



# EU-NATO Cooperation

The European Union's Global Strategy responds to evolving security threats and highlights unprecedented security challenges such as terrorism, hybrid threats, economic volatility, climate change and energy insecurity. European citizens demand greater security and the EU is responding. The Global Strategy therefore proposes to boost the Union's contribution to Europe's collective security in various areas including working closely with its partners, beginning with NATO.

NATO is a major partner for the European Union in the area of security and defence. Both organisations share common values, strategic interests and many of their member states belong to both organisations (22). They already cooperate in a wide variety of issues, including managing crises, developing the defence capability of their member states, building the capacities of partner countries, addressing hybrid threats and contributing to maritime security.

EU and NATO representatives meet regularly at political and technical levels to discuss issues of common interest and agree on common actions.

## **A New Era of Cooperation**

In July 2016, Presidents Tusk and Juncker as well as NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg signed a Joint Declaration in Warsaw which foresees to boost cooperation in 7 key areas. On 6 December 2016, a set of pragmatic and ambitious follow-up measures were adopted in parallel by the Council of the European Union and the North Atlantic Council at the Foreign Ministers level in Brussels. There are 42 actions foreseen in the 7 areas of cooperation identified in the joint Declaration:

- 1.** countering hybrid threats,
- 2.** operational cooperation including maritime issues,
- 3.** cyber security and defence,
- 4.** defence capabilities,
- 5.** defence industry and research,
- 6.** parallel and coordinated exercises and
- 7.** defence and security capacity-building.

In addition, it was agreed to strengthen political dialogue between both organisations.

"The decisions are a major step forward. Today we start a new important era in EU-NATO cooperation," said EU High

Representative Federica Mogherini when presenting the package together with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

The EU High Representative will report to EU Member States and the NATO Secretary General to NATO Allies regularly on the progress in implementing the set of concrete actions.

## **Existing Cooperation in the Field**

The EU and NATO have already long cooperated in managing crises. For example, in 2004, the EU deployed Operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, drawing on NATO planning expertise and other Alliance assets and capabilities.

Since then EU and NATO have cooperated in other crises theatres such as Afghanistan, Kosovo or in tackling piracy off the coast of Somalia.

More recently EU and NATO naval forces have also been deployed side-by-side in the Aegean Sea to conduct reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance of migrant smuggling and trafficking, supporting Turkish and Greek

authorities and the EU's Frontex agency operations. Also, in the Central Mediterranean, NATO's operation Sea Guardian is cooperating with EU Operation Sophia through information sharing and logistics. Operation Sophia main responsibilities are aimed at disrupting the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean and preventing the further loss of life at sea.

### Other Areas of Cooperation

The range of subjects discussed at political consultations between NATO and the EU comprises a wide range of issues and will now be further boosted by the new package of measures. Security issues in Europe and its neighbourhood have been a major topic. For example, since the start of the crisis in Ukraine, both organisations have worked closely to coordinate their activities. Consultations have also covered the Western Balkans, Libya and the Middle East.

Member States have one single set of forces which they can use in different frameworks. Therefore, EU and NATO will pursue coherence in their capability development efforts with a view to ensure complementarity and avoid unnecessary duplications. Efforts will now get an additional and significant boost through the agreed actions.

In countering hybrid threats, EU and NATO cooperation will be expanded in the areas of situational awareness, strategic communication, crisis response and bolstering resilience.

In the context of closer cooperation, in early 2016 EU and NATO concluded a Technical

Arrangement on Cyber Defence. A number of the activities adopted now will further strengthen cooperation in this key area.

EU and NATO also cooperate in defence and security capacity building of partners. Particular attention is given to building partners' capacity and resilience, in particular in the Western Balkans, the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods.



### Links

[EU and NATO start new era of cooperation](#)

[EU-NATO Joint Declaration, Warsaw, July 2016](#)

[EU-NATO Statement on the implementation of the Joint Declaration with Annex containing the common set of proposals](#)

[Mogherini-Stoltenberg joint press conference \(remarks\)](#)

[Mogherini-Stoltenberg joint press conference \(Q&A\)](#)

[EU-NATO cooperation: Council adopt conclusions to implement Joint Declaration](#)

[Infographic – “EU-NATO Joint Declaration: Implementation”](#)