

RECOMMENDATION 774¹

on cooperation in the operational area between the EU and NATO – reply to the annual report of the Council²

The Assembly,

- (i) Stressing the indivisibility of European defence;
- (ii) Considering that European defence today is embodied both by NATO and by the European Union, through the ESDP;
- (iii) Recognising the role of NATO as the embodiment of the collective defence alliance concluded among certain European states, the United States and Canada;
- (iv) Stressing the relevance of the modified Brussels Treaty as a binding collective defence treaty for European states in the absence of a similarly binding commitment in the European Union framework;
- (v) Considering that the efforts under way in NATO and the EU in the area of force projection and rapid reaction capabilities are complementary, and that hence it is important to preserve that synergy;
- (vi) Stressing that it is necessary for all states concerned to comply with their capability commitments within NATO and the European Union so as to be better able to respond to the expectations of non-European allies and enhance Europe's operational and decision-making autonomy;
- (vii) Considering that EU-NATO political and operational cooperation should go further than the framework established by the Berlin plus agreements, in compliance with the terms of the EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP of 16 December 2002;
- (viii) Noting that the Berlin plus agreements have worked for the benefit of the European Union in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and now in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the framework of the EU-led Operation Althea;
- (ix) Considering that the making available to the EU of NATO operational command and control capabilities in application of the Berlin plus agreements will strengthen the EU's own capabilities and enable it to act more autonomously in the future;
- (x) Considering that NATO, through the Berlin plus agreements with the EU, also benefits from the experience acquired by the EU in the field of civil and military crisis management and that the dual character of those instruments is also necessary for the success of NATO's external operations;
- (xi) Stressing that the European Union is a long-term political project which includes the framing of a common defence policy which might lead to a common defence;
- (xii) Considering that this development calls for a revision of transatlantic relations in the field of security and defence which goes beyond the more limited NATO framework;
- (xiii) Taking the view that cooperation and complementarity are the basis for the political and operational relations between NATO and the EU;
- (xiv) Recalling that both the NATO and EU military capabilities are composed exclusively of national assets that are made available to the two organisations for the conduct of their missions;

¹ Adopted by the Assembly on 7 December 2005 at the 9th sitting.

² Explanatory Memorandum: see the report tabled on behalf of the Defence Committee by Jean-Pierre Kucheida, Rapporteur (France, Socialist Group), Document 1918.

(xv) Stressing that in the event of a deployment of forces beyond the national territory, whether for the purpose of missions under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty or for crisis-management missions of the Petersberg type, the national parliaments are kept informed and may be called upon to express an opinion on the subject;

(xvi) Considering that it is crucial to guarantee a high degree of parliamentary scrutiny at national level over the development of NATO and the ESDP,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE THE WEU MEMBER STATES AS MEMBERS OF THE EU AND NATO TO:

1. Meet their commitments as regards the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the EU battlegroups within the agreed deadlines;
2. Ensure that the European forces made available to NATO and the EU have at their disposal the equipment needed to conduct their missions;
3. Contribute the financial and material resources needed to successfully complete ongoing projects or those to be developed in connection with the Prague Capability Commitments and European Capability Action Plan;
4. Establish in the area of intelligence and that of defence research, technology and development, genuine cooperation programmes open to the broadest possible participation, so as to avoid capability gaps among the European forces;
5. Provide adequate national and collective funding for European capability development programmes conducted in cooperation within NATO, the EU or other frameworks in order to avoid delays and cost over-runs;
6. Draw up in consultation with NATO a defence strategy for the European Union to supplement the European Security Strategy, while preserving the EU's decision-making and operational autonomy;
7. Envisage the establishment of a framework for dialogue and cooperation on security and defence between the European Union and the United States in order to deal with common threats, without prejudice to the role of NATO as a collective defence alliance among certain European states and the United States;
8. Continue to regularly inform the members of the WEU Assembly about present and future developments in the areas of the CFSP and ESDP and within the Atlantic Alliance, and guarantee a high degree of parliamentary scrutiny at national level over those matters.