

# Breaking Down the Walls:

## Improving EU-NATO Relations

Henna Hopia

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## Executive Summary

In a world where threats are becoming more diverse and require collective efforts, where the US is disengaging from Europe and its neighbourhood, where Europe is struggling with limited resources and decreasing defence funding, and where the EU lacks the capabilities that NATO has, Europe needs to use the strengths of both the EU and NATO. For this to happen, and as the Member States of the organisations are essentially the same, it is vital that better cooperation between the EU and NATO be achieved. Attempts to strengthen cooperation have been made, but these have not been enough. The attempts always hit the same walls: both between the EU and NATO, and within these organisations. There are only vague statements of ‘a strategic partnership’, but no official relationship that would be truly useful in building capabilities and operability. This is mostly due to the political problem between Cyprus and Turkey that precludes any official EU–NATO cooperation. Unfortunately, as the Cypriot Presidency of the EU in the autumn of 2012 has shown, this problem is far from being eliminated. Both the EU and NATO need to adjust their attitudes to promote better cooperation and to take their strategic partnership to a whole new level as a precursor to creating a joint political and strategic agreement on the division of labour regarding what is to be done in conflict zones and the organisation of security and defence policy in Europe as well as to creating permanent and official decision-making and consultation structures on all levels. To achieve this, reforms are needed within the EU: the EU Member States need to become more united; deepen their foreign, security and defence integration; and centralise their decision-making procedures to overcome short-sighted unilateral policies. Or the EU simply needs to allow some countries to move faster in the direction of greater defence integration. The year 2013 offers several opportunities for

improving EU-NATO relations, such as the European External Action Service review and the European summit on defence. Cyprus now also has a new president who has shown some willingness to take steps forward. Possible closer relations with NATO might offer the country the new dynamism necessary to solve the political problem. All EU Member States and the organisations themselves must now take responsibility in an effort to end the futile competition between the EU and NATO that is undermining European security.

**Keywords**

European Union – NATO – Defence – Security – Cooperation – Capabilities – Operations – Transatlantic relations – Cyprus-Turkey issue

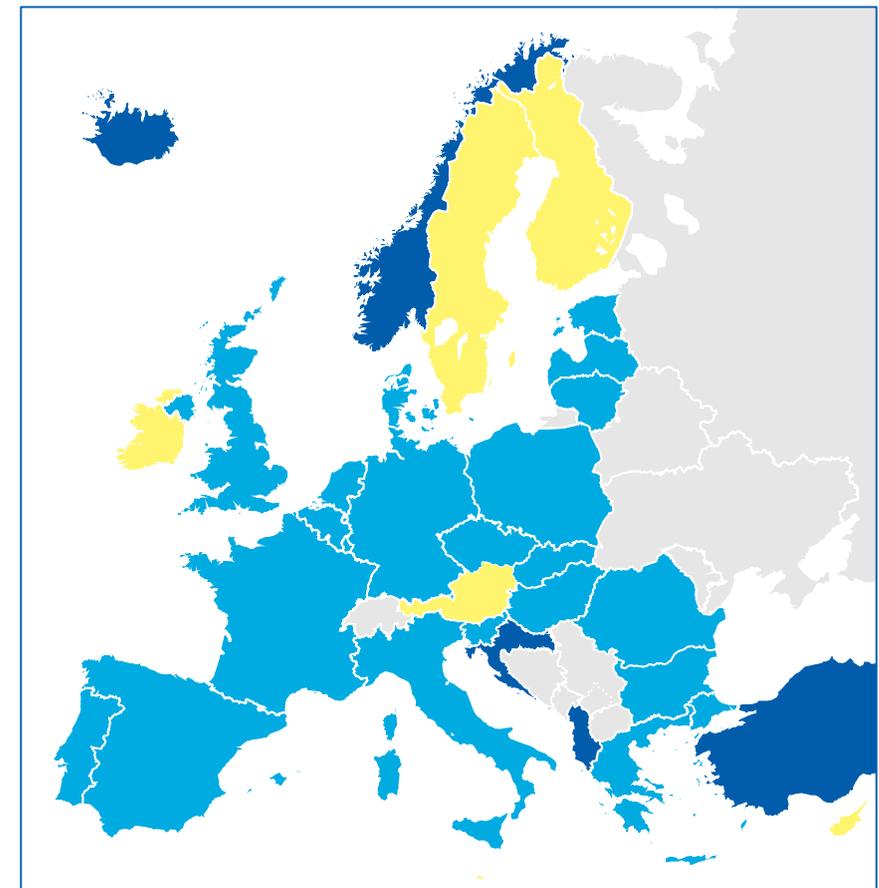
**Introduction**

US President Ronald Reagan challenged the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to ‘Tear down the Wall’ in Berlin in 1987. Eventually the Wall came down, the borders between Western and Eastern Europe disappeared, Europe united, and, in the course of the following 15 years, most ex-Soviet European states joined both the EU and NATO.

These European countries are now allies: economically, politically, and in security and defence. The vast majority of the members of the EU and NATO are the same countries: as Croatia joins the EU in mid-2013, 22 out of the 28 NATO members will also be members of the EU, and even the non-Allied EU members (Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Malta and Cyprus) are closely

linked to the European security framework, if not already interoperable with NATO (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 European EU and NATO members in spring 2013**



- Member of the EU and NATO
- Member of the EU only
- Member of NATO only

Source: Author's own compilation.

Europe has seen unprecedented waves of integration in recent decades, yet some walls seem to remain and new ones have even appeared within Europe. We have witnessed declarations of ‘more Europe’ in the EU and acknowledgments that only by acting together can future threats and challenges be handled, and that only when united can Europe function as a global actor. Yet, despite this, EU countries seem determined to maintain national control over foreign relations and security matters, which hinders the fulfilment of common objectives.<sup>1</sup> NATO is formed of many of the same Member States, and is thus impaired by the same problems: a lack of funding, a lack of joint responsibility, a lack of joint vision, a lack of common will, and multiplying threats. National disputes impede work both within and between these organisations.

NATO is the main framework for security and defence for most European countries. After the end of the Cold War, it expanded its range of tasks from collective defence to also cover crisis management and the war on terrorism, especially after the 9/11 attacks. More non-military elements have since been introduced, such as cyber defence, disaster relief and police training.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the defence dimension of the EU has also been developed. The idea was already there in the 1950s with the aim of establishing the European Defence Community, but it was not until the 1990s that it finally materialised with the Maastricht Treaty, which stated that common security and defence policy might in time lead to common defence.<sup>3</sup> However, despite rapid peaks in progress at times, starting with the Saint-Malo Declaration in 1998 and the following summits in Köln and Helsinki, we have still not achieved this goal. The EU

<sup>1</sup> Article 296 of the Treaty Establishing the European Community (consolidated version) is often referred to in this context.

<sup>2</sup> NATO, *Active Engagement, Modern Defence. Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (adopted 19–20 November 2010), [accessed](#) on 5 November 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Treaty on European Union, Art. J(4)(1).

has improved its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and has conducted more missions than NATO in recent years, most of which have been within its own field of civilian expertise. The EU has demonstrated a willingness to beef up its muscles, to engage in military operations and to do more to advance defence capabilities in Europe. The strengthening of these capabilities within both the EU and NATO means that the organisations must become closer to one another to create synergies and avoid duplication.

With the initiation of the Iraq War in 2003, transatlantic relations deteriorated and some European capitals considered cooperation with the US to be unpalatable. NATO was thought in some circles not to have a meaningful future, and Europe accelerated its pursuit of defence cooperation in the framework of the CSDP. There was growing competition between the organisations—for instance, they both launched their own rapid response forces, the EU Battlegroups (EUBGs) and the NATO Response Force (NRF). CSDP became, in the eyes of some, a counterweight to US hegemony, which, in turn, caused some Americans to question whether a stronger CSDP was in Washington’s interests. Since 2008, this leitmotif has disappeared from official US policy, but to a certain extent it is still felt among some US conservatives, and there still seem to be tensions between ‘the Europeanists’ and ‘the transatlanticists’ in Europe. However, a major hindrance for EU–NATO relations emerged in 2004 when Cyprus joined the EU, bringing with it the unsolved conflict of the divided island. This change was quickly noticeable in EU–NATO relations: Turkey and Cyprus, the latter supported by Greece, started to blackmail the EU and NATO from their respective sides. This ‘ice age’, blocking any official political EU–NATO cooperation, has continued for a decade, and when someone asks what can be done about it, the usual response is ‘nothing, this is just the way it is’.

Nowadays there is less competition between the organisations, partly due to somewhat improved transatlantic relations. It is acknowledged that the CSDP and NATO should coexist and find synergies to cooperate in a complementary way, and that the US has even encouraged the EU to build on its role as a univocal global security provider. With the Lisbon Treaty, the EU upgraded its foreign, security and defence policies by creating the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the position of the High Representative of the Union for foreign affairs and security policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HR), who also leads the European Defence Agency (EDA). These tools are necessary in order for Europe to take greater responsibility for the security of its insecure neighbourhood, as the US has made it clear that it will focus more on the Asia-Pacific region in the future. As the Americans are less interested in NATO, and as it does not seem to have any big projects ahead of it, its future role is considered to be open to debate. There is room for the EU to manoeuvre; however, to the disappointment of many, the EU has not been fully able to use the tools provided by the Lisbon Treaty to increase its prominence in the world. In a sense the EU's reputation, even as a soft power, is not as strong as it was previously due to its unprecedented economic crisis. The crisis has led to severe defence cuts and hence has endangered European defence capabilities and put the unity of the Union to an extreme test, and Member States are even less willing to pursue common efforts than previously.

How can Europe be a credible actor in the world, preventing and solving conflicts, when it cannot get itself together internally, within and between the Euroatlantic organisations? This frustration was clearly demonstrated in the statements of the leaders of both the EU and NATO in 2010. At the NATO Lisbon Summit, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy called for the EU and NATO to 'break down the remaining walls', saying that 'the ability of our two organisations to shape our

future security environment would be enormous if they worked together'.<sup>4</sup> NATO Secretary General (SG) Anders Fogh Rasmussen has used even tougher words to describe the limitations of the current common agenda, calling the situation 'frustrating', 'nearly embarrassing' and even 'absurd'.<sup>5</sup> If it is understood that Europe needs to act in a more coordinated way, using both its EU and NATO tools, to become a credible global actor. Where, then, is the glitch? Are the two headquarters worlds apart even though they are situated in the same city? Are there such grave differences in the opinions of the capitals that they cannot be overcome? Is the dispute with Cyprus and Turkey something we just have to accept and ignore? Are the problems so insurmountable that the proper sharing of resources, information and tasks is impossible? And how important is the improvement and deepening of this cooperation anyway?

This research paper will try to answer these questions, by first providing an outline of the challenges facing Europe, which could be solved or at least improved by more EU-NATO cooperation, second, by explaining the obstacles or hindrances standing in the way of this cooperation, and third, by drawing conclusions and offering some policy recommendations. For the paper, the author conducted a series of confidential, off-the-record interviews with EU, NATO and national officials, think tank members, journalists, politicians and advisors, and also used a web-based survey to gather the views of several Brussels-based EU and NATO ambassadors. The author would like to thank all the individuals and organisations that contributed to the work of this publication.

<sup>4</sup>European Council, The President, 'Remarks by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, at the NATO Summit in Lisbon', PCE 273/10 (19 November 2010), [accessed](#) on 22 October 2012.

<sup>5</sup>SG Rasmussen made these remarks at the annual conference of the Security and Defence Agenda in Brussels; see his speech 'Security Policy in an Era of Budgetary Constraint', 21 June 2010, accessed on 22 October 2012. See further reference to these remarks in various media articles such as T. Vogel and C. Brand, 'NATO Chief Urges EU to Give Turkey Security Role', *EuropeanVoice.com*, 30 September 2010, [accessed](#) on 22 October 2012, and H. Hopia, 'Nato uudistaa itseään - halusta ja pakosta', *Nykypäivä*, 24 June 2010.

## Europe's challenges: the need for cooperation

### Threats facing Europe

Today's security threats are complex, cross border and multi-dimensional, and it is commonly recognised that they cannot be tackled on a national basis but require the implementation of common measures. The EU has defined the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and organised crime, matters of cyber and energy security, and also non-military threats such as climate change, as the main threats to its security.<sup>6</sup> NATO, very similarly, states the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and extremist groups, cyber attacks, disruption to energy security and supply, and also 'the conventional threat' as the challenges it faces in its security environment.<sup>7</sup>

However, when looking at today's declining European defence budgets, it seems that these threats are not taken seriously. In an interview with the author, one think tank member expressed the opinion that actually 'Europeans should feel tremendously threatened', as some risk assessments suggest that 80% of the world's hot spots surround Europe in a semicircle, from Russia via Eastern Europe, to Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. But Europeans do not feel very threatened and are, according to the interviewee, 'strategically lazy'. Some Member States have different interests and the necessity of acting together is not clear to all. One Member of the European Parliament (MEP) interviewed for this paper also thinks that the current threats seem 'marginal'

<sup>6</sup> Council of the European Union, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World* (11 December 2008), [accessed](#) on 4 January 2013.

<sup>7</sup> NATO, *Active Engagement, Modern Defence*.

to people and that defence budgets are not a very popular topic amongst citizens, and that this is reflected in politics: 'the Member States are very short-sighted and just think of the next elections, and not in the long-term.'

In this context, the more that can be done together to save costs and at the same time to increase security, the better. EU–NATO cooperation could work when confronting a common 'enemy': for example, in cases of piracy, cyber threat or terrorism there could be more natural inter-organisational cooperation instead of both organisations working separately. For instance, with cyber threats NATO could provide the military aspect and pinpoint the hackers, with the EU providing a more diverse approach and harmonised legislation to back up the action.

When issues get more political, such as with relations with Russia, the situation becomes more complicated. Russia divides opinions, not so much between but within the EU and especially within NATO, as some newer Member States view Russia more sceptically than others. It would be beneficial to try to establish a more coherent and coordinated EU–NATO approach towards Russia, especially as it has a growing appetite for increasing its influence and power in its neighbourhood, and seems, in a sense, to have gone back in time, now once again viewing NATO as hostile.<sup>8</sup> Russian President Vladimir Putin himself believes that Europe, and the West as a whole, is in decline.<sup>9</sup> Due to the lack of a strong common position, the EU's influence is not increasing even in its neighbourhood in spite of the institutional tools in place. This is a concern, for instance with some former Soviet states, such as Ukraine and Belarus, where Russia is keen on upholding its position.

<sup>8</sup> Russia defines NATO, its actions and enlargement as the first external threat to its security, see Carnegie Endowment, *Text of Newly-Approved Russian Military Doctrine* (5 February 2010), 8 a), [accessed](#) on 8 March 2013. The language was less harsh in the previous doctrine from 2000, in which NATO was not even mentioned; see Arms Control Association, 'Russia's Military Doctrine', May 2000, [accessed](#) on 8 March 2013.

<sup>9</sup> D. Trenin, 'The End of the EU–Russia Relationship As You Know It', Carnegie Endowment (25 December 2012), [accessed](#) on 3 January 2013.

Indeed, Europe is often viewed as a continent of the past and not of the future, and even the West as a whole is seen as losing its relevance. According to a study by the US National Intelligence Council, power in the world will shift dramatically by 2030, ‘largely reversing the historic rise of the West since 1750 and restoring Asia’s weight in the global economy and world politics’. By then Asia will have surpassed North America and Europe combined in terms of global power, based upon GDP, population size, military spending, and technological investment. China will probably have the largest economy, surpassing that of the United States a few years before 2030.<sup>10</sup> The European, Japanese and Russian economies are expected to continue their slow relative declines. No country will hold the hegemony of power in 2030, but instead the world will be increasingly in the hands of ‘multifaceted and amorphous networks composed of state and nonstate actors’, over whom policymakers’ powers will be limited.<sup>11</sup> This alone is a reason for the West to work more closely together, with partners that share the same values.

### Defence cuts accelerating Europe’s irrelevance

General Håkan Syrén, former chair of the European Union Military Committee (EUMC), said in autumn 2012 that a marginalised Europe is already fact.<sup>12</sup> This is due to its diminishing military capacity, which has been caused by budgetary cuts resulting from the financial and economic crisis. Since 2008, two-thirds of European countries have cut their military spending, with cuts of more than 10% in 18 European countries and more than 20% in eight. Latvia saw cuts of 51%; Greece, 26%; Spain, 18%; Italy, 16%; Ireland, 11%; and Belgium, 12%. The biggest

<sup>10</sup> US National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2020: Alternative Worlds* (December 2012), 16, [accessed](#) on 4 January 2013.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>12</sup> H. Syrén, ‘Innovative European Defence Cooperation: Pooling and Consolidating Demand’, 19 September 2012, [accessed](#) on 8 October 2012.

three European spenders—the UK, France and Germany—have made relatively small cuts so far, but are planning to make a lot more. Only some of the countries that have suffered less in the economic crisis, such as Poland, Turkey and Norway, have actually increased their military spending.<sup>13</sup> This general downward trend is unlikely to change soon as the crisis is ongoing and, more importantly, because even before the economic crisis defence was not a priority in Europe, with most countries not spending NATO’s recommended 2% of the budget on defence.<sup>14</sup>

In 2012 the only NATO members to spend more than 2% in addition to the US were the UK and Greece. This reflects the general imbalance within NATO, where Europe’s share in defence spending is at an all-time low. The SG highlighted this transatlantic gap at the 2013 Munich Security Conference: since 2001 the US share of NATO defence spending has increased from 63% to 72% (see Figure 2 for 2007–12).<sup>15</sup> Europe has lost interest in security, despite the 9/11, Afghanistan, and the setting up of a framework for more active foreign and security policy under the Lisbon Treaty, and has been counting on the Americans to provide military capabilities, troops and equipment. According to the SG, Europe needs to do more ‘because a strong European contribution to NATO’s capabilities will sustain a strong US commitment to NATO’.<sup>16</sup> Former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates made it clear in 2011 that, unless Europe starts seeing defence as important again, future US leaders may not consider investments in NATO to be worthwhile.<sup>17</sup> ‘Everybody knows that sooner or later NATO will be finished because the US will pull out

<sup>13</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), ‘Recent Trends in Military Expenditure’, [accessed](#) on 7 January 2013.

<sup>14</sup> J. Dempsey, ‘Is NATO Turning the Corner?’, *Carnegie Europe*, 3 February 2013, [accessed](#) on 4 February 2013.

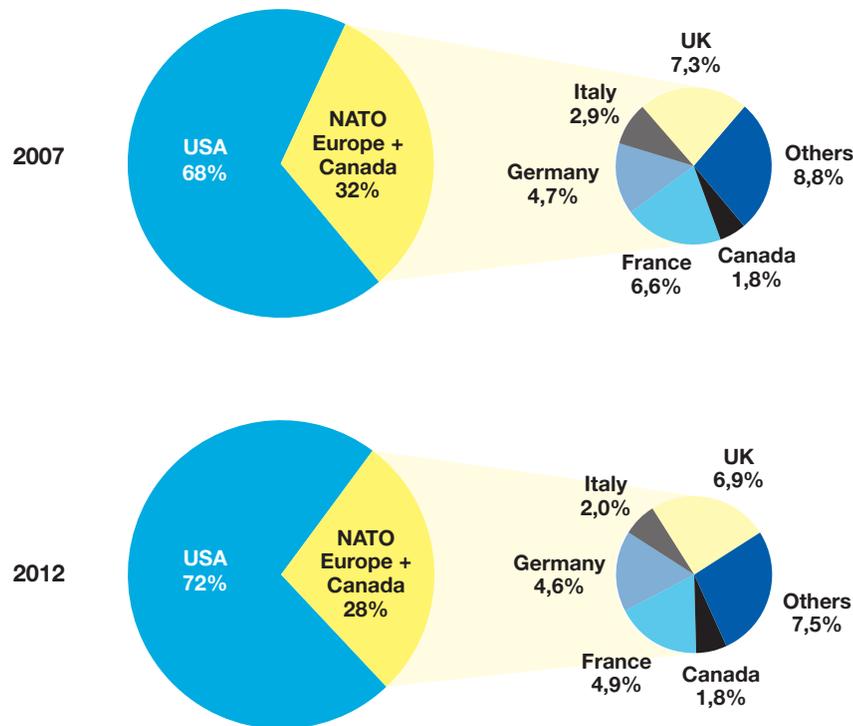
<sup>15</sup> NATO, ‘NATO after ISAF: Staying Successful Together’, Remarks by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Munich Security Conference, 2 February 2013, [accessed](#) 4 March 2013.

<sup>16</sup> NATO, ‘NATO after ISAF: Staying Successful Together’.

<sup>17</sup> R. Gates, US Department of Defense, ‘Future of NATO’, Speech at the Security and Defense Agenda (10 June 2011), [accessed](#) on 29 November 2012.

and create some kind of new structure', a Polish diplomat said in an interview for the EUobserver.<sup>18</sup> Although the US still has strategic interests in Europe, it is a reality that it is shifting its focus, 'pivoting' or 'rebalancing', towards the Asia-Pacific region. For instance, the US Navy's resources are currently divided equally between the Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East, but, in future, 60% will be located in Asia.<sup>19</sup>

Figure 2 Percentage of Alliance defence expenditures, 2007 and 2012



Source: NATO, 'Secretary General's Annual Report 2012', 31 January 2013, accessed on 4 March 2013.

<sup>18</sup> 'Military Spending: EU Dwarf Shrinks as US Gets Bigger'.

<sup>19</sup> G. Rachman, 'Disarmed Europe Will Face the World Alone', *Financial Times*, 18 February 2013, accessed on 10 March 2013.

But what is Europe doing? Due to defence cuts, EU states' military capabilities are 'on a steady downward slope', Syrén says.<sup>20</sup> Countries are sustaining 'overcapacities' but at the same time failing to invest in critical shortfalls. Hence many Member States will be unable to sustain essential parts of their national militaries, such as air forces. Sweden's Army Chief, Sverker Göranson, has actually gone so far as to say that Sweden would only last for one week if it were to be attacked.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the defence expenditure of the whole of Europe is not that bad. In 2011, the EU27 paid out €216 billion out of the €1334 billion spent globally, which equalled 16% of global spending and is actually relatively considerable when compared to the major players in the world: the US (€480 billion, 36%), China (€110 billion, 8.2%) and Russia (€55 billion, 4.1%),<sup>22</sup> but what makes it problematic is that this spending was not pooled together but scattered in 27 directions. Even the cutbacks in national defence were not coordinated, which undermines the security of the whole of Europe. At the same time, as in the past 10 years, while European defence spending has declined by about 20%, Chinese expenditure has risen by almost 200% (and these are only the official numbers) and is expected to almost double again by 2015.<sup>23</sup> This has increased defence spending in Asia in general.<sup>24</sup> For the first time in centuries, in 2012 Asian countries spent more on their militaries than European ones.<sup>25</sup> Russia has also significantly increased its military spending over the last few

<sup>20</sup> H. Syrén, 'Innovative European Defence Cooperation: Pooling and Consolidating Demand', 1.

<sup>21</sup> 'Försvar med tidsgräns', *SvD Nyheter*, 30 December 2012, accessed on 7 January 2013.

<sup>22</sup> SIPRI, 'Recent Trends in Military Expenditure'; and 'Military Spending: EU Dwarf Shrinks as US Gets Bigger', *EUobserver.com*, 17 April 2012, accessed on 7 January 2013. (Currency conversions made on rates as of 7 January 2013.)

<sup>23</sup> G. Rachman, 'Disarmed Europe Will Face the World Alone', *Financial Times*, 18 February 2013, accessed on 10 March 2013.

<sup>24</sup> 'China Boosts Defence Spending by 10.7%', *Financial Times*, updated 5 March 2013, accessed on 5 March 2013; and 'Chinese Defence Budget Set to Double by 2015', *Financial Times*, 13 February 2012, accessed on 5 March 2013.

<sup>25</sup> G. Rachman, 'Disarmed Europe Will Face the World Alone'.

years and intends to increase it even further. In 2011 it passed the leading European defence spenders, the UK and France, for the first time since the early 1990s.<sup>26</sup>

The US is no longer interested in carrying out large operations, such as that in Afghanistan, and is even reluctant to take on smaller operations, such as that in Libya, or to be that active in the framework of NATO in general. In an interview, one MEP suggested that ‘Maybe this is what was needed—the Americans to leave—for Europe to take defence seriously’. This should be the case, since the American study claims that if in 2030 the US is unwilling or unable act as a global security provider, the world will be less stable and the potential for competition and conflict between states will increase.<sup>27</sup>

It is already clear that the focus on EU–US relations is shifting from security to economy and trade. Negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership are to be launched in 2013. This will be a valuable element in strengthening the transatlantic link both economically and politically, but, at the same time, the security aspect should not be forgotten. It is unlikely that this will happen, as the war on terrorism will not end in the near future, and the unrest in the Middle East and North Africa region and Central Asia will also continue to need strong US input in the years to come. The deep core of transatlantic relations over the next decade should lie in security and defence, as Europe and America are becoming weaker in the new multipolar world and Europe will continue to need the stability and liberal order provided by the US.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> SIPRI, ‘Recent Trends in Military Expenditure’.

<sup>27</sup> US National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2020: Alternative Worlds*, 64.

<sup>28</sup> J. Techau, ‘It’s the Military, Stupid!’, *Carnegie Europe*, 26 February 2013, [accessed](#) on 26 February 2013.

## Pooling and sharing smartly

As highlighted above, the defence cuts have left Europe struggling to maintain its defence capabilities. At the same time, it should be remembered that the cost of capabilities doubles in price every 15–20 years, as noted by Syrén, and once capabilities are reduced it is much harder to build them up again. What makes matters worse is that the European dimension has not been taken into consideration when making national decisions. It is now slowly being realised that there is a need for enhanced cooperation and coordination of capabilities within both organisations; in the EU under the title of Pooling & Sharing (P&S), and in NATO under the Smart Defence Initiative (SD).

In December 2011 P&S was strengthened by encouraging 11 projects in areas such as air-to-air refuelling and medical support, and in autumn 2012 a code of conduct for P&S was adopted. There is, however, a lack of political will to go further with this endeavour; Chair of the EUMC General Patrick de Rousiers recently admitted that Member States are still ‘reticent’ about pooling and sharing.<sup>29</sup> The Member States still seem reluctant to enter into integration as, for instance, the failure of the EADS–BAE Systems deal in autumn 2012 demonstrates. The deal would have presented huge potential for Europe’s defence industry, as noted by one senior EU official in a Council background briefing in September 2012. One think tank member interviewed for this paper even went so far as to call the blocking of the deal ‘a disaster’ and ‘short-term thinking’.

One problem is that it is the same small group of EU Member States that are active in European initiatives, while ‘the majority take refuge in discursive support’, and, therefore, in order for the P&S to be effective and deliver on European capacity, significant transfers of sovereignty are needed.<sup>30</sup> Some are also not convinced about the sincerity of pooling initiatives. According to one MEP

<sup>29</sup> F. Ducrotté, ‘Parliamentary Update, SEDE Subcommittee’, ISIS Europe (Brussels, 23 January 2013), [accessed](#) on 27 February 2013.

<sup>30</sup> J. Howorth, ‘CSDP and NATO Post-Libya: Towards the Rubicon?’ Egmont Security Policy Brief no. 35 (July 2012), 3, [accessed](#) on 22 October 2012.

interviewed by the author, ‘Smart defence often looks like a justification, or even a cover up, for the reduction of our military resources in the hope that modern technology will cover the gap, which it will not’.

Some progress is, however, expected as P&S and the common European defence market will be addressed at the EU summit on defence in December 2013. This is needed, as defence markets are not only fragmented but also undermined by national protectionist views, and suffer from overcapacity, duplications, and cuts to defence research and development (R&D) spending.<sup>31</sup> The Commission has already strengthened the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) by introducing a Task Force on Defence Industries and Markets in 2011. The EDA is working on integration in military procurement and R&D, but still lacks adequate funding from the Member States.<sup>32</sup> The financial and economic crisis has forced the EU to start taking P&S more seriously, but it remains to be seen how far it will go. As clarified by one interviewed journalist, pooling especially cuts to the core of sovereignty and creates dependence, and in time might lead to Security of Supply, which would have implications for NATO as well.

NATO has also strengthened its SD efforts, but it is facing similar challenges to the EU and a lack of willingness for more burden-sharing from the European side. SD supports the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), which aims to increase interoperability, integrate command networks and build cohesion in NATO. Heterogeneity has increased amongst the Allies according to one national military representative at NATO. The CFI is expected to be the next big thing in NATO, as large operations are being run down and there is a need to balance the overall input of different Allies.

<sup>31</sup> F. Ducrotté, ‘Parliamentary Update, SEDE Subcommittee’.

<sup>32</sup> A. Frontini, ‘A Battle Against Decline? EU Defence after the European Council’, European Policy Centre (Brussels, 17 December 2012), [accessed](#) on 17 December 2012.

Due to the imbalance, the SG has suggested that in the future no single member should be responsible for more than 50% of certain critical capabilities.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to challenges within the organisations, there are challenges affecting the relationship between them. It is essential to avoid duplication, and P&S and SD should be seen as two sides of the same coin, as one senior EU official observed in an off-the-record briefing. Capabilities are a national matter and countries have only one set of forces and personnel for EU, NATO and national objectives, so it is in their own interest that the work be done consistently in all three circles. One senior NATO official noted that, for consistency, the EU and NATO would need a joint statement of requirements for capabilities and to have a more systematic way of meeting those requirements. It might be worth looking at how much P&S and SD can be combined and how greater policy coordination could increase synergies and prevent duplication. Brussels officials often argue that there is no overlap between P&S and SD, however estimations on whether to believe these statements vary. Most interviewees think that there is some overlap but that work is being done to avoid this problem. However, one EEAS official believes that some items can be found in both P&S and SD but under different names. He notes, however, that in the end they are not the same projects, as P&S is carried out on a broader basis than SD, which focuses solely on military aspects, while the former also has a comprehensive dimension.

Both organisations are of course keen to have their own projects, and to some extent this is understandable due to the differing natures of the organisations as SD is done on a transatlantic basis and P&S aims to coordinate Europe. There is some suggestion that more European political oversight is required to balance the US dominance in capability building within NATO.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> NATO, ‘NATO after ISAF: Staying Successful Together’.

<sup>34</sup> A. Frontini, ‘A Battle Against Decline? EU Defence after the European Council’.

Some, such as General Klaus Naumann, former chair of the NATO Military Committee, think that the EU and US components could be combined into a NATO component force and that Europeans could then fill the gaps left by US weaknesses. General Naumann also believes that more cooperation is needed in, for instance, transport, maritime and airlift capabilities in cases of crises and humanitarian disasters, and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Syrén has called for more EU-NATO cooperation in some areas where there is a European shortfall: intelligence, precision munitions and air-to-air refuelling. There are also encouraging examples of working EU-NATO cooperation, such as in the use of helicopters, where the EU provides pilot training and NATO focuses on equipment and helicopter upgrades. Successful cooperation has also been seen with improvised explosive devices and in modular military field hospitals.

### What roles on the ground for the EU and NATO?

Declining European capabilities have been especially visible in theatre. The operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Libya have revealed major weaknesses in NATO's capabilities.<sup>35</sup> In Libya even the biggest European defence spenders ran out of ammunition in just two months. As fewer and fewer are willing and able, and both the EU and NATO are conducting similar crisis management initiatives in the same theatres, the growing need for cooperation in the field is evident (see Figure 3). It is also often necessary for the EU to work closely with NATO in the field: for instance in Kosovo and Afghanistan the EU has been completely dependent on the security provided by NATO, as one EU ambassador noted in an interview. Often, as in Afghanistan, this has caused NATO to take the attitude that other organisations are there to act as its supporters, even though it is clear that situations cannot be solved only through the use of military force and that the other organisations' presence is also necessary.

<sup>35</sup> J. Dempsey, 'Is NATO Turning the Corner?'

**Figure 3 Overview of the missions and operations of the EU and NATO, February 2013**



Source: European External Action Service, 'EU Missions', February 2013, accessed on 7 March 2013. Changes, including NATO operations, made by author.

Estimates of the successes of EU–NATO cooperation in the field vary. The official line is that cooperation works well but needs to be strengthened, but underneath this there are stories of lives that have been put in danger due to the lack of cooperation and information sharing, for instance in Afghanistan. One EEAS officer revealed that it was only in 2012 that the EU sent its civilian personnel to be briefed on Afghanistan at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), even though an EU Police (EUPOL) mission in Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations have run in parallel since 2007. It is no wonder that NATO was virtually withdrawing from camps when the EU was still expecting its support. In Kosovo too, the KFOR mission was being scaled back just at the wrong time in the view of the EU, again due to a lack of coordination. As well as sharing information, the division of labour also needs to be well organised. In Afghanistan, EUPOL and ISAF initially faced serious difficulties, and it was only when the EU focused its mission's objectives on its complementary expertise—training the higher ranking police officers and mentoring Afghan officials on the rule of law and human rights—that cooperation started to improve. In an interview with the author, one EEAS officer stated that lessons have been learned and that, as a result, from now on a joint planning camp will always be set up when the EU and NATO are operating in the same area.

Relations have worked better in other current co-operations, such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina with EUFOR Althea, where the EU is using NATO's military structures at SHAPE via the Berlin Plus arrangement. Cooperation has also been rather successful in the Horn of Africa with Operations ATALANTA and Ocean Shield. An EEAS officer interviewed for this paper noted that the Horn of Africa offers a good example of complementary operations, as only the EU can provide judiciary condemnation against piracy and only NATO can provide the hard power. One NATO officer stressed also that military staffs understand each other and are more willing to share information, which contrasts with the

situation among civilian and political actors, and that this is why EU–NATO cooperation works well in matters such as maritime security.

The EU is now carrying out more operations than NATO—since 2003 the EU has launched 28 CSDP missions, but the pace has slowed in recent years. The majority of the current operations are civilian (11); there are only four ongoing military missions. However, in the future NATO will focus more on its other core tasks than on crisis management,<sup>36</sup> and on other issues such as key capabilities and missile defence. In his Munich speech, the SG noted that 'NATO doesn't have to intervene everywhere, the alliance is shifting from operational engagement to operational readiness'.<sup>37</sup> Thus, if, in the future, NATO concentrates less on operations and the US reduces its activities in Europe's neighbourhood, then Europe will be required to do more of the work. General Naumann, a former NATO chief, believes that the EU should not only handle soft power issues, leaving hard power action to NATO, but that the EU's comprehensive toolset is actually more suitable for addressing future conflicts than NATO's apparatus.<sup>38</sup> But this toolset is not equipped for everything.

It is easier for the EU to carry out civilian than military missions. First, the former is where its expertise and capabilities lie; second, civilian operations are politically easier for Member States to approve than military missions; and third, common EU funding is used for civilian missions, but military operations are paid for by the participating states. Only the common structures of military missions are provided for jointly through the strictly intergovernmental Athena mechanism,<sup>39</sup> but the Member States

<sup>36</sup> At the 2010 Lisbon Summit NATO defined collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security as its main tasks.

<sup>37</sup> NATO, 'NATO after ISAF: Staying Successful Together'.

<sup>38</sup> F. Ducrotté, 'Parliamentary Update, SEDE Subcommittee'.

<sup>39</sup> For more information on the Athena mechanism, see Europa, Summaries of EU Legislation, 'The Mechanism for Financing Military Operations (Athena)', last updated 6 January 2012, [accessed](#) on 7 March 2013.

fund that too, and are reluctant about doing so. One EEAS officer noted regretfully that ‘due to the difficulty in funding, I don’t see the EU conducting any major military operations.’ A journalist interviewed for this paper reflected that ‘This is a major problem. The Athena mechanism has constantly been oversubscribed, and the demand has always depleted the pot’. He thinks its annual budget of around €200 million needs to be substantially increased, or placed on a common EU footing. And even if Athena was taken to a new level, it could still only be used for the costs of common structures, not to cover operational costs. Thus, all real operational costs, such as those of the EUBGs, need to be paid by the participating countries themselves, which basically excludes all smaller Member States from deploying any troops.

The EUBG concept was created over a decade ago to increase CSDP operational capabilities. However, the Battlegroups have never been deployed, in spite of consideration of their use in the cases of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, Chad, Haiti, Libya, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>40</sup> The fact that they were not used, even in Mali, is generally seen as their deathblow: ‘use it or lose it, now we are at lose it’, is often repeated by the experts. (The EUBGs seem to be something of a non-issue, as several of the interviewees were not even aware of the current countries in the rotation.)

The use of NATO’s NRF, which is more capable and bigger than the EUBGs, has also not been as expected: it has only been used to protect the Athens Olympics and the Afghan presidential elections, and to conduct disaster relief in Pakistan and in the US after Hurricane Katrina—with all these activities taking place as long ago as 2004–6.<sup>41</sup> ‘They’ve been very expensive training tools’, observed one EEAS officer about both

<sup>40</sup> M. Hatzigeorgopoulos, ‘The Role of EU Battlegroups in European Defence’, *ISIS Europe* (June 2012), 5, [accessed](#) on 27 February 2013.

<sup>41</sup> NATO, ‘NATO Response Force (NRF)’, Fact Sheet (February 2013), [accessed](#) on 10 March 2013.

of the rapid response forces. Both the EUBGs and NRF need to be reassessed in terms of their decision-making processes, implementation and deployment, funding, purpose, and objectives—and also how these concepts and their rotations fit together. NATO is now talking about revitalising the NRFs, so that they become ‘the engine of our future readiness’.<sup>42</sup> But as one interviewed think tank member sees it, the EUBGs and NRF will never work as stand-by arrangements, because in the end whether to deploy troops or not always remains a national decision, and very few nations are willing and able to do this.

Another hindering factor is that the EU Member States are not eager to approve military missions. And even though the EU could get agreement and funding from the Member States, it does not have the capabilities in equipment, planning and command that NATO has. The EU is only capable of planning something decided upon well in advance, such as EUTM Mali, but when a situation develops rapidly, as it did in January 2013 in Mali, the EU cannot react quickly even if it wanted to (which its Member States often do not want it to do). General De Rousiers admits that ‘in the current political climate, the EU is only able to deploy economic, legal, training and police forces to solve crises’, and that it is ‘not yet ready to maintain stability in Libya and Mali.’<sup>43</sup> In 2003, precisely due to the lack of these capabilities, the Berlin Plus arrangement was created, under which the EU can use NATO’s military planning and command capabilities at SHAPE.<sup>44</sup> After its establishment, permanent liaison structures in the other organisations’ headquarters were created: the NATO Permanent Liaison Team to the EU in 2005 and the EU Cell at SHAPE in 2006. However, the Berlin Plus arrangement has only been used twice, in Concordia in 2003 and in Althea since 2004 (after Cyprus

<sup>42</sup> NATO, ‘NATO after ISAF: Staying Successful Together’.

<sup>43</sup> F. Ducrotté, ‘Parliamentary Update, SEDE Subcommittee’.

<sup>44</sup> See Council of the European Union, ‘Background—EU–NATO: The Framework for Permanent Relations and Berlin Plus’, [accessed](#) on 27 February 2013.

was granted EU membership this was no longer possible, see next section). There have also been talks about a reversed Berlin Plus, where NATO would be able to borrow the EU's civilian capabilities. However, this has not yet led to anything concrete, and now NATO itself is also developing a comprehensive approach dimension, which in EU circles is seen as duplication.

For operational headquarters for military missions, the EU could use one of the five national operational headquarters (in the UK, France, Germany, Greece and Italy), but this option is considered to be a slow, inefficient, ad hoc one and one that would not add to organisational memory or indeed the EU's capabilities. Therefore France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Poland, as well as the European Parliament, have pushed for a permanent civilian–military operational headquarters for the EU. The EP report argues that due to the civilian–military focus of the EU, such a structure would not duplicate NATO structures, which are primarily for military planning,<sup>45</sup> but the UK strongly rejects this. The only remaining choice is to forget the EU's own planning structures and to hope that one day the EU will be able to once again use NATO's tools at SHAPE, as promised in the Berlin Plus arrangement. But this would mean solving an even more unwavering political problem, the Cyprus–Turkey blockage.

<sup>45</sup> European Parliament, *Report on the Role of NATO in the Security Architecture of the EU*, A6-0033/2009 (2008/2197(INI)) (28 January 2009), 9, [accessed](#) on 17 December 2012.

## Building blocks of the wall

### The untouchable Cyprus–Turkey issue

A decade ago things looked different. The EU–NATO Declaration on European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)<sup>46</sup> from 2002 refers to ‘effective mutual consultation, dialogue, cooperation and transparency’, and ‘the spirit of openness’ between the EU and NATO. It said that the EU aims to ensure ‘the fullest possible involvement of non-EU European members of NATO within ESDP’, and likewise that NATO supports ESDP and gives the EU ‘assured access to NATO's planning capabilities’.<sup>47</sup> The background information elaborates that ‘NATO guarantees that the EU has access to NATO planning’ and that, should the EU request it, an EU operational headquarters can be established at SHAPE. The EU and NATO also agreed on ‘mutual crisis consultation arrangements’ and on the security of information.<sup>48</sup>

The Republic of Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, but has never joined the abovementioned arrangements due to Turkey's veto. As a result, the decades-long dispute over the division of the island was brought inside the EU–NATO framework. At the time Cyprus promised to be willing to negotiate, and Turkey was also hopeful about its path to EU membership. However, the UN talks failed and an ice age fell over the EU and NATO institutions. Ever since, Turkey and Cyprus (and its supporter, Greece) have blocked EU–NATO cooperation from their respective sides. This deadlock has been given many names, such as ‘the political problem’ and

<sup>46</sup> The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was renamed as the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with the Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009.

<sup>47</sup> NATO, ‘EU–NATO Declaration on ESDP’, 16 December 2002, [accessed](#) on 27 February 2013.

<sup>48</sup> Council of the European Union, ‘Background—EU–NATO: The Framework for Permanent Relations and Berlin Plus’.

‘the participation problem’. There is no political and strategic dialogue between the EU and NATO, and this is for ‘well known reasons’, as one NATO ambassador put it. The problem is not openly discussed in political spheres, it is soft-pedalled, and no countries’ names are mentioned. As one diplomat mentioned to the author, ‘on a political level the rhetoric from the EU and NATO officials on NATO–EU cooperation has been very positive’, ‘but there is the big pink elephant in the room’. The ambassadors surveyed and experts interviewed by the author all agree that this problem is a significant obstacle or challenge to better EU–NATO cooperation and some strongly feel that some kind of pressure should be added to try to break the deadlock.

As there are no formal meetings, the HR and the SG meet regularly in informal consultations. The main tool in EU–NATO political relations is the ambassadorial meetings of the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the North Atlantic Council (NAC), but due to vetoing by Turkey and Cyprus, these meetings can only discuss the Althea operation. ‘It’s a matter of every autumn, discussing whether Althea will be continued’, one senior EU official noted despondently. And that is it: no talks are allowed regarding Afghanistan, capabilities, future cooperation, political and strategic cooperation, or anything else. Berlin Plus is the only structured form of cooperation, and has, since the very beginning, been virtually disabled.

As well as paying the price in terms of a lack of cohesion at the top of the organisations, and the fact that the EDA cannot work efficiently with its NATO counterpart, the political problem is seen as a ‘lack of operational smoothness in the field’, according to one think tank member the author interviewed. The EU and NATO are not able to carry out combined operational planning, nor can they really share official information. There are agreements to allow for appropriate information sharing between the organisations, but this is often blocked or protested by a single country. This has

led to risky situations in the field. As one NATO officer so bluntly put it, it is ‘often the case in warfare, when organisations are not talking, people die’. But the practitioners have circumvented this and share information on a personal trust basis. One interviewee, an EEAS officer, disclosed that the staff also works together unofficially at the headquarters, ‘as much informal cooperation is done as possible, and it’s known to the very top levels.’ Officials have joint meetings, they are just not formal. ‘And we just stop talking in the hallway until the Turks have passed us by’, he adds.

Officially, Ankara and Athens might be getting along slightly better than before, but at the practical level all cooperation is still blocked. ‘It all comes down to this one NATO nation that doesn’t want to share information with the EU’, one NATO officer observed. Turkey has prevented EU personnel from visiting the new CCOMC (NATO’s Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre) at SHAPE, an EEAS official revealed in an interview, even though it is vital for the EU to know what NATO is doing regarding the comprehensive approach. Some examples seem counter-productive, even for the parties themselves. For instance, the Turks refuse to join meetings at the EEAS where they themselves would be provided with valuable information. ‘You can have the best discussion with a most enlightened western-minded Turk, but if you mention the Cyprus–Turkey issue, his eyes glaze over and the discussion ends. This is the way it is at all levels’, said one think tank member.

To this date, there is no institutionalised relationship between the EU and NATO, only vague statements of ‘a strategic partnership’. It seems that Brussels and the Member States have given up trying and have accepted this as an immutable reality. EU and NATO official documents repeat the same sentences with no real effect: that the strategic partnership should be strengthened, organisations should play complementary and mutually reinforcing roles, and that they should avoid duplication.

Some of the official communications also show some signs of frustration, but no country is ever mentioned: the European Security Strategy's (ESS) implementation report from 2008 reads that the EU and NATO have worked well together on the ground, 'even if formal relations have not advanced',<sup>49</sup> and the NATO strategic concept states that there is a need to 'broaden the political consultations to include all issues of common concern'.<sup>50</sup> The SG has also called for an upgrade of the NATO–EU Capability Group from its current role of information exchange to a 'forum of active cooperation', where 'mutual cooperation is no longer the exception, but the norm'.<sup>51</sup>

According to one EEAS officer, even inside NATO, high level officials say that NATO is 'shooting itself in the foot when Turkey is vetoing everything, even though it is understood by all that cooperation is necessary'. A German analysis reveals that the Turks' refusal 'to constructively support the concept of partnership' is a key problem. As an example, Turkey recently blocked an important NATO working document due to its antipathy towards the EU, and in this case also towards NATO partner Israel.<sup>52</sup> This is, of course, hindering the EU's work as well. This reached a climax during the Cypriot presidency in autumn 2012, when Turkey blocked all cooperation, and has so far, in many senses, maintained this situation. The issues of security and defence were totally absent from the agenda of the Cypriot presidency,<sup>53</sup> and in various security and defence seminars in Brussels during the Cypriot presidency the biggest source of the problems was never even mentioned.

<sup>49</sup> Council of the European Union, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy*.

<sup>50</sup> NATO, *Active Engagement, Modern Defence*.

<sup>51</sup> NATO, 'Security Policy in an Era of Budgetary Constraint'.

<sup>52</sup> 'European Obstruction: NATO Reforms Moving at "Snail's Pace"', *Spiegel Online*, 25 February 2013, [accessed](#) on 1 March 2013.

<sup>53</sup> See Cyprus, *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union*, 1 July–31 December 2012 (2012), [accessed](#) on 3 January 2013; 'Priorities of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 July–31 December 2012', [accessed](#) on 3 January 2013; and 'Synopsis of the Main Results of the Cyprus Presidency, 1 July–31 December 2012', [accessed](#) on 3 January 2013.

Several suggestions have been put forward to improve relations, but none will lead anywhere as long as Turkey, Cyprus and Greece stay firmly in their foxholes. Some say that the EU should take a much tougher approach towards the Cypriots, and, for instance, link the financial bailout to the political settlement of the island.<sup>54</sup> 'But,' warned one think tank member, 'the dispute is a matter of principle, national identity and pride, therefore they can't be bought. Also, linking the issue to bailout wouldn't be credible as Germany would not jeopardise the euro.' Many in NATO, including the SG, have suggested that Turkey be included in EDA cooperation and CSDP mission decisions, just as Norway has been, and just as non-NATO members have been welcomed into ISAF processes. This would make sense as Turkey is the largest non-EU contributor to CSDP missions, but some wonder whether Turkey is even interested in this. It has also been suggested that the EU should be firm and not continue with Turkey's EU membership talks before there is progress; however, this could backfire. The negotiations are already very difficult, but might begin to improve now as France and Germany have given the green light to restarting talks. Eight chapters out of 35 remain closed due to the Cyprus–Turkey issue.<sup>55</sup> The Commission has called on Turkey to 'engage positively with all parties in order to facilitate a successful completion of the process'.<sup>56</sup> For its part, Turkey blames the EU for a discriminatory and biased attitude.<sup>57</sup> However, as Turkey is a vital member of NATO, a strategically located regional power and a gateway to the Muslim world, the EU should think carefully about how to deal with the issue of Turkey.

<sup>54</sup> See, for instance, J. Dempsey, 'Cyprus: Link EU Bailout to Political Settlement', *Carnegie Europe*, 21 February 2013, [accessed](#) on 22 February 2013.

<sup>55</sup> Council of the European Union, 'General Affairs and External Relations: General Affairs', Press Release 16289/06 (Presse 352) 2770th Council meeting (11 December 2006), 19, [accessed](#) on 3 January 2013.

<sup>56</sup> European Commission, *Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012–2013*, COM(2012) 600 final (10 October 2012), 18, [accessed](#) on 11 October 2012.

<sup>57</sup> Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'No: 234, 10 October 2012, Press Release Regarding Turkey 2012 Progress Report and Enlargement Strategy of the EU Commission', [accessed](#) 11 October 2012.

The election of Nicos Anastasiades as the president of Cyprus might offer some new hope, although none of the interviewees believe that this will bring about a real change. Anastasiades has declared his willingness to forge a new relationship with Turkey and find a solution for the island (in 2004 he supported the UN plan rejected by the Greek Cypriots); he comes from the largest European political family, the European People's Party (EPP); and has a far more pro-European attitude than his predecessor. One think tank member interviewed for this paper suggested that, 'it's often the case that only conservatives can carry out reforms on questions of national pride, and that only leftists can go to war. But the main players here are in Athens and Ankara'. Most importantly though, Anastasiades has declared that Cyprus will apply for NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. Turkey will most likely make this difficult, but at least the issue will be put on the table and the silence lifted. This could create the movement and dynamics needed and might change the psychology of the situation.

### Inter-organisational competition

The Cyprus–Turkey deadlock is also used as a scapegoat, a convenient excuse. About a decade ago there was a lot of distrust and dismissal between the EU and NATO, mainly due to transatlantic affairs. Unfortunately, this competitive attitude has not yet totally disappeared. Sometimes it is embodied in a fight over turf, as the organisations are both constantly redefining themselves. Sometimes there is a clear division of labour: while NATO handles missile defence, the EU takes care of Iran's nuclear programme talks and Arctic Circle issues. But there are dissatisfactions, as the EU does not want NATO to acquire comprehensive capabilities of its own, and the EU's attempts to assume military capabilities and obscure NATO's role as the

collective defence provider in Europe cause frowns among NATO staff.

Sometimes it is simply about organisational pride. One EEAS officer had observed an EU official complaining 'But this is an *EU operation*', when asked to talk to a NATO colleague about the situation on the ground, where both had ongoing operations. And will either of the organisations really give up their declamatory titles, such as P&S and SD, even if this would sometimes make sense? One think tank interviewee calls this 'the beauty contest' between the organisations. Both also think that the other should accommodate their needs. 'There is an attitude problem. Everybody talks about coordination, but nobody likes to be coordinated', a national military representative to NATO noted in an interview. NATO's CCOMC wants EU civilian experts to plug into their structures, while the EU expects that whatever it needs should be affiliated to it. Both are waiting for the other to adapt, when instead they should be trying to find a win-win solution. There is also the human aspect: as long as the situation stays the same there is no need to invest in thinking about new arrangements. And as long as nothing new is done, nothing and nobody's jobs are being put at risk.

Cultural differences in the bureaucracies should not be underestimated either. Both organisations are totally different in nature. While NATO is a military alliance with over 60 years of experience of defending the Western world, the EU is an integrating economic and political union of states, or a 'vast, vast machinery' as one NATO interviewee put it. An interviewed journalist stressed, however, that in capabilities and transformation the huge size of NATO means that it often takes a lot longer for it to see that an initiative has failed, whereas the much smaller EDA can make corrective moves more quickly. One senior NATO official is of the opinion that in general NATO is more pragmatic in its work, and, for instance, works more flexibly with non-members, whereas the EU has a more legalistic

approach. The organisations see issues differently—for instance the concept of a ‘comprehensive approach’ means different things and different processes in the two organisations. Also, with military and civil servants there always tends to be a lack of understanding and even disdain towards ‘the other kind’. To better understand what the other is thinking, one should ‘invite people over’. As one respondent noted, the organisations should ‘sit down, discuss, be open to taking into consideration each other’s concerns’. The EU in particular has not been very good at opening up: the EEAS is not well known outside European institutions due to the fact that its early days were full of internal disputes, causing it to not be outward facing enough. ‘Organisations, such as NATO, have been expected to be contacted by the EEAS, but this has rarely happened’, one EEAS worker admitted in an interview.

There is still competition in its various forms. But to a large extent it is the Cyprus–Turkey issue that keeps this alive, because as long as there is no open and generally accepted communication and cooperation, the relationship will not be normalised. Until this political problem is solved, the only tool that the EU and NATO seem to have is to cooperate in practical day-to-day work, and to take one small step at a time, avoiding trouble. ‘Maybe at some point cooperation might become so much business as usual that nobody will even question it anymore’, said one EEAS officer, revealing his hopes to the author.

### All the EU’s voices

The EU itself is not making the EU–NATO relationship straightforward. It does not have a clear view of how to develop the CSDP or what it wants to do. Most of the time this is due to the divergent views of the Member States, which means that in matters of CFSP and CSDP, which demand unanimity, one

country can block decisions, for instance regarding EU–NATO cooperation. Countries are acting on their own in crisis areas and doing what they feel like with their defences, without even consulting each other or the EU. As a result of the economic crisis common efforts are receiving less support, which has further weakened the EU’s common position.

Indeed, many are thinking about how the EU could act in a more united way. There is a great deal of underlying dissatisfaction with the current situation, both in Brussels and in the Member States. There have been an increasing number of calls for change, most probably with the hope of having an impact on the upcoming EEAS review in July 2013 and the defence summit in December. Groups of ministers have written letters calling for more integration in security and defence, more powers for the HR and the EEAS, the introduction of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) in security and defence, and more military capabilities for the EU: see for instance reports from the 11 foreign ministers of the Future of Europe Group,<sup>58</sup> the 5 foreign and defence ministers of the biggest Member States (excluding the UK),<sup>59</sup> and from the meeting of the Central European countries.<sup>60</sup> Sweden, Poland, Spain and Italy are in the process of publishing a report on a ‘European Global Strategy’ to update the existing strategy.<sup>61</sup> There are also individual interventions, such as General Syrén’s, which have called, for instance, for an increasing allocation of national defence budgets for common European purposes.

<sup>58</sup> Future of Europe Group, ‘Final Report of the Foreign Ministers of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain’, 17 September 2012, [accessed](#) on 9 April 2013.

<sup>59</sup> France, ‘Meeting of the Foreign Affairs Ministers and Ministers of Defence of France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain’, 15 November 2012, [accessed](#) on 19 November 2012.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Visegrad Countries to Form Joint Military Force’, *Euractiv.com*, 8 March 2013, [accessed](#) on 8 March 2013.

<sup>61</sup> Swedish Institute for International Affairs (UI), ‘EGS Towards a Global European Strategy 2013’, EGS Fact Sheet, [accessed](#) on 21 February 2013.

However, the letters do not offer anything new, at least not that addresses the core problem. As one think tank member said in an interview, ‘We don’t have an institutional problem in the EU, we have an executive reluctance problem.’ In a sense, the letters can be seen as a sign of the silent high hopes that were created that the Lisbon Treaty might bring about a change in Member States’ attitudes, but the EU27 have not been willing to go further as a single entity. The above-mentioned think tank member believes that the letters are simply test-balloons to get support for ideas, to see if the smaller countries will join the middle-ranking group of countries (Spain, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the Netherlands) which ‘are not big enough to have illusions of independence as the big three have, but are too big not to have foreign policy’. With these letters, the Member States are trying to convince smaller states, which might have some important individual concerns but no foreign policy of their own, to get on board to cultivate a critical mass to move issues forward. In contrast, a member of another think tank argues that the letters are sent to fill ‘the vacuum at the top of the EEAS’, as there is little political guidance from the HR, and as the rotating presidency no longer plays an important role in this area.

The HR has not been very industrious in fulfilling her role, creating initiatives and taking them forward (it is widely believed that she is not very enthusiastic about CSDP). For instance, one think tank member stressed that in the case of Mali the HR should have raised the issue of a common crisis response and pushed it forward. It is, of course, a two-way street, so if the Member States want the HR and the EEAS to lead the way, they must also allow this to happen and give the HR more room to act. But perhaps they are simply expecting the HR to take charge? A recent study suggests that the EEAS should take the lead, for instance in the strategic planning of the EU’s external relations and pulling together a common policy from the input of Member States

and other institutions. There are several challenges, including the lack of coordination between the EEAS and the European Commission, and the all-pervading Member States’ unwillingness to do more together.<sup>62</sup> The Member States have, for instance, been cutting back on their own diplomatic networks without fully utilising what the EEAS can provide. They also fight with each other over representation in international organisations such as the UN, even though the global weight of the whole of Europe is weakening and Europe’s over-representation is seen as less and less justified. Member States are also engaging more in economic competition with each other, for instance in China, where they are increasing their presence but do not hold a common political EU approach in very high regard. Therefore, countries such as China and Russia will continue to be on the winning side with their strategy of divide and rule.<sup>63</sup>

It is said that the reason why CFSP and CSDP decisions are still taken with unanimity is because they go to the very core of sovereignty. But as Brussels now has a say over national budgets—usually the definition of self-determination—why not in matters of security? Budgetary surveillance might have more significance for the Member States, especially in the area of common currency, than coordinated security and defence decisions, but the latter also has meaning due to common security commitments. According to General Syrén, ‘We need a change of political and military mindsets: we can’t hide anymore behind general words like sovereignty’.<sup>64</sup> It is also often thought that citizens would not approve of defence integration, but actually citizens do seem to appreciate integration in the fields

<sup>62</sup> R. Balfour and K. Raik, European Policy Centre and the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *Equipping the European Union for the 21st Century: National Diplomacies, the European External Action Service and the Making of EU Foreign Policy* (January 2013), [accessed](#) on 29 January 2013.

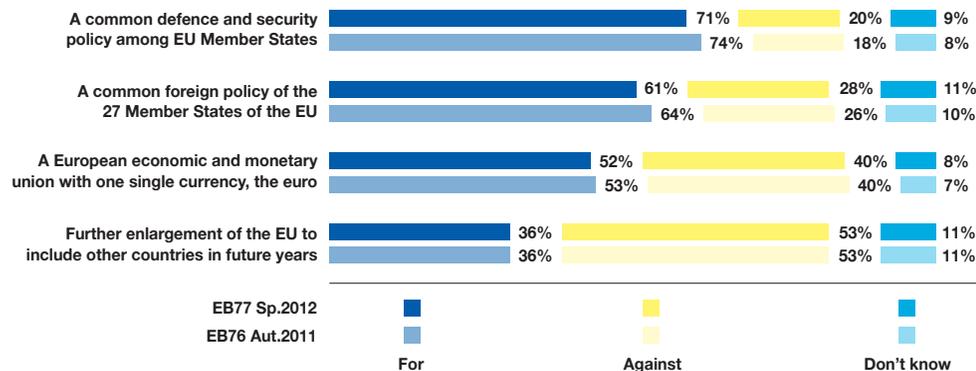
<sup>63</sup> R. Balfour and K. Raik (eds.), European Policy Centre and the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *The European External Action Service and National Diplomacies*, European Policy Centre Issue Paper no. 73 (March 2013), 19–20, [accessed](#) on 12 March 2013.

<sup>64</sup> H. Syrén, ‘Innovative European Defence Cooperation: Pooling and Consolidating Demand’, 4.

of CFSP and especially CSDP, and more so than in economics, which has seen the most rapid developments recently (Figure 4).<sup>65</sup> Seventy-one per cent of Europeans are in favour of a common defence and security policy and 61% favour a common foreign policy. There is absolute majority support for CFSP in all EU countries (except Ireland where there is a relative majority), and in Slovakia, Cyprus and Belgium support is closer to 90%. These levels of support have been similar since the mid-1990s,<sup>66</sup> so this does not seem to be a new and easily mutable phenomenon. Notwithstanding this, CFSP and CSDP remain the least integrated of EU policies. ‘CSDP is like the Economic and Monetary Union 20 years ago, so maybe in 20 years something will happen’, one think tank leader offered in an interview.

**Figure 4 Support for European policies**

What is your opinion on each of the following statements?  
Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it.



**EU27**

Source: European Commission, Standard Eurobarometer 77, *Public Opinion in the European Union* (Spring 2012), 97–8, accessed on 22 February 2013.

<sup>65</sup> European Commission, Standard Eurobarometer 77, *Public Opinion in the European Union* (Spring 2012), 97–8, accessed on 22 February 2013.

<sup>66</sup> See, for instance, European Parliament, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy in the Context of the ESDP*, 2006/2033(INI) (18 October 2006), accessed on 22 February 2013.

None of the major steps can, however, be taken without having the big Member States—the UK, France and Germany—on board, because they count for 66% of the EU’s total capabilities, as noted by one think tank member. But, as in many other policy areas, here also their views are scattered. The UK still wishes to act alone; Prime Minister David Cameron recently announced that the UK can act unilaterally over Syria regardless of the EU, stating that it still has ‘an independent foreign policy’.<sup>67</sup> The UK, which is opposed to anything that would duplicate NATO assets, is currently distancing itself from further EU integration, and in the eyes of many, even its future EU membership is in question. However, it is argued that the US emphasis in Europe will shift away from NATO to the EU—and that if the Brits wish to uphold their special relationship with the Americans, they should remain close to the EU and CSDP.<sup>68</sup> Many Europeans also see keeping the UK active in CSDP as essential: ‘without it there is not enough critical mass’, one interviewee noted, which is one of the reasons why there seems to be no point in creating a permanent EU operational headquarters without the UK.

The UK is the only country able and willing to properly deploy troops besides France, and they see defence in a different way to other Europeans. Also, their nuclear weapon capability elevates them to a special class. France is an interesting case, as it wants both—a strong (French-modelled) CSDP that does not undermine NATO. It has been thanked for its action in Mali, but at the same time criticised for leaving the EU on the side. Its new White Paper on defence is expected to acknowledge that France and Britain carry most of the responsibility, and will continue to work together under the Lancaster House Treaty and the Downing Street Declaration, but that there is a real need to advance the CSDP

<sup>67</sup> ‘UK Asserts Right to “Independent Foreign Policy”’, *EUobserver.com*, 13 March 2013, accessed on 13 March 2013.

<sup>68</sup> See R. Niblett, ‘UK Needs to Beware the US “Work Around”’, *Chatham House*, 10 January 2013, accessed on 14 January 2013.

as it lacks a shared vision.<sup>69</sup> The third major player, Germany, is something of a stranger in this crowd, as however large a player in economics, it is, according to one German interviewee, ‘extremely reluctant to take any position on security issues and to increase its defence spending. For generations it didn’t have to as the Americans were there’. The Germans cannot see that they could use their position to advantage and show leadership, which is what everybody is waiting for. Even Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski has said that ‘Germany’s inactivity is more frightening than its activity.’<sup>70</sup>

In preparation for the defence summit in December 2013, the heads of state and government have assigned the HR and the Commission the task of developing more ways to improve the CSDP by September 2013. They say more needs to be done to increase the effectiveness, visibility and impact of the CSDP by improving the military and civilian availability of the required capabilities, and strengthening the European defence industry.<sup>71</sup> Some progress might be seen in the run-up to the summit, as debate has now risen to the level of the most prominent heads of state and government. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande called for more defence cooperation in Warsaw in early March 2013: Merkel said that security and defence cooperation must be strengthened, and Hollande stated this must be done on the basis of a strategic vision that also includes a common industrial base, which should be adopted at the defence summit. Their statement also called for NATO and the EU to cooperate closely to develop defence capabilities without duplicating efforts.<sup>72</sup> ‘France stands here

<sup>69</sup> France, *The International and Strategic Evolutions Faced by France: Preparatory Document for the Update of the White Paper on Defence and National Security* (2012), 68–71, [accessed](#) on 16 April 2013.

<sup>70</sup> R. Sikorski, ‘I Fear Germany’s Power Less than Her Inactivity’, *Financial Times*, 28 November 2011, [accessed](#) on 9 April 2013.

<sup>71</sup> European Council, ‘Focus on External Affairs’, 14 December 2012, [accessed](#) on 21 December 2012.

<sup>72</sup> ‘Visegrad Countries to Form Joint Military Force’, *Euractiv.com*, 8 March 2013, [accessed](#) on 8 March 2013.

next to Germany. This is the first time this has happened. This shows that the will is truly there for building up the potential for a cooperative defence’, said Hollande.<sup>73</sup> What is also interesting is that the meeting included the Visegrád countries, with Poland in the lead. However, regardless of who will be the leading countries in the future, these countries all support a strong NATO, so it is unlikely that its position will be undermined.

It is expected, as one think tank member predicts, that the EU will not go very much further as a full bloc of 27, soon 28, countries, but that there will be more ad hoc coalitions of the willing. There are already several regional cooperation platforms, such as the Weimar Triangle, the Visegrád Four, the Franco-British cooperation and the Nordic NORDEFECO. There are also unused tools available, such as the Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence, which do not have roles currently but could be utilised. How these approaches would affect EU–NATO relations is difficult to estimate. They could undermine it if the EU were to become more fragmented. On the other hand, countries would be freed from the demand for unanimity, and such coalitions might therefore provide new ways out of the political problem and in that way also work better with NATO and act as an inspiration to others. The EU already has several cores, even in security and defence; Denmark has opted out of the CSDP, some Member States are in NATO and some not, and countries vary a lot in their size and capabilities. The precondition for this to work would be to ensure that the EU and NATO remain flexible enough. But another question is whether a several-tier development would undermine the EU’s attempts to become a global power as a single entity. In economics, at least, some countries’ decisions to stay out of the common currency have not had this effect. Regional coalitions might help with pooling and sharing, training and operations, and developing the CSDP, but they alone will not

<sup>73</sup> ‘Chancellor Merkel and President Holland Join Visegrád Group Meeting in Warsaw’, *Germany.info* 8 March 2013, [accessed](#) on 13 March 2013.

stop the decline of Europe’s military.<sup>74</sup> For instance, the Finnish chief of defence recently warned the public not to expect too much from the Nordic cooperation: that in spite of some of the operational benefits it has achieved, it will not solve the financial challenges of the military in this decade or at the beginning of the next.<sup>75</sup> It certainly will not remedy the absence of collective defence guarantees for non-Allied EU countries. When it comes to the matter of collective defence, no one questions NATO’s position. However, from time to time some non-Allied countries might ask what the EU’s plans are in the case of an attack upon an EU Member State. The Lisbon Treaty introduced the mutual defence clause or mutual assistance clause (Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union) and the solidarity clause (Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union), however there is still no idea what these arrangements would mean in the case of an emergency, and the EU needs to clarify this quickly. ‘The safe is empty’, one EEAS official remarked when asked about the EU’s defence plans, and this is true as the EU, with its 200 soldiers in its staff, does not have the ability to undertake the military planning that NATO has with its 8900-strong staff and planning structures.

<sup>74</sup> J. Techau, ‘It’s the Military, Stupid!’

<sup>75</sup> Finnish Defence Forces, ‘Commander Warns Not to Expect Too Much of Nordic Cooperation at This Stage’, 5 March 2013, [accessed](#) on 6 March 2013.

## Conclusions

Facing the challenges mentioned—security threats that cannot be addressed alone, declining European military resources and capabilities, and the decreasing global relevance of Europe and the whole Western world—the solution seems quite simple: more cooperation in Europe and between the EU and NATO. As one NATO ambassador responded in the survey: ‘It’s a must’. The organisations are owned by their members, which are mostly the same, with NATO protection covering 94% of EU citizens, and the countries each have just one army, one budget and one pool of resources for both purposes. There might be varying national interests, but a very large proportion of the concerns that the countries have is the same. Indeed, when the author asked the experts what good would come of closer EU–NATO cooperation, the answers reflected the common challenges: greater capabilities, more operational advances by combining assets, savings in resources and the strength of working together in the world and doing more against new security challenges. Also, as one ambassador put it, the EU–NATO relationship is ‘crucial not just in terms of managing crises and conflicts, but also in terms of ensuring the transatlantic partnership’. The strategic weight of the West would simply be a lot greater if we all acted together, noted one senior NATO official.

The majority of the ambassadors surveyed by the author think that EU–NATO relations have improved in the past decade to some extent, and that the relationship is now mainly ‘average’ or ‘quite good’. But this seems to be due to the fact that the staffs of these organisations have found ways to circumvent the blocked official channels to increase necessary, even vital, practical cooperation. There seems to be no transparent attitude

to tackling the problems in EU–NATO relations—almost all of the ambassadors answering the survey said the challenges are not discussed in an open and constructive manner. One ambassador responded: ‘The discussions tend to avoid the real reasons and problems and instead the debate goes on about what is good and so on’. The Turkish–Cypriot issue forbids a formal alignment of all things military, joint efforts in tackling common threats and joint capability development. ‘Before the fundamental cause of that problem is solved, no meaningful breakthrough in EU–NATO relations can be expected’, one NATO ambassador clarified, and, so as long as that is the case, there can be no real institutional or formal improvements, all progress will be made on an ad hoc basis, and no major security issues will be discussed together.

In a perfect scenario all EU members would also belong to NATO, and Turkey and Cyprus would have solved their differences or at least found a way of not tormenting others. In this ideal world, the EU could be the political, economic and foreign policy union for the countries, using its comprehensive toolset in civilian crisis missions. The defence and military side would be organised under NATO structures, in close cooperation with the transatlantic partners. However, not all EU members have joined or might ever join NATO. So more should be done to involve the European non-EU NATO allies further in the CSDP and the EDA, and to involve the non-NATO EU Member States further in NATO cooperation<sup>76</sup>. However, due to the political problem, even this remains a distant goal. This also hampers the very important capability building efforts, as the non-NATO members do not have access to all the necessary information.

Underneath the political problem is also the ‘beauty contest’ between the organisations, and the fact that there is a mutual lack of knowledge and understanding. What is alarming is that

<sup>76</sup> European Parliament, *Report on the Role of NATO in the Security Architecture of the EU*, 5.

sometimes even people of the same nationality have different views when wearing either an EU or a NATO badge, as mentioned by one EU ambassador. In the end the fundamental question is what do Europeans want to accomplish? Europe should understand that it has to invest in security and defence, as the world is not seemingly becoming any safer and others will be ruling the game in the future. It is no longer even a question of the EU’s will to become a credible global power, but whether it can even remain credible per se and maintain the capabilities it has. As the US is not keen on providing security to Europe’s neighbourhood to the same extent as before, Europe needs to take on more responsibility. Some scholars expect that ‘the likely integration of European defence resources due to budget cuts would in time reduce the military gap between Europe and other powers’, and therefore give Europe a bigger role in future multilateral operations.<sup>77</sup> However, at the same time Europe is expected to remain cautious about the use of force and military interventions.<sup>78</sup> But, as one EU ambassador interviewed for this paper sees it, to become a super power the EU would need to have military strength beyond crisis management, and that the ‘mentality of a global actor’ is just not there.

If the Member States decide that the EU should remain a soft power, then they should let NATO handle defence and commit to this choice. Some argue that as the CSDP is failing and the US is losing interest in Europe, NATO might have a second chance if Europe commits to it in a more unified way.<sup>79</sup> As that too would be a matter of European security as, with mostly the same members, the EU would have a responsibility to see that its Member States invest enough in NATO defence. However, as the European Parliament stated in its first report on EU–NATO relations in 2009, despite the fact that NATO has a fundamental security role, the

<sup>77</sup> US National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2020: Alternative Worlds*, 66.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> J. Dempsey, ‘Is NATO Turning the Corner?’

EU must also develop its own security and defence capabilities to help with burden-sharing with the non-European allies and also to provide an appropriate response in case of security threats that might concern only EU Member States.<sup>80</sup> And is having a greater ability to do more on its own not what the EU began to pursue after the conflicts in the Western Balkans? However, this ability still seems to be lacking after two decades, and, as one academic put it, CSDP has ‘muddled through in an ad-hoc way’, and Libya, for instance, showed that the EU’s capability to deliver a significant military mission in its neighbourhood is ‘grossly inadequate’<sup>81</sup>.

As this academic also stated, the relationship between CSDP and NATO so far has led to ‘sub-optimal performance on the part of both, to dysfunctional practices at both institutional and operational levels, to many crossed political wires, and to much waste of resources and effort. As long as this continues, neither NATO nor CSDP is likely to achieve its true objectives’.<sup>82</sup> The EU and NATO need to take at least small steps to improve their cooperation, and working together more on issues such as cyber defence could set a good example. In time, good experiences might have spillover effects. However, there is also the need for an agreement on the political level, a joint declaration or agreement to end the competition between the organisations, to define a new EU–NATO strategy and to institutionalise the relationship. Both organisations should recognise their strengths and try to overcome their respective weaknesses through cooperation. Europe could perhaps therefore use both—the EU and NATO—when needed, depending on the framework and the tools that are the most fit for purpose. NATO is set to become less an actor in its own right and more a service provider, especially

since the Americans do not seem to have any inclination to use it. In the end it might not even be so important which tools Europe uses, as long as it does use them, and this also seems to be the view from Washington. ‘Americans don’t care so much about the framework of NATO or CSDP, they just want Europe to deliver’, is the impression that one Brussels think tank member has been given.

In the end the real underlying question is can Europe establish a vision for its future. If Europe as a whole cannot decide, then individual nations will have to keep improvising, creating ad hoc arrangements, and pursuing coalitions of the willing. This can also be a good thing, but to have legitimacy and political weight, it should be done within an official EU framework, meaning that the EU would need to introduce more flexibility and abandon the demand for unanimity in security and defence. There are several regional subgroups that could work as a basis for such endeavours, however, for bigger processes the larger Member States, namely France and Britain, need to be involved. But if this is the future, with no unity for the EU, then how credible will it be as both a global actor and the protector of its citizens? The most important issue, however, is that it makes the decision to act. Otherwise, the biggest threat to Europeans is Europe itself.

<sup>80</sup> European Parliament, *Report on the Role of NATO in the Security Architecture of the EU*, 7.

<sup>81</sup> J. Howorth, ‘CSDP and NATO Post-Libya: Towards the Rubicon?’, 3.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

## Policy recommendations

- Calls from Member States for more integration in security and defence, the consequences of the economic crisis, and also Europe's situation in the world vis-à-vis the US, have created momentum to act that should be used to rethink Europe's security and defence as a whole.
- To be a more unified actor in the world and to ensure smoother interaction with and within NATO, the EU needs to better integrate its CFSP and CSDP. As the EU holds some competence over its Member States, unlike NATO, it should take more responsibility for improving EU–NATO relations.
- Initiatives such as giving the HR powers to cover all foreign policy matters, introducing Qualified Majority Voting and upgrading the EEAS should be discussed as part of the EEAS review and at the December summit, and prepared as proposals from the Commission. There should be an open and honest discussion on Europe's security, leading to a renewed European (Global) Security Strategy, a European White Book, and eventually the necessary changes at the next treaty change.
- Should the HR be given more powers, he/she should also be held more accountable for delivery and following his/her policy programme set out at the beginning of the term, possibly via scrutiny from the European Parliament. The defence summits should become a regular event, a permanent process, with reporting and clear targets, and Member States should be held accountable for their agreements. EU Member States need to act in a more unified way in the global arena, as the only ones who will

gain from a scattered approach are Europe's adversaries. Therefore, any national action in diplomatic and foreign policy should be discussed at the EU level to find more synergies and not undermine common efforts. A common consular system, as well as common representation in global organisations, would increase Europe's credibility as a unified actor.

- The Member States need to spend more on defence; the NATO recommendation of 2% of GDP could be a good reference point. Due to the economic situation this might not be achieved soon, if at all, so it is important to stress the importance of wise investments: the EEAS and the EDA could have a similar procedure with the national defence budgets as the Commission now has with the eurozone members' national budgets, 'a European Defence Semester', to ensure that funds are used in a rational and productive way and with a European dimension in mind. Allocating a share of national defence budgets for European purposes, such as for the EDA, should be discussed.
- The countries in question are allies politically, in security and most via collective defence, so major national defence decisions are not merely a national matter. The general defence planning of the Member States should be discussed together, in the EU ministerial meetings and with the European Defence Semester, to ensure a common direction and security for all.
- As Member States differ in their capabilities and priorities, as there are only a few countries that can actually carry out missions, and as it is not always possible to go further with the whole of the EU, a mechanism of introducing flexibility for coalitions of the willing, but also at the same time maintaining the EU's legitimacy and political support should be considered.

- Unused and unclear EU tools, such as the Permanent Cooperation on Defence, the EUBGs, and the mutual defence and solidarity clauses, should be re-evaluated and assessed together with NATO’s corresponding mechanisms to find more efficient, useful and coherent tools.
- P&S and SD should be carried out together where possible to avoid duplication and to create efficiency: the SD could have the military core, and P&S could add the legal, political and civilian framework, as well as training and other expertise. Best practices can be used as models for further work. The EU and NATO should streamline their capability requirements, list their capability priorities and fill in each other’s blanks. The EU should also decide on the European internal market for the defence industry, and restructure and streamline defence procurement.
- A joint declaration, an institutional agreement, or a common strategic vision is needed for the EU and NATO. This would alleviate the competitive attitudes, and give permission for increased cooperation. As the EU and NATO are ‘owned’ by their members, they should be able to use these organisations as tools as needed. En route towards such an agreement, the organisations should pinpoint their priorities and strengths and weaknesses, define how they can complement each other, define their idea of the best possible form for EU–NATO cooperation, develop a common stance on the comprehensive approach, and also assess options for the collective defence of non-NATO EU members. This work should start at the defence summit in December 2013 with the NATO SG.
- The agreement should also produce a framework for more official meetings at all levels of planning, implementation and policy, starting with the HR and the SG. The ambassadorial meetings should be revitalised and enhance the role of the

NATO–EU Capability Group. All Member States should be allowed to attend EU–NATO meetings and, when appropriate, candidate and partner countries should also be able to join in. Permanent security agreements between the EU/EDA and NATO are needed to enable proper cooperation.

- There needs to be a totally different kind of impetus to solving or at least mitigating the Cyprus–Turkey dispute. A roadmap should be drafted and specific mediators from both the EU and NATO appointed for the negotiations, which will investigate what concessions each party is willing to make if the other party comes to the table—for instance, granting PfP status for Cyprus in exchange for giving Turkey access to the EDA and CSDP. The current situation needs to be condemned as lose-lose for all players in order to find a win-win situation. This should be made a key priority for both organisations. European leaders and especially the EPP need to support their colleagues, but also add pressure, to finally achieve results. It is not just a national matter if it affects the security of us all.
- The EU and NATO need to promote a more open dialogue with citizens to ensure that they have a realistic idea of security and defence matters, of threats and, for instance, of the capabilities of the organisations. This is especially important in countries that are facing national military decline and so far have decided to remain non-aligned.

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