



EU-NATO COOPERATION

In the current strategic environment, with unprecedented challenges emanating from the South and the East, cooperation between the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is essential.

The security of EU and NATO are inter-connected: not only are 22 EU Member States also NATO Allies; together, they can also mobilise a broad range of tools and make the most efficient use of resources to address those challenges and enhance the security of their citizens.

EU-NATO cooperation constitutes an integral pillar of the EU's work aimed at strengthening [European security and defence](#), as part of the [implementation of the EU Global Strategy](#). It also contributes to Trans-Atlantic burden sharing. A stronger EU and a stronger NATO are mutually reinforcing.

A NEW ERA OF INTERACTION

On 8 July 2016, the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, together with the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization signed a Joint Declaration in Warsaw with a view to giving new impetus and new substance to the EU-NATO strategic partnership.

It outlined seven concrete areas where cooperation between the two organisations should be enhanced: **1.** countering hybrid threats; **2.** operational cooperation including at sea and on migration; **3.** cyber security and defence; **4.** defence capabilities; **5.** defence industry and research; **6.** exercises; **7.** supporting Eastern and Southern partners' capacity-building efforts.



Photo: Donald Tusk, Jens Stoltenberg and Jean-Claude Juncker (from left to right)

On the basis of the mandate by the Joint Declaration, common sets of proposals were endorsed by the EU and NATO Councils in December 2016 and 2017. Altogether 74 concrete actions are under implementation in the seven areas (see list). Four progress reports were submitted highlighting main achievements and added value of EU-NATO cooperation in different areas.

On 10 July, 2018, the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, together with the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization signed a second Joint Declaration in Brussels calling for swift and demonstrable progress in implementation.

Cooperation between the EU and NATO is now the established norm and daily practice and continues to take place on the basis of key guiding principles: openness, transparency, inclusiveness and reciprocity, in full respect of the decision-making autonomy and procedures of both organisations without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policy of any Member State.



Hybrid threats

20 out of the 74 current proposals for cooperation are focussed on countering hybrid threats. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats effectively contributes to strengthening EU-NATO cooperation in this area. EU and NATO personnel have participated in the Centre's activities to develop a better understanding of hybrid threats and the options to counter them in a coordinated way.



Operational cooperation including maritime issues

EU and NATO staffs are engaged in exploring modalities to enhance coordination, complementarity and cooperation in the maritime domain. Staffs regularly exchange ideas in the meetings of the mechanism on Shared Awareness and De-Confliction in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED), as the main forum for sharing information and coordination of efforts.



Cyber security

Active interaction at staff level is proceeding in the field of cyber on concepts and doctrines, existing and planned training and education courses, threat indicators, ad-hoc exchanges of threat alerts and assessments, cross-briefings, including on the cyber aspects of crisis management and regular meetings.



Defence Capabilities

Efforts continue to ensure coherence of output between the planning instruments and processes, namely the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the European Defence Fund (EDF), the EU Capability Development Plan, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and respective NATO processes such as the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) and the Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process. Coherence and synergies between NATO and EU efforts are being made to improve military mobility.



Defence industry and research

EU and NATO staffs continue the dialogue on industry matters, which includes regular updates on related NATO and EU activities. Special focus lies for example on Small and Medium Enterprises' access to defence supply chain and innovation, or industry engagement in specific areas.



Exercises

The second parallel and coordinated exercise took place in November 2018: the largest hybrid crisis management exercise ever conducted and led by the EU. The scenario allowed for strong interaction between EU and NATO staff.



Capacity-building

Assisting partners in building their capacities and fostering resilience, in particular in the Western Balkans, and in our Eastern and Southern neighbourhood is a common objective. Information exchange, including informal staff-to-staff political consultations on the three pilot countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova and Tunisia) has intensified.



Strengthening political dialogue between EU and NATO

The established practice of mutual invitations to relevant ministerial meetings continued. Reciprocal cross-briefings on issues of mutual interest have become more frequent.