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OPPORTUNITIES TO DEEPEN NATO-EU COOPERATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The twin shocks of the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the AUKUS nuclear submarine deal — along with the heavy toll of President Donald Trump’s tenure — have triggered an ongoing discussion in U.S.-Europe security relations. In particular, given the United States’ increased focus on the Indo-Pacific region in tackling the China challenge, the European Union has been more concretely reflecting on how to increase its military capabilities in regions which are no longer security priorities for Washington. So far, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been the key military organization responsible for security in the trans-Atlantic space; therefore, an increased military role for the EU raises questions about how the two organizations would relate to each other.

NATO and the EU do have a long track record of cooperation, from institutional cooperation to personnel exchange and joint exercises. Over the years the two organizations have also operated in tandem, with the EU’s Operation Althea taking over the capacity-building efforts of NATO’s Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2004 and with both deploying simultaneous counterpiracy missions off the Somalia coast — Operation Ocean Shield (2009-2016) and Operation Atalanta (2008-2022). Moreover, NATO and the EU seem to also have converged in their respective strategic thinking along the lines of countering Russia and China’s aggressive behavior and malign economic influence, as well as threats coming from disruptive technologies and disinformation. Pressed by these challenges, NATO and the EU have progressively expanded their traditional range of military and civilian activities so much that their missions now partially overlap, with NATO embracing capacity-building and cyberoperations and the EU stepping up on crisis management.

Yet NATO-EU cooperation remains somewhat limited because of political tensions between member states (which hinders intelligence sharing) as well as weak European military capabilities and inadequate defense spending. Over the past few years the EU has made important progress in this domain through the establishment of the European Defense Fund and several defense projects under the Permanent Structure

Cooperation (PESCO) mechanism. Yet, according to several studies in the field, the state of European defense appears insufficient to tackle more serious military threats or to enable the EU to take initiatives in its neighborhood independently from the United States. In its “Strategic Compass” to be published in March 2022, the EU is supposed to adopt a bolder approach to its defense capabilities. In parallel, in a new strategic concept to be released in June 2022, NATO is supposed to tackle security throughout a widened angle, looking at domains that are not strictly defense-related.

As NATO and the EU progressively expand their scope and strategic thinking in the context of growing global challenges, this paper reflects on how the two organizations could engage in a deeper dialogue to leverage each other’s capabilities: the EU should rely on NATO’s experience with logistics and procurement to strengthen its own and the alliance’s military posture, while NATO should rely on the EU’s experience to counter disinformation, improve military mobility, and tackle hybrid threats stemming from malign economic influence and disruptive technologies. Reaching such synergies is crucial to strengthening both NATO and EU security posture and to ensure readiness on a number of fronts, not necessarily tied to the military domain and perhaps beyond the trans-Atlantic space itself.

INTRODUCTION

In the summer and early fall of 2021, two incidents cast doubt on the United States’ future commitment to European security. The first was the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan despite the objections of NATO allies. The second was United States’ negotiation of the AUKUS nuclear submarine deal with Australia and the United Kingdom without informing France. (France had an agreement with the Australian government to build diesel-propelled submarines.)¹ Europeans were furious. Charles Michel, president of the European Council, said, “What does it mean America is back? Is America back in America or somewhere else? We don’t know... We are observing a clear lack of transparency and loyalty.”² European Commissioner Thierry Breton, who is French, spoke of “a growing feeling in Europe... that something is broken in our transatlantic relations” and called for a “pause and a reset.”³

These twin shocks created a new demand for what is intermittently called European strategic autonomy — the notion that the European Union should be more capable of acting on its own in pursuit of Europe’s interests. While France champions this idea, other European nations are more reluctant, especially those physically closer to Russia who see the United States as the key security provider. France argues that a greater role for the European Union is compatible with a continuing vital role for NATO in European security, but this begs the question of how the two organizations — NATO and the EU — relate to each other.



In the face of myriad global challenges and what is needed to address them, NATO and the EU have been struggling for relevance and resources.

Their relationship has not always been easy. Political tensions between some of the member states have triggered mistrust, especially when it comes to intelligence sharing. Meanwhile, in the face of myriad global challenges and what is needed to address them, NATO and the EU have been struggling for relevance and resources. The recent Afghanistan crisis has shown a deep divergence between their two leaderships.

In September, Claudio Graziano, chairman of the European Union Military Committee, called for a European rapid reaction force that is “able to show the will of the European Union to act as a global strategic partner.”⁴ In response, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated that “any attempt to establish parallel structures, duplicate the command structure, that will weaken our joint capability to work together, because with scarce resource we need to prevent duplication and overlapping efforts.”⁵

This paper takes an in-depth look at NATO-EU cooperation and makes recommendations for how to improve it. In particular, given the interconnected and broader security challenges that go beyond the traditional military domain, the paper argues that the two organizations should engage in a deeper dialogue to leverage each other’s capabilities: The EU should rely on NATO’s experience with logistics and procurement to strengthen its own and the alliance’s military posture, while NATO should rely on the EU’s experience to counter disinformation and improve military mobility.

First, this paper discusses the state and evolution of NATO-EU cooperation through joint exercises, military activities, and strategic alignment. Second, it explains the main issues that hinder cooperation. Next, it highlights how NATO and the EU could leverage each other’s assets in three interconnected spheres: the information sphere (cyber and disinformation); the military sphere (mobility, interoperability, and procurement); and the technological sphere (supply chains and infrastructure). Finally, it offers broad policy recommendations on how to improve NATO-EU cooperation amid numerous complex challenges, rising competition with China, increased tensions between member states and the proliferation of ad hoc security agreements that may impact the future of the two organizations.

THE CURRENT STATUS OF NATO-EU COOPERATION

Pressed by the complex threats posed by transnational, interconnected challenges, NATO and the EU have progressively expanded their traditional range of military and civilian activities so much that their missions now partially overlap. For this reason, the two organizations have established an institutional framework as well as joint exercises on hybrid threats.

Personnel exchanges and joint exercises

Inter-institutional cooperation between NATO and EU was officially established in 2002 under the NATO-EU Declaration on European Security and Defense Policy. With the Berlin Plus arrangements in 2003, the two organizations added an operational dimension, basically identifying operational support that NATO could offer the EU, such as through providing access to NATO’s planning capabilities, assets, and classified information for EU-led crisis management operations.⁶ In the wake of Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, NATO and the EU agreed to two more joint declarations (one in 2016 and one in 2018);⁷ each recognized the crucial nature of the partnership and listed several proposals to increase the organizations’ defense cooperation. Every year since then, NATO and the EU have issued a progress report⁸ to keep track of their ongoing or completed joint activities.

Over the years, NATO and the EU have amplified contacts between their respective officials to increase mutual trust and facilitate communication. For example, there are now permanent NATO military liaisons at the EU’s military staff headquarters

and permanent EU liaisons at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE).⁹ NATO and the EU also have participated in each other's crisis management exercises, such as NATO's Crisis Management Exercise in 2017 and the EU's Hybrid Exercise Multilayer 18 in 2018. So far, most of these exercises have entailed EU or NATO participation and observation, which, together with personnel exchange, are a fruitful resource to ensure communication, the building of trust, and the sharing of best practices.

Other joint exercises include the NATO-led Coalition Warrior Interoperability exercise, which the EU participated in through its Command and Control Information System. For the first time, this allowed testing of the compatibility of NATO and non-NATO systems related to, among other areas, formatted tactical messages; geographical, meteorological, and oceanographic data; and communications.¹⁰ More recently, during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, NATO and the EU coordinated their efforts to facilitate both the procurement and delivery of essential personal protective equipment (PPE). The EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center worked together to procure and offer, respectively, the equipment; deliveries of the PPE were made through NATO's strategic airlifting and logistics apparatus.¹¹

Military operations

In the military domain, NATO and EU efforts have generally operated in parallel and then converge along the way, rather than begin under a shared mission, strategy, or division of tasks. It is worth recalling that neither NATO nor the EU have their own military forces; member states provide the personnel and means to support a given mission initiated by NATO or the EU under a joint command. Consequently, according to the principle of having a "single set of forces," states that are both NATO and EU members do not have separate armed forces to fulfill their duties with one or the other organizations. Usually, a single armed force operates under either a NATO or EU mandate, sometimes even changing its flag over the course of the same day. When both organizations deploy to the same operational environment on a similar mission, the lines and responsibilities can get blurred.¹²



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For example, in the Horn of Africa, without any formal link to each other, NATO and EU forces were simultaneously deployed off the Somalia coast for counterpiracy missions — Operation Ocean Shield (2009-2016) and Operation Atalanta (2008-2022), respectively — with similar mandates focused on the deterrence, prevention, and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. Earlier, in 2004, the EU's Operation Althea took over the capacity-building efforts of NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina but did so with the same military units initially under NATO's command (in fact, the headquarters of Operation Althea is located in NATO's SHAPE).¹³ Despite the lack of formal agreement, NATO and EU staff were successful in establishing effective mechanisms for informal cooperation and information exchange, such as regular meetings on their counterpiracy efforts and medical exercises.¹⁴

In the Mediterranean, like in the Balkans, NATO and EU forces have benefited from more formal cooperation. In fact, NATO made its facilities available for the EU's Concordia peacekeeping operation taking over from NATO's Allied Harmony in North Macedonia in 2003.¹⁵ More recently, NATO's role was crucial in supporting Frontex (the European border and coast guard agency) and Turkey in the fight against human trafficking in 2016. Two information-sharing agreements were set up: first between Frontex and NATO's Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM) and then between NATO's MARCOM and the EU Naval Force Mediterranean's Operation Sophia (replaced by Operation IRINI in 2020).¹⁶ When working on naval operations, especially in tackling human trafficking, information sharing is imperative; for instance, such cooperation in the Mediterranean has helped increase situational awareness of the migration flows and routes used by traffickers of weapons and human beings. However, given the complex challenges posed by migration flows stemming from political instability in Libya — and by the numerous geopolitical actors involved in the issue — the success of such NATO and EU missions may be relatively limited and will require stronger political stances both in NATO and in the EU.¹⁷

While NATO and the EU have a relatively positive track record for their cooperation in these regions, the same thing cannot be said for Iraq, where the two organizations have embraced similar tasks and, as mentioned earlier, have only coordinated along the way. In fact, since 2017-2018 they have both been providing advisory and training support to Iraqi police forces and political leaders. This is evidence that the division between the military and civilian domains — and thus between NATO and EU activities — has become more blended. Given the overlap, increasing coordination from the start and on the strategic level could ensure a better employment of time and resources.

The precipitating political and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan reveals the consequence of missed opportunities stemming from both a weak European defense and a lack of coordination between NATO and EU. In Afghanistan, NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF, 2001-2014) and Resolute Support (2015-2021) operations proved incapable of stabilizing the country and establishing resilient local security structures. Following the U.S. announcement that it would withdraw its troops, the European countries that intended to stay in the country for longer lacked the logistical means and capabilities to do so.¹⁸ In light of these structural incapability, there was not even a discussion about the option for the EU to take on security and capacity building tasks following the end of NATO operation.

Looking ahead at the Sahel, which is set to be the theater for the next global crisis — as the NATO summit communiqué warned in June 2021 — both NATO and the EU are present through regional partnerships and provide humanitarian aid and security forces to fight against terrorism.¹⁹ Because the security crisis will likely worsen due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic and climate change, it will be important for NATO and the EU to strategize and initiate joint action on several areas beyond just military security. They also should leverage the EU's long-standing relations with the African Union.

Strategic alignment

Over the past 20 years, NATO and the EU have gone from coexistence to cooperation; their respective strategic thinking seems to have become increasingly aligned in spite of their different scopes and aims.

Last June, NATO launched its 2030 agenda and is expected to develop its strategic concept before its June 2022 summit. The agenda includes proposals to tackle traditional challenges like terrorism as well as emerging threats from global competition, climate change, and cyber and disruptive technologies.²⁰ Notably, in its June 2021 summit communiqué, NATO explicitly called China's behavior a systemic challenge to international security and then hinted at increasing NATO's currently limited role in Asia.²¹

Similarly, the EU will release its "Strategic Compass" in March 2022. Per High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, the EU is going to building on its 2019 strategic outlook and reach a shared definition of the threats and therefore come up with a "guide to action" for the EU to become a credible security provider vis-à-vis global challenges.²² These matters include some of the same challenges outlined in the NATO 2030 agenda, such as the slowdown in globalization; great power competition; regional instabilities (state fragility, inter-state tensions); and threats by state and nonstate actors, including their use of hybrid tools (cyberattacks to steal data and to target crucial infrastructure, paramilitary groups operating under broad deniability, economic blackmail among others) and disruptive technologies.²³

Both the NATO 2030 agenda and the Strategic Compass look at security through a holistic approach that ranges from military tools to the strengthening of the resilience of both infrastructure and society. In a world where threatening security challenges are becoming more complex technologies, it is crucial for the two organizations to adopt such a comprehensive approach. However, recent events like the collapse of Afghanistan after an almost 20-year-long commitment from NATO and European allies, shows how important it is to conduct an assessment over security priorities and strategies in more traditional realms, such as counterterrorism operations, and more broadly in the security relations between the U.S. and Europe.

PROBLEMS IN NATO-EU COOPERATION

As the overall strategic interests and security priorities of NATO and the EU have begun to overlap in response to emerging global challenges, the relationship — and hence cooperation — between the two organizations has become more complex.

Limited communication channels

Although personnel exchanges and joint exercises have helped to set up a framework and a mindset for more integrated operations, officials interviewed for this paper²⁴ under the condition of anonymity pointed out that information sharing and the results achieved have been very limited. The lack of a secure communication system to share information between the two organizations severely hinders their ability to work together on a daily basis but most importantly to coordinate in a real crisis scenario and consequently to put in place a joint response. As of now, there is no direct inter-institutional secure lines of communication between the EU and NATO. All communications take place between each member state and either within NATO or within the EU. This also is particularly relevant when it comes to sharing best practices or handing over tasks from one organization to the other.²⁵

Political tensions and different strategic priorities

Adding to this communication difficulty, political tensions have multiplied within both NATO and the EU, triggering a climate of distrust that prevents intelligence sharing. Turkey's purchase of Russian S-400 surface-to-air missiles²⁶ and its invasion of northern Syria after U.S. troops withdrew raised security concerns in the alliance, while the Northern Cyprus question and Ankara's activities in the eastern Mediterranean waters have created tensions with Greece.²⁷ Relations between France and the U.K. have also significantly worsened since the AUKUS deal, which could ultimately impact the functioning of NATO.

Complicating matters further, as described above, the two organizations' activities have started to overlap, with NATO embracing capacity-building and cyber operations and the EU stepping up on crisis management. More recently, during preparation of its strategic concept, NATO has been questioning its role in the fight against climate change and in countering China's multifaceted influence in the trans-Atlantic space. And following the AUKUS deal, the EU has been reflecting on developing a stronger military to be able to respond to crises directly impacting its security. NATO opposes any form of duplication, from command to resources, which is quite telling in terms of its soul-searching for the definition of its objectives and its range of action vis-à-vis global challenges.²⁸

Recent events in Afghanistan offer a very good opportunity to reflect on the role of NATO and EU aspirations. After the Taliban took back Kabul, NATO called for an assessment of the accomplishments and failures of ISAF and Resolute Support.²⁹ But instead the EU – not directly involved in Afghanistan as an organization but rather through individual member states – and the United Kingdom reflected on their excessive dependence on the United States in areas of paramount importance to European security. As evacuation operations started in Kabul, with devastating images traveling around the world, Borrell defined Afghanistan as a “wake-up call” for the strengthening of European defense.³⁰ Allies complained about the United States' lack of coordination and communication on the withdrawal, its unwillingness to extend the deadline for evacuations. For its part, the United Nation Security Council rejected a French-U.K. proposal to establish of a U.N.-controlled safe zone around the Kabul airport.³¹ While it is debatable whether or not the EU would have used its hypothetical army to secure Kabul's airport, the Afghanistan experience exposed Europeans' vivid vulnerabilities in the security domain and their dependence on the U.S. military's logistical and technological capabilities.

In short, while NATO is rethinking its military engagement and reflecting more on capacity building and missed opportunities in the diplomatic field, the EU is reflecting on its military power. Interestingly, this simultaneous chasm and overlap between the two organizations' activities and projections is yet another sign of two major needs: First, the West needs to strengthen both its military and non-military tools, and second, there must be more coordination between the U.S. and Europe and by extension between NATO and the EU. These improvements will be essential to prevent malign



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actors from taking advantage of security crises against the West. China and Russia, for example, have already seized the opportunity that Afghanistan offers to double down on their anti-Western propaganda. Both Moscow and Beijing immediately sought to establish contacts with the Taliban and will likely try to exert more power through their economic influence and other means; eventually they may gain leverage by tapping into Afghanistan's rare earth reserves³² or potentially by meddling with migration flows to put pressure on Europe.

A weak European military

European defense spending, specifically related to nations falling short of the NATO 2% of GDP target, has been a major issue in U.S.-EU relations. While Barack Obama's administration exerted diplomatic pressure, Donald Trump's engaged in open confrontation on this issue. Neither administration obtained significant results, however; and as Afghanistan has shown, Europe is still far too reliant on the military protection of the United States — an issue that weakens NATO's posture.

Over the past few years, the EU has strengthened both its legal and financial mechanisms to be more competitive on the security side. In December 2017, under articles 42.6 and 46 of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council established a Permanent Structured Cooperation mechanism to deepen cooperation between willing member states. These states have agreed to binding commitments on investment, planning and management to advance their defense capabilities in the service of both national and multinational operations (including those of NATO and the UN). PESCO currently has 46 projects in several domains, from training to maritime and land exercises to cyber and military mobility.³³ Through the European Defense Fund, the EU also has allocated 7.9 billion euros (roughly \$9 billion) for the 2021-2027 period to research innovative defense products and technologies through collaborate development projects.³⁴

But while these initiatives represent a step toward better European coordination on defense issues, they are completely reliant on political will and inter-governmental coordination — as security is not a competence of the EU but an inalienable prerogative of its member states. In fact, many of the PESCO projects appear to be severely delayed.³⁵

U.S. experts interviewed for this research also point out the bad shape of European defense and more broadly its dependence on the United States for even more reachable defense objectives. A report from the Center for American Progress mentions the example of France's anti-terrorism operation in the Sahel, where the U.S. ended up supporting basic air-refueling and surveillance flights.³⁶ A detailed study by the Clingendael Institute points out that if the EU wants to be a credible actor in crisis management, primarily in its neighborhood, then it should be able to operate cross-spectrum in the air, land, sea, cyberspace, and space domains — which cannot be done without more serious investments in European defense.³⁷ The case of Afghanistan — where Europeans decided to leave after the U.S. withdrawal despite the predictable consequences on migration and political instability — offers a concrete example of such shortcomings.³⁸ As Brookings expert Michael E. O'Hanlon points out, Afghanistan operations did not require high-tech equipment or massive resources; but the fact that European countries involved in NATO operations in Afghanistan did not step up to preserve a military presence in a crucial theater for European security speaks to their unpreparedness in terms of stockpiles of equipment and inability to conduct such

operations without the help of the United States.³⁹ Germany's defense capabilities are also emblematic: Despite having more fiscal leeway and being at the forefront of European technological innovation, Berlin has not invested in its military, which still lacks critical equipment such as body armor, night vision gear, and helicopter spare parts.⁴⁰ In this regard, evidence suggests that integrating and strengthening European defense would undoubtedly offer more openings for specialization, boost resource allocation and more broadly improve readiness. Yet such opportunities are highly contingent on building trust between allies and increasing political will, which will inevitably take time and be achieved in different ways.

Recently, some inter-governmental initiatives outside of the EU and NATO frameworks were taken to tackle these shortcomings. In 2018, French President Emmanuel Macron launched the European Intervention Initiative (E2I) with the aim of deepening military cooperation between like-minded European governments sharing a strategic culture. Through intelligence sharing, scenario planning, joint planning and exercises, its 13 participants are working to strengthen their military cooperation so that they can offer rapid responses in case of a crisis. The E2I is particularly relevant because one of its members is the United Kingdom, which is not currently part of any PESCO projects. The U.K.'s involvement signals the importance of the relationship and responsibilities that the it shares with European partners on security. While limited, the initiative is an example of how Europe and the U.K. can strengthen their security cooperation. As the U.K. has left the EU, stronger defense cooperation between the U.K. and the EU would also positively impact NATO through fostering synergies and interoperability.

However, while relevant, these initiatives are insufficient for Europe to play a credible role as a security actor in its eastern and southern neighborhoods. And such weaknesses endanger the deterrence power of the NATO alliance against Russia and ultimately reduce the opportunities for the EU more broadly to defend its security interests.

IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATING IN EMERGING THEATERS

As the pressure from China and Russia rises and amplifies the threats posed by traditional challenges, the EU and NATO's partners have little to gain from division and a lack of coordination. The time has come to identify new and better ways to fill security gaps and effectively allocate resources to ensure readiness on a variety of fronts. Moreover, to enhance coordination, each organization should consider how to add value to the other organization in both the military and non-military domains. At least four dimensions of the current security debate are crucial to strengthening the NATO-EU partnership: increasing European military capability, improving military mobility and interoperability, sharpening cooperation in the cyber and disinformation space, and finding synergies in procurement through the securitization of technology and supply chains.

A stronger European defense to strengthen NATO's posture

While the EU has made significant progress in countering hybrid warfare since Russia's annexation of Crimea, the same cannot be said with regard to developing more effective traditional deterrence capabilities. Such capabilities are increasingly necessary, not just because of Russia's aggressive posture — expanding its area of operations beyond the post-Soviet space to Syria and Africa — but also because of the growing geopolitical and security alignment between Beijing and Moscow.

Since 2014, cooperation between China and Russia has expanded beyond the domain of arm sales. The two countries have supported each other's development of strategic weapons (such as for missile defense) and artificial intelligence, as well as each other's political positions in the United Nations Security Council.⁴¹ Beijing and Moscow have deepened their interactions in Africa, where Russian Wagner Group mercenaries patrol Chinese facilities,⁴² and conducted military exercises including a shared air patrol in the Asia-Pacific region.⁴³ They also have been seeking common ground on Afghanistan since the departure of U.S. troops.⁴⁴ Such alignment is increasingly resembling a partnership that is reflected at the military level too. After the past year's military drills in the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea, and the Indo-Pacific, China and Russia recently conducted a joint military exercise called Zapad/Interaction-2021 in China's northwestern region of Ningxia, where for the first time they used a joint command and control system and shared equipment — mimicking the way NATO forces work with each other.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, the United States has begun to shift its security focus toward the Indo-Pacific region and South China Sea where Beijing is threatening Taiwan. Consequently, should a direct confrontation with China occur in the medium to long term, Russia could take advantage of the situation and potentially target Europe while U.S. forces and attentions are directed elsewhere. For this reason, it is crucial for European allies to have the military capabilities to push back against Russia with little support from the United States, at least in the initial phases. With more defense capabilities, European allies would also have the resources to respond to crises that arise in the Mediterranean region. After four years of strained trans-Atlantic relations — where the defense spending issue has intoxicated the broader debate on trans-Atlantic security — a stronger European defense would help Washington recognize the increased geopolitical cohesion and security concerns of the bloc.

Unfortunately, as described earlier, such capability has yet to be achieved. A RAND Corporation wargaming simulation exercise assessed that in the case of a conventional attack by the Russian Federation, Moscow's forces would be able to reach the outskirts of either the Estonian or Latvian capital in around 60 hours, and the NATO allies would not be able to defend these territories because of a (totally fillable) shortage of military capabilities.⁴⁶ Similarly, a scenario analysis by the International Institute for Strategic Studies argued that without the help of the United States, conventional forces from European NATO countries would not be able to push back against the hypothetical conquest of Lithuania and part of Poland by the Russian Federation.⁴⁷

To ensure that they can successfully respond to a land attack from Russia, or a coordinated Russia-China operation, Europeans need to increase the quality and readiness of their defense apparatus. A policy brief by the NATO Defense College calls for multinational battlegroups in Poland and in the Baltics to increase their readiness in terms of support capabilities, such as artillery and air defense, and for European allies to fulfill their NATO 2018 Readiness commitment of providing several land combat brigades and maritime task groups.⁴⁸ The authors also point out that to increase deterrence, European allies need sufficient and effective air and missile defense capabilities to protect critical infrastructure, as well as long-range conventional precision-strike weapons to limit Russia's options for regional conventional attacks.

All these analyses indicate that expanded capabilities on the European side are crucial for a stronger NATO posture. Political tensions around the branding of European strategic autonomy have unfortunately poisoned this debate and complicated a very simple issue: European forces must be able to take effective action with or without the United States in the theaters that are crucial for European security.

Improved military mobility and interoperability

While an increased European military posture is important per se, quick deployment and interoperability across the trans-Atlantic space is equally important. For this reason, NATO-EU cooperation appears even more relevant when it comes to military mobility, interoperability and procurement.

Military mobility – defined as the ability to deploy and move thousands of troops across the European territory – is crucial to project an effective deterrence and is a key area where NATO-EU cooperation has been the most successful. Many factors slow mobility and therefore negatively impact the readiness of European defense, such as infrastructure incompatibility, as well as complex regulations on the transportation of weapons or military equipment. In 2019, NATO countries identified concrete steps to increase their military mobility, with the goal of being able to deploy 30 ground battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 combatant ships in the span of 30 days.⁴⁹ The steps focus on four main areas: (1) developing and strengthening infrastructure, (2) improving strategic airlift and sealift capabilities, (3) strengthening the command and control line as well as planning for better coordination on a large scale, and (4) easing legal and diplomatic procedures across the military and civilian sectors to facilitate clearance processes.

However, an Atlantic Council report has noted some significant gaps within each of the above listed sectors, which include a lack of resources and institutional weakness in tackling military mobility. As military mobility has important repercussions for strategic projection and procurement,⁵⁰ it should be an area where NATO and the EU could have a more constructive dialogue. Strategic location is not currently a prime criterion for the evaluation of new defense projects in the EU, as the union is not a military power and is not used to strategic thinking in the military field. For this reason, the EU could benefit from NATO geostrategic experience to identify areas where more resources are needed and how they could be put to better use when considering geographical factors. For safer military mobility, such infrastructure should also be made more resilient to cyberattacks.

Given its regulatory power, the European Union could play a valuable role in easing military mobility by establishing simpler processes to attain custom and border permissions for the transportation of, for example, dangerous goods or military equipment. The EU is also well placed to strengthen roads and infrastructure that are crucial for military mobility.

In fact, the EU has launched the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) projects, a series of studies and activities designed to eliminate bottlenecks to mobility across the continent by, for example, completing missing sections of transit corridors and developing new dual-use (civilian and military) infrastructure projects.⁵¹ EU countries have also started featuring military mobility in their defense projects under PESCO and have set parameters for non-EU members to join; for example, Canada, Norway, and the United States are expected to participate in a PESCO project led by the Netherlands to test the state of military mobility in Europe.⁵² Improving military mobility across the trans-Atlantic space would positively impact the interoperability of allied armed forces – specifically their ability to be deployed and to operate with one another across the

territory of the alliance. NATO and the EU can already count on deep interoperability because they share the forces of 21 countries that are member states of both organizations. Yet, as there are important asymmetries in military capabilities across the EU and more broadly across the alliance space, interoperability is in constant need of improvement.

So far, one success story of NATO-EU interoperability has been the technological cooperation between the European Defense Agency (EDA) and the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) on air-to-air refueling operations (transferring fuel from one military aircraft to another in mid-air). This cooperation helped address one of the biggest EU defense shortfalls.⁵³

In the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the AUKUS deal that marks the United States' pivot toward the Indo-Pacific region, the debate over European defense has sharpened and more funds are being allocated to the European Defense Fund to strengthen the union's military posture. In fact, the third EU "Joint Report to the European Parliament and the Council on the Implementation of the Action Plan on Military Mobility" has noted significant progress since October 2020, including on custom formalities and work with the EDA on two Cross-Border Movement Permission Technical Arrangements.⁵⁴ Most importantly, from next year onward, EU member states can use funding from the European Recovery and Resilience Facility to invest in transport, including dual-use infrastructure.⁵⁵ The EU also has a budget of 330 million euros (roughly \$375 million) for co-funding projects (subjects to call for proposals) on dual-use infrastructure.⁵⁶ While this level of ambition is certainly welcome because of its positive impact on EU defense capabilities, the EDA and NSPA should closely coordinate their efforts in order to increase interoperability and ultimately NATO and EU resilience and readiness toward international security threats.

Leveraged EU advantages in the hybrid domain

Although progress has been slow on the traditional military side, the European Union has proved to be a versatile asset for other aspects of security, specifically in the political and hybrid domains. Diplomatic and regulatory approaches are primary political tools to push back against autocracies. Despite its members having different strategic foreign policy priorities, the European Union has established a solid diplomatic posture in defense of European values and interests. For example, learning from its reaction to the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, the EU was able to create a united front following Russia's incursions in Ukraine in 2014 and has imposed sanctions still in place today – for example, in response to the annexation of Crimea, the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 in eastern Ukraine, and more recently the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny.



Although progress has been slow on the traditional military side, the European Union has proved to be a versatile asset for other aspects of security, specifically in the political and hybrid domains.

On China, the European Union has acted consistently, based on its labeling of the country as both an economic competitor and a strategic rival. The EU has pursued commercial deals while also heavily regulating Chinese foreign direct investment in

sensitive sectors of European interest. More meaningfully, the EU has repeatedly condemned China for its human rights abuses in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Taiwan and has announced a ban on products made with forced labor.⁵⁷

While NATO is reinventing itself in the face of pressing challenges like China and climate change,⁵⁸ the EU has advanced in tackling cybersecurity, regulating and exploring new technologies and developing its Indo-Pacific strategy.⁵⁹ The EU's advantages over NATO in the diplomatic and economic domains, especially when it comes to crisis management and political pressure, should be taken into account in broader discussion of NATO-EU coordination.

Sharpened cooperation on disinformation and cyber

The countering of disinformation is one key area where the European Union offers added value to international security. Since 2014 – and particularly following the disinformation operations carried out by Russia-sponsored media during the Brexit referendum and the U.S. presidential elections in 2016 as well as the French presidential elections in 2017 – the EU has set up a solid structure to monitor, detect, and counter disinformation.

The EU was the first to establish a dedicated task force, the EU StratCom, within the European External Action Service (EEAS) to combat disinformation in the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). Subsequently, the European Commission established ground rules for online platforms and the advertising and social media industries, including a Code of Practice on Disinformation and guidelines on accountability obligations.⁶⁰ The EU also has set up important monitoring activities, such as the Digital Media Observatory and the COVID-19 monitoring and reporting program, to function as a European hub for fact-checkers. A crucial part of these efforts is included in the Action Plan Against Disinformation that sets up a Rapid Alert System to facilitate information sharing and a unified response across the European institutions.⁶¹

Compared to the EU, NATO's approach to combatting disinformation is less robust and limited in scope. NATO has set up tracking and monitoring activities – which offer fact-checking findings and counternarratives, including in the Russian language – but it has mostly relied on its Public Diplomacy Division which only monitors NATO-related material. For example, during the first few months after the outbreak of COVID-19, the division set up a section on its website called “NATO-Russia: Setting the record straight”; the website addresses the top five myths circulated by Russian propaganda regarding NATO's connection with and reaction to the spread of COVID-19.⁶²

Also established by NATO – but operationally independent – the StratCom Center of Excellence (COE) in Riga, Latvia brings together civilian and military stakeholders to conduct research on the use of modern technologies and to develop virtual tools for analyses, research, and decisionmaking. Hence, the center has produced valuable material for NATO's Public Diplomacy Division. In addition, the StratCom COE has worked with the EEAS StratCom task force to train EU staff on how to respond to simulated disinformation attacks and responses. More recently, in 2019, the EU and NATO started exchanging information through the inclusion of NATO's international staff in the EU Rapid Alert System, as well as through dialogues, staff and information exchanges and training exercises, including briefings between the EEAS StratCom and NATO Public Diplomacy Division.⁶³

These are important efforts that highlight NATO and the EU's openness to dialogue and mutual learning experiences. But they are nowhere near enough to keep up with the network of disinformation, where techniques are rapidly evolving and taking advantage of artificial intelligence. While China and Russia are reinforcing each other's narratives through multiple channels, the effects of malign foreign influence in the disinformation domain are now being compounded by homegrown disinformation networks using the same pattern of exploiting people's fear and vulnerability. Evidence of this occurring includes the spread of anti-vaccination propaganda as well as anti-democratic propaganda (which helped spur the assault on the U.S. Capitol in January 2021).⁶⁴

Given the growing vulnerabilities in the trans-Atlantic space, NATO and the EU should join forces and expand their activity from countering disinformation to a preventing effort. The EU can add value in increasing the involvement of the private sector, and NATO can add value in using its intelligence capabilities in the counterterrorism domain to identify troll factories and disinformation sources.

More broadly on cyber, despite advancements in their own jurisdictions, the paths of NATO and the EU have not crossed much yet. The two organizations have a different approach to cyber issues: While the EU aims to develop resilience against cyber threats, NATO has a broader and forward-looking approach that aims to prevent cyberattacks and to use cyber as an offensive tool to tackle threats and create deterrence.⁶⁵ For example, the EU is seeking to strengthen its cyber posture through an EU Cybersecurity Strategy. The first piece of corresponding legislation, the EU Network and Information Security Directive (EU 2016/1148), established substantial cybersecurity standards that member states must adopt to protect critical sectors.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, in its latest summit communiqué, NATO stated that "a decision as to when a cyber-attack would lead to the invocation of Article 5 would be taken by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis," thus highlighting the increased awareness of the security implication of cyberattacks on critical infrastructure.⁶⁷

Despite their different approaches, both NATO and the EU included cyber in their 2016 cooperation frameworks and started a series of joint exercises between the EU's 2017 Parallel and Coordinated Exercise and NATO's 2017 Crisis Management Exercise, as well as more recent exercises like those conducted through the CYBERSEC 2019 forum.⁶⁸ However, while incredibly valuable, such exercises have not gone much beyond staff-to-staff interactions and joint workshops. Understandably, cybersecurity cooperation implies a significant amount of intelligence sharing, which is ultimately impeded by a lack of trust stemming from political tensions and by the national security concerns of individual member states. In addition to establishing a more substantial channel for intelligence sharing to immediately warn allies about a cyberattack and prevent domino effects, other smaller steps could help increase cooperation and strengthen resilience in the trans-Atlantic space.

For instance, the establishment of common standards related to threat and resilience capabilities could, in the event of a cyberattack, facilitate talks between allies and improve the interoperability of infrastructure. Within the United Nations, there are already two working groups trying to advance international legislation and standards covering the cybersecurity space.⁶⁹ In line with these efforts, NATO and the EU could adopt similar standards that also help integrate and reinforce their complementary cybersecurity strategies. In particular, NATO could look at the existing EU regulatory framework and

adopt similar strategies and resilience practices across the alliance, and the EU could benefit from NATO’s vast military experience and capabilities that are relevant to the cyber domain in order to bolster the security aspect of the EU’s cybersecurity strategy.

Synergies in procurement and capability development

As with the cyber domain, NATO and the EU could respond to outside pressure by increasing and improving procurement and technological cooperation. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered shortages and vulnerabilities in the supply chain, and the competition for rare earth material and high-technology products (such as microchips) has increased. Meanwhile, breakthrough technological achievements are opening new frontiers for competition in the security domain.



European allies could better coordinate their defense spending within the framework of the European Union; the absence of an integrated defense structure inevitably leads to duplications and wasted resources.

First, European allies could better coordinate their defense spending within the framework of the European Union; the absence of an integrated defense structure inevitably leads to duplications and wasted resources. Moreover, the armed forces of different European countries may encounter difficulties in operating with one another, given that there are 138 defense systems in Europe (compared to only 30 in the United States).⁷⁰ As stated in a European Commission report, the lack of cooperation in the European defense industry produces a loss of 25 billion to 100 billion euros per year, while 30% of the costs could be saved if a joint procurement was in place.⁷¹

In the United States, several commentators point out that a more integrated procurement system at the European level will negatively impact U.S.-EU trade relations in the defense industry.⁷² Although some economic losses for the United States are indeed possible, there are ways to contain them and of course an EU with a stronger defense would make a more reliable partner for the United States. In fact, the U.S. and EU are currently discussing administrative agreements with the EDA to allow the United States to participate in PESCO projects. Through a franker dialogue, the two sides of the Atlantic could strengthen the defense market without resorting to protectionist stances on either side. This is particularly relevant considering the strong ties between the U.S. and EU defense industries; they both could benefit from deeper cooperation and exchanges on the technological level, and from free and fair competition in the trans-Atlantic defense market based on common rules and standards.

On this point, the EU could leverage resources from the European Defense Fund and the European Commission’s Horizon 2020 program to develop new technologies and fill security gaps. Both the fund and program are relatively young and would benefit from a deeper exchange with NATO — whose experience in military procurement is unrivalled — to help define standards as well as characteristics of the technology.

NATO and the EU address capability development in markedly different ways. NATO focuses more on procuring a given item from a given state to meet a specific need of the alliance, whereas the EU focuses more on filling capability gaps and encouraging member states to cooperate to develop new assets. In this regard, the EU appears to

have a comparative advantage given the role of the European Defense Agency to go beyond specific operational requirements and its ability to consider long-term trends and ways member states can cooperate on the development of new capabilities. In particular, the EU defense procurement benefits from strong support from EU-led research and development programs, as well as from considerable financial resources from the European Defense Fund. As European defense capabilities advance, there will be overlap between the EU Capability Development Priorities and the NATO Defense Planning Process; this gives the EU and NATO an opportunity to foster greater cooperation and build up a more efficient and competitive trans-atlantic defense.⁷³ A recent study from the French Institute of International Relations identifies areas where defense requirements could be harmonized and where the EU and NATO could work on joint research projects: from cyberdefense, air superiority, logistics, and medical support capabilities to science and technology, arms control, and intelligence.⁷⁴ A more synchronized approach in these areas — that would also entail a joint assessment of member state performances — will undoubtedly reinforce both NATO- and EU-led operations as well as deterrence.

Such an approach to procurement could prove particularly helpful given the rising threats coming from vulnerabilities in the global supply chain. The COVID-19 pandemic has unveiled Western countries' strong dependency on Chinese supplies, both in the medical and technological fields (though the supply issues around personal protective equipment were addressed relatively rapidly).⁷⁵ A recent study by the Mercator Institute for China Studies identifies 103 categories of electronics, chemical, mineral/metal, and pharmaceutical products in which the EU is critically dependent on imports from China.⁷⁶ At the same time, as economies worldwide have started to recover from the pandemic and embark on ambitious investment plans to boost innovation in their national industries, the demand for semiconductors — crucial for building microchips, which are essential in any modern technology — has increased and become one of the central issues of the U.S.-China competition. This issue is further complicated by geopolitical concerns; a large proportion of semiconductor manufacturing occurs in Taiwan.⁷⁷

The U.S. and the EU have recently begun initiatives to increase the domestic production of microchips. In June, the U.S. Senate passed the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) for America Act, which allocates \$52 billion toward the effort.⁷⁸ And the EU followed suit with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen committing to a similar amount.⁷⁹ The U.S. and EU discussed the issue during their inaugural Trade and Technology Council (TTC) meeting in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, in September 2021.⁸⁰ These discussions represent a first step toward breaking the ice on trans-Atlantic cooperation, particularly related to developing new technologies that are vital for enhancing geopolitical and economic security. But the main takeaways are that the U.S. and the EU are facing the same challenges and that the EU has increased its geopolitical ambition and range of interests.

So far, there is no similar dialogue platform between NATO and the EU — a fact that hinders inter-institutional cooperation in the procurement domain. In fact, if NATO and the EU develop different standards, it could lead to duplication and hinder logistical and strategic interoperability across the trans-Atlantic space. For this reason, it is especially important for NATO and the EU to establish deeper communication on procurement and the definition of common standards. Increasing connections and synergies between industrial clusters within the trans-Atlantic space, particularly for

materials such as semiconductors and microchips, would decrease dependence on geopolitically risky supply chains. Moreover, developing common standards when it comes to procurement, data privacy, and weaponry components would facilitate technological exchanges as well as the interoperability of equipment (be it artificial intelligence or more traditional military supplies) across the NATO-EU space.

Given the increasing importance of new technologies for economic development, industrial advancement, and innovation, the only alternative to a shared approach in the trans-Atlantic space would be increased competition among allies and reduced interoperability – which would inevitably create more advantages for competitors to exploit.

WHERE EURO-ATLANTIC ORGANIZATIONS FIT IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

Over the last decade, the rise of China and increased competition between Washington and Beijing have put the Indo-Pacific region in the spotlight. This, in turn, has impacted the strategic projection of both NATO and the EU. However, the U.S. and the EU only recently developed clearer strategic frameworks for their respective engagement in the region – and each framework has broader security implications. For instance, the United States has since launched the trilateral security pact AUKUS with Australia and the United Kingdom; strengthened ties with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (or Quad) with Australia, India, and Japan; and increased its contingency planning in the South China Sea in defense of the Taiwan Strait.⁸¹

The United States' new strategic focus on this region has naturally impacted the NATO alliance and hence triggered a debate on the organization's future involvement in the region. So far, the alliance has intensified relations with its Indo-Pacific partners such as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. For example, the North Atlantic Council, NATO's political decisionmaking body, has held more frequent meetings with the four countries to address multilateral security challenges, especially in the Korean Peninsula, but also bilateral topics such as cyberdefense, nonproliferation, and civil preparedness.

The EU's response to the U.S. pivot and perceived growing security threat coming from China has been accentuated by Beijing's uncooperative approach and rather aggressive propaganda that lays blame for the spread of COVID-19 elsewhere. The EU's strategy for the Indo-Pacific aims to build partnerships in the region to ensure "a rules-based international order, a level playing field, as well as an open and fair environment for trade and investment, tackling climate change and supporting connectivity with the EU."⁸² Whether it is focusing on inclusive prosperity, a green transition, ocean and digital governance, or connectivity, the EU is aiming to strengthen security and defense as well as human security. EU member states plan to conduct joint exercises in maritime security and port calls with their Indo-Pacific partners. At the same time and more in line with its traditional engagement, the EU is concluding partnership and cooperation agreements with several countries in the region to build more sustainable value chains and diversify trade negotiations. The union is even considering a region-to-region trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

While all these efforts point to a trend of increased engagement in the region, there has so far been limited cooperation among NATO, the EU, and the United States, just like in the other theaters described above. This can most certainly be attributed to the lack of political will in organizations largely driven by consensus. Even under a unified strategy, not all EU countries will engage in military cooperation with their Indo-Pacific partners. The lack of cooperation is also evidenced by duplicative subregional agreements and individual initiatives (of which AUKUS is the main one). Such a proliferation naturally begs the question of whether NATO and the EU can be significant actors in the region. While this remains to be seen, the two organizations can leverage their potential and find ways to work together.



The EU could be a valuable partner for the U.S. and NATO in [the Indo-Pacific] theater given its growing economic and regulatory power, especially related to fair-trade practices and human rights protection.

First, the EU could be a valuable partner for the U.S. and NATO in this theater given its growing economic and regulatory power, especially related to fair-trade practices and human rights protection. Second, NATO could help promote standards and interoperability (for example, through procurement coordination between NATO and the EU as described earlier). Increased interoperability not just through NATO but also EU forces could help to quickly mobilize forces in case of conflict, as well as serve as a deterrent regarding China. The EU could also offer support through its European Peace Facility, designed to provide assistance to partner countries to increase their security and defense capabilities.⁸³ However, regardless of the type of assistance provided, without clear rules for standardization and convergent strategies for procurement and military strengthening, the two organizations (and their member states) risk competing with one another for strategic and market advantages.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In a world marked by COVID-19, deeper social divisions, more vulnerable supply chains, and increased competition in the international arena, the roles of NATO and the EU and their ability to tackle global challenges are constantly being questioned. Moreover, with the proliferation of ad hoc coalitions to tackle specific challenges, the two organizations are constantly fighting for relevance and space to operate. In this context, as this paper has shown, both NATO and the EU have more to gain through joining forces rather than competing with one another. In light of the arguments developed so far, some broad policy recommendations appear relevant:

1. **NATO and EU member states should leverage their policy fora to discuss joint initiatives and better employ their assets – NATO’s military capabilities and logistical systems and the EU’s capacity building and financial assistance.** This would enable a more coordinated approach to crises based on a division of labor agreed to on a case-by-case basis. Learning from past experiences, the two organizations should work to avoid another “Afghanistan scenario” in areas like the Sahel region.
2. **NATO and the EU should increase information sharing and establish protocols in crucial sectors from anti-terrorism cooperation to cybersecurity.** The periodic joint exercises performed so far are important steps toward building confidence

and fostering regular updates and the sharing of best practices. Yet insufficient information sharing and the lack of protocols in case of a crisis hinder the utility of the exercises conducted. While this recommendation ultimately depends on political will, some smaller channels could be created to streamline limited but vital information, especially in the event of a cyberattack.

3. **Regarding disinformation, NATO should take advantage of the EU's apparatus and support it with its own solid structure for intelligence gathering – instead of having NATO's Public Diplomacy Division duplicate the work of the EU StratCom task force.** Alternatively, because countering disinformation is not the main job of the division, NATO could create a separate disinformation unit to work closely with the EU's task force. Coordinating efforts to tackle different outlets of disinformation could help reduce the overall burden. In both scenarios, the two organizations should not just seek to counter disinformation but also prevent it as much as possible.
4. **NATO and the EU should increase their dialogue on regulations and impediments to military mobility and interoperability.** NATO's deeper expertise on strategic airlifting and military operations could help the EU improve regulations to facilitate military mobility. More broadly, NATO should leverage EU regulatory power in conjunction with its objectives when it comes to capacity building as well as in countering China's multifaceted influence.
5. **To reinforce NATO's posture in Europe and elsewhere, the EU should boost its military capability (as member states' militaries contribute to NATO's single set of forces).** Enhanced military capabilities would also enable the EU to intervene independently from the United States in theaters that are no longer security priorities for Washington. European countries will need to assess their defense spending for greater efficiency and assess the advantages of a more integrated procurement system. While doing so, Europeans should consider mechanisms to enable the U.S. defense industry to participate; this could minimize the economic losses, foster technological development and cooperation on a trans-Atlantic level, and reduce dependence on geopolitically risky supplies.
6. **NATO and the EU should foster cooperation in procurement and capability development to increase interoperability, including through the establishment of similar standards.** This would enhance military mobility and interoperability across Europe and other theaters like the Indo-Pacific, where the engagement of the U.S. and Europe is growing.

PROSPECTS

The twin shocks of the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the AUKUS deal — along with the heavy toll of Trump's tenure — have caused many to deeply reflect on the roles of NATO and the EU and their relationship, especially at a time when ad hoc coalitions seem more popular than alliances. Settling after this upheaval will take a while, particularly as political tensions between member states of NATO and the EU arise, such as between France and the U.K. over the AUKUS deal, the U.K. and the EU over fishing licenses and Northern Ireland, and the EU and Poland and Hungary over their illiberal turns. Moreover, despite significant increased diplomatic activity between

OPPORTUNITIES TO DEEPEN NATO-EU COOPERATION

the U.S. and Europe (for example, the G-20 and COP26 meetings and the lifting of U.S. sanctions on EU aluminum and steel), the United States' attention is expected to be primarily absorbed by its midterm elections and competition with China.

In this general context, one may argue that there is little to no political will to pursue better coordination between NATO and the EU. But because the challenges just described have sparked a long overdue conversation on how to rebalance the trans-Atlantic relationship, the two organizations have a valuable opportunity to redefine their roles, scopes, and interests. Given the scarcity of resources and the plurality of challenges to address, their member states are left with a choice: either get stuck on the same old problems or find ways around them. These new ways could include working together on confidence-building measures to improve coordination, the allocation of resources, and the division of labor. This shift may take a while if it happens at all, but it offers the only path toward staying relevant in the security domain.

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