



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program**



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**On the Web:**

<https://www.jnlwp.com>

**Media contact: +1 (703) 432-0905**

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### **NATO Begins Non-Lethal Weapons Capabilities-Based Assessment**

By Jennifer Bowen

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For the past decade, NATO has recognized the importance of non-lethal capabilities and has taken steps to outfit NATO troops with escalation-of-force options. NATO's latest effort, System Analysis and Studies-078 (SAS-078), is conducting a capabilities-based assessment to understand NATO non-lethal weapon (NLW) requirements, identify capability gaps and offer potential solutions and recommendations.

The Department of Defense defines non-lethal weapons as "weapons, devices and munitions that are explicitly designed and primarily employed to incapacitate targeted personnel or materiel immediately, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel and undesired damage to property in the target area or environment. Non-lethal weapons are intended to have reversible effects on personnel and materiel." Non-lethal weapons provide warfighters with escalation-of-force options when lethal force is not the best first response. These capabilities assist warfighters in discerning intent, delaying and deterring individuals, and discriminating targets in a variety of missions ranging from full-scale combat to humanitarian relief – all while minimizing casualties and collateral damage.

"The NATO capabilities-based assessment will be a critical step in providing escalation-of-force options to NATO's forces around the globe," said Colonel Tracy Tafolla, Director of the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate and chairman of the SAS-078 Task Group. "NATO forces are engaged in operations ranging from humanitarian relief missions to full-scale combat, and non-lethal weapons can

help minimize casualties and collateral damage across the range of military operations.”

The SAS-078 kick-off meeting took place in October 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Throughout the past year, the study’s task group organized its activities into the following working groups and began work on the study:

- The Requirements Analysis Working Group identified NLW requirements and analyzed scenarios and planning situations. The group will report on the requirements in the coming months.
- The Capabilities Analysis Working Group is reviewing information on currently fielded and potential NLW capabilities.
- The Experimentation Working Group is addressing experimentation approaches, protocols and technology-specific experiments and modeling.
- The Gap Analysis Working Group will compare requirements against currently fielded and future NLW capabilities to identify and prioritize gaps.
- The Gap and Solution Analysis Working Group will identify and prioritize potential NLW solutions and remaining gaps.

The U.S. serves as the lead nation for the SAS-078 study, with participation from nine other NATO member nations: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom. Several NATO organizations are also contributing to the study.

Upon completion, SAS-078’s NLW capabilities-based assessment will be available for NATO member nations to use when making important decisions about non-lethal weapons. This assessment will help promote interoperability and provide a common framework for addressing NLW issues.

For more information on non-lethal weapons, visit the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program website at <https://www.jnlwp.com>.