



NATO Parliamentary Assembly

European Parliament

Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

JOINT MEETING

With the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA)

in association with the Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF)

SUMMARY

“Countering new threats together - A new era of EU-NATO cooperation”

Inter-Parliamentary Meeting

European Parliament

4-5 June 2018

Monday 4 June 2018

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY EVA KAILI, CHAIR OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION TO THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND PAOLO ALLI, PRESIDENT OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY, CO-CHAIPERSONS OF THE MEETING

1. **Eva Kaili** (European Parliament) opened her remarks by noting the role the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) plays in fostering stronger NATO-EU relations. She then introduced the Vice-President of the European Parliament Ioan Mircea Pascu and the President of the NATO PA Paolo Alli. Ms Kaili remarked on the importance of NATO-EU cooperation in recent years; saying that, as a Greek member of the European Parliament, she welcomed the positive impact it was having on the challenges coming from the South. She concluded by stating she hoped for a good outcome from the NATO Summit in Brussels in July 2018.

2. NATO PA President **Paolo Alli** (Italy) opened his remarks by thanking all guests for their participation, stressing the importance of parliamentary action as a useful complement to governmental diplomacy on key questions such as NATO-EU cooperation. He also thanked the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), which had been a long-time supporter of closer NATO PA-European Parliament cooperation.

3. Mr Alli then briefly mentioned the challenging global security environment, saying that no organisation or nation can handle it alone. As such, closer NATO-EU cooperation was vital. By confirming that NATO is the cornerstone for European security, the 2016 EU Global Strategy worked to dispel concerns about duplicated efforts or rivalries between the two organisations. The NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit took cooperation between the two organizations to unprecedented levels by jumpstarting the new NATO-EU initiatives the seminar was seeking to examine. Mr Alli noted the importance of informed politicians to maintain the necessary political will to follow through on and sustain these initiatives. He also mentioned the NATO PA's declaration on *Affirming NATO's Unity and Credibility at the Brussels Summit*, which was adopted at the Assembly's Spring Session in Warsaw in May 2018, and which he would present at the July Summit of NATO's Heads of State and Government. Among others, the declaration addressed the issue of NATO-EU cooperation, which would be one of the five key items on the agenda of the July 2018 NATO Brussels Summit.

4. Mr Alli concluded by expressing sincere hope that any political disagreements between Allies would neither weaken the NATO-EU partnership, nor fracture the transatlantic link.

OPENING ADDRESS BY IOAN MIRCEA PASCU, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

5. **Ioan Mircea Pascu** (European Parliament) started by highlighting the sub-title of the joint meeting "new threats in a new era"; to which he said the addition of classical conventional threats with new, often asymmetrical and dynamic threats is creating a more dangerous and less predictable international security environment.

6. Mr Pascu noted recent European efforts to strengthen common defence and security, mentioning the recent Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) initiative and the European Defence Fund (EDF) as examples. The next steps in his view should include the adoption of an EU White Book on Defence and the transformation of the Sub-Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE) to a full-fledged Committee within the European Parliament structure.

7. Mr Pascu concluded by mentioning the report on EU-NATO relations he recently authored and which underlines the fact that, in spite of all the differences, starting from the fact the EU is not a military organization, both organizations are founded on common values. He expressed his hope for the continuation of strong transatlantic relations.

SESSION CHAIRED BY EVA KAILI: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH PEDRO SERRANO, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR CSDP (COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY) AND CRISIS RESPONSE AT THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS) AND ROSE GOTTEMOELLER, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO

8. **Pedro Serrano** stressed the importance of NATO-EU cooperation in countering new threats. Revitalized NATO-EU cooperation, he said, was made possible by the Joint Declaration signed at the Warsaw Summit, which allowed constant engagement between the staff of the two organizations, who can now pursue a common agenda.

9. Mr Serrano also said the strengthening of EU capabilities matters to NATO too. The EU's priority now, he continued, was to enhance the capabilities of its member states, and it would do so through projects such as the EDF, PESCO and CARD (Coordinated Annual Review on Defence).

10. According to Mr Serrano, the key concern today was how to move forward together effectively. In this spirit, he welcomed EU-NATO cooperation on military mobility, which would help modernise infrastructure and simplify regulatory issues. Mr Serrano also identified hybrid threats as a key area of cooperation: he mentioned the Joint EU-NATO Centre of Excellence in Helsinki, the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell which was working in cooperation with NATO's Intelligence and Security division on coordinated assessment and sharing of information on attribution, and the parallel and coordinated exercises NATO and the EU took part in together as examples.

11. Mr Serrano further highlighted the positive example set by Operation Sea Guardian and Operation Sophia of NATO-EU operational cooperation. He identified Ukraine and Georgia, as well as Iraq as countries where NATO and the EU could take part in joint actions as well. He also mentioned counterterrorism as well as women, peace and security initiatives as issues where further cooperation might be beneficial.

12. Mr Serrano concluded by expressing his hopes for positive outcomes from the upcoming European Council meetings and the NATO Summit in July, which, he said, should lead to another joint declaration based on the principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, reciprocity, and respect for the decision-making autonomy of each organisation and for the sovereign interests of individual member states.

13. NATO Deputy Secretary General **Rose Gottemoeller** started by reminding the audience that 94% of the EU population lives in a NATO member states: as such, it was widely accepted that both organisations face the same security challenges. She then recalled the projects introduced by the NATO-EU Joint Declaration. Specific examples she mentioned were cooperation on hybrid, military mobility, as well as women, peace and security.

14. Ms Gottemoeller then welcomed the recent progress made in European defence, which she noted can strengthen the transatlantic bond by helping with the burden sharing issue – a point which has been stressed by Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. She continued by underscoring two key premises for NATO-EU cooperation: first, the EU should complement and not duplicate existing NATO efforts; and, second, forces and capabilities generated by the EU should be made available to NATO, as nations only have one single set of forces. She noted that stronger EU defence also needed to include non-EU NATO allies to the fullest extent possible, reminding the audience that

both the United States and Canada make significant contributions to European security: After Brexit 80% of NATO spending will be by non-EU member states, and 3 out of 4 Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) Battlegroups will be non-EU led. As such, NATO defence in the future will rely increasingly on non-EU countries, making their inclusion in EU defence projects important.

15. Regarding the upcoming NATO Brussels Summit, Ms Gottemoeller expressed hope for a new joint declaration between NATO and the EU, noting however that a lot still needed to be done to implement existing common proposals.

16. A key priority for the Brussels Summit would be to adopt measures to reinforce quickly NATO's deterrent presence in the East. This effort would be articulated around three pillars: reinforcement, readiness and military mobility.

17. Ms Gottemoeller added that NATO's approach to Russia remained based on the principles of deterrence and dialogue. A further meeting of the NATO-Russia Council had taken place the previous week.

18. Ms Gottemoeller also underlined the progress made on projecting stability in NATO's neighbourhood, through a variety of means such as training and capacity building in Ukraine, Georgia, Jordan, Iraq, Afghanistan among others.

19. A further main priority for the Summit would be modernising NATO's command structure via the establishment of two new Headquarters – an Atlantic Command based in Norfolk, United States, and a logistics command based in Germany.

20. To conclude, Ms Gottemoeller mentioned the progress made on burden sharing, one of the key issues for the current US administration. Burden sharing included three dimensions: defence spending, capabilities and contributions to mission and operations. She expressed the hope that many more states would increase their contributions on these three fronts, and said she looked forward to building momentum for the 70th anniversary of NATO in 2019.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

21. **Julio Miranda Calha** (Portugal) asked what the main obstacles for strengthened NATO-EU cooperation were. He also requested clarifications on what could be done to improve the NATO-EU presence in the South.

22. Ms Gottemoeller said the main obstacle towards increased cooperation was actually insufficient human resources. She added that as there were 74 actions to implement in the common set of proposals for NATO-EU cooperation, some were inevitably going to be moved back in the queue. A further challenge was to ensure respect for the three principles mentioned earlier – complementarity, force generation taking into account the fact that nations only have one single set of forces and the inclusion of non-EU NATO Allies.

23. Regarding the South, Ms Gottemoeller first acknowledged that projecting stability was one of NATO's priorities, for which concrete deliverables were expected at the Brussels Summit. While NATO and the EU have worked together increasingly, more cooperation was needed still. As an example, Ms Gottemoeller said economic and development assistance were not within NATO's mandate, which meant NATO partners in the Middle East and North Africa region had to look to the EU to improve efforts in this respect.

24. Mr Serrano stressed he thought the desire to avoid duplication should be adapted to context, as the EU might need to duplicate some NATO efforts for functional autonomy. He cautioned that such duplication, should it happen, would not be an impediment to cooperation. The priority therefore should be to avoid *unnecessary* duplication.

25. He further noted that the EU had a mirror interest to that of NATO to ensure the involvement of non-NATO EU members in the cooperation. In his view, the main goal for both organisations should be to avoid opening space for interpretation, i.e. to send a clear message about how each organisation responds to citizens' needs.

26. Lastly, he confirmed that the lack of human resources was a pressing problem making it difficult to implement all the proposals and solving this problem would require an increased budget.

27. **Ojars Eriks Kalnins** (Latvia) brought up the rise of populism in Europe, saying it could be manipulated by external actors, and asked to what extent the EU and NATO were working to prevent this.

28. Ms Gottemoeller mentioned the two centres of excellence in Helsinki and Riga that are helping both the EU and NATO gain an understanding of hybrid and asymmetric threats. She also said the two centres had been and would continue to work in synergy rather than duplicate each other's efforts.

29. Mr Serrano seconded Ms Gottemoeller's remarks on the importance of the Centre of Excellence in Helsinki, though the Centre was still only a recent institution which would need time to finetune its work. The EU's work focused on increasing the resilience of member states. However, to fight hybrid threats, identification was essential to be able to adopt suitable countermeasures. Mr Serrano thus called on NATO and the EU to come together on this important aspect.

30. **Charles Tannock** (European Parliament) said he believed the two speakers might have underestimated the importance of Brexit for the future of transatlantic relations, particularly in light of the current tariffs implemented by the US administration against its own allies.

31. Ms Gottemoeller agreed with Mr Tannock but remained hopeful the tariffs were part of a wider negotiation scheme envisaged by the current US administration. Mr Serrano in turn hoped that the United Kingdom would remain loyal to their promise of continuing cooperation in the defence sector. Indeed, the EU remained open to external partners in the field of defence, and the United Kingdom would always be welcome to participate.

32. **Aydin Ünal** (Turkey) remarked there were certain threats to European values, such as islamophobia, racism, and populism, which seem to remain unaddressed. He asked what steps were being taken to prevent a collapse of European values.

33. Ms Gottemoeller argued hybrid warfare tactics, such as propaganda, could divide societies by emphasising internal differences. She said nations must address the use of these methods through strategic communications and tackling misinformation. Mr Serrano believed explaining the root causes of xenophobia as well as developing effective counter-narratives may be effective tools to tackle this issue.

34. **Ahmet Berat Conkar** (Turkey) expressed concern about the reinforcement of Russia's nuclear arsenal and asked what the strategies against a potential nuclear attack were.

35. Ms Gottemoeller said that NATO must act in the entire spectrum of deterrence in order to thwart any adversary. At the same time, NATO recognised that a nuclear attack remains an extremely remote possibility. Mr Serrano remarked the use of nuclear weapons was a red line and should always be prevented via transparency and dialogue.

36. NATO PA President Paolo Alli asked two questions: how to make the NATO Hub for the South more effective; and what progress could be expected towards the integration of countries in the Western Balkans into the Euro-Atlantic community.

37. Ms Gottemoeller said the Hub's specificity was that it combined military and civilian expertise and as such provided a good platform for further NATO-EU cooperation. The Hub would be front and centre in Summit discussions, and the Alliance was working towards ensuring the Hub reached full operational capability. Mr Serrano welcomed discussions on possible ways for the EU to cooperate with the Hub. Regarding the Western Balkans, he mentioned that the recent Western Balkans Summit had sent clear signals, and that NATO and EU enlargement processes were mutually reinforcing.

38. **Christophe Lacroix** (Belgium) asked for clarification on the measures taken to build common knowledge on cyber threats, and whether synergies between the two organizations have been considered.

39. Ms Gottemoeller mentioned NATO's industry partnership, which was aimed at gathering information on cyberspace and sharing them with member states and industry players. The partnership was also meant to allow member states to communicate quickly and work together on strengthening cyber-defence. She said innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence, or cryptography had both good and bad potential consequences, and that cooperation was the best way to understand the security implications. Mr Serrano said that while the EU had been active in enhancing cyber-security, cyber-defence was a new area for the EU, and that the separation between the two was not clearly delimited. The EU's mandate on cyber-defence currently focused on the protection of its own networks and assistance to member states. Within PESCO, nations had suggested the establishment of cyber rapid response teams.

40. **Carlos Costa Neves** (Portugal) first asked whether the EU was aiming to have autonomous military capabilities; second, whether the two organizations had the same definition of the South; and third, whether competition in the defence industry may lead to interoperability issues within the EU.

41. Ms Gottemoeller said NATO was attentive to the threats coming from south, meaning the Maghreb, the Sahel, and beyond and was working to broaden bi-lateral and multilateral cooperation and partnerships in the region, particularly with the African Union. She believed cooperation with the EU would allow NATO to overcome resource constraints to tackle issues in the broader area more effectively.

42. Turning to Mr Costa Neves' question about interoperability, Ms Gottemoeller replied that interoperability is in the DNA of the NATO Alliance. Further improvements were needed, however, even in simple areas such as radio communications. She agreed that there could be a concern when equipment came from outside the Alliance.

43. Mr Serrano said the EU's engagement in the Sahel provided a good example of the EU's contribution to security and defence. There, the EU was supporting governments, funding development, assisting with the development of security structures, and with regional efforts. He listed countries in which the EU had deployed personnel; these included, among others, assistance to local forces in Mali to fight terrorism and organised crime; a counter-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia; assistance to the government of national accord in Libya in the reform of security institutions; and a maritime mission in the Central Mediterranean. The EU also supported regional forces and institutions as well as United Nations missions.

44. Generally, the EU's contribution to defence and security included five pillars:

- cooperation on capability development;
- the development of crisis management structures;
- defence policy;
- engagement with partners; and
- operations.

45. The EU tried to promote an integrated approach in its support to partners, whether countries wanted to focus on security, capacity building, or trade issues.

46. Ms Kaili asked whether there were ways to improve information exchange between Allies.

47. According to Ms Gottemoeller, this was a field where a lot more could be done. NATO-EU cooperation could make information exchanges more effective. Mr Serrano said better information exchange would also improve interoperability amongst member states.

SESSION CHAIRED BY PAOLO ALLI: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAN BROEKS, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NATO INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF

48. **Lieutenant General Jan Broeks** was generally quite satisfied with the current state of NATO-EU relations but noted there was still opportunity for further improvement, including in staff-to-staff cooperation.

49. General Broeks stressed that military mobility was one key area where NATO-EU cooperation was essential. The debate on this issue in NATO had three principal areas of focus: requirements, standards, and speed of movement. If NATO and the EU have only a single set of forces from which to draw, he continued, requirements must be aligned. He said there had been an inclusion of NATO requirements in the EU command, and that, as a result there is currently a streamlining of processes to ensure a coherent set of requirements. Progress had been made in cooperation over the last year with NATO HQ working closely with the EU and the European Defence Agency (EDA) on cross border mobility and transportation.

50. General Broeks then argued that effective requirements require agreed-upon standards. NATO standards, he noted, were efficient, well documented and well tested. They also permitted the expansion into the large NATO partnership network.

51. The challenge of *speed of movement* was how to move quickly through bureaucratic barriers; “basically authorities and legislation”, he said. While some steps had been taken, much more remained. General Broeks asked the audience to think about how, for instance, NATO’s Article 5 and the EU’s mutual assistance clauses can work together. Cooperation between NATO and the EU was essential both in crisis and in peacetime. The speaker stressed in particular the challenge of moving troops in a situation which had not yet escalated into crisis, i.e. as posturing. Both organizations, he noted, need the ability for faster and more flexible response; swift troop movements, he said, improved the credibility of deterrence.

52. Paolo Alli thanked General Broeks and opened the floor for questions.

53. **André Bosman** (Netherlands) asked why the EU did not use NATO standards in the past, as they had already been available.

54. General Broeks answered that during the Cold War, NATO standards were consistent throughout the West. After the Cold War, the same requirements to build roads, airfields, or other infrastructure no longer existed whether for existing members or countries which had joined NATO since. Today, General Broeks added, the EU and NATO have different starting points: NATO is seeking to move heavy divisions across Europe, while the EU wants to move smaller and lighter battlegroups. In addition, transport regulation safety, he said, was much more stringent today than during the Cold War.

55. **Metin Lütfi Baydar** (Turkey) asked General Broeks his assessment on Russia’s maritime capabilities.

56. General Broeks said Russia was increasingly reaching the level of a strategic competitor in the maritime domain. In the Baltic Sea, he continued, Russia's actions could be considered mostly posturing, and its capabilities there did not exceed what could be expected from a country with Moscow's ambitions and resources. In contrast, Russian presence in the Black Sea exceeded by far what it needed to control the area, which, he noted, could only be interpreted as a means for Russia to project power and influence the Mediterranean. In the Atlantic, Russia seemed to be seeking the ability to disrupt sea-lanes of communication between North America and Europe, which was a major concern for NATO planners.

57. **Mr Kalnins** said that NATO had no objections to PESCO if it was complementary. However, one of the areas of concerns for NATO was harbour and maritime security, and he asked if this was something that PESCO was taking up.

58. General Broeks said he had limited visibility when it comes to PESCO's development, as some initiatives were led by member states, and others had just begun. He would be in favour of more cooperation, however. NATO was working on a more flexible approach to maritime security, such as a current initiative to reduce standing naval forces to a smaller nucleus, with the ability to bring in ad-hoc forces as needed.

59. **Göran Pettersen** (Sweden) pointed out that Sweden was committed to the solidarity clause in the EU treaty and asked the general to elaborate on how a partner country could contribute to such military cooperation.

60. General Broeks answered that NATO was preparing operational contingency plans with both Sweden and Finland: While NATO is autonomous in its operational contingency plans, he continued, Sweden and Finland could participate if they wished. He added that a partner can add host nation support, especially for anti-access/ area denial. Indeed, anti-access area denial could make it difficult for NATO to come in with reinforcements through the Baltic Sea, but these could come in through Sweden and Finland.

61. **Mr Bosman** asked if closer European defence industrial cooperation should be perceived more as a threat or a potential benefit to better interoperability.

62. General Broeks said that interoperability has several dimensions: first, the spirit of interoperability, upon which an alliance is built; second, the doctrine to work together, even if technical interoperability is lacking; and, third, technical interoperability. The speaker recognised that some elements, such as having identical equipment throughout the Alliance, were impossible to achieve. He said NATO's responsibility, as a military alliance, was to set requirements which must be respected.

63. NATO PA President **Paolo Alli** took the floor to note that the cost of new infrastructure to ensure military mobility was unequal across allies. He asked if NATO made any estimation of the costs of modernising infrastructure and asked how these costs would be shared to manage the different impact on different member states.

64. **David Hobbs**, Secretary General of the NATO PA, added to Mr Alli's comment by saying that during some exercises, the United States had funded infrastructure to be able to move their armed forces effectively around Europe.

65. General Broeks answered that while NATO and the EU agreed on infrastructural technical requirements in the EU Action Plan, there was no agreement as to where funding should be spent. As an estimate, he noted there were four possible sources of funding: direct nation-funded routes and infrastructure where they supported exercises; national plans with each nation paying for infrastructure work in their territory; NATO capability package programmes for infrastructure which needed to be developed within NATO; and, direct EU funding. General Broeks said top-down political

guidance was essential to secure funding without infighting. NATO had set stepping-stones, aiming to be able to move all forces across Europe without impediments by 2024.

66. Mr Alli also asked General Broek's opinion on the High North, and whether some Allies were underestimating the threat. He put his question in perspective by saying that China had been using its soft power in the region, while Russia had been militarising it.

67. In response, General Broeks referred to the new command responsible for the Atlantic which the Alliance would soon establish. While NATO could not formally express interest in developments in the Arctic, this would be an area of interest for the new command.

68. **Mr Miranda Calha** raised the issue of the new command in Germany and asked why it is important.

69. The General said that there were two new commands coming on line for Alliance; one for the Atlantic in the United States to protect the sea lanes of communication from North America to Europe, and a joint support and enabling command in Germany. The command in Germany would be responsible for wartime planning scenarios, and only called upon in an Article 5 situation. General Broeks said the question they were working on currently was how to prepare the command adequately, so it could become immediately active in an Article 5 situation.

70. **Ms Kaili** asked if there was a situation of possible conflict that was currently underestimated, especially looking at innovative technologies.

71. General Broeks answered that hybrid tactics were most underestimated, especially ones linked to cyber-security. NATO and the EU have been victims of targeting, but also have experienced collateral damage from attacks that spilled over into NATO and EU territory. He also noted concern about new, potentially disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence. He said the present is the time to have such discussions.

72. **Mr Miranda Calha** asked what speeding up the decision-making process in terms of crisis meant in practice.

73. General Broeks highlighted three aspects: having military readiness, the ability to move forces, and speedy decision-making. He said that SACEUR – NATO's top military authority – only had the authority to alert and stage currently but could not deploy the Very High Readiness Joint Taskforce (VJTF) without authorisation from the North Atlantic Council.

74. General Broeks added that air mobility was also important to consider. A crisis response mechanism was being developed so that as soon as there was a Council decision on the VJTF, nations could lift the diplomatic clearance for airplanes to move through territory.

75. Paolo Alli thanked the General and introduced Philipp Fluri.

WRAP UP BY PHILIPP FLURI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND HEAD EASTERN EUROPE, SOUTH CAUCASUS, CENTRAL ASIA DIVISION, THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF ARMED FORCES (DCAF)

76. **Philipp Fluri** said the meeting was co-organised by the NATO PA, the EP and DCAF, but the whole endeavour was really part of an ongoing process started over a decade ago. A lot had changed since the initiative to further NATO PA and EP cooperation, and he felt very encouraged by the substance and tenor of the meeting. Mr Fluri also said it was clear that NATO and the EU had overcome their institutional biases which once held them back and had come to a shared understanding of the challenges and necessary response in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond.

77. He encouraged the NATO PA to find a way to document and publish insights from the meeting. As far as DCAF was concerned, he said, they would like to continue cooperating with both institutions.

78. He concluded by thanking all members again for their insights.

79. Mr Kalnins said that if NATO-EU cooperation was going to be successful, non-EU NATO members needed to believe in the EU, particularly the United States. He asked what the level of dialogue was between EU and US officials?

80. Ms Kaili said that EU-US dialogue was still on-going and had not stopped. She was unable to say if the United States believed in Europe, but that the United States was an ally and that the EU would continue to work with them. She then closed the meeting.

Tuesday 5 June 2018

VISIT TO THE EU MILITARY PLANNING AND CONDUCT CAPABILITY (MPCC)

81. On 5 June 2018, the NATO PA delegation visited the EU's recently established military planning and conduct capability (MPCC).

82. The decision to establish the MPCC stems from the conclusions of the European Council meeting in December 2016. The new institution was officially established in June 2017.

83. The MPCC parallels the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) – responsible for the planning and conduct of civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. In turn, the MPCC is responsible for the planning and conduct of CSDP military non-executive missions, currently the EU Training Missions (EUTM) in Somalia, Mali, and the Central African Republic. In Mali, the EU had 578 active personnel, soon to be 779, as the mission scaled the number of trainers and advisors on the ground. In the Central African Republic, it aimed to increase its presence to 187 personnel (from the current 170), and in Somalia, its presence was at 150 following a 30% decrease in budget.

84. Non-executive missions are those for which the deployed EU force only plays a supporting and advisory role vis-a-vis the host nation, as opposed to executive missions, where the deployed EU personnel is authorised to use force. For executive missions and operations, strategic command is provided either by SHAPE for operations conducted under the Berlin plus agreement – currently operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina; or by an Operational Headquarters provided by a member state – e.g. Northwood in the United Kingdom for the EU counterpiracy operation *Atalanta* or Rome for the EU operation *Sophia* in the Mediterranean; or by the recently established EU Operational Headquarters.

85. The MPCC has a total of 39 staff (15 of which are double-hatted with the EU Military Staff - EUMS). It is built on existing structures: it is part of the EUMS and its director is also the director of the EUMS, but remains functionally independent. The MPCC reports directly to the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC), providing it with military strategic guidance.

86. The MPCC's main tasks include:

- Operational planning at the strategic level and force generation;
- Budget and procurement;
- Coordination with civilian and military stakeholders at the EU level;
- Contributing to the Joint Support Coordination Cell.

87. As such, one of the MPCC's key goals is to enhance civil-military synergies in the planning and conduct of EU missions.

88. As the delegation visited the MPCC, it was undergoing its first planned review. One key challenge was that the MPCC had still not achieved its minimum operational capability, let alone full operational capability. Adjusting staffing to reflect the nations' level of ambition was therefore essential.

89. Should EU nations so decide, the MPCC could, in the future, become the strategic command for all EU military missions and operations, but this would require many more resources. For instance, the Headquarters for operation *Atalanta* alone has 180 personnel.

90. In this regard, the review presented the full range of options for the evolution of the MPCC, from status quo to a phased transformation into a full joint civilian-military operational headquarters with a staff of 150-200.

91. Both the MPCC and CPCC held staff talks with SHAPE, and increasingly, EU and NATO planners exchanged at the military strategic level. For instance, discussions were held on the EU and NATO's maritime operations, as well as plans for Iraqi training missions. In 2018, NATO and the EU would also for the first time hold a joint seminar on Special Operations Forces. This was an excellent example of bottom-up cooperation. Political strategic coordination between NATO and the EU remained a sensitive matter, however.

92. The MPCC integrated contributions from non-EU partners when and if no member state was available to fill a manning gap. Thus, Georgia provided force protection and Serbia role 2 medical support for the EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic. These contributions were financed through common funding.

93. Regarding the financing of EU operations, it was hoped that the Athena mechanism could be used in the future to help finance the participation of troops from EU members in certain cases.
