

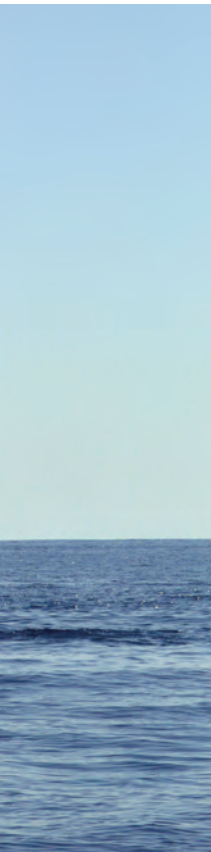


In November 2012, EU Naval Force flagship ITS SanGiusto captures suspected pirates as part of Operation Atalanta—also known as European Union Naval Force Somalia (EU-NAVFOR-ATALANTA)—part of a larger global action by the EU to prevent and combat acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia. (EU-NAVFOR-ATALANTA)

Taking Responsibility in a Dangerous World

Europe's Evolving Transatlantic Partnership

By Federica Mogherini



For as long as I can remember, I have heard my U.S. colleagues ask we Europeans to take greater responsibility for European and Transatlantic security. I have always agreed with that sentiment. Seventy five years ago, hundreds of thousands of Americans sacrificed their lives to liberate Europe from Nazism and Fascism. The United States contributed to rebuilding our devastated continent and to preserving freedom in Europe after the war. Such debt is impossible to repay. But after decades of American support to Europe, the transatlantic partnership has become more mature. Europe is now a global power, one of the three largest global economies, the biggest market in the world, and we invest in development aid at twice the level of the United States, and more than the rest of the world combined. Taken together, the 28 Member States of the European Union have a defense budget second only to that of the United States. We feel the responsibility that comes with greater strength. When America came under attack on 9/11, we immediately showed our full solidarity: for the first time in history, NATO's collective defense clause was activated in support of the United States. And in recent years we Europeans have taken unprecedented steps to fulfill our responsibility and increase our contribution to global security.

Since the beginning of this century, our security environment has continued to change at an astounding pace. The principle that borders should never be changed by military force has been violated by Russia on our very continent: once again, an armed conflict is taking place on European soil. Instability has spread around our region, from Syria to Yemen, from Libya to the Sahel. Cyberattacks have become more and more common, and represent a risk to our power grids as well as to our bank accounts. In this complex and dangerous world, European and American security are connected. Any nuclear proliferation crisis poses a threat that is global by definition. Tension along global trade routes—for instance around the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa, or in the South China Sea—affect both our economies. The crisis in Venezuela is having a direct impact on the lives of one million European citizens, even though it is occurring in another hemisphere. The European Union and the United States share the same interest in peace and security—in the Balkans as well as in Afghanistan

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or the Korean peninsula. We share the same interest in discussing China's role in global trade. And when human rights are violated in any corner of the world, it is an attack against the principles upon which both of our democracies are built.

The transatlantic partnership is indeed evolving, and some analysts describe a growing rift across the ocean. Yet transatlantic cooperation today is more important than ever. Beyond any disagreement we might have, European and American interests very often coincide. On most foreign policy issues—from Ukraine to Syria, from Africa's security to North Korea—transatlantic cooperation is in great shape. During the five-year term of the current EU leadership, the European Union and NATO have signed two historic Joint Declarations, which have opened a whole new phase in our partnership. Our two organizations share 22 Members and the same set of values: our mandates are different but—most importantly—they are complementary. While NATO remains the pillar of Europe's collective defense, there are tasks that can only be performed by an organization of a different nature, such as the European Union (EU). The EU contribution to our common security is unique and increasingly relevant in our dangerous world.

Our security today requires a complex mix of military and civilian tools. Addressing the crises of our times requires not only a traditional security component, but also the economic capacity to engage in post-war reconstruction and to reconvert a war economy. Sustainable security requires diplomacy and mediation as well as the capacity to rebuild state institutions. Sustainable peace has to be rooted in local realities, but must also be supported by an adequate multilateral framework. This complex mix is what I call the European way to peace and security. None of the security challenges our world faces today can be effectively addressed with a purely military approach. However, the old adage—"Americans are from

Mars, Europeans are from Venus"—does not correspond to a changing reality. The European Union is not any longer a mere civilian power. We aspire to be a global security provider, in cooperation and complementarity with our partners, and we have taken substantial steps to strengthen our military capabilities.

Three years ago, I presented a Global Strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy, which stated explicitly that Europe should take greater responsibility for European and global security. The only way to do so was to harness the untapped potential of European cooperation on defense matters. The Strategy has triggered an unprecedented set of new cooperative initiatives to make Europe stronger and safer. We have set a new "level of ambition" for our European security and defense policy, and this is good news for our American friends. Europe is finally taking greater responsibility, and we are doing this in a spirit of partnership and cooperation with our allies, starting with the United States and NATO. That Europe has embarked on this journey is profoundly in the U.S. interest.

More Equal Burden Sharing

The European Union cannot dictate to its Member States how much they should invest in defense. I have always believed that, when it comes to our common security, Europeans need not only to spend better, but also to spend enough. Yet this decision does not belong to the European institutions: it is for national governments and parliaments to decide, in line with their international commitments—including within the NATO framework. What the European Union can do is to help Member States make the most out of every euro that they invest. This is exactly what we have done in the last five years. And for the first time in decades, European defense budgets have started to increase again.

FIGURE 1: The Business Case for Defence Cooperation, a European Union Perspective.



Source: European Union External Action, "Security and Defence Infographics," September 11, 2017. Reproduced as is.

The European defense markets have historically been fragmented along national lines. This has generated several inefficiencies over time. The lack of coordination among national armies and governments has led to a multiplicity of defense systems. For instance, while the United States has only one model of battle tank in use, European nations have seventeen. The same goes for fighter jets (six models in the United States, twenty in Europe), and for all weapon systems: in total, we Europeans have 178 active weapon systems, while the United States has only 30. The consequences are easy to understand: from duplications to inefficiencies and interoperability issues. The cost of non-cooperation on European defense budgets is estimated to exceed \$28 billion per year. Studies conducted by the European Defense Agency show that potential savings in the acquisition, operation, and maintenance of capabilities range from 20 to 50 percent, depending on the model of cooperation. This European efficiency deficit has proven to be a challenge for both the

European Union and NATO. It has led to duplication and lack of interoperability in certain areas, while investment was insufficient in other strategically crucial fields.

European cooperation has a unique potential to address these shortfalls. A growing awareness of the need for EU cooperation emerged during the two-year consultation that I launched at the beginning of my mandate and that led to the 2016 Global Strategy. The European Union could provide both financial incentives to cooperation and a framework for Member States to coordinate their spending decisions. This is exactly what has happened since 2016.

On the one hand, we identified our collective military needs and shortfalls. This process—led by the European Defense Agency—was carried out in constant coordination with NATO, to avoid duplication and synchronize our priorities. The European Union's needs largely overlap with NATO's. For instance, we identified deficits in areas ranging from force protection to medical support, from air and missile defense to communications and information systems, from strategic air and sea transport to maritime interdiction, from command and control to air-to-air refueling assets. Cyber defense has also been identified as a key joint priority: in the event of a cyber-attack, we are collectively only as strong as the weakest link of our cyber-defense chain. We have a duty to ensure that the highest cybersecurity standards are met all across Europe and the transatlantic space. In the words of the Global Strategy, we Europeans agreed on the need to invest in the "full-spectrum (of) land, air, space and maritime capabilities, including strategic enablers" and to do this "in full coherence with NATO's defense planning process."

On the other hand, we developed three main tools to fill these gaps. First, we created an economic incentive for Member States to conduct research together, develop together, and buy together, particularly in those sectors where we identified capability shortfalls. To this aim, the

European Commission—that is, the executive branch of the European Union—created the first-ever European Defense Fund (EDF). The Fund’s precursor is already supporting projects such as the euro-drone, and the full-fledged program should be worth more than \$14 billion in the next EU budget. The EDF will focus in particular on small and medium enterprises, and will help address a recurring gap in European defense research and technology: investments in research and technology by Member States are still far from our collective benchmark of 2 percent of total defense spending, hovering around 0.8 percent. Europe needs an innovative and competitive defense industrial base, if it is to take responsibility for its own security. The EDF is a contribution in this direction.

Second, we created a mechanism for European governments to synchronize their defense spending plans. The Coordinated Annual Review of national defense budgets is a monitoring mechanism that allows our Member States to identify new opportunities for cooperation among them, at the moment when budgetary decisions are taken. It is a tool to align national defense planning with the EU-wide Capability Development Priorities that Member States have agreed together. The Coordinated Annual Review makes use of information that our Member States already make available in the NATO context, but its focus on identifying opportunities for cooperation between national capitals is unique.

The third new tool that we have developed has attracted most of the attention from policymakers and pundits—and rightly so. Back in 2007 EU Member States agreed on the Lisbon Treaty, the new “constitution” of the European Union. The Treaty foresaw the possibility for groups of Member States to set up a “Permanent Structured Cooperation” (PESCO) among them on defense issues. This possibility was ignored for a decade, until the Global Strategy brought it back on the European agenda. Twenty five out of 28 EU Member States have joined

this new form of cooperation. They have signed on to 20 binding commitments, for instance to increasing their defense budgets and making forces available for joint operations. And they have launched 34 concrete cooperation projects to develop new military capabilities that we currently lack.

These three initiatives provide a new framework and incentives to reduce the long-standing fragmentation of Europe’s defense sector. This should not be seen as a threat to transatlantic collaborative initiatives. It is not a zero-sum situation: on the contrary these initiatives will help make NATO stronger, by strengthening its European pillar. The impact is already visible: Member States participating in PESCO have increased their defense budgets of 3.3 percent in 2018 and of 4.6 percent in 2019, with plans to further increase them in the short term. Moreover, cooperative European initiative can make defense spending on our side of the Atlantic more effective and more focused on the strategic capabilities that we all need. European nations only have one set of forces: this means that any new capability will be available not only for EU-led operations, but also in the NATO context for those countries that are part of the Alliance. All our work aims at making Europe a more credible security provider, also in line with earlier calls for more balanced burden sharing. It is about strengthening our forces and strengthening the European contribution to NATO.

Twenty out of 25 Member States that have entered the Permanent Structured Cooperation are also NATO Allies: they have a natural interest in ensuring that the capabilities they develop under PESCO are fully compatible and interoperable within the NATO context. On top of that, we have set up an assessment mechanism to ensure coherence between new PESCO projects and NATO priorities.

The U.S. Administration has raised some concerns about the impact of these new initiatives. It should be clear though that none of them amount

to a “Buy European Act.” They all boost European defense cooperation without excluding any partner per se. Neither the European Defense Fund nor the Permanent Structured Cooperation affect the EU defense procurement market. The restrictions within the EDF Regulation for non-EU companies are similar to those imposed by the United States on EU companies aiming to access publicly funded U.S. programs. In fact, the U.S. system is much more discretionary than ours, which results in an extremely limited presence of EU companies in the U.S. defense market. The European defense market will continue to be considerably more open to foreign companies than the U.S. market. Meanwhile, we will continue our technical dialogue with the United States to clarify some of the legal aspects that concern both sides and, within these constraints, to also facilitate transatlantic industrial cooperation.

To be fair, the progress that we have so recently achieved on European defense cooperation was long overdue. The first plan for a European Defense Community dates back to 1950—but it was sunk by European divisions a few years later. At that time, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He made his views on European defense cooperation very clear in 1954 when he said: “I am convinced that the coming into force of the European Defense Community Treaty will provide a realistic basis for consolidating Western defenses and lead to an ever-developing community of nations in Europe.” Eisenhower believed that European integration had the potential to benefit NATO and the transatlantic community. Some 65 years later, his views are still valid.

A Closer Partnership with NATO

NATO has just turned 70 and I have no doubt about its relevance to our contemporary security environment. My friend the German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen—now President-elect of the European Commission—recently wrote: “If NATO

did not exist, those in favor of a free world would have to invent it.” NATO is the pillar of Europe’s collective defense, but it is a security provider well beyond the transatlantic space. It is training Iraqi security forces, has contributed to the territorial defeat of *Daesh*, and assists Afghan security forces and institutions. NATO matters to America and to Europe alike. As a consequence, it is in the European Union’s interest to work with NATO and to strengthen its European pillar.

These two goals go hand-in-hand. It is no coincidence that, as we took unprecedented steps to intensify European defense cooperation, we also brought our cooperation with NATO to a whole new level. NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was the first person to receive a copy of our Global Strategy, just minutes after I had presented it to the European Union’s Foreign Ministers. A month after the Global Strategy’s presentation, the EU and NATO signed a historic Joint Declaration in Warsaw, then a second Joint Declaration in Brussels two years later: we left behind the “theological” debates about compatibility between NATO and EU defense cooperation, and opened the way for closer collaboration on the ground.

Our organizations play complementary roles in providing security in Europe. The European Union’s broad toolbox complements NATO’s core tasks. Article V remains the cornerstone of collective defense for NATO Allies: this is recognized in the EU Treaty, and the European Union is not in the business of territorial defense. At the same time, the Brussels Joint Declaration of 2018 explicitly welcomed our work at the EU level to bolster European security and defense, including through PESCO and the EDF. The complementary nature of our action is evident in Iraq: while NATO is training the local military, our EU mission to the country is providing expertise on civilian security sector reform. These two tasks are equally important to consolidate the new Iraqi institutions and prevent a resurgence of *Daesh*.

The two Joint Declarations have launched 74 common actions for NATO and the European Union. Twenty of these focus on countering hybrid threats, and we have run our first parallel and coordinated exercises. Part of this work aims at ensuring coherence of output between our planning instruments and processes—the three new tools that the European Union has set up (PESCO, EDF, and the Coordinated Annual Review on Defense) and respective NATO processes such as the Defense Planning Process and the Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process.

A particularly good example of our new level of cooperation is military mobility. Today more than ever, rapid response has become an essential requirement for our security. Acting fast may be vital to prevent a crisis, to respond to a threat, or to avoid an escalation. Effective deterrence and defense depend not just on the quantity of deployed forces: they also very much depend on the ability to move them quickly if needed. If we invest in the best military capabilities and the most advanced defense systems, but they get stuck at borders for customs checks—we clearly have a security and an efficiency issue. Improved military mobility in Europe is a priority for NATO. Yet the obstacles against military mobility—both physical and bureaucratic—needed to be tackled through cooperation on a continental scale that only the European Union can provide. All Member States that are involved in our Permanent Structured Cooperation have taken part in a Dutch-led project to improve military mobility, and the European Commission has mobilized its own resources to support the ongoing work. In doing so, we have coordinated constantly with NATO experts to ensure coherence between our respective sets of military requirements for new infrastructure and regulations. Today, national regulations are being reformed to speed up permission procedures, and infrastructure is being upgraded all across Europe. It is no surprise that military mobility has been

labelled the flagship of EU–NATO cooperation in the past three years.

This is one of many examples showing that stronger EU defense cooperation is not an alternative to the transatlantic bond. On the contrary, a stronger European Union makes NATO stronger. There is no competition, only cooperation and complementarity. A stronger Europe in defense terms is essential towards a more equal burden sharing within the Alliance. For us Europeans, strategic autonomy and cooperation with our partners—starting with NATO—are two sides of the same coin. We have chosen the path of cooperative autonomy.

Choosing Cooperative Autonomy

A more responsible EU needs to be militarily capable of acting autonomously should this be necessary. “Autonomously” does not mean “unilaterally.” all our military and civilian missions have either been requested by the host country or mandated by the United Nations. I have already mentioned our cooperation and complementarity with NATO in Iraq, and other examples abound. For eight years, NATO Operation *Ocean Shield* worked side by side with EU Operation *Atalanta* to fight piracy off the Horn of Africa. In eleven other theaters, for instance in Mali and in the Central African Republic, our forces are acting together with United Nations’ peacekeepers: in some cases, we even share camps. The European Union is a cooperative power by definition. We believe in multilateralism, and we believe that international cooperation is essential to addressing all the major issues of our times, including security issues. But to do our part and take our fair share of responsibility, we also need the capacity and the capabilities to act autonomously. This is the core idea behind our definition of “cooperative autonomy.”

Autonomy means that the European Union should be able to take full responsibility for its own security, but also to act whenever there is a unique EU added value in responding to a particular

situation. We cherish the ambition of making the European Union a global security provider, and we see a growing demand from our partners—including the United States—for a global engagement of the European Union on security matters. Our mix of civilian and military tools is increasingly valued and requested worldwide. The European Union must not only develop the full spectrum of military and civilian capabilities, but also ensure that we have the right command and control structures and adequate financial instruments to support our action. For this reason, alongside the new initiatives that I have already mentioned, we have also created a new unified command center for all EU military training and advisory missions, which mirrors our command center for civilian missions. We have also proposed to establish a European Peace Facility, as a funding mechanism that should close some of the gaps we have experienced in our past military deployments. The Facility will first and foremost cover the costs of all EU military missions and operations—that are now financed on an *ad hoc* basis by Member States—to facilitate and speed up their deployment. It will allow us to contribute to peace operations led by other international actors, and to support the armed forces of partner countries with infrastructure, equipment, or military assistance. Once again, a stronger European Union means primarily a more reliable and cooperative partner in global security affairs.

Investing in partnerships and in multilateralism is the heart of our security and defense policy. In these years we have developed closer ties not only with NATO and the United Nations, but also with other regional organizations in all corners of the world. For the first time ever, we took part in a military naval drill with ASEAN. Our security cooperation with the African Union is closer than ever, and we have helped establish transnational military forces in the Sahel and in the Lake Chad region, to tackle security challenges such as

terrorism and organized crime across the porous borders of those regions. We see this kind of international cooperation as essential to advance our national and European interests. For this reason, we want our contribution to these partnerships to be as effective and valuable as possible for our partners.

This is even more true in case of our partnership with the United States. No other world powers are as close as we are. For 70 years we have been one transatlantic community—and this will not change. We share the same values and we share a common destiny, in spite of our current disagreements on certain policies. The United States is and will remain our closest partner and ally, and we want to be the closest partner and ally for the United States. Where others see a transatlantic rift, I see the potential for a more mature and equal relationship between Europe and the United States. Since World War II, the United States has been like an older brother to Europe. American support has made us the global power we are today. It is time for us to show that we have grown up, and enter into a more adult kind of relationship. We want to be partners, not free-riders. We want to take up our responsibilities in a spirit of fairness and cooperation. We do not believe that Europe alone can carry the weight of the world on its shoulders—no global power can, in today's world. Behaving like an adult also means being fully aware of our strengths and of our limits. Europe should approach security and defense with no complexes of inferiority. We should be confident in our means, while recognizing that we need each other, and we need to be as close as possible to our partners, starting with our oldest and strongest partner, the United States. This is Europe's cooperative autonomy. It is a European interest and it is—I believe—a crucial American interest as well. **PRISM**