Following the St. Mâlo summit, the pace picked up in bargaining between NATO and the WEU states over the nature of their relationship. The key focus was at NATO’s Washington summit in April 1999, where the allies “acknowledged” the EU’s “resolve,” post–St. Mâlo, “to have the capacity for autonomous action so that it can take decisions and approve military action where the alliance as a whole is not engaged” [emphasis added in both places]."1 NATO’s new Strategic Concept agreed that ESDI “will continue to be developed within NATO.”2 And this process will assist the European Allies to act by themselves as required through the readiness of the Alliance, on a case-by-case basis and by consensus, to make its assets and capabilities available for operations in which the Alliance is not engaged militarily under the political control and strategic direction either of the WEU or as otherwise agreed.3

What this meant in practice was spelled out in the Washington summit communiqué, again presuming that ESDI would be built “within the Alliance,”4 including to help

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2In the context of the ongoing debate, it should be recalled that 10 of the 19 Allies that subscribed to this document were full members of the WEU, including France, the most active proponent of “autonomous action” for what would emerge as ESDP.
3NATO, The Alliance’s Strategic Concept, April 24, 1999, op. cit., paragraph 30.
both EU members and other European Allies to take the necessary steps to strengthen their defence capabilities, especially for new missions, avoiding unnecessary duplication.\(^5\)

The NATO allies—by implication, featuring the United States—also took a step well beyond their earlier work in developing a relationship of trust and confidence with ESDI by stating their readiness to adopt the necessary arrangements for \textit{ready access} by the European Union to the collective assets and capabilities of the Alliance, for operations in which the Alliance as a whole is not engaged militarily as an Alliance. The [North Atlantic] Council in Permanent Session will approve these arrangements, \textit{which will respect the requirements of NATO operations and the coherence of its command structure} [emphasis added in both places].\(^6\)

At this point, NATO also acknowledged that the European agent for operating ESDI would be the EU rather than the WEU, and it endorsed two points of particular concern to some Europeans and especially France: Arrangements worked out would “address”—i.e., make provisions for—

\textit{Assured} EU access to NATO planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-led operations; [and] \ldots \textit{the presumption} of availability to the EU of pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-led operations [emphasis added in both places].\(^7\)

This new arrangement—or modified bargain—between NATO and ESDI came be called \textit{Berlin-plus}, in that it reaffirmed NATO’s primacy in terms of actual military action, acknowledged that there would be no “unnecessary duplication,” restated (by implication) the

\(^5\)Ibid., paragraph 9.
\(^6\)Ibid.
\(^7\)Ibid. This arrangement went on to provide:

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] \ldots the further adaptation of NATO’s defence planning system to incorporate more comprehensively the availability of forces for EU-led operation.
“separable but not separate” military capabilities principle, insisted that non-EU NATO members be engaged, and repeated several times that the EU would operate only where NATO forces were not engaged militarily. In return, NATO accepted the notion of “autonomous [EU] action,” although without precisely defining what that term meant, and increased the chances that NATO would not try to undercut the deal in the midst of a crisis, by adding the words “assured” (access to NATO planning) and “presumption” (of access to NATO capabilities and assets).8

There the debate might have come to rest, had it not been for what happened a little over a month later, when the European Council met at the head of state and government level at Cologne (June 3–4, 1999). In the interim, the EU’s four main reasons for promoting ESDI-ESDP—to further European integration, to accommodate France’s competition with Germany, to recognize that the Franco-American deal on France’s reintegration into NATO’s integrated command structure had failed to reach completion, and to provide Britain with something to show its European allegiance—had been joined by a fifth reason: the growing sense in Europe that it had not been able to “pull its weight” in the air war being conducted against Serbia in the Kosovo conflict.9 This fact raised three principle issues: the shortfall in European high-technology military capabilities; the renewal, however restrained, of American rumblings about “burden sharing”; and irritation in many European capitals (and among some European militaries) that the United States had been calling most of the shots in the conflict, sometimes a bit heavy-handedly.10 Indeed, the added impetus to ESDP for many Europeans

8For the proponents of EU activities under ESDP that do not rely on the principle of building capabilities within NATO, “separable but not separate” from it, these two points are considered the essence of Berlin-plus.

9Thus, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson noted that:

   Collectively, the European members of NATO spend almost two-thirds of the United States’ defense budget—but Kosovo made it clear they have nothing like two-thirds of the real capability of the U.S. (NATO, Parliamentary Assembly, Press Statement, Amsterdam, November 15, 1999).

10This grumbling had its American analogue: The lack of sufficient European capacity to keep pace with U.S. technology meant that the United States had to assume an even greater share of the air campaign, and that some European air assets could not even be employed because they lacked the capability, for instance, to communicate by
was less about being able to do more, but rather to have more of a
say in what decisions about security and the use of force were being
made, even within NATO.11

In any event, the Presidency Conclusions of the Cologne summit ad-
dressed in depth the issue of “the common European policy on se-
curity and defense.” In particular, it noted that the European Council

should have the ability to take decisions on the full range of conflict
prevention and crisis management tasks defined in the Treaty on
European Union, the “Petersberg Tasks.” . . . [This meant] the
Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by
credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a
readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises with-
out prejudice to actions by NATO.12

However, as the U.S. in particular was quick to note, this statement—
along with the companion report from the German EU presidency—
was selective in what part of the new Berlin-plus bargain struck at
Washington to endorse. At Cologne, emphasis was placed in particu-
lar on the NATO summit’s words on “assured EU access to NATO
planning capabilities able to contribute to military planning for EU-
led operations”; and on “the presumption of availability to the EU of
pre-identified NATO capabilities and common assets for use in EU-
led operations.”13 But the ritual words that would implicitly or ex-
plicitly acknowledge NATO’s primacy were noticeably absent. There
was nothing about building ESDI/ESDP within NATO, about acting
only where NATO was not engaged, about protecting the require-
ments of NATO action or the coherence of the command chain, or
about avoiding unnecessary duplication. There were, however, pro-

secure channels. The sharpness of some of these U.S. criticisms can be credited with
furthering some Europeans’ desire to have a capability that would be less subjected to
such criticism. Of course, a remedy also lay in simply increasing defense spending,
including on “open architecture” equipment that would increase allied interoperabil-
ity with U.S. forces—whether for operations limited to Europe or for coalition de-
ployments elsewhere.

11The argument that the Kosovo experience was the decisive European motive for
pursuing ESDP is belied by the fact that much of what has been done antedated that
conflict.


13Ibid., paragraph 4.
visions for involving non-EU NATO members. One phrase in the Cologne document—“in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO” [emphasis added]—almost seemed to be a deliberate effort to evade the formulation for NATO’s role (“where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged,” etc.) that had been so carefully worked out for the Washington summit.¹⁴

It is not surprising that the U.S. administration concluded that the European Union had broken trust over this issue.¹⁵ Notably, in a talk—much discussed in Europe—at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott expressed U.S. government fears:

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¹⁴Annex III to the Presidency Conclusions (Cologne European Council, June 3–4, 1999, op. cit.) did provide for “the need to ensure the development of effective mutual consultation, cooperation and transparency between NATO and the EU.” The Presidency Conclusions to the Cologne summit also contained an important section on the steps the EU would need to take so that its new venture would be effective, including the need for:

- a capacity for analysis of situations, sources of intelligence, and a capability for relevant strategic planning. This may require in particular:
  - regular (or ad hoc) meetings of the General Affairs Council, as appropriate including Defense ministers;
  - a permanent body in Brussels (Political and Security Committee) consisting of representatives with pol/mil expertise;
  - an EU Military Committee consisting of Military Representatives making recommendations to the Political and Security Committee;
  - an EU Military Staff including a Situation Centre;
  - other resources such as a Satellite Centre, Institute for Security Studies (ibid., paragraph 3).

¹⁵One European explanation—which did not gain adherents in Washington—was that the Cologne documents were hastily prepared and thus reflected inefficiency as opposed to an effort to undercut the Washington summit agreement. Given the nature of the communiqué-drafting process, however—especially with the close attention always paid by countries like France and Britain, this is not a convincing explanation. For developments during this period, through the December 1999 EU summit, see Karen Donfried and Paul Gallis, European Security: The Debate in NATO and the European Union, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report to Congress, April 25, 2000.
[The United States] would not want to see an ESDI that comes into being first within NATO but then grows out of NATO and finally grows away from NATO, since that would lead to an ESDI that initially duplicates but that could eventually compete with NATO.16