INSTITUTO
UNIVERSITÁRIO
DE LISBOA

Assessing EU-NATO cooperation in discourse and practice: a comparative analysis of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security

Ana Ricardo Martins Vieira

Master in International Studies

Supervisor:
PhD João Terrenas, Invited Assistant Professor
ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon

Co-Supervisor:
PhD Luís Nuno Rodrigues, Full Professor
CEI-ISCTE - Centre for International Studies at University Institute of Lisbon

October, 2023

SOCIOLOGIA
E POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS

Department of History

Assessing EU-NATO cooperation in discourse and practice: a comparative analysis of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security

Ana Ricardo Martins Vieira

Master in International Studies

Supervisor:
PhD João Terrenas, Invited Assistant Professor
ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon

Co-Supervisor:
PhD Luís Nuno Rodrigues, Full Professor
CEI-ISCTE - Centre for International Studies at University Institute of Lisbon

October, 2023

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to all who contributed directly or indirectly to the accomplishment of this dissertation.

To my supervisor, João Terrenas, for his patience, support, guidance and motivation throughout this journey.

To Inês Marques Ribeiro for her kindness, support and encouragement.

To my Professors at Universidade Lusíada Porto for passing on their valuable knowledge, which led to my keen interest in the topic of this dissertation.

I would like to express my gratitude to my mom and dad, without whom none of this would have been possible. Thank you for your love, support and for relentlessly reminding me that there is nothing I cannot achieve.

To my family and friends, Teresa, Filipe, Natália, Antero, Jorge, Ricardo, Catarina, Raquel, Lígia, Patrícia and Isabel, for supporting me throughout this journey and encouraging me to finish another chapter in my life. Special gratitude to Albertina, the kindest soul, for inspiring me to be my best self.

Abstract

To what extent has the interest in consolidating the cooperation between NATO and the EU in the field of security and defence been translated into practice? NATO and the EU have a long-standing relationship and responding efficiently and concertedly to the growing range of unconventional threats requires a joint approach, based on a common vision and articulated in a cooperative and complementary way. Nevertheless, as the vast academic literature on the subject demonstrates, there has been tension, competition and conflict in the relational dynamic between the two institutions due to the EU's pursuit of strategic autonomy. In contrast, this dissertation aims to analyse cooperation between NATO and the EU. Based on an analysis of official documents, we seek to understand how this inter-institutional cooperation has evolved in three areas that have acquired increasing strategic relevance. We particularly highlight the areas of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security, which are the areas of cooperation consistently mentioned in the three EU-NATO Joint Declarations. We conclude that, despite the intention to strengthen operational cooperation between the two organizations, which is reflected in the official documentation, an analysis of the projects implemented collaboratively demonstrates that cooperation is still particularly limited, with some important differences in these three areas analysed. Through this analysis, we intend to contribute to the literature on EU-NATO cooperation by establishing the relationship between the rhetoric and official documentation and the practical actions taken.

Keywords

European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Hybrid Threats, Cyber Threats, Maritime Security

Resumo

Em que medida o interesse em consolidar a cooperação entre a OTAN e a UE no domínio da segurança e defesa se tem traduzido para a prática? A OTAN e a UE têm uma relação de longa data e responder de forma eficiente e concertada ao crescente leque de ameaças não convencionais requer uma abordagem conjunta, assente numa visão comum e articulada de forma cooperativa e complementar. Ainda assim, e como demonstra a vasta literatura académica sobre o tema, tem persistido uma tensão, concorrência e conflitualidade na dinâmica relacional entre as duas instituições, como resultado da procura por autonomia estratégica da UE. Em sentido oposto, esta dissertação tem como objetivo analisar a cooperação entre a OTAN e a UE. É neste contexto que, tendo por base uma análise dos documentos oficiais, procuramos compreender de que forma é que esta cooperação inter-institucional tem evoluído em três áreas que têm ganho uma crescente relevância estratégica. Destacamos, em particular, as áreas das ameaças híbridas, das ciberameaças e da segurança marítima, que são as áreas de cooperação consistentemente mencionadas nas três Declarações Conjuntas da OTAN e da UE. Concluímos que, apesar da intenção de estreitar a cooperação operacional, que está plasmada na documentação oficial, uma análise dos projetos implementados colaborativamente demonstra que a cooperação ainda é particularmente limitada, existindo algumas diferenças importantes nestas três áreas analisadas. Através desta análise, pretendemos contribuir para a literatura que se debruça sobre a cooperação OTAN-UE, estabelecendo a relação entre a retórica e documentação oficial e as ações práticas desenvolvidas.

Palavras-chave

União Europeia, Organização do Tratado do Atlântico Norte, Ameaças Híbridas, Ciberameaças, Segurança Marítima

Table of contents

Glossary of acronyms

CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear

CERT-EU – European Union Computer Emergency Response Team

CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy

CMX – Crisis Management Exercise

CoE – Centre of Excellence

CSDP – Common Security and Defence Policy

EDA – European Defence Agency

EEAS – European External Action Service

ENISA – European Union Agency for Network and Information Security

EP – European Parliament

ESDI – European Security and Defence Identity

ESDP – European Security and Defence Policy

EU – European Union

EUGS – European Union Global Strategy

MARCOM – Allied Maritime Command

NAC – North Atlantic Council

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCIRC – NATO Computer Incident Response Capability

PACE – Parallel and Coordinated Exercise

PESCO – Permanent Structured Cooperation

SHADE – Shared Awareness and Deconfliction

SHAPE – Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe

US – United States

WEU –Western European Union

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research puzzle and objectives

Especially after the end of the Cold War, and in the context of rapid globalization and the multiplication of unconventional threats, there has been a growing recognition of the need to deepen cooperation between NATO and the EU, two institutions that are essential to the transatlantic security architecture. In 2016, Stoltenberg stated that "Everything we do – to defend ourselves, and to project stability – is magnified when we work with others. This is especially true when we speak about the European Union. We share common values and interests. And we face common threats. (…) Unity and cooperation between NATO and the EU remains as important as ever. In these times of uncertainty, our partnership is increasingly essential" (Stoltenberg, 2016). It is in this sense that it becomes quite relevant to understand the evolution of the relationship between the two organizations and the efforts that have been developed over the past two decades.

NATO is currently the most relevant organization in the field of security and defence, and, since the beginning, part of its function has been to ensure the security of the European countries due to the fact that it was never possible for the EU to institutionalize a viable instrument that would allow the security of its member states and its Eastern and Southern neighbours. Although NATO is the guarantor of security and the EU is an economic and political union of twenty-seven independent member states with an international projection, especially in ideological and economic terms, the EU has shown a growing interest in ensuring its strategic autonomy, developing its own industry and designing a joint strategic compass. Considering the challenges and threats arising, from the Russian projection to terrorist attacks and conflict in neighbouring regions, it is understandable that the EU is acting in order to expand the areas in which it operates. Not only is it understandable that the EU is continually broadening its scope of action, but also that it is willing to cooperate with other partners, namely NATO, to confront the threats emerging.

Against this backdrop, this dissertation sets out to investigate the evolving strategic partnership between NATO and the EU. More specifically, it delves into how the two organizations have discursively framed their growing interest in strengthening cooperation and, building upon that, assesses the extent to which this has been translated from discourse into practice. The objectives of this dissertation are threefold: (1) to analyse NATO and EU's official documents focusing on inter-institutional cooperation in the sphere of security and defence and, in doing so, map how this discourse has evolved and what initiatives have been put forward; (2) to compare official documents to practical action in the areas of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security; and (3) to understand in which of these three areas there has been the greatest effort to deepen inter-institutional cooperation. We decided to focus on this topic because although there is literature on the relationship between NATO and the EU, part of it

focuses on a logic of tension, competition and conflict versus complementarity between the two organizations, as a result of the EU's initiatives towards autonomy (see for instance Quinlan, 2001; Howorth & Keeler, 2003; Hofmann & Reynolds, 2007; Duke, 2008; Demetriou, 2016; Howorth, 2017; Howorth, 2019; Germanovich, Retter, Grand-Clement, Flanagan, Pezard & Paillé, 2021). Even when academics address cooperation, they don't attempt to bridge the link between official discourse and its translation into practical action (see for instance Cornish, 2006; Touzovskaia, 2006; Lachmann, 2010; Aghniashvili, 2016; Biscop, 2018; Stabile et al., 2018), which is relevant because it is worth understanding what efforts have been carried out by the two organizations.

Understanding EU-NATO cooperation is crucial for, at least, three important reasons. First, the transatlantic relationship is a long-standing one and to ensure cooperation and complementarity between NATO and the EU is crucial if its member states are not to suffer from a duplication of efforts as most EU member states also maintain membership within NATO (Latici, 2020). In this regard, as the member states have a single defence budget and armed forces, they must allocate these efficiently and, consequently, the efforts of each organization should be as complementary as possible (Maio, 2021). Thus, it is important to ascertain whether the two organizations have been able to achieve mutual support and cooperation. Second, the EU is very often associated with its civilian and diplomatic tools while NATO is usually linked to the military dimension and force projection. Thus, a detailed examination of the complementarity between these two organizations can be justified given their respective fields of competence (Lachmann, 2010; Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019; Gjeta, 2021). Furthermore, it is understandable that the dynamics of cooperation gain relevance especially as the two organizations are faced with common challenges, such as counterterrorism, space security, maritime security, regional instability, and hybrid threats. According to Cruz (2021), inter-institutional cooperation is central for NATO and the EU to deal with the threats posed to the transatlantic region.

Given the impossibility of covering every area of EU-NATO cooperation, we decided to focus our analysis on three strategic areas that have been highlighted in the EU-NATO Joint Declarations on cooperation. In these Joint Declarations, four areas are recurrently addressed, namely maritime security, hybrid threats, cyber threats and capabilities development (EU-NATO, 2016b; EU-NATO, 2018a; EU-NATO, 2023b). We decided to focus on the first three areas mentioned because the realm of capabilities development has already been the object of an extensive body of literature (see for instance Yost, 2000; Winn, 2003, Berdal & Ucko, 2009; Raăiu & Vasilean, 2009; Wiesner, 2013; Schreer, 2019).

Still, there are other areas of cooperation mentioned in these Joint Declarations that are not common to all three documents, which is why we have chosen not to address them in detail. Among these other areas are military mobility, women, peace and security agenda, defence industry and

greater defence research, growing geostrategic competition, resilience issues, protection of critical infrastructures, space and climate change (EU-NATO, 2016b; EU-NATO, 2018a; EU-NATO, 2023b).

More importantly, however, each of these three dimensions has gained particular significance for EU-NATO cooperation. First, designing effective strategies to deal with hybrid threats referring to the use of conventional and unconventional methods demands joint efforts. The EU considers that as hybrid threats target fundamental democratic processes and undermine citizens' trust in their institutions and governments, they constitute a particular challenge to the EU. These threats are becoming more complex by combining various methods, such as disinformation, economic pressure, mistreatment of migrants, cyberattacks, and other covert actions (Joint Research Centre, 2023). For NATO, hybrid threats have been recently more frequent and intense, and NATO's primary objective is to be ready to prevent, combat and respond to these threats (NATO, 2023a).

In the cyber realm, it is important to understand how NATO and the EU have been working together to deal with these emerging threats. Security conflicts have now started to include a cyber component and cybersecurity failures will increasingly indicate weaknesses in national security (Ilves, Evans, J., & Nadeau, 2016). On the one hand, the EU is concerned about the cyber domain as the frequency and sophistication of cyberattacks and cybercrime are rising throughout Europe (Council of the EU, n.d.a). Moreover, cyber threats are nearly always transnational, and an attack on one state's vital infrastructure might have an impact on the entire EU (European Commission, n.d.). NATO, on its part, presents the importance of cybersecurity by explaining that as malign actors increasingly try to undermine the Alliance by using cyber actions and campaigns, cyberspace is contested at all times. According to NATO, these actors aim to "degrade our critical infrastructure, interfere with our government services, extract intelligence, steal intellectual property and impede our military activities" (NATO, 2023b).

With regard to maritime security, to the EU, maritime security is of utmost importance because its member states make up the largest combined exclusive economic zone and a secure ocean is essential for the EU economy (European Commission, 2023a). The focus, therefore, on maritime security stems from its importance for the EU itself but also for NATO as the Alliance is committed to improving its posture and situational awareness, and to deter and protect against all maritime threats (NATO, 2023c). In that sense, this dissertation offers the first study that focuses and compares the evolution of the EU-NATO partnership along these three dimensions of security and defence cooperation.

1.2. Research questions

The research question that guides our dissertation can be articulated as follows: To what extent has the interest in consolidating the cooperation between NATO and the EU in the field of security and defence been translated into practice?

In order to operationalize this research question and structure our analysis, a set of sub-research questions have been developed: (1) How has the discourse about EU-NATO cooperation evolved? (2) What are the key objectives of EU-NATO cooperation outlined in official joint documents after 2016? (3) Which cooperative actions have resulted from the official EU-NATO discourse in the sphere of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security? (4) What are the main weaknesses and strengths of the EU-NATO cooperation in these three realms?

1.3. Methodology

1.3.1. Document analysis

Document analysis provided the core methodological resource utilized in this dissertation. It refers to a methodical strategy that is particularly tailored for analysing or evaluating documents (Bowen, 2009). According to Bowen (2009), "skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation" are all parts of document analysis (Bowen, 2009: 32), and we went through these phases in order to analyse the documents selected. We started by conducting a superficial examination of the documents that address EU-NATO cooperation to understand which ones fit in with our theme, based on the keywords defined below (p. 5). Second, focusing on the documents that are most relevant to this dissertation, we began a detailed examination of the documents, which involved reading the documents more than once and writing down the key aspects to understand not only the content but also the context and the implications of the content. In the final stage, we proceeded to interpret the documents, for which a series of questions were set (p. 7).

The analysis of documents will be fundamental to (1) understand the evolution of cooperation between NATO and the EU; (2) understand what the suggestions are for dealing with hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security; (3) understand the similarities and differences between the official discourse and the practical efforts carried out, by comparing the information obtained from official documents to the information acquired from academic articles and other official reports; and (4) understand which means need to be improved for the organizations to achieve better results.

1.3.1.1. NATO and EU official documents: timeframe, inclusion and exclusion criteria

Regarding primary sources, we will be using NATO and EU official documents about cooperation between the two organizations. Due to the vast number of official documents that exist, we had to

delimit the documents to be used based on the topics they address and with the most useful information for the topic we are focusing on.

We started by focusing on a set of keywords that guided us: cooperation, hybrid, cyber, maritime, training, exercises, workshops, seminars, European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, Operation Sophia, Operation Atalanta, Operation Sea Guardian, Operation Ocean Shield. By using these keywords, we were able to (1) select the most appropriate documents for us given our areas of interest, and (2) focus our attention on specific parts of the documents to be analysed and not focus on all the details and areas of the EU-NATO relationship.

The inclusion criteria were joint and individual documents that mention cooperation between NATO and the EU: (a) documents and speeches between 1992 and 2010 that address the relationship between the two organizations. In the third chapter, the aim of analysing this period is to understand the beginning of the EU-NATO relationship and the structure created between the two organizations so that they could cooperate. It makes sense to start our analysis after the Maastricht Treaty in order to understand the evolution of the EU-NATO relationship and the efforts that both parties made to be able to work together in practical terms. In the third chapter, we covered documents up to 2010 because until 2010 a set of official documents were created and shaped the EU-NATO partnership and provided the guidelines for the organizations to establish joint efforts, such as the 2010 Strategic Concept; (b) documents between 2016 and 2023, namely the EU-NATO Joint Declarations, the common set of new proposals and their implementation reports because these documents justify our choice of areas to focus on as explained above (p. 2); (c) documents related to hybrid threats (2015-2023), cyber threats (2013-2023) and maritime security (2014-2023). The delimitation of these dates is based on the fact that this is when the EU-NATO relationship began in each of the areas in question.

Our exclusion criteria are NATO and EU individual documents that merely indicate the EU/NATO as a partner but do not explain the level of cooperation in any detail, such as the Lisbon Summit Declaration (2010), the London Declaration (2019) and the Implementing guidelines for the Framework for a coordinated EU response to hybrid campaigns (2022). Other documents excluded are those that do not focus on the areas of cooperation we have chosen to address in our dissertation, such as the Chicago Summit Declaration (2012) focused on EU-NATO cooperation in Kosovo.

It is after the state of the art chapter that we start directing our attention towards the official EU-NATO documents. In the third chapter, the focus is on official documents from each organization that enable us to understand which areas were of greatest concern to NATO and the EU, such as the Brussels Summit Declaration (1994), the EU's Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), the Franco-British St. Malo Declaration (1998) and the Bucharest Summit Declaration (2008). The choice of these documents stems, first, from the fact that they represent remarkable events for each organization and, second, because they allow us to understand the EU-NATO relationship in its early days. To these documents

we would like to add the EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP (2002) and the Berlin Plus Agreement (2003) as they represent the foundation of these organizations' strategic partnership (EU, n.d.).

Following from that, and as our dissertation is centred around the three EU-NATO Joint Declarations, we address these Declarations and the seventy-four common set of proposals[1] developed to implement the Joint Declarations. In addition to these documents, we resort to the eight reports produced by NATO and the EU on the implementation of the common set of proposals. In these reports, we direct our analysis to the areas of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security so that we can understand which practical actions have been taken. These reports give us the opportunity to understand which are the results that the two organizations have been able to achieve by working together and are, therefore, a relevant part of this research.

We also selected individual NATO and EU documents that address EU-NATO cooperation in the field of security and defence, with a clear emphasis on documents that address hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security. With regard to hybrid threats, the official individual NATO documents used were the 2010 Strategic Concept to understand how the organization defines hybrid threats, the Secretary General's Annual Report of 2015, of 2016 (2017), of 2018 (2019), of 2019 (2020) and of 2020 (2021), as well as the Warsaw Summit Communiqué (2016). In addition, the organization's website was used for us to perceive how NATO positions itself regarding hybrid threats currently. In turn, the EU official individual documents selected were documents from the EEAS on hybrid threats and their definition, as well as the EUGS (2016).

With regard to cyber threats, the official individual NATO documents used were the 2010 Strategic Concept, the Secretary General's Annual Report of 2017 (2018) and of 2020 (2021), and the Cyber Defence Pledge (2016) that address the matter of cyber threats and the EU-NATO relationship in this realm. The EU's official individual documents on cyber threats are the EU Cybersecurity Strategy: an Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace (2013), the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework (2014) and its 2018 update.

On maritime security, the official individual NATO documents selected were the Alliance Maritime Strategy (2011) and the Secretary General's Annual Report of 2016 (2017), of 2017 (2018), of 2019 (2020) and of 2022 (2023). These documents were selected because of their content and the fact that NATO highlights them as important documents when considering maritime security (NATO, n.d.a). We also used information taken from the NATO and Allied Maritime Command websites about NATO's maritime operations, namely Operation Allied Provider, Operation Allied Protector, Operation Ocean Shield and Operation Sea Guardian. In addition, the EU official individual documents used were the

[1] In December 2016 and December 2017, a set of forty-two and another set of thirty-two common proposals to implement the 2016 Joint Declaration were adopted respectively.

European Union Maritime Security Strategy (2014), as well as the EU Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan (2018) and the 2020 Report on the implementation of this Action Plan. Information on Operation Atalanta and Operation Sophia was collected from the website of the EEAS.

After defining the documents to be analysed, a series of questions were developed to help us analyse them: (1) What is the main purpose of the document? (2) What are the subjects covered? (3) What is the context in which the document was produced? (4) What is the impact of the document? (5) How does the document relate to previous one? Does it confirm or contradict previous information? Does it modify or expand previous objectives? (6) What are the proposed actions? (7) How do the documents address hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security?

1.3.1.2. Secondary sources on NATO and EU: inclusion and exclusion criteria

In addition to official documents, we resorted to secondary sources, namely scientific articles that can add to the information taken from the official documents. The articles selected were those that focus on the practical aspects of the EU-NATO relationship.

In the hybrid realm, there are not many scientific articles that address EU-NATO cooperation, and among those that do, the focus is usually on the initiatives of each organization related to this topic (see for instance Szymański, 2020), or on the reasons why the two organizations should cooperate (see for instance Pindják, 2014), but without addressing how the two organizations have been cooperating. For this reason, we resorted to the articles by Mesterházy (2017) and Koenig (2018) who, through interviews, were able to contact staff from both organizations and obtain information that fits in with the topic of our dissertation and allows us to obtain relevant information on hybrid threats.

In the cyber domain, the literature on cyber threats is not very vast either, nevertheless, we were able to focus our attention on articles that address EU-NATO cooperation on cyber threats rather than on articles that strictly focus on the strategies of each organization related to this topic (see for instance Pernik, 2014; Kovács, 2018; Poptchev, 2020; Guchua & Zedelashvili, 2021). We chose to use the article by Lété and Pernik (2017) because these authors sought to address EU-NATO cyber exercises and the efforts made by the two organizations in this area, as well as Pawlak's (2017) article as it includes moments in which the two organizations sought to foster proximity.

In the maritime realm, there are also relatively few academic articles on EU-NATO cooperation. Our selection of the articles to include is based on the operations we mention throughout the third and seventh chapters: Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield, and Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian, respectively. We highlighted the articles by S. Smith (2011) and Gebhard & Smith (2014) that discuss Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield, and by Marcuzzi (2018) that was able to obtain relevant information on the Administrative Arrangement signed between MARCOM and Operation Sophia in 2017.

1.3.2. Methods

In order to develop a deeper understanding of the EU-NATO cooperation, we decided to use the descriptive method and the comparative method. As Krishnarao (1961) points out, the descriptive approach can focus on the what and how of certain facts but it does not address the question of "Why?". The descriptive method addresses what is being done rather than what could or should be done, making no mention of causes, reasons, meanings or possibilities (Johnson, 1953). For this dissertation, the descriptive method is important as it allows us to understand how the two organizations approach and frame inter-institutional cooperation, in particular cooperation on hybrid threats, cyber security and defence and maritime security. In particular, it will help us answer two sub-research questions: (1) How has the discourse about EU-NATO cooperation evolved? (2) What are the key objectives of EU-NATO cooperation outlined in official documents after 2016? Nevertheless, we recognize that merely describing the official rhetoric of the two organizations, without referring to the similarities and differences between the official discourse and the actions taken, is not enough and does not allow us to fully answer our research question and sub-research questions. This explains why the comparative method gains prominence.

As expressed by Collier (1991), the "'comparative method' is often used to refer to the partially distinctive methodological issues that arise in the systematic analysis of a small number of cases." (Collier, 1991: 7). Moreover, comparison is a method of explicitly contrasting two or more cases to identify parallels and differences and, consequently, understand, explain, and reach subsequent conclusions (Azarican, 2011). In our case, the aim is to explore and contrast the similarities and differences between the official EU-NATO rhetoric and the practical actions. The comparison is conducted between the official discourse, with emphasis on the objectives defined in the official rhetoric and key elements such as exercises, workshops, training, informal exchanges and operational cooperation, and between the practical translation of the official discourse. To do so, we focus our attention on the EU-NATO implementation reports of the common set of proposals and establish a comparison between the official discourse and these same reports based on the keywords mentioned above (p. 5), thus identifying the consonances and dissonances between the official rhetoric and the actions taken. This enables us to understand whether the two organizations have been able to follow the intentions expressed in the official discourse.

1.4. Structure of the argument

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. This first chapter includes the introduction of the theme and its importance, the objective of the analysis, the identification and justification of the three areas of EU-NATO cooperation under analysis, and the research and sub-research questions. We also address

the methodology used throughout the dissertation, the criteria of inclusion and exclusion of the official EU-NATO documents and scientific articles, and methods.

In the second chapter, we review the state of the art within the academic debate in order to understand how cooperation between the two organizations is perceived and the perspectives taken by the different authors. Through a literature review, we demonstrate that the EU-NATO relationship is motivated by the interests and threats that these organizations have in common, but that they also find challenges in avoiding duplication of resources and efforts, while their relationship is constrained by the political obstacles posed by Turkey and Cyprus. Furthermore, we demonstrate that there are both moments of effectiveness and ineffectiveness in the EU-NATO relationship related to operational cooperation, with an emphasis on operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Mediterranean.

In the third chapter, we address the evolution of the EU-NATO relations. The chapter is divided into three distinct sections that correspond to different periods of this partnership. Firstly, from 1992 to 1996, the period in which NATO focused on persuading the EU to develop initiatives in the field of security and defence. Secondly, from 1997 to 2003, the period in which the EU started taking action towards playing a more active role and in which the EU-NATO relationship was formally established. Thirdly, the period exposing the obstacles that emerged since the EU-NATO relationship was formalized, including operational cooperation. Although there were several efforts, which were clearly visible in Operation Althea, to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations, difficulties persisted and, after 2003, a dynamic of tension and lack of coordination between the two organizations evolved due to the Iraq War and the EU's initiatives towards strategic autonomy. For instance, as a result of the lack of coordination and complementarity, Operation Atalanta and Operation Sea Guardian from 2009 to 2016 had similar areas of operation but were unable to effectively work together. Thus, in this chapter, we demonstrate the complexity of the EU-NATO partnership, setting the stage for the subsequent analysis of their current efforts to strengthen their cooperation related to maritime security, hybrid threats and cyber threats.

In the fourth chapter, we focus our attention on the EU-NATO Joint Declarations on cooperation of 2016, 2018 and 2023 to understand which are the main areas of cooperation and how the two organizations are cooperating according to the official discourse. Through these Joint Declarations, we demonstrate the willingness of both organizations to work together and address as one the challenges posed. We portray the evolution of the EU-NATO rhetoric as throughout 2016 and 2023 the areas in which the two organizations are interested in cooperating have been broadened and include hybrid threats, maritime operational cooperation, cyber security and defence, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities, women, peace and security agenda and Russia's war on Ukraine. As a result, in the official discourse we are being presented with the clear will of NATO and the EU to

remain united and to develop greater ties, and what remains to be done is to determine the practical translation of these documents.

In our last three chapters, we strictly analyse cooperation between the two organizations related to hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security to understand if there are discrepancies between the official discourse and the actions being implemented. Through the analysis of official statements and documents, as well as the projects implemented, we demonstrate that NATO and the EU have, to a limited extent, succeeded in translating official documents into practical action, namely through exercises, workshops and staff-to-staff interactions. In the case of hybrid threats, there is a translation of official documents into practice, except for the area of bolstering resilience which did not fulfil expectations because the two organizations were not prepared "to be ready to deploy, by mid-2017 in a parallel and coordinated manner, experts to support EU Member States/Allies (...), in enhancing their resilience" (EU-NATO, 2016a). In the cyber field, we demonstrate that the documents have been translated into practice through training, workshops, seminars and exercises that allowed the two organizations to share different perspectives, to come to joint understandings and to foster a culture of trust. However, as far as cyber missions and operations are concerned, NATO and the EU have not been able to establish any connections between each other, which means that practical actions fall short of what is expected when considering the official discourse. In the field of maritime operations, we specifically demonstrate the translation of the official rhetoric through Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian, which are the two operations portrayed in the official documents that allow EU-NATO operational cooperation. Compared to Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield, it is clear that the EU-NATO cooperation has improved. However, we also demonstrate that the EU aspires for the two organizations to be able to share confidential information, but this has not yet been achieved in practical terms.

Finally, the concluding chapter lays out our main findings, explains some limitations of the analyses and identifies future avenues for research.

Chapter 2. State of the art: cooperation and complementarity between the EU and NATO

The central theme of the present dissertation is the cooperation and complementarity between NATO and the EU. This chapter explores the academic debate regarding the topic under analysis, in addition to the examples of cooperation or non-cooperation mentioned in the literature that lead us to a better perception of the subject in question.

In terms of security and defence, academics often focus their attention on the transatlantic area, showing great interest in the relationship that exists between NATO and the EU. Part of the literature that exists focuses on tension, competition and conflict versus complementarity between the two organizations, as a result of the EU's initiatives towards autonomy (see for instance Quinlan, 2001; Howorth & Keeler, 2003; Hofmann & Reynolds, 2007; Duke, 2008; Demetriou, 2016; Howorth, 2017; Howorth, 2019; Germanovich, Retter, Grand-Clement, Flanagan, Pezard & Paillé, 2021). This dissertation, on the contrary, will focus on cooperation and complementarity between NATO and the EU while alluding to the efforts of the two organizations in their strategic partnership. In this sense, for our state of the art we chose articles: (1) that address the relationship between NATO and the EU with a focus on the reasons that induce the organizations to cooperate (see for instance Lachmann, 2010; Tomescu & Mărcău, 2014; Græger, 2016; Simion, 2018; M. E. Smith, 2018; Savin, 2019; Krimi, 2020; Latici, 2020; Baciu & Friede, 2020; Cruz, 2021; Gjeta, 2021); and (2) that address the elements that can limit the EU-NATO strategic partnership (see for instance Touzovskaia, 2006; Aghniashvili, 2016; Cornish, 2016; Helwig, 2018; Stabile et al., 2018; Cladi & Locatelli, 2019; Drent et al., 2019; Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019; Maio, 2021; Ewers-Peters, 2022; Schuette, 2022).

2.1. Common interests and threats

NATO and the EU have a wide range of members in common and, consequently, face common security challenges and have common interests. This becomes a relevant topic for the academic literature because it is worth understanding whether common interests and threats are factors that foster the two organizations to develop common efforts.

According to Simion (2018), NATO and the EU began discussions on topics of mutual interest as a result of the EU's success in taking over NATO's Operation Allied Harmony (2003) and NATO's Stabilisation Force (2004) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina respectively. Given that both organizations are interested in ensuring stability and security at the international level, cooperation between them can be perceived as crucial and natural (Savin, 2019; Tomescu & Mărcău, 2014).

Smith (2018) recognizes that the willingness of the EU and NATO to cooperate when their common interests are at stake means that future difficulties will not automatically lead to a standstill in the EU-NATO partnership. To prove this point, the author highlights the EU's ability to replace NATO

operations in the Balkans with Operation Concordia and Operation Althea, and the EU-NATO collaboration in response to the Mediterranean refugee crisis through joint naval operations, as well as cooperation on cybersecurity and hybrid warfare (M. E. Smith, 2018).

Cruz (2021) considers that NATO will only be able to ensure its cohesion if it invests in cooperation with the EU, particularly through mutual consultation that allows more transparency between both parties. Among the threats that the author recognizes that bring the two organizations closer are migration, terrorism and assertiveness to the East. Even though Schuette (2022) also recognizes these as areas of common interest to both organizations, the author states that the relationship between NATO and the EU is marked by minimal collaboration and that the threats emerging only expose the limitations of each organization and reflect why a stronger position should be taken by both. It is also in this sense that Stabile et al. (2018) consider that it is time for NATO and the EU to start a division of labour.

Regarding the threats posed to both organizations, Baciu and Friede (2020) point out that the EU-NATO cooperation must be defined and operationalized, thus bringing more security and clarity to the bond between the two organizations. This requires a firmer stance by the EU, allowing emancipation from the United States but never undermining the transatlantic relationship (Baciu & Friede, 2020).

Overall, the authors recognize that the interests and threats common to the two organizations are a reason that induces NATO and the EU to join efforts and cooperate. However, EU-NATO cooperation still needs to be better defined so that the two organizations can respond more effectively to the threats they face.

2.2. Division of tasks or overlapping?

It is understandable that NATO and the EU, given the common threats posed to both organizations, develop similar efforts to address these challenges. For this reason, academics have been interested in understanding whether these efforts may lead to overlapping or a division of tasks.

Cornish (2016) acknowledges that NATO and the EU, instead of cooperating, may be inserting themselves in a logic of competition. NATO, besides being fundamental in terms of territorial defence in Europe, is expanding its field of action, establishing contacts and developing operations in geographical areas where the EU is already inserted in. Nonetheless, it was recognized by the author that it is possible for the two institutions to organize themselves and coordinate their efforts in Africa as the US has less interest in being militarily present in this continent (Cornish, 2006). In this regard, Gjeta (2021) points out that the two organizations share similar ideals and challenges that induce them to cooperate and have their own division of efforts at a geographical level. For instance, NATO focuses on the three Baltic States and Poland in response to Russia's activities in Ukraine, and the EU focuses on missions and operations in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Palestinian territories, and Georgia, where NATO

does not wish to act due to political sensitivity (Gjeta, 2021). The problem found here is that the division of tasks along geographic lines has never been formally conceptualized, nor has it been defined who does what and where (Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019).

According to Tardy and Lindstrom (2019), the growing role played by the EU in the management of international crises through the CSDP seems to have given rise to an inter-institutional rivalry that limits what the organizations can do together. In Maio's (2021) point of view, to solve this, NATO and EU member states should better utilize their resources, which include NATO's military capabilities and logistical networks, as well as EU capacity building and financial aid, relying on a case-by-case division of work (Maio, 2021).

Although Drent et al. (2019) recognize that cooperation has gotten increasingly complex due to the overlap of strategic goals and security priorities, they also consider that security concerns demand collaboration because neither organization is prepared to deal with both military and non-military security threats. For instance, in the hybrid realm, the EU has a comprehensive civil capacity, including its role in societal resilience building and information campaigns, and NATO has a strong military capability, which means that the two organizations have different strengths and, therefore, cooperation makes sense (Drent et al., 2019).

Not only Drent et al. (2019), but also other authors, such as Lachmann (2010), Tardy and Lindstrom (2019) and Gjeta (2021), focus their attention on the scope of missions of each organization. They perceive, on the one hand, that NATO is better prepared in military terms, due to its more frequent interventions and the ability to resort to the use of force. On the other hand, the CSDP is more linked to civilian missions and the EU is seen through the lenses of a soft power, where non-military personnel play a key role (Lachmann, 2010; Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019; Gjeta, 2021).

Lachmann (2010) considers that the CSDP still needs to work on its means and missions, so that there is more balanced cooperation, as NATO already has many years of experience and the CSDP does not. For this reason, Tomescu and Mărcău (2014) mention that, as both organizations are fundamental contributions to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, strengthening military capabilities to reduce the gap with the US will result in tighter cooperation between NATO and the EU.

According to Cruz (201), by sharing responsibilities, the use of duplicate resources could be prevented, both in terms of the capabilities of each organization and in terms of geographical spaces. This does not seem to be a problem for the future because North American leaders very often require European countries to invest at least 2% of their Gross Domestic Product in the development of their military capabilities. Thus, if EU member states invest more in the defence sector, it will be possible to move from burden-sharing to the idea of responsibility-sharing between NATO and the EU (Cruz, 2021).

Overall, there is a recognition amongst the authors that NATO has a strong military capability and that the EU has a strong civilian capability. This, consequently, allows the two organizations to join efforts to face the challenges posed. However, it is certainly important for the EU to develop its capabilities so that there is more balanced cooperation.

2.3. Turkey and Cyprus

Turkey, a non-EU NATO Ally, has a dispute with Cyprus, a non-NATO EU member state, over the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This leads inevitably to obstacles in the EU-NATO relationship and is, therefore, addressed in the academic literature.

According to Tardy and Lindstrom (2019), although both organizations have twenty-two members in common and have pushed the pace forward from 2016 onwards with Joint Declarations, the dynamic between member states can be different. Not only Tardy and Lindstrom (2019), but also Aghniashvili (2016) and Krimi (2020) seem to believe that member states that are either part of the EU or part of NATO do not often consider collaboration a priority. Tardy and Lindstrom (2019), Helwig (2018), Drent et al. (2019) and Stabile et al. (2018) mention the case of Turkey and Cyprus, that lead to institutional flaws, do not allow for the development of new legal frameworks and only allow for EU-NATO collaboration related to staff exchanges, including in terms of military mobility and hybrid threats, which reflects cooperation as "an ambition rather than a reality" (Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019: 12). Cornish (2006) also refers to this idea, pointing out that if there is no consensus at the "highest political levels", cooperation will remain solely an idea, and neither the organizations' military nor civilian assets will be fully utilized (Cornish, 2006: 22). That is exactly why Stabile et al. (2018) defend that it is urgent to find a solution to this issue.

Authors such as Cornish (2006), Aghniashvili (2016) and Latici (2020) identify Turkey and Cyprus as the main factors preventing the exchange of classified information between NATO and the EU. Thus, the lack of agreement between Cyprus and NATO on the exchange of confidential material, derived from Turkey's impediment, poses difficulties in the relations between the organizations (Cornish, 2006; Aghniashvili, 2016; Latici, 2020). For instance, this disagreement prevents collaboration on the ground between Operation Irini and Operation Sea Guardian (Latici, 2020), and the lack of exchange of classified information contributed to the failure of the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan, which ended up having a negative impact on both institutions. Moreover, in the area of hybrid threats, Helwig (2018) considers that there is little possibility of expanding collaboration toward a combined hybrid command capable of developing and implementing defence actions due to the unwillingness of member states to exchange sensitive information.

To demonstrate that the member states are the ones who put obstacles in the way of cooperation between the two organizations, Cladi and Locatelli (2019) provide the example of Turkey preventing

Cyprus from attending formal North Atlantic Council and Political and Security Committee meetings and joining the Partnership for Peace, and the example of Cyprus preventing official collaboration between Turkey and the EU and restricting the scope of discussions on Berlin Plus topics. According to Drent et al. (2019), common threats and the already more developed capabilities of the EU require considering cooperation with NATO beyond the Berlin Plus Agreement, which has been hampered by Turkey and Cyprus since 2004. As one may understand, informal contacts are considerably more difficult and time-consuming, not always allowing cooperation to succeed or to be carried out when needed. Nonetheless, a positive aspect that the authors highlight is that these member states have recently allowed more informal contacts to be carried out, and NATO even exchanged with the EU both its military infrastructure needs and its norm for the transit of dangerous commodities (Drent et al., 2019). In fact, it is considered that there has been a development in terms of information sharing and policy coordination, whether it comes to hybrid threats, cybersecurity and defence, military mobility, or when the organizations deploy operations in the same theatre, such as in Iraq or the Mediterranean Sea (Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019).

In addition to these two member states, Cladi and Locatelli (2019) mention the case of France, which has used resources on the EU Battlegroups concept, that replicated the NATO Rapid Reaction Force, as well as the divergence between the member states of both organizations in the Darfur crisis in 2005 in which France and Germany chose the EU command centre for airlift, and Italy and the United Kingdom chose SHAPE (Touzovskaia, 2006). It is in this sense that Touzovskaia (2016) states that the greatest difficulty in the EU-NATO relationship is at the political sphere.

Overall, it is clear that Turkey and Cyprus are the main obstacles in the NATO-EU relationship and that, although they allow informal exchanges of information, these member states place major barriers in terms of exchanges of classified information, which certainly limits the EU-NATO partnership.

2.4. Overlap of membership: are NATO and the EU avoiding duplication?

Although we recognize that there are member states that pose challenges to the EU-NATO relationship, we should also emphasize that the two organizations have a total of twenty-two member states in common and, therefore, academics have shown interest in addressing this matter.

Latici (2020) and Maio (2021) mention that duplication should be avoided and that a lack of inter-institutional collaboration would prevent the achievement of more favourable results for both parties because member states do not have one armed force for NATO and another for the EU, hence both organizations rely on the same set of assets provided by the twenty-two member states they share (Latici, 2020). Stabile et al. (2018) specify that due to the fact that member states do not have one armed force for NATO and another for the EU, in North Africa, the Sahel, and the Middle East, the

member states tend to choose either NATO or the EU operation to avoid using more resources than necessary, leaving behind the possibility of cooperation.

Ewers-Peters (2022) points out, considering the membership overlap, that cooperation cannot be taken for guaranteed just because the two organizations have twenty-two members in common. On the one hand, there are member states that actively call for cooperation between the two organizations either through exchanges or joint actions. On the other hand, there are other member states that pose obstacles, such as Turkey and Cyprus, to this cooperation (Ewers-Peters, 2022).

Maio (2021) uses Operation Ocean Shield and Operation Atalanta to demonstrate that NATO and the CSDP are not using their means correctly because these two operations had similar mandates, which indicates a lack of synergies. Moreover, to demonstrate that NATO and the EU did not know how to cooperate and make use of their resources, leading both organizations to use more resources than would have been necessary if they sought to complement each other's work, Lachmann (2010) mentions the case of competition in 2005 regarding the supply of airlifts for the African Union operation in Darfur.

Overall, although it is acknowledged that the overlap of membership should lead to a division of tasks, the two organizations are still finding it difficult to coordinate their actions and avoid duplicating efforts.

2.5. Operational cooperation: effective or ineffective?

Both NATO and the EU conduct operations and missions in various parts of the world, such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Mediterranean, the Western Balkans and the African continent. Some of these operations and missions are deployed on the same ground, which gives NATO and the EU the opportunity to seek cooperation and complementarity. For this reason, academics have been addressing operations and missions deployed by NATO and the EU on the same ground in order to identify the ones in which there is the most or least contact between the two organizations.

According to Latici (2020), joint exercises and training have been crucial strategies for developing shared experiences and similar working practices. It is also in this sense that Maio (2021) acknowledges that “personnel exchanges and joint exercises have helped to set up a framework (...) for more integrated operations” (Maio, 2021: 6). In this regard, Tardy and Lindstrom (2019) and Græger (2016) recognize the importance of staff-to-staff contacts as it facilitates information sharing. At the staff level, according to Græger (2016), cooperation “happens in offices, over meals, on the phone, by email, or on the fringe of formal meetings” especially when NATO and the EU have operations in the same operational areas (Græger, 2016: 484).

Krimi (2020) states that the EU's desire to become a major actor in the field of security has encouraged it to strengthen ties with NATO. The example used by Krimi (2020) is related to Iraq.

According to the author, NATO and the EU complemented each other in Iraq because the EU decided to focus on matters that are outside of NATO's purview, such as the adoption of counter-terrorist funding tools to combat money laundering and to strengthen assurances against unauthorized financial transfers. Meanwhile, the Allies, through NATO Mission Iraq, were able to provide training to the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, focusing on the military element (Krimi, 2020). Tardy and Lindstrom (2019) and Lachmann (2010), to expose the importance of cooperation between the EU and NATO, use as example NATO's Kosovo Force, a military operation, and the EU's Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, a civilian mission. The authors also mention NATO's Operation Unified Protector in Libya, with a military role, and the EU's Border Assistance Mission, with a civilian role. This division can also be perceived through NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, once again, militarily involved, while the EU ran a civilian police mission, the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019).

Stabile et al. (2018), not agreeing with this point of view, considered that there was minimal coordination between NATO and the EU when they were deployed in Afghanistan, which sometimes ended up resulting in overlapping and duplicative efforts. Yet, Aghniashvili (2016), while recognizing that there was a lack of coordination in Afghanistan, also mentions that NATO supplied the protection needed by the personnel of the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan.

Moreover, Stabile et al. (2018) consider that there was ineffectiveness between NATO and the EU in the Mediterranean because EU's Operation Sophia and the NATO-led Sea Guardian (further discussed on p. 47) were planned to work closely, but the outcomes revealed that without an appropriate level of cooperation, NATO and EU's operations in projecting stability are ineffective. Not agreeing with this point of view, Krimi (2020) aimed to demonstrate that collaboration between Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian allowed NATO to provide assistance to the CSDP through operational information and logistical assistance. Overall, these operations are cases in which we can clearly see the discrepancies in the academic literature, contributing to the lack of unity among the academics regarding the matter of cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, it was demonstrated that there is an abundance of literature on EU-NATO cooperation. This literature has focused on several aspects and, often, reached similar conclusions. The literature on common interests and threats demonstrated that the two organizations should seek to cooperate with each other so that they can better address the challenges posed. It is acknowledged, however, that despite the efforts of the two organizations, EU-NATO cooperation still needs to be defined and operationalized, thus enabling them to deal with the threats posed.

The literature on the division of tasks argues that, as NATO and the EU have different strengths, one being more focused on the military dimension and the other on the civilian dimension, they have the opportunity to establish a division of tasks. Although it is acknowledged that the EU's initiatives could result in a rivalry that drives the organizations apart, the literature tends to point out that it is necessary for the EU to be able to further develop its capabilities so that there is more balanced cooperation and complementarity. Through the literature on membership overlap, we were able to demonstrate that, although it is essential for the two organizations to avoid duplication, there are still times when there is a lack of synergies, as in the case of the supply of airlifts for the African Union operation in Darfur in 2005, and Operation Ocean Shield and Operation Atalanta.

With regard to the literature on Turkey and Cyprus, although it is recognized that informal exchanges of information are ongoing between the two organizations, the biggest problem concerns classified information as a result of the obstacles posed by these two countries that are preventing the EU-NATO partnership from progressing.

Even though the authors above tend to point out EU and NATO operations to justify whether they consider that cooperation between the EU and NATO is effective, this subject lacks details regarding information about staff-to-staff relations and the efforts that are being carried out by both organizations to avoid duplications. So far academics have not addressed the content of official NATO and EU documents on security and defence cooperation while also assessing how these official documents are being translated into practice. Moreover, as it became apparent through this chapter, we still lack a deeper understanding of how this relation evolved in the fields of hybrid, cyber and maritime. In the next chapter, we will focus on the evolution of the EU-NATO relationship in order to understand which official documents first addressed the basis of the EU-NATO cooperation and what progress was made in practical terms over the years.

Chapter 3. Evolution of the EU-NATO relationship

The relationship between NATO and the EU is long-standing and several official documents have been created throughout the years addressing this partnership. This chapter is divided according to the distinct periods of the EU-NATO cooperation in the post-Cold War period. We focus on key milestones during each of these periods, thus setting the stage for the subsequent analysis of EU-NATO current efforts to strengthen their cooperation in the fields of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security. Overall, the chapter shows that each of these periods revealed distinctive dynamics in the EU-NATO relation. Whereas the first period was characterized by an approach by NATO to encourage the EU to take initiatives in the field of security, the second was characterized by a dynamic that allowed the two organizations to establish formal mechanisms that enabled them to join efforts. Finally, the third period was marked by the first difficulties that emerged in the EU-NATO relationship, such as the attempts by the EU to autonomize itself from NATO. In this period, we emphasize the area of maritime security because already in 2009 NATO and the EU had deployed two operations in the same operational area. This is particularly relevant because in the seventh chapter we will focus our analysis on the field of maritime security and will, thus, be able to establish the link between the operations that were deployed before (Atalanta and Ocean Shield) and after (Sophia and Sea Guardian) the Joint Declarations, demonstrating the progress achieved.

3.1. 1992-1996: The first steps towards cooperation

From 1992 to 1996 a period unfolded during which NATO undertook initiatives to incentivize the EU to focus on its security and defence dimension, despite the fact that at the time the EU was focusing on its economic and political integration.

On February 7, 1992, the Maastricht Treaty was signed, creating the EU. Among the three existing pillars, the CFSP, through which the beginnings of a common defence policy were established, sought to "preserve peace, strengthen international security, promote international cooperation and consolidate democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms" (Council of the EU, n.d.b).

In this same exact year (1992) NATO started by supporting the idea of the WEU being part of the EU defence component. It was rational for NATO to adopt this stance as the WEU and the development of its operational capabilities were considered compatible with NATO and a way of strengthening the Atlantic Alliance (NAC, 1992). NATO was available for its collective assets to be used on "WEU operations undertaken by the European Allies in pursuit of their CFSP" (NATO, 1994). For this purpose, the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces was adopted to facilitate operations and the use of capabilities (NATO, 1994).

In Berlin in 1996 NATO took the decision to develop a ESDI within NATO to increase European involvement in security matters while fostering transatlantic collaboration. In the creation of the ESDI, the preparation of WEU operations was a crucial component. These operations were based on the identification of "separable but not separate capabilities, assets, and support assets" (NAC, 1996), and separable but no separate Headquarters and Headquarters elements and command positions were needed for the WEU-led operations. It was then in Berlin that were defined the foundations that allowed NATO and the EU to mobilize their efforts later on, with the WEU being fundamental for this as it was with whom NATO had already established principles of complementarity and transparency and with whom areas of common concern had already been identified (NAC, 1996).

3.2. 1997-2003: Bringing the two organizations together

From 1997 to 2003 the documents by NATO and the EU provide insights into how the two organizations were planning how they could cooperate with each other, using which means and instruments, and in which areas.

Javier Solana[2] in 1997 addressed very openly the results that EU-NATO cooperation could have in the future, such as the influence on Russia and on the security of Central and Eastern Europe based on strategic interests common to both organizations (Solana, 1997). In our point of view, it seems relevant to approach this statement from two different perspectives. On the one hand, we can approach this statement from a negative perspective because it was not defined nor discussed how NATO and the EU could deal with the threats posed to both organizations, which implies that the political discourse prevailed over practical action. On the other hand, we can consider this a positive statement because both organizations were open to working together on challenges arising. Considering that the EU-NATO partnership was just beginning, being aware of common challenges seems to be a relevant step.

In the same year (1997), in the Amsterdam Treaty, it was defined that the WEU would be an integral part of the EU. However, the EU had to respect the obligations of the member states that were bound to NATO and develop its security and defence policy taking into consideration NATO's framework (EU, 1997). This statement seems particularly pertinent because there is a clear recognition of NATO's role and a demonstration that the EU had no intention of acting as NATO's competitor. In fact, the idea of NATO remaining the foundation for collective defence in Europe is repeated in different documents, such as in 2016 in the EU's Global Strategy and earlier in the Treaty of Lisbon that improved the ESDP and changed its name to CSDP (EU, 2016; EU, 2007).

The CFSP, that established the beginnings of a common defence policy, was strengthened in 1999 with the creation of the ESDP, a result of the St. Malo Declaration (1998) that claimed that "the Union

[2] Javier Solana was the ninth Secretary General (1995–99) of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

must have the capacity for autonomous action" (Blair & Chirac, 1998: 2). With the ESDP the EU sought to ensure that it had the capabilities to cope with crises arising, particularly crises in which the Alliance did not intend to be involved. Thus, there was an attempt by the EU to gain more autonomy, to improve its projection and to have a relevant role in the international arena, which involved being able to act on its own, but supported by reliable military forces, and with the authority to choose when to use them and the willingness to do so (Blair & Chirac, 1998). The security and defence of the EU presuppose NATO, and this was the first time that the European countries had shown, in a declaration, their desire to gain autonomy. As a result, Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State during the Clinton administration, devised the "3 D's" to underline that the US would not support the EU if it weakened NATO's power. No de-coupling, which means no withdrawal from the US, nor from NATO, no discrimination against non-EU NATO member states and no duplication of NATO assets were the three prerequisites for US support (Albright, 1998). It is interesting how the US, who claimed to want the EU to develop its capabilities, was shown to be taken back when the EU tried to achieve autonomy.

In 1999 NATO ended up recognizing the EU's efforts to take independent action because it wanted the EU member states to strength their defence capabilities. At the Washington Summit Communiqué, it was emphasized that both organizations make "decisive contributions to peace and stability on the European continent" and that cooperation on topics of common interest could occur when it increased the effectiveness of action by NATO and the EU (NAC, 1999). However, let it be clear that in this Communiqué NATO did not refer to the ESDP, but still to the ESDI developed within NATO, which indicates its difficulty in accepting the EU's new initiative.

On February 19, 2002, Lord Robertson[3] considered that September 11 "caused an extraordinary upsurge in transatlantic solidarity" and a coalition against terrorism "with the transatlantic nations at its core" was created (Robertson, 2002). However, the terrorist attacks also made both organizations wonder what their roles would be regarding this new threat (Lord Robertson, 2002). Cooperation in this area began with the development of a seminar on terrorism and through the examination "on how to improve coordination in addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction" (EU-NATO, 2003b). Aside from these facts, terrorism was not a subject of a sufficient debate between the two organizations and, instead, they focused on the instability in the Balkans. For instance, on 24 February 2004, Scheffer[4] mentioned that he would "very much hope for a joint EU-NATO Declaration on terrorism" (Scheffer, 2004), which ended up not happening.

In December 2002, the EU-NATO cooperation was reinforced by the EU-NATO Declaration on the ESDP, which assured the EU's "access to NATO's planning capabilities" (NATO, n.d.b). This Declaration

[3] Lord Robertson served as the tenth Secretary General of NATO from 1999 to 2003.
[4] Jaap de Hoop Scheffer served as the eleventh Secretary General of NATO from January 2004 to August 2009.

is one of the most important milestones in the EU-NATO relationship as it established that this relationship is based on the following political principles: “Partnership (…); Effective mutual consultation, dialogue, cooperation and transparency; Equality and due regard for the decision-making autonomy (...); Coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the military capability requirements common to the two organizations” (EU-NATO, 2002).

Beyond these political principles, an important instrument that set the basis for practical action between the two organizations was the Berlin Plus Agreement. Aiming to prevent needless resource duplication, to overcome the lack of military capabilities and to cooperate more efficiently with NATO, the EU started having access to NATO capabilities, shared assets and to its operational planning, and could use these assets on missions where NATO was not engaged (Witte, 2003). This Agreement included the 2003 document signed on the security of information involving “classified information or material (...) provided or exchanged between the Parties” to safeguard the information shared. As NATO and the EU agreed that consultations and cooperation should be developed related to common interests in the areas of security, defence and crisis management, this cooperation to be more effective presupposed the sharing of classified information (EU-NATO, 2003c).

3.3. The years after the basis of the EU-NATO partnership was established

3.3.1. Tensions and attempts to strengthen the EU-NATO cooperation

Although the Berlin Plus Agreement and the EU-NATO Declaration on the ESDP can be considered a breakthrough in the relationship between the two organizations, the reality is that the Iraq War on March 20, 2003, transformed the partnership between NATO and the EU. Nonetheless, in the years after the beginning of the Iraq War there were still moments of attempted proximity between the organizations. In the following sections, the aim is to explore both moments of distancing and efforts at cooperation.

On the one hand, there was a big focus on reaching stability and security in the Western Balkans, especially since in the 1990s the EU had demonstrated its ineffectiveness in dealing with the violence and tension in this region. Javier Solana had already mentioned in 1998 that “The Balkans are a case in point” (Solana, 1998). As such, on March 31, 2003, the EU conducted its first military crisis management operation using the “collective assets and capabilities of NATO for EU-led operations” as it was tasked with Operation Concordia to replace NATO's Operation Allied Harmony in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (NATO, 2003). The second successful mission was Althea in which the EU took over from NATO’s Stabilisation Force in December 2004. The fact that the two organizations successfully managed to transfer one operation to the other and that NATO's experience provided an

advantage for the EU indicates that the early days of the EU-NATO partnership created high expectations for the future (EU Military Committee, 2007).

On the other hand, as a result of the Iraq War, by the end of April 2003, to demonstrate their discontentment, Belgium, France, Germany, and Luxembourg requested the EU to establish its own operations planning department in the Tervuren suburb of Brussels. Because SHAPE exists, some considered that there was no reason for such EU facility to be created and that it was a duplication that should be avoided. Not only did it create divisions between NATO, particularly the US, and the EU, but also within the EU itself (EU operational planning: The politics of defence, 2007). Moreover, in July 2003 the ESDP sent the first autonomous peacekeeping force to Bunia[5] (United Kingdom and France, 2003), which was another step in the EU's efforts to become autonomous.

This situation was only attenuated when the European Security Strategy[6] (2003) recognized that no country could counter the threats of the twenty-first century by itself. Thus, NATO and the EU should work together. Despite this recognition, the EU did not hesitate to mention that although NATO and the EU had been working together on the ground in the Balkans and Afghanistan, there was not any actual development in their formal relationship (Council of the EU, 2003). This was the first time that the EU officially mentioned difficulties related to EU-NATO cooperation.

In 2007, Scheffer addressed the several attempts carried out for the two institutions to cooperate more with each other, but pointed out that there is always "a remarkable distance between them" because the EU-NATO relations seemed to be still stuck in the 1990s. This partnership should not be approached by trying to avoid duplication, but by thinking about how NATO and the EU, taking into consideration their means, could work together in the most effective way because "the military and non-military dimensions of security must go hand in hand" (Scheffer, 2007). If we think back to our state of the art, Drent et al. (2019), Lachmann (2010), Tardy and Lindstrom (2019) and Gjeta (2021), succeeded in meeting this idea by focusing their attention on the scope of missions of each organization.

Nonetheless, similar to the 2006 Riga Declaration, in the 2008 Bucharest Summit Declaration, NATO reiterated the idea that NATO and the EU share a set of matters of common interest, namely terrorism, military capabilities and civil emergency planning, which require joint efforts (NAC, 2006; NATO, 2008). Interestingly, NATO refers to "future cooperative endeavors" between the two

[5] Operation Artemis' goals included helping to stabilize the security situation in Bunia, improving the humanitarian situation, and ensuring the protection of displaced people in the refugee camps there (Homan, 2007).

[6] The European Security Strategy, along with the Saint-Malo declaration, is one of the key texts of the ESDP. This document focused on multilateralism and its importance in overcoming the challenges of the international scenario, namely terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime (Council of the EU, 2003).

organizations, which undoubtedly reflects the idea that in 2008 there was the prospect that the EU-NATO relationship would be developed in other areas and that it would take on new forms and dimensions (NATO, 2008). NATO's intention to expand the relationship between the two organizations is understandable as it is necessary for both organizations to look beyond security in the Balkans region. In the 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO sought to stress that for the EU and NATO to contribute to international peace and security four circumstances are necessary: one, improve the strategic partnership with the EU; two, enhance the two organizations' operational cooperation; third, increase the range of political consultations; and four, cooperate more in capability development to avoid duplication (NATO, 2010). For this reason, our focus in the next section will be on Operation Atalanta and Operation Sea Guardian.

3.3.2. EU's Operation Atalanta and NATO's Operation Ocean Shield

Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield[7] were both being conducted in the waters off the Horn of Africa with the aim of countering piracy. We address this matter in this section because, from a very early stage, the two organizations had the opportunity to establish operational cooperation in the maritime domain, unlike in the cyber and hybrid realms, which only began to be developed after 2013 and 2015, respectively.

Operation Atalanta was deployed in 2008 and its tasks include, in addition to protecting the World Food Programme[8] and preventing and combating piracy and armed robbery at sea, the following: monitoring fishing activity in the Western Indian Ocean and the Horn of Africa, combating drug trafficking, and assisting in the arms embargo on Somalia (EU Naval Force Operation Atalanta, n.d.) When it comes to NATO, Operation Ocean Shield (2009) was to counter piracy activities, including though surveillance to identify ships, and "to prevent and disrupt hijackings and to suppress armed robbery" (NATO, 2022a). As such, there are considerable similarities between the missions of each operation, both focused on, firstly, combating piracy and, secondly, combating armed robbery.

In the official documents, mentions of cooperation are made in a very general and comprehensive way without specifying how cooperation and complementarity took place and which means were used between the two organizations (EU-NATO, 2017b). Moreover, even though both operated in the same theatre, there was no official connection between them. The EU and NATO member states were unable to reach a political understanding that would allow coordinated operational efforts and strategic collaboration, or a unity of command. Neither before nor after the deployment of the operations joint

[7] Operation Ocean Shield had as precedents Operation Allied Provider (2008) and Allied Protector (2009) (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, n.d.a).

[8] The World Food Programme is a leading humanitarian organization that saves and transforms lives, provides food aid in times of need, and works with local communities to improve nutrition and foster resilience (World Food Programme, n.d.).

planning was developed nor any explicit task-sharing or strategic complementarity of activities (Gebhard & Smith. 2014).

Both operations were being conducted in the Gulf of Aden and this could lead to competition as member states seem to have preferred Operation Atalanta given its resources that contain “more ships, better maritime patrol aircraft, and the legal arrangements with countries in the Gulf to transport captured pirates” (S. Smith, 2011: 257). For instance, in 2013 a pirate was arrested by a Danish vessel with the Ocean Shield Task Force and once the Danish authorities ceded jurisdiction, the Seychelles 2023 authorities asked Atalanta for help in prosecuting this individual (EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta, 2023). Furthermore, given the difficulties in exchanging sensitive information due to Turkey, states that were part of both operations ended up giving preference to one operation over the other. Even though it would have served shared interests, given the twenty-two common members and the engagement in the same area, the two organizations were prevented from exchanging information and intelligence (Gebhard & Smith, 2014), which poses an actual challenge to their relationship that they need to overcome urgently. Referring to our state of the art, we can only agree with the idea of cooperation as “an ambition rather than a reality” (Tardy and Lindstrom, 2019: 12) because there is a lack of consensus at a political level (Cornish, 2006; Tardy & Lindstrom, 2019).

In this case, would it not make sense to resort to the Berlin Plus Agreement? By comparing the maps of the areas of operation of each operation, we can observe that these are similar: Operation Atalanta includes the Gulf of Aden and neighbouring countries, including the port and city of Muscat (Oman), Somali Basin, Red Sea, Gulf of Suez and Gulf of Agaba (EU Naval Force Operation Atalanta, n.d.); NATO was deployed in the Horn of Africa, including the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean up to the Strait of Hormuz, as well as Somali, which was not part of NATO's mandate but was allowed by Somali authorities (MARCOM, n.d.b). Considering Gjeta's (2021) point of view in our state of the art, the organizations have their own, non-official, division of efforts regarding geography, but this contrasts with what has just been stated as NATO and the EU deployed operations in the same theatre.

Also related to the possibility of the EU taking over from NATO's operation, S. Smith (2011) was able to ascertain that some NATO actors were inclined to end Operation Ocean Shield and hand control of the operation over to the EU. Additionally, there was a growing consensus that the EU had a more effective role “given its ability to act at the political level in a way that NATO currently just cannot” (S. Smith, 2011: 257). To have Operation Atalanta take over from NATO's operation appears to be a more effective way for NATO and the EU to use their resources, but the two organizations were unable to do so because the Berlin Plus Agreement has become useless. As Turkey is the one that has been preventing formal cooperation between the two organizations, there seems to have been a clear step

backward when compared to Operation Althea, thus demonstrating that the official documents created in 2003 no longer have any practical application.

3.4. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to help us understand how the EU-NATO relationship has evolved since the creation of the EU, what mechanisms were used at the time to establish this strategic partnership and what key milestones marked the periods analysed and allowed the EU-NATO relationship to be sustained and developed so that currently it focuses on other areas, such as hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security. It became clear that mutual efforts were conducted to establish the foundations of the EU-NATO relationship, in which we must highlight the Berlin Plus Agreement that allowed for operational cooperation to take place. Nevertheless, we were also able to understand that the success of this partnership did not last long, with Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield being a case that demonstrates the difficulty of translating official documents into practical action and the ineffectiveness of the EU-NATO relationship beyond the Berlin Plus Agreement.

In this chapter, we demonstrated that NATO sought to be the backbone of the EU in security terms, and in the cases in which the EU aimed at gaining autonomy, as happened with the ESDP or the EU's idea to have an operations planning department in the Tervuren suburb of Brussels, NATO, and in particular the US, very quickly took a posture of distancing itself from the EU. Moreover, we recognize that the Iraq War caused a breach in the EU-NATO relationship. In the years after 2003 tensions between the two organizations became visible, as can be perceived through Scheffer's speech pointing out that there is "a remarkable distance" (Scheffer, 2007) between the two organizations, as well as through the position taken by the Council of the EU in stating that there has been no progress in the formal EU-NATO relationship (Council of the EU, 2003). Up until 2003 NATO served as the organization that ensured Europe's defence and with which the EU used to comply with; however, this has changed and so has the Euro-Atlantic link due to the sense of mistrust felt on both sides of the Atlantic. Let there be, nonetheless, no doubt that international threats allow the two organizations to remember why they have so many decades of history and cooperation: for their own security and defence. This is why, despite moments of tension and disagreement, these organizations always end up seeking to strengthen their relationship with each other. In the next chapter, we will focus our attention on the three EU-NATO Joint Declarations which reflect the willingness of NATO and the EU to strengthen their relationship in response to the challenges arising currently.

Chapter 4. EU-NATO cooperation after 2016: the Joint Declarations

The period from 2016 to 2023 seems to be the period of greatest connection between the two organizations, demonstrated through the Joint Declarations on cooperation and the seventy-four common set of proposals. In this chapter, the aim is to ascertain the current areas of EU-NATO cooperation and how official documents are addressing this topic. Our focus will be on the Joint Declarations on EU-NATO cooperation of 2016, 2018 and 2023, highlighting the objectives, the contexts in which these declarations were developed and the implications of their content for the strategic partnership of the two organizations.

4.1. The 2016 Joint Declaration

The Warsaw Joint Declaration, adopted on July 8, 2016, was the first Joint Declaration of the two organizations and sought to give new meaning to the EU-NATO relationship. While recognizing that the Euro-Atlantic security is interconnected and that NATO and the EU can mobilize tools to deal with emerging challenges together and efficiently use resources, the Warsaw Joint Declaration reaffirmed NATO and the EU's commitment to strengthening collaboration in several areas of mutual interest, with the goal of improving security, stability, and resilience in Europe and beyond. The commitment involved countering hybrid threats, expanding and adapting operational cooperation including at sea, expanding coordination on cyber threats, developing complementary and interoperable defence capabilities, developing coordination on exercises, facilitating defence and research industry, and building defence and security capacity (EU-NATO, 2016b).

At the time, the focus was on the Western Balkans and the Eastern and Southern neighbours, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Jordan, and Morocco (EU-NATO, 2016a; EU-NATO, 2017c), as well as Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan (EU-NATO, 2017a).

This Declaration can be perceived as an important milestone in the relationship between the two organizations. The set objectives in the Declaration and in the seventy-four common set of proposals convey the idea that NATO and the EU have a common vision of the threats the member states of the organizations face and that they are aiming to find the means to tackle these challenges together. As it is the first EU-NATO Joint Declaration, it is an unprecedented document with the aim to increase EU-NATO cooperation on common challenges.

Interestingly, in the first and second reports on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed, the two organizations mentioned that there were long-term actions as well as short-term actions to develop EU-NATO cooperation (EU-NATO, 2017b; EU-NATO, 2017c). This would, thus, allow the staff of the two organizations to establish contact in all relevant areas of the EU-NATO relationship (EU-NATO, 2017c). In the third report, however, the scenario is relatively different, as the two organizations choose to state that “the overwhelming majority of the actions have a long-term

perspective requiring continued implementation" (EU-NATO, 2018b: 1). In this case, there is a clear recognition of the complexity of the EU-NATO cooperation and, at the same time, of the difficulties the two organizations face in organizing themselves in such a way that they can cooperate. If we consider the actions that have to be implemented, these essentially involve liaisons between staff in the field, exercises, training and exchanges of information (EU-NATO, 2017b; EU-NATO, 2017c; EU-NATO, 2018b). In the case of information exchanges, these are limited by the lack of a formal structure allowing for the exchange of classified and unclassified information.

Koenig (2018) was able to ascertain, through an interview, that "It's all well and good but it is largely bureaucratic stuff" and that the political tensions related to Turkey and to Cyprus put a "glass ceiling on implementation" of the seventy-four common set of proposals (Koenig, 2018: 8). In our state of the art, we mention authors such as Tardy and Lindstrom (2019), Helwig (2018), Drent et al. (2019) and Stabile et al. (2018) that highlight Turkey and Cyprus as member states that pose difficulties in the EU-NATO relationship, and the information obtained from this senior NATO official corroborates this exact idea.

4.2. The 2018 Joint Declaration

4.2.1. Areas of cooperation

The 2018 Joint Declaration, adopted on January 10, reflects the two organizations' commitment to continuing to deepen their relationship. It begins by recognizing that since Warsaw there has been a substantial evolution of the EU-NATO relationship, and cooperation between the institutions is considered to be "unprecedented in its quality, scope and vigour" (EU-NATO, 2018a: 1). In order to strengthen their collaboration and address shared concerns, in 2018 NATO and the EU agreed to work together in areas such as military mobility, counterterrorism, CBRN-related risks, women, peace and security agenda, as well as to keep on focusing on hybrid threats, cyber threats and operational cooperation including at sea. So, despite the significant progress, it was recognized that there is still a long way to go, including providing capabilities that are available to both organizations and that allow for complementarity (EU-NATO, 2018a).

One matter that was not discussed in the 2016 Joint Declaration was burden sharing, but in 2018 it was stated that it is important that European efforts are made so that NATO Allies are not disadvantaged (EU-NATO, 2018a). The issue of burden sharing was raised not only in this Joint Declaration but also in the Wales Summit Declaration in 2014, in the Brussels Summit Declaration in 2018 and in the Brussels Summit Communiqué in 2021 (NATO, 2014; NATO, 2018; NAC, 2021). The fact that this issue is mentioned so often demonstrates its relevance and the urgency for a more active stance to be taken. Unfortunately, in 2016, in the European Defence Action Plan, the EU mentioned

that only Estonia, Greece, Poland, and the United Kingdom (no longer part of the EU) were meeting the NATO expenditure goal of 2% of Gross Domestic Product agreed at the Wales summit in 2014 (European Commission, 2016b).

Overall, this Declaration aimed to reinforce what had already been established in 2016 and to demonstrate that the two organizations were indeed seeking to cooperate. Not only does this document confirm what had already been stated in 2016, but it also broadens the areas in which the two organizations were interested in cooperating. More than that, this Declaration raised the issue of burden sharing, contrary to what happened in 2016, and demonstrated that despite the disparities between the two institutions, they continue to seek to expand their partnership.

4.2.2. Initiatives developed by the European Union

What may explain the EU-NATO closeness after 2016 are the initiatives developed by the EU to strengthen its security and defence capabilities. In this section, it is important to address these initiatives as they are portrayed in official joint documents as a relevant EU-NATO link.

Contrary to the other Joint Declarations, in the 2018 Declaration NATO recognized the EU's efforts to improve European security and defence, namely through the European Defence Fund[9] and PESCO (EU-NATO, 2018a). We consider this information relevant because, recalling Chapter 3, whenever the EU attempted to develop initiatives that would provide it with more autonomy, NATO usually reacted with caution, and now NATO seems to be much more receptive to EU initiatives.

Regarding PESCO, it was created in 2017 by twenty-five EU member states that are "willing (...) to develop jointly defence capabilities, invest in shared projects, and enhance the operational readiness and contribution of their armed forces" (Council of the EU, 2017). Complementarity is politically accepted between PESCO and NATO because capabilities developed through PESCO are available for deployment in NATO, as a result of the single set of forces (Lazarou & Latici, 2020). However, as thirty-eight of the forty-seven PESCO initiatives match NATO priorities (EU-NATO, 2020), does this not imply an overlap between the two organizations? Should they not try to be as complementary as possible and coordinate their efforts? This brings us back to our state of the art in which the common member states and the single set of forces are highlighted as a fundamental motive for NATO and EU to coordinate their efforts and avoid duplication (Lachmann, 2010; Latici, 2020; Maio, 2021; Ewers-Peters, 2022).

[9] The European Defence Action Plan, which demanded a significant increase in EU spending on procurement, research and development, and defence capacity, proposed the creation of the European Defence Fund to help member states in establishing cooperation as the norm, enabling them to create and obtain crucial strategic defence capabilities (European Commission, 2016b; European Commission, 2017).

4.3. The 2023 Joint Declaration

In the 2023 Joint Declaration, there is a demonstration of the fragility of Europe and the consequent vulnerability to threats. The threats highlighted are Russia's war on Ukraine, authoritarian actors that undermine EU and NATO's interests, values, and democratic principles, China as an actor with increasing assertiveness and policies that give rise to challenges to the EU and NATO, terrorist groups, persistent conflict, and fragility and instability in the European neighbourhood (EU-NATO, 2023b).

The context in which this Declaration was made is particularly relevant, which was Russia's war on Ukraine, hence the focus on support for Ukraine. In contrast to the reaction NATO and the EU had to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, in 2023 NATO and the EU shaped a Joint Declaration demonstrating their dissatisfaction with Russia's actions, which indicates their concern and induces them to combine their efforts. Not only do they disapprove of Russian behaviour, but they also mention their full support for Ukraine (EU-NATO, 2023b). NATO, already in its 2022 Madrid Summit Declaration, made sure to mention that the invasion of Ukraine demonstrates why the EU-NATO partnership is so important in dealing with security challenges, especially considering the coordinated response to Russia's actions (NATO, 2022d). The impact of the Russian invasion was highlighted not only in the 2023 Joint Declaration but also in the 2022 and 2023 reports on the implementation of the common set of proposals. It was recognized that the two organizations should increase their exchanges and cooperation on resilience-related issues, and that NATO and the EU included in their exchanges CBRN as a topic of discussion about the potential civil consequences of Russia's invasion (EU-NATO, 2022; EU-NATO, 2023a). This coordination of efforts is particularly relevant because it allows for a joint response to the challenges posed.

While in 2023 the two organizations reiterated what had already been agreed upon in the two first EU-NATO Declarations regarding the fight against hybrid and cyber threats, maritime security, military mobility, defence capabilities, exercises, and counterterrorism, they also recognized that it is essential to expand and deepen the existing relationship to other areas. The areas include emerging and disruptive technologies, climate change security consequences, disinformation, and geostrategic competition (EU-NATO, 2023b). The problem with deepening the relationship in other areas is that this is a matter that is repeatedly raised in the official discourse of these organizations, but few practical results seem to be forthcoming related to these new areas (EU-NATO, 2018a; NAC, 2021; NATO, 2022c). This brings us back to section 3.3.1, in which we pointed out NATO's desire to expand the scope of cooperation between NATO and the EU beyond security in the Balkans region. Taking into consideration the new areas of cooperation highlighted in the three Joint Declarations, we can recognize that the two organizations have managed to project their efforts beyond the Balkans region.

Overall, the purpose of this NATO-EU official document was to demonstrate that since 2016 NATO and the EU have been able to move forward in order to achieve tangible results and demonstrate how

together they can achieve better outcomes. It is clear that their discourse is based on their need to remain united and to address the challenges posed to their member states.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we provided an overview of the three EU-NATO Joint Declarations. These Joint Declarations have demonstrated the willingness of both organizations to work together, to address together the threats they face and to use their resources in the most effective way. Thus, the Declarations are a reflection of the political will for greater ties between these two institutions.

We demonstrated that the 2016 Joint Declaration had a more superficial content, only briefly mentioning the areas of EU-NATO cooperation, such as hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security. However, since 2018 there has been an evolution of the official EU-NATO discourse. In addition to addressing the areas of cooperation, the organizations started to mention the initiatives developed particularly by the EU in the field of security and defence and which contribute to a greater balance in the EU-NATO relationship. In the 2018 Joint Declaration, the two institutions sought to demonstrate that they were willing to extend the range of areas in which they intend to cooperate, including, for instance, military mobility, counterterrorism, CBRN-related risks, and women, peace and security agenda. In the 2023 Joint Declaration, these areas were further expanded to include emerging and disruptive technologies, climate change security consequences, disinformation, and geostrategic competition, thus demonstrating the abundance of areas of common interest that allow NATO and the EU to work closely. Moreover, in 2023 the two organizations directly identified the threats that require a joint approach. This is particularly relevant because it reflects, for the first time, a direct joint reference to the threats posed to both organizations, including Russia and China.

Overall, if we were to think of the EU-NATO relationship solely on the basis of official documents, we could state that this relationship has evolved significantly (Helwig, 2018). However, focusing only on the official discourse is not enough and we must also address the practical dimension of the EU-NATO relationship that allows these organizations to deal with challenges and threats emerging. In the following chapters, we will focus not only on cooperation in terms of official documentation but also on the practical actions taken by the two organizations. We will, thus, seek to ascertain how the two organizations approach the fields of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security not only from 2016 onwards but also in previous years so that we can understand if there has been an evolution, what is the level of cooperation in these areas and if the official documents translate into practical actions.

Chapter 5. Cooperation on hybrid threats: 2015-2023

In the area of hybrid threats, NATO and the EU have sought to work not only based on the efforts of each organization individually but also through cooperation between the two organizations. According to the EU, "Hybrid threats influence and exploit vulnerabilities to incur damage below the threshold of overt aggression. They are a mixture of coercive and subversive activities, conventional and unconventional methods, used in a coordinated manner across multiple domains" (EEAS Strategic Communications, 2022). NATO, for its part, affirms that "NATO Allies face threats and challenges from both state and non-state actors who use hybrid activities to target political institutions, influence public opinion and undermine the security of NATO citizens" (NATO, 2023a). Following from that, hybrid methods of warfare, including sabotage, propaganda, deception, and other non-military tactics, are challenges that NATO recognizes it cannot solve alone (NATO, 2023a), which explains our interest in this domain.

5.1. Evolution of the EU-NATO cooperation on hybrid threats: official documents

To address the EU-NATO relationship on hybrid threats, we need to consider their official documents to assess how the two organizations have been perceiving the difficulties and challenges they face and how they plan to deal with those same threats. When it comes to hybrid threats, there is a discrepancy between the period when NATO began addressing them and the period when the EU began focusing on them. Initially, hybrid threat concerns were indirectly expressed in NATO's Strategic Concept of 2010 and considered "new threats" (NATO, 2010: 4). These threats ended up being included in NATO's Capstone Concept as "threats (...) posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives" (Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, 2014: 10). On the other hand, the EEAS only circulated a paper in May 2015 titled "Countering Hybrid Threats" that mentioned that the impact of these threats should be addressed and these threats should be countered. Hybrid threats were recognized as a "variety of covert and overt tactics that are implemented using military and/or non-military means" (EEAS, 2015b: 2).

What could explain why the EU started addressing hybrid threats in 2015 is the annexation of Crimea in 2014 that underlined the overall weaknesses of EU and NATO member states, who are generally unprepared for this kind of threats. It is in this sense that it became imperative for the two organizations to start joining efforts (Major and Mölling, 2015).

Koenig (2018) was able to ascertain that both organizations had a shared interest in collaborating in the realm of hybrid threats, and that "it is (…) the area that worked best" (Koenig, 2018: 9). Starting in 2016, the EUGS included a pledge to a closer relationship with NATO in fending against hybrid threats (EU, 2016). In July 2016 NATO expressed its commitment to cooperation and coordination with

other actors in the field of hybrid threats and emphasized the EU itself (NAC, 2016). In fact, it was only in 2016, through its comprehensive strategy on its role in countering hybrid threats, that NATO realized the need to increase collaboration with the EU, which is crucial in terms of non-military actions to prevent hybrid attacks (Stoltenberg, 2017).

In the 2016 Warsaw Joint Declaration, the two organizations pointed out the need to improve their capacity to deal with hybrid threats by strengthening resilience, cooperating "on analysis, prevention, and early detection, through timely information sharing and (...) intelligence sharing between staffs; and cooperating on strategic communication and response" (EU-NATO, 2016b: 1). In 2017, twenty out of the seventy-four common set of proposals were related to cooperation on hybrid threats, which shows their importance for these two organizations (EU-NATO, 2017a). On the one hand, we can denote that 2016 was indeed the year in which the two organizations managed to organize themselves so that they could start implementing joint efforts in this area. On the other hand, the exchange of intelligence and information and cooperation through strategic communication were the first steps that the two organizations took to bring their staff closer.

In the 2018 Joint Declaration, the two organizations reiterated what they had already defined on hybrid threats: the need to exchange information and to deal with hybrid threats from the East and South (EU-NATO, 2018a). However, they also acknowledged the need to make progress on counterterrorism (EU-NATO, 2017a; EU-NATO, 2018a) and, both in 2018 and in 2023, the importance of countering disinformation (EU-NATO, 2018a; EU-NATO, 2023b). Let us now analyse how this rhetoric has been translated into practical action.

5.2. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats

In the 2017 common set of proposals, the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, created in Helsinki in 2017, was highlighted as a Centre that should and could facilitate the staff-to-staff relationship (EU-NATO, 2017a). In all the EU-NATO reports, which address the practical efforts of the two organizations, this Centre is considered an important element regarding cooperation between NATO and the EU, in correlation with what was defined in the common set of proposals (EU-NATO, 2017b; EU-NATO, 2017c; EU-NATO, 2018b; EU-NATO, 2019; EU-NATO, 2020; EU-NATO, 2021; EU-NATO, 2022; EU-NATO, 2023a).

In practical terms, the Centre actively helps develop EU-NATO cooperation through its programs, which are mostly events and exercises (EU-NATO, 2018b), and it involves work that is beneficial in the areas of education, training, tabletop exercises, and resilience-building for hybrid threats (Stoltenberg, 2020). The Centre has grown from twelve member states and Allies in 2017 to a total of thirty-three member states and Allies in 2023, which shows the importance it has acquired over the years, allowing the connection between NATO and EU staff (EU-NATO, 2017c) (EU-NATO, 2023a). There seems to be

no denying that it is a mechanism which, firstly, translates official documents into practical action, and, secondly, allows the two organizations to informally maintain links with each other. To add to this, both the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and the NATO Hybrid Analytical Branch have sought to focus their common efforts on the Centre (EU-NATO, 2023a).

After 2019 the two organizations began to establish strong connections between their staff "with the aim of strengthening situational awareness, mutual understanding of respective activities, as well as to explore further potential cooperation avenues" (EU-NATO, 2020: 3; EU-NATO, 2019; EU-NATO, 2021; EU-NATO, 2022). This is particularly relevant as it allows a link based on mutual understanding to be developed, and for the activities conducted by each organization to not necessarily translate into a duplication of efforts.

Moreover, as it is not a NATO nor an EU agency, it is protected from the political blockade that hinders collaboration between the two institutions, which means that the barriers posed by Turkey and Cyprus do not arise here (Koenig, 2018). In this case, however, we must point out the informal nature of the EU-NATO relationship and the fragility this entails despite the will to bring the two organizations closer. We can recognize, of course, that this Centre is important so that the staff of both organizations can be in contact, but we must ask ourselves whether this is enough and whether NATO and the EU do not already have a history and relationship strong enough that should allow them to go beyond informal contacts.

5.3. Hybrid Exercises, workshops and seminars

In the field of hybrid threats, exercises, workshops and seminars are among the means most often mentioned as a way through which NATO and the EU can establish cooperation. For that reason, we have dedicated a section to these elements.

The first parallel and coordinated exercise EU PACE17/CMX17 took place on October 2017 and it involved staff interaction across four areas: "Early Warning/ Situational Awareness; Strategic Communications; Cyber defence; Crisis Prevention and Response" (EU-NATO, 2017c: 4). A year later, in 2018, took place the NATO Parallel and Coordinated Exercise 18, in which NATO supported the EU during its own crisis management exercise. According to both organizations, there was an unparalleled level of collaboration between NATO and the EU through the four areas mentioned above, and it involved testing decision-making processes, and communication and information exchange procedures of NATO and EU officials in a fictitious hybrid crisis situation (Stoltenberg, 2019). Recalling the Joint Declarations of 2016 and 2018, information exchange is one of the main means through which the EU and NATO aim to cooperate (EU-NATO, 2016b; EU-NATO, 2018a), and these exercises have proved to be a very significant contribution in enabling the organizations' staff to engage with each other.

Within the scope of the PACE concept, in the EU Hybrid Exercise Multilayer 18 the aim was to exchange information with regard to terrorist, criminal and smuggling incidents, to focus attention on the issue of disinformation and civil protection and, consequently, to ensure the synchronization of the EU and NATO in their crisis response activities (EU-NATO, 2019). As such, this exercise is in conformity with the 2018 Joint Declaration, which called for the need to counter disinformation, thus being a clear translation of the official discourse into practical actions (EU-NATO, 2018a; EU-NATO, 2023b).

A workshop related to CBRN resilience happened in 2019 with the aim to "identify respective policies, plans and procedures to support CBRN preparedness and resilience as well as the crisis response mechanisms" (EU-NATO, 2019). This means that the two organizations have aimed to understand each other's mechanisms, thus helping to strengthen their partnership and have a better perception of the actions conducted by each other. NATO and EU staff also attended other workshops aiming to achieve closer engagement, such as the "Resilience and cross-sectoral cooperation in responding to CBRN threats with hybrid elements" in July 2019 and the "Building Capacities, Strengthening Resilience: EU and NATO partnerships for addressing CBRN risks and threats" in January 2020 (EU-NATO, 2020: 4). Another workshop we would like to mention is related to bolstering resilience and crisis response involving these institutions' requirements and methods, which were tested in a hybrid threat scenario exercise (EU-NATO, 2019).

Overall, the fact that the EU and NATO are making an effort to ensure that these initiatives take place should be recognized as a positive aspect because it allows for coordination and preparation among their staff and, consequently, allows for a better response capacity. These efforts have allowed the two organizations to develop actions that reflect the official rhetoric, which means that, at least as far as exercises and workshops are concerned, the two organizations have fulfilled expectations.

5.3.1. Counterterrorism

In the field of counterterrorism, the EU-NATO relations are based on workshops and seminars. This is not an area of cooperation that emerged as a result of the Joint Declarations, because as early as 2003 the two organizations had already developed a seminar on terrorism (p. 21). Nevertheless, it is an area in which the two organizations have been seeking to broaden cooperation in recent years.

NATO and the EU began in 2018 to develop actions that reflect the official documents related to counterterrorism (EU-NATO, 2018b). Recalling the official joint documents, in 2017 and 2018, NATO and the EU committed themselves to cooperate in the area of counterterrorism with the aim of increasing cooperation on threat assessments through staff relations (EU-NATO, 2017a; EU-NATO, 2018a; EU-NATO, 2018b). In 2018, at the Europol Headquarters, discussions of the terrorist threat took place, and in 2019 this cooperation was expanded through informal contact between NATO, the EU

and the Europol's European Counter Terrorism Centre, through participation in working groups and staff involvement in events of mutual interest (EU-NATO, 2018b; EU-NATO, 2019). Since 2019 cross-briefings, seminars and workshops have become the norm in the field of counterterrorism and, until 2023, the EU-NATO relationship has been maintained on the basis of these practices (EU-NATO, 2019; EU-NATO, 2020; EU-NATO, 2021; EU-NATO, 2022; EU-NATO, 2023a).

Considering the actions that have been undertaken, it is possible to state that the official documents have been translated into practice, although this has only been based on an informal link. It is, thus, a connection that allows each staff to understand the standards of each organization and builds mutual trust. However, it seems that ministers are only urging personnel from the EU and NATO to work with each other in terms of countering hybrid and terrorist threats, thus building shared analyses, concepts, and standards rather than creating new official collaboration structures that can help their staff to communicate with each other and exchange sensitive information (Helwig, 2018).

5.4. Strategic communication

Prior to the Warsaw Declaration, in 2015, officials from both organizations began requesting additional actions to strengthen EU-NATO cooperation against hybrid threats (Mesterházy, 2017), and NATO and the EU held consultations on how to effectively prepare, deter and defend against hybrid threats, which include staff from both organizations exploring opportunities for practical cooperation, such as enhanced situational awareness and strategic communication (Stoltenberg, 2015).

In terms of strategic communications, there are exchanges about the ongoing activities of each organization (EU-NATO, 2018). Moreover, as a result of the common set of proposals of 2017, there was a discussion that involved the “coordination of strategic communications messaging on security threats” (EU-NATO, 2017a; EU-NATO, 2018b: 3), thus being a clear example of the translation of the official rhetoric of 2017 into practice. In 2019 and 2020 not only did NATO and the EU seek to maintain these advances, but also sought to ensure that strategic communications could assist in countering disinformation through "information exchange, analysis and capacity development” (EU-NATO, 2019: 2; EU-NATO, 2020: 3). We can perceive that there is an attempt to evolve the EU-NATO relationship in this area even if it is through small steps, especially in terms of disinformation. For instance, in 2021, strategic communications, as a result of COVID-19, gained a new aspect as it also began to consider information manipulated by “persistent and emerging actors” related to the pandemic (EU-NATO, 2021: 3). As there was a need to counter disinformation, the EU-NATO staff sought to analyse and expose the information being manipulated, thus making progress on the EU and NATO’s seventy-four common proposals (Stoltenberg, 2021; EU-NATO, 2018a).

Between 2019 and 2023 NATO and EU staff continued to work closely. For instance, in 2019 the two organizations were cooperating through the EU's Strategic Communications Task Force East and

the Riga NATO Strategic Communications COE, namely on "research on pro-Kremlin narratives" (EU-NATO, 2019: 2), which reflects the intention, expressed in 2016, of NATO and the EU to strengthen cooperation between these two initiatives (EU-NATO, 2016a). Moreover, in correlation with the 2023 Joint Declaration, several actions have already been undertaken by the two organizations regarding the war on Ukraine, such as the Hybrid CoE scenario-based discussion on hybrid threats from Russia and China and the work "to maintain shared situational awareness of hostile activities in the information environment" (EU-NATO, 2023a: 4). Thus, there is an effort by the staff of the institutions to, firstly, address current issues of concern and, secondly, to deepen the EU-NATO relationship on the basis of the Joint Declarations.

5.5. Bolstering resilience

Regarding resilience, NATO and the EU have been addressing this aspect related to hybrid threats since 2016. In this year (2016) the aim was to prepare "to be ready to deploy, by mid-2017 in a parallel and coordinated manner, experts to support EU Member States/Allies (...), in enhancing their resilience, either in the pre-crisis phase, or in response to a crisis" (EU-NATO, 2016a). In the 2017 common set of proposals, it was added that the two organizations should address civil preparedness, work on workshops, discussions and exercises, and explore the presence of EU personnel in NATO Resilience Advisory Support Teams, as well as NATO personnel presence in EU advisory preventive and preparedness missions within the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EU-NATO, 2017a).

In 2019, with an emphasis on risk assessments, medical evacuation, mass casualty incidents and population movement, staff from both organizations highlighted their approaches to resilience and raised awareness of their tools (Stolenberg, 2020). These tools may include technological techniques, cyber and legal means, coordinated responses and strategic communication (H. Smith, 2019). This, in turn, was in line with the official discourse of the two organizations (EU-NATO, 2017a), making it possible to strengthen the staff-to-staff cooperation in this area and to allow staff from both organizations to be aware of the tools and approaches used by their counterpart.

However, the results are not yet as expected since the focus has been mainly on workshops as explained above (p. 35), and the two organizations aren't ready "to deploy, (…) in a parallel and coordinated manner, experts to support EU Member States/Allies (...), in enhancing their resilience" (EU-NATO, 2016a). Staff from the two organizations in 2020 and 2021 shared information regarding civil preparedness efforts, including related to COVID-19, but it was only in 2022 that NATO and the EU decided to launch a Structured Dialogue on Resilience, as a result of the growing importance that this topic began to have for EU and NATO member states (EU-NATO, 2020; EU-NATO, 2021; EU-NATO, 2022). The inaugural meeting sought to address synergies and complementarity (EU-NATO, 2022). The fact that this was the inaugural topic raises hopes that there will be a strategic collaboration between

the two parties in the future, particularly because it allows the staff of each organization to recognize in which areas the organizations can complement each other's work and coordinate their efforts. Moreover, by addressing synergies and complementarity, the two organizations can avoid duplicating resources, which allows their member states to benefit from this partnership.

5.6. Conclusion

In the official documents and in the actions implemented, NATO and the EU seek to highlight hybrid threats as a field in which great efforts are being developed, which mostly include informal exchanges of information, exercises and workshops. There is a clear translation of official documents into practical action in the realm of hybrid threats, with the exception of bolstering resilience, in which there is still a discrepancy between the official rhetoric and the practical developments, as the cooperative activities have been limited to workshops, therefore not being in correlation with the rhetoric calling for the coordination of experts from the two organizations to support member states in strengthening their resilience. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting, regarding risk assessments, medical evacuation, mass casualty incidents and population movement, that staff from both organizations were able to translate the documents into practical action by sharing their approaches to resilience and raising awareness of their tools, thus contributing to the knowledge of the staff of each organization about its counterpart.

Related to strategic communications, there is a translation of the official rhetoric into practice as the two organizations have sought to counter disinformation through "information exchange, analysis and capacity development" (EU-NATO, 2019: 2; EU-NATO, 2020: 3), which is in accordance with the 2018 Joint Declaration. Furthermore, the two organizations have managed to adapt to challenges related to information being manipulated by "persistent and emerging actors" (EU-NATO, 2021: 3) as a result of COVID-19. This demonstrates not only the ability of the two organizations to adapt to current threats but also the translation of the 2018 Joint Declaration into practical action since it called for countering disinformation.

In the 2023 Joint Declaration, Russia's invasion of Ukraine was one of the most prominent issues addressed. NATO and the EU have managed to act according to the official rhetoric, starting with discussions on hybrid threats from Russia and the work "to maintain shared situational awareness of hostile activities in the information environment" related to Russia's invasion (EU-NATO, 2023a: 4).

An aspect we certainly cannot fail to address are workshops, exercises and seminars that have allowed the interaction between the staff of each organization, thus improving coordination and giving NATO and EU personnel the opportunity to acquire more preparedness to deal with hybrid threats. However, it is also possible to wonder to what extent informal exchanges and exercises are enough. In our state of the art, we pointed out Latici's (2020) idea that joint exercises and training have been

important in developing shared experiences and similar working practices even though political obstacles do not allow the formal establishment of the EU-NATO partnership. Even so, what is the point of mutual trust if there are no formal structures to link NATO and the EU and have them coordinating their resources and efforts? We have to agree with Helwig (2018) when he states that there is little possibility of expanding collaboration toward a combined hybrid command due to the difficulties in exchanging sensitive information. The informality of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, even though it allows to increase situational awareness and mutual understanding of each other's actions, is proof of this, as the two organizations have not sought to organize themselves in a way to be able to cooperate with each other formally. In the next chapter, we will address the topic of cyber threats in order to assess whether the obstacles encountered in this chapter are limited to hybrid threats or whether they extend to other areas of EU-NATO cooperation.

Chapter 6. Cooperation on cyber threats: 2013-2023

As part of the EU and NATO's efforts to tackle hybrid threats, the two organizations have enhanced their collaboration in different areas, including cyber threats (NATO, 2023b) since both organizations are attacked by sophisticated state actors, non-state actors with political motivations, and cybercrime groups that endanger the civic, political, economic, and military security of EU and NATO member states (Lété & Pernik, 2017). For this reason, throughout this chapter, we will be focusing on the cyber realm and addressing the EU-NATO official documents, the Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, as well as training, education, workshops and exercises, which are considered the most significant means of EU-NATO engagement.

6.1. Evolution of the EU-NATO cooperation on cyber threats: official documents

To address the EU-NATO relationship on cyber threats, we need to consider their official documents to assess how the two organizations have been perceiving the difficulties and challenges they face and how they plan to deal with those same threats.

After the 2007 cyber-attacks on Estonia's public and private institutions, NATO approved in January 2008 its first Policy on Cyber Defence. In 2010, in its new Strategic Concept, NATO reinforced its concern about cyber-attacks, especially since in 2008 the conflict between Georgia and Russia showed how cyber threats may play a significant role in conventional warfare (NATO, 2023b). However, in the years immediately after 2008 there was never a link between NATO and the EU on cyber threats, which can be explained through the fact that the EU itself only had its first Cybersecurity Strategy in 2013.

In the 2013 Cybersecurity Strategy of the EU, it was stated that "synergies between civilian and military approaches" are needed. Moreover, in order to minimize duplication, the EU agreed to consider a way through which NATO and the EU could work together to strengthen the "resilience of critical governmental, defence and other information infrastructures" that are essential to both organizations' member states (EP, Council, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions, 2013: 11). Dialogue between the two organizations was considered important to ensure effective defence capabilities and to identify opportunities and priorities for collaboration, which includes exercises and training (EP, Council, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions, 2013). This then gives us the starting point for the EU-NATO relationship on cyber threats.

It was, however, only beginning in 2014 that NATO and the EU started to actually cooperate in this domain. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 can serve as an explanation for this shift. Prior to that, the EU merely mentioned the need for cooperation between the two organizations, but no effort was made in that direction.

As a result of NATO emphasizing the need for a deeper engagement with the EU in its 2014 summit in Wales (NATO, 2014), the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework in 2014 advocated specific actions in order to improve EU-NATO situational awareness, information exchange, early warning systems with regard to cyber threats, and the ability to foresee risks that might impact both organizations (Council of the EU, 2014). Considering this approach, the EU both in 2014 and 2018 stated its support for the creation of a framework for consistent requirements for cyber defence capability, as well as increased use of the EDA liaison agreement with the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence to enable the two organizations to collaborate in multinational cyber defence projects (Council of the EU, 2014; General Secretariat of the Council, 2018b). This liaison is meant to identify areas for collaboration and suggest initiatives to help develop cyber defence capabilities so that NATO and the EU can reduce duplication of efforts and allocate resources more effectively. It is focused on ongoing research initiatives, common terminology, and training (EDA, 2013).

In the Cyber Defence Pledge, at the Warsaw Summit in 2016, the efforts being made by the EU and NATO to improve cyber security and encourage greater EU-NATO cooperation in this area were highlighted (NATO, 2016a). The Warsaw Joint Declaration, a key document in the EU-NATO relationship on cyber issues, highlights the need to expand the EU-NATO coordination on cyber threats in the context of "missions and operations, exercises and on education and training" (EU-NATO, 2016b: 1). Through this Declaration, NATO and the EU aimed to add more substance to their cooperation and presented chances to forge closer connections between the two organizations (Mesterházy, 2017). In other words, the political green light for improved EU-NATO cyber defence cooperation was given (Pawlak, 2017).

In the 2016 common set of proposals, NATO and the EU committed to develop cyber exercises and to "exchange concepts on the integration of cyber defence aspects" in missions and operations in order to align requirements and standards (EU-NATO, 2016a: 4). In the second common set of proposals in 2017, it was recognized that there should be exchanges of good practices on cyber aspects, including operational aspects of cyber defence, with the aim of identifying potential synergies between the two organizations (EU-NATO, 2017a).

Moreover, in the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework 2018 update the EU reinforced the idea that regular personnel consultations and cross-briefings are important. Not only that but it was also mentioned that meetings between the Politico-Military Group and NATO committees should minimize duplication of efforts and guarantee coherence and complementarity of activities (General Secretariat of the Council, 2018b). As far as this is concerned, several practical moments allow us to understand the EU-NATO link in the cyber domain, such as the EU-NATO staff-to-staff consultations in January 2015 and at the working level between the EU Military Staff, the EDA and the NATO Consultation, Command and Control staff (Pawlak, 2017).

Mesterházy (2017) considers that cyber threats are presently one of most significant areas of EU-NATO cooperation but it's interesting to note that NATO is still rarely mentioned in the EU official documents on cyber threats (European Commission, 2015; European Commission, 2016a; EP and Council of the EU, 2019; European Commission, 2020a). Nevertheless, Appathurai, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, acknowledged that there is a solid foundation for EU-NATO cooperation on cyber challenges, and that time has come for the two organizations to increase their collective situational awareness of cyber risks, their capacity to react to hostile cyber activity, and the ability to encourage responsible online behaviour (Appathurai, 2022).

6.2. Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence

In 2016, the same year as the first Joint EU-NATO Declaration, an arrangement was signed by NATO and the EU in the field of cyber. Addressing this arrangement is relevant because it created a framework for the exchange of information and best practices between the two organizations (NATO, 2016b). Between 2019 and 2023, the Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, signed between NCIRC and CERT-EU, was constantly recognized for its contribution to the relationship between the two emergency response teams (EU-NATO, 2019, EU-NATO, 2020; EU-NATO, 2021; EU-NATO, 2022; EU-NATO, 2023a). It is clear that this arrangement is in accordance with official NATO and EU documents, especially with the 2017 common set of proposals, which emphasize the importance of sharing good practices (EU-NATO, 2017a).

Through this partnership, NCIRC and CERT-EU can share technical information more easily, which benefits both organizations' prevention, detection, and response to cyber incidents. This can be accomplished through information exchange of products, through sharing of information relating to events or incidents, and through visits to facilities and laboratories (Pawlak, 2017).

In 2018 the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework update, the EU ensured that the Technical Arrangement would be further utilized in order to enhance situational awareness, information exchange, and early warning systems as well as to foresee threats that may harm both organizations (General Secretariat of the Council, 2018b). There is, therefore, a growing commitment, particularly by the EU, to start using this agreement to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations, in particular through their emergency response teams.

6.3. Training, education, workshops and exercises

NATO and the EU often mention, in their official documents, that the field of cyber is advancing through exchanges between their staff on concepts and doctrines, cross-briefings, training and education courses (EU-NATO, 2018b; EU-NATO, 2019; EU-NATO, 2020). Although the organizations do not provide information about doctrines and cross-briefings, they often address training and education

courses, as well as workshops and exercises, which is why in the following section we will address these elements, with the focus being mainly on exercises as exercises are the most mentioned in the official documents.

In 2016 NATO and the EU committed to coordinate training requirements and provide training courses for the staff of both organizations (EU-NATO, 2016a). Already in 2017, the two organizations ensured the coordination of training requirements through the exchange of information on training and education courses (EU-NATO, 2017c). In terms of education and training, the overall goal has been to "facilitate the implementation of NATO and EU best practices and enhance the interoperability" (EU-NATO, 2018b: 4). As such, in the field of cyber threats, the link between the official discourse and the practical actions regarding training and education has been coherent and precise. For instance, in 2017, the EU had access to NATO's education and training syllabus (EU-NATO, 2017c). This cohesion can also be demonstrated through cyber training modules to avoid duplication, to improve training and education standards, and to enable collaboration, thus allowing information exchange on training and education activities (EU-NATO, 2019).

From 2018 onwards, NATO and the EU, in addition to exchanges on training and education, have been holding workshops to allow for enhanced interaction and coordinated development of cyber defence concepts. One of these workshops took place in June 2018 for the two organizations to explore each other's tools and processes to identify good practices (EU-NATO, 2018), and two workshops took place in September 2018 and April 2019 involving "NATO and EU conceptual ideas and documents" in order to achieve greater EU-NATO coordination (EU-NATO, 2019: 5). This, thus, is in accordance with the common set of proposals of 2016 and 2017, as the two organizations managed to exchange concepts (EU-NATO, 2016a) and best practices (EU-NATO, 2017a).

Overall, in cyber training, education and workshops, several examples translate the official rhetoric into practice and there seems to be a constant effort to bring the two organizations closer so that the staff of each organization acquires knowledge on the actions conducted by its counterpart. Moreover, there has been a constant effort to ensure interoperability between the two organizations, which must be recognized as a strength in the EU-NATO relationship.

Regarding cyber exercises, NATO and the EU made it clear that cyber-attacks require joint efforts. To prevent these attacks, common cyber exercises and interaction between NATO and the EU's emergency response teams are needed (EU-NATO, 2017b). To better understand the EU-NATO connection in exercises related to cyber issues, let us consider NATO CMX 2017 and EU PACE[10]. These

[10] The EU-NATO Parallel and Coordinated Exercise 17 concentrated on four key areas: situational awareness, the efficacy of tools to counter cyber threats at the EU level, speed of reaction and appropriate reactivity of crisis response mechanisms, as well as the ability to communicate quickly and in a coordinated manner (Politico-Military Group, 2017).

exercises were conducted separately but in coordination between EU and NATO staff (Politico-Military Group, 2017). For instance, in the CMX 2017, staff from NATO and the EU practiced exchanging information and communicating during a simulated crisis scenario in a hybrid environment (Stoltenberg, 2018). There is, however, a substantial inconsistency between a coordinated crisis response in reality and between the PACE and CMX since these two exercises remain autonomous initiatives and represent the only significant joint EU and NATO exercise each year (Lété, 2019). Nevertheless, the importance of these exercises for the staff of the two organizations to engage with each other and build mutual trust cannot be overlooked.

In 2019 NATO observed EU exercises, including Cyber Europe 2018, which operates as a vital forum for exchanging best practices and creating new tactics and strategies (Mesterházy, 2017), and both in 2022 and 2023 NATO personnel observed sections of the annual Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox table-top exercise in the Council Horizontal Working Party on Cyber Issues (EU-NATO, 2023a; EU-NATO, 2022).

It is certain that NATO has extended its interactions with the EU, particularly in the areas of training, information sharing and exercises (Stoltenberg, 2021), however, it seems that the relationship between the two organizations is no more than exercises, training and information sharing. We must, then, ask ourselves if having this approach is enough. Despite the EU-NATO cooperation efforts on cyber issues, it is clear that the two organizations still need to make more joint efforts in order to more efficiently deal with, prevent, detect and deter cyberattacks, which includes considering how to broaden and strengthen their current defence and cybersecurity cooperation (Lété & Pernik, 2017). Thus, they will have to build on the foundation that already exists by making further efforts toward cross-border integration of information, capabilities, and defensive strategies (Ilves, Evans, J., & Nadeau, 2016).

According to Lété and Pernik (2017), there are three obstacles that can explain the difficulties encountered in the EU-NATO relationship on cyber threats. First, despite the obvious necessity for coordinated responses, there is no situational awareness of cyber threats between EU and NATO member states, in contrast to the hybrid threats realm. Additionally, not every member state has access to the same information and member states that have the capacity to identify cyber-attacks refuse to divulge specifics to other parties. At the same time, there is currently no direct channel for the EU and NATO to share confidential information, which makes the EU-NATO relationship more difficult. Secondly, between member states, there is a substantial difference in military and civilian cyber capabilities, which poses a difficulty to cooperation (Lété and Pernik, 2017).

6.4. Conclusion

The cyber domain is the domain we have the least information about, with official documents only raising the importance of concepts, exercises and training for the EU-NATO relationship. Can we

consider that there is a translation of official EU-NATO documents into practice in the field of cyber threats? Yes, we can, starting with the harmonization of training requirements and training courses for mutual staff participation, as well as the involvement of staff in exercises of the two organizations. In addition, workshops have allowed enhanced interaction and coordinated development of cyber defence concepts, giving these organizations the opportunity to better understand each other's strategies. However, we should also point out that, as far as missions and operations are concerned, practices that connect the two organizations have not been developed, which means that the translation of official EU-NATO documents into practice is limited.

Despite the official documents and the positive outcome that the two organizations try to convey by being involved in each other's exercises and workshops and by developing a Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, the truth is that there has not been much of a significant EU-NATO cooperation in the field of cyber threats. We do, nonetheless, acknowledge the efforts of the organizations and consider training, workshops, seminars and exercises positive because they allow the two organizations to share different perspectives, to come to joint understandings and to foster a culture of trust, which are certainly important elements when the staff of each organization tries to deal with problems that emerge in the domain of cyber security and defence.

Overall, the EU and NATO have started to improve their cooperation related to cyber, thus allowing for more interactions between their staff and mutual coordination. Although these steps taken to combat cyber threats are encouraging, they are only the beginning.

Having addressed this area, it will be interesting to turn our attention to maritime security, an area in which NATO and EU staff have the opportunity to cooperate with each other on a daily basis as operations are deployed in the same theatres. This approach will certainly allow us to better understand the level of proximity between the staff of each organization.

Chapter 7. Cooperation on maritime security: 2014-2023

In the EU-NATO Joint Declarations on cooperation, in the common set of new proposals and in their implementation reports, the focus related to maritime security is on information sharing, exercises and training, and Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian. Thus, throughout this chapter, we will seek to analyse how the two organizations have been cooperating through information sharing, exercises and training, and, then, analyse the efforts undertaken when NATO and the EU have operations deployed in the same theatre, with an emphasis on Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian. In this chapter, we also include Operation Irini, which replaced Operation Sophia in 2020.

7.1. Evolution of the EU-NATO cooperation on maritime security: official documents

Several NATO and EU documents address the maritime domain, especially individual EU documents due to the interests of its member states in this area. In this section, we address these official documents in order to better understand the official rhetoric of the two organizations.

The EU defines maritime security as "a state of affairs of the global maritime domain, in which international law and national law are enforced, freedom of navigation is guaranteed and citizens, infrastructure, transport, the environment and marine resources are protected. (...) It facilitates improved cross-sectoral cooperation within, between and across civilian and military authorities and actors", and this idea includes cooperation with NATO (General Secretariat of the Council, 2014: 3).

The only time NATO mentioned the EU in its 2011 Alliance Maritime Strategy was to state that the Alliance intends to connect with the EU (and other actors) with the goal of "preventing conflict, building partner capacity, ensuring the freedom of the seas, upholding international maritime law and promoting Alliance values." (NATO, 2011). In 2013, NATO stated that even though piracy remained a threat in the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Aden, there was a decrease in piracy attacks as a result of the work that was undertaken by actors such as NATO and the EU, which had worked together to achieve better results and to deter and disrupt pirate attacks and protect vessels, namely through Operation Ocean Shield and Operation Atalanta (Rasmussen, 2013).

In 2014 the EU Maritime Security Strategy[11] defined that cooperation should be carried out with international partners, in particular with NATO through complementarity and coordination in crisis management (General Secretariat of the Council, 2014). Two years later (2016), in the Warsaw Joint Declaration, deepening EU and NATO's operational cooperation sea was considered essential. To do so, it was suggested that there should be "increased sharing of maritime situational awareness as well as better coordination and mutual reinforcement of our activities in the Mediterranean and

[11] The EU Maritime Security Strategy covers risks and threats, including organized crime, threats to freedom of navigation, threats to biodiversity, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (Council of the EU, 2018).

elsewhere" (EU-NATO, 2016b). In the 2016 and 2017 common set of proposals and in the 2018 Joint Declaration, this approach was maintained with reference to Operation Sea Guardian and Operation Sophia in terms of information sharing and logistical support (EU-NATO, 2016; EU-NATO, 2017a; EU-NATO, 2018a). The Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan, adopted in June 2018 by the EU, is in conformity with the EU-NATO Joint Declarations as it appeals for information sharing, cross-sectoral maritime security training and exercises and operational cooperation through Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian (EEAS, n.d.). It seems to be an ambitious document that certainly seeks to bring the two organizations closer but the focus on voluntary information sharing, training and exercises seems to be a perpetuation of how NATO and the EU address their partnership.

In 2023 the European Commission pointed out that since the Maritime Security Strategy was adopted in 2014, security risks and challenges have increased, which demands for improved response (European Commission, 2023a). For this reason, the EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan were updated. More than intensifying the EU-NATO relationship through staff-to-staff contact, the EU acknowledged that collaboration with NATO should be increased specifically through the "EU-NATO structured dialogue on resilience and the task force on resilience of critical infrastructure" (European Commission, 2023b: 11). Based on this official rhetoric, let us move on to the actions that have been implemented by the two organizations.

7.2. Information exchange, training and exercises

Information sharing is one of the most visible forms of connection between the staff of the two organizations, namely through the SHADE mechanisms, which is why this section seeks to address its relevance. In addition to information exchange, training and exercises also gain prominence in the EU-NATO relationship.

From 2018 to 2023 EU-NATO operational cooperation relied on information sharing through the SHADE forum in the Mediterranean and in the Horn of Africa, which is considered to be the key forum for information sharing, exchanging best practices and cooperation (EEAS, n.d.; EU-NATO, 2018b; European Commission, 2020b; EU-NATO, 2022; EU-NATO, 2023a). However, in 2018 the EU pointed out that it is essential to share not only unclassified information with NATO but also classified information (General Secretariat of the Council, 2018a). The problem we may encounter here is that NATO and the EU, despite having a long-standing relationship, have not yet been able to create a formal channel through which they can exchange information. Thus, there is a clear difficulty in translating this individual EU document into practical action because the two organizations are currently focusing on a multinational forum composed of several countries and organizations other than just NATO and the EU and do not have a mechanism that enables them to exchange classified information. If this relationship is supposed to progress based on the official documents, shouldn't

efforts be made to enable greater linkage between the two organizations? Should they not be organized enough to complement each other more and have a channel that allows them to share information, both confidential and non-confidential?

As far as training is concerned, it is important to assess its relevance to the EU-NATO relationship in the maritime realm because, according to the European Commission, "The common set of proposals adopted after the 2016 EU-NATO joint declaration has been implemented through cooperation between the EU and NATO maritime centres of excellence and training centres, with a view to promoting a common understanding of maritime challenges and improving responses" (European Commission, 2020b). In 2018, the aim was to link EU agencies with research, training, and education centres and centres of excellence in EU member states, including NATO-accredited centres and training facilities (General Secretariat of the Council, 2018a). In 2020, the EU sought collaboration with NATO Centres of Excellence as well. For instance, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and NATO's Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre established a working relationship and are considering cross-participation in training courses (European Commission, 2020b).

Regarding exercises, these were conducted to keep a high level of preparedness for crisis circumstances and focused on monitoring navigation to spot suspicious activity, intervening at sea, and evacuating populations. For instance, the European Commission co-organized and took part in the EU Hybrid Exercise Multilayer 18 (PACE), which improved coordination of the overall EU-NATO response to maritime security threats (European Commission, 2020b). As the focus is once again on exercises and information sharing, the relationship between the two organizations seems to be stuck. The question is, will these exercises and training courses be applied when necessary or are we facing a situation in which resources are wasted but not used in real scenarios? Let us put that to the test and focus on maritime operations in the following sections.

7.3. Maritime Operations: EU's Operation Sophia and NATO's Operation Sea Guardian (2015-2020)

EU's Operation Sophia, deployed on June 22, 2015, and NATO's Operation Sea Guardian, launched in November 2016, reflect the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO (EEAS, n.d.). In this section, our focus will be on these operations and the aim is to understand whether, as a result of the official documents, the two organizations have managed to improve their relationship in terms of operational cooperation.

Operation Sophia, part of the EU response to migration, addresses the physical aspect of migration and its core causes. The aim is to "identify, capture and dispose of vessels and enabling assets used or suspected of being used by migrant smugglers or traffickers" (EUNAVFOR MED Sophia, n.d.). On the other hand, Operation Sea Guardian has three tasks being conducted, namely "maritime security capacity building, support to maritime situational awareness and maritime counterterrorism" (NATO,

2023d). This operation was preceded by Operation Active Endeavour, which was meant to patrol the Mediterranean and monitor shipping, boarding any suspect ships, which is remarkably similar to EU's Operation Sophia (NATO, 2022b). The fact that this operation was succeeded by Sea Guardian is significant because it enabled the missions of each organization not to be so similar and to avoid duplication of resources, thus demonstrating how serious NATO and the EU are about cooperating and complementing each other.

In 2016 NATO's Secretary General stated that Operation Sea Guardian would support Operation Sophia in terms of situational awareness, logistical support, including refuelling, and through NATO's ships and maritime patrol planes that became available for the EU operation (Stoltenberg, 2016).

On May 30, 2017, an Administrative Arrangement was reached between MARCOM[12] and Sophia's Operational Headquarters to facilitate information sharing related to maritime situational awareness as well as logistical and medical support. The EU's officer placed at MARCOM and the military authorities of member states that are part of both institutions made decisions on cooperation on a "case-by-case basis" (Marcuzzi, 2018: 2; Credendino, 2018), which demonstrates a clear informal structure that is contrary to the EU's official recognition of the need to establish exchanges of classified information. Nonetheless, as information was actively exchanged and there was mutual logistical assistance (EEAS, n.d.), this Agreement seems to be particularly relevant as it set the parameters for operational cooperation between Operation Sea Guardian and Operation Sophia and as it is a clear application of the 2016 Warsaw Joint Declaration and the 2016 and 2017 common set of proposals that required the sharing of maritime situational awareness, coordination and reinforcement of efforts (EU-NATO, 2016a; EU-NATO, 2016b; EU-NATO, 2017a).

In addition to information sharing, one of the most emphasized aspects in the official documents was logistical support (EU-NATO, 2016; EU-NATO, 2017a; EU-NATO, 2018a). In this case, the logistical support provided by NATO took place in terms of "(1) onshore facilities, (2) role 2 capability afloat and (3) replenishment at sea" (EU-NATO, 2019: 4), thus translating the official NATO-EU documents into practice and allowing the two organizations to reinforce their complementarity in the Mediterranean.

We were also able to ascertain that NATO assembled and analysed information and shared it with Operation Sophia, which increased the efficiency of both operations. Moreover, daily situation reports, sailing intentions, and schedules for air, surface, and submarine operations were all shared. By sharing this data, duplication could be reduced and an improved understanding of maritime activity was provided (MARCOM, 2018), thus meeting the official rhetoric of these organizations. Comparing these operations with Operation Atalanta and Operation Sea Guardian (p. 24-26), it becomes clear that despite the lack of formal mechanisms, NATO and the EU still managed to cooperate and ensure

[12] MARCOM is the central command of all NATO maritime forces (MARCOM, n.d.-a).

situational awareness and logistical support, thus demonstrating an improvement of their operational cooperation.

Operation Sophia's mandate was extended and had two additional tasks: assisting in the execution of the United Nations arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya and providing training for the Libyan coastguard and navy (EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia, n.d.). NATO agreed in July 2017 to assist Operation Sophia in carrying out the Resolutions 2236 (2016) and 2357 (2017) on arms embargo on Libya (EU-NATO, 2017c).

7.3.1. Operation Irini (2020-2023)

After 2020, the operation that started to be mentioned in NATO and EU official documents was Operation Irini, launched on March 31, 2020, and preceded by Operation Sophia. Its main goal is to contribute “to the implementation of the United Nations arms embargo on Libya” and all the other missions of Operation Sophia are maintained as secondary (EU-NATO, 2020: 5).

As Latici (2020) put it, at the time of writing, it is uncertain how much NATO might participate and work with Irini, especially if we consider that after 2020 the Secretary General's Annual Report did not mention any kind of cooperation and coordination with the EU (Stoltenberg, 2023). Before this report, cooperation between NATO and the Operation Sophia was always mentioned in the Secretary General's reports even if not in detail (Stoltenberg, 2017; Stoltenberg, 2018; Stoltenberg, 2019; Stoltenberg, 2020). Currently, the only information that is available is that “the EU briefed NATO's Operations Policy Committee on its Operation in the Mediterranean” and that the NATO Secretary General was informed when Operation Irina's mandate was extended in March 2021 (EU-NATO, 2021: 4). Moreover, the SHADE mechanism remains the used platform for dialogue through annual conferences co-chaired by the Operation Irini and MARCOM (NATO, 2023d). It thus seems that we have reached an impasse in this relationship. Alluding to our state of the art, Latici (2020) pointed out that the relationship between the two operations has been suffering difficulties as a result of the impediments posed by Turkey, thus changing the operational cooperation dynamic that was developed through Operation Sophia and Sea Guardian.

7.4. Conclusion

Maritime security is the area in which cooperation is most evident, with a clear response from the organizations that goes beyond joint exercises and exchanges of information.

In the official joint documents, NATO and the EU make direct reference to Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian, calling for cooperation and coordination between the two operations. An important aspect to highlight is that Operation Active Endeavour, which had a similar mandate to Operation Sophia, was replaced by Operation Sea Guardian, allowing for coordination and

complementarity between NATO and the EU. From the beginning of these operations, it was mentioned that Operation Sea Guardian would support Operation Sophia in terms of situational awareness and logistical support and that was accomplished. In this case, we must certainly acknowledge the role of MARCOM, which always sought to demonstrate its flexibility in assisting Operation Sophia.

We started this chapter by demonstrating that individual official documents in the field of maritime operational cooperation are much more demanding than in the other two realms (hybrid and cyber threats), often calling for increased cooperation and support between the two organizations. In particular, the European Union Maritime Security Strategy called for the exchange of unclassified and classified information. However, the EU's official rhetoric is not currently being translated into practical action since the exchange of information between the two organizations is still based on informality, particularly through the SHADE mechanism. Thus, we are facing the same problem that was encountered in the previous chapters: there is no formal channel that allows the organizations' staff to be in contact.

Cooperation and complementarity between the two organizations in this field are certainly the consequence of the efforts that have been conducted in recent years as a result of the official documents appealing for coordination. As far as Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield are concerned, however, the two organizations were not able to better manage their resources and avoid duplication, thus becoming a learning lesson for NATO and the EU. Recalling Maio's (2021) point of view regarding these two operations, it is clear that NATO and the CSDP were not using their means correctly because these two operations had similar mandates and they were deployed in the same theatre. For this reason, it is a crucial step forward that the organizations have managed to improve their relationship in this realm through Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian and demonstrated that they can complement each other's work.

Conclusion

Against the backdrop of an increasing interest in strengthening EU-NATO cooperation, this dissertation aimed to accomplish three main objectives: (1) to analyse NATO and EU's official documents focusing on inter-institutional cooperation in the sphere of security and defence and, in doing so, map how this discourse has evolved and what initiatives have been put forward; (2) to compare official documents and the practical actions taken in the areas of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security; and (3) to understand in which of these three areas there has been the greatest effort to deepen inter-institutional cooperation.

Based on these objectives, four sub-research questions were developed. First, how has the discourse about EU-NATO cooperation evolved? The progression of the EU-NATO discourse on cooperation has been marked by increasing recognition of the need for closer cooperation. Initially, the main official documents to impact the EU-NATO relationship were, firstly, the St. Malo Declaration (1998), which enabled the creation of the ESDP, allowing the EU to start pursuing its strategic autonomy. Secondly, the EU-NATO Declaration on the ESDP (2002), which assured the EU's access to NATO planning capabilities and established the EU-NATO political principles. Thirdly, the Berlin Plus Agreement (2003), which set the basis for practical action and, from a very early stage, the EU-NATO relationship focused on crisis management operations. The results obtained in the first two missions under the Berlin Plus Agreement were a success and gave rise to expectations that more joint efforts could be unleashed based on this official document. However, there have been obstacles that have made it difficult for this partnership to gain more dynamism, starting with the Iraq War, the obstacles posed by Turkey and Cyprus and the EU's progress towards achieving strategic autonomy. The EU-NATO discourse from 2003 onwards was marked by tensions, with the EU pointing out the lack of development in the EU-NATO formal relationship, and Jap de Hoop Scheffer noting the distance between the two organizations as their partnership seemed to be still stuck in the 1990s. In 2008, it began to be recognized that there were areas of common interest that required joint efforts, but no action was taken in this direction.

There was, nonetheless, a significant moment of transition, the EU-NATO Joint Declaration of 2016, that opened the way for this relationship to deepen. For this reason, we can consider that the EU-NATO discourse has been subject to change over the years, with periods marked by setbacks and others by advances.

Following from that, we set out to understand what have been the key objectives of EU-NATO cooperation outlined in official joint documents after 2016. In this regard, joint statements have stressed the need for NATO and the EU to find new ways to work together and adopt a new level of ambition as these organizations face the same threats and have common tools and resources. In addition, the main objectives of the 2016 and 2017 common set of proposals are to act on the decisions

adopted in Warsaw, in order to intensify the rhetoric about EU-NATO cooperation and pave the way for the implementation of actions that translate official discourse into practice. Overall, NATO and the EU's main objectives in these official documents are to express a united front and to conduct efforts that will allow the two organizations to address current threats on the basis of mutual trust and mutual understanding of respective actions.

Third, we aimed to grasp what have been the practical outcomes resulting from the official EU-NATO discourse in the sphere of hybrid threats, cyber threats and maritime security. Among the various examples that could be used, in the realm of hybrid threats, the scenario-based discussion on hybrid threats from Russia can be emphasized, as well as "the shared situational awareness of hostile activities in the information environment" (EU-NATO, 2023a: 4). These two actions are strictly linked to the 2023 Joint Declaration, which identifies Russia as a threat that undermines security and stability and that identifies the need to address information manipulation. Regarding cyber threats, as early as 2016, NATO and the EU recognized as an important tool the coordination of training requirements and training courses for the staff of both organizations, and in 2017 the staff of these organizations immediately sought to ensure this same coordination by exchanging information on "existing and planned training and education courses" (EU-NATO, 2017c: 3). Finally, in terms of operational cooperation in the field of maritime security, the actions undertaken that translate the official documents into practice are related to Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian. Cooperation is visible, for instance, through the information that NATO assembled, analysed and shared with Operation Sophia, as well as through the daily situation reports, sailing intentions, and schedules for air, surface, and submarine operations which were all shared and allowed to avoid duplication of efforts.

Our fourth and last sub-question, deriving from the previous inquiry, was concerned with understanding what are the main weaknesses and strengths of the EU-NATO cooperation in these three realms. Overall, the strengths of the EU-NATO relationship are (1) the efforts undertaken informally by the staff of each organization, particularly with regard to information exchange, and (2) the political will to reinforce the EU-NATO partnership, as evidenced by the official documents that have been developed jointly.

Regarding the existing weaknesses in the EU-NATO cooperation, we consider the following: (1) cooperation is confined to staff-to-staff communication, information exchange, exercises and workshops; and (2) there is an inability to share classified information. As the EU-NATO cooperation is rather limited, restricted to staff-to-staff communication, information exchange, exercises and workshops, this cooperation is based on the efforts of NATO and EU staff even though there are no formal structures to facilitate the link between them. Both Græger (2016) and Maio (2021) considered that informal cooperation and information exchange channels are important for both staff to

cooperate with each other, but, in our perspective, any ambitious partnership is hindered by cooperation being confined to staff-to-staff exchanges.

Regarding the difficulty in exchanging classified information, as stated in our state of the art, according to Aghniashvili (2016), the lack of exchange of classified information contributed to the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan not being able to carry out its mission in its entirety, which ended up affecting both NATO and the EU. This is reflected in our dissertation because, despite the ambition outlined in the official documents to ensure EU-NATO cooperation, the exchange of information between the two organizations is only informal, through NATO and EU staff. These exchanges take place through SHADE in the case of maritime security, through the European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in the case of hybrid threats, and through the Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence in the case of cyber threats. Thus, we are faced with an issue that is common to the three areas analysed, and which demonstrates the fragility of cooperation between the two organizations. Regarding this topic, it is important to highlight the Berlin Plus Agreement which included a document involving classified information. As the Berlin Plus Agreement has become obsolete, we believe it is necessary to take formally delimited measures and to establish an instrument that lays the basis for practical action with regard to classified information.

Having succeeded in answering our sub-research questions, we shall focus on answering the research question that guided our dissertation: To what extent has the interest in consolidating the cooperation between NATO and the EU in the field of security and defence been translated into practice?

To answer our research question, we should start by stating that, despite the intention to strengthen operational cooperation between the two organizations, which is reflected in the official documentation, an analysis of the projects implemented collaboratively demonstrates that cooperation is still particularly limited, with some important differences in these three areas analysed. The field with the most practical translation is maritime security. In the case of maritime security, in the Joint Declarations, the two organizations expressed the need for improved coordination and mutual reinforcement of efforts, as well as increased sharing of maritime situational awareness.

In practical terms, the two organizations recognize the importance of the SHADE mechanism in sharing information and exchanging best practices between 2018 and 2023. However, the focus on this initiative is not enough as the EU called for the need to share unclassified and classified information with NATO. As the two institutions still do not have a mechanism to share classified information, this means that NATO and the EU have not been able to act in accordance with the European Union Maritime Security Strategy, thus not translating this official document into practice.

Nevertheless, maritime security is particularly relevant in the translation of the official EU-NATO rhetoric into practical actions as NATO and the EU have demonstrated that operational cooperation at

sea between them can be effective, namely through Operations Sophia and Sea Guardian. These operations are examples of why the two organizations should join efforts and cooperate when they are deployed in the same theatre. The operations, having different mandates, demonstrate that, even without a formal mechanism establishing a link between them, NATO and EU staff can coordinate their efforts and provide assistance to one another, as is the case with Operation Sea Guardian being available to support Operation Sophia in terms of situational awareness, logistical support, including refuelling, and through NATO's ships and maritime patrol planes that became available for the EU operation. In addition to this, the Administrative Arrangement of 2017 demonstrates that it is possible for cooperation to be carried out with decisions being made on a case-by-case basis, and this is a lesson that should be taken into consideration in future operations. If we establish a bridge between these two operations and Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield, we realize that a significant evolution has taken place. Operation Atalanta and Operation Ocean Shield, with very similar areas of operation from 2009 to 2016, showcased the lack of efficiency in the EU-NATO coordination, but Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian demonstrated that the two organizations can and know how to cooperate with each other.

In the case of hybrid threats, official documents address situational awareness, strategic communication and bolstering resilience. The implementation of the common set of proposals of 2016 and 2017 has been gradual. From 2016 to 2018 there was a very significant increase in the interaction between the staff of each organization, making it possible to establish strong relations. With regard to strategic communication, it was only in 2018 that practical progress was established in this area through exchanges about ongoing activities. The translation of the official documents into practice can be expressed, for example, through cooperation in "analyzing and exposing information manipulation by persistent and emerging actors" (EU-NATO, 2021: 3), which is a reflection of the 2018 Joint Declaration that highlighted the need to counter disinformation.

As far as bolstering resilience is concerned, the practical actions fell short of what was defined in the official documents because these actions were based on workshops rather than on working in coordinating experts from the two organizations to support member states in strengthening their resilience.

When it comes to situational awareness, the importance of the European Centre for Countering Hybrid Threats should be highlighted as it allows the staff of both organizations to be in contact and increase situational awareness and mutual understanding of respective actions. In this case, however, we must point out the informal dimension of the EU-NATO relationship and the fragility this entails despite the will to bring the two organizations closer.

Based on our analysis, this seems to be the field in which the most efforts are being made to advance the EU-NATO relationship, unlike cyber threats, in which there is clearly a limitation on what the two organizations plan to do together.

Regarding cyber threats, in official documents, it is considered important to expand EU-NATO coordination on cyber threats in the context of "missions and operations, exercises and on education and training" (EU-NATO, 2016b: 1). As far as exercises are concerned, EU PACE and NATO CMX 2017 represented the only significant joint EU-NATO exercises, and although the staff of the two organizations sought to exchange information and communicate during a simulated crisis scenario in a hybrid environment, it is not easy to assess whether the two organizations would actually be able to work together in a real scenario requiring a joint response. Nevertheless, the importance of these exercises for the staff of the two organizations to engage with each other and build mutual trust cannot be overlooked. Regarding education and training, the translation of official documents into practical actions should be recognized, starting with the efforts to avoid duplication and to improve interoperability through the exchange of information on training development regimes and on training and education courses. When it comes to missions and operations, however, the situation is different. In this area, the only aspect we can highlight is the Technical Arrangement on Cyber Defence, which allows technical information to be shared more easily and, thus, benefits both emergency response teams' prevention, detection, and response to cyber incidents. It is, therefore, clear that the focus on information exchanges and exercises needs to be expanded so that the two organizations can begin to cooperate on missions and operations related to the cyber domain and, thus, enable a full translation of official documents into practice.

Overall, although we were able to ascertain that the official documents of NATO and the EU have been translated into practice, the reality is that the cooperation is rather limited and the official documents are not being fully translated into practice in any of the analysed areas. Moreover, what purpose does it serve for the two organizations to establish so many links through exercises, workshops and seminars if there are no joint efforts in real-life crisis situations (with the exception of Operation Sophia and Operation Sea Guardian)?

To bring this dissertation to a close, it is important to recognize the limitations of our dissertation, namely the fact that it only focuses on official discourse and that there was no possibility of conducting interviews or doing fieldwork. Although the official discourse allows us to understand the areas in which there is greater collaboration and how the organizations seek to deal with common threats, it does not allow us to understand why the official discourse is merely focusing on informal exchanges, exercises, workshops and training. Future research could incorporate interviews or fieldwork to address this topic, which will allow a better understanding of the EU-NATO relationship.

References

Aghniashvili, T. (2016). Towards More Effective Cooperation? The Role of States in Shaping NATO-EU Interaction and Cooperation. *Connections: The Quarterly Journal, 15*(4), 67-90. doi:10.2307/26326460

Azarian, Reza. (2011). Potentials and Limitations of Comparative Method in Social Science. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science 1*(4), 113-125. Available at 15.pdf (ijhssnet.com)

Baciu, C. A., & Friede, A. M. (2020). The EU's CFSP/CSDP in 2030: Towards an alternative vision of power? *New Perspectives, 28*(3), 398-412. doi:1177/2336825X20935245

Biscop, S. (2018). EU-NATO relations: A Long-Term Perspective. *Nação e Defesa*, 150, 85-93. doi:10400.26/29556

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *9*(2), 27-40. doi:10.3316/QRJ0902027

Cladi, L., & Locatelli, A. (2019). Keep calm and carry on (differently): NATO and CSDP after Brexit. *Global Policy, 11*(1), 5-14. doi:10.1111/1758-5899.12747

Collier, D. (1991). The Comparative Method: Two Decades of Change. In Rustow, D. A., & Erickson K. P. (Eds.), *Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives* (pp. 7-31). New York, New York, United States: HarperCollins. Available at: The Comparative Method: Two Decades of Change (escholarship.org)

Cornish, P. (2006). EU and NATO: *Co-operation or competition* (PE 348.586). Directorate General of External Policies of the Union, European Parliament. Available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/eunatorelations_/eunatorelations_en.pdf

Cruz, M. A. (2021). "NATO 2030": Survival in a new era. *JANUS.NET, 12*(1), 13-30. doi:10.26619/1647-7251.12.1.2

Duke, S. (2008). The Future of EU–NATO Relations: a Case of Mutual Irrelevance Through Competition? *Journal of European Integration*, 30(1), 27-43. doi:10.1080/07036330801959457

Drent, M., Kruijver, K., & Zandee, D. (2019). *Military Mobility and the EU-NATO Conundrum.* Clingendael Institute. Available at https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Military_Mobility_and_the_EU_NATO_Conundrum.pdf

EU operational planning: The politics of defence. (2007). *Strategic Comments*, *9*(10), 1-2. doi:10.1080/1356788030903

Ewers-Peters, N. M. (2022). Positioning member states in EU-NATO security cooperation: towards a typology. *European Security, 32*(1), 22-41. doi:10.1080/09662839.2022.2076558

Gebhard, C., & Smith, S. (2014). The two faces of EU-NATO cooperation: Counter-piracy operations off the Somali coast. *Cooperation and Conflict, 50*(1), 107-127. doi:10.1177/0010836714532917

Gjeta, G. (2021). NATO-EU Relations. *European Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1, 104-108. doi:10.29013/EJHSS-21-1-104-108

Græger, N. (2016). European security as practice: EU–NATO communities of practice in the making? *European Security*, *25*(4), 478-501. doi: 10.1080/09662839.2016.1236021

Helwig, N. (2018). *New Tasks for EU-NATO Cooperation: An Inclusive EU Defence Policy Requires Close Collaboration with NATO*, SWP Comments, 4. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Available at https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2018C04_hlw.pdf

Hofmann, S. C. & Reynolds, C. (2007). *EU-NATO relations: Time to thaw the "frozen conflict"*, SWP Comments, 12. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Available at EconStor: EU-NATO relations: Time to thaw the "frozen conflict"

Homan, K. (2007). Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In A. Ricci & E. Kytömaa (Eds.), *Faster and more united? The debate about Europe's crisis response capacities (pp.* 151-155). Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Available at https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20070531_cscp_chapter_homan.pdf

Ilves, L. K., Evans, T. J., Cilluffo F. J., & Nadeau, A. A. (2016). European Union and NATO Global Cybersecurity Challenges: A Way Forward. *PRISM, 6*(2), 126-141. Available at https://cco.ndu.edu/PRISM/PRISM-Volume-6-no-2/Article/840755/european-union-and-nato-global-cybersecurity-challenges-a-way-forward/

Koenig, N. (2018). *EU-NATO Cooperation: Distinguishig Narrative from Substance*. Jacques Delors Institute, 1-14. Available at https://www.delorscentre.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/20180720_EU-NATO_Koenig.pdf

Krimi, S. (2020). *Report – The NATO-EU Partnership in a Changing Global Context.* NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Political Committe. Available at https://www.nato-pa.int/document/2020-revised-draft-report-nato-eu-partnership-changing-global-context-krimi-037-pcnp-20-e

Krishnarao, B. (1961). The Descriptive Method in Social Research. *Sociological Bulletin*, *10*(2), 46–52. doi10.11770038022919610204

Lachmann, N. (2010). The EU-NATO-CSDP relationship: asymmetric cooperation and the search for momentum. *Studia Diplomatica*, *63*(3-4), 185-202. Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/44838587

Latici, T. (2020). *Understanding EU-NATO cooperation: Theory and Practice*. European Parliamentary Research Service. Available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2020)659269

Lazarou, E., & Lațici, T. (2020). *PESCO: Ahead of the strategic review*. European Parliamentary Research Service. Available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/652051/EPRS_BRI(2020)652051_EN.pdf

Leighton H. Johnson. (1953). Limitations of the Descriptive Method. *Phi Delta Kappan International*, *34*(6), 241-242, 245. Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/20332351

Lété, B. (2019). Cooperation in cyberspace. In T. Tardy & G. Lindstrom (Eds.), *The EU and NATO: The essential partners* (pp. 28-36). Paris, France: European Union Institute for Security Studies. Available at https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/08e9e07b-cd30-11e9-992f-01aa75ed71a1.0001.01/DOC_1

Howorth, J. & Keeler, J. T. (2003). *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy* (pp. 3-235). New York, United States: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1057/9781403981363

Lété, B., & Pernik, P. (2017). *EU–NATO Cybersecurity and Defense Cooperation: From Common Threats to Common Solutions*. The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 38, 1-9. Available at https://www.gmfus.org/news/eu-nato-cybersecurity-and-defense-cooperation-common-threats-common-solutions

Lima, B. P. (2009). As relações entre a nato e a União Europeia pós-11 de Setembro. Relações Internacionais, 1(21), 87-99. Available at https://ipri.unl.pt/images/publicacoes/revista_ri/pdf/ri21/RI21_artg6_BPL.pdf

Lindstrom, G. (2007). Enter the EU Battlegroups. *Chaillot Paper*, 97, 7-77. European Union Institute for Security Studies. Available at https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/cp097.pdf

Knutsen, B. O. (2022). Weakening Transatlantic Relationship? Redefining the EU–US Security and Defence Cooperation. *Politics and Governance, 10*(2), 165–175. doi:10.17645/pag.v10i2.5024

Maio, G. D. (2021). *Opportunities To Deepen NATO-EU Cooperation.* Brookings. Available at https://www.brookings.edu/articles/opportunities-to-deepen-nato-eu-cooperation/

Major, C., & Mölling, C. (2015). *A Hybrid Security Policy for Europe: Resilience, Deterrence, and Defense as Leitmotifs*, SWP Comments, 2. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Available at https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2015C22_mjr_mlg.pdf

Marcuzzi, S. (2018). *NATO-EU Maritime Cooperation: For What Strategic Effect?* NATO Defense College. Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19855

Mesterházy, A. (2017). *NATO-EU cooperation after Warsaw* (report (163 DSCTC 17 E rev.1 fin). NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Available at https://www.nato-pa.int/document/2017-eu-and-nato-cooperation-mesterhazy-report-163-dsctc-17-e-rev1-fin

Pawlak, P. (2017). *Countering hydrid threats: EU-NATO cooperation*. European Parliament. Available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2017)599315

Raik, K., & Järvenpää, P. (2017). *A New Era of EU-NATO Cooperation How to Make the Best of a Marriage of Necessity.* International Centre for Defence and Security. Available at https://icds.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/ICDS_Report_A_New_Era_of_EU-NATO.pdf

Savin, D. (2019). Consideration Regarding NATO and European Union Relationship. *Research and Science Today*, 1, 37-45. Available at https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=753220

Schuette, L. A. (2022). Shaping institutional overlap: NATO's responses to EU security and defence initiatives since 2014. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *25*(3), 423-443. doi:10.1177/13691481221079188

Simion, E. (2018). NATO-EU Cooperation. In *International Conference Knowledge-Based Organization*, *24*(1), 211-214. Sciendo. doi:10.1515/kbo-2018-0031

Smith, H. (2019). Countering hybrid threats. In T. Tardy & G. Lindstrom (Eds.), *The EU and NATO: The essential partners* (pp. 13-20). Paris, France: European Union Institute for Security Studies. Available at https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/08e9e07b-cd30-11e9-992f-01aa75ed71a1.0001.01/DOC_1

Smith, M. E. (2018). Transatlantic Security Relations Since the European Security Strategy: What Role for the EU in Its Pursuit of Strategic Autonomy? *Journal of European Integration, 40*(5), 605-620. 10.1080/07036337.2018.1488840

Smith, S. (2011). EU–NATO cooperation: a case of institutional fatigue? *European Security, 20*(2), 243-264. doi:10.1080/09662839.2011.557771

Stabile, A. A., Lasconjarias, G., & Sartor, P. (2018). NATO-EU Cooperation to Project Stability. *Instituto Affari Internazionali*, 18, 1-15. Available at https://www.iai.it/en/pubblicazioni/nato-eu-cooperation-project-stability

Tardy, T., & Lindstrom, G. (2019). The scope of EU-NATO cooperation. In T. Tardy & G. Lindstrom (Eds.), *The EU and NATO: The essential partners* (pp. 5-18). Paris, France: European Union Institute for Security Studies. Available at https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/08e9e07b-cd30-11e9-992f-01aa75ed71a1.0001.01/DOC_1

Tomescu, I. R., & Mărcău, F. C. (2014). Coordinates of NATO-EU Cooperation. In Moisescu, G., Plesanu, T., Alexandrescu, G. (Eds.), Strategic Changes in Security and International Relations, *1*: *The 10th International Scientific Conference "Strategies XXI"* (pp. 258-263). Available at https://pt.scribd.com/document/667773389/Strategic-Changes-in-Security-and-International-Relations-Vol-i

Touzovskaia, N. (2006). EU–NATO Relations: How Close to 'Strategic Partnership'? *European Security, 15*(3), 235-258. doi:10.1080/09662830601097421

Sources

Albright, M. (United States Secretary of State). (1998). *Press Conference by US Secretary of State Albright* [Press Conference]. North Atlantic Treaty Organization Headquarters, Brussels. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s981208x.htm.

Allied Maritime Command. (n.d.). *Mission*. Available at https://mc.nato.int/about-marcom/mission-

Allied Maritime Command. (n.d.). *Operation Ocean Shield*. Retrieved July 13, 2023, from https://mc.nato.int/missions/operation-ocean-shield.

Allied Maritime Command. (2018). *Operation Sea Guardian Coordinating with EU's Operation Sophia in the Central Mediterranean Sea*. Retrieved July 13, 2023, from https://mc.nato.int/media-centre/news/2018/osg-coord-with-eus-operation-sophia-in-the-central-med.

Appathurai, J. (Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges). (2022). *NATO and the European Union work together to counter cyber threats.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved July 24, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_197959.htm.

Council of the European Union. (n.d.). *Cybersecurity: how the EU tackles cyber threats*. Retrieved July 24, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/cybersecurity/.

Council of the European Union. (n.d.). *EU cooperation on security and defence*. Retrieved May 21, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/defence-security/.

Council of the European Union. (2017). *Defence cooperation: Council establishes Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), with 25 member states participating* [Press Release]. Retrieved June 28, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/12/11/defence-cooperation-pesco-25-member-states-participating/.

Council of the European Union. (2018). *Maritime security: EU revises its action plan* [Press Release]. Retrieved July 19, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/06/26/maritime-security-eu-revises-its-action-plan/.

Credendino, E. (2018). *EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia*. European Parliament. Retrieved July 27, 2023, from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/155265/06_181010%20-%20Presentation%20to%20EP%20Committee%20on%20SEDE%20-%20Credendino.pdf.

Cyber Risk GmbH. (2014). *European Cyber Defence Policy*. Retrieved July 13, 2023, from https://www.european-cyber-defence-policy.com/.

EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia. (n.d.). *Mission*. Retrieved July 19, 2023, from https://www.operationsophia.eu/about-us/.

EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta. (2023). *Operation Commander's Salute*. Retrieved July 15, 2023, from https://eunavfor.eu/newsletter/newsletter-march-2023.

European Commission. (n.d.). *Cybersecurity Policies*. Retrieved July 23, 2023, from https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cybersecurity-policies.

European Commission. (2015). *Commission takes steps to strengthen EU cooperation in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime* [Press Release]. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_4865.

European Commission. (2016). *Commission signs agreement with industry on cybersecurity and steps up efforts to tackle cyber-threats* [Press release]. Retrieved May 4, 2023.

European Commission. (2020). *New EU Cybersecurity Strategy and new rules to make physical and digital critical entities more* resilient [Press release]. Retrieved May 24, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2391

European Commission. (2023). *Maritime Security: EU updates Strategy to safeguard maritime domain against new threats* [Press Release]. Retrieved May 17, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_1483.

European Defense Agency. (n.d.). *Coordinated Annual Review on Defence*. Retrieved May 16, 2023, from https://eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/EU-defence-initiatives/coordinated-annual-review-on-defence-(card).

European Defense Agency. (2013). *EDA & Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre Of Excellence Establish Liaison*. Retrieved May 16, 2023, from https://eda.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/2013/04/10/eda-cooperative-cyber-defence-centre-of-excellence-establish-liaison.

European External Action Service. (n.d.). *Factsheet: EU-NATO cooperation on Maritime Security*. Retrieved July 9, 2023, from https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/factsheet_-_eu-nato_maritime_cooperation.pdf.

European External Action Service Strategic Communications. (2022). *Countering Hybrid Threats.* European External Action Service. Retrieved August 10, 2023, from https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/countering-hybrid-threats_en.

European Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta. (n.d.). *Mission*. Retrieved July 22, 2023, from https://eunavfor.eu/mission.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2002). *EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP* [Press release]. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_19544.htm.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2003). *EU and NATO Concerted Approach for the Western Balkans*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved February 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2003/p03-089e.htm.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2003). *Joint Press Statement by the NATO Secretary General and the EU Presidency / NATO-EU Ministerial Meeting* [Press Release]. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_20280.htm.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2016). *Statement on the implementation of 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* [Press release]. Retrieved June 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_138829.htm.

Joint Research Centre. (2023). *A new method to help policymakers defend democracy against hybrid threats*. European Commission. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/new-method-help-policymakers-defend-democracy-against-hybrid-threats-2023-04-20_en.

North Atlantic Council. (1992). *Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Oslo 4 June 1992*. Ministerial Meeting, Oslo. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c920604a.htm.

North Atlantic Council. (1996). *Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council: Final Communiqué* [Press communiqué]. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1996/p96-063e.htm.

North Atlantic Council. (1999). *Washington Summit Communiqué issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C. on 24th April 1999* [Press release]. Retrieved February 5, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-064e.htm.

North Atlantic Council. (2016). *Warsaw Summit Communiqué issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016* [Press release]. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm.

North Atlantic Council. (2021). *Brussels Summit Communiqué* [Press release]. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (n.d.). *NATO Documents*. NATO Library. Retrieved June 22, 2023, from https://natolibguides.info/maritimesecurity/documents.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (n.d.). *Relations with the European Union*. Retrieved May 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49217.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2003). *Operation Allied Harmony ends*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved May 17, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/update/2003/03-march/e0331a.htm

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2016). *NATO and the European Union enhance cyber defence cooperation*. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_127836.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *Counter-piracy operations (2008-2016)*. Retrieved September 1, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48815.htm

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *Operation Active Endeavour (2001-2016).* Retrieved September 1, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_7932.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Countering hybrid threats*. Retrieved August 10, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Cyber defence*. Retrieved July 14, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_78170.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *NATO's maritime activities*. Retrieved July 11, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_70759.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Operation Sea Guardian*. Retrieved July 11, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136233.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Partnership for Peace programme*. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50349.htm.

Robertson, G. (NATO Secretary General). (2002). *"A Global Dimension for a Renewed Transatlantic Partnership": Remarks by Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General* [Remarks]. European Parliament Conference, Brussels. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020219a.htm.

Scheffer, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2004). *Remarks by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer* [Remarks]. European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, Brussels. Retrieved May 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040224a.htm.

Scheffer, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2007). *NATO and the EU: Time for a New Chapter [Keynote speech]*. Berlin. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070129b.html.

Solana, J. (NATO Secretary General). (1997). *The New NATO and the European Security Architecture: Speech by the Secretary General* [Speech]. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved May 6, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_25726.htm.

Solana, J. (NATO Secretary General). (1998). *"NATO and European Security into the 21st Century" Speech* [Speech]. Oxford Union and the European Affairs Society. Retrieved May 6, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-7F6550F8-E45F3390/natolive/opinions_26116.htm.

Stoltenberg J. (NATO Secretary General). (2016). *Why the Warsaw Summit matters: Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Warsaw Summit Experts' Forum* [Speech]. Warsaw Summit Experts' Forum. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_133257.htm.

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. (n.d.). *Operation Allied Protector*. Retrieved August 15, 2023, from https://shape.nato.int/page13974522.

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. (n.d.). *Operation Allied Provider*. Retrieved August 15, 2023, from https://shape.nato.int/page13984631.

Witte, P. D. (2003). *Taking EU-NATO relations forward*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved May 7, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_20603.htm?selectedLocale=en.

World Food Programme. (n.d.). *Mission*. Retrieved September 16, 2023, from https://www.wfp.org/overview.

Official documents

Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate. (2014). *Read-Ahead.* Allied Command Transformation. Retrieved May 9, 2023, from https://www.act.nato.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/ffao_ws6_read_ahead.pdf.

Blair, T. and Chirac, J. (Heads of State and Government of the United Kingdom and France). (1998). *Joint Declaration issued at the British-French Summit (Saint-Malo, 4 December 1998)*. Centre virtuel de la connaissance sur l'Europe. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from https://www.cvce.eu/obj/franco_british_st_malo_declaration_4_december_1998-en-f3cd16fb-fc37-4d52-936f-c8e9bc80f24f.html.

Council of the European Union. (2003). *European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World*. Retrieved July 15, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30823/qc7809568enc.pdf.

Council of the European Union. (2014). *EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework.* Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. Retrieved July 25, 2023, from https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2018/11/EU-141118-EUCyberDefencePolicyFrame-2.pdf.

European Commission. (2016). *European Defence Action Plan*. EUR-Lex. Retrieved May 16, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2016:950:FIN.

European Commission. (2017). *Launching the European Defence Fund*. EUR-Lex. Retrieved May 16, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017DC0295.

European Commission. (2020). *Report on the implementation of the revised EU Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan.* Retrieved July 16, 2023, from https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-03/swd-2020-252_en.pdf.

European Commission. (2023). *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the update of the EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan "An enhanced EU Maritime Security Strategy for evolving maritime threats".* Retrieved May 17, 2023, from https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-03/join-2023-8_en.pdf.

European External Action Service. (2015). *Food-for-thought paper "Countering Hybrid Threats"*. Council of the European Union. Retrieved September 14, 2023, from https://www.statewatch.org/media/documents/news/2015/may/eeas-csdp-hybrid-threats-8887-15.pdf.

European Parliament and Council of the European Union. (2019). *Regulation (EU) 2019/881 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on ENISA (the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity) and on information and communications technology cybersecurity certification and repealing Regulation (EU) No 52*. EUR-Lex. Retrieved September 3, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/881/oj.

European Parliament, Council, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions. (2013). *Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace.* EUR-Lex. Retrieved June 18, 2023, from eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013JC0001.

European Union. (1997). *Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related acts*. EUR-Lex. Retrieved February 2, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A11997D%2FTXT.

European Union. (2007). Treaty of Lisbon. EUR-Lex. Retrieved February 2, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12007L%2FTXT.

European Union. (2016). *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe - A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. European External Action Service. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2003). *Agreement between the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the Security of Information*. EUR-Lex. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A22003A0327%2801%29.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2016). *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.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2017). *Common set of new proposals on the implementation of 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*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_149522.htm.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2017). *Progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 14, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_06/20170619_170614-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-EN.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2017). *Second progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 13, 2023, from https://www.

nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_11/171129-2nd-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2018). *Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.* Council of the European Union. Retrieved June 13, 2023, from nato_eu_final_eng.pdf (europa.eu).

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2018). *Third 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.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved 14, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_06/20180608_180608-3rd-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2019). *Fourth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 14, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_06/190617-4th-Joint-progress-report-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2020). *Fifth 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.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 21, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/6/pdf/200615-progress-report-nr5-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2021). *Sixth 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.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved June 22, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/6/pdf/210603-progress-report-nr6-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *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.* Council of the European Union. Retrieved June 22, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/57184/eu-nato-progress-report.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Eighth 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.* Council of the European Union. Retrieved June 22, 2023, from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/65080/230616-progress-report-nr8-eu-nato.pdf.

European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2023). *Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved May 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_210549.htm.

European Union Military Committee. (2007). *Op ALTHEA – Consolidated Report on "Historical Lessons Identified" from the Execution of Operation ALTHEA*. Council of the European Union. Retrieved July 15, 2023, from https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14181-2007-REV-1/en/pdf.

General Secretariat of the Council. (2014). *European Union Maritime Security Strategy.* Council of the European Union. Retrieved July 20, 2023, from https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST%2011205%202014%20INIT/EN/pdf.

General Secretariat of the Council. (2018). *Council conclusions on the revision of the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) Action Plan (26 June 2018).* Council of the European Union. Retrieved September 12, 2023, from https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10494-2018-INIT/en/pdf.

General Secretariat of the Council. (2018). *EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework (2018 update).* Council of the European Union. Retrieved June 4, 2023, from https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14413-2018-INIT/en/pdf.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (1994). *Declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council ("The Brussels Summit Declaration")*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24470.htm?mode=pressrelease

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2006). *Riga Summit Declaration issued by NATO Heads of State and Government*. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_37920.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2008). *Bucharest Summit Declaration.* Retrieved May 7, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2010). *Active Engagement, Modern Defence: Strategic Concept.* Retrieved September 10, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2011). *Alliance Maritime Strategy.* Retrieved July 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_75615.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2014). *Wales Summit Declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales*. Retrieved July 25, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2016). *Cyber Defence Pledge.* Retrieved July 19, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133177.htm.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2018). *Brussels Summit Declaration.* Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept.* Retrieved August 10 2023, from 290622-strategic-concept.pdf (nato.int).

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *Madrid Summit Declaration.* Retrieved July 7, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_196951.htm.

Politico-Military Group. (2015). *Six-Month report on the Implementation of the Cyber Defence Policy Framework.* Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. Retrieved July 9, 2023, from https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2018/11/EU-150626-ReportCyberDefencePolicyFramework-1.pdf.

Politico-Military Group. (2017). *Annual Report on the Implementation of the Cyber Defence Policy Framework*. Council of the European Union. Retrieved August 8, 2023, from https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15870-2017-INIT/en/pdf.

Rasmussen, A. F. (NATO Secretary General). (2013). *Secretary General's Annual Report 2012.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved August 23, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-46075B7B-980DF8A5/natolive/opinions_94220.htm.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2015). *The Secretary General's Annual Report.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_01/20160128_SG_AnnualReport_2015_en.pdf.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2017). *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2016*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_03/20170313_SG_AnnualReport_2016_en.pdf.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2018). *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2017*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_03/20180315_SG_AnnualReport_en.pdf.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2019). *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2018*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20190315_sgar2018-en.pd.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2020). *NATO Secretary General's Annual Report.* North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2021/3/pdf/sgar20-en.pdf.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2021). *The Secretary General's Annual Report.* North Atlantic Treaty Organziation. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/3/pdf/sgar21-en.pdf.

Stoltenberg, J. (NATO Secretary General). (2023). *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2022*. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2023/3/pdf/sgar22-en.pdf.

United Kingdom and France. (2003). *Franco-British Summit*. European Commision. Retrieved May 6, 2023, from https://ec.europa.eu/dorie/fileDownload.do;jsessionid=lBpNTk1G52mDpQslLFk2vY9Y79K2QKDZ8MrMj1GGjysBzzJ7cLbc!-750017855?docId=125359&cardId=125359.