NATO-EU PARTNERSHIP
– AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD ACCOMPLISHING
GLOBAL SECURITY –

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After almost 72 years of existence, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation brings together 30 states with common values and aspirations, setting side by side Europe and North America. If in the moment of its foundation the Alliance faced a limited range of risks, today the Organisation is confronting with a wide range of threats, from terrorism to cyber-attacks.

In this context, a strong transatlantic partnership and, implicitly, a close cooperation between the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation are necessary to strengthen the security climate, especially considering the fact that the two organisations have 22 European states in common. The security challenges are gaining new valence, so the response must be combined to further ensure the transatlantic security and peace. Will the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union succeed in making the transition from a transatlantic to a global peace?

Keywords: NATO; EU; democracy; strategic partnership; cooperation;

INTRODUCTION

In these difficult times in which the world's states are facing all the problems generated by the coronavirus pandemic, we notice, perhaps more clearly than before, that without a strong alliance on which to lay the foundation of a strong relationship between partner states, there is no possibility to deal with political, social, financial, medical and security pressures.

Solidarity must be at the heart of the international architecture. In this way, through the powerful effect of teamwork, through the permanent exchange of information and capabilities, through the combined effort of all the states, we can develop a more secure, prosperous and free society.

The most important role in this approach is played by international organisations, considering, on the one hand, the fact that their very structure is based on the pillars of democracy, prosperity, solidarity, and, on the other hand, the resilience that they have shown over the past decades.

In hindsight, it is clear that we can no longer analyse all the things only at a regional level, without taking into account the whole picture, because the political changes and all the implications we feel today are gaining global valences, and the states are, more than ever, in an obvious interdependence.

The detachment from a conventional type of war by adopting hybrid methods of attack, the vital cyberspace in a modern society, and the practices by which different countries intervene in the internal affairs of other states, represents a set of risk which are very difficult to manage by a single state. This is why, since the early 1990s, there has been a permanent need to strengthen the international cooperation.

In this regard, given the international climate with its unprecedented challenges, the cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was seen not only as an important step in ensuring the security of the allied states, but also as a necessary measure to implement.

Today, the security challenges can easily outweigh the ability of a single state to defend itself. Whether we are talking about terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, climate change, natural disasters, or even if we are focusing on the analysis of cyber-attacks, fake news, sanitary crisis like a pandemic, dealing successfully with all these threats must be the result of the combined effort of the EU and NATO states.

Of course, the United Nations also plays a key role in this, given its active involvement in security, peacekeeping operations, the development of harmonious relations between states and the ongoing desire for international cooperation. However, in this approach, we will turn our attention only to the NATO-EU partnership.

At the NATO Summit, held in Warsaw in 2016, through the joint declaration of the Secretary General of NATO, the President of the European Council, and the President of the European Commission, the partnership between NATO and EU got strengthened, and the cooperation process gained new approaches in strategic areas, including hybrid threats, maritime security and cyber security.

This statement came as a natural consequence of the fact that both structures were facing similar challenges and sharing common interests (EU-NATO Cooperation, 2016, point 1), as arising from the priority fields assumed at the Warsaw Summit.

We can say that the European Union and NATO are interconnected, given the need to ensure a secure climate and the right conditions for the development of its citizens prosperity. Not only that 22 EU member states are aligned under the umbrella of NATO, but both values and security threats call for the combined action of the two international structures.

The 21st century has put NATO in the position to re-evaluate the definition of security and the means needed to guarantee it. Thus, security can no longer be limited to the military capabilities that the Organisation can make available in order to repel an armed attack, but must take into account the unseen enemy, the non-military dimension and all the social, cultural, religious and ethnic factors (Pasăre, 2014).

The complementarity must be the key word in this endeavour, and the interoperability between these two organisations must be constantly raised to a new level, in order to provide security for all the member states and, why not, for all mankind.

NATO AND EU PREMISES

In order to understand the need for cooperation between the two organisations, it is necessary to make a sketch of the most important historical events that have led to the establishment of these international structures. Although each of them has its own peculiarities, there are some similarities in terms of purpose and the premises of their very existence.

At the end of the World War II, with about 36 million citizens killed in the conflict (A Shorth History of NATO), Europe was on its knees. Like it was not enough, the desire of the Soviet Union to maintain its influence in the Eastern part of Europe,

the economic and humanitarian crisis put a huge pressure on the shoulders of the old continent.

Thereby, after a long period in which they practiced an isolationist policy, determined by the fear that Europe will return to the same policies that led to the world war, the United States decided to become actively involved in the European political life.

Even though the US aid, through the implementation of the Marshall Plan (Kagan, 2015, pp. 48-50)[1], was the cornerstone of European reconstruction, European states still felt the need to strengthen their security through military, economic cooperation and political progress[2].

This reality was confirmed by the conclusion of the Treaty of Dunkirk between the United Kingdom and France, signed on 4 March 1947. Through this treaty, the signatory states undertook to provide mutual support in the event of an aggression by Germany, in order to prevent it from becoming again a threat to the European peace and to strengthen the existing economic relations (Zlătescu, Bulgaru, 2016, p. 7). This Treaty was to be the cornerstone of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Signed in Washington on 4 April 1949 by the United States, Canada and other 10 European states (Belgium, Denmark, France, Island, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was born. As a politico-military alliance, the Organisation was established to respond to the Soviet expansionism, to prevent the rebirth of militarism and radical nationalism through a consistent North American presence, and to encourage the European integration policy.

The provisions of the Treaty revolve around Article 5, which states that the allied States undertake that an armed attack on one or more members is an attack against them all. Consequently, in the event of such an armed attack occur, the response in order to restore and maintain the transatlantic security must be a combined one. In this endeavour, singing the Treaty was the first step in strengthening the transatlantic cooperation. At the same time, it was the moment where the foreign policy of the United States underwent significant changes, becoming part of the global community.

If, at first, NATO was only a politico-military alliance that did not have the necessary means to ensure the regional security, this changed soon. The detonation

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[1] By consolidating European economy, the USA met two important goals: to have an economic partner and to strengthen the European defence capability against the Soviet Union.

[2] In this respect, the Western European Union was established – an international military organisation based on the principle of collective defence and with the purpose to facilitate the economic, social and cultural cooperation between Member States (https://www.britannica.com/topic/Western-European-Union).

of the first Soviet atomic bomb, on 29 August 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, led the Alliance to realise the need for immediate regrouping and the need for accelerating the efforts to ensure a combined response and regional security.

Therefore, following the events of 25 June1950, when without any warning, the North Korean army, supported by the Soviet Union, crossed the 38[th3] parallel and attacked South Korea, the United States understand the necessity for international cohesion, for a mass production of military equipment to discourage the Soviet Union and to sustain the Alliance member states.

As a result, NATO consolidated its command structure, established the Supreme Command of the Allied Forces in Europe, in the suburbs of Paris[4] and in February 1952 appointed the first Secretary General, in the person of Lord Hastings Lionel Ysmay.

The great victory of the Korean War, officially concluded in 1953, would be the birth from the ashes of the conflict of the United Nations, as the first international organisation that managed to repel an armed attack against a peaceful country (van Loon, 2017, pp. 522-526).

On the other hand, in this not very friendly context, but under the umbrella of the transatlantic security, managing to stabilise the balance in the political, economic, and humanitarian crisis, enjoying the consistent help from the United States, the Western Europe began to regain its radiance.

The extreme nationalism led to four wars between French and Germans, two of which were the World Wars. It was clear that a new paradigm had to be adopted, so the need to implement measures aimed to build a supranational entity was highlighted.

The shaping process of the supranational structure was, therefore, the response of the Europeans to the interwar period, characterised by unpredictability, by hazard, by the cruel and degrading socialist, communist governments. Moreover, in the context of the crisis that the European states were acting against, the need for refurbishment, economic cooperation and the expansion of the political relations was more prevalent than ever (Marr, 2015, pp. 577-580).

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[3] Established in Yalta as the delineation between North Korea – influenced by the Soviet Union and South Korea – by the United States of America.

[4] Following the split between France and NATO's military structure, in February 1966, the Allies moved quickly to find new hosts for the headquarters that would have to leave France. They decided to move NATO's political headquarters from French territory as well. Belgium became the host nation for both NATO and SHAPE, on 26 October 1966, the decision being made to establish NATO's new location in Brussels.

Europe's decline was a wake-up call at both political and academic level. Thus, the interwar period was perceived as the period when Europe stopped having a strong voice in the world. The command of the world was to be taken by the United States, the shift of the power pole being obvious.

The most feared consequence of this decline was the departure of the European states from a set of common values and the increasing influence of the Soviet Union over the old continent. It is about that pseudo-concept of José Ortega Y Gasset, the man-mass, which promotes the vehement refusal to acknowledge a higher entity, a mentality taken over at state level and manifested by moving away from civilisation, from the European doctrine.

At the same time, the Spanish philosopher pointed out that this apparent European decline would be the most precious moment that would allow Europe to reinvent itself, to reborn, to evolve, and to lay the very foundation stone for what would later be the European Union (Gasset, 2007, p. 171).

Of course, these theoretical concerns, which we find in the interwar period, represented only the first step on the path to a consolidated European identity, concrete political steps being mandatory, in accordance with the historical reality that European states witnessed. These political manifestations represented the willingness of the European states to strengthen, to regroup in an entity that would ensure peace, as well as economic and social progress.

It should be pointed, from the outset, that the purpose of the Communities was to unify all the European states through universally applicable legislation, through common policies, a single currency, standards and values shared by all member states.

An important step in this direction was the moment of 23 July 1952[5], when the Frenchmen Jean Monet and Robert Schuman`s proposal, known as the Schuman Plan, was put into practice – six countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Nederland, and West Germany) joined together and formed the European Coal and Steel Community.

Among the reasons behind the founding of these communities we mention the economic unification, the establishment of a European federation, the production process modernisation, and above all, the elimination of the secular opposition

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[5] On that date, the founding Treaty of the European Coal and Steel Community, signed in Paris on 18 April 1951, entered into force. The preamble to the Treaty shares common characteristics with those of the North Atlantic Treaty. Thus, world peace is mentioned as well as the achievement of this goal through adapted efforts to the existing dangers. Moreover, a *de facto* solidarity that would constitute the premise of a common economic development is envisaged.

between France and Germany by establishing an international control mechanism over the basic branches of the armament industry (Fuerea, 2016, pp. 19-20).

Moreover, in 1954 the Western European Union was founded as a legacy of the fact that the Western states opposed the Soviet expansion, understating the need for a common front, and, on 1 January 1958, the well-known European Economic Community was created, known as the Common Market, and the European Atomic Energy Community/Euratom.

The economically fruitful cooperation, by ensuring the free movement of workers and capital, and, at the same time, the possibility to exercise the security control over the destination of the products available on the nuclear market came into force within a political alliance embraced by 28 countries and which brought back the European states brilliance, prosperity, and common purposes (van Loon, p. 529). Even so, the European goal of merging nations and the focus on the rule of law, the supremacy of human rights have proven to be insufficient in the current geopolitical configuration.

If, on the one hand, the European aspirations to regroup under the umbrella of the same values evokes the world's admiration and shows that dialogue must be a valuable weapon in solving any disputes, on the other hand, the non-participation in security as an independent entity, with armed forces capable to provide security for the citizens of the members states, in a constantly changing world, in which new threats emerge, has been seen as a weakness, not only by citizens, but also by officials (Meixler, 2018).

COMMON VALUES, COMMON FUTURE

From the Preamble, the North Atlantic Treaty presents the main pillars on which the Alliance was established. Thus, the signatories of the treaty affirm their desire to live together in peace, commit to defend the individual freedom, the principles of democracy and to obey the laws. At the same time, Member States commit to promote the stability and the welfare of the North Atlantic region.

Further, Article 1 provides the obligation for the Member States to not endanger the security and to respect the international law. Article 2 complements Article 1, in the sense that, the Parties will contribute to further development of peaceful and friendly international relations, to promote the conditions of stability and welfare, and to encourage economic cooperation between any or all of them (North Atlantic Treaty, 1949).

On the other hand, the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, emphasises, from the beginning, that world peace can only be achieved

through efforts adapted to the existing dangers, and that Europe's role in achieving this goal is undeniable.

At the same time, the need for the facto solidarity between Member States and a strong economic development through the establishment of development relations are the basic principles of this Treaty (Traité instituant la Communauté Européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier, 1951).

The European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community Treaties, were grounded, on the one hand, on a common commercial policy, a custom union, a strengthened economic and social environment, technological development and common policies in areas such as agriculture, fishing or transportation[6], and on the other hand, on a common nuclear industry market, to exclude the possibility of an armed conflict between European states and to ensure their cooperation[7].

In our analysis, the Maastricht Treaty, signed on 7 February 1992, known as the Treaty of the European Union is highly important. The Treaty represents a new stage in the process of consolidation of a united Europe, with common goals and ideals. Therefore, the most important objectives that the Union set itself are to promote economic and social progress, the common security and defence policy, human rights and the best interests of the Member States, and to develop close cooperation on justice and home affairs.

We have made this assessment of the principles and objectives on which NATO and EU exist precisely to emphasise that they have common premises, a common trajectory, common beliefs and visions. Both organisations are extremely careful about promoting and ensuring the security and the prosperity of the citizens.

It is clear that the most important values of the two organisations can only be common, given their composition and the entire historical development. Therefore, the cooperation between them is not only desirable but absolutely necessary.

The direct involvement of the European Union in the regional security must not have the character to exclude or compete with NATO, on the contrary, it must be achieved through a cooperative activity.

The existing common defence and security policy at European Union level is of great help to the Alliance, as long as their efforts are complementary and do not overlap with NATO programmes and capabilities.

The European contribution to the common security must rely on effective policies, in order to achieve the planned results. The European Union common

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[6] As regards the European Economic Community.
[7] Regarding the European Atomic Energy Community.

security and defence policy, which establishes the necessary framework for political and military structures for the purposes of enforcement the Union's military and civilian missions and operations outside its borders, is an important step in the two international organisations` efforts to secure the regional security through joint effort, cooperation and ongoing dialogue.

If we look at the military spending at European level, we see that although Europe is a major player in the field, because of inefficient spending, lack of interoperability and technological gaps, there is a considerable discrepancy between the existing capabilities and the possible outcome if all these security policies would have a common ground.

In other words, without a sustained, coordinated and effective investment, Europe's ability to ensure the security will suffer. In this direction, cooperation, interoperability, development of long-term perspectives and participation in joint NATO-EU operations are elements of utmost importance.

However, why is the cooperation policy between the two organisations preferable to competitiveness? Well, the international architecture defined after the World War II is full of challenges from every dimension of our existence.

The complexity and unpredictability of the attacks, the fact that they are not limited to a physical space, their frequency and profound implications, the peculiarities that the European Union presents, the growing pressure from Russia, China's aspirations of becoming a global leader, the refugee crisis are some of the reasons why cooperation is indispensable.

Organised crime, climate threats, interethnic conflicts are other examples to emphasise that no state, no organisation can solve all the problems by acting alone. Partnerships are necessary, perhaps more than ever, in order to ensure global peace and a security climate, because the emergence of all these challenges is impossible to predict, to anticipate, and an optimal response can only be achieved within a strong alliance.

The importance of cooperation between EU and NATO becomes apparent, on the one hand, from the joint actions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the other hand, from the permanent exchange of policies and good practices in various key areas.

As a consequence of the cooperation missions, the EU and NATO signed the Berlin Plus Agreement, with the aim of increasing the level of interoperability and of streamlining cooperation between the two organisations, with the EU acquiring the right to use NATO's capabilities. It is therefore an agreement on the logistical

support which is necessary for the good cooperation and which highlights the need for cooperation in strategic areas.

In this regard, we mention areas such as cyber security – the WannaCry attack, military mobility, hybrid threats[8], mutual participation in exercises, such as CYBRID, an exercise organised by the European Union in Estonia in the field of hybrid threats, the Cyber Coalition, NATO's annual exercise, and the Operation Sea Guardian, aimed at fighting against illegal migration, arms and human trafficking, and to strengthen the security of maritime borders. These important joint exercises enable both structures to know each other's working methods better, to reinforce the coordination capacity in order to achieve the common strategic objective.

However, in this hostile environment with diverse security risks, the cooperation between the two entities in the field of security must be accompanied by the extension of these relations and enhanced cooperation with African and Asian states, with African Union member partners, Arab League and not only.

The European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation have the vocation to ensure global peace and, afterwards, to provide the transition from transatlantic to global security. The eradication on any regional conflict, the progress, the ongoing cooperation and the mutual trust are some significant elements in this regard.

It is clear that, in order to strengthen a global security climate, the preconditions for a permanent military and political cooperation must be created, in which the footprint of both organisations to become more noticeable.

Therefore, the impact of the adopted policies in the transatlantic cooperation must go beyond the geographical boundaries covered by the two organisations and must be mastered and applied globally. It is the safest way to ensure a secure climate for all the citizens, regardless of the state in which they live or the challenges they are facing.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union strive to ensure transatlantic peace, the respect for common values, for individual freedoms, for democracy, for human rights and to promote the rule of law.

The ongoing challenges facing the two international organisations have the character of destabilising, of jeopardising the work and the progress made during all this time. Moreover, the engagement in fighting against all the threats may also be difficult to reach if we take into account the diverse and sophisticated nature

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[8] Both international structures contribute to and benefits from the facilities offered by the European Center of Excellence for Combating Hybrid Threats in Finland.

of the new types of challenges. The response to all existing challenges must also include non-EU actors for a course of action tailored to each threat.

In this regard, NATO and the EU have not only committed themselves to provide territorial protection for the allies, but have also worked to protect and promote their core values, crisis prevention and crisis management as well as post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction. These joint steps were preceded by extensive negotiations and various policies in order to enable the accomplishment of such common actions.

Just like the EU-NATO partnership has gone through several stages of development until it reached the necessary conditions for cooperation and interoperability, likewise it is necessary to develop relations with Asian and African states through joint actions in priority fields, in order to strengthen the dialogue and to establish a sustainable strategic partnership.

Therefore, to ensure the expansion of the security and prosperity climate from the regional to global level, the culture in the field of security cooperation must be constantly cultivated, and NATO-EU cooperation should become the pillar on which global partners can build an extended, common and lasting security environment.

Unfortunately, the instability of the Middle East has posed a series of real challenges for both EU and NATO member states, and the decisions taken by nations as independent entities have had a major impact on both organisations. Thus, the development of a sustainable, strengthened climate of peace that successfully meets all the external challenges must be endorsed through direct involvement, investments and permanent assistance, and has to include areas characterised by instability.

CONCLUSIONS

The European Union is the natural partner of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, and together, with the joint effort and complementary actions, have the vocation to expand the security climate globally.

As it has been mentioned before, NATO and the EU have ensured the Euro-Atlantic security environment and the prosperity of all the allies for more than 70 years, and almost 90% of the citizens of the NATO's allied states are European citizens. In this context, a strong Europe means a strong Alliance, so all the investments for the citizen's security represent common goals and shared achievements (Geoană, 2020, p. 42).

Moreover, these moments of unprecedented uncertainty that we are witnessing raise fundamental questions about the architecture of the world governance and about the need for a permanent cooperation and collaboration, not only at regional level, but also globally.

In this endeavour, it is important for Europe to remain at the heart of the transatlantic security, strengthening the Alliance's eastern flank through an increased military presence and extending its influence over Asian and African states.

The cooperation process outside the European soil is a long-term course of action and need to be strengthened, so that the Euro-Atlantic values can contribute to the creation of the necessary cooperation mechanism in order to ensure the transition from regional peace to global peace and security.

Of course, ensuring the security and the involvement of both EU and NATO in safeguarding global peace involves huge costs, thereby all the expenses must be efficient and in areas of high interest, such as cyber-attack response infrastructure and artificial intelligence.

With regard to the necessary funds in this field, the European Parliament has constantly encouraged Member States to meet NATO's capability targets, which requires a minimum level of defence spending of 2% of GDP, but meeting this condition has proved to be a lasting approach and it is a policy that, at the moment, is not approved by all the North Atlantic Organisation member states.

Regarding the efforts of both NATO and the EU, if initially they were parallel rather than convergent, today all NATO policies encompass the European political dimension. Achieving this goal has not been easy at all, however the joint effort of the two international entities has led to prosperity and regional peace. Thus, the next step in the NATO-EU partnership should be to extend the sphere of responsibility and their influence, so that Asian and African states can enjoy the values and the security environment that this partnership entails.

As the Brussels and Berlin Agreements state, the main principles of NATO and EU cooperation shall include interconnected actions and common capabilities available to both international organisations. Avoiding an unnecessary duplication of effort and interoperability are the fundamental mechanisms of the partnership.

A fine example in this regard is the necessity for common information, surveillance and recognition capabilities. On the one hand, if the EU acquires such a system, it must be available to both EU and NATO, and on the other hand, NATO's capabilities must be available for the EU, avoiding, in this way, any unnecessary investments (Lute, 2019, p.18).

In its mission of expanding the security climate, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has developed flexible cooperative relationships with partners from around the world. Whether we are talking about New Zealand, Pakistan or Iraq, about Japan or South Korea, the global partnership has characterised the Alliance's policy. At the same time, the Organisation consults with other non-member states[9] that have not concluded bilateral cooperation programmes at the level of the Alliance.

As an extension of the current bilateral relations between the two international organisations and non-member states, in order to initiate the cooperation process and to achieve an effective dialogue with Asian and African states, NATO and the European Union can launch policies in various fields such as the new security threats, fighting against piracy, energy security or aspects related to humanitarian disasters.

This type of flexible global cooperation policy needs to be implemented in future partnerships outside the transatlantic territory, and the consolidation process, the permanent dialogue and a strong partnership must involve the entire international community to reach the fundamental purpose of the international organisations, and the transition from transatlantic peace to global security to be achieved.

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[9] China, India, Singapore, Indonesia.

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