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Second progress report
on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and
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On 6 December 2016, EU and NATO Councils endorsed a common set of 42 proposals for the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, together with the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Responding to the tasking by the Ministers of both Organizations to report on a bi-annual basis, the first progress report on the implementation of the proposals was submitted to the respective Councils in June 2017.

This is the second progress report covering the period July-December 2017.

In the second semester, EU-NATO cooperation - which constitutes an integral pillar of work aimed at strengthening European security and defence, together with the implementation of the EU Global Strategy and the European Defence Action Plan - has been further enhanced and deepened. Our pragmatic and practical cooperation illustrates the new quality, intensity and dynamics in our engagement as manifested in our June progress report.

Since the first progress report, on the basis of the mandate by the two Councils, implementation of the common set of proposals has been ongoing across all working strands. Cooperation has indeed become the established norm with constant interaction between the two staffs.

As stressed in the June report, the degree of progress depends on the specific nature of the individual actions: while some are focused on concrete short-term deliverables, others are more process-oriented and with a longer-term perspective requiring continued implementation. This has created an environment that allows the EU and NATO to pursue cooperation at staff to staff level on all key dimensions of the relationship.

In the period between July and December 2017, the following main achievements can be highlighted:

Countering hybrid threats

In the current security environment, our cooperation on countering hybrid threats remains of key importance.

The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki has been set up and is now operational: 12 Member States and Allies, as well as EU and NATO staffs have joined the Centre's Steering Board to date. The participation of the High Representative/Vice President and

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the Secretary General of NATO at the official inauguration ceremony on 2 October sent a strong message.

The first Parallel and Coordinated Analysis has been completed and an unclassified summary has been developed. New Parallel and Coordinated Analyses are planned for 2018. The EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the NATO Hybrid Analytical Branch are in discussions about how best to exploit the capability of the new European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats through exchanging publicly available information. Consultations on strategic communication support for Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia continue.

Staff-to-staff contacts continue between NATO and EU resilience experts. In September 2017, an EU-NATO Resilience Workshop brought together experts in critical strategic sectors to exchange information on respective activities and explore proposals for further work, particularly in the area of critical infrastructure protection. Through regular contacts staffs continue to exchange information on NATO's baseline requirements for national resilience and their integration in the NATO Defence Planning Process. In the context of NATO's Resilience Advisory Support teams, the EU participated with observer status in NATO's advisory mission to Romania. Interaction between staffs also continued to ensure that the implications of hybrid threats are addressed in a coherent manner in the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP) and the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP).

Operational cooperation including maritime issues

Cooperation and coordination at tactical and operational levels between EUNAVFOR Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian have continued through regular information sharing and logistical support, including refuelling. In July 2017, NATO Allies agreed to support EUNAVFOR Sophia in the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 2236 (2016) and 2357 (2017) related to the arms embargo on Libya.

The lessons learnt seminar building on experience from the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean and on the interactions in the Mediterranean successfully took place in Brussels at the end of June, co-organised by Norway and the Netherlands in cooperation with the NATO Defence College (NDC) and the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS).

Cyber security and defence

The cyber threat landscape has changed drastically, imposing the need for a strategic approach to threats and challenges in order to protect the well-being of our citizens.

Further exchange of concepts and doctrines is under preparation. Information on existing and planned training and education courses has been exchanged in order to harmonise training requirements and to open, where applicable, respective training courses. For example, NATO's complete education and individual training syllabus featuring NATO's cyber defence courses was

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shared with the EU. Several coordination meetings to discuss a taxonomy for a severity scheme of cyber incident response also took place. Exchanges also took place in the area of Cyber Hygiene.

NATO staff has been invited as observer to attend the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA)'s Cyber Europe Exercise in 2018. EU cyber defence staff has been upgraded to the level of participant in NATO's Cyber Coalition exercise and NATO also has approved the involvement of ENISA as a visitor. Interaction and information exchange between NATO and the EU on cyber aspects took place during the CMX17 and TIDE SPRINT exercises.

Defence capabilities

Coherence of output and timelines continues to be pursued between the NDPP and the CDP. EU staff has been invited to attend the bilateral consultations of a number of NATO Allies that are also EU Members States. A number of NATO Partners invited EU staff to attend NATO's Planning and Review Process (PARP) meetings. In this context, the revision of the CDP in 2018 will benefit from the information gathered. NATO staff has been invited to CARD bilateral meetings of a number of EU Member States that are also NATO Allies. Furthermore, regular staff-to-staff contacts take place to ensure avoidance of increasing the reporting burden on EU Member States and NATO Allies that belong to both organisations with regard to the CDP and CARD and also the NDPP and reporting on the implementation of the Defence Investment Pledge.

Regular staff-to-staff contacts also take place in order to avoid unnecessary duplication on multinational projects and initiatives and de-conflict multinational projects/programmes developed within the Pooling & Sharing and Smart Defence initiatives. On Air-to-Air refuelling (AAR), regular experts meetings continue apace with objective to increase interoperability. On Military Aviation, following the approval of the Military Aviation Strategies, the respective implementation plans were endorsed in July 2017. Furthermore, reciprocal participation of EU and NATO staffs at respective meetings ensures avoidance of duplication and strengthens the visibility on respective activities. On standardization, cooperation is channelled through the Material Standardization Harmonization Team. On Airworthiness, EU and NATO staffs contributed with inputs to respective technical documents aiming to ensure coherence.

Defence industry and research

Interactions focused on providing mutual updates at staff level on industry related matters and Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) access to defence procurement and cross-border supply chains. Future exchanges will have the main objective of addressing respective practices on how to attract innovative companies including SMEs to the defence sector. Staff to staff contacts took place also in the field of innovation.

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Exercises

The first parallel and coordinated exercise EU PACE17/CMX17, held in September and October 2017, was one of the most concrete and visible outcomes of the implementation of the common set of proposals. Intensive staff interaction took place across all four areas of the Hybrid Playbooks: Early Warning/ Situational Awareness; Strategic Communications; Cyber defence; Crisis Prevention and Response. The scale of interaction between EU and NATO staffs during PACE17 is without precedent for more than 10 years. It was also the first time that: NATO staff participated at a Presidency-chaired Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangement (IPCR) round-table; EU staff participated in the discussions of the North Atlantic Council and NATO's Civil Emergency Planning Committee; an EU crisis-cell presence was established at NATO HQ during the conduct phase; and daily staff-to-staff video-conferences took place with regard to the crisis and respective actions anticipated or taken.

The Lessons learned process is ongoing and its outcome will feed into the planning of the 2018 parallel and coordinated exercise with the EU in the lead. Lessons learned focus on several aspects like the interaction between the EU and NATO crisis response mechanisms and the challenges related to the exchange of classified information between the two staffs, including the need for secure communications, notably with the aim to ensure, in the future, swift and secure exchange, in full respect of the need for originator's control. Further staff-to-staff discussions are envisaged to resolve identified issues.

The first planning meeting for PACE 18 is set to take place in mid-December 2017 and, in accordance with the PACE concept, NATO staff will be invited.

Defence and security capacity building

Intensive staff consultations on assisting partners in building their capacities and fostering their resilience, in particular in the Western Balkans and in our Eastern and Southern neighbourhood led to the identification of areas of common interest and initial deliverables for each of the three pilot countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia and the Republic of Moldova) as a first step.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, staff began exploring several concrete areas of cooperation, including exchange of information on strategic communication and public awareness-raising, civil protection, small arms and light weapons, and cyber security and defence. In the Republic of Moldova, staffs are exploring concrete activities in the following areas: strategic communication, cybersecurity and defence, ammunition storage and safety. Staffs invited each other to their media outreach activities. In Tunisia, the initial focus is on addressing Chemical Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) issues, countering improvised explosive devices (C-IED), as well as training and education.

The EU adopted a financing decision in July 2017 to allocate €2 million for 2017 as a contribution to the NATO Building Integrity Programme, which aims at reducing the risk of corruption and

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promoting good governance in the defence and security sectors. The financing will cover Neighbourhood countries on a voluntary basis, and is pending on NATO completing the six-pillar assessment.

Strengthening political dialogue between EU and NATO

Mutual invitations to relevant ministerial meetings have become established practice. The High Representative/Vice-President participated at the working dinner of NATO Ministers of Defence in November and will attend the meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in December. The Secretary General of NATO attended the informal meeting of EU Ministers of Defence and, as an observer, took part in the EU Ministerial Table Top Exercise 'CYBRID' co-organized by the Estonian Presidency and the European Defence Agency in Tallinn in September. He attended the EU Foreign Affairs Councils (Defence) in November.

The second informal PSC-NAC meeting took place on 30 November 2017.

Cross-briefings on issues of mutual interest continued, including on European security and defence.

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Cooperation between NATO and the EU continues to be implemented in line with the mandates given by the EU and NATO Councils. Daily work is carried through staff-to-staff contacts and continued dialogue.

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