

**15. EU-NATO ON DECLARATION ON ESDP  
16 DECEMBER 2002**

**THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION,**

Welcome the strategic partnership established between the European Union and NATO in crisis management, founded on our shared values, the indivisibility of our security and our determination to tackle the challenges of the new Century;

Welcome the continued important role of NATO in crisis management and conflict prevention, and reaffirm that NATO remains the foundation of the collective defence of its members;

Welcome the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), whose purpose is to add to the range of instruments already at the European Union's disposal for crisis management and conflict prevention in support of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the capacity to conduct EU-led crisis management operations, including military operations where NATO as a whole is not engaged;

Reaffirm that a stronger European role will help contribute to the vitality of the Alliance, specifically in the field of crisis management;

Reaffirm their determination to strengthen their capabilities;

**Declare that the relationship between the European Union and NATO will be founded on the following principles:**

Partnership: ensuring that the crisis management activities of the two organisations are mutually reinforcing, while recognising that the European Union and NATO are organisations of a different nature;

Effective mutual consultation, dialogue, cooperation and transparency;

Equality and due regard for the decision-making autonomy and interests of the European Union and NATO;

Respect for the interests of the Member States of the European Union and NATO;

Respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which underlie the Treaty on European Union and the Washington Treaty, in order to provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment, based on the commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any other through the threat or use of force, and also based on respect for treaty rights and obligations as well as refraining from unilateral actions;

Coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the military capability requirements common to the two organisations;  
To this end:

The European Union is ensuring the fullest possible involvement of non-EU European members of NATO within ESDP, implementing the relevant Nice arrangements, as set out in the letter from the EU High Representative on 13 December 2002;

NATO is supporting ESDP in accordance with the relevant Washington Summit decisions, and is giving the European Union, inter alia and in particular, assured access to NATO's planning capabilities, as set out in the NAC decisions on 13 December 2002;

Both organisations have recognised the need for arrangements to ensure the coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the capability requirements common to the two organisations, with a spirit of openness.