



**Third progress report
on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO
Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017**

8 June 2018

On 6 December 2016, EU and NATO Councils endorsed in parallel processes a common set of 42 proposals for the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed on 8 July 2016 by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, together with the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Furthermore, on 5 December 2017, the two Councils endorsed in parallel processes a common set of new proposals consisting of 32 further actions for the implementation of the Joint Declaration including new topics such as counter-terrorism, women, peace and security and military mobility.

Responding to the taskings by the Ministers of both Organizations, progress reports on implementation were submitted to the respective Councils in June and December 2017. Those two progress reports manifested considerable and concrete results yielded by the continued pragmatic and practical EU-NATO cooperation.

The present third progress report covers the period January-June 2018. The report elaborates on the main achievements of EU-NATO cooperation – also in view of the upcoming meeting of the European Council on 28-29 June and the NATO Summit on 11-12 July – and highlights the added value of EU-NATO cooperation in different areas aimed at strengthening the security of citizens. The next common progress report is foreseen in a year's time (June 2019).

The overwhelming majority of the actions have a long-term perspective requiring continued implementation, since they represent recurring processes which continually produce gradual results, rather than single one-off events. Systematic informal staff-to-staff interaction ensures steady progress. A process of continuous engagement has been established.

The two organizations continue to face common security challenges: this only reinforces the need for further strengthening cooperation. In the current strategic environment, EU-NATO engagement remains of utmost importance. Together with the implementation of the EU Global Strategy and the European Defence Action Plan, cooperation between EU and NATO constitutes an integral pillar of EU's work aimed at strengthening European security and defence, which contributes to Trans-Atlantic burden sharing. A stronger EU and a stronger NATO are mutually reinforcing.

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Countering hybrid threats

Countering hybrid threats remains of key importance with 20 out of the 74 current proposals for cooperation focused in this area.

The EU Hybrid Fusion Cell, the NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki (Centre of Excellence) are all in frequent contact and have developed strong relations at the working level. On situational awareness, staff-to-staff discussions between the respective geographical and thematic clusters of EU's Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity and NATO's Joint Intelligence and Security Division have been established and now regularly take place via monthly Video Teleconferences. Furthermore, regular strategic foresight discussions between NATO and EU staffs took place. To date, three Parallel and Coordinated Analyses have been finalized (two of these during the current reporting period) regarding the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood and a fourth one on hybrid threats is in the making. The EU Hybrid Fusion Cell, the NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch and the Centre of Excellence are reflecting on the possibility of establishing trilateral cooperation using open source material.

The Centre of Excellence continues to support EU and NATO staffs working on hybrid threats. Both staffs have participated in the Centre's activities, inter alia attending workshops, seminars and exercises aimed at enhancing the understanding of hybrid threats. Representatives of both organizations are present at the Centre's Steering Board meetings. Through its projects, predominantly events and exercises, the Centre of Excellence effectively contributes to strengthening EU-NATO cooperation in the area of hybrid threats. It is in this context that in March, EU and NATO staffs met for a high-level retreat, hosted by the Centre of Excellence. Beyond the assessment of the current state of affairs, the objective was to specify possible concrete actions in all key areas of interaction and formulate recommendations for further enhancing EU-NATO cooperation. Discussions focused on improving (1) early warning and situational awareness, (2) strategic communication and messaging, (3) crisis response, (4) resilience, and (5) cyber defence and energy security.

In May, in the frame of assessing the implications of hybrid threats on capability development, the Centre of Excellence facilitated a scenario-based workshop "Harbour Protection Under Hybrid Threat Conditions" organized by the EU and attended by staffs of both organisations. This workshop was the outcome of the Hybrid Threats Table Top exercises conducted in 2016.

Cooperation on women, peace and security is in its initial stage. An EU-NATO Workshop on methodology exchange and women, peace and security is planned for September 2018. As to gender indicators in early warning systems/analysis to improve situational awareness, as a first step, EU and NATO staffs agreed to analyse and assess the current practices in both organisations.

Staff interactions also took place in the area of counter-terrorism. NATO staff visited the Europol Headquarters in January 2018 for discussions of the terrorist threat, including aspects related to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear risks and Improvised Explosive Devices. NATO is now invited to participate in Europol meetings on explosive precursors.

In the area of strategic communications, exchanges at the technical level covered ongoing activities and discussed the scope for further cooperation in the East, the South and the Western Balkans. A dedicated discussion took place on the approach to 'crisis communication' including coordination of strategic communications messaging on security threats. There is frequent engagement between EU and NATO spokespersons, strategic communications counterparts and the EU Strategic Communications Task Forces and the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga.

In the framework of crisis response and bolstering resilience to hybrid threats, NATO shared with EU staff its guidance on Improving Resilience of National and Cross-Border Energy Networks and its guidance for Incidents Involving Mass Casualties. EU staff participated in the NATO Energy Security Roundtable in December 2017 and provided a briefing on energy security issues to the NATO Industrial Resources and Communications Services Group in March 2018. Staff contacts continue between NATO and EU resilience experts. A meeting to take place in June 2018 will discuss the methodology to map the respective activities on both NATO's Resilience Baselines and the EU's Prevention and Preparedness work streams.

The EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch are now able to communicate via the EU version of the NATO Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES). This information exchange capability adds to the already existing and fully functioning secure Video Teleconference link.

A staff-to-staff meeting in May 2018 raised awareness of the status of the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP) and the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP). The focus was on the ways that resilience and hybrid were addressed in the respective defence planning processes as well as on the upcoming capability development steps in view of June 2018 when the updated EU Capability Development Plan and NATO Defence Planning Process priorities will be presented to the Member States and Allies.

Operational cooperation including maritime issues

Cooperation and coordination at tactical and operational levels between EUNAVFOR Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian have been enhanced through regular information sharing and logistical support, including refuelling.

EU and NATO staffs are engaged in exploring modalities to enhance coordination, complementarity and cooperation in the maritime domain. Staffs regularly attend 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. They agreed to create an informal working group at staff level to discuss possible recommendations on improving SHADE MED with a view to presenting the outcome at an upcoming staff meeting.

The EU has initiated the revision of its Maritime Security Operations (MSO) Concept during 2018 as part of its Conceptual Development Implementation Plan 2018-2019. It will be discussed in EU and NATO at staff working level.

Building on bilateral discussions with Belgrade and Pristina regarding political, operational and technical activities necessary for the normalisation of the lower airspace over Kosovo¹, talks with the participation of relevant aviation experts were held in Montenegro, most lately in March 2018. The next talks are planned for June 2018 with representatives of Eurocontrol. Other relevant international organizations, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) could also be invited to future meetings, as appropriate. The ultimate objective remains the establishment of direct routes from Pristina to cities of the region, including the route Pristina – Belgrade, for which a Letter of Agreement should be finalised by the end of 2018.

Cyber security and defence

Active interaction in the field of cyber goes forward with exchanges between staffs on concepts and doctrines, information on 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.

NATO hosted annual high-level consultations between EU and NATO staffs in December 2017 featuring, inter alia, recent policy developments, such as NATO's Cyber Defence Pledge and the EU's September 2017 Joint Communication on Resilience, Deterrence and Defence: Building strong cybersecurity in Europe. The EU also presented some of the key capability development projects in the area of cyber defence.

Planning is under way for several staff level workshops in 2018. The aim is to ensure a broader involvement of relevant stakeholders, facilitate increased exchange, and, where possible, the coordinated development of concepts on cyber defence.

Exchanges on Training, Education and Exercises as well as Research and Technology were further deepened. Overall, the aim in the area of education and training has been to facilitate the implementation of NATO and EU best practices and enhance the interoperability between the two organisations. NATO's complete education and individual training syllabus featuring NATO's cyber defence courses was shared with the EU staff. The two staffs coordinate efforts in this particular area aiming to provide coherent training to respective personnel, considering also the recently established EU Cyber Education, Training and Exercises platform.

EU cyber defence staff took part, for the first time, as full participant in NATO's Cyber Coalition exercise held at the end of 2017. In April 2018, EU staff participated in the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence Locked Shields exercise.

With a view to exchanging best practices on cyber aspects and implications of crisis management, EU and NATO staffs are planning to organise an expert workshop in June 2018 to discuss respective cyber-related tools and processes with a view to identifying good practice.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Cyber was also the topic of EU-NATO's staff-to-staff third dialogue on industrial aspects in April. More details are presented in the "Defence Industry and Research" section of this report.

Defence capabilities

Efforts continue to ensure the coherence of output between 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 (PARP). Invitations by individual Allies to EU staff during the first half of 2018 to the bilateral consultations in the framework of NATO's Defence Planning Process and Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process added substantial value and information for the Capability Development Plan revision and further enhanced preparations and implementation of consultations in the frame of the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence. In parallel, several EU Member States who are also NATO Allies or Partners invited NATO staff to their Coordinated Annual Review on Defence bilaterals. NATO and EU staffs are working together to ensure coherence of output and timelines. Close staff-to-staff contacts at all levels contribute also to avoid increasing the reporting burden on nations that belong to both organisations and ensures mutual awareness of work under way in each organisation.

Quarterly expert meetings of EU and NATO staffs ensure complementarity and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication downstream by coordinating multinational projects and programmes. This process is further supported through EU staff participation in the annual Multinational Solutions Synchronisation Workshops. Concrete examples supporting several NATO Defence Planning Priorities have been identified in areas such as Air-to-air refuelling, where the EU initiatives are fully reflected in the relevant NATO roadmap, Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) Aircraft, Countering Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED), Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), and Medical Support.

Following the parallel approval of the Military Aviation Strategy in the context of the Single European Sky (SES), work is now being carried forward as foreseen in the respective implementation plans, developed in coordination with Eurocontrol. As regards Single European Sky Air Traffic Management (ATM) Research (SESAR), which is the technical pillar to the Single European Sky, coordination continues in the context of the Air Traffic Management Master Plan update. EU staff continue to participate in the NATO-Eurocontrol Air Traffic Management Security Coordinating Group focusing on aerospace security issues, including cyber. NATO staff will participate in the EU Aviation Cyber Security Seminar in June 2018. In addition, NATO and EU staff participate in the European Aviation Safety Agency's (EASA) 'European Strategic Coordination Platform'. Staff-to-staff talks continue on areas such as Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Air Traffic Insertion. On airworthiness, work continues to develop guidelines, best practices and harmonized approaches for the recognition of Military Airworthiness Authorities.

Work also continues on the identification of projects where standardisation-related activities could be harmonised with the aim to avoid duplication in the development of standards. Close engagement of respective staffs on the Standard Architecture for Soldier Systems is a concrete example in that respect. EU staff participated in the NATO Standardization Staff Group in May 2018. This provided another forum to harmonize various efforts to advance

interoperability through standardization and to avoid duplication in the development of standards.

NATO and EU staffs are working together to ensure coherence and synergies between NATO and EU efforts to improve military mobility. NATO staff are contributing, as appropriate and as foreseen in the EU's Action Plan on Military Mobility presented in March 2018, to the EU's ongoing work to develop military requirements reflecting the needs of the EU and its Member States, including with regard to infrastructure. In this context, in May 2018, the Secretary General of NATO transmitted NATO's generic parameters for transport infrastructure to the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the EU High Representative. Furthermore, EU staff have been made aware of the NATO standards relevant to military mobility. The EU Action Plan builds upon the Roadmap on military mobility developed by the European Defence Agency's Ad hoc Working Group to which NATO staff was associated. To ensure coherence, EU staff have also been associated to some relevant NATO activities.

In May 2018, NATO and EU staffs held an informal workshop on a set of counter-terrorism relevant defence capabilities: Technical Exploitation with a focus on countering Improvised Explosive Devices, Harbour Protection and countering Small Unmanned Aerial Systems. Subject matter experts presented the main activities of each organisation in these focus areas, identified complementarities and opportunities to ensure that these capabilities can be addressed in a coherent manner. As follow-up, NATO and EU staffs are to hold a second informal workshop at the end of 2018 to take stock of work underway and determine if more substantial coherence could be achieved in order to support military capability development that contributes to the overall counter-terrorism effort.

Defence industry and research

EU and NATO staffs continued the dialogue on industry matters. The exchange focused on regular update on related NATO and EU activities and specifically on practices regarding industry including Small and Medium Enterprises' access to defence supply chain and innovation as well as industry engagement in particular areas. More specifically, during the third staff dialogue on industrial aspects in April, both organisations explored practices regarding industry engagement in the area of cyber. EU staff presented the Cybersecurity Package, adopted in September 2017, outlined cyber defence in the context of the European Defence Fund and informed on various cyber multinational projects and events. Reciprocally, NATO staff briefed on the NATO cyber action plan and related activities, such as the Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP) and the NATO 2018 Cyber Symposium. The exchange will continue by identifying and addressing other specific Industry-related topics of common interest.

Exercises

The next parallel and coordinated exercises (with the EU's exercise in the lead) are to take place in November 2018. In the ongoing preparatory phase staff level discussions are underway: NATO staff have been invited to participate in all planning meetings and workshops by the EU. NATO will draw elements from the EU exercise (HEX-ML 18) to develop its parallel exercise (PACE 18).

Similarly to last year, the 2018 parallel and coordinated exercises will be based on a hybrid scenario, including cyber elements, and will have the same overarching objective - synchronising the two organizations' crisis response activities in particular in a hybrid context. The crisis scenario will be designed to cover the following strands: situational awareness, strategic communications, cybersecurity, crisis prevention and response. It also has a terrorism aspect and therefore will contribute to counter-terrorism cooperation.

Exchange of lessons learnt by both organizations will take place upon completion of the Post Exercise Reports. Work between staffs is ongoing on secure communications and clarifying processes for exchanging classified information. Discussions are also underway to develop a plan for implementing parallel and coordinated exercises in 2019-2020.

In terms of invitations to participate in observing its military exercises, NATO has invited EU staff to the following exercises in 2018: Trident Juncture 18; Trident Jaguar 18; Cyber Coalition 18 and Coalition Warrior Interoperability Exercise 18. NATO staff participated with observers in MILEX 18 in April 2018.

EU and NATO staffs exchange information on the planned timing of their activities in order to avoid overlapping which would have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the respective planned training and exercises, including in the area of helicopter exercises. Where possible, cross-invitations to respective exercises are extended. For example, NATO staff was invited to observe the Hot Blade 2018 exercise in May 2018 in Portugal.

The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats hosted a hybrid exercise in April 2018 attended by NATO and EU staff as well as Allies and Member States. A NATO-EU workshop is planned for October 2018 to test the key modalities already defined in the EU's Playbook and NATO's Operational Protocol. NATO is exploring with the Centre of Excellence the potential for them to support NATO-EU training interaction.

With regard to disaster response exercises, the European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) will participate with a liaison officer in the field exercise organized by NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) in October 2018. In preparation, the ERCC participated in the main planning conference in February 2018. Enhanced staff-to-staff interaction in this area has resulted in improved practical cooperation. In March 2018, as a result of lack of human immunoglobulin emergency, Romania requested international assistance both through the EU and NATO. In response, the two Centres participated in a videoconference with two donor countries: Austria and the United States. This was the first emergency in which the two Centres cooperated via videoconference.

Defence and security capacity building

Information exchange, including informal staff-to-staff political consultations on the three pilot countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova and Tunisia) has intensified. It also takes place regarding Ukraine, Georgia and Jordan. Recent initiatives include cooperation on strategic communication efforts in the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and workshops organised at the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats bringing together NATO and EU experts to look at strategic communications challenges in the Western Balkans and discuss options for addressing them. Contacts in the areas of education and training, including in the field of e-learning, as well as democratic control of armed forces, are ongoing in the case of Tunisia. In the Republic of Moldova, EU

and NATO staffs coordinate their briefing programmes and exchange speakers for visits from Moldova to the EU and NATO.

In terms of way forward, a number of possible concrete activities were identified, for example: 1) participation of EU experts in upcoming NATO Building Integrity seminars; 2) work on the NATO Reference Curriculum on Counter Terrorism; 3) involvement in the other organisation's public diplomacy events; 4) cooperation between the EU and NATO to support the Tunisian Centre of Excellence on Countering Improvised Explosive Devices. Cyber security and defence and ammunition storage have been identified as areas presenting more opportunities to explore.

In Ukraine, under the auspices of the EU Delegation, NATO is chairing a donor coordination group for the defence and security sector and is closely cooperating with the EU Advisory Mission to Ukraine on issues such as strategic communications, communications capacity building, training, and reform of the Security Service of Ukraine. NATO staff are also working with the EU Support Group for Ukraine on identifying possible projects to support Ukraine.

NATO and EU staffs are also coordinating their activities in and on Iraq with as regards their respective Missions in the country.

Cooperation established in 2017 between the NATO-accredited Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Centre of Excellence in Vyskov, the Czech Republic, and the EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centres of Excellence Initiative, is being developed. Further cooperation on training is envisaged along with deepened cooperation between the Centre and the Regional Secretariats of the Initiative. The Centre is also participating in the EU Horizon 2020 Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear security research programmes.

The second progress report of December 2017 highlighted a financing decision by the EU to allocate €2million for 2017 as a contribution to the NATO Building Integrity Programme, pending completion of a six-pillar assessment. That assessment is due to be completed by end June 2018.

Strengthening political dialogue between EU and NATO

The established practice of mutual invitations to relevant ministerial meetings continued. The EU High Representative participated at the working dinner of NATO Ministers of Defence in February and the meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in April. The Deputy Secretary General of NATO attended the EU Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) in March and the informal meeting of EU Ministers of Defence in Sofia in May.

Work is proceeding with a view to organizing a package of six North Atlantic Council (NAC) Political and Security Committee (PSC) meetings in the coming 18 months, with the aim of having one informal and one formal meeting before the summer break in July 2018.

In the first semester of 2018, reciprocal cross-briefings on issues of mutual interest have become more frequent and covered the following topics: EU cyber policy issues, the outcome of the strategic review of Operation Atalanta, the EU Training Mission (EUTM) and the EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) in Somalia, ongoing EU military missions and

operations, the Western Balkans, Iraq, energy security, the Alliance's role in the maritime domain and NATO operational activities.

With a view to enhance transparency between EU and NATO on capability development multinational projects and programmes, EU and NATO representatives were invited to the NATO Conference of National Armaments Directors and the European Defence Agency Steering Board respectively.

EU staff observed a number of NATO meetings with partners, including on NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building packages with current and future recipients (Republic of Moldova, Iraq, Georgia, Jordan, Tunisia and Libya), NATO's Planning and Review Process, Building Integrity and Interoperability issues.

Staff-to-staff dialogue continued on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) issues, specifically in the context of the implementation of the EU Action Plan and the March 2018 European Council Conclusions. EU staff addressed the panel on complementary roles of international organizations in addressing Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear threats in the framework of the workshop on cooperation between NATO and partners held in May 2018 in Chania, Greece.

EU and NATO staffs established a dialogue on counter-terrorism related issues in May. They focused on cooperation regarding terrorist threats, collaboration in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, capacity building of partner countries, and development of scenario based discussions.

EU and NATO military staffs continued their dialogue on the implementation of the relevant actions, particularly within the framework of the biannual Director General EU Military Staff-Director General International Military Staff Conferences.

Since the endorsement of the first common set of proposals for the implementation of the Joint Declaration in December 2016, a systematic, informal staff-to-staff process consisting of three inter-locking layers has been set up to ensure steady progress:

1) Experts from EU and NATO staffs are responsible for the actual implementation of the proposals in direct and close contact with each other; 2) An intermediate layer ensures coordination and consistency of implementation; 3) A principals' level oversees implementation and gives strategic guidance. In addition to frequent working contacts between experts, regular and ad hoc meetings are organised at the intermediate and principals' level.

Cooperation is carried forward in transparency with EU Member States and NATO Allies through regular reporting to the respective Councils and Committees on the overall implementation by EU and NATO staffs.

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With a view to further developing and strengthening cooperation, the continued full engagement and support by NATO Allies and EU Member States remains key.