Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Operations) in July 2009 with the rank of Lieutenant General.

In May 2011 he was appointed by the Secretary of State for Defence as Defence Senior Adviser for the Middle East (DSAME), working to support cross Government engagement in the region. As DSAME he provides a focal point for senior members of regional military hierarchies and the wider leadership, enabling access to the highest levels of the UK’s wider Defence and Security structure.

Ambassador Sameh Aboul-Enein is the Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister of Egypt for Disarmament and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. He is currently also Assistant Professor for international security, conflict resolution and disarmament at the American University in Cairo, Visiting Professor at the Diplomatic Academy, University of East Anglia, Visiting Lecturer and Course instructor at the NATO Defense College in Rome and at the British Military Academy in Swindon, UK.

Prior to this, Dr. Aboul-Enein was Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Head of Mission of Egypt to the UK, London. Earlier, he was Director of United Nations Affairs Department as well as Director of Specialized Agencies and International Organizations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo. From 2002-2006 he was Alternate Representative to the Conference on Disarmament and to United Nations offices, Permanent Mission of Egypt, Geneva.
THURSDAY 27 JUNE

Discussion Topic: The Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative at a crossroads

As part of NATO’s International Staff, Dr Jaroslaw Skonieczka will open the discussion on the current state of NATO’s partnerships. The view from the ICI will be covered by HE Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah, Vice President of the National Security Bureau of Kuwait.

Speakers

Dr. Jaroslaw Skonieczka is the Senior Director of “Integration, Partnerships and Cooperation Directorate,” in the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division at NATO HQ. The division is responsible for communications, expert support and for monitoring the progress of partner countries in political, military and defence cooperation programs. Dr Skonieczka headed a NATO review team in Montenegro in March, in order to assess the implementation of planned ANP activities.

H.E. Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah is Vice President of the National Security Bureau since 2006, and is also the Head of Information, Security, Research & Studies Sector. Since 2008, he has acted as the Head of the Higher Organizing Committee for Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection. He has headed Kuwaiti Delegations in several security and intelligence conferences, and has also participated in several strategic think-tanks in and out of Kuwait.
Key note speech: NATO in Afghanistan

As former Commander of the International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan and United States Forces, General John Allen (ret.) will assess of the current situation in Afghanistan. He will also present his insights into NATO operations outside of NATO theaters and share some of his experiences to illustrate these points.

General John R. Allen retired from active military duty in 2013. He assumed his duties as Commander of the International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan and United States Forces – Afghanistan on July 18, 2011. General Allen’s prior tour as a general officer was as the deputy commander, U.S. Central Command, a position he held from July 2008 - June 2011.

General Allen was born in Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He graduated with military honors from the United States Naval Academy, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Operations Analysis. He also holds a Master of Arts degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University, as well as a Master of Science degree in Strategic Intelligence from the National Defense Intelligence College, and a Master of Science degree in National Security Strategy from the National War College.

He commanded The Basic School from 1999 to 2001, when he was selected in April 2001 to return to the Naval Academy as Deputy Commandant. Allen became the 79th Commandant of Midshipmen in January of 2002, the first Marine Corps officer to serve in this position at the Naval Academy. In January 2003 Allen was nominated for appointment to the rank of brigadier general.

From 2006-2008, General Allen served as Deputy Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and Commanding General, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade, deploying to Iraq for OIF 06-08, serving as the Deputy Commanding General of Multinational Force - West (MNF-W) and II MEF (Forward) in the Al Anbar Province.

Personal decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit with three Gold Stars in lieu of four awards. Foreign awards include the Mongolian Meritorious Service Medal, First Class; the Gold Medal of the Polish Armed Forces; and the Taiwan Order of the Resplendent Banner with Special Cravat. He was also the nominee to become NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander, Europe in early 2013.
Key note speech: The Italian Defense posture in the future strategic scenario

Italy's geographical position makes it an important player in the Mediterranean regions. Chief of the Italian Defense General Staff, Admiral Luigi Binelli Mantelli, will discuss national defense approach and posture in the future strategic scenario, focused on principal ongoing and future ops.

Admiral Luigi Binelli Mantelli is Chief of the Italian Defence General Staff with the rank of Admiral. He attended the Italian Naval School "Morosini" in Venice and, from 1969 to 1973, the Italian Naval Academy in Leghorn. He holds a University degree in Maritime and Naval Sciences. Upon graduation, he started his time at sea onboard the destroyer ITS Audace (1973-74).

Following this assignment, he was posted to the destroyer ITS Ardito (1974-76). His next sea tour was onboard the frigate ITS Carabiniere where he was appointed Principal Warfare Officer (PWO) (1978-80), and then onboard the cruiser ITS Vittorio Veneto (1984-86).

Ashore, he served in a variety of roles both in the operational and educational fields. In the former, he was appointed as Chief of Operations Division of the Italian Fleet Commander-in-Chief and as Head of the Operations Branch of the Navy Staff. Within the educational field, he served as Commandant of Midshipmen and Ensigns classes at the Naval Academy and as Chief Study Branch at the Schools Inspectorate. From March 2004 to April 2007, he was Chief of the General Office of the Italian Chief of Defence (Admiral Di Paola).

From April 2007 to April 2009, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy.

From April 2009 to February 2012, as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Fleet (CINCNAV), he led the Italian maritime component in a number of operations: the humanitarian operation for the earthquake-stricken Haitian population; NATO and EU-led anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean; Italian and NATO-led operations in the aftermath of the Libyan crisis. He was promoted to Rear Admiral Lower Half in July 1998; Rear Admiral Upper Half in July 2002; Vice Admiral in July 2007.

In addition to specialization courses, he attended the "Advanced General Staff Course" at the Naval War College in Leghorn (1986-87), the "48th Session at the Italian Institute for Higher Studies in Defence" (IASD) at the Centre for Higher Studies in Defence (CASD) in Rome (1996-97) as well as the "General and Flag Officers Course" at NATO Defense College (2002). On 2 March 2012, he was appointed Chief of the Italian Navy. Since 31 January 2013 he is Chief of the Italian Defence General Staff with the rank of Admiral.