

11. Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council 30 MAY 1997

The member countries of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and participating countries of the Partnership for Peace, determined to raise to a qualitatively new level their political and military cooperation, building upon the success of NACC and PFP, have decided to establish a Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. In doing so, they reaffirm their joint commitment to strengthen and extend peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, on the basis of the shared values and principles which underlie their cooperation, notably those set out in the Framework Document of the Partnership for Peace.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will be a new cooperative mechanism which will form a framework for enhanced efforts in both an expanded political dimension of partnership and practical cooperation under PFP. It will take full account of and complement the respective activities of the OSCE and other relevant institutions such as the European Union, the Western European Union and the Council of Europe.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, as the successor to NACC, will provide the overarching framework for consultations among its members on a broad range of political and security-related issues, as part of a process that will develop through practice. PFP in its enhanced form will be a clearly identifiable element within this flexible framework. Its basic elements will remain valid. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will build upon the existing framework of NATO's outreach activities preserving their advantages to promote cooperation in a transparent way. The expanded political dimension of consultation and cooperation which the Council will offer will allow Partners, if they wish, to develop a direct political relationship individually or in smaller groups with the Alliance. In addition, the Council will provide the framework to afford Partner countries, to the maximum extent possible, increased decision-making opportunities relating to activities in which they participate.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will retain two important principles which have underpinned the success of cooperation between Allies and Partners so far. It will be inclusive, in that opportunities for political consultation and practical cooperation will be open to all Allies and Partners equally.

It will also maintain self-differentiation, in that Partners will be able to decide for themselves the level and areas of cooperation with NATO. Arrangements under the Council will not affect commitments already undertaken bilaterally between Partners and NATO, or commitments in the PfP Framework Document including the consultation provisions of its article 8.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will meet, as required, in different formats:

In plenary session to address political and security-related issues of common concern and to provide information as appropriate on activities with limited participation.

In a limited format between the Alliance and open-ended groups of Partners to focus on functional matters or, on an ad hoc basis, on appropriate regional matters. In such cases, the other EAPC members will be kept informed about the results.

In a limited format between the Alliance and groups of Partners who participate with NATO in a peace support operation or in the Planning and Review Process, or in other cases for which this format has been agreed. The other members of the EAPC will be informed as appropriate.

In an individual format between the Alliance and one Partner.

Structure

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will meet, as a general rule, at Ambassadorial level in Brussels and on a monthly basis.

The Council will meet twice a year at both Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers level; additional meetings can be envisaged as required. It may also meet at the level of Heads of State or Government, when appropriate.

The Council will be chaired by the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Alliance or his Deputy. The representative of a member country will be named President d'Honneur for six months according to modalities to be determined.

The work of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will be supported regularly by the Political-Military Steering Committee (PMSC) and the Political Committee (PC) in their configurations at Alliance with all Partners. On an ad hoc basis an EAPC Senior Political Committee would address issues referred to it, as required.

The EAPC will consider, based on evolving practical experience, whether this support could be improved by an EAPC Steering Committee (EAPC-SC) which would integrate the functions of the former enlarged Political Committee and the PMSC in NACC/PfP format.

The PMSC will meet, as appropriate, in an Alliance with individual Partners or Alliance with groups of Partners (e.g PARP) configuration. The PMSC and PC with Partners will meet at least once a month, or more frequently if required. Other NATO Committees will expand opportunities for work with Partners on cooperation issues and will inform the EAPC on their work in this regard. Their activities will become part of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council framework. An important part of this framework will be new opportunities for Partner consultations with the Military Committee. The Military Committee will also play a major role in the expanded range of opportunities for consultation and cooperation provided by the future support structure for the EAPC.

Substance

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council will adopt at the time of its establishment the NACC Work Plan for Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation and will replace it with an EAPC Work Plan as part of its future work. The activities included in the Partnership Work Programme (PWP) will also come under the general purview of the EAPC.

Specific subject areas on which Allies and Partners would consult, in the framework of the EAPC, might include but not be limited to: political and security related matters; crisis management; regional matters; arms control issues; nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) proliferation and defence issues; international terrorism; defence planning and budgets and defence policy and strategy; security impacts of economic developments. There will also be scope for consultations and cooperation on issues such as: civil emergency and disaster preparedness; armaments cooperation under the aegis of the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD); nuclear safety; defence related environmental issues; civil-military coordination of air traffic management and control; scientific cooperation; and issues related to peace support operations.

Eligibility

Present NACC members and PfP participating countries automatically become members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council if they so desire. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council is open to the accession of other OSCE participating states able and willing to accept its basic principles and to contribute to its goals. New members may join the EAPC by joining the Partnership for Peace through signing the PfP Framework Document and by stating their acceptance of the concept of the EAPC as laid out in this document. The EAPC would be invited to endorse the accession of its new members.

(...)

ABOUT THE EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

29 May 1997

The Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was drawn up by representatives of the members of the Alliance and Partners as a joint effort, based on a set of agreed principles. Its purpose is to lay out the main characteristics of the EAPC and to form the basis for launching the new Council.

The introductory paragraphs lay out the principles which will guide the activities of the EAPC.

The EAPC, building upon the success of NACC and PfP, will be a framework for an expanded political dimension of Partnership and for practical cooperation under PfP. The basic elements of PfP will remain valid; an enhanced PfP will be a distinct element within the overall flexible framework of EAPC.

The EAPC will replace the NACC and provide the framework for consultations on a broad range of political and security-related issues, while taking full account of the work of the OSCE and other European security institutions.

The EAPC will promote cooperation in a transparent way; it will allow Partners who so wish to establish a direct political relationship with the Alliance individually or in smaller groups.

The EAPC will provide the framework for giving Partners increased decision-making opportunities relating to activities in which they participate.

The EAPC retains the principle of self-differentiation and the principle that opportunities for consultation and cooperation are open to all Allies and Partners equally.

Subsequent paragraphs of the Basic Document describe the formats, structure, substance, and eligibility for membership of the EAPC.

The EAPC will have the flexibility to meet in a variety of formats, according to need.

It will meet monthly in Brussels, in plenary session at Ambassadorial level; and twice a year at the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers. Additional meetings could be scheduled, if needed, and the Council could also meet at the level of Heads of State and Government.

NATO committees will support the work of the EAPC. Provision for consideration of adjusting this support in the light of experience is also mentioned. There will be new opportunities for Partner consultations with the Military Committee within this framework.

The EAPC will consult on an expanded range of political and security related issues. An extensive but non-limiting list of such issues is included in the Basic Document. They are as follows: political and security related matters; crisis management; regional matters; arms control issues; nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) proliferation and defence issues; international terrorism; defence planning and budgets and defence policy and strategy; and security impacts of economic developments. There will also be scope for consultations and cooperation on issues such as: civil emergency and disaster preparedness; armaments cooperation under the aegis of the CNAD; nuclear safety; defence related environmental issues; civil-military coordination of air traffic management and control; scientific cooperation; and issues related to peace support operations.

All current NACC members and PfP participating countries may automatically become members of the EAPC if they so wish. Other OSCE participating states able and willing to accept the principles and goals of the EAPC may become members by joining the Partnership for Peace, through signing the PfP Framework Document and by stating their acceptance of the concept of the EAPC as stated in the Basic Document.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council

The development and enhancement of dialogue and partnership with Cooperation Partners forms an integral part of NATO's Strategic Concept. The creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) at the end of 1991 established a framework for dialogue and cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the newly independent states emerging from the former Soviet Union. Membership of the NACC increased from 25 countries in 1991 to 40 countries by 1997. Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, as participants in Partnership for Peace (PfP) (see Fact Sheet), had observer status in the NACC.

Building upon the success of NACC and PfP, allied and Cooperation Partner Foreign Ministers inaugurated the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) at their meeting in Sintra, Portugal, on 30 May 1997, with a view to raising political and military cooperation among their countries to a qualitatively new level. The Ministers approved an EAPC Basic Document developed in close cooperation between the Alliance and Partners. In so doing, Ministers reaffirmed their joint commitment to strengthening and extending peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and to cooperating to this end on the basis of shared values and principles, notably those set out in the Framework Document of the Partnership for Peace. The EAPC, as the successor to NACC, provides the overarching framework for political and security-related consultations and for enhanced cooperation under PfP.

The expanded political dimension of consultation and cooperation which the EAPC offers, allows Partners, if they wish, to develop a direct political relationship with the Alliance. In addition, the EAPC provides the framework for giving Partner countries increased decision-making opportunities relating to activities in which they participate.

The EAPC meets twice a year at both Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers level and, as a general rule, at Ambassadorial level in Brussels on a monthly basis. It may also meet at the level of Heads of State or Government, when appropriate.

Membership

There are 44 EAPC members, including all 16 NATO member countries plus:

Albania	Azerbaijan	Turkmenistan
Hungary	Latvia	Czech Republic
Slovenia	Tajikistan	Poland
Armenia	Belarus	Ukraine
Kazakstan	Lithuania	Estonia
Sweden	the former Yugoslav	Romania
Austria	Republic of	Uzbekistan
Kyrgyz Republic	Macedonia	Finland
Switzerland	Bulgaria	Russia
	Moldova	Georgia
		Slovakia

Activities

At the time of its establishment, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council adopted the existing NACC Work Plan for Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation, which includes regular consultations on political and security-related matters as well as other activities mentioned below. By the time of the 1997 Autumn EAPC Meeting, a new Work Plan will be drawn up to implement the EAPC Basic Document. Initially, the EAPC Work Plan can be expected to follow a similar pattern to the work of the NACC and is likely to include the following topics: political consultations on specific political and security related matters such as crisis management; regional matters; arms control issues; nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) proliferation and defence issues; international terrorism; defence planning and budgets and defence policy and strategy; security impacts of economic developments. There will also be scope for consultations and cooperation on issues such as civil emergency and disaster preparedness; armaments cooperation under the aegis of the NATO Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD); nuclear safety; defence related environmental issues; civil-military coordination of air traffic management and control; scientific cooperation; and issues related to peace support operations. Additional areas for cooperation within the framework of the EAPC may be added subsequently.

Cooperation on defence-related issues, in the military field and in the sphere of peacekeeping (including exercises) will continue as Partnership for Peace activities.

Further examples of continuing activities in the framework of the EAPC, focusing on consultation and cooperation, are as follows:

Economic issues

The Economic Committee's work with Cooperation Partners focuses on defence budgets and their relationship with the economy; security aspects of economic developments; and defence conversion issues. Expert meetings, seminars and workshops are held to address these subjects. Databases and pilot projects are being developed in the field of defence conversion with a view to practical application in Cooperation Partner countries. The annual NATO Colloquium on economic developments in EAPC countries also brings together experts for exchanges of views on relevant economic topics.

Information matters

In the field of information, the NATO Committee on Information and Cultural Relations meets with representatives of Cooperation Partners annually to discuss the implementation of cooperative information activities. Cooperative programmes organised by the NATO Office of Information and Press include visits, co-sponsored seminars and conferences, publications and Democratic Institutions Fellowships. Assistance is provided by Missions of Cooperation Partner countries in Brussels and by Contact Point Embassies of NATO countries in Partner capitals.

Scientific and environmental issues

NATO's Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) meets with Cooperation Partners at least once a year. An extensive programme of cooperative activities in scientific and environmental affairs focuses on such priority areas as disarmament technologies, environmental security, high technology, science and technology policy, and computer networking. In addition, NATO Science Fellowships are awarded to both NATO and Cooperation Partner scientists for study or research. Several hundred scientists from Cooperation Partner countries now participate in NATO's scientific and environmental programmes.
