

# **SHAPING INTELLIGENCE FOR THE FUTURE**

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SACLANT Intelligence Branch

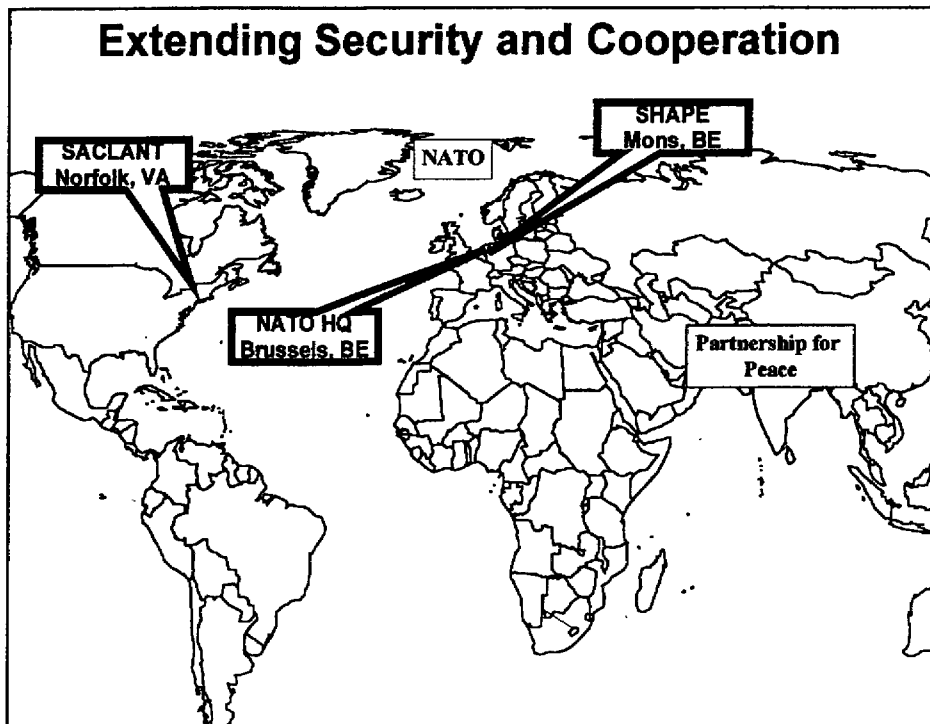
**This Brief is Classified  
NATO UNCLASSIFIED**

## **Briefing Outline**

- **NATO Strategic Environment**
- **Implications**
- **NATO Intelligence Requirements**
- **The ACLANT OSINT Approach**
- **The Future**

**(U) My aim today is to give you an insight into the benefits of the ACLANT OSINT programme. This effort is one of the building blocks of a coordinated NATO OSINT programme. Our objective is to harness open sources in a systematic way as a means of enhancing NATO intelligence coverage of an ever broadening sphere of security concerns.**

- **(U) I will begin with a reminder of the strategic environment in which the NATO Alliance currently operates, the roles that will impose on us in the future and the (U) consequent implications for information and intelligence flows.**
- **(U) I then will explain why these developments argue for a NATO Open Source Intelligence capability.**
- **and go on (U) to illustrate what the ACLANT approach has been to open sources and their role within an all-source intelligence effort**
- **and finally, (U) I will look ahead and describe what we are doing for the future.**



**Before I begin, I wish to spend a few moments to reacquaint you with the NATO of today. We continue to have two Strategic Commands within NATO, SHAPE in Belgium and SACLANT in Norfolk where I work. The business of the Alliance is directed from NATO headquarters in Brussels. Beyond this, little else about NATO appears static.**

**Well behind us are the days in which NATO's role was to repel a Russian lead invasion of Western Europe. The Alliance's concept of security is best articulated in its Strategic Concept, published during the Washington Summit in April 1999. This document presents a vision of NATO that sees engagement more than confrontation. Which identifies transnational problems more than traditional security concerns as its raison d'être.**

**Dealing with these issues requires not merely the broad membership of the 19 member nations within NATO but also other strategic partners.**

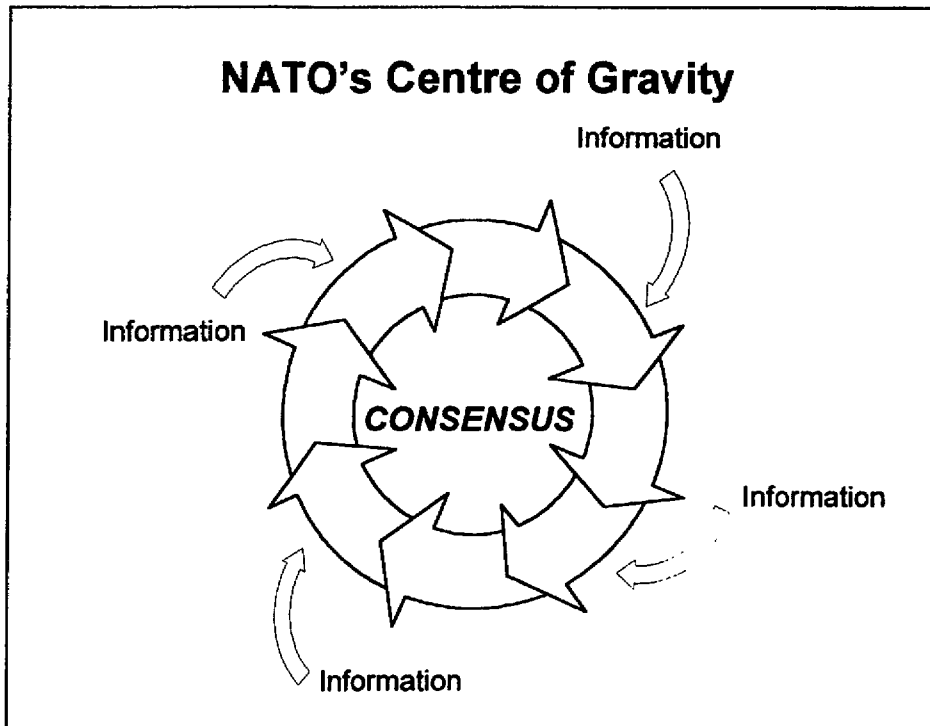
**Partnership for Peace, begun in 1994, is a major success story for NATO, with 26 Nations in central and eastern Europe currently participating.**

**With these nations we exercise, offer training and seek ways to improve interoperability. We serve alongside many of these nations on operations, most notably in the Balkans.**

## NATO's New Strategic Environment



(10) The Alliance's Strategic Concept reflects the broader spectrum of Alliance security concerns and potential future roles. Life is no longer Black and White; six years experience in the Balkans and other events around the world, illustrate well that the Alliance will look increasingly beyond its borders to the risks that threaten regional and global stability. The Strategic Concept highlights transnational security issues as the challenge, a challenge that will inevitably require a multinational response and not necessarily confined to the nations represented here today. We will see broader coalitions that may include PFP and Mediterranean Dialogue countries among others.



(☺) This vision, encapsulated in the Alliance's Strategic Concept, requires NATO decision-makers from the strategic to the tactical levels to have access to the right information at the right time, but on a vastly expanded array of concerns than the “comparatively simple” Cold War mission. During the Kosovo campaign it was particularly evident that the Alliance's centre of gravity was and remains consensus. But consensus must be built, nurtured and maintained through a common understanding of the specific issues where collective action is contemplated.

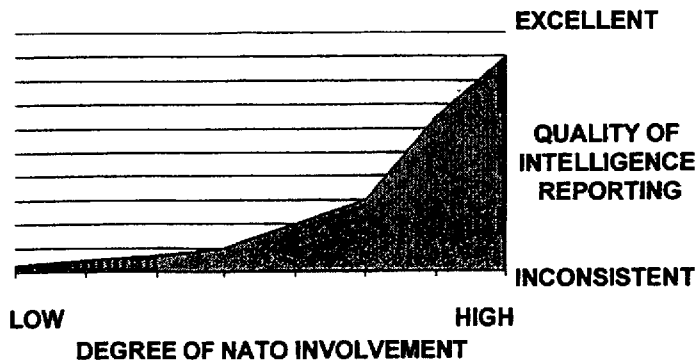
As currently organized, NATO's intelligence capability is insufficiently flexible and poorly structured to support this. This is in large measure to the absence of our own organic collection capability but also down to the fact that national intelligence contributions frequently lack the immediacy required to shift focus and production efficiently to meet a demanding policy agenda and operational remit.

Security concerns also inhibit our ability to engage in the vital task of building and maintaining a broader coalition of support for action with those non-NATO elements that we are increasingly engaged with.



(🗨️) Like the missions of the future, our activity in the Balkans requires interaction with the United Nations, the European Union, the OSCE and a network of NGOs. Humanitarian operations and NEOs are equally demanding in terms of the variety of players that actively contribute to our operational effectiveness. Combined Joint Task Force Commanders are expected to foster a coordinated approach, which requires information sharing.

## Intelligence Contributions



**NATO has always been reliant upon its member nations to contribute intelligence. Experience has shown that this intelligence flow has been insufficient to satisfy the needs of either, NATO decision-makers, or its operational commanders. Although this generalization is not universally true, this graphic illustrates the dilemma of relying solely upon national intelligence contributions. For areas where NATO forces are deployed on the ground, such as the Balkans, the quality of national intelligence reporting shared with the Alliance is in fact outstanding.**

**However, for areas where NATO is not directly involved, national intelligence contributions are inconsistent and clearly insufficient to satisfy decision-makers' needs. NATO's broader definition of security embraced within the Strategic Concept has resulted in an ever-increasing focus on non-traditional security concerns. Nations themselves are also struggling to deal with such diverse concerns as mass migration and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is clear that if nations have been unable to provide the Alliance with the intelligence it needs in the past, then in the face of an increasingly complex future, nations will be even less able to share sufficient intelligence to meet NATO's needs.**

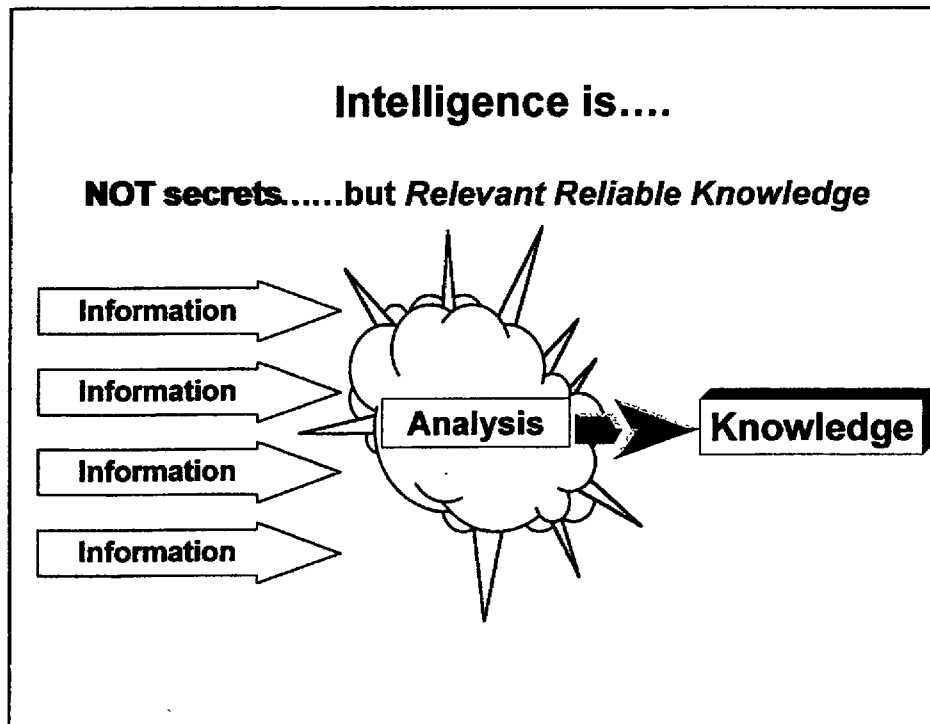
## **Information Control in the Information Age**

- **Vast amounts of data**
- **Information flows**
- **Balance against media sound bites**
- **Harness potential of open sources**

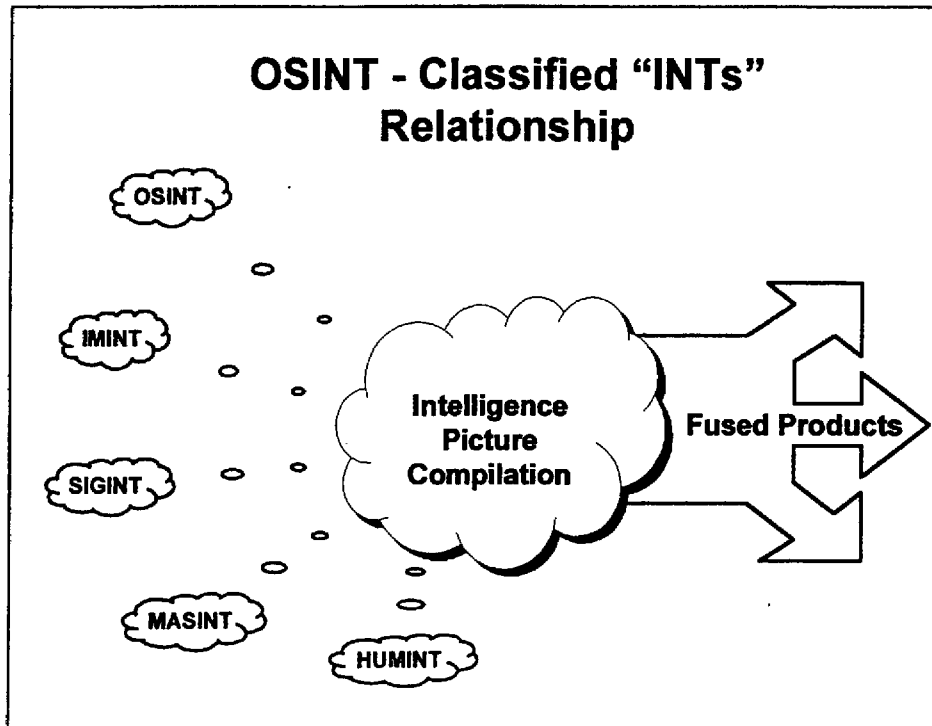
**Robust OSINT effort is required**

**(U) The information revolution has placed vast amounts of data into the hands of staffs and decision-makers at all levels and now, even more, directly into the public domain. (U) Detailed foreign information sources, that just a few years ago were solely in the hands of intelligence analysts, are now broadly distributed either freely on the Internet or via specialized information brokers. (U) Controlling the flow of international information is no longer within the gift of intelligence staffs and it is vital that the Intelligence community now stay abreast of developments in the media and, more troubling, the entertainment industry. (U) Our respective leaderships must be provided with timely, accurate, quality intelligence to balance the sound-bite transmissions and sensationalisms of the media at large. This is not a zero-sum game, but rather a complimentary effort. (U) We too can use these information streams to supplement what can be learned elsewhere. (U) This can best be done through a robust Open Source Intelligence, or OSINT effort.**













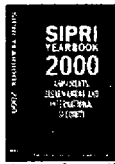


(~) One of the more interesting debates within our staff has revolved around definitions. While this is largely semantics, and whether or not you agree precisely with our definition, there is no doubt that intelligence is no longer (~) the exclusive domain of secrets. Intelligence can be described as relevant reliable knowledge. The key is its relevance to decision-makers based on the commander's mission and the environment in which he is operating. (~) The measure of any information's utility is the degree of confidence in its reliability. Informed Analysis is the converter - it is no longer acceptable to swamp the busy man with information and then sit and watch him drown in it. We must provide that and only that which he needs to do the job.



(☺) OSINT is not an independent solution to NATO's intelligence needs, but it is an essential element of that solution. The process enables open source data to be gathered, validated, evaluated and employed to contribute to fused products that address intelligence gaps.

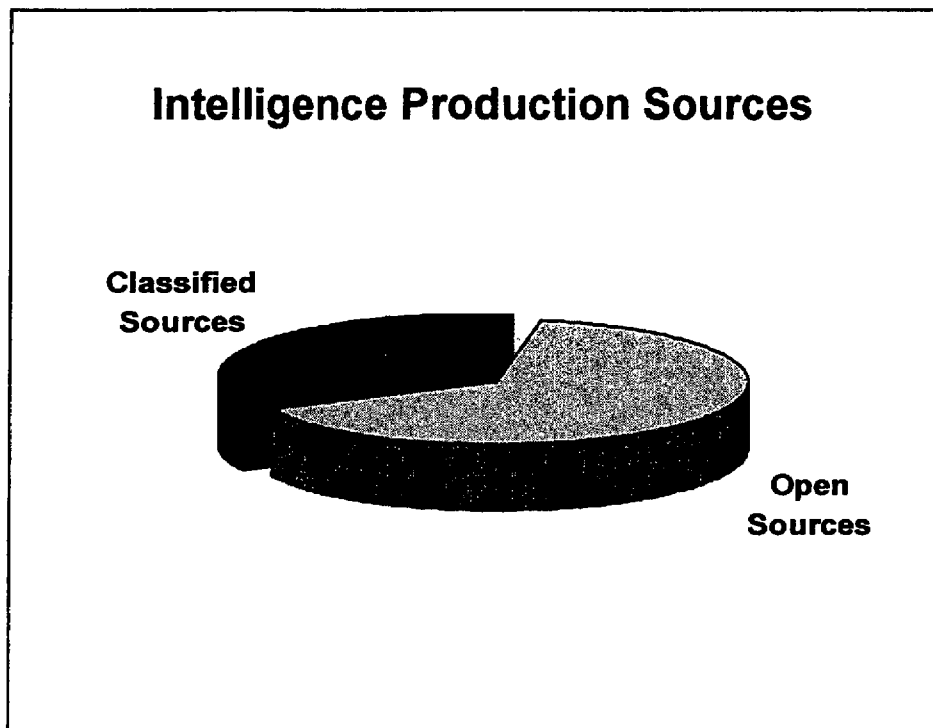
(☺) What we have identified is a NATO-wide need for a systematic approach to open sources that gathers information and blends OSINT-derived intelligence products with other classified intelligence sources to better serve the information needs of the future.

**Open Sources**

 <b>Analyst - 5 days</b>	 <b>3 frames of EO Imagery</b>	 <b>50 country reports</b>	 <b>50 books</b>
 <b>1 OSINT Terminal</b>	 <b>Brussels \$1500</b>	 <b>1 year of electronic subscription</b>	
 <b>3 months service</b>	 <b>10 copies of proliferation databases</b>	 <b>5 frames of Radar Imagery</b>	
 <b>10 copies of ORBATS</b>			

(U) So far so good, but what does it cost? No it isn't free but, relative to other intelligence disciplines, it is a bargain. As a comparison (U) I have taken the cost of an air ticket to Europe as a benchmark of the type of investment that we typically make to support our intelligence programme. By comparison, here is a representative array of products that can be acquired for the same price. At ACLANT we have implemented an OSINT strategy that requires no additional people and has been achieved within current staff constraints.

This has been driven less by our own efforts as it has been from the top by our command leadership. My Flag Officers have recognised that this capability has brought relevant, reliable knowledge on non-traditional intelligence topics direct to their desks and quickly. Recognizing that this was the fruit of trained analysts, working with the best commercially available information, they have demanded more and have willingly re-aligned budget priorities to afford us the capability.



**(☺)** We see OSINT contributing to the development of an intelligence issue of importance to our Command, providing greater background and depth to the information we obtain from other sources. This graphic illustrates how our OSINT effort is contributing to our overall intelligence programme.

However, 43% of my intelligence product is assessed as being derived from classified reports with OSINT contributing the remaining 57%. These figures mask the fact that much of the classified product derived from national intelligence contributions is itself heavily reliant upon original open sources. In some cases, our OSINT products themselves are reported without the addition of classified intelligence generating a by-product of the methodology in that it also permits us to produce a more easily sanitized product where distribution to PfP or other nations is deemed desirable or necessary.

## **ACLANT OSINT Capability**

- **CCIR based**
- **Complementary to classified intelligence**
- **Permits intelligence gaps to be filled**
- **Training for analysts**

**(U)** In developing our OSINT capability, we examined our Commander's Critical Information Requirements.

**We determined that our effort had to be entirely complimentary to our classified intelligence programme.**

**We determined our intelligence gaps. Those that lent themselves well to OSINT coverage were identified and staff were assigned to those areas.**

**We identified our training requirements, contracted for and conducted a series of training sessions to teach our analysts' how to exploit open sources and produce OSINT products.**

**Since then we have further refined and developed our methodology for producing all intelligence products.**

## **OSINT Production Priorities**

- **Derived from the Strategic Concept**
- **De-conflicted with other NATO Commands**
- **Vision is to grow with other Commands**

**(U)** For our headquarters at ACLANT, we determined which areas were the top priorities for OSINT production. These are all areas identified within our CCIRs, insufficiently covered by national intelligence contributions, and suitable for OSINT exploitation.

Although there are other reporting areas of equal or greater importance to our headquarters, we deliberately de-conflicted our OSINT production from that of the **(U)** other major OSINT production centre in NATO located in Molesworth England. Known as the Multi-National Intelligence Coordination Cell, this organization already produces an impressive collection of OSINT products using a similar methodology. By de-conflicting our OSINT production with that of other NATO efforts, we see a greater pool of quality OSINT products available to all NATO and member nation intelligence staffs.

## ACLANT OSINT Model

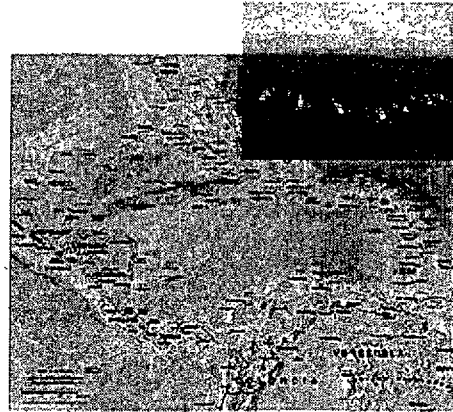
Level I OSINT Production	Sources are entirely <u>Unclassified</u>
Level II OSINT Production	Product may be <u>Classified</u>
Level III OSINT Production	Product is <u>Classified</u>

(☺) Open sources are abundant and are increasing in quality, quantity and ease of access for everyone including the intelligence analyst. Open sources are unquestionably more timely, but are not necessarily more accurate. The role of the analyst is to act as a filter for that information to determine its accuracy and worth, assembling and presenting of the resulting validated information into a coherent intelligence picture that informs, forecasts, warns and occasionally speculates. Within this process, we have defined three levels of OSINT

production. (☺) Level One consists of the compilation of reliable open reporting on a relevant issue. Level Two adds some analytical judgment. Level Three production are tailored products addressing a specific concern.

We produce a weekly Level One OSINT product that summarizes the best information available utilising freely and commercially available sources on a recurring series of topics.

## ACLANT OSINT Trial



(🖱) To validate the concept, we initiated a trial at two levels, supporting HQ ACLANT at the Strategic level and supporting the Standing Naval Force Atlantic (SNFL) in its deployment to the Caribbean at the operational level. This squadron of ships is one of NATO's immediate maritime reaction forces.

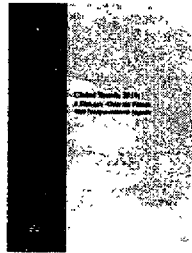
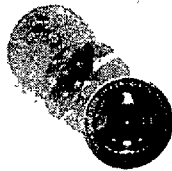
Support for its deployment to the Western Atlantic included tailored basic intelligence on STANAVFORLANT's operating area in the Caribbean and a range of specific products designed to support a hurricane relief exercise in Curaçao.

In military terms, the target audience for any initiative is the operations staff. Our trial favourably impressed our planners who quickly realized that for humanitarian response, little time is available to initiate classified intelligence production and once on scene, military forces rightly serve a supporting role to civilian relief efforts. Classified intelligence products are of little value in such situations.



## OSINT Methodology

- OSINT is **NOT** “surfing the World Wide Web”
- Requires development of OSINT discipline
- Valid OSINT increases volume of actionable intelligence



OSINT informs broad discussions

(U) The trial emphasized the value of open sources. OSINT is not merely surfing the Internet and it requires a systematic approach similar to any of the other “INT” disciplines that you are already familiar with. We have seen that an effective OSINT effort has quickly provided our own command with increased access to actionable intelligence. Our staff achieves a wider span of coverage and OSINT derived products facilitate easier engagement by decision-makers with broader coalition partners who are essential to mission success in NATO’s new strategic vision.

There is clearly a need to establish improved doctrine for OSINT production and use within NATO. One of the more challenging debates will be the degree to which OSINT production and efforts need to be classified. (U) A senior member of the CIA recently commented that his organization had historically classified its OSINT products because they did not want to expose how they used open sources. However, even the CIA is evolving a robust web presence and has recently (U) published “Global Trends 2015”, an OSINT product developed in concert with academics, think-tanks and NGOs.

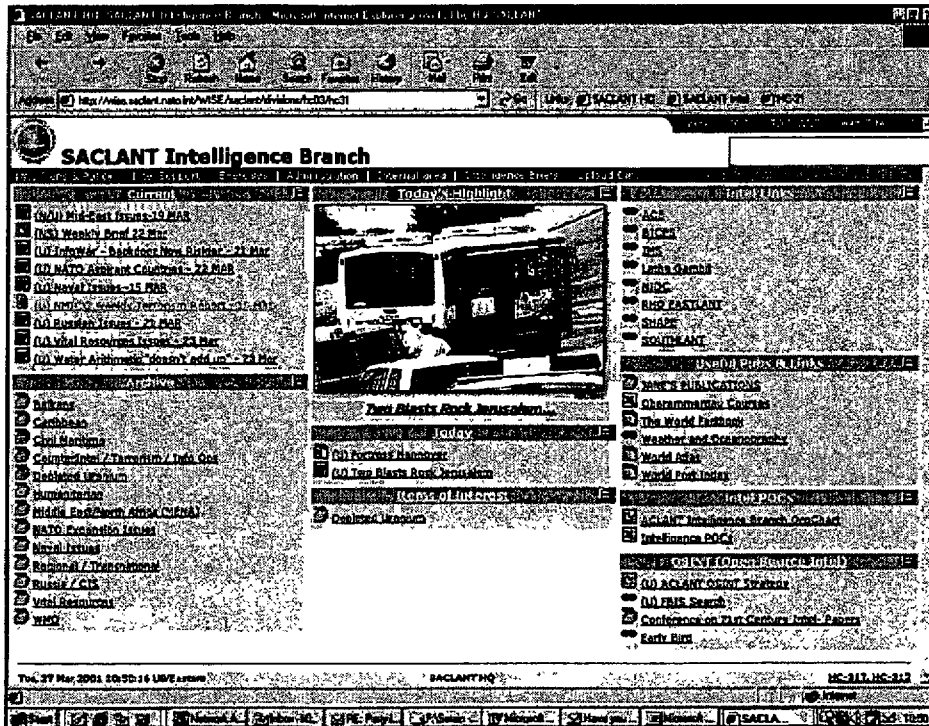
## Next Steps

### ACLANT is:

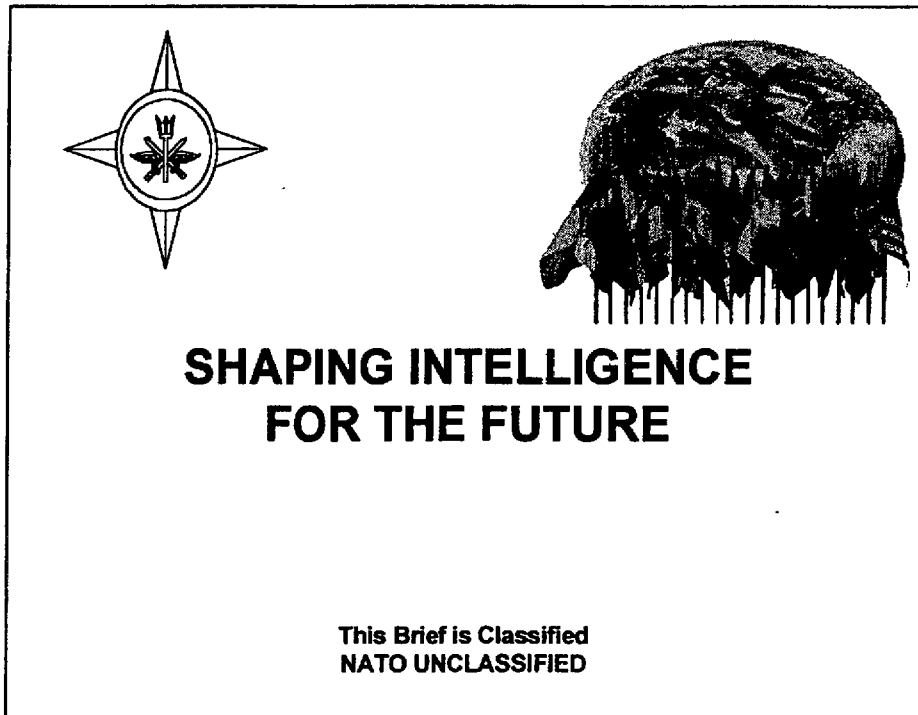
- Drafting NATO OSINT Manual
- Sponsoring NATO OSINT Seminar in Washington D.C. 11 May '01
- Seeking nations involvement in NATO OSINT capability

### (U) What next?

- (U) To address this and other doctrinal issues, ACLANT is leading in the preparation of a NATO OSINT manual that will outline how to establish and develop an effective NATO OSINT capability and to blend that effort within an all-source intelligence programme. All NATO Commands and member nations work OSINT to varying degrees. We see agreed doctrine as the glue necessary to begin to build a mutually reinforcing OSINT capability across the Alliance.
- (U) This conference and our closed session tomorrow will serve as the first step in the evolution of an OSINT capability within NATO.
- We see engagement of our international partners as the next step beginning first with those nations that already cooperate with us operationally. NATO has taken great strides to improve its ability to operate multinationally and OSINT is a logical component of effort.



(u) The approach we have generated at ACLANT has enabled our staff to be proactive, produce results and increase their output. There is much more to be done and as with any other form of intelligence it needs greater national contributions if it is to be as successful as we need it to be.



**(☺)** Ladies and Gentlemen that just about concludes my presentation.

**The future vision of NATO is centred on rapidly deployable joint forces able to react and respond quickly to emerging crises before they become a greater problem. Those forces will come from your nations and as they will be commanded by NATO, it is essential that we have the right tools for the job. Transnational problems mandate multinational solutions. NATO is uniquely poised to contribute to those solutions.**

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