By the spring of 2001, work was moving forward both at the European Union and regarding the common understanding of the key areas of difference between the EU’s ESDP and NATO, especially as seen from Washington. Progress in relations between the two institutions took place despite the restraints imposed by Turkey on actions by the North Atlantic Council, along with clear emphasis on the principle that “nothing is decided until all is decided.” NATO and the EU began the practical work related to the four working groups and, on February 5, held the first-ever meeting of the North Atlantic Council with the EU’s Political and Security Committee (PSC), at the ambassadorial level.1 This was pursuant to an informal exchange of letters in January, between the Swedish EU presidency and the NATO secretary general, “confirming permanent arrangements for consultation and co-operation.”2 Ambassadors of the two institutions would meet six times a year, and foreign ministers twice.3 Part of the

1Between then and the end of May, the two sets of ambassadors met four times. See Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Final Communiqué, Budapest, NATO Press Release M-NAC-1(2001)77, May 29, 2001, paragraph 43.
2See Presidency Report to the Göteborg European Council on European Security and Defence Policy, Brussels, June 11, 2001, paragraph 32. This method was a device to get around the Turkish hold on reaching formal decisions at NATO. Notably, the next sentence of this section on permanent arrangements was the following: “In the relations between the EU and NATO as organisations, there will be no discrimination against any of the Member States.”
first ambassador’s meeting in February was about process; but part was also about policy—the situation in the Western Balkans—thus crossing a watershed in relations between the two institutions and showing that something was possible beyond “theology.” Indeed, in practice, the Balkans issue has already provided a spur to institutional cooperation between the EU and NATO, as Bosnia proved to be a spur for NATO’s transformation and political resurgence a half-decade earlier—although it is still not clear whether the current experience will set a lasting precedent for development of the overall NATO-EU/ESDP relationship.

During the spring of 2001, NATO and the EU sought to find ways of resolving the key outstanding issues, although they were handicapped in part by the hold placed by Turkey on reaching final agreements. During this period, Britain was most active in trying to broker compromises. This was especially true with regard to the role to be played in ESDP processes by non-EU NATO members. For example, it was agreed informally that the EU contributors committee, noted earlier, would work by consensus, and the EU’s Political and Security Committee would normally rely on what the contributors committee decided when the interests of any non-EU NATO member was involved; there would be no operations without this

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4 *NATO Update*, February 5–11, 2001, op. cit.:  
Regarding NATO-EU relations, Ambassadors discussed ongoing business between the two organisations and the elements that remain to be resolved; regarding the situation in the [sic] Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, they voiced their concern over ongoing violence in the region and stated that NATO and the EU are working together to help stabilise the situation.


6 Materials here and in the following two paragraphs are based on the author’s interviews with senior EU and NATO officials in Brussels, June 2001.
consensus. However, final agreement founndered just before the May foreign ministers’ meeting of the North Atlantic Council.7

Furthermore, although agreement between NATO and the EU on “permanent arrangements” was not yet possible, the January 2001 NATO-Sweden exchange of letters provided significant latitude for common effort, even though both Turkey and Norway sought greater assurances about their role in the ESDP consultative process and continued to have doubts whether arrangements were adequate for their participation in EU activities under ESDP. At the same time, NATO and the EU came close to completing work on a security agreement (on protecting information, etc.);8 but “Berlin-plus” discussions continued at a slow pace. A key element has been determining the role to be played within ESDP by Allied Command Europe’s Deputy Supreme Allied Commander and how he would be selected.9

The most critical issues discussed during this period related to ESDP planning. On defense planning, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Operations Edgar Buckley reportedly tried to break a major impasse by brokering an informal agreement on the way in which a three-part process would work. The three parts are (1) an EU internal review mechanism, as decided by the European Council at Nice;10 (2) adaptation of the NATO defense planning sys-

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7Reportedly, the deal was rejected by the Turkish military (not enough conceded by the EU) and also Greek representation at the EU (too much conceded). Ibid.

8At the Budapest foreign ministers’ meeting of the North Atlantic Council on May 29, the ministers noted

the successful implementation of the NATO-EU interim agreement on the security of information established last year and welcome[d] the progress made in preparing a permanent security agreement between the two organisations, including the productive work in the NATO-EU Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Issues. [They reiterated their] readiness to conclude a permanent security agreement between NATO and the EU as a matter of priority (Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, May 29, 2001, op. cit., paragraph 44).

9Ibid. One suggestion for selecting Deputy SACEUR would preserve NATO’s formal authority for making the appointment but would also provide for consultations first with the European Union.

The difficult part is to agree on the third element. One important proposal in this context is to work toward a common Defense Planning Questionnaire (DPQ), beginning with at least a common data base. With regard to operational planning, the evolution of understanding was that the EU was unlikely to conduct any of its own—that it would not attempt to duplicate NATO’s capabilities—but rather would rely upon those capabilities, provided “assured access” were formally agreed upon, which was a provision of “Berlin-plus.” However, as earlier described in EU Presidency Conclusions at the Nice summit, there could still be circumstances, regarding military operations on the Petersberg list, where national planning capabilities could be used. In practice, that would mean Britain or France, but there was general understanding that all operational planning would be fully transparent to NATO and the EU.

At the May 29 Budapest meeting of NATO foreign ministers, the NATO allies formally recognized what had been achieved, in both formal and informal efforts with the EU to sort out remaining issues. It was notable—but not accidental—that progress was assisted by the two institutions’ cooperation over the Macedonia crisis, and especially the joint diplomatic missions of Lord Robertson and Javier

6. In order to ensure continuing European action to strengthen capabilities, the Member States agreed on the importance of defining an evaluation mechanism enabling follow-up and progress towards the realisation of the commitments made with a view to achieving the headline goal, in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

See this reference for details of the mechanism.

11These were comments to the author by a senior NATO official. By mid-year, there were reports that the idea of a common DPQ could be acceptable to France, which since the 1960s had not taken part in this process linked to the NATO integrated military structure. Having all countries engaged in European security, whether in NATO or in the EU, following a consistent defense planning process, is important in gaining a clear understanding of what various national forces can do, in promoting interoperability, and in identifying shortfalls as measured against a common understanding of what military forces might be called upon to do.

12Ibid.

13Author’s notes on comments by French defense minister Alain Richard, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., July 9, 2001.
Solana. At Budapest, NATO emphasized several issues: the importance of strengthened European military capabilities, for both “the Alliance’s missions and . . . EU-led operations for Petersberg tasks where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged”; the value of non-EU European allied forces for EU-led operations; bilateral meetings the EU had been holding with these allies “to clarify and evaluate their contributions to European crisis management on the basis of the same criteria as those applying to EU member states [emphasis added]”; the EU’s recognition of the need to improve capabilities; the mutually reinforcing nature of the NATO DCI and the EU’s Headline Goal; and consultations taking place through a group called “HTF Plus” (i.e., the EU states and NATO participants).

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14 Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, May 29, 2001, op. cit., paragraphs 28 and 41:
We particularly welcome the close cooperation between NATO and the EU, as exemplified by the joint missions to Skopje by the NATO Secretary General and the EU High Representative. . . . The close consultation and cooperation between the two organisations and the mutually reinforcing steps taken by them in responding to the situation in the Balkans show that NATO and the EU have engaged in successful practical cooperation on questions of common interest relating to security, defence and crisis management. Continuing such practical cooperation between the two organisations will help ensure that crises can be met with the most appropriate military response and effective crisis management ensured.

15 Ibid., paragraph 45:
The European Allies are committed to further strengthening their military capabilities and to reinforcing the Alliance’s European pillar. This will enhance their ability to contribute both to the Alliances’ missions and to EU-led operations for Petersberg tasks where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged. We note that this process does not imply the creation of a European army and that the commitment of national resources for EU-led operations will be based on sovereign decisions.

16 Ibid., paragraph 46:
The significant additional contributions offered by non-EU European Allies to the pool of forces available for EU-led operations are important and will enhance the range of capabilities potentially available to the EU. We welcome the bilateral meetings held between the EU and the non-EU European Allies in order to clarify and evaluate their contributions to European crisis management on the basis of the same criteria as those applying to EU member states and look forward to the further development of this practice. We note the EU’s recognition of the need for further capability improvements. The Alliance’s Defence Capabilities Initiative is also supporting the enhancement of European capabilities. The objectives arising from NATO’s DCI and the EU’s Headline Goal are mutually reinforcing. We note with sat-
The NATO ministers zeroed in on one issue: “the importance of finding solutions satisfactory to all Allies [regarding] the issue of participation [in ESDP activities].” They stressed a number of areas in which there had been significant progress—and not just regarding the concerns of Turkey (and to a lesser degree of Norway), by making a special reference to “progress made in developing dialogue, cooperation and consultation between Canada and the EU.” Indeed, the ministers again stressed that the alliance “is proceeding on the principle that nothing will be agreed until everything is agreed—the participation issue is also relevant in this context”; but they held out promise that critical issues remaining could be resolved, which could be characterized as “Berlin-double-plus”: EU assured access to NATO operational planning; presumed availability of NATO assets; identification of EU command options, including “developing the role of DSACEUR in order for him to assume fully and effectively his European responsibilities”; and adaptation of NATO defence plan-

This convoluted reference to the HTF Plus reflected Turkey’s resistance to having such cooperation between NATO and the EU on a carte blanche basis.

17Ibid., paragraph 47:

We continue to underline . . . the importance of finding solutions satisfactory to all Allies to the issue of participation. . . . Allies look forward to further broad and effective practical implementation of the arrangements agreed by the European Council at Nice for dialogue, consultation and cooperation with non-EU European Allies on issues related to security and defence policy and crisis management as well as the modalities for participation in EU-led military operations. We welcome the EU’s commitment to intensify consultation in times of crisis. . . . Consultation and cooperation are particularly important with the EU Political and Security Committee and the EU Military Committee and, as appropriate, with the EU military staff, so as to ensure that the Allies concerned derive maximum benefit from them and to enable the Allies concerned to contribute effectively.

18Ibid., paragraph 48: “This includes a joint commitment to intensify consultation in times of crisis, particularly when the EU is considering an operation using NATO assets and capabilities.”
These four items plus “participation” thus seemed to constitute the agenda for a final NATO-EU bargain.

The narrowing of the set of institutional concerns also reflected the reality of the two bodies’ memberships—that fully 11 members of the EU are also NATO allies and that nothing could find its way into a NATO communiqué unless it has the blessing of these 11, including France, the most ambitious for ESDP among EU members. This illustrates the value of membership overlap, consultations among, and even within governments; the pressures to reach agreement within the EU and formal consensus within NATO; and mutual understanding that the United States—as “chief stakeholder” in NATO—must have its own concerns about ESDP taken fully into account. By May 2001, therefore, it was becoming clear that a new process of interaction between NATO and the EU had been created and that, by and large, it was starting to work.

What was, in effect, the EU response came at the Göteborg European Council meeting of June 15–16, the days immediately following the summit with President George W. Bush. Especially important was a voluminous Presidency Report on ESDP, reflecting considerable detailed efforts. The EU thus had significant work to report, including in the important area of civilian aspects of crisis management; the

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19 Ibid., paragraph 49:

Intensified discussions on the participation issue since our last meeting in December have strengthened the prospects for progress on the various aspects of the Washington [summit] agenda and specifically on arrangements for:

- assured EU access to NATO planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-led operations;
- the presumption of availability to the EU of pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-led operations;
- the identification of a range of European command options for EU-led operations, further developing the role of Deputy SACEUR in order for him to assume fully and effectively his European responsibilities; and
- the further adaptation of the Alliance’s defence planning system.

20 This has been a major focus of the overall EU effort with regard to ESDP. Particularly important has been the development of a police capacity, building on decisions made at the Feira European Council. This has been a notable problem with the conduct of
creation of “permanent political and military structures” in the council and its secretariat; and progress in building “a permanent and effective relationship with NATO . . . agreed and implemented, as exemplified by the close cooperation in crisis management in the Western Balkans.” The EU also reported that

Arrangements have been implemented concerning the consultation and participation of non-European NATO members and other


Interim ESDP bodies had been made permanent:

• The PSC, which became permanent on 22 January 2001, deals with all CFSP issues, including ESDP. The establishment of the PSC has strengthened the ability of the Union to deal with these issues and to address crisis situations in a coherent way.

• The EU Military Committee became permanent on 9 April, when the Council appointed the permanent chairman of the EUMC [General Gustav Hägglund, retiring Finnish Chief of Defence]. The EUMC is responsible for providing the PSC with military advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU as well as providing military direction to the EUMS.

• The EU Military Staff was declared permanent on 11 June [under German Lieutenant General Rainer Schuwirth]. The EUMS, under the military direction of the EUMC, provides military expertise and support to the ESDP, including the conduct of EU-led military crisis management operations (Presidency Report to the Göteborg European Council on European Security and Defence Policy, June 11, 2001, op. cit., paragraph 20).

The council adopted a Regulation for a Rapid Reaction Mechanism in February 2001 (ibid., paragraph 24). . . . Work has been carried out which should enable the Council to take decisions in the near future, to establish as agencies a European Union Satellite Centre and a European Union Institute for Security Studies in support of the CFSP, including the ESDP (ibid., paragraph 25).

Ibid., paragraph 40. This sentence was followed by: “Rapid agreement is called for on arrangements permitting EU access to NATO assets and capabilities.”
countries which are candidates for access to the EU, and relations with Canada.\textsuperscript{23}

The special notation of Canada—as in the communiqué of the NATO foreign ministers’ meeting two weeks earlier—could have derived from the strong concerns that its defense minister, in particular, has expressed about Canada’s being sidelined by ESDP preparations.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition, the Göteborg European Council took steps to promote ESDP’s military capabilities. Reaffirming that by 2003 the EU would

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., paragraph 50. It is interesting that, in considering “consultation and participation of non-EU European NATO members,” the summit elaborated on the overall EU relationship with Turkey:

Good progress has been made in implementing the pre-accession strategy for Turkey. . . . However, in a number of areas such as human rights, further progress is needed. Turkey is urged to take concrete measures to implement the priorities of the Accession Partnership (ibid., paragraph 10).

\textsuperscript{24}Presidency Report to the Göteborg European Council on European Security and Defence Policy, June 11, 2001, op. cit., paragraph 45.

Canada, with its long experience in peacekeeping, is a valuable partner to the European Union in the area of the ESDP. The EU welcomes the readiness of Canada to contribute to crisis management efforts undertaken by the Union. . . . [T]he EU and Canada have begun regular consultations on ESDP-related issues of mutual concerns. The EU will work with Canada to take forward the modalities for Canadian participation in EU-led operations.

See Hon. Art Eggleton, Minister of National Defence, “Transatlantic Relations and European Security and Defence Identity,” Munich, Germany, February 3, 2001:

We—like some other Allies—have concerns about the direction the NATO-EU relationship might go. First, EU structures for crisis management operations should strengthen, not detract from, NATO’s role as the primary body for addressing Euro-Atlantic security challenges. In short, Canada would have serious difficulties with anything that weakened NATO’s current consultative practices and consensus-based decision-making. . . . [W]e need to have appropriate arrangements for situations where the EU would expect to use NATO’s assets and capabilities. . . . We need assurances that we would be involved in any decision on the role and manner of deployment of these forces [NATO assets]. . . . While the EU has welcomed the possibility of Canadian participation, we have yet to agree on the modalities. . . . A central issue for us is that, in any EU-led operations, we have adequate access to decision-making on matters affecting the deployment of Canadian forces. . . . [T]o be excluded from the strategic planning at the earliest stage would be politically unacceptable. And, I suspect, equally unacceptable to other non-EU Allies. If ESDI fails to respond to these fundamental political realities, grave problems await us.
be able “to deploy rapidly and then sustain forces capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks, including the most demanding [emphasis added],” the council approved an EU exercise policy and an EU exercise programme. “The Exercise Policy identifies the EU requirements for and categories of exercises, including joint exercises with NATO,” from 2001–2006. Furthermore, working with the forthcoming Belgian EU presidency, the Swedish presidency has developed a plan for the work on military capabilities in order to ensure the appropriate preparation of a Capability Improvement Conference in November 2001 . . . [at which] Member States will be asked to commit themselves to specific additional measures in order to address the identified shortfalls.

The object of all these activities was to point to the December 2001 European Council at Laeken, under the Belgian presidency, as the moment of decision for “achieving the objective of making the EU [i.e., ESDP] quickly operational”—in other words, “the operational capacity of the EU crisis management organs.” Remarkably, during the first half of 2001, the EU both drove decisively forward with at least the bureaucratic aspects of creating ESDP and showed considerable sensitivity to concerns expressed by the United States and by other non-EU members of NATO. As was evident at the preceding meeting of NATO foreign ministers, the process within the EU was also working, and the prospects for productive agreement between the two bodies were steadily rising. Work remains to be done—as both admit—but the estrangement of “two institutions

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26 Ibid., paragraph 27. See also “Annex IV: Exercise Policy of the European Union.”
29 Speech by Alain Richard, May 17, 2001, op. cit.:
This year we will achieve the operational capacity of the EU crises [sic] management organs, which are professional, decisive and consistent with the preservation of the full sovereignty of governments; and we will reach a new step in enhancing and improving the effective collective capabilities we have decided to develop.
living in the same city as though on different planets” seems to be gradually giving way in the face of practical efforts.