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Supreme Allied Commander Transformation
Introductory Remarks**

The European Institute

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Ambassadors, General officers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin my brief remarks by thanking the European Institute, particularly its Chair, Ms. Jacqueline Grapin, and its President, Ms. Joëlle Attinger, for this opportunity to be with you today. And thank you to Ambassador Robert Hunter, who has been very dedicated in sharing his insights since my arrival in the United States, for agreeing to moderate this session.

The timing for today's session could not be better: less than three weeks after the Group of Experts (who received the benefit of ACT's military advice throughout their deliberations) delivered their report on the new NATO Strategic Concept to the Secretary General, who will now start work on drafting the Strategic Concept. On the European Union side, we are witnessing the long-awaited implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon, one of whose consequences is that there is now a European Union delegation in Washington. So it could be argued that both organizations are once again at a crossroads today – a crossroads where the future of each will not be without consequences for the other.

The Group of Experts, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and many others, have pointed out that the current level of cooperation between the European Union and NATO does not reflect the extent of their common interests and the overlap in their membership. 21 members of NATO are also members of the European Union, and none of these nations have two separate sets of forces. It is therefore in all of their interests that both organizations work seamlessly together. This is what our taxpayers and our publics expect from us. And it is the only sustainable course of action.

I would like to argue today that, despite the obstacles to closer EU-NATO cooperation of which we are all aware, this is an area where quick progress can be made, in a pragmatic way and in a spirit of mutual confidence. I see several reasons for this:

- First and foremost, the increasing need for a comprehensive approach to crisis management requires much closer cooperation between international actors who offer different skills as well as complementary approaches and capabilities – I will elaborate on that in a minute;
- Second, the constrained financial and fiscal environment. We all know that this situation is likely to remain with us. Most European countries will go through considerable defense cuts in the years to come, if they have not already begun to do so. This is a powerful incentive for seeking efficiencies and avoiding unnecessary duplications;

- Third, the development of the European Union’s Common Security and Defense Policy, and particularly its operations and its capability development process. This evolution is in my view most welcome and I would like to offer the thought, which may sound paradoxical to some of you, that a strong CSDP is actually in the interests of the Alliance and the transatlantic community under at least two headers:
 - ✓ it offers one more implement in the international community’s toolkit for crisis management, and a particularly powerful one, backed as it is by the civilian and development sides of the European Union; and
 - ✓ it means that the EU and NATO have an immediate interest in cooperating, even more so than in the past.

Taking these factors into account, the Group of Experts recognized that “the EU is a unique and essential partner to NATO” and put the EU-NATO relationship high on their list of recommendations. I think that these recommendations – even though some are probably not realistic in the near future - are spot-on and that their implementation would greatly advance the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU and make it an all-encompassing one.

This aspect is particularly important: I was struck, when reading the first part of the Experts’ report, by the fact that many of the overarching goals identified by the Experts for a strong NATO in 2020 could be advanced and facilitated by a strong partnership between NATO and the EU. Thus, cooperation between NATO and the EU is not a topic among others; it can and should be a common thread in both organizations’ endeavours. This becomes evident when exploring some of the topics developed in the first part of the report.

Let us consider first some of the threats described as “unconventional” by the Group of Experts. There is a kinship here between the findings of the report and those of ACT’s Multiple Futures Project, released in 2009, namely that future adversaries will seldom attack the Alliance along purely conventional lines, but rather will use a wide array of conventional and unconventional tools to attack our modern societies where they are critically vulnerable – by threatening the global commons, air, space, sea and cyberspace, and specifically the vital flows on which our societies rely, whether real or virtual.

Maritime security has thus gained new prominence in recent years, as a result of several challenges, ranging from terrorist activities to piracy and illegal trafficking of various kinds. NATO and the EU have both acted in response to these threats – most notably in the field of anti-piracy where both organizations have deployed operations off the coast of Africa. The efforts that they are making in this area should not be seen as competitive, but as complementary endeavours, not only in maritime operations, but also in the field of broader regional capacity-building where the EU and NATO need to cooperate even more closely.

Both organizations have also recognized the need to develop a more comprehensive maritime strategy and have begun to do so. NATO has been developing the Alliance Maritime Strategy, which follows the Maritime Situational Awareness and Maritime Security Operations concepts. As for the EU, it is currently reflecting on its maritime strategy, notably through the work of the “Wise Pens” launched by the European Defence Agency, with whom my Command has had an active interaction.

Beyond the maritime issue, there is a need to assess to what extent other “commons”, such as cyberspace, should also be areas of EU-NATO cooperation. If the Strategic Concept defines

the Alliance's posture in this regard, an intensification of NATO-EU exchanges on this topic may be envisaged.

Turning back to our operational present, the need for strong EU-NATO cooperation is also evident when considering the Alliance's main operational engagement in Afghanistan. It is often overlooked that Afghanistan is an increasingly important theatre for the European Union as well. Amongst other initiatives, such as EUPOL Afghanistan, the deployment of the European Gendarmerie Force within the NATO Training Mission, although not under the purview of the European Union, is a visible example of a distinctly European capability contributing directly to Alliance efforts in this crucial training mission.

You will have noticed the recent appointment of Ambassador Sedwill as the new NATO Senior Civilian representative, with a reinforced office. Ambassador Sedwill is a counterpart to the new European Union Single Representative, Ambassador Vygaudas Usackas, and is working closely with the NATO military commander, General McChrystal, in order to contribute to a concerted, coordinated effort of all the organizations present in Afghanistan. I have the feeling that we are witnessing the development of a landscape that allows all present organizations to better interact in theater, and I welcome these steps.

At Allied Command Transformation, we are contributing to achieving this goal as intensely as we can, and we see this as a two-way street. Our Joint Force Training Center in Bydgoszcz, Poland, has carried out pre-deployment training for the Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams with the participation of members of the European Gendarmerie Force and EUPOL Afghanistan, who have brought their expertise to our future deployees. In our fight against Improvised Explosive Devices, which kill personnel under a NATO or an EU banner without discrimination, we are keen on having the EU benefit from our work. Thus the EU has adopted the standards developed by NATO, saving itself considerable time and trouble. We are also working on an Afghan Mission Network to allow all of our national contingents within ISAF to have a common connection between national communication systems. The unclassified part of this network will be open to non-NATO, including EU, troop contributing nations.

Afghanistan today is one of the application points – though by no means the only one – of our efforts towards a renewed, more fully developed comprehensive approach. I know that the understanding of what the Comprehensive Approach should entail may differ amongst actors. But I think there is a broad consensus around a few basic points:

- First, no single organization or actor can achieve most goals in the international area alone. This is not a new lesson learned: when the UN was entrusted with the administration of Kosovo in 1999, it did not do everything by itself. While the general administration and the responsibility for the police were directly assumed by UNMIK, the UN relied on different organizations for other parts of the overarching mandate: NATO for hard security, the OSCE for democratization, the EU for economic reconstruction and development. No actor was able to accomplish all these goals simultaneously without the help of the others. This shows that tasks have to be distributed among organizations, albeit not with a single pattern and while retaining a degree of flexibility (thus, in Kosovo, the European Union ended up also taking responsibility for the police component of the international presence);
- Second – and a corollary of my first point – it is hard to imagine any lasting solution to any security crisis achieved through military means alone, but at the

same time there is no serious crisis today that could not benefit from military involvement. We have several examples of this in the recent past: Georgia, where the EU deployed a civilian ESDP mission but could not have gotten its people on the ground in time without recourse to military planning capabilities and strategic airlift; or even more recently, Haiti, for which only the military was in a position to provide disaster relief in a coordinated and quick fashion for the first week, and remained an invaluable asset after that.

This means that what is needed is above all a mindset of cooperation that is flexible and inclusive enough to accommodate the cultures and operational procedures of different actors, yet consistent enough to deliver a unity of effort through the different tools, from planning to deployment on the ground. And I cannot think today of any success in this regard that would not be enhanced by a strong underlying EU-NATO partnership. If the EU and NATO cannot achieve such a dialogue at both theatre and strategic levels, then all our talk about a comprehensive approach will be greatly enervated.

I see a particularly important opportunity for this dialogue as the EU itself is figuring out how to bring about a comprehensive approach “internally” between its own civilian and military instruments. The results of this debate can inform NATO’s own discussion of how to best equip itself to interact with civilian counterparts.

There are many ways to bring about this beneficial civilian-military interaction, and ACT is actively exploring them, from pre-deployment common training, so that all actors are familiar with each other’s procedures and techniques, to common exercises and information exchange platforms once on the ground. In this regard, I would like to mention our experiment-turned-capability, the Civil-Military Fusion Center, which operates from a university campus in Norfolk and brings together, on one webpage, all the relevant information for a given theatre. The EU is obviously among the first beneficiaries of these initiatives.

Beyond the NATO-EU cooperation, ACT seeks to establish a broader network of partnerships. In this context, I will be tomorrow in NYC for a first interaction at the UN at my level that I hope will be fruitful in producing avenues of cooperation that can benefit the operationalization of the comprehensive approach.

In the field of capabilities, ACT has developed a pragmatic cooperation with the European Defense Agency in order to enhance a mutually reinforcing capability development between the two organizations. The EDA, despite some differences in size and mandate, is a natural partner for us: we are both in the business of capability development and we are both looking out for the future to deliver the best to our respective organizations today.

On this basis, the EDA Chief Executive and myself have identified specific areas for cooperation, some of which I have already touched on, such as C-IED, Network Enabled Capabilities, Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Medical Support and Protection against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Threats.

On each of these topics, we seek concrete deliverables within the current agreed framework between both organizations, on an informal basis. For instance, we are developing parallel courses on CBRN that will have the same content and will be open to participants from both NATO and the EU. My wish is that this cooperation can feed the work of the NATO-EU capability group, in order to breathe some new life into this format and make it a real forum to advance the EU-NATO cooperation in the field of capabilities. I am fully aware of the political limitations, but I think there is scope for pushing the walls of the envelope within the

agreed framework and this is why I intend to continue and intensify my cooperation with EDA.

Given the important proportion of industry representatives who are here today, I would be remiss if I did not mention ACT's relations with industry. As you know, my Command, just like EDA, interacts daily with industry representatives, but unlike the EDA, we do so at an earlier, pre-competitive stage. In this regard, ACT has developed the Framework for Collaborative Interaction with industry and Academia, allowing us to exchange with industry representatives on future Alliance needs and how they can best respond to them on issues such as, but not limited to, logistics, medical support or maritime command and control systems. And one of my priorities in this work is to have a balanced approach that includes European as well as American industry representatives.

But I have spoken too long already. I want to allow for an in-depth dialogue with you. Before I do that, let me once again thank the European Institute for bringing together such a distinguished group of people. This is exactly the kind of event that I want to participate in, as I develop my Command's think tank function. Listening to the ideas out there, reflecting on them and selecting the best ones for the benefit of the nations of the Alliance is how I see this function, and I can only do that if I have a strong partnership with a wide variety of think tanks, here in Washington but also in Europe.

Thanks to the European Institute, today I have the best of both worlds. I am eager to take advantage of it and to start our discussions. Thank you very much.