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*Fernando Dueñas Puebla**

Projecting stability on NATO's Southern Flank. How can NATO and the EU ensure efficient cooperation?

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Projecting stability on NATO's Southern Flank. How can NATO and the EU ensure efficient cooperation?

Abstract:

The South, an area where important challenges for Europe come from, like terrorism and migration, with unpredictable security consequences in the medium and long term. An area where NATO and the European Union share a common neighbourhood and common security challenges. That is the reason why the NATO - EU cooperation is paramount in the South. Achieving stability in the South goes beyond the simple but at the same time, necessary military responses. Even though, NATO is making an outstanding effort in projecting stability by enhancing partnerships and Capacity Building, it is unable to address the root causes of instability, mainly related to the demographic pressure or socioeconomic issues. So, the EU with its 'Integrated Approach' should be the main NATO's Strategic Partner to address the instability in the Southern Flank.

NATO can take advantage of the influence of the EU in the South to improve its image and presence, for example with the EU's diplomatic strengths, especially in North Africa and Sahel.

From Security and Defence perspective, the complementarity and mutual support in NATO - EU cooperation could be put in practice, for example in future missions in Libya regarding Security Sector Reform, or intelligence-sharing on counterterrorism.

Keywords:

NATO, European Union, EU, southern, projecting, stability, cooperation, capacity, counterterrorism.

***NOTA:** Las ideas contenidas en los **Documentos de Opinión** son de responsabilidad de sus autores, sin que reflejen, necesariamente, el pensamiento del IEEE o del Ministerio de Defensa.

Introduction

The crisis in Ukraine and the aftermath of the Arab Spring with the terrorism of Daesh in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), provoked important decisions in both NATO's Summits of Wales 2014 and Warsaw 2016 to adapt the Alliance to the new strategic environment. During the Wales Summit, NATO addressed for the first time the need to reinforce the capabilities to project stability in its eastern and southern neighbourhoods, in order to improve their resilience and their capacity to ensure stability and security by themselves. The idea of 'projecting stability' represents the second main vector of NATO adaptation to the new strategic context, together with the new deterrence and defence posture¹. During the Warsaw Summit, a 'framework for the South' was established to improve regional situational awareness, anticipation and projecting stability through partnership and capacity building². Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg summarised NATO's broad objective for the South: 'to protect our territory, we must be willing to project stability beyond our borders. If our neighbours are more stable, we are more secure'³. As it is appreciated, this term has been widely used in NATO's declarations and statements; however, there is not an official definition of this concept. Within academics realm, definitions have been provided on the term, such as 'a spectrum of engagement, running from partnerships with key states, including capacity building, to crisis management measures relying on military capabilities'⁴. Also, it is important to note the controversy originated with the term of 'projecting stability', considered by many partners and developing countries as 'aggressive', representing the term 'projecting' as an intrusion in partner governments' rules⁵.

¹ Miguel García de Cárcer y García del Arenal, "La adaptación de la OTAN 2014-2017" in *OTAN: Presente y Futuro. Cuaderno de Estrategia 191*, Ed. Ministerio de Defensa (Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos 2017), 25.

² "Warsaw Summit Communique". NATO. Accessed 28 April 2018.
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?selectedLocale=en

³ Jens Stoltenberg, "NATO Projecting Stability: Charting NATO's Future", (presented by NATO Secretary General at the Atlantic Council, Washington, D.C.' NATO 06 Apr. 2016).

⁴ Rubén Díaz-Plaja, "What does NATO need to project stability in its neighbourhood?", *Real Instituto Elcano ARI 40/2017*. (18MAY17): 1.

⁵ Statement during Academic Lecture at 132 SNR Course NATO Defense College, 2018

Taking into account the abovementioned definition, NATO's projecting stability is unable to address the root causes, mainly related to the demographic pressure that drives instability to the South. Unemployment, food insecurity, environmental issues and water scarcity, lead to large population groups vulnerable to radicalization by terrorists and displacement due to migration⁶.

NATO has actively engaged its partners for military contributions to enhance stability in the South, but, at the same time, must acknowledge the importance of political and socioeconomic elements that can only be delivered by local governments with a help from organisations like the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). While working with organisations like the African Union (AU) to achieve a regional approach is important, success begins with a key partner, the EU⁷. Both organisations share a common neighbourhood, a common commitment to their neighbours' resilience and common security challenges. NATO and the EU developed their respective strategies witnessing initiatives to underpin their cooperation, starting by their Joint Declaration at the Warsaw Summit.

This paper will develop the way to ensure the most efficient cooperation between NATO and the EU, in order to achieve stability in the South. An analysis on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of NATO and the EU toolboxes will lead to recommendations and conclusions on the issue.

NATO Toolbox. Partnership and Defence Capacity Building

At the Warsaw Summit, projecting stability was conceived in the framework of the 360-degree approach⁸, but the concept has been increasingly associated to the Southern Flank⁹. The Alliance does not rely on suitable tools to address the challenging situation

⁶ Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability, (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

⁷ Jordan Becker, "NATO and the South: Opportunities for coherence and integration". *Real Instituto Elcano ARI 18/2018* (13 February 2018): 5.

⁸ "Warsaw Summit Communiqué". NATO. Accessed 28 April 2018, 81.

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?selectedLocale=en

⁹ Ruben Diaz-Plaja, "Projecting Stability: an agenda for action", NATO Review Magazine (13 March

in MENA and an effective NATO strategy towards Southern Flank still looks indefinite. However, NATO has definitely made a difference as part of the global international community's efforts¹⁰, by enhancing the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) partnerships, fostering Defence Capacity Building (DCB), and making a significant effort in counterterrorism with Operation 'Sea Guardian' in the Mediterranean and with AWACS support to the Global Coalition to counter the Islamic State (ISIL).

NATO has deep experience with partnerships. Its greatest contribution to the South is not military, but the partnership pillars: political dialogue and practical cooperation through the full use of NATO's cooperative security toolkit¹¹. In Operation 'Unified Protector' in Libya, the participation of four Arab NATO partners provided an unprecedented Arab League's support, increasing the legitimacy of the operation. However, NATO's efforts to project its influence in the South through its partners are likely constrained by issues such as internal political changes in partners, geopolitical rivalries (Russia, China...) and its negative reputation among locals in the MENA region. Therefore, NATO needs to make itself more attractive to its partners¹². At the Wales Summit, NATO adopted the DCB Initiative to fulfil the partners' primary need of developing and enhancing their defence skills¹³. NATO's Capacity Building is focused on priority areas related to current challenges in the South (counterterrorism, border security, counter-Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED), Cyber-Defence, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN), Intelligence). Their activities are tailored for the specific partner's needs, enabling them to voluntarily participate in other DCBs projects (i.e.: Jordan in Iraq), which could be applied for Tunisia or other partners in future DCBs with Libya. This has generated great acceptance with an increasing number of requests among Southern partners. Another

2018). <https://nato.int/docu/review/2018/Also-in-2018/projecting-stability-an-agenda-for-action-nato-partners/EN/index.htm>

¹⁰ Mariem Ben Hassine, "NATO and co-operative security: the challenges in the region" in Deep Maghreb: (In)security and stability North Africa and its Sahel dimension. (NATO Defence College Foundation. 2017), 30.

¹¹ Ibid. (Same page).

¹² Erik Reichborn- Kjennerud, "NATO's Problematic Partnerships in the MENA Region", Mediterranean Quarterly Spring 2014. (Duke University Press ,2014), 7.

¹³ Mariem Ben Hassine, "NATO and co-operative security: the challenges in the region", in Deep Maghreb: (In)security and stability North Africa and its Sahel dimension. (NATO Defence College Foundation. 2017), 30.

important step to enhance NATO's regional approach to the South has been the cooperation with regional organizations like AU in areas of mutual interest¹⁴.

NATO's functions in counterterrorism in the South are restricted to assessment and interpretation, unless NATO forces are deployed (Op. 'Sea Guardian'). A viable way forward for NATO is to enhance intelligence sharing with partners, mainly with the EU, so that its shortfalls are compensated¹⁵.

The activities related to projecting stability to the South, requires command and control structures at operational and strategic levels that provides an effective common operating picture. The Hub-South in JFC Naples allows enhanced and coordinated intelligence sharing, counterterrorism and DCB in the South. At the strategic level, the Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre (CCOMC) facilitates to NATO coordination with civilian and military bodies and organizations.

Still, it is important to stress the different threat perceptions between the Allies, which could hamper consensus for the strategy for the South. This is due to the perception that devoting resources to the South is detrimental to the East. This issue could seriously affect to NATO's Centre of Gravity: its cohesion.

EU Toolbox. The Integrated Approach

The EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini stated in 2015: 'Complex threats call for coordinated response, using military and civilian tools, as well as longer term financial and development instruments in a comprehensive way. Responding to emergencies is crucial, but we also need to think strategically, prevent rather than simply react to crises, work on their root causes'¹⁶. This statement represents the essence of the Integrated

¹⁴ "NATO and the African Union boost their cooperation", NATO Newsroom, Accessed 30 April 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/news_109824.htm?selectedLocale=en

¹⁵ Sinan Ülgen and Can Kasapoğlu, "A Threat-Based Strategy for NATO's Southern Flank", Carnegie Europe. Paper, (10JUN16), 21.

¹⁶ "Interview with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission Mrs Federica Mogherini", European Union Military Committee, Chairman's e-Newsletter Issue n. 19, (September 2015).http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/csdp/structures-instruments-agencies/eumc/documents/issuespecialaedition_en.pdf

Approach to Conflicts and Crises, a core part of the 2016 EU Global Strategy, which also recognises that none of the conflicts can be solved by the EU alone¹⁷.

The Integrated Approach is a consequence of expanding the Comprehensive Approach (defined in the 2003 EU Security Strategy), with its three pillars (Diplomacy, Development/Economy/Trade and Defence/Security), to the ways to act in Conflicts: multi-phased (all stages of the conflict cycle), multi-level (from local to global) and multi-lateral (engaging all the players in a conflict)¹⁸. A key aspect is the strategic coherence between Integrated Approach and the EU instruments available. The diversity of political, economic and security instruments has enabled the EU to respond in a multi-faceted manner to situations where other crisis management actors are less prepared¹⁹.

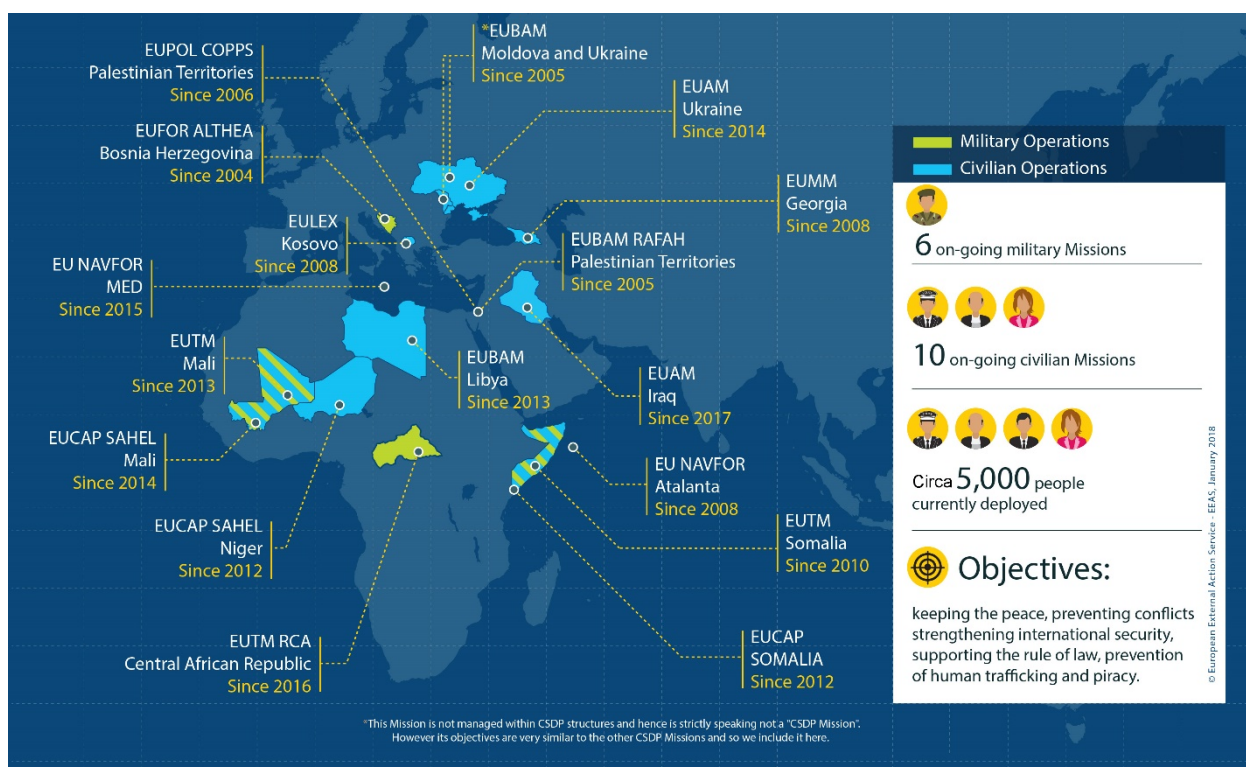


Figure 1: Current CSDP Missions y Operations.

Source: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/430/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations_en

¹⁷ "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", EEAS, Accessed 01 May 2018, 10. <http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en>

¹⁸ Ibid. 28-29 <http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en>

¹⁹ Antonio Missirotti, "The EU and the world: players and policies post-Lisbon. A Handbook", EU Institute for Security Studies, (2016), 55.

The South is vital for the EU, most Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions are deployed in this area.

The 'porous' Sahel is where the EU Integrated Approach is being tested, in order to address the root causes of the challenges and building resilience. Diplomacy (EU Delegations), Development (technical and financing instruments of the EU Commission) and CSDP (civilian-military missions) represent the approach to priority domains where EU has particular strengths (governance, democracy, rule of law, human rights, youth, migration, border managing, agriculture, food security, education, infrastructure or climate change)²⁰.

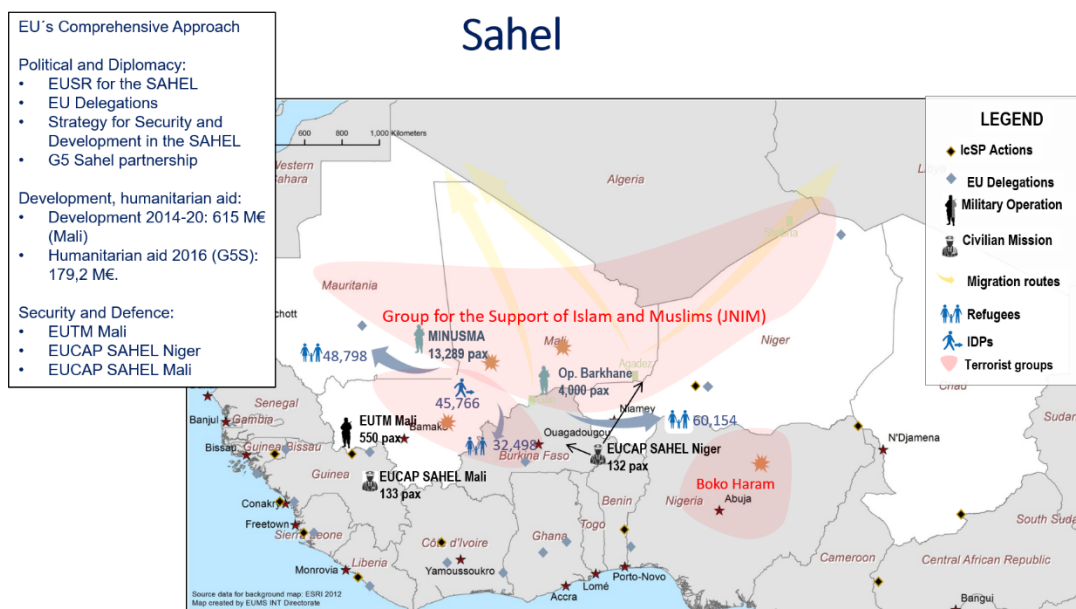


Figure 2: EU Integrated Approach in Sahel Region

Source: ESP PERMREP to the EU

The main CSDP strength in the South is Capacity Building in essential areas such as counterterrorism, migration, border control, rule of law, human trafficking or enhancing domestic security. CSDP missions are adaptable to new security needs (i.e: Operation 'Sophia' is also performing capacity building with the Libyan Coast Guard). Also, partnerships with AU and support and finance of the G5-Sahel Joint Force to fight against

²⁰ Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

jihadists in Sahel, have increased the leverage and effectiveness of the CSDP action in the South.

Yet, the EU has the core challenge to ensure coherence between the broad range of instruments of the EU Commission (Development pillar) and those of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Diplomacy and CSDP pillars)²¹. Likewise, the experience reveals some deficiencies in the EU Integrated Approach. Its imbalance towards migration is not perceived by partners as the most adequate response for local needs, leaving counterterrorism as a more important factor to address. Also, coordination needs strengthening between CSDP civil and military missions and with other main actors in Southern Flank (France, Italy, and the US)²². The EU Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) is the first step to get the necessary coordination between civilian mission and non-executive military missions (EUTMs) at the strategic level²³.

The insufficient political support of many CSDP missions, impacts in the level of their ambition. Member states with different threat perceptions (East-South), insist on short mandates as many missions by design (i.e: Security Sector Reform) require long-term presence²⁴. Finally, the EU has a broad variety of crisis management tools but, at this moment a modest military capability, having their tools focused on the lower end of crisis spectrum or crisis prevention.

Opportunities and Threats in NATO - EU Approaches

Based on the analysis of both NATO and the EU toolboxes, a number of opportunities for cooperation in different domains and the threats that could jeopardize this cooperation have been identified.

Defence Capability Building is paramount for both NATO and the EU, as they share common commitment to resilience of the South and it represents one of the seven areas

²¹ Christian Mölling. "Comprehensive approaches to international crisis management". CSS Analyses in Security Policy, Vol. 3, No. 42, (October 2008), 2.

²² Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Antonio Missiroli, "The EU and the world: players and policies post-Lisbon. A Handbook", EU Institute for Security Studies, (2016), 51.

for deeper cooperation identified in the Warsaw Joint Declaration in 2016. One concern might arise about the potential competition between both organizations in the South in this realm; therefore, coordination is essential. 'Leveraging the expertise and financial resources of both NATO and the EU in support of joint projects in partner countries would be a significant way of strengthening a networked approach to projecting stability'²⁵. Tunisia is one of the three pilot countries for NATO - EU cooperation in DCB areas²⁶. Another significant step in the networked approach is the financing decision adopted by the EU in July 2017, allocating \$2 million as a contribution to the NATO Building Integrity Programme²⁷. This programme, launched in 2007, provides practical tools to help participating countries strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability, reduce the risk of corruption in the defence and security sector and promotes good governance²⁸. Three partners in the South are participating in the Programme (Tunisia, Mauritania and Jordan).

Counterterrorism is an area where the cooperation between both organizations is limited mainly due to the difficulties in sharing and coordinating Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) efforts. The EU lacks sufficient ISR assets and presents deficiencies in situational awareness²⁹. However, there are potential opportunities to achieve a more effective NATO - EU cooperation, as both rely on powerful hubs for intelligence sharing (the EU European Counterterrorism Centre and the NATO Hub-South). Also, important ISR NATO assets (Allied Ground Surveillance System, AWACS) could support the EU missions in the Mediterranean and in the South.

NATO and the EU maritime operations in the Mediterranean are cooperating effectively and mutually complementary. NATO Sea Guardian operation has a mandate covering both Article 5 and non-Article 5 missions, while also supporting the EU mission Sophia, and is available to be tasked to counter the smuggling of migrants across the

²⁵ Ruben Diaz-Plaja, "Projecting Stability: an agenda for action", NATO Review Magazine, (13 March 2018). <https://nato.int/docu/review/2018/Also-in-2018/projecting-stability-an-agenda-for-action-nato-partners/EN/index.htm>

²⁶ Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "The Building Integrity Programme". NATO, Accessed 25 May 2018.

²⁹ Attila Mesterhazy. "NATO - EU cooperation after Warsaw". NATO Parliamentary Assembly Defence and Security Committee. (07 October 2017), 3.

Mediterranean. This successful support opens opportunities for further cooperation in the maritime domain.

The Hub-South entails an effective tool for coordination with the EU in missions, at the operational level. Also, SHAPE CCOMC would enable efficient coordination with MPCC at the strategic level, initially limited for CSDP non-executive missions (EUTM).

The pre-existing negative perceptions of the Arab world vis-à-vis NATO and the West and related sensitivities to Israeli-Arab relations inhibit NATO's regional role in the Southern Flank³⁰. However, it is not so negative for the EU, due to its particular insight on the Israeli-Arab conflict, backed by two EU missions in Palestinian territories and its economic effort in development in the MENA.

NATO - EU Cooperation is hampered by some member states prioritising their national interests. Turkey (NATO) and Cyprus (EU) set mutual impediments on operational and intelligence sharing issues because of the unresolved conflict on Cyprus³¹. The influence developed by some member states in specific areas (i.e.: the US in Middle East and France in North Africa), makes them enablers for NATO or the EU, in the area, but at the same time, are reluctant to grant them a wider political / military scope³².

Recommendations

NATO allies must change their mindset of prioritizing their threat perceptions to the East or to the South. The approach must support the defence of the Eastern Flank towards the Russian threat while, simultaneously, addressing terrorism and migration challenges in the South. Projecting stability needs a transversal 360-degree approach to avoid the risk of 'regionalization' and eroding NATO's cohesion. One proposal could be the creation / identification of tailored training/mentoring units assigned to existing NATO Force Structure (NFS) HQs with projecting stability tasks (specifically DCB), on a voluntary and rotating basis, and similar to the rotation plan format for NRFs. This would involve a

³⁰ Tommy Steiner. "NATO and its Middle East and Mediterranean Partners: Taking NATO's Role in its Southern Flank to a New Strategic Level", The German Marshall Fund of the United States. (2017), 9.

³¹ Kristi Raik and Pauli Järvenpää, "A New Era of EU-NATO Cooperation How to Make the Best of a Marriage of Necessity", International Centre for Security and Defence. (May 2017), 6.

³² Sinan Ülgen. "NATO's Southern Strategy at a Crossroads", Carnegie Europe. (07 December 2017), 5.

significant number of allies, providing a similar perception of cohesion to the Enhanced Forward Presence initiative.

Capacity building is identified as a major element of partnership for both NATO and the EU, and a key tool to increase stability in the South without deploying large military forces³³. It is one core area identified in the NATO - EU Joint Declaration and a scope where joint projects are conceivable. It is paramount to deepen cooperation in this realm by aligning financing, expertise and NATO's well developed network of national education, training and research centres, avoiding duplicities and competitions, and adapting the terms of cooperation to the specificities of the host nation in order to achieve synergies and cost effectiveness.

NATO has much less leverage than the EU in the Southern Flank³⁴. To increase its approach effectively, NATO must lean on its partners, becoming more proactive and offering them tailored assistance rather than waiting to be approached³⁵. Likewise, NATO should promote public diplomacy activities in the South, by reaching out to opinion shapers in all NATO regional partners to relieve anti-Western prejudices regarding NATO's 'real' intentions³⁶. In this effort, the EU could support NATO with its diplomatic strengths, particularly in areas where the EU is a key actor (North-Africa, Sahel).

Libya constitutes a 'black hole' that threatens to 'swallow' its close actors in the area, with the added risk of 'somalisation'³⁷. At the Warsaw Summit, Allied leaders agreed to support Libya upon request from their authorities. Taking into account that many Libyan security interlocutors have argued that a gendarmerie type structure is more suited to Libya's security challenges (policing, border control, counter-narcotics) than a conventional,

³³ Margherita Bianchi, Guillaume Lasconjarias, and Alessandro Marrone, "Projecting Stability in NATO's Southern Neighbourhood". NDC Conference Report Research Division - NATO Defense College No. 03/17 (July 2017), 7

³⁴ Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability, (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

³⁵ Erik Reichborn- Kjennerud, "NATO's Problematic Partnerships in the MENA Region". Mediterranean Quarterly Spring 2014. (Duke University Press 2014), 30.

³⁶ Tommy Steiner. "NATO and its Middle East and Mediterranean Partners: Taking NATO's Role in its Southern Flank to a New Strategic Level", The German Marshall Fund of the United States. (2016), 10.

³⁷ "Annuaire Français de Relations Internationales 2017. Volume XVIII". Université Panthéon-Assas. Centre Thucydide. 2017, 124.

national-level army³⁸, NATO - EU Cooperation would be desirable and should constitute a long-term project³⁹ based on complementarity. Apart from a diplomatic and development approach, the EU could contribute complementarily in Security Sector Reform (SSR) and good governance (this support exists practically in all EU missions), as it relies on a significant expertise regarding reforming police, law enforcement agencies, civil institutions and the establishment of border and gendarmerie-like forces. On the other hand, NATO could lead to support the rebuilding of the Libyan Armed Forces and the reintegration of armed militias into the country's defence and security structures, roles already played in Kosovo and Afghanistan⁴⁰, with the potential support of MD partners (i.e. Tunisia), taking the example of Jordan's participation in DCB in Iraq. The approach would be bottom-up, starting at municipal level, except on the east of Libya, due to the strength of the Libyan National Army⁴¹. If needed, NATO would provide military forces to achieve a safe and secure environment.

NATO - EU maritime cooperation in the Mediterranean is another successful example of complementarity and mutual support. Further cooperation could take place in the maritime security task, by protecting the vital Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) which access the European Southern neighbourhood (i.e.: The Gulf of Guinea).

NATO and the EU should enhance the cooperation in counterterrorism, assuming the security principle of the continuum between internal and external security and the impossibility of their categorical distinction⁴². NATO is very experienced in external counterterrorism and the EU relies on powerful internal antiterrorist and coordination instruments. So, it is crucial a fluent and reliable intelligence sharing to make effective the internal-external security nexus and provide an efficient answer to one of the foremost threats from the South.

³⁸ Frederic Wehrey, "Transatlantic Security Assistance in Fractured States: The Troubling Case of Libya", The German Marshall Fund of the United States, (2017), 15.

³⁹ Karim Mezran, "Saving Libya to Defend NATO's Southern Flank". MENASource, Accessed 10 May 2018 (/blogs/menasource).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Statement during International Workshop on NATO - EU Cooperation to Project Stability, (Centro Alti studi per la Difesa-Roma, 17APR18).

⁴² Enrique Mora Benavente, "La OTAN y la Unión Europea. ¿Por fin una cooperación eficaz?" in OTAN: Presente y Futuro. Cuaderno de Estrategia 191, Ed. Ministerio de Defensa (Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos 2017, 147).

NATO - EU cooperation should be across all levels of command. By starting with top-down political guidelines by member states and working through concrete measures to implement it, as is currently the case of NATO - EU partnership⁴³. The establishment of NATO Hub-South and the EU MPCC are unequivocal signs of enhancing the opportunities for an efficient multi-level structure of cooperation.

Conclusions

Achieving stability in the South requires a comprehensive approach that would go far beyond simple military responses. The root causes of instability are mainly socioeconomic (Arab Spring is an example), which require government's reform, economic development, individual freedom, and addressing inequality issues, that outreach NATO's capabilities to address them⁴⁴. Even, the term of 'projecting stability' should be reconsidered or, at least, renamed, because of the controversy created in partner countries and the wideness that the concept implies.

At the Warsaw Summit, it seems to be admitted implicitly that NATO would not aspire to the role of first responder for the South (the term 'contribute' appears very often along the Warsaw Summit Declaration). However, NATO brings a unique added value of defence capacity building, demonstrating that one paramount ingredient to ensure security and stability is the strength of local forces and institutions⁴⁵. In turn, the EU plays a key role by addressing the root causes of instability, in helping the South with political and socioeconomic reforms, building strong institutions, fighting corruption and focusing on civilian and non-executive military missions. However, as a successful EU Integrated Approach in the South needs security and stabilization providers, particularly in less secure areas and in low-medium intensity conflicts, the EU missions would need the

⁴³ Sonia Lucarelli, Alessandro Marrone, Francesco N. Moro. "Projecting Stability in an unstable world". NATO HQ (2017), 46.

⁴⁴ Erik Reichborn- Kjennerud, "NATO's Problematic Partnerships in the MENA Region", Mediterranean Quarterly Spring 2014. (Duke University Press 2014), 27.

⁴⁵ Mariem Ben Hassine, "NATO and co-operative security: the challenges in the region", in Deep Maghreb: (In)security and stability North Africa and its Sahel dimension. (NATO Defence College Foundation. 2017), 30

protection of NATO assets. The sense of more robust cooperation between NATO and the EU is more convincing than ever before⁴⁶.

NATO - EU relationship is strategic, given their complementarity in facing security challenges. Shared values as well as overlapping membership and resources, would make it unlikely for NATO and the EU to be competitors. On the contrary, they should play complementary and mutually reinforcing roles in Projecting Stability, taking into account that neither NATO nor the EU could provide by themselves the full range of the approach in the Southern Flank.

*Fernando Dueñas Puebla**

Teniente Coronel de Artillería (DEM).

Analista Sección de Asuntos Internacionales, División de Planes del Estado Mayor ET

⁴⁶ Alexander Vershbow, "ESDP and NATO: better cooperation in view of the new security challenges", Speech by NATO Deputy Secretary General presented at the Interparliamentary Conference on CFSP/CSDP, Riga, Latvia, (05 March 2015).