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Subject: Council Conclusions on the Implementation of the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Delegations will find in Annex the Council Conclusions on the Implementation of the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, adopted by the Council at its 3506th meeting held on 6 December 2016.

Council Conclusions on the Implementation of the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

1. The Council recalls the European Council Conclusions of 28 June 2016 calling for further enhancement of the EU-NATO relationship by working with and for the benefit of all Member States, in light of those aims and values which we hold in common and given the unprecedented challenges facing both organizations. Our security is interconnected: together, we can mobilize a broad range of tools and make the most efficient use of resources to address those challenges and enhance the security of our citizens. In this respect, new and improved ways of working together in an ambitious and pragmatic way are needed with the overall objective of building a true organisation-to-organisation relationship.
2. EU-NATO cooperation will continue to take place in the spirit of full openness and transparency and in full respect of the decision-making autonomy and procedures of both organisations. It will be based on the principles of inclusiveness and reciprocity without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policy of any Member State.
3. The Council welcomes the Joint Declaration signed by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Warsaw on 8 July 2016. It gives new impetus and substance to EU-NATO cooperation in the areas of countering hybrid threats; operational cooperation including at sea and, in accordance with the Council Conclusions of November 2016, on irregular migration; cyber security and defence; defence capabilities; defence industry and research; exercises; supporting partners' capacity building efforts in the Western Balkans, the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods and strengthening their resilience.

4. Implementation of the Joint Declaration is a key political priority for the EU. It constitutes an essential element of broader efforts aimed at strengthening the Union's ability to act as a security provider, in line with the Council Conclusions on implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence and the European Defence Action Plan.
5. The Council welcomes the progress achieved in advancing EU-NATO relations, in particular since the signature of the Joint Declaration, including in implementing and operationalising parallel procedures and playbooks for interaction in countering hybrid threats; enhancing operational cooperation and coordination on maritime issues including between EU NAVFOR MED Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian in the Mediterranean in implementing their mandates, building upon the successful cooperation between the EU and NATO in the Aegean; developing parallel and coordinated exercises as well as in the field of strategic communication with a view to building resilience. EU-NATO cooperation in the field of exercises will be conducted in full respect of the EU's Exercise Policy Framework.
6. With a view to consolidating such progress and ensuring further advances in all areas listed in the Joint Declaration, the Council endorses the common set of proposals attached in the annex. They constitute concrete actions for the implementation of the Joint Declaration developed jointly by the EU (EEAS and Commission services, with the EDA) and NATO. The common set of proposals is not a standalone document and must be read in conjunction with the present Council Conclusions both of which will be implemented in accordance with the principles set out above.
7. The common set of proposals is being endorsed in a parallel process by NATO through the North Atlantic Council.

8. The Council underlines that Member States have a ‘single set of forces’ which they can use in different frameworks. The coherent development of Member States’ capabilities through EU and NATO respective processes will thus also help to strengthen capabilities potentially available for both organizations, while recognizing their different nature and responsibility. In this regard, the Council welcomes the continued close and mutually reinforcing co-operation with NATO in areas of shared interest, both strategically and operationally, in crisis management in support of international peace and security as well as on defence capability development where requirements overlap.
9. The Council invites the High Representative/Vice President/Head of the European Defence Agency, in close cooperation with Member States, to launch work on implementation of the common set of proposals immediately, thus ensuring their full involvement and transparency. Reports on implementation including possible suggestions for future cooperation should be provided on a biannual basis starting by the end of June 2017.

Common set of proposals for the implementation of the Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

1. Countering hybrid threats

Since spring 2016, EU and NATO are implementing and operationalising parallel procedures and playbooks for EU-NATO interaction in the areas of situational awareness; cyber security; crisis prevention and response and strategic communication.

- Encourage participation by EU and NATO as well as EU Members States and NATO Allies in the work of the "European Centre for Countering Hybrid Threats" to be established in 2017.

Situational Awareness

- Concrete measures will be put in place by May 2017 to enhance staff-to-staff sharing of time critical information between the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the relevant NATO counterpart including by exchanging the analysis of potential hybrid threats. This will include the establishment of technical means to allow systematic exchange of information relating to hybrid threats.

Strategic communication

Cooperation has been established between the EU and NATO staffs with regard to strategic communication. Between now and mid-2017, they will:

- Intensify cooperation and undertake shared trend analysis of misinformation, including through social media targeting the EU and NATO; produce, by the end of 2016, an analysis on the above; cooperate to improve quality and outreach of positive narrative.

- Enhance mutually reinforcing efforts regarding support for stratcom capabilities of partner countries including through coordinated or joint trainings and sharing of platforms.
- Encourage cooperation between the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence and the EEAS Stratcom division (specifically task forces East and South) including further joint trainings/seminars.

Crisis response

- Enhance preparedness, inter alia, by holding regular meetings at staff-to-staff level.
- Bearing in mind the EU's crisis response procedures, including the Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements (IPCR) and NATO's Crisis Response System, seek to synchronize the two organisations' parallel crisis response activities with the goal of providing coherent support in response to hybrid threats.

Bolstering resilience

EU and NATO will raise awareness on existing and planned resilience requirements for the benefit of Member States/Allies. To that end, as of 2017.

- Staff contacts will be intensified, including cross-briefings to respective bodies on resilience requirements.
- Assess requirements, establish criteria and develop guidelines in the context of greater coherence between the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP) and the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP).
- Work to be ready to deploy, by mid-2017 in a parallel and coordinated manner, experts to support EU Member States/Allies, upon request, in enhancing their resilience, either in the pre-crisis phase, or in response to a crisis.

2. Operational cooperation including maritime issues

- By December 2016, enhance cooperation and coordination between Operation Sea Guardian and EU NAVFOR MED Sophia in the Mediterranean, through information sharing and logistical support and through practical interaction between the two operations.
- Building upon synergies between the EU operation and NATO in the Aegean, NATO and EU will study opportunities, in the first semester of 2017, for further maritime cooperation between them.
- In support of the above goals, EU and NATO will continue to make full use of the mechanism on Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED).
- Organise during the first semester of 2017 a lessons learnt seminar building on experience from the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean, and on the interactions in the Mediterranean.
- Compile during the first semester of 2017 an overview of relevant maritime exercises by respective organisations with a view to identifying further opportunities for possible interaction.
- Develop further cooperation between NATO and EU staff on aviation in the Western Balkans, including through the Balkans Aviation Normalisation Meetings (BANM) process.
- Increase the frequency of meetings with partners participating in respective operations, starting in 2017.

3. Cyber security and defence

- With immediate effect, EU and NATO will exchange concepts on the integration of cyber defence aspects into planning and conduct of respective missions and operations to foster interoperability in cyber defence requirements and standards.
- In order to strengthen cooperation on training, as of 2017, EU and NATO will harmonize training requirements, where applicable, and open respective training courses for mutual staff participation.

- Foster Cyber Defence Research and Technology Innovation cooperation by further developing the linkages between EU, NATO and the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence to explore innovation in the area of cyber defence: considering the dual use nature of cyber domain, EU and NATO will enhance interoperability in cyber defence standards by involving industry where relevant.
- Strengthen cooperation in cyber exercises through reciprocal staff participation in respective exercises, including in particular Cyber Coalition and Cyber Europe.

4. Defence capabilities

- Pursue coherence of output between the NATO Defence Planning Process and the EU Capability Development Plan through staff to staff contacts and invitation to EU staff to attend NDPP and PARP screening meetings upon invitations by the individual countries concerned.
- Seek to ensure that capabilities developed multinationally by Allies and Member States are available for both NATO and EU operations.
- Pursue complementarity of multinational projects/programmes developed within NATO Smart Defence and EU Pooling & Sharing, in areas of common interest, such as air-to-air refuelling, air transport, satellite communications, cyber defence and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems, notably through continued and intensified staff-to- staff contacts.
- Further contribute to the coherence of multinational efforts, by reflecting multinational projects developed in an EU context, as relevant, in the capability roadmaps supporting NATO defence planning priorities, and by taking into account multinational projects developed in a NATO context in deriving Priority Actions in the framework of the EU's Capability Development Plan.

- Continue closer cooperation between NATO and EU/EDA experts in the field of Military Aviation with a view to ensuring complementary efforts in the interest of defence and security in Europe especially as regards the development of a Military Aviation Strategy, the implementation of Military Airworthiness arrangements, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems Air Traffic Integration, Aviation security including cyber, as well as civil initiatives, such as SES/SESAR.
- Enhance interoperability through increased interaction on standardisation. With the aim to avoid duplication in the development of standards, identify projects where standardisation-related activities could be harmonised.

5. Defence industry and research

- Further develop a dialogue between EU and NATO staff on industrial aspects using existing fora.
- Enhance cooperation at staff level on defence-related R&T in common areas of interest.

6. Exercises

- Implement parallel and coordinated exercises (PACE) as a pilot project for 2017 and 2018. This will be done with NATO in the lead through the Crisis Management Exercise 2017 (CMX 17) and the EU in the lead through Multi-Layer Crisis Management Exercise 2018 (ML 18) or other types of exercises in 2018. The exercises will include a hybrid element.
- NATO or EU staff experts of the non-leading organization for the respective years to be invited to contribute to the planning and conduct of the leading organization's exercise, in a spirit of reciprocity.
- Lessons and recommendations to be shared to the extent possible.
- Organise staff to staff exercises in 2017 to test the key modalities already defined in the respective Playbooks/Operational Protocols.

- Complement training and education inter alia through invitations to each other's staff to appropriate events (e.g. workshops, presentations, exercises).
- NATO will, as of 2017, continue to invite the EU (EEAS and European Commission) to participate in observing its military exercises. The EU will reciprocate accordingly.

7. Defence and security capacity-building

- NATO and EU staffs will foster cooperation , including on the ground, on building partners' capacity and resilience, in particular in the Western Balkans, the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods, including Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.
- Encourage cooperation and exchange of expertise through respective Centres of Excellence and other relevant training activities and programmes in support of partners.
- Identify possibilities for EU and NATO to participate in their respective projects and practical partnership programmes.
- Ensure complementarity of maritime capacity building efforts.

Strengthening political dialogue between EU and NATO

- Continue regular formal and informal PSC-NAC meetings.
- Further pursue in a balanced manner the practice of mutual invitations to relevant ministerial meetings.
- Strengthen cross briefings to respective Committees and Councils, including on operations.

Follow-on/Staff to staff cooperation

Since July 2016, the EU and NATO have significantly strengthened staff to staff interaction by means of regular meetings, at various levels, including on the preparation of the present set of proposals. Contact-points have been established both in the EU and NATO to ensure smooth communication and better cooperation. This staff-to-staff interaction will continue at regular intervals in order to monitor the implementation of the proposals above, build on those and suggest new directions for progress and report to respective Councils on an annual basis.
