

- Background -

EU-NATO: THE FRAMEWORK FOR PERMANENT RELATIONS AND BERLIN PLUS

1. The comprehensive framework for EU-NATO permanent relations, which the Secretary General/High Representative and NATO Secretary General concluded on 17 March 2003, was a landmark in the relations between the two organisations.
2. This framework of relations built upon NATO's Washington Summit in 1999 and the conclusions of the European Council at Nice in December 2000 as well as the EU-NATO joint declaration of 16 December 2002. The EU has established adequate modalities to involve closely in EU-led operations the non-EU European NATO members. Five countries belong to this group: Bulgaria, Romania, Iceland, Norway and Turkey (the first two are, in addition, candidates for accession to the EU).
3. The EU and NATO have built a genuine strategic partnership that is now well established and deep-rooted. For this partnership to work, both organisations ensure effective consultation, cooperation and transparency at all times. This partnership is also about ensuring efficient crisis management and working together in order to identify the best possible response to a crisis. For this purpose, the EU and NATO agreed on mutual **crisis consultation arrangements** that are geared towards an efficient and rapid decision-making in each organisation in the presence of a crisis. Such EU-NATO consultations involve the EU's Political and Security Committee and NATO's North Atlantic Council, the EU and NATO Military Committees as well as the Secretary General/High Representative and NATO Secretary General.
4. In order to foster these consultations by guaranteeing a secure physical environment and enabling the exchange of classified documents and information, the EU and NATO concluded an **agreement on the security of information**.
5. When a given crisis gives rise to an EU-led operation making use of NATO assets and capabilities, the EU and NATO will draw on the so-called "**Berlin Plus arrangements**". These arrangements cover three main elements that are directly connected to operations and which can be combined: EU access to NATO planning, NATO European command options and use of NATO assets and capabilities.

6. First, NATO guarantees that the EU has access to NATO planning. At the early stages before the EU even knows whether an operation will eventually take place, this may involve a NATO contribution (by SHAPE in Mons) to the work carried out by the EU Military Staff on the definition of options (these are known as "military strategic options"). Subsequently, should the operation take place with use of NATO assets and capabilities, NATO will provide the operational planning required.
7. Second, the EU may request that NATO makes available a NATO European command option for an EU-led military operation. In this case, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) is the primary candidate for EU Operation Commander. He will remain at SHAPE where he establishes the EU OHQ. The remaining command elements determined by the EU (such as the EU Force Commander and EU Force Headquarters deployed in theatre or the EU Component Commands) may either be provided by NATO or by EU Member States.
8. Thirdly, the EU may request the use of NATO assets and capabilities. To this end, NATO has established a first list of its assets and capabilities that, in strong likelihood, NATO would decide to make available to the EU should the EU need them. In addition, NATO has defined a number of principles as well as financial and legal considerations applicable to the release of its assets and capabilities to the EU. On this basis, a specific EU-NATO agreement setting out the conditions for use of NATO assets and capabilities is drawn up for a given operation. Such agreement provides in particular for a possible recall of assets due to unforeseen circumstances, for example due to the emergence of a NATO Article 5 contingency (this means an attack against a NATO member).
9. Another important element of the EU-NATO relation is related to the development of military capabilities. More specifically, it is about how the EU and NATO and their Member States should develop in a mutually reinforcing way and deliver the military capabilities they need for crisis management. It addresses the way in which the EU and NATO could fill in those capabilities where both organisations have the same requirements and similar shortfalls. Work is currently underway in order to improve the synergy between the EU and NATO in certain capabilities areas where both have pilot projects.

10. EU-NATO relations proved to work well in connection with the first ever EU-led military operation. This was Operation **CONCORDIA** in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in which the EU used NATO assets and capabilities and where the EU Operation Commander was Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR).

 11. Before and during the second EU-led military operation, **ARTEMIS** in the Democratic Republic of Congo -an operation conducted autonomously by the EU- NATO was regularly and timely informed of the EU's intentions, in full respect of the spirit and of the letter of the crisis consultation arrangements.

 12. The CME-CMX03, a joint EU-NATO crisis management exercise (19-25 November 2003), provides further experience to consolidate EU-NATO relations in crisis management.
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