

**Interparliamentary Conference for
the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**

Senate of the Republic, 5 - 7 November 2014

The Outlook for European Defence: Strengthening the Cooperative

Approach with Strategic Partners

Article 21 of the TEU asserts that multilateralism lies at the core of the EU's external activities, stating that the Union "shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations."

The [European Security Strategy](#) establishes a framework of cooperation with partner countries and international organizations in crisis management, stating: "There are very few problems – practically none at all – that we may tackle alone. The threats described are common threats shared by our closest partners. International cooperation is a necessity. We must pursue our objectives, both through multilateral cooperation via international organizations, and through partnerships with the key players."

To this end, at bilateral level the EU has developed an effective and balanced partnership with the United States on security-related issues, spanning the fight against terrorism, combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and crisis management. Framework agreements to facilitate the participation of partner nations in EU-led crisis management operations are in place with a number of other non-member states including Canada, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.

1. EU-USA Cooperation

The European Community and the United States established diplomatic relations back in 1953, but this cooperation was not formalized until November 1990 in the [Transatlantic Declaration](#). This was supplanted in November 1995 by the [New Transatlantic Agenda](#) (NTA), forming the basis of transatlantic partnership. An ambitious EU/USA cooperation agenda has since been updated as a result of concerted ongoing dialogue. Dialogue takes place at a number of levels, from annual summits between EU and US leaders to technical work by experts and more informal and operational *ad hoc* contacts.

The EU and US have continued to work together in civil and military crisis management and conflict prevention. In March 2008, the two parties signed a [Work Plan on Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention](#), taking tangible steps to implement cooperation in a number of different areas. In May 2011, a Framework Agreement was signed to allow American civilians to take part in

CSDP. Close cooperation continues as part of stabilization initiatives in the Balkans and the EULEX rule-of-law mission in Kosovo.

2. The Partnership between the EU and UN

EU/UN crisis management cooperation is of great importance and benefit to both organizations: the EU benefits from the political legitimization of a mandate from the UN Security Council, while the UN benefits from the credibility and operational capacity of the EU, especially in the case of complex EU-led operations. Over the years, the EU has deployed around twenty CSDP missions on many continents, providing operational, economic and political support to UN peacekeeping initiatives. EU/UN crisis management cooperation was formalized in 2003 in a [Joint Declaration](#) after the Artemis operation. An additional [Joint Statement](#) expanded and strengthened this in June 2007.

The consultative EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management was set up in 2003 as a follow-up to the Joint Declaration. The Committee brings together senior-level crisis management representatives from the EU and UN at least twice a year, plus additional *ad hoc* meetings at times of crisis.

Although political dialogue and cooperation at a technical level are satisfactory, the UN is keen on larger contributions of European troops, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Margins for improvement in cooperation potentially exist in conceiving concepts for EU missions that provide niche capacities alongside UN missions.

3. EU/NATO Cooperation

3.1 Introduction For more than fifteen years, the European Union and NATO have been converging both in terms of membership (22 common members) and the sharing of strategic objectives, functions, and potential spheres of action. These organizations play two complementary and mutually-supportive roles in protecting peace and international security pursuant to the principles enshrined in the UN Charter.

Relations between the two bodies were initially institutionalized in 2001 after steps had been taken in the 1990s to promote greater European responsibility for defence-related issues. Until 1999, the Western European Union (WEU) acted as NATO's interlocutor for dialogue on European territorial defence. The Balkan Crisis in 1999 made it clear that the EU needed to equip itself with autonomous logistical capacity to manage crisis situations, leading to consultations on setting up a common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Headline goals were established at the 1999 Helsinki European Council, giving the Union credible military capacity to implement the Petersberg missions. These missions were either humanitarian or for evacuation purposes, missions conceived to keep the peace, and missions involving combat forces for crisis management, including operations to restore peace. The Amsterdam Treaty, which went into effect on 1 May 1999, transferred responsibility for these missions to the European Union.



At the Washington Summit in April 1999, NATO expressed its willingness to put the Alliance's strategic resources at the disposal of the EU for EU-led missions, including in situations where NATO did not have envisaged competency.

That operational partnership was confirmed in a joint NATO-EU declaration on the ESDP and then formalized in March 2003 in the Berlin Plus arrangements. These accords allow the European Union to access NATO's planning and command capacity and use its equipment to implement crisis management missions.

3.2 The Framework for EU/NATO Cooperation At institutional level, this partnership is a tangible part of an "agile organizational framework" consisting of two annual meetings at Foreign Minister level, and three NAC-COPS joint meetings for every six-month spell of European Union Presidency by Ambassadors accredited respectively with the Atlantic Council and European Union Political and Security Committee. The agenda is rounded off by any required twice-yearly meetings of the Military Committees from the two organizations, as well as regular meetings of specific subsidiary bodies. Meetings are regularly held at the levels of Foreign Minister, Ambassadors, Military Representatives and Defence Attachés, as well as at staff level, while military liaison roles have been institutionalized.

Under the framework of these agreements, a division of competencies is conducted on a flexibility-led basis. A presumption of availability is taken for granted for the European Union with regard to pre-identified NATO common capacities and structures for use in EU-led operations where NATO is not directly involved. To ensure coordination between the two organizations, supervision of these operations is allocated to the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (D-SACEUR), an integral part of the Atlantic Alliance's military staff. Linking cells have also been established between the two military structures.

The Berlin Plus arrangements have twice been implemented: in Macedonia in 2003 (Operation Concordia), and in Bosnia in 2004 (Operation Eufor Althea), in which the EU took over leadership of missions previously run by NATO while continuing to make use of the Alliance's command structure.

3.3 Additional Commitments to Mutual Support

The new [NATO Strategic Concept](#) approved by the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 made reinvigoration of relations between NATO and the European Union a key plank of Alliance action over the forthcoming decade.

The New Strategic Concept clearly establishes that an active and effective European Union contributes to global security in the Euro-Atlantic area. It follows that for NATO, the EU is a unique and essential partner. The objective of closer co-operation between the two organizations is to be pursued through:

- Strengthening the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU in a spirit of full and reciprocal opening up, transparency, complementarity and respect for the independence and institutional integrity of both;
- Enhancing practical cooperation during operations across the full spectrum of crises, from coordinated planning to reciprocal in-the-field support;

- Extending political consultations to include all issues of common interest in order to share decisions and perspectives;
- More exhaustive cooperation in developing capacities while minimizing duplication and maximizing cost efficiencies. The New Strategic Concept consequently acknowledges the importance of stronger European defence with greater capacity to benefit international security and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Within this context, closer NATO-EU cooperation acts as a further lever for developing a comprehensive international approach to managing crises (a principle reiterated by the Chicago Summit in 2012). This requires the effective application of both military and civil instruments, as in Afghanistan where the EU's contribution to the ISAF mission is oriented towards bolstering the country's statehood.

The [December 2013 European Council](#) was dedicated specifically to the issue of common European defence. One of its conclusions was to boost European Defence.¹ Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will continue to develop in full complementarity with NATO under the agreed framework of a strategic partnership between the EU and NATO, in respect of each party's independence and decision-making procedures; the EU must consequently find the necessary resources to maintain a sufficient level of investment.

Cooperation is a priority for the development of military capacity oriented towards guaranteeing interoperability, including with main partner organizations like NATO. Defence planning must be implemented in full compliance with existing NATO planning processes.²

In terms of capacity, similar reciprocal commitments may be found in the [Conclusions of the 2014 Newport NATO Summit](#), which reiterated that efforts by NATO and the EU oriented towards strengthening defence capacity are complementary, and that NATO will continue to work in close contact with the EU to ensure that the Smart Defence initiative and the EU's Pooling and Sharing initiative are complementary and mutually supportive, while at the same time backing the development of capacities and interoperability in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and maximize cost/benefit ratios.

The NATO Newport Summit Conclusions reiterated that the EU remains a unique and essential partner for NATO, and that the two organizations share common strategic values and interests. NATO acknowledges the importance of stronger and more capable European Defence as a factor for a stronger NATO. In a spirit of reciprocal and full opening up, transparency, complementarity and respect of NATO and the EU's autonomy and institutional integrity, commitments must be maintained to work side-by-side on crisis management operations while at the same time broadening political consultations: already expanded to security risks like cyber threats, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counterterrorism and energy security, they must be further rolled out to other areas such as maritime security, defence, security-related capacity building and hybrid threats.

¹ Development is along three clusters: 1) Enhanced effectiveness, visibility and impact for the CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy); 2) Development of European defence capacity; 3) Strengthening the European defence industry and its technology base.

² As is common knowledge, it is a question of coordinating the NATO Defence Planning Process with the European Capability Development Plan and strengthening existing cooperation mechanisms like the EU-NATO Capability Group.

3.4 Issues and Prospects for EU/NATO Cooperation

Whereas relations on the ground are normally fluid and constructive, political/strategic dialogue is intermittent and contradictory, despite the fact that EU/NATO institutional cooperation mechanisms seem – at least on paper – to be organic and well-developed.

The as-yet-unresolved dispute between Cyprus (a member of the EU but not NATO) and Turkey (a member of NATO but not the EU) remains a real obstacle.

Scope for uncharted cooperation lies especially in political/strategic dialogue and in drawing up a common overall agenda. To this end, it would be beneficial to initiate the process of reviewing the European Security Strategy, which dates back to 2003 and has in a *de facto* sense been superseded even in its title (“A Secure Europe in a Better World”) and now lags behind NATO’s New Strategic Concept, even if the necessary political consensus was lacking at the European Council on Defence in December 2013; this was probably a result of the fact that it coincided with the end of the European legislative process, although downstream from the renewal of the EU’s institutions, new scope and new opportunities may arise for a common strategic review under the auspices of mutual support with NATO and, perhaps, a new implementation of public diplomacy.

In-the-field cooperation offers scope for improvement. NATO’s undeniable superiority over the EU in terms of military resources and capacity might suggest calling on the Alliance for high combat-intensity operations or operations that envisage a robust military presence in order to contain or prevent violence breaking out in areas of instability. Partly as a result of its non-military crisis management assets, the EU may be better-suited to operating in areas that have already been partially pacified or where the risks of escalation are limited, where it could be tasked with reconstruction and assistance rather than combat or the re-establishment of order. An initial form of synergy that could potentially be implemented right now would be a “handover” between NATO and CSDP missions once security conditions have become sufficiently stable. In consequence, a comprehensive approach to crises could pave the way for more structured cooperation between NATO and the EU. The EU could offer NATO civil capacity for crisis management – administrative and judicial assistance, police forces, border control, etc. – in the same way that the EU makes use of NATO’s assets to lead certain military operations (pursuant to the Berlin Plus Arrangements).

Further scope for improvement may lie in training and education, by strengthening joint educational opportunities and reprising joint Crisis Management Exercises through the convergence of NATO and EU exercises (CMX/CME), along with other tools for testing NATO/EU interaction during times of crisis, and fine tuning a joint response to growing security challenges and hybrid threats.

4. EU/AU Partnership

The EU has developed close cooperation with the African Union (UA) in the field of crisis management.

The [strategic partnership](#) between the EU and the African Union began at the 2007 Lisbon Summit, since when it has evolved through ministerial level “Troika” and “Commission-to-Commission” meetings.



The peace and security partnership is founded on three fundamental pillars:

- Strengthening political dialogue;
- Rendering the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) fully operational;
- Setting aside guaranteed funding for AU peacekeeping.

The APSA consists of a number of bodies: a Committee of Wise Men; a continental preventative alert system; two military structures – the African Standby Force (the ASF is a semi-permanent armed force) and the Military Staff Committee (the MSC is a consultative body dedicated to purely military questions); and a special fund to finance operations.

A Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) programme was set up in 2010 to guarantee the possibility of rapid military deployment compared with the AU's standard 30/90 days.

In August 2013, the AU announced the start-up of an African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (AIRC), a mechanism designed to provide operational modules fifteen hundred-units strong. Activated in 2013, it is due to be ready by 2015, and should be the precursor of the ASF (which although planned for more than a decade has yet to come into being).

At present, the AU is not capable of self-funding; to a large extent it depends on the largesse of international donors (90% of its programmes and peacekeeping operations are funded by international organizations). Between 2007 and 2013, the European Union set aside €740 million for cooperation with the AU through the African Peace Facility.

5. Other Partners and New Prospects for the EU's Crisis Management Cooperation System

The EU maintains important crisis management-related dialogue with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

One new potential crisis management partner for the EU is the Arab League, which in 2011 deployed a mission of observers to Syria. The EU could help the Arab League develop its own crisis management capacity as it did with the AU, potentially by setting up a similar funding mechanism: an Arab Peace Facility.

With the emergence of a series of civil wars and humanitarian crises along Europe's southern flank, and in view of tight defence budgets in EU's member states following the financial downturn, it would seem increasingly important for the European Union to pursue a cooperative approach to crisis management operations, as it is already doing with multilateral partner organizations such as the UN and AU, as well as with new partners like ASEAN and the Arab League. The EU's role in multilateral crisis management could be strengthened along three axes: civilian crisis management; military crisis management; and supporting other partners' readiness. In the first scenario, a "plug and play" approach could be developed whereby the European Union inserts distinct EU modules into operations led by other partners, for example, a team of governance or border control experts as part of a UN operation, or a team of EU specialists providing logistical and administrative support to political staff deployed as part of an Arab League mission. Even without a CSDP mission, an EU delegation could be envisaged being sent to theatre-of-crisis States to act in an advisory role to other peacekeepers on security governance. In the second scenario, the use of specialized CSDP military modules (an engineering mission, a team of WMD specialists) could be envisaged as a way of working alongside intervention by other organizations, responding to a separate chain of command, or alternatively rapid battlegroup intervention to temporarily guarantee the security of civilian personnel dispatched by the UN, AU, etc. In the last of these scenarios, the EU could play an important role in helping other organizations develop their own crisis management capacity by offering education, training, equipment supply, and establishing a funding mechanism based on the African Peace Facility model.

Talking Points

Pursuant to the situation summarized above, debate could continue on:

- Timescale and methods for strengthening political/strategic dialogue between the EU and NATO;
- Potential further areas for EU-NATO political consultation and cooperation;
- Tools suited to establishing an overall EU-NATO security agenda;
- Common EU-NATO strategic culture communications strategies;
- Opportunities and methods for enhancing the coordination of EU-NATO capacity development;
- Criteria, tools and procedures for enhancing EU-NATO operational cooperation in the field;



- Timescale and methods for strengthening political/strategic dialogue between the EU and the UN;
- Criteria, tools and procedures for enhancing EU-UN operational cooperation in the field;
- Forms of cooperation with new partners such as ASEAN or the Arab League.