Role of NATO in the security architecture of the EU

2008/2197(INI) - 21/01/2009

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Ari **VATANEN** (EPP-ED, FI) on the role of NATO in the security architecture of the EU. The committee recalls that 94% of the EU population are citizens of NATO member states, 21 EU Member States out of 27 are NATO allies, 21 NATO allies out of 26 are EU Member States and Turkey, a long-standing NATO ally, is a candidate for accession to the EU. MEPs consider that NATO forms the core of European security and the EU has sufficient potential to support its activities.

Strategic overview: MEPs underline that the raison d'être of the European Union is to build peace within its borders and beyond. An effective security strategy bolsters democracy and the protection of fundamental rights according to MEPs. They consider that the EU's ability to build peace depends on the development of the right security strategy or security policy, including the capacity for autonomous action and an efficient and complementary relationship with NATO. Therefore, MEPs call on the EU to continue to deploy missions while ensuring greater sustainability of the ESDP. They call for the EU's **existing crisis-management tools to be further developed**.

MEPs strongly advocate **increased solidarity among the EU Member States** in developing common security and defence strategies. The Commission is called upon to carry out further research into the importance of the sequencing of military and civil interventions in conflict areas and to integrate their findings into its security and development policies.

The relationship between NATO and the security architecture of the EU: MEPs recognise the fundamental role of NATO in the security architecture of Europe. They note that the Alliance remains the foundation of collective defence, and that the security of Europe as a whole, regardless of the individual positions adopted by its states, continues to benefit from the maintenance of the transatlantic alliance. MEPs take the view that the future collective defence of the EU should as far as possible be organised in cooperation with NATO and that the **USA and the EU need to intensify their bilateral relationship** and extend it to issues pertaining to peace and security.

Security risks in the modern world still require closer partnership and concentration on strengthening the core capabilities of the EU and NATO, according to MEPs. Cooperation in elaborating the new European Security Strategy and the new NATO Strategic Concept is crucial.

MEPs are of the view that the **EU must develop its own security and defence capabilities**, and develop the instruments of its security strategy, ranging from diplomatic crisis-prevention and economic and development assistance to civilian capabilities in the field of stabilisation and reconstruction. The “Berlin plus” arrangements, which allow the EU to have recourse to NATO assets and capabilities, need to be improved according to MEPs in order to allow the two organisations to intervene and effectively deliver relief in current crises.

Turkey is called upon to cease hindering the cooperation between EU and NATO.

Cooperation between NATO and the EU in security and defence issues: a formal return to the military structures of NATO is welcomed by the MEPs. The EU and NATO should work together in response to the new security challenges and adopt concrete initiatives for the pooling of European defence capabilities. The proposal for the establishment of systematic contacts between the Secretaries-General of

NATO and the EU Council is welcomed, in particular so as to avoid confusion where the EU and NATO operate side by side in different missions towards the same common purpose. EU Member States which are also members of NATO are asked to redouble their efforts towards the establishment of a **framework for integrated cooperation between NATO and the EU**.

MEPs call on the **EU and NATO to better inform people of their missions** and of the role those missions play in creating security and stability around the world.

EU Operational Headquarters: MEPs support the establishment of a permanent EU Operational Headquarters, under the authority of the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative, having as part of its mandate the planning and conduct of military ESDP operations. They stress that an EU Operational Headquarters would complement the current NATO command structures and would not undermine NATO's transatlantic integrity.

Capabilities and military spending: MEPs are of the opinion that the mutual challenge for the EU and NATO is to make use of the **same national pool of resources in terms of personnel and capabilities**. In addition to the need for the much more efficient use of military resources, the need for more investment in defence by EU Member States is essential in the interests of European security. Therefore, MEPs call for a significant increase in the proportion of common costs in every NATO and EU military operation.

Compatibility between NATO and EU membership: MEPs insist that all the EU Member States must be present at the joint EU-NATO meetings without discrimination. They propose that those NATO allies that are candidates for EU accession should be more closely involved in the work of the ESDP and the European Defence Agency.

MEPs deplore, in particular, the fact that the **Cypriot problem** continues to badly impair the development of EU-NATO cooperation. Cyprus is asked to review its political position on its membership of the Partnership for Peace and NATO member states are asked to refrain from using their veto to prevent EU Member States from becoming members of NATO. MEPs are of the view that, if and when **Russia** becomes a genuine democracy, the depth of cooperation between it and the EU could reach unprecedented levels Therefore, they invite Russia to transform itself into a true democracy exercising the rule of law, and to root out all practices involving the use of violence as a means of furthering political goals.