

# Cooperation & Conflict in Transatlantic Defence and Security Structure

---

Rouya Khezri<sup>\*1</sup>, Kazem Sultanahmadi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Researcher in International Relations

<sup>2</sup> M. A Student in International Law, Islamic Azad University

---

Received: 5 Feb 2011 ; Accepted: 20 Jun 2011

---

**Abstract:** The both Atlantic side relations from the ancient time had been faced with too much challenge but the continuing of this relation is due to the common political and economical interests. The upper Atlantic and the two organizations (NATO, EU) still exist to gain the essential goals and the political and security connection which are boosting with the economical integration at the same time. But we cannot neglect the disintegration of the two Atlantic sides and the approach of the US and the EU in facing with some serious treats such as terrorism which had created a big gap on the strategic and military designing of two sides. In fact there is another gap in the matter of defending investment which could be managed. The first gap caused the increasing of deference in military capability between the EU and the US in fulfilling the common military operations either in Europe or elsewhere. Although the military cooperation in NATO is very important, The US doesn't make any contribution with its European allies in NATO to seek the national security strategy. Now concerning the new security challenged in 21 century, the main question is, whether the security and defense relation of two Atlantic side countries is moving towards cooperation or conflict?

**Keywords:** Neo-liberalism, Neo-Realism, Transatlantic, Security, Cooperation, Conflict.

---

## Introduction

In the prospect of pro collective security after the world wars, the best and the most connivance method are for international cooperation when more opportunity was made more than the previous time. To think about the value and common interests, actions were taken in accordance with this case particularly applied in Euro-Atlantic relations where the democratic values were extended. Increasing the number of the democratic states and the expansion of democratic values in accordance with the principle and justifiable thought among the western governments about the essentials rule of the liberal organization to equilibrium after traditional security dilemma. In the 1990s the anarchic regimes were increasingly raised. The idea of cooperation, security, or collective security (the states paid much concern about the original security issue) in Europe and the other parts of the world found very important rule in policy making. Under the umbrella of cooperative security, community

and security regime were established which can clearly seen in the reform or development of the EU, NATO and European security cooperative organization.

So at the begging of the 21 century, despite important change which occurred in international policy, the traditional mistrust to the international security regime still remained. After the termination of the cold war, the world became a safer and more secure place for living and this kind of feeling completed after the cancellation of the possible atomic war between the East and the West. Expansion of the democratic value and socialism as well as some positive movements toward globalizations, and also the influence of international organization have played a virtual and important rule in decreasing the cooperative aspect of security dilemma among the states.

It's good to say that this ideology was run to the corner and it wasn't concerned much, because the evidence shows the importance of the military forces especially after the 11, Sep, 1999 terrorist

attacks in the US. The arm race in many parts of the world was continued and the chemical, biological and atomic weapons had their influence in the security measures in many countries. These were the main reasons which made it difficult and significant to reach a consensus in the most essentials and principal international security issues.

Now concerning the new security challenged in 21 century, the main question is, whether the security and defence relation of two Atlantic side countries are moving towards cooperation or conflict? In this Article, the researchers are going to analysis the defence and security structure of the Atlantic, both In theory and cooperative aspects as well as the strategic disorder of both sides of the Atlantic and later the defence policy and security of the European countries will be discussed.

## **The Neo-realism and Neo-liberalism approaches to security**

### **A) Neo-realism opinion**

In the realistic opinion states are the most powerful players in international community and security is the most important duty. States really believe that in order to protect and secure themselves they should have a self reliance and there is no other way in the world rather than self reliance's.

Based on the realistic theory the states that claim sovereignty have to provide themselves with military capability, and this potentiality will be considered as an enemy by other states.

Doubt or uncertainty which causes a kind of mistrust is the nature of international community. Since the states cannot be aware of or understand the main goal or interests of their neighborhood countries at any time they must be ready to defend themselves when it's needed. The states look eagerly for their independence and national sovereignty to keep their existence within the international body.

Generally the neo realism believes this theory will move states to have an eye on themselves, to fight, or even to have a military attack against others. Thus, based on this theory national security or insecurity is the result of the international structure. The anarchic structure is very stable and as a result of the structure of the international body will be harmful similar to its previous condition before World War II.

John Mearsheimer in his article "Back to the future" states that ending the cold war may cause a traditional balance of power in the multi power policy in which the fundamentalist nationalism in the tribunal frame will cause the uncertain ability and chaos. He also evaluates the cold war as a new era for peace, security, and stability as a result of bipolar structure.

Like Mearsheimer, The other neo-realists believe that in the international policy there is no room for permanent and long-lasting war but it will cause a permanent competition and race in which the possibility of lasting for a lone term exists. Realism accepts that the cooperation between the countries could not and will not happen in the real world because of some limitations. The Maine factor of this limitation, i.e. the ruling logic of the security competition and the less amount of the cooperation, couldn't destroy or harm it. (Mearsheimer 1994-5:4)

On the other hand, Barry Buzan believes that the "security dilemma" could be recovered within the international cooperation between the states which has better understanding and thought. This idea could be managed to establish the international body. There are good reasons that the policy makers should pay attention to the time and also they should have some eye on the interests of their neighbors. Buzan believes " more and more countries will come to this understanding that their national security is integrated and related to each other, and their house policy which was made among the principals of fundamentalist national interests beside their attractive aspects, will doom to fail (Buzan, 1983:208)

In this prospect, each change which includes a distance from concerning to the national interests and paying more attention to the concept of international security might be acceptable. It can be said that this is the same event which took place in west Europe during their resent for 50 years.

After a long time the hostility relations between France and Germany as well as the other west European countries, after signing the Rome pact, a sense of community appears in which the previous sworn enemies, become loyal good friends to each others. Despite the previous time, these countries never thought that any military action or war could be a good solution for solving their dispute or argument. Disagreement still remains but a general rule or behavior exists among the European countries which emphasize on diplomatic and peaceful

means for settling their issues rather than military action.

### **B) Neo-liberalism opinion.**

One of the neo-liberalist theories for the international security indicates that the international organization doesn't play an essential and vital role in preventing the wars. This theory explains the international organization as a product or tool of the interest of the states, the privilege and immunity are the framework of their decisions to cooperate or compete, and participating in international organization doesn't make any difference. This idea was challenged after the world wars. For instance Douglas Hurd the ex British foreign minister, said in June 1992, "the organization in Europe has played a significant and important role in boosting and strengthening security and they are going to continue this important role. West established a sort of international organization in which the capability of them to settle the dispute was already proved. He also believes that "the big changes after the world wars is to camper and adjust these organizations with the new situation"(Baylis, 2005:307). These ideas find their place within European countries so they believe that a complex of organizations has the potential of covering and completing while supporting each other. Some of these organizations are EU, NATO, WEU and OSEC.

Neo-liberalists believe that creating a model of institutionalized cooperation among the countries will make a unique opportunity to reach international security in future years. This idea is usually active in the frame of realism, claims that play the important role of the international organization in maintaining peace and security and also to make a good cooperation among the states which is more than the role it might have played. Keohane and Martin believe that the organization could offer some information and reduce the sum of the deal; they give more credit to the treaty and facilitate the cooperation and interchange. (Keohane and Martin, 1995:42)

The follower of this theory refuses to accept the importance of political and economical organization in Europe to deal with and solve the traditional dispute among the European countries. They also mention that the internal development of the EU and NATO after the cold war was an obvious element of the huge investment of those countries.

Based on this theory if the states had the narrow minds or different thinking about power, the EU and NATO organization could disappear after the cold war. But in reality this case wasn't proved. Both of these organizations have expanded their duties since the onset of the new century. But it doesn't mean that some states stopped deceiving others and their bad feeling directly refers to their national interests and their incomes from cooperation. In the other word, the international organizations could not omit the war from the internal regimes. But they were able to increase the value of cooperation among all states.

### **The Atlantic opinion on defence and the security approach of the EU**

The bipolar system created after the world war caused some European countries to secure themselves from any possible attack by the Soviet Union and trust the power of the US for more than 50 years and put it in the universal policy of the US in the NATO system. The cold war was a good reason for defence management of the NATO in the Western Europe and in this situation Europe, found an independent character and came to this conclusion that there is no logical reason to compete with the US and the Soviet Union.

After the cold war because of the shift in the security issues and lack of more threat from the side of Soviet Union, the US didn't exert a reaction force, and challenged the character of the NATO. In this situation all security issues in Europe was totally domestic such as illegal immigration, racism and smuggle and there was no need to be controlled by a foreign power. In this basic frame and for the first time, the 12 heads of states arranged to meet each other in 10 Dec 1991 on Maastricht Netherlands and at the end of this meeting they reached an agreement regarding the security issue. The Maastricht Treaty found a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) which is a top Point in the European countries relations.

Finally in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of Dec 1999 in Helsinki session they renovated a new security structure and reduced the level of their dependence to the NATO and the US, and the new European security doctrine was created. In this session the EU leader decided to establish a new common army in Europe under the name of "rapid reaction forces" "to interfere in possible internal attack among the European countries (Oxford Analytica, 2000:27).

This offer was made by France and England. These two countries in the St. Malo declaration in Dec 1998 agreed to work accordingly to enable the union to act in some security issues. In this declaration it was addressed that "the EU needs to be in a position to act independently in the international domain. To reach this aim the EU must had to the capacity of independence and self- reliance and get the proper support by the military forces and to have decision making tools in other to use them to replay to the international crises (Sheperd, 1386:120).

This rapid reaction force has 60000 troops to take varieties of actions such as the humanitarian aid, evacuation of the people from the crisis area, military action in order to separate the two sides of conflict ... This army started its action in 2003 in humanitarian missions to maintain peace and security.

### A) The European approach

The European countries after many years of concentrating on political and economical integration, are trying to take some affective steps towards one united Europe: mainly one foreign policy and common security, one European security and defence policy.

On this issue two different ways of thinking appears: one is that some Europeans such as French are looking to make one independent military structure and make more integration among the union elsewhere by putting some limitations on the role of NATO and its effect in Europe. They are supporting the idea of that in the long term that EU must take more responsibility according to its European common security and defence policy and do more independently than before on this issue.

The second group named ATLANTIS including England believes that the collective security in Europe must be run or imposed by NATO. Although this group accepts the centralization of Europe they claim that NATO must be at the center of any decisions on the security and defence policy of Europe. England prefers to deal much more with the US on the security issues rather than working with European countries. On the other hand the case of establishing one European army in the frame of EU and strengthening the west European unity are the most important aims some European countries like France and Germany have.

This idea is usually opposed by England be

cause this country acts as a supportive force of the US. In the case of establishing a European army, some members such as England believe that this army must act in accordance with the US and NATO. Lord Jeffrey Howe the British ex foreign minister say: "The aim of European defence structure is to boost and strengthen the capacity and capability of the European defence structure in order to act as a complex without rejecting or putting aside the main powers like the United States. The structure is necessarily required to make a stable and deep relation between NATO and the EU without weakening our collective defence policy"(Khalozadeh, 1384:33-34).

On the other side France raised this idea that a united Europe in security and defence system requires that the Europe must raise its power to a proper level to be a partner of the US not the puppet of this country. France believes that in this way the political and military appearance of the US in EU might be reduced and on the other side the political affect of the EU will intensify.

In the case of European rapid reaction forces, France emphasizes that the EU must have an exclusive decision and action power in interfering the European crises. France totally dismisses any advisory relation between the new EU rapid reaction forces and the NATO and expresses its concern that may be the US starts some measure to defuse this independent of the EU rapid reaction forces. (See Taylor, 2008:152-156)

England's point of view is different. This country thinks that the EU's independent military capability from NATO is a big mistake. the British conservative party totally disagrees with the European rapid reaction forces because they believe that this creation will finally move toward the establishment of a new European army and weaken the role of the NATO in Europe and It will harm British-US relations. Britain is opposes to any action which is moving to reduce the US military obligations in Europe and believes that this wrong force will put the European country in a big danger and catastrophic era . It says that the European defence is totally related to the NATO (Daalder, 2001:564-565). Tony Blair believes that the existing of NATO in the new European era is essential and vital (Daheshyar, 1384:192)

Generally, England has more tendencies to intensify the potential capacity of the EU under the frame of NATO and have much closed harmony with the US rather than with France. But France

has more tendencies to separate the European military capacity from that of NATO and American military forces.

## **B) The American approach**

The United States of America has been a supporter of the European integration for a long time. It was the US that encouraged political and economical integration in Europe but the amount of supporting, the security, and defence cooperation it gave was much less than required.

The anxiety of the US from power increase of The EU and their attempt to create a common security, and defence forces caused some disputes between two strategic allies. America was on this idea that the establishment of an independent army will weaken and decrease the power of NATO as a main European security and defence organization

The US, on the one hand, wants to boost the military capacity of NATO members but on the other hand it's not satisfied with the independent role of the Europe. America tries to expand the European role of the NATO by giving a new European identity to it. By this measure America wants to take the responsibility of the European collective security and maintain peace and security in this continent, is NATO. America also tries to convince the European leader that because of the Financial, equipment and navy problems which EU member face, they could easily use the NATO facilities so there is no need to move forward making a new European army.

The United States believes that the innovation of the security and defence structure of the Europe must not make a big gap between the US and the EU and increase the function of the NATO. Brezinski believes that nowadays besides of the European economical ability, the financial and economic dependence and also the deep relation between the US and the EU makes the European countries puppets of the US. He also doesn't discard the possibility of omitting or terminating the military gap between two sides (Brezinski, 2000:18). In the US point of view, 4 main principles must be run, or guide the relation among the union and one single European defence identity:

The union act must boost the capability of NATO

All the decisions of union must emphasize on common value and interests

All member should effectively participates in security issues of the Europe

The standard of collective measure in defence policy must not be scratches in any condition. (Daheshyar,1384:201)

On the other hand, Europe decides to ensure the US that their attempt to gain the military independence, does not mean that they want to set aside NATO or to get out of it. And the military cooperation between the US and the union will continue. In the Nice report this issue was stated that the security and defence policy of the European is just to act as a connector between the inside EU and NATO(Nice, 2000).

## **Conflict and Cooperation in Transatlantic Relations**

More than 50 years the defence participation and cooperation were the standing Point US, EU security interests. In other word two sides were able to keep peace and security in divided European area based on cooperation inside the NATO, and then moves it toward the unity, liberty and democracy. They tolerated the political differences so they were able to put aside and pass the conflict era. Now in the time of any crises the relation is stronger, and it has proved its success upon the dispersion forces.

As far as the two sides of Atlantic start to face with challenge in 21 century, they remember their obligation on the security issues. In the first step they showed their unity to face with the 9/11/2001 terrorist attack. The internal relation of NATO members becomes closer.

However, the European evaluation of the policy and security issues such as the new movement toward facing the terrorism was totally different with the American idea. The conflict of idea rose at the time of technological and economical development, thus reaching a security cooperation becomes harder and harder than before.

In recent years the US started to renovate and make a rapid change in its military capability and sources. This development which passed a huge and vast era was achieved with a high speed that the military budget of the European countries could not reach it. So the EU has loosened the competition in this field. During the cold war, the US and Europe had a common strategic opinion. The military needs and requirements of the US and

Europe were complimentary it means that the two armies complete each other, and it was focus on armed control to defend themselves against any possible attack by the soviet union and its allies, but after the cold war there was a big change in the strategic prospect and some new subjects for both sides for military designing and organizing that appear, and now the main problem of the US and its allies is to think about the common defence measure rather than acquiring a common concept on the NATO(Office of the President, 2002 :30)

The European strategic point of view still concentrated on the European difficulty. In fact after the world war, there was no intention on the role of Europe in maintaining the security on the other side of the Persian gulf. In Persian Gulf, the role of European military appearance in 1991 was in the second level of priority. However in the last decade, the European members of NATO had a huge investment in defence section, but they couldn't reach an advanced development in this filed.

Some French military experts in a research, tried to compare the military and defence capability of the US with the military situation of the five major members of the EU Including Italy, France, England, Germany and Spain which together share more than 80% of the EU defence expenses. This report shows that the US maritime navy consists of 12 cruiser stand, 29 navies, but on the other side, the 5 European countries own just 1 cruiser and one airplane carrier (See Chalmers, 2001:571-578)

The recent change could either cause more integration or disintegration. In the field of integration the Europeans want to extend their abilities for military cooperation with the US army especially in maintaining peace and security missions in Europe and peacemaking in this area. They also want closer deal with the EU issue and the NATO action. The European countries also don't satisfy with the missions which they are participating. It's obvious that all the European states accept that the US army was creates to do the high tension mission all over the world and on the other hand they didn't reach to an agreement to send their common forces to take some military mission out of the Europe continent. The US offer to establish the rapid reaction forces in NATO could affect the future cooperation of European country and the Atlantic countries. In case of solving the problem of EU and NATO, still there are some deferent security priority which can make difficult to reach to the high level of cooperation.

After the 11 Sep, the American designer come to this conclusion that for America there is no need to make any unity with the others and the European understand that the US could not be a reliable partner any more. The American tendency to do unilateral action will resulted the European countries start to create an independent defence structure. For European especially Germany and France if the decision and the plat form of NATO was in favor of Washington, this organization is not a suitable common organization. The attempts which were started from 1999 with the participation of Berlin and Paris to move forward a European security and defence structure. The main aim of this attempt was to reduce the European dependence to the NATO which is totally under the rule and management of the united state of America.

Absence of a strong European policy in the head of state of NATO members in Prague (2002) in front of the will and request of America, failing to get a common or united position in Iraq crises and the American policy in this regard and finally paying less attention to the role of the EU in solving the Middle east crises all tighter was the elements of the deep diversion in the European security, defence and geopolitics policy.

Increasing the upper Atlantic conflict and reducing the bilateral concept could weaken the political determination of the two continents in other to face with their strategic deference opinions. However this common concept was wrealed after the 11 Sep attack but some new symbols of reinforcement of it was seen.

Some analyses criticizes that the separation of the US and EU is very essential and vital and they warn about this separation. They thought that this is the main root of upper Atlantic disputes. The disputes reflect the deep separation in their opinions regarding the moral identity of power or the means of identity of it.

Although there is difference in the concepts and security politics between the US and EU but the continuation use cooperating of them could be useful and beneficiary for each sides. In fact they are fully aware of the necessity of the coalition war and the necessity of reducing the strategic arguments. In this filed, it is good to say they although lthe US has the capacity and capability of military mission individually but he is looking for political legitimate from the coalition members. On the other side the European countries have no close rather than coordination and cooperation with the United

States of America. America had learn one lesson on the Iraq war and the lesson is that the US has the power of doing military action individually because of its military improvement but the leadership after the war individually is not possible and fully cooperation and coordination of the other allies is required(Gordon, 2004:81).

## Conclusion

The both Atlantic side relations from the ancient times had been faced with too much challenge but the continuing of this relation in due to the common political and economical interests. The upper Atlantic and the two organizations (NATO, EU) still exist to gain the essential goals and their political and security connections are boosting with the economical integration at the same time. But we cannot neglect the disintegration of the two Atlantic sides and the approach of the US and the EU in facing with some serious treats such as terrorism which had created a big gap on the strategic and military designing of two sides. In fact there is another gap in the matter of defending investment which could be managed. But the first gap caused the increasing of difference in military capability between the EU and the US to fulfill the common military operations either in Europe or elsewhere.

The priority and policy of the US defence secretary are the main obstacles on the way of creating and forming a clear upper Atlantic regime. Although the military cooperation in NATO is very important, the US does not make any contribution to its European allies in NATO to seek the national security strategy.

Just Comparing the US defence budget with the whole budget of the EU is enough to understand how much The EU is weak. 15 members of the EU assign 160 billion euro for their defence budget but this amount in the US is 354 billion Euros. The US military budget for fighting against terrorism after 11 sep 2001 to Feb. 2002 was increased 6 % and in 2003 US added 11% to its defence budget (Bechet and Rohatyn,2003:1-35)and the total amount reached to 48 billion dollars(Gordon,2004:78).

This database shows that if the EU wants to present more actively in the international scene beside the United States and keep its independent policy and position, there is no way rather than empowering its defence system.

If the interest and budget differences of Europe and the US are not settled the cooperation opportunity of two Atlantic sides will be much bounded so in the US and EU relations the important factor is to adopt the principal common policy in order to reach the interests of all parties..

## References

- Baylis , J. (2005) "International and Security in the Post Cold War Era", In Baylis, J and Smith, S. eds., *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Bechat, J.p. and Rohatyn F. (2003) "The Future of the Transatlantic Defense Community", CSIS Panel Report. Washington: CSIS, January.
- Brzezinski, Z. (2000) "Living with a new Europe", *National Interest*, No.60, summer.
- Buzan, B. (1983) *People, States and Fear*. London: Harvester wheat sheaf.
- Chalmers, Malcolm (2001)"The Atlantic Burden-Sharing Debate: Widening or Fragmenting? *International Affairs*, Vol. 77, No.3, July.
- Daalder, Ivo. (2001) "Are the United States and Europe Heading for Divorce?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 77, No. 3, July.
- Daheshyar, H. (1384), *Neoconservatives and the U.S. foreign policy*, Tehran: Soraye
- Gordon, Philip H. (2004)"The Transatlantic Alliance and the International System ", In Hamilton, D (ed.) *Conflict and Cooperation in Transatlantic Relations*, and Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations.
- Keohane, R and Martin, I. (1995)"The Promise of Institutional Theory", *International Security*, Vol.20.No.1.
- Khalozadeh, S. (1384), "Political- security relations of the United States and Britain after World War II", *Europe Book (5)*, Tehran: Cultural Institute of Contemporary Studies Abar.
- Mearsheimer, J(1994/95)"The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3.

Nice Presidency Report. (2000) European Security and Defense Policy, Brussels, Dec 4, in:  
<http://www.info-france-usa.org/news/statements/2000/defenrep.asp>.

Office of the President (2002) the National Security Strategy of the US, Washington, D.C. The White House, September. In:  
[http://www.state.gov/documents/strategy\\_organization](http://www.state.gov/documents/strategy_organization).

Oxford Analytical. (2000) "EU and NATO", June 7.

Shepard, E (1386)"Model for European defence policy?" Translation Qahremanpor, Journal of defensive Strategy, the fifth year, No. 17, fall

Taylor, Paul (2008) the End of European Integration, London and New York: Routledge.

### **Rouya Khezri**

Is an officials in foreign affairs ministry and received Ph.D in International Relations from Islamic Azad University, Sciences and Researches Branch, 2008.



### **Kazem Sultanhmadi**

Is M.A student in International Law at Islamic Azad University.

