

Former military chiefs call for joint EU-NATO 'directorate'

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Five former Western military leaders have called for the formation of a joint EU-NATO 'directorate' in order to co-ordinate the two bodies' response to any threats to global security.

In a report presented to the German Marshall Fund in Brussels on Wednesday (16 January), the authors lamented the lack of co-ordination between the EU and NATO both in the European capital and on the ground in conflict zones such as Afghanistan where both organisations have committed troops.

Also criticising the United Nations' ability to respond to dangers, the report argues that better co-operation between the EU and NATO through a new high-level political body – a 'steering directorate' should fill this void.

"We propose, as a first step towards a new and wider transatlantic bargain, the establishment of a US, EU, NATO steering directorate at the highest political level."



The United Nations' is confronted with "insurmountable political disunities and executive incapacity," the report says.

"There is a great mismatch between the interconnected list of dangers and the international and national capabilities to respond to them - capabilities that are weakened by their disunity."

The report, entitled "Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World," was authored by former French chief of defence staff Jacques Lanxade, former Dutch chief of defence staff Henk van den Breemen, former NATO military committee chief Klaus Naumann, former UK chief of defence staff Peter Inge, and former chairperson of the US joint chiefs of staff John Shalikashvili.

Within the EU, 21 of 27 member states are also members of NATO, and NATO itself has 26 members.

However, despite the overlap, co-ordination between EU and NATO military activities has been problematic at times, with concerns over military capabilities and duplication of activities.

Both NATO and EU have rapid response units raising the question of where loyalties would lie in the event of an EU member state being asked to contribute to both forces at the same time.

The report highlighted possible future threats from Iran and China, as well as the ongoing danger from Islamic extremists.

It comes ahead of a summit of the Western military alliance in April, where national leaders are expected to craft a new post-Cold-War role for NATO.