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Seventh progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017

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Seventh progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017

Peace on the European continent has been shattered by Russia's unprovoked military aggression against Ukraine. It constitutes a gross violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter, fundamentally challenging our shared values and threatening Euro-Atlantic security.

Since the first day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU and NATO, EU Member States and NATO Allies, have been standing and working together. Our strategic partnership is more robust and relevant than ever at this critical moment for Euro-Atlantic security. Political dialogue at all levels has further intensified, demonstrating NATO and EU unity and our common resolve in condemning Russia's war of aggression and in expressing full solidarity with Ukraine, its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as its right to self-defence. EU-NATO staff cooperation mechanisms have also been enhanced to support coherence and mutual complementarity of efforts in responding to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In this new strategic context, our long-standing partnership continues to make tangible progress, demonstrating and reinforcing the strength and solidity of the transatlantic bond. In the course of the past year, the two organizations further consolidated their mutually reinforcing cooperation to the benefit of all NATO Allies and EU Member States, with a view to upholding and promoting the shared values and interests of the Euro-Atlantic community.

The present, seventh report on the implementation of the 74 common proposals – which were endorsed by EU and NATO Councils in parallel processes in 2016 and 2017 – elaborates on progress achieved between June 2021 and May 2022 by demonstrating concrete deliverables in all agreed areas of cooperation.

In particular, we wish to highlight the following elements:

- NATO-EU political dialogue and common messaging further developed to include notably the joint visit by the NATO Secretary General and the President of the European Commission to Lithuania and Latvia in November 2021, a joint press conference by the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO on the very day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as well as increased frequency of cross-participation in respective high-level meetings.
- Well-established political consultations continued in different settings, including through regular meetings between the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC). Our dialogue remains an indispensable and highly valued instrument for strengthening mutual understanding, building confidence and ensuring reciprocal transparency vis-à-vis all EU Member States and NATO Allies, as well as their ownership and strong support.
- Agreed cooperation work strands continued to deliver concrete results, including through the newly established structured staff dialogue on resilience; cooperation on strategic communications and countering foreign information manipulation and interference; efforts

to ensure the coherence of output between the respective NATO and EU defence planning processes where requirements overlap, and between capability development efforts; continued exchanges through the structured staff dialogue on military mobility; and dedicated staff interactions on Ukraine focusing in particular on hybrid, cyber, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN), humanitarian assistance and protection of critical infrastructure.

The EU-NATO strategic partnership continues to be taken forward in full respect of the agreed guiding principles enshrined in the Warsaw and Brussels Joint Declarations on NATO-EU cooperation.

The adoption of the EU's Strategic Compass in March as well as the forthcoming adoption of NATO's next Strategic Concept in June offer a unique opportunity to further enhance coherence and synergies between the two organizations.

In light of the current challenges to international peace and stability, and with the full engagement and continued support by all NATO Allies and EU Member States, the two staffs remain firmly committed to reach the full potential of the 74 proposals for common action, and to further enhance, deepen and expand our mutually beneficial cooperation.

Countering hybrid threats

EU and NATO staffs continued to engage and promote activities organised by the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki (Hybrid CoE). Both staffs participated in its Steering Board meetings. The Centre's membership continued to grow with 31 NATO Allies and EU Member States having joined the centre to date. In April 2022, the Hybrid CoE hosted the main exercise for the 'Resilient Civilians' project, which brought together senior-level government officials and experts from EU Member States and NATO Allies. The frequency of staff-to-staff meetings increased, and both staffs continued to exchange information on activities in their respective organisations.

Well-established relations between the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the NATO Hybrid Analysis Branch continued to develop through staff-to-staff exchanges, with the aim of strengthening situational awareness and mutual understanding of respective activities, as well as to explore further potential cooperation avenues. The two staffs continued the established practice of preparing Parallel and Coordinated Assessments on various topics, publishing four such documents in the reporting period.

Cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism (CT) progressed well. Staff talks were held regularly, exchanging views on topics such as battlefield evidence, technical exploitation, capacity building for partners, countering improvised explosive devices, countering unmanned aerial systems, countering terrorist financing, and protection of critical infrastructure. Both organisations benefitted from cross-briefings and mutual staff participation in respective working groups. In November 2021, the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU hosted an informal seminar focusing on gender and terrorism, with the participation of representatives from EU Member States and NATO Allies, as well as of NATO and EU staffs. EU staff observed NATO's Martial Vision Technical Exploitation Seminar in December 2021 and have been invited to observe a Battlefield Evidence Training organised by the NATO Stability Policing Centre of Excellence in June 2022 for NATO partners in the Middle East and North Africa region.

In line with the agreement reached between the President of the European Commission and the NATO Secretary General during his visit to the College of Commissioners in December 2020, EU and NATO staffs launched a Structured Dialogue on Resilience in January 2022. This new engagement also reflects the growing importance Allies and Member States attach to this topic. During the inaugural meeting, staffs discussed synergies and complementarity between NATO's strategic resilience agenda and the EU's Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, the upcoming EU Critical Entities Resilience Directive and NATO's Baseline Requirements for National Resilience, and between NATO's work on civil protection and humanitarian assistance and the Union Disaster Resilience Goals.

NATO and EU staffs increased their exchange and cooperation on specific resilience-related issues stemming from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. EU staff briefed twice the NATO Civil Emergency Planning Committee in March and April 2022 while NATO briefed the EU's Politico-Military Group in May 2022, on respective responses to civilian implications of Russia's invasion.

Cooperation on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) issues continued, with CBRN among the topics included in EU-NATO exchanges on the potential civil implications of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The November 2021 Annual Conference of the NATO Joint CBRN Defence Centre of Excellence (JCBRND CoE) explored diverse aspects of NATO-EU interaction for CBRN defence and resilience, with a view to strengthening practical cooperation. Staff talks held during that conference encompassed a broad spectrum of topics on present and future activities in this field. A workshop on CBRN consequence management facilitated by the NATO JCBRND CoE took place in November 2021. The next round of EU-NATO staff discussions on CBRN is planned for June/July 2022.

NATO-EU staff interaction on Strategic Communications included a broad exchange of views on foreign information manipulation and interference, including disinformation, looking at persistent and emerging actors. They discussed the overall framework to address the threat and concrete projects to advance EU-NATO cooperation.

EU and NATO staffs consistently exchanged in-depth reporting, real-time insights and worked hand-in-hand to maintain shared situational awareness of hostile activities in the information environment, including through the EU Rapid Alert System. During analyst exchanges such as the EU-led international cooperation calls and regular *ad-hoc* meetings, staffs continuously shared assessments of the information environment, including on Russia's war on Ukraine. Staffs closely monitored hostile information activities, and identified information manipulation and disinformation, in advance of and during the Russian invasion of Ukraine, using the insights to inform both organizations' strategic communications approaches and other response options. Staffs tracked China's StratCom activities providing political support to Russia and their amplification of Russian messaging. The NATO-led Information Environment Assessment Tiger Team fostered close coordination and cooperation with EU staff regarding capability development. Staffs of both organizations have participated in the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, which provides a forum for further cooperation.

NATO and EU staff cooperation with the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (StratCom CoE) remained strong. The StratCom CoE delivered a commissioned research project on "Disinformation in democracies – Improving Societal Resilience to Disinformation" with case studies focused on national programmes in seven countries. A StratCom CoE virtual event with high-level participants from both Organisations was organized to present results publically. Staffs

jointly commissioned further research by the StratCom CoE and the European CoE for Countering Hybrid Threats, in order to contribute to shared EU and NATO knowledge of identifying tactics, techniques and procedures of hostile actors in the information sphere.

EU and NATO staffs continued to coordinate public communications related to areas of common interest, including by mutually amplifying respective digital content, and reinforcing common messaging in public diplomacy events.

Operational cooperation including maritime issues

Staff dialogue on operational cooperation and the practice of mutual cross-briefings in respective NATO and EU Committees, including in the maritime field, continued on a regular basis.

In October 2021, NATO briefed the EU's Political-Military Group on the Alliance's maritime operations and activities. NATO staff participated in the October 2021 Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED) hosted by Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI and in February 2022, hosted EU-NATO staff talks on maritime activities. Meanwhile, NATO's deployment in the Aegean Sea continues to link with FRONTEX in assisting Greece and Turkey to cut the lines of illegal trafficking and illegal migration.

With regard to Afghanistan, EU and NATO staffs continued to consult and coordinate efforts in Brussels, and until August 2021 in Kabul, including through participating in quarterly Comprehensive Approach meetings, as well as weekly International Community meetings in Kabul involving the Office of the NATO Senior Civilian Representative and the EU Delegation. NATO and EU staffs also interacted closely regarding their respective Safe Passage efforts.

The robust process model for Aviation Safety Oversight for the airspace over Kosovo¹, established in 2020 with the contribution of Iceland to KFOR, has enabled some technical progress in 2021 for new South-West air routes in the lower airspace over Kosovo. Despite continued staff engagement, further progress in the respective aspects and remits of the aviation normalization process in the Western Balkans under NATO and EU lead remains contingent on political developments in the region.

Cyber security and defence

EU and NATO staffs maintained regular contact and information exchanges on respective cyber activities, including policy developments. This included close engagement when NATO and the EU publicly called out the unacceptable Solarwinds cyber operation in April 2021 and Microsoft Exchange Server compromise in July 2021.

In light of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, a key focus was to develop a shared understanding of the threats and the potential spill over effects on Allies and Member States. Another focus was to achieve shared situational awareness on efforts by the two organizations and their respective constituencies to support Ukraine in the area of cyber.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

In terms of strengthening cooperation on cyber exercises through reciprocal participation, upon the invitation of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU Council, NATO staff observed sections of the annual Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox table-top exercise (CyDipTTX 2021) in the EU Council's Horizontal Working Party on Cyber Issues in November 2021. NATO staff and the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCD CoE) also participated in the planning and conduct phase of EU's CYBER PHALANX 21 exercise during the third quarter of 2021. EU staff participated in the international cyber defence exercise Locked Shields, organised by the CCD CoE.

In September 2021, NATO staff participated in the Cyber Defence Policy Framework review workshop with the EU Member States, organised by the European External Action Service (EEAS). Exchanges between EU and NATO staffs continued on concepts and doctrines as well as training and education. NATO released its new Comprehensive Cyber Defence Policy to EU staff, and the EU Military Vision and Strategy on Cyberspace as a Domain of Operations was shared with NATO staff. The European Defence Agency (EDA) participated in the NATO Annual Discipline Conference in October 2021, providing an update to Allies on the EU's Cyber Education, Training and Exercises projects. In addition, in April 2022, two workshops were conducted on Cyber Defence Education, Training and Exercises and on Cyber Defence Concepts Exchange in March 2022 with participation of staffs from both organizations. Work continued between the EU Military Staff (EUMS) and NATO International Military Staff (IMS) in this regard.

The cooperation between the EDA and NATO CCD CoE continued, including through invitations to NATO to attend the EDA Project Team Cyber Defence meetings. NATO CCD CoE invited EU staff to take part in the annual International Conference on Cyber Conflict (CyCon) in June 2021. In September 2021, the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) participated in the 5th NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) Cyber Security Conference in the Maritime Domain.

The Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence between the NATO Computer Incident Response Capability (NCIRC) and the Computer Emergency Response Team for the EU institutions, bodies and agencies (CERT-EU) continued to be implemented in line with existing provisions. The Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP) is being leveraged to this end. In addition, coordination meetings between the staffs are held on a regular basis and exchanges on best practices for technical topics also continue.

Defence capabilities

Efforts continue to ensure the coherence of output between the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP), the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and respective NATO processes such as the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) and the Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process (PARP), where requirements overlap, while recognizing the different nature of the two organizations and their respective responsibilities and memberships. In this context, EU staff were invited by individual Allies to attend multilateral consultations for the development of the 2021 NATO Capability Targets, agreed in October 2021, in the framework of the NDPP. Also, EU staff were invited by individual Allies to attend the ongoing bilateral and multilateral meetings of the NDPP Capability Review. In parallel, several EU Member States that are also NATO Allies or Partners invited NATO staff to their CARD bilateral meetings. Moreover, close staff contacts at all levels, including between military staffs, have contributed to ensure mutual awareness of work under way in each organization. Under the single set of forces principle, capabilities developed by members of both organizations, including those developed multinationally, remain in principle available for NATO and EU operations, subject to national political decisions.

NATO and EU staffs are working together to ensure coherence of multinational efforts, in view of the further development of EU defence initiatives and of the multinational High Visibility Projects in NATO respectively. To this end, expert meetings of EU and NATO staffs have continued to ensure respective awareness, complementarity of efforts and avoidance of unnecessary duplication downstream as regards respective multinational projects and programmes. Concrete examples in that respect include areas such as Air-to-Air Refuelling, Surface Based Air Defence systems, Countering Improvised Explosive Devices, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), Maritime Unmanned Systems, Ammunition, and Air Crew Flight Training. This also included staff discussions on work related to facilitating interoperability by design.

Progress continues on the implementation of the Military Aviation Strategy according to the respective implementation plans for which the related actions are coordinated through dedicated regular staff meetings. The regular reciprocal participation in the EDA Military Aviation Board and NATO Aviation Committee contributes to ensuring coordination and coherence. In addition and in the framework of the on-going negotiations on Single European Sky (SES) reform, Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research 3 (SESAR 3) and the upcoming SESAR Deployment programme, staff cooperation continued to ensure that military inputs, including by NATO, are appropriately taken into account. In this context, NATO staff were associated to the Tiger Team led by EDA and gathering representatives from EDA participating Member States, EUROCONTROL and NATO, aiming to develop a military Communications, Navigation and Surveillance strategy.

Cooperation was also pursued on security risks to aviation including the cyber risk, within the NATO-EUROCONTROL Air Traffic Management Security Coordinating Group and in the European Aviation Safety Agency's (EASA) 'European Strategic Coordination Platform'. EDA, EUROCONTROL and NATO staff are collaborating with the overall objective to safeguard military aviation needs and requirements in a European context. On airworthiness, information exchanges between the NATO Airworthiness Advisory Group and the Military Airworthiness Authority Forum continued through staff representation in mutual meetings.

Established cooperation in various capability domains continued apace. On Air-to-Air Refuelling, staff cooperation ensured continued synchronization of the NATO air-to-air refuelling roadmap with respective EU work strands. Furthermore, with support by the EU and NATO staffs, the project to field a Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) Fleet further advanced with the delivery of two additional MRTT aircraft over the reporting period.

Regarding RPAS Air Traffic Integration (ATI) and the implications of U-Space regulation on military activities, meetings between staffs took place on a regular basis to ensure mutual awareness on respective activities in this critical capability area. NATO staff also continued to contribute to EDA RPAS projects and studies. With a view to ensuring transparency to Member States and Allies and avoid duplication of efforts, cross-briefings on respective activities were held. EDA and NATO staffs jointly briefed on RPAS ATI at the Madrid World Air Traffic Management Congress.

In the maritime domain, expert level discussions took place to provide transparency on EDA activities related to underwater control and NATO Maritime Unmanned Systems and mine warfare initiatives respectively, including in relation to exercises REPMUS 21 and 22 hosted by Portugal. The NATO Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation was also invited to update the EDA Project Team Underwater control.

Standardisation remains an important area of cooperation to ensure the awareness of both EU Member States and NATO Allies of respective and complementary efforts in this area.

Transparency and coordination were pursued through staff contacts, as well as regular cross-participation of staffs in the NATO Committee for Standardisation and the European Defence Standardisation Committee respectively.

Military mobility remains a “flagship” of NATO-EU cooperation and a high priority for both organisations in light of the new security environment, as also underlined in the EU Strategic Compass on Security and Defence². The Structured Dialogue on Military Mobility continues to serve as an effective format for focused staff discussions on shared priorities, such as military requirements, transport infrastructure, transport of dangerous goods, customs, cross border movement permissions and relevant exercises, as well as mutual updates on respective work including logistical IT systems and resilient civil transport systems. Further opportunities for cooperation in light of additional work in both organisations will be sought.

Military mobility is regularly addressed at the Director General NATO IMS/Director General EUMS Conferences. Furthermore, cross-briefings were provided in January by the EUMS to the NATO Military Committee in Permanent Session on the EU’s military mobility efforts and by the NATO IMS to the EU Military Committee on NATO’s enablement and military mobility work. In addition, the EUMS and NATO IMS are evaluating the roads used for military needs declared by the 21 common members, and assessing the synergies between the border crossing points of neighbouring countries, with a view to supporting coordination between respective EU and NATO efforts.

NATO staff continued to participate in certain EDA meetings in the Project Team Movement and Transport.

Defence industry and research

NATO and EU staffs continued consultations on wider industry matters and concrete topics related to industry engagement, to ensure mutual awareness and sharing of best practices. This included reciprocal presentations on the EU industrial strategy as well as on relevant tenets of NATO 2030. The EDA Deputy Chief Executive participated in the November 2021 NATO-Industry Forum.

Staff contacts on research and innovation continued to ensure mutual awareness on respective policy developments and initiatives related to emerging and disruptive technologies and defence innovation, also with a view to identifying possible synergies. Regular consultations were maintained between EDA and the NATO Innovation Hub in Allied Command Transformation (ACT) to foster mutual awareness on respective activities and support mutually reinforcing approaches, including with reciprocal expert participation in the juries of respective innovation prizes, and between EDA and the NATO Science and Technology Organization (STO). Staff interactions started in the areas of Materials, Command and Control, and Artificial Intelligence. The NATO STO continued to engage with the Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the EDA on techniques for the identification of technological ‘weak signals’. The Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE) of the STO continued its participation in several maritime research projects supported by the Commission.

² As of now, three non-EU NATO Allies – the United States, Norway and Canada – have joined the EU’s PESCO project Military Mobility.

In December 2021, the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges shared NATO's perspective at the EDA Annual Conference on Defence innovation. NATO representatives participated in the Defence Innovation Day organised by EDA in May 2022.

Exercises

Recent events have shown that developing further crisis management capabilities, improving preparedness to deal with crises and strengthening resilience in the face of crises has become all the more important.

In order to enhance cooperation in the area of exercises, EU and NATO staffs were engaged in the preparations for the implementation of the Parallel and Coordinated Exercises (PACE) to be held in 2022-2023. In 2022, the leading organization will be the EU with its exercise EU Integrated Resolve 2022 (IR22); and NATO will be in the lead in 2023 with its Crisis Management Exercise 2023 (CMX23). NATO staff were invited to participate in the planning of the EU's IR22, and EU staff were invited to NATO's CMX23 Main Planning Meeting.

A two-part Staff Level Workshop on Crisis Management between EUMS and NATO IMS took place in October and in December 2021.

EU staff were invited to participate in Steadfast Defender 21 exercise in May-June 2021, and Steadfast Jupiter 21 exercise in October 2021, as well as to Cyber Coalition 21 exercise in November-December 2021. EU staff have been invited to NATO's annual Coalition Warrior Interoperability eXploration, eXperimentation, eXamination, eXercise (CWIX) in June 2022.

NATO staff participated in the distinguished visitors' day of EDA 2021 and 2022 helicopter exercises, as well as to the 2021 Helicopter Tactics Symposium. Regular coordination between EDA and the NATO Joint Air Power Competence Centre continued to take place, including to ensure de-confliction of exercise schedules.

Defence and security capacity building

Cooperation on defence and security capacity building for partner countries continued with a maintained focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Jordan, the Republic of Moldova, Tunisia, and Ukraine. NATO and EU staffs in Brussels and on the ground continued to regularly exchange views and information on the political and security situation in all the aforementioned partner countries, and on the respective activities of both organisations. This area of cooperation has become even more important with Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In the period prior to February 2022, the EU and NATO in Ukraine continued close cooperation to advance security sector and intelligence reform within the International Advisory Group (EU Delegation, EU Advisory Mission Ukraine, NATO Representation to Ukraine, and US Embassy). In Brussels, staffs consulted on their evolving defence capacity building support to Ukraine, notably in view of the Assistance Measures (AMs) under the EU's European Peace Facility (EPF) and the enhancement of NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine. They also discussed other topics such as anti-corruption, rule of law, security sector reforms, hybrid threats, strategic communications and countering disinformation, economic reforms, energy, resilience, and Women, Peace and Security. EU and NATO staffs also consulted regarding the Russian demarches received in the last months of 2021. The meeting of the North Atlantic Council and the European Union's

Political and Security Committee in February 2022 was a valuable opportunity for the two organisations to discuss the situation and demonstrate their unity. These consultations were complemented by several high-level trilateral meetings between the EU, NATO and the Ukrainian side.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, NATO and EU staffs have intensified their interaction, including through dedicated staff dialogues on relevant aspects of respective responses to the invasion.

Political consultations have taken place for the other partner countries as well. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), NATO and EU staffs held bimonthly roundtables on security in Sarajevo in 2022, and coordinated their activities on cybersecurity through the dedicated EU Special Representative/OSCE-led Working Group. In the context of NATO's efforts to develop additional tailored support package for BiH, NATO-EU staff consultations took place to identify synergies and mitigate potential duplication of efforts.

In the case of Georgia, EU and NATO staffs regularly discussed the domestic and regional political situation as well as respective programmes and activities (e.g. EU's Security, Accountability and Fight against Crime programme and NATO's Substantial NATO-Georgia Package), the preparation and operationalisation of the EU's EPF AMs for Georgia for 2021 and possible proposals for AMs for 2022, as well as actions to support Georgia's resilience, including in the area of hybrid threats, cyber security and disinformation. In recent months, several high-level meetings took place in Tbilisi, including the visit of a European Parliament delegation to the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Center. Staff consultations also took place on NATO's additional tailored support package for Georgia.

On Moldova, NATO and EU staffs stepped up exchanges, with EU staff consulting NATO experts in preparing projects under the EPF AMs. For the first time ever, the EU, NATO and the Moldovan government met in a trilateral high-level format in January 2022.

As for Jordan and Tunisia, NATO and EU staffs briefed each other on their respective ongoing counter-terrorism efforts to assist these two countries.

Cooperation also took place beyond these countries³. In the Western Balkans, a high-level coordination between EU and NATO leadership, and subsequent coordinated NATO-EU activities and strategic messages, proved highly effective in defusing tensions between Belgrade and Pristina over the licence plates issue in September 2021.

As per usual practice, cross-briefings took place in autumn 2021 to update respective committees in both organizations on the progress in this area of cooperation. Furthermore, the EU was invited to participate in, and brief at, the NATO meeting of National Points of Contact for the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, which took place in December 2021.

Practical cooperation touched on a number of issues, including:

- Strategic Communications: following a joint webinar on Countering Disinformation in Ukraine in May 2021, the first Kyiv StratCom Forum was organised in December 2021 by

³ Among others, EU and NATO staffs continued to update each other on respective engagements with Mauritania.

the Ukrainian Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security with the support of NATO and the EU.

- Humanitarian assistance: EU and NATO staffs coordinated and de-conflicted respective activities in response to crises, notably in Ukraine.
- Crisis management: in November 2021, NATO and EU staffs evaluated together Jordan's full-scale national exercise 'Path to Safety 2021', designed to test Jordan's resilience in and response to extreme situations, including terrorist attacks, power blackouts and industrial disasters.
- Good governance: NATO Building Integrity (BI), which is supported through the NATO BI – EU Partnership Agreement, continued to support Georgia, Jordan, the Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine in the area of good governance in the defence and security sector. Within that framework, regular exchanges took place between NATO and EU staffs (including through the NATO BI Trust Fund Advisory Group, of which the EU is a member). The EU's financial support allowed NATO BI to provide expertise to these countries.

Looking ahead, the staffs of the two organisations have discussed a number of activities for partner countries in the coming period, including:

- On Ukraine: to continue to work and explore how to further deepen dialogue and undertake initiatives in Brussels and Kyiv, as appropriate.
- On Jordan: to discuss the possibility of having the EU Delegation in Amman brief at upcoming NATO Counter-Terrorism (CT) events designed for Jordan, including on the EU's approach to CT and the whole-of-government approach.
- On Moldova: to seek opportunities to cooperate as appropriate, e.g. on hybrid threats, cyber security and defence, Women, Peace and Security, CBRN, and the upcoming NATO Professional Development Programme.
- On Georgia: to continue to exchange information on activities in the area of security and defence, including the EPF, with a view to identify synergies and cooperate, as appropriate;
- On Tunisia: with the EU's financial support, NATO BI will continue to strengthen Tunisia's BI capacities to support the establishment of a Tunisian Regional BI Centre.

As regards good governance at large, the implementation of the BI programme, supported by the EU, will continue under the current Partnership Agreement, which ends on 31 December 2022. Consultations between NATO BI and the EU are taking place to explore collaboration for the period 2023-2026.

In Iraq, the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) and the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) continued working together to meet the current needs of the Iraqi counterparts. Both missions regularly exchange situational awareness on political and security dynamics and cooperate on coordinated messaging. They have, together with other international partners, developed robust coordination and cooperation arrangements for the Security Sector Reform effort delineating roles and responsibilities, to include strategic communications. Combined efforts on Women, Peace and Security progressed within the informal technical working group for information sharing and

coordination. The two missions also worked together on implementing the NATO BI Self-Assessment Questionnaire methodology in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior.

Cooperation at the level of Centres of Excellence continued to advance gradually. Both the 12th Annual Conference organized by NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC, June 2021) and the 5th NMIOTC Cyber Security Conference in the Maritime Domain (September 2021) saw strong EU participation. NATO's Combined Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence (CJOS COE) conducted online its Annual Maritime Security Regimes Round Table (November 2021), focusing on 'challenges and threats in global maritime security', with participation from EU CSDP maritime operations.

In addition, the ESDC opened two cyber security courses to participants from NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCD CoE). NATO invited the EU to various workshops, conferences and training courses, and contributed to ESDC and EDA training activities. Following EU-NATO staff workshops in March 2022, ESDC invited NATO C3, CCD CoE, NMIOTC and Cyberspace Operations Center to participate as observers and contributors in the ESDC Executive Academic Board.

Political Dialogue

Political dialogue between the two organizations continues to be an essential and indispensable instrument for strengthening mutual understanding, building confidence, and ensuring reciprocal transparency vis-à-vis all NATO Allies and EU Member States as well as their strong engagement. The well-established practice of mutual invitations to relevant ministerial meetings, cross-briefings and staff dialogues was sustained and further enhanced, adapting to Covid-19 restrictions by using virtual channels of communication where possible.

EU and NATO staffs continued regular dialogue within the framework of the implementation of the common set of proposals, including on military mobility, capability development, counter-terrorism, hybrid threats, cyber defence, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, strategic communications and countering disinformation, strategic foresight, capacity building for partners, as well as climate change and security/defence.

Political dialogue further increased in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, reaching unprecedented levels, and was instrumental in fostering EU-NATO unity of purpose and complementarity of efforts.

In the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the NATO Secretary General and the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission participated in Leaders' calls organized by the US President in January, February and April 2022, as well as in G7 meetings, at the Leaders' level in March and Foreign Ministers' level in April. On 24 February, in the margins of the extraordinary virtual NATO Leaders' meeting on Ukraine, the NATO Secretary General held a joint press conference with the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission. Both Presidents later participated in the virtual NATO Leaders' meeting.

The EU High Representative participated in the meetings of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in December 2021 and in January, March and April 2022. In addition, he participated in the meetings of NATO Ministers of Defence in February and March 2022, while the EEAS Deputy Secretary General for CSDP and Crisis Response attended the NATO Ministers of Defence meeting in October 2021.

The NATO Secretary General participated in the EU Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) in November 2021 and January 2022, while the NATO Deputy Secretary General attended the informal EU Ministers of Defence meeting in September 2021 and the EU Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) in May 2022.

In June 2021, the NATO Deputy Secretary General addressed the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET) and Sub-Committee on Defence (SEDE), in association with the European Parliament's Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO. In February 2022, the Managing Director of the European External Action Service addressed the joint session of the Defence and Security Committee, the Economics and Security Committee and the Political Committee of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. In April 2022, the Secretary General of NATO met with the President of the European Parliament and addressed the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament.

The NATO Secretary General and the President of the European Commission paid a joint visit to Lithuania and Latvia in November 2021 to address the hybrid challenges posed by the situation at the border with Belarus as well as developments in and around Ukraine.

Senior level contacts, including several bilateral meetings of members of the College of Commissioners with NATO Principals, as well as regular interactions between the EEAS Secretary General and the NATO Deputy Secretary General, further expanded. Furthermore, EU senior officials took part in the meetings of NATO Defence Policy Directors in September 2021 and April 2022, and of NATO Security Policy Directors in April 2022. In turn, NATO senior officials participated in the meeting of EU Defence Policy Directors in December 2021 as well as of EU Security Policy Directors in March 2022.

Dialogue between the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the Political and Security Committee (PSC) continued on topical issues. A previously agreed package of three meetings was completed with an informal meeting on China in July 2021, followed by another package of three highly relevant and substantial meetings that included an informal meeting on Afghanistan in September 2021, a formal meeting on Operation ALTHEA in December 2021, and an informal meeting on Russia/Ukraine in February 2022.

EU and NATO representatives continued efforts to engage with all NATO Allies and EU Member States through mutual cross-briefings. Since the signature of the Warsaw Joint Declaration in July 2016, more than 150 cross-briefings have been held in various EU and NATO committees and working groups. In the reporting period, this included briefings by the EEAS Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General to the NAC in September 2021, December 2021 and May 2022; and briefings by the NATO Deputy Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General to the PSC in June 2021, December 2021 and April 2022. The NAC was briefed on the Western Balkans in November 2021 by the EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement and on climate and security in January 2022 by the Commission's Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal. In addition to the reciprocal briefings, the established practice of senior level informal meetings with the participation of non-EU NATO Allies and non-NATO EU Member States continued.

Cross-briefings by NATO to the EDA Steering Board and by the EDA and the European Commission to the Conference of National Armaments Directors respectively continued to take place. NATO Assistant Secretaries General also held meetings with the EDA Chief Executive and European Commission Director Generals, respectively.

Several cross-briefings took place in the respective Military Committees as well.

Dialogue between the NATO and EU military staffs, including cross-invitations for the participation of each organization's Senior Military Authorities in respective Chiefs of Defence meetings, was enhanced. The last meeting of the bi-annual NATO and EU military staff Directors' General conference was held in November 2021 at NATO Headquarters. The Directors General monitored and reported to their respective Military Committees on the implementation of the military-related common proposals as well as on the state of play of staff interactions. Furthermore, an informal game plan was continually updated to monitor the state of play between the two staffs on mutually identified objectives and milestones within designated lines of development.

Cooperation continued on issues related to Women, Peace and Security (WPS) through regular staff engagements. In November 2021, the NATO WPS team met with the EEAS Gender & Diversity team to exchange on best practices on respective WPS Action Plans, on the role of women and gender in building and strengthening societal resilience, as well as to discuss the Regional Acceleration of UNSC Resolution 1325 (framework and possible synergies in the context of working with partners in the MENA region).

In December 2021, the NATO Secretary General's acting Special Representative for WPS and the EU Ambassador for Gender and Diversity addressed the Annual Conference of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives. Both of them, together with the EEAS Gender Advisor, also spoke at the High-Level Roundtable on Women, Peace and Security, which addressed full and meaningful participation of women in peace and security, with a particular focus on the EU and NATO external implementation of the WPS participation pillar as well as on their cooperation on the WPS agenda.

In January 2022, a staff workshop on WPS took place with the participation of civilian and military staff from NATO and the EU, including those deployed to missions, with a view to discussing current work and exploring potential areas for future cooperation.

The implementation of the 74 common proposals remains an on-going and long-term process. It continues to require commitment and concerted efforts from all stakeholders. Based on a pragmatic and flexible approach, EU and NATO staffs remain firmly committed to, and engaged in, taking this cooperation forward in a swift, fully coordinated and coherent way with a view to delivering further concrete results.