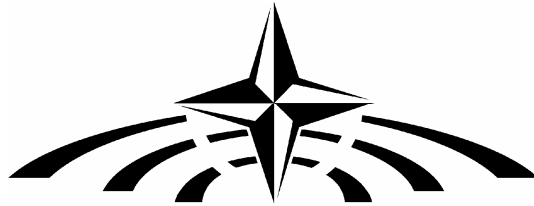


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Original: English



NATO Parliamentary Assembly

SUB-COMMITTEE ON TRANSATLANTIC DEFENCE AND SECURITY CO-OPERATION

NATO-EU OPERATIONAL COOPERATION

DRAFT REPORT

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13 March 2007

* Until this document has been approved by the Defence and Security Committee, it represents only the views of the Rapporteur.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The senior civilian leadership of both NATO and the European Union have consistently reaffirmed the importance of deepened cooperation between their respective institutions. These leaders have extolled the benefits of a synergistic relationship that would, at the minimum, deconflict missions and resource allocations, and at best coordinate the action of the two bodies for maximum positive effect. The NATO-EU relationship, in the words of their December 2002 joint Declaration on European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), would be a “strategic partnership... founded on our shared values, the indivisibility of our security and our determination to tackle the challenges of the new century.” As two of the institutions most likely to be called on by the international community and their own citizens to respond to the world’s most pressing and challenging security crises, the EU and NATO would appear to have compelling reasons to work together in such a way as to maximize the combined positive impact of their differing capabilities. And yet, to date, no mechanism is in place to ensure that the two organizations effectively dialogue, let alone coordinate, when a crisis flares up that either might reasonably respond to. Further, the inability to dialogue in Brussels at the political level has led to uncoordinated and sometimes inefficient operational responses.

2. This report has been prepared for the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Security and Defence Cooperation of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly’s Defence and Security Committee. The Sub-Committee’s main purpose is to examine transatlantic cooperation in areas including NATO-EU level cooperation, defence industrial cooperation, asset-sharing, defence burden sharing, and intelligence sharing. The Sub-Committee seeks to analyse the barriers to increased cooperation and propose solutions when appropriate. It is not within the scope of this Sub-Committee’s work to address the question of what kind of division of labour at the political level is appropriate between the EU and NATO – what their respective *raison d’être* may be, now and in the future. However, this body *is* intensely interested in the extent to which the expressed intent and rhetorical exhortations of “synergy” between the two international actors have become reality. What is the state of the on-the-ground, day-to-day cooperation between these institutions where it matters most – in the operational context?

3. Since the inception of the “Berlin plus” arrangements spelling out cooperative mechanisms between the two organizations, several crises have created demand for joint, or at least coordinated, action between the EU and NATO: from Concordia and Althea in the Balkans – in the “traditional” Euro-Atlantic theatre – to the much further afield operations confronting the challenges in Afghanistan and in the Darfur region of Sudan. Although the successful hand-over of peacekeeping forces in Bosnia from NATO to EU command demonstrated that synergetic relations are possible between the two organizations, the turf battle over assisting the African Union in Darfur suggested that rivalry could erode the effectiveness of both institutions, while potentially undermining Allied solidarity. The current state of play was summarized by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the Secretary General of NATO, who lamented in Berlin in January “how narrow the bandwidth of cooperation between NATO and the Union has remained. Despite many attempts to bring the two institutions closer together, there is still a remarkable distance between them.” The ability of each of these organizations to use their unique resources to address crises and spread stability beyond their membership’s borders may well depend on their ability to close this gap.

4. Cooperation between the two organizations is hampered by a number of obstacles, which will be detailed further below. The first, and perhaps most significant, is the political emphasis placed on an independent EU military identity by some member states of both organizations. These states are concerned that developing too close a relationship in the area of security and defence policy with NATO – and thus the United States – risks undermining the ability of ESDP to eventually stand alone. Also important is a related lack of consensus on what types of missions are appropriate for each organization to undertake. A rapprochement between the organizations is thus prevented by divergent visions of their purpose among their respective member states. Other

roadblocks also exist, such as structural problems having to do with the Cyprus conflict; technical questions having to do with security clearances and membership in various related organizations; the lack of direct channels for NATO to interact with EU institutions besides the European Council; bureaucratic distrust and rivalry; and reported incompatibility amongst national and institutional leaders.

5. This Sub-Committee plans two visits to investigate the operational cooperation between NATO and the European Union in 2007. The Sub-Committee plans to visit operational nodes such as the EU airlift and sealift coordination centre at Eindhoven in the Netherlands and the EU Deployable Headquarters at Potsdam in Germany. The Sub-Committee will also engage officials and experts in several countries on their views on the NATO-EU relationship, as well as discussing the issue with representatives from both organizations. These discussions will deepen the Sub-Committee's understanding of EU operational concerns as well as details of ongoing operational cooperation between the EU and NATO, and inform future drafts of this report. This initial draft is intended principally as useful background for the Sub-Committee's visits, and is based primarily on government publications, press reports and other public sources. The final version, to be published in the fall of 2007, may differ significantly from the current draft.

II. ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INCOMPLETE PARTNERSHIP

6. What had been a fairly consistent and clear division of competencies since the inception of both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) has increasingly overlapped since the late 1990s. The EU has moved towards developing its own identity and capabilities in the security field, and is developing a significant reservoir of experience in the deployment of its still-nascent security forces. NATO, for its part, has definitively moved beyond the debate on out of area operations and, as demonstrated by current discussions on the "Comprehensive Approach" has recognized that the Alliance will be called on to perform tasks from high-intensity combat all the way to limited reconstruction assistance. Its deployments in the challenging environments of Pakistan and especially Afghanistan have reinforced this evolution.

7. Both organizations have taken on a decidedly global and potentially intersecting strategic outlook in the post 9/11 world. NATO's statement in Prague in 2002 that it would meet challenges "from wherever they may come," came just a short time before the launch of NATO's mission to Afghanistan, its first operation outside of Europe. The EU, for its part, has also laid down a marker of its wide strategic view in the 2003 *European Security Strategy*, noting that "distant threats may be as much a concern as those that are near at hand." Increasingly distant deployments by both organizations have confirmed their intent to back their newly global strategic outlooks with more than simple rhetoric.

8. The organizations' relative strengths also indicate a level of potential complementarity that could be harnessed in addressing the security challenges that face the membership of both organizations. NATO's Riga Summit Declaration, issued on 29 November 2006, reaffirms the principles behind the development of a relationship between the EU and NATO:

"NATO and the EU share common values and strategic interests. ... We will strive for improvements in the NATO-EU strategic partnership as agreed by our two organisations, to achieve closer cooperation and greater efficiency, and avoid unnecessary duplication, in a spirit of transparency and respecting the autonomy of the two organisations. A stronger EU will further contribute to our common security."

The EU's European Security Strategy of 2003 pays similar homage to the importance of the relationship between the two bodies:

“The EU-NATO permanent arrangements ... enhance the operational capability of the EU and provide the framework for the strategic partnership between the two organizations in crisis management. This reflects our common determination to tackle the challenges of the new century.”

A. THE EUROPEAN UNION’S DEVELOPMENT AS A SECURITY ACTOR

9. The EU and NATO remain fundamentally different types of organizations, bringing different strengths and resources to bear on any given security problem. NATO rightly retains its unique character as a standing peacetime military alliance that has developed the capability to quickly deploy over long distances for a range of security operations. The Alliance’s unique assets and interoperability, developed over decades of cold war planning and coordination, provide it undeniable capabilities in coalition operations. NATO’s toolkit, however, lacks several assets that the EU holds in spades, including for example the resources, competencies, or for that matter, any declared intent to take on post-conflict reconstruction assistance as one of its primary missions.

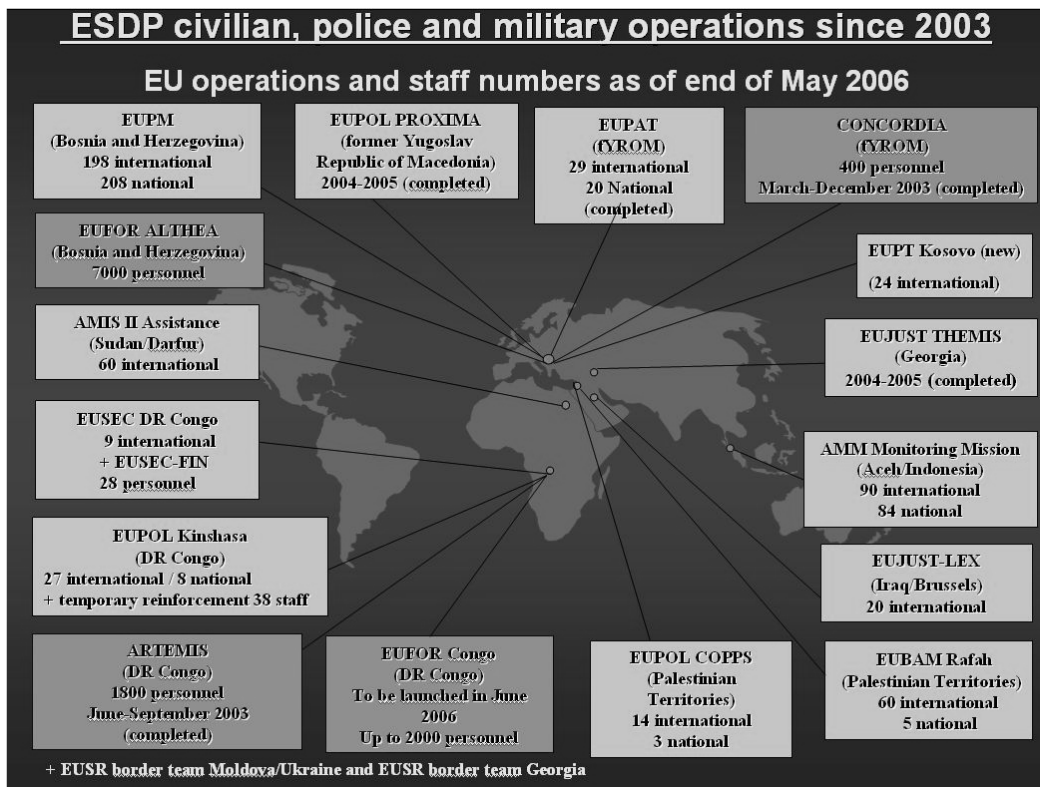
10. The EU, for its part, has amplified the role and resources it can bring to bear in the post-conflict phases of operations. Indeed, the EU has expanded the scope and reach of its “crisis management” operations related to the so-called “Petersberg Tasks,” including humanitarian and rescue tasks and peacekeeping (as well as other tasks including disarmament, combating terrorism, and security sector reform). Most importantly, the EU has also made progress in developing its military capabilities through the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). New EU institutions that are increasingly active in what used to be a NATO-only security domain include the European Defense Agency (EDA), the EU Military Committee, and the EU Military Staff (EUMS). The EDA’s responsibilities are chiefly in defense procurement; the EUMC advises the EU’s Political and Security Committee (PSC) on all military matters within the EU; and the EUMS is a planning and advising organization that reports to the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as the PSC, intended to “integrate military and non-military elements in operations.”

11. In addition, the European Union has moved into the field of rapid reaction forces. In 1999, EU member states agreed to put at the Union’s disposal, on a voluntary basis, up to 60,000 troops with the capability to deploy for two months and be sustained for at least one year – the 2003 Headline Goal. This initiative did not result in a standing force; also unlike the NATO Response Force (NRF), joint training was not involved. While the EU was able to declare the force operational (with some important deficiencies), it has never been called on; no deployment involving anywhere near those numbers of troops has been considered by the EU. Recognizing this fact and with increased appreciation of smaller force packages through its increasing operational experience, especially in Operation Artemis, the European Union in February 2004 proposed a new “Headline Goal 2010” – to establish high readiness Battle groups of roughly 1,500 troops each, able to rapidly get to a crisis area within 10 days of any decision to deploy. The EU currently plans to stand up thirteen such Battle groups, which should be able to sustain an operation for 30 days (120 with rotation). The EU battle groups have played a useful role in promoting military transformation. However, they continue to face several challenges: their ability to deploy rapidly is severely constrained by logistical considerations and decision-making processes. Additional questions about the Battle groups’ relationship with other commitments, especially the NRF, are detailed below.

12. Beyond these high-end military capabilities, and its considerable assistance budget, the EU has also created deployable forces of security sector professionals who could assist in civilian stabilization missions, including plans to stand up a deployable civilian police force of up to 5,000 officers, several hundred deployable judicial experts, as well as other reconstruction and bureaucratic managers and trainers. Five EU member states have also joined in the creation of the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF). This force, launched as a contribution to the ESDP effort by France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and The Netherlands, would be particularly valuable in missions short of combat but requiring more robust capabilities than a police force would offer. The EGF,

although primarily intended for the EU, is also intended to be available for deployment under the aegis of NATO as well as other organizations including the OSCE and the UN. The EGF was declared operational as of July 2006, with headquarters in Italy.

13. The European Union is rapidly gaining operational experience in a much larger geographic area. Extensive operations coordinated closely with NATO in the Balkans (where the strategic interests of both organizations were obvious, and the conflict zone was a relatively easily accessible and geographically proximate area), were only the beginning. The EU has undertaken 16 deployments to date, as far afield as Aceh and Gaza. If the first EU-led operation, Concordia, saw the Union deploying in relatively close territory in Macedonia, the second – Operation Artemis, in 2003 – was a deployment outside of Europe to the Democratic Republic of Congo. France led a 1,500- strong force in the operation, conducted completely outside the “Berlin Plus” arrangements (and thus without recourse to NATO assets). Artemis also highlighted another point of operational friction between the two organizations: while the EU informed NATO of its intentions *during* Artemis, it apparently did not consult NATO *prior* to its launching. This signalled that discussions on “sequencing” – whether NATO is assumed to hold the “right of first refusal” on security operations, i.e. that the EU would only launch an operation after NATO as a whole had decided not to be engaged – were as yet unresolved.



14. A significant common thread among these early EU operations has been their distinctly small logistical footprint. Indeed, none have so far required prolonged re-supply and extensive use of airlift. Many of these operations were civilian in nature and relatively small in scope and ambition. However, the intent behind the operations, and the larger EU strategic view they indicate, signal that the relationship between the two organizations has moved into a more challenging period, in which they both will continue to venture beyond the traditional Euro-Atlantic space to project security to areas far afield where threats to their territories may originate. Just as the days of NATO sitting in a defensive crouch waiting for Soviet tanks to pour across the Fulda Gap are long gone, the days of the European Union as a purely economic and social institution are also of the past. As both institutions subscribe to the model of exporting security, and because they are

largely vulnerable to the same threats, NATO and the EU have found, and increasingly will find, that they are planning similar actions in response to emerging security challenges, and drawing on largely the same pool of resources to do so.

15. The most significant missing element from the EU's growing military toolkit is a single integrated military structure such as that embodied by SHAPE and the rest of the NATO command structure. Indeed, the emergence of the European Union as an increasingly ambitious player in the security sphere was the impetus for discussions on ensuring that unnecessary duplication of resources was avoided if at all possible. The outcome of these discussions were the arrangements known as "Berlin Plus", which sought to provide the European Union sufficient access to NATO assets that the Union would forego the creation – and resourcing – of a parallel set of institutions.

B. THE ROAD TO BERLIN PLUS

16. The argument for rationalizing defence-related expenditures and institutions between NATO and the EU is based mainly on their largely shared membership. Since the enlargement of both organisations in 2004, and the subsequent 2007 accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU, 21 of the 27 member countries of the EU are members of NATO. For these members of both organizations, limited defence budgets (and the capabilities they buy) are necessarily scarce resources that are increasingly called on for national needs, as well as for commitments to NATO and the EU. Making maximum use of those resources means avoiding any situation in which NATO and the EU might be duplicating each other's efforts, particularly in a climate that sees most Allies unable to meet the informally-agreed threshold of spending 2% of GDP on defense.¹

17. The increasing role of the EU in the security sphere detailed above, as it began to develop a European Security and Defence Policy in the late 1990s, led to increased recognition of the need for a framework for cooperation with NATO. At the 1999 Washington Summit, NATO affirmed its willingness and intent to grant access to its collective assets and capabilities to the EU. Institutionalized relations between the two organizations were further developed in a 2001 exchange of letters between the NATO Secretary General and the EU Presidency, sketching out the scope of cooperation and the modalities of consultation between the two organisations.

18. Continued discussions between the organizations eventually led to the "NATO-EU Declaration on ESDP", agreed in December 2002. The Declaration reaffirmed assured access for the EU to NATO's planning capabilities for EU military operations. It also laid down the fundamental building blocks of the relationship: mutual consultation, equality and autonomy of decision-making of the two bodies; respect for member states' interests; respect for the UN Charter; and mutually reinforcing development of requirements for military capabilities to be shared by both.

19. Following the political decision of December 2002, the "Berlin Plus" arrangements, adopted on 17 March 2003, laid out the basic parameters of operational relations between the two bodies [see box]. The arrangements provide the basis for NATO-EU cooperation in crisis management by allowing EU access to NATO's collective assets and capabilities for EU-led operations. In effect, they allow the Alliance to support EU-led operations in which NATO as a whole is not engaged. The operational assets directly owned by NATO *per se* – notably a small fleet of airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft – are not very extensive. However, access to NATO's

¹ A counter-argument has been made that duplication of resources can be useful in that it offers the chance to experiment with various ways of organizing the response to security challenges. Your Rapporteur finds this argument less than compelling in the face of the serious and growing limitations on defense resources that member states are willing and able to put towards defense.

planning assets and command structure is among the most important elements of the “Berlin Plus” arrangements. This allows the EU to coordinate a major operation through NATO rather than duplicating these institutions itself.

C. OTHER INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

20. Beyond Berlin Plus, there exist a number of institutional links between the two organizations, including the NATO-EU Capability Group, which met for the first time in May 2003. Its goal is to achieve consistency between the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP), and the Prague Capability Commitment (PCC) and more importantly between the NRF and the EU Battle groups. NATO and the EU are intended to meet at the level of foreign ministers twice annually. The NAC meets with the PSC at least three times a semester, and the each institution’s Military Committees meet twice a semester. NATO has a permanent liaison at the EU Military Staff and EU officers are permanently present at SHAPE. In addition, a number of joint exercises between the organizations have been held with

The “Berlin Plus” Arrangements: main features

- . *assured EU access to NATO planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-led operations;*
- . *the presumption of availability to the European Union of pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-led operations;*
- . *identification of a range of European command options for EU-led operations, further developing the role of NATO’s Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) in order for him to assume his European responsibilities fully and effectively;*
- . *the further adaptation of NATO’s defence planning system to incorporate more comprehensively the availability of forces for EU-led operations;*
- . *a NATO-EU agreement covering the exchange of classified information under reciprocal security protection rules;*
- . *procedures for the release, monitoring, return and recall of NATO assets and capabilities;*
- . *NATO-EU consultation arrangements in the context of an EU-led crisis management operation making use of NATO assets and capabilities*

(source: NATO Handbook, 2005 edition)

the intent of testing and improving interoperability between NATO and the EU in operations. One of the Sub-Committee’s goals during 2007 is to evaluate the extent to which current practice meets the goals and expectations laid out when these institutional linkages were first adopted.

III. LIMITATIONS ON IMPROVING RELATIONS

21. Despite the expressed intent to productively work together, the two institutions find themselves struggling to do just that. NATO’s Jaap de Hoop Scheffer characterized relations in January 2007 as “problematic” and “still stuck in the 90s.” A number of factors bear some responsibility for the dysfunctionality of the inter-organizational relationship.

22. The first roadblock to deeper cooperation between the two bodies is political in nature. There exists within NATO a group of Europeanist countries whose actions suggest a desire to limit NATO’s role and promote the cause of the European Union’s growing role as a security actor. This stands in obvious contrast to an Atlanticist group of countries which seeks an ever-broader set of responsibilities and attendant capabilities for the Alliance. One of the concerns of the Europeanist group is that strong relations with NATO would strengthen the position of the United States in Europe and possibly prove detrimental to further European integration in the area of security. Again citing Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in 2007, “some deliberately want to keep NATO and the EU at a distance from one another. For this school of thought, a closer relationship between NATO and

the EU means excessive influence for the USA. Perhaps they are afraid that the ESDP is still and too new and vulnerable for a partnership with NATO."

23. However, it appears not all EU members of NATO seem to share this concern; certain Allies are more apt to pursue an independence of European defence policy from NATO than others. For instance, press reporting on the launching of the EU mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in July 2006 indicated a telling internal European debate: German leaders evidently sought to have the mission run out of SHAPE headquarters in Mons; instead, the French preference for an independent EU mission run out of the EU Potsdam military headquarters won out.

24. Some analysts see further evidence of the ambiguity within the EU on its relations with the Alliance in its relatively lukewarm statements on EU-NATO cooperation. Informal review of the relevant public pronouncements and presentations by both organizations do appear to indicate a much higher degree of emphasis on a cooperative relationship in NATO documents. The length and frequency with which this issue is cited in NATO documents suggest a consistent prioritization of this question. Similar EU presentations, however, appear to give relatively short shrift to cooperation with NATO. Whether this constitutes evidence of greater demand on the part of NATO for cooperation with the EU, rather than the reverse, requires further evaluation.

25. The larger and unresolved political question detailed above, suggesting differing strategic views of the "proper" role for NATO and for the EU in the security arena today and tomorrow, is unfortunately accompanied by structural problems preventing meaningful discussions between the organizations. The most direct structural impediment to dialogue in Brussels between the two organizations, and especially between the North Atlantic Council and the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC), emerged after the enlargement of the European Union to include Malta and Cyprus in 2004. In line with its non-recognition of the government of Cyprus, Turkey has not allowed sensitive information to be exchanged with the European Union as a whole, or Cyprus and Malta in particular at joint meetings, as they are not members of Partnership for Peace, under which some intelligence sharing is permissible. This is a legacy of a policy that had allowed for the previous EU neutrals (Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden – all PfP members) to participate in these discussions. However, the 2004 EU enlargement brought Cyprus into the mix, along with its strained relations with Turkey. For its part, Cyprus, seeking to preserve its status as an equal member of the EU, has prevented the rest of the EU from engaging in broader discussions with NATO. This situation has created a stalemate in which the two institutions can only formally discuss "Berlin Plus" operations (at this point, Operation Althea in Bosnia); but even in this case, Cyprus and Malta are not present. More problematically, as a result of this situation, the organizations as a whole cannot discuss non-"Berlin Plus" missions - for example, operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo – at all at the ambassadorial level. As a result of these problems, formal meetings between the institutions are widely seen as ineffectual at best.

26. An additional problem in the dialogue between organizations is centered on the European organizational structure. At the time of the NATO-EU Declaration of 2002 and at the inception of the "Berlin Plus" arrangements, the European Council, through the office of the Presidency, became NATO's interlocutor for dialogue with the Union as a whole. Since then, other European institutions such as the European Commission have begun to play increasingly important roles in security operations in areas including reconstruction funding, but also policing and other security sector activities. However, the EU-NATO relationship has not evolved to take this development into account; no formal channel for discussion between NATO and the Commission exists as yet, for example, and as a result, discussion is severely curtailed.

27. Other, seemingly less compelling issues have been cited as contributing to the difficult communication between the two institutions. Neither speculations about personally lukewarm relations among the heads of the institutions, nor a more broadly cited reciprocal institutional distrust of an unfamiliar bureaucracy, would appear to play a decisive role in the rocky relationship.

Some have also blamed difficult relations between the bodies on the incompatible views of the leadership of certain particularly vocal member states of both organizations, and accordingly counsel patience, time, and eventual change of leadership of organizations as well as certain member states as factors that may well lead to an improvement in the relationship.

IV. CASE STUDIES: NATO-EU IN ACTION

A. THE BALKANS: A BERLIN PLUS SUCCESS STORY

28. Several operations have been undertaken within the “Berlin Plus” framework: the Balkans in particular have been a proving ground for EU military deployments in coordination with NATO. The first EU operation - an EU-led crisis-management military operation under the name Operation Concordia – saw approximately 300 EU troops deployed to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* to protect EU and OSCE monitors of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which itself had been formalized under the patronage of the NATO Secretary General and the EU CFSP High Representative. Concordia took over these responsibilities in March 2003 from NATO’s Operation “Allied Harmony”. In accordance with the “Berlin Plus” arrangements, the EU operation was headed by NATO’s Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) at SHAPE, through an EU commander on the ground.

29. Operation Althea, the EU peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, also began as a NATO operation. The handover from NATO to the EU, based on the “Berlin Plus” arrangements, took place successfully in December of 2004, with NATO continuing to provide planning, logistic and command support. The EU took over the NATO mission with 7,000 of its own troops and similar command arrangements as those in Concordia. An EU cell was established at SHAPE in Mons, and EU liaison teams were present at NATO’s Joint Forces Command in Naples. The operation is supervised by the EU Military Committee (to which DSACEUR, in this instance, reports). Ongoing communication with NATO takes place through the Military Committees and the PSC-NAC channel. NATO has maintained a headquarters in Bosnia to carry out a number of specific tasks related in particular to assisting the government in reforming its defence structures, as well as supporting the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Operation Althea remains the most ambitious EU military operation to date.

30. However, for all the credit given to the “Berlin Plus” arrangements for the success of the handover of both operations, and good coordination in Bosnia in particular, reporting indicates that the on-the-ground achievements were not as institutionally seamless as might have been thought. Indeed, the success of the handover evidently depended heavily on the commanders on the ground from both organizations, who were forced to de-conflict what evidently were sometimes unclear and overlapping mandates. Delays in some decisions on operational issues were also reportedly caused by divergent views between the organizations.

B. DARFUR: POLITICAL DEADLOCK, OPERATIONAL WORK-AROUND

31. Perhaps the most vivid example of an inability of the two institutions to pool resources and achieve operational synergy occurred in May 2005, when the African Union (AU) requested assistance from both organizations. The AU sought assistance in the movement of troops from various African countries to the peacekeeping mission being deployed to Sudan’s western region of Darfur to quell the violence and improve the humanitarian situation.

32. Unfortunately, the two organizations were unable to come to agreement on which organization would respond, or on a division of labor regarding the assistance mission, with each

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

organization unwilling to defer to the other. Ultimately, the fruitless discussions resulted in separate airlift efforts, requiring coordination by the African Union out of its headquarters at Addis Ababa. Subsequent reporting indicates that the EU had sought to use the European Airlift Centre at Eindhoven in the Netherlands to coordinate the lift under an EU banner, with members citing Europe's historic ties to Africa, and perhaps more relevantly, longer term involvement in Darfur (since 2004). NATO preferred its own in-house facilities at SHAPE. The parallel effort, with coordination by the AU, emerged as the only outcome to which both organizations could agree.

33. In the AU assistance mission, NATO and the EU face a new operational reality, very different from any situation envisaged by Berlin Plus: they are operating organizationally separately, but in the same time and place, and with the same objectives. On a positive note, there are indications that NATO and EU personnel are effectively working together, under the auspices of the AU, to deconflict their airlift support; the Air Movement Coordination Cell at SHAPE and its EU counterpart in Eindhoven are by all accounts in direct and frequent coordination. This unpublicized but necessary exchange demonstrates what is possible at the working level, without broader political agreement. It remains to be seen whether this kind of cooperation is sustainable in the absence of greater Brussels-level engagement and coordination.

C. OPERATIONS OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE: AFGHANISTAN, KOSOVO

34. The two most pressing challenges that NATO officials most often cite for the Alliance in 2007 are the on-going operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Both also feature significant involvement by the European Union; both present fundamental challenges to the security of members of both the EU and NATO. Cooperation and complementarity, not simply de-confliction, appear to be of fundamental importance if the international interventions are to succeed. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, speaking about Afghanistan in particular, noted in January that "NATO does not have the civil means to drive reconstruction forward, and we also have no interest at all in acquiring such means. It is the EU that has such means (...). In other words, the two institutions are dependent upon one another". Several analysts have suggested that the EU could take a larger role in the political and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, potentially managing funding pledges by its member states as well as coordinating the work of their Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

35. German Chancellor Angela Merkel recently also urged NATO and the EU to work together in Afghanistan, calling it "crucial" in order for efforts to defeat the Taliban to succeed. And indeed, the European Union is making important contributions in Afghanistan, and its commitment there is growing. In the NATO-EU context, the EU is helping to underwrite the role of NATO PRTs, and has recently approved an ESDP police-training mission. The police mission, which itself will require a significant degree of coordination with NATO forces, is foreseen for June 2007 and will consist of 160 police officers. EU High Representative Javier Solana noted in describing the operation that "(...) it will require close co-operation between the EU and NATO" because it relies on the NATO-led PRT system, and that cooperation between the organizations had already begun through support to the EU planning team from the NATO Secretariat and ISAF on the ground.

36. The NATO Operation in Kosovo, KFOR, has the potential to become more challenging in the short and medium term, as discussions on Kosovo's future status mature. NATO, already deeply committed in the very complex operation in Afghanistan, would be sorely stretched should the situation in Kosovo degrade into a security crisis. There are currently approximately 16,000 NATO troops on the ground in Kosovo, from 36 nations. Commanding officers have announced that the mandate, strength and organization of the mission will remain in 2007.

37. Both organizations have committed to playing a significant role in whatever international presence will exist in Kosovo once its status is decided. NATO is to remain the international military presence keeping the peace, while the EU will be responsible for a wide range of security

sector activities, notably policing. To date, NATO-EU cooperation in Kosovo is reputed to be fairly good, but could become more complicated, as discussions on the division of labor between the incoming EU police force and NATO troops on the ground have yet to come to resolution. In the longer term, it is possible that the model of the “Berlin Plus” handover to the EU in Bosnia might serve as a model for Kosovo, with the EU eventually taking over responsibility for the operation with NATO support.

V. BUILDING OPERATIONAL FORCES: NRF VS. BATTLEGROUPS

38. As described above, there are likely to be increasingly frequent occasions in which both organizations will want to respond to an emerging security threat. And as previously detailed, both organizations are developing rapid response forces to undertake such operations. However, many questions remain unresolved regarding the relationship between the NATO Response Force and the EU’s Battle groups.

39. The NRF and the Battle groups share many attributes, including that both are six-month rotational forces, multinational in nature, and expeditionary in intent. Both aim to spur improvements in their organization’s respective ability to successfully deploy, employ, sustain and rotate forces, achieve higher readiness levels, and improve interoperability. And of course, both largely draw on the same member states’ militaries for force generation. Both forces are also subject to an on-going debate regarding their fundamental purpose and the type of mission each is able to undertake.

40. However, despite the statement contained in the Prague Declaration that “the NRF and the related work of the EU Headline Goal should be mutually reinforcing while respecting the autonomy of both organizations”, it remains unclear whether the two forces would neatly fit together in the event of a response by both. In fact, the use of national caveats within each force could prevent effective collaboration between the two, as military commanders would be prevented from moving operational control of armed forces from one force to the other as necessary. It is also unclear which organization would have priority in using the forces designated for both the NRF and the Battle groups to address an emerging security challenge. At present, rotational schedules have been coordinated between the two forces such that no member’s units will be serving in both forces at once; however, it is unclear whether the de-confliction is sustainable, or whether it will hold for airlift and other enabling capabilities.

VI. CONCLUSIONS/PROSPECTS

41. It is the view of this Sub-Committee that matching the high-end military capabilities of the Atlantic Alliance with the European Union’s increasingly comprehensive set of tools to address security challenges would allow the organizations to collectively best serve their member states’ interests. In the short term, it appears that prospects are rather bleak for resolution of the structural difficulties hampering formal dialogue between the two organizations in Brussels. While the relative success of working-level cooperation offers some hope that the political roadblocks will not completely shut off potentially beneficial collaboration, these political roadblocks must be addressed; the alternative serves neither the interests of the EU or NATO, nor those of their member states.

42. Some have suggested that a breakthrough in Brussels between the organizations is not necessarily needed in order to effectively cooperate on the ground. Further, it may be that the institutional difficulties at the political level in Brussels are simply too engrained to be overcome, and that gradually improving operational cooperation at the working level will be all that is possible until a more propitious political climate emerges, allowing for the resolution of the institutional

roadblocks to coordination. This could come about through leadership changes in various capitals, such as the departure of French President Chirac, whose profound disagreements with U.S. President Bush (whose term will also be up in 2008) stifled deeper NATO-EU cooperation. (It remains to be seen whether the election of any of the leading candidates in the French Presidential election – all seen as confirmed Atlanticists – would fundamentally alter this dynamic.) It certainly appears that without higher-level political coordination, commanders on the ground are likely to suffer from unclear or overlapping mandates. A lack of coordination could also allow the two organizations to veer into a dynamic of unhelpful competition or, equally dangerously, mutual ignorance and mistrust.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPROVING A STRAINED RELATIONSHIP

43. Several potentially useful recommendations on ameliorating the NATO-EU relationship have been put forward by think tanks, governmental experts and Parliamentarians. Some of these recommendations, briefly cited below, will be put to initial scrutiny in meetings with officials on the seam of NATO-EU relations during the Sub-Committee's upcoming visits.

44. The Atlantic Council of the United States has suggested a range of possible steps towards a more effective relationship between NATO and the EU. While their overall recommendations are principally in the political realm, some of the operational suggestions pertain to the areas of joint planning, force generation, and military command structure, among others. In particular, the Atlantic Council argues that NATO's links with the European Defense Agency and the European Commission should be strengthened, and "operational liaison offices" should be established for those involved in operations but not under military command. Another recommendation, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, suggests the possibility of NATO calling on the EU's capabilities in the civilian side of stability and reconstruction operations through a "Berlin Plus" in reverse." While this concept deserves further scrutiny, its political viability is uncertain at this time.

45. Other possible measures would be potentially beneficial and will be considered by this Sub-Committee. Structurally, it would appear of fundamental importance to work out a channel for discussions between NATO and all EU institutions playing a role in security provision, including the Commission, thus ensuring a dialogue with all the players likely to have a role in an operational context such as Kosovo. Additionally, ensuring that the two rapid response force initiatives (the NRF and the EU Battle groups) are synergistic, while potentially difficult, remains vital if scarce defence resources are to be spent efficiently. Joint training to ensure interoperability, for instance, should be a minimum requirement. Strategic airlift is a particular example of a relatively scarce and expensive operational asset which would seem to present to both institutions the perfect opportunity for cooperation. Indeed, several efforts underway to procure such capabilities testify to their operational value.

46. Ultimately, it will be necessary to employ "pragmatism" over "dogmatism" (to paraphrase NATO's Jaap de Hoop Scheffer from January 2007) at every organizational level of NATO and the EU, if the security challenges facing both organizations are to be met successfully. Only a cooperative and mutually enhancing working operational relationship will ensure the most effective use of scarce defense and security resources in the face of an increasingly broad and complicated range of challenges. Defense budgets and personnel are increasingly stretched, and will be even more so in 2007, a year in which major challenges in Afghanistan and Kosovo confront both organizations. In such a strategic climate, duplication, waste, and inefficiencies stemming from non-operational concerns are luxuries neither NATO, the EU, nor their member states can afford.