

**BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CO-ORDINATION**  
**BUDAPEST, HUNGARY**  
**MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**  
29 May – 1 June 2006

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Belgium	Mr. Marc Isselé
Bulgaria	Ms. Olga Nikolova Sotirova
Canada	Dr. Richard Monaghan
Czech Republic	Col. Ladislav Chaloupsky
Denmark	1Lt Jens Bilgrav
Estonia	Lt. Meelis Vilippus
France	Lt. Col. Didier Guinard
Germany	Mr. Herbert Walinsky
Greece	Mr. Elias Papadopoulous
Hungary	Ms. Gyuláné Mag
Italy	CDR Luigi Grassi
Latvia	Ms. Inese Preisberga
Lithuania	Lt. Andrius Kieras
Netherlands	drs Gerard Seinhorst
Norway	Maj. Bente Sandkleven
Poland	LTC Jacek Danysz
Romania	LTC Viorel Juretcu
Slovakia	Lt Col Martin Backo
Slovenia	Ms. Melita Djuric
Spain	LTC José M. Lamela
Turkey	Lt. Col. Ayhan Akengin
United Kingdom	Mr. Jeremy Nowers
United States	Col. Stephen M. Jones

**OBSERVERS**

Austria	Brig. Gen. Horst Walther
Finland	Mr. Risto Kuokkanen
Sweden	Ms. Monica Larson
NATO HQ (IMS)	Mr. Philip Turner
NATO SHAPE Language Testing Centre	Mr. Michael Adubato
NATO E3A Component Language Testing Centre	Ms. Laura DeOdorico

**SECRETARIAT**

Chair	Dr. Ray Clifford
Secretary	Ms. Peggy Garza
Secretary for PfP	Mr. Keith Wert

### **Item 1: Introductions and Recognition of the New Heads of Delegations**

Introductions were made and the Chairman welcomed the new heads of delegations.

### **Item 2: Completed Action Items from the Last BILC Conference**

a. The heads of delegation had been asked to return the survey concerning the benchmark test to the BILC Secretary by 6 July.

- Action completed. The Chairman reported on the results during his keynote speech.

b. A WG was to be convened at the next conference to develop explanations of the STANAG 6001 language level descriptor titles with examples of military occupations at those levels.

- Action completed. During the week, the WG reviewed the current labels for each STANAG 6001 language level and recommended that five out of the six be changed to better reflect the level standards. The WG Chairs reported their findings first to the Steering Committee and again in the plenary session. The Chairman thanked the WG for their important work.

c. The Netherlands, Canada, Germany and the UK agreed to comprise a WG to discuss the future organization of the BILC Secretariat.

- Action completed. This WG submitted a draft proposal for NATO to establish a Language Office focal point office. The BILC Secretariat was not subsumed in this proposal but many tasks that the Secretariat cannot perform because it is not a permanent staff element would be taken on. Ensuing discussion included the United States volunteering to look into the possibility of making a national contribution to provide a civilian expert to handle some of these responsibilities in conjunction with the effort to establish an actual NATO language office.

d. Each head of delegation was asked consult back home with a view to see if his country could assume the BILC Chair and Secretariat under the current BILC Constitution and Rules of Procedure.

- Action completed. Canada reported that it was available to assume the duties of the Secretariat with timing, transition and duties to be discussed.

e. The members of Working Panel on Plus Levels were to present the plus descriptors for comment at the BILC Professional Seminar in Bulgaria. Afterward the plus levels will be presented to the Steering Committee at the BILC Conference in Hungary.

- Action completed. The Czech Republic moved and Bulgaria seconded that the plus level descriptions developed by the WG be approved by the Steering Committee for nations to use at their discretion. The motion passed with abstentions by Denmark, Estonia, Germany and Spain.

### **Item 3. JSSG Meetings and Tasking Requests**

The BILC Secretary attended both the fall and spring NATO Training Group (NTG) Joint Services Subgroup (JSSG) meetings. She reported on the issues that came up that required some assistance by BILC:

- a. BILC was asked to provide a language expert to assist the efforts of the JSSG WG, Training and Education for Peace Support Operations (TEPSO). Germany, Turkey, and Austria volunteered to look into the possibility of providing this support to TEPSO.
- b. JSSG requested information from BILC that would list which countries taught foreign languages that were required on NATO missions. Denmark volunteered to query nations to compile such a list.
- c. Ideas to perhaps use the NTG website for BILC were raised. After discussion of the pros and cons, the United States, which currently hosts the BILC web site ([www.dlielc.org/bilc](http://www.dlielc.org/bilc)), offered to look at upgrading the site, to include a possible search engine and a secure password-protected section.
- d. The Romanian study on language levels and force goals in deployable units, which was very favorably received by the JSSG, prompted a Steering Committee discussion centering on serious concerns expressed by several nations that EG 0356, "Language proficiency for deployable forces" requires revision. Romania moved, seconded by Bulgaria and Poland, that BILC formally bring to the attention of appropriate NATO authorities that the force goals be revised because they are both unrealistic and unattainable due to the high SLPs prescribed. These prescribed SLPs exceed those required from established NATO nations.
- e. The NTG approved funding for three (vice two) offerings of the BILC Language Testing Seminar (LTS) beginning in 2007. The Marshall Center will continue to host the LTS.
- f. JSSG requested that BILC review the NATO "Building Block" approach to delivering NATO specific language courses, e.g. "Staff Officers Military Terminology Course", "Maritime Operational Language Seminar" and so forth. The BILC Secretary requested nations to consider offering support for this activity when the specifics are received later in the year.
- g. The NTG has approved funding for the development of the Benchmark Advisory Test (BAT). A paper on test specifications was passed to the nations and nations were solicited for additional items. Items submitted by 15 July could be included in the initial version of the test. Subsequent items could be included in future versions. The Chairman emphasized that nations should only submit new items; not items incorporated into their national STANAG 6001 tests.

#### **Item 4. Language Training Assessments**

BILC Secretary for PfP reported on the continuing assessments, pointing out the national contribution of Sweden in supplying an expert to comprise the team. Since the 2005 BILC Conference, BILC assessments have been conducted in Bulgaria and for a second time in Georgia at the invitations of their defence authorities. Potential future assessments include Ukraine, countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

#### **Item 5. BILC Secretariat Issues**

At the 2005 Conference, the BILC Chairman had charged the members of the Steering Committee to consult back home with a view to see if any country could assume the BILC Chair and Secretariat under the current BILC Constitution and Rules of Procedure. During this 2006 Conference, Canada volunteered to assume the “core” BILC Secretariat responsibilities at the end of 2007 when the current Secretariat term will end. Canada will start shadowing the Secretariat immediately and details for responsibility of “non-core” Secretariat activities, such as Language Training Assessments and the Language Testing Seminar, will be worked out prior to formal transfer of responsibilities. Germany moved and the Netherlands seconded the proposal, followed by a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

### **Item 6. Future BILC Meetings**

- a. BILC Conferences. Future BILC Conferences were agreed to: 2007 United States, 2008 Greece, 2009 Italy, and 2010 Turkey.
  - The United States proposed a theme for the 21 -24 May 2007 Conference: “The language implications of NATO’s expanding role.”
- b. BILC Professional Seminars: 2006 Estonia, 2007 Austria, 2008 Romania and Denmark and Bulgaria have tentatively volunteered to host in 2009 and 2010 respectively.
  - The proposed theme for the 2-5 October 2006 Professional Seminar in Estonia is: “Continuing and sustaining modern language programmes”.

### **Item 7. Other Business**

The U.K. proposed the formation of an Indo-Iranian language forum to provide a focus for sharing ideas about best practice, course design, course materials, specific language difficulties and operationally related issues. The first meetings took place on 31 May and 1 June after conference plenary session. Identities and contact information were shared. A way ahead will include meeting formally during the BILC Professional Seminar in Estonia in October 2006.

### **Item 8. Action Items**

- a. Denmark will solicit from nations the language courses taught in support of NATO operations and will compile a flat data base including points of contact.
- b. Germany, Turkey and Austria will look into the possibility of supporting the TEPSO WG with language training expertise.
- c. The United States will review the BILC website with the BILC Secretary and explore the feasibility of upgrading the site.
- d. The BILC Secretariat will send a letter to appropriate NATO authorities expressing the Steering Committee’s concern that that the force goals (EG 0356) prescribed are unrealistically high and recommend that they be revised to set a still challenging but obtainable target for the nations concerned.
- e. Reading items to be considered for the initial version of the BAT should be submitted to the BILC Secretary by 15 July.

**Item 9. Vote of Thanks to the Host Nation**

The Chair expressed the Steering Committee's appreciation to Hungary for hosting an excellent and productive Conference.

PEGGY GARZA  
BILC Secretary