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## CHALLENGES OF NATO-EU COOPERATION AFTER THE COLD WAR

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With the end of the Cold War, the international security agenda began to include a wide range of issues, from starvation to women's rights movements, from environmental pollution to economic instability and even to epidemic diseases.

This challenges in the international system has raised the necessity to develop measures to bear with the emerging threats. During the Cold War, the European Union (EU) – which has been long time dependent on the United States (US) in terms of the security of the continent – sought to reach a competitive position in international politics by breaking this dependence and expanding its economic success in the new era.

Similarly, the existence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which has been the main defence organisation in the Euro-Atlantic security zone during the Cold War, has been questioned with the disappearance of Cold War. It has transformed into an organisation that struggles with today's threats and also with structural challenges.

The beginning of the European Union's collective initiative on a Collective Defence and Security Policy is based on political environment of the post-World War II era. The Western European countries facing the threat of communism and the military presence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the Eastern European region, took some steps towards this direction; the Brussels Treaty was signed and the Western European Union, the European Defence Community and the Fouchet Plan were made. During the Cold War period the bipolar world order was dominated by the NATO led by the US, and the Warsaw Pact military alliance

led by the USSR. During this era the European Communities could not ease its dependence on the defence policies of the United States.

In the post-Cold War era, the need for US leadership and NATO resources in Europe have not disappeared. The fact that the integration steps to be taken in the field of defence was perceived as a taboo in the EU member states, the disagreements among the member states and the US objections made it difficult to make an autonomous structure.

However, the disagreements among the EU members marked a turning point in the development of the European Security and Defence Policy. The situation paved the way to the Saint-Malo Declaration, a document that was signed between France and Britain that advances the creation of European security and defence policy, which has failed later. In other words, the institutional initiatives in the Euro-Atlantic area that emerged in the field of security and defence following the Second World War did not turn into a self-sufficient military security mechanism until the end of the 1990s, despite all the efforts of the EU.

In this context, those can be defined as the golden years when the EU had not yet created military power, NATO was not involved in any international military actions, there were not any serious internal issues between NATO and the EU, and even there was no need for intensive communication between those two institutions. This has changed when the EU started to develop its own military security policy as a result of the tensions between the EU member states and the United States in the late 1990s. The concerns of the affected parties in this process provided a new basis for the cooperation between NATO and the EU.

The new structure – which was based on the Saint-Malo Declaration and shaped in the subsequent EU Summits – did not pose a threat to NATO at the beginning, but rather a complementary link between the two organisations. Although it has been made possible to share duties and responsibilities, regulations have generally remained on paper and effective cooperation between the two organisations was not possible to be carried out.

However, it is evident that European decision-making mechanisms do not differ from the NATO alliance's decision-making mechanisms, the intentions to avoid copying NATO's defence capabilities while developing European ones and avoiding discrimination against non-EU NATO members are not sufficient.

During the meeting prior the 1998 Saint-Malo Declaration, France and the United Kingdom proposed a common defence policy. Eventually, while NATO's main concerns were shaped by the existence of an alternative formation, the EU was focused on the need to separate NATO

capabilities from the EU without spending too much on defence. In the non-EU NATO member countries, concerns for exclusion from the European security system have emerged. Hence, due to the fact that the EU did not constitute a military force during the 1990s, concerns were emerged.

The main reason for creating a defence and security formation was the impact of the Kosovo crisis that broke out in 1998. The EU did not intervene to the crisis for one year due to the United States had avoided action; and when the intervention took place it clearly showed the military dependency of the EU on NATO; and for last, the dependency on NATO showed that the US has more military capabilities.

Therefore, the EU members decided to finalise the common defence policy that was planned in Maastricht but could not put into practice in order intervene to crises in Europe and the surrounding regions. The case of military force was also put on the agenda also during the Helsinki Summit. In other words, even though the EU has entered into a unique structure, it has maintained its cautious attitude towards transatlantic relations in the development of the process of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

In the early 2000s, the ESDP was still limited in terms of its mandate and military power, and it could be interpreted as a policy that is dependent and the same time contradicts to NATO and US security policies in terms of effects of this limitation.

Although the steps that were taken in 1999 on the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), have not immediately turned the EU into a completely developed military actor which has been achieved by today. It has paved the way for the European Union to accept its dependence on NATO and to focus on further development in this direction. The EU's ongoing and completed tasks and operations are important indicators of the progress made in this regard. The EU cannot be regarded as a civilian power alone. The EU today acknowledges its dependence on NATO.

The main concern of NATO, which was the defence organisation of the Euro-Atlantic region throughout the Cold War, that the EU would develop an autonomous defence structure thus the NATO would lose its significance. For this reason, the NATO allies have always communicated that the new structure within the EU will strengthen the European leg of the alliance.

The NATO contributes to the division of defence burden on the continent until it maintains its primary role in European defence policy and to the point where the EU does not constitute an alternative, and also strives to deepen NATO-EU relations.

As an important actor, the United States, supports Europeans' efforts to stand on their own feet in the field of security and defence. However, if the EU enters a rival structure of NATO and claims to provide the security of Europe independently of the USA, Washington would emphasise that it is not possible for the United States to accept such an approach. US Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott stated in a speech he made in London in 1999 that: "The United States did not want the ESDP to develop into a rival organization that emerged outside NATO and then developed outside NATO and finally separated it from NATO."

As a result, the possible impacts of the EU's steps taken in the areas of security and defence without the NATO and the possibility of weakening the link between Europe and the Atlantic alliance are some of the main concerns. The NATO's disconnection with the EU and Brussels' move towards a separate defence organization would weaken NATO. In addition, the European Union's intentions to balance the power of the United States would adversely affect NATO.

In case the EU carries out a completely separate security policy from NATO, the policies of the USA would change in a way that it challenges the interests of EU and two organisations would be competitors in preventing global threats. Eventually, both sides have to increase military spending. With all this in mind, it seems unlikely that the EU would be a completely independent institution in military sense. Therefore, the relations that turned into competition after 1998, now seem to be more focused on cooperation today.

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