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## EU-NATO Cooperation Could Guarantee Energy Infrastructure Security

Heiko Borchert and Karina Forster of IPA Network argue that energy infrastructure security requires a serious military commitment. The EU could make this commitment by pooling resources with NATO through joint research in security and technology, military cooperation with key energy partners such as Africa, and mutual education through exchange of lessons learned. Part one of their commentary described energy infrastructure security as a key challenge for the transatlantic community.

### Key Military Capabilities

Armed forces have a serious role to play in energy infrastructure security. A senior NATO official confirmed on May 14, 2007 that the organization is now taking steps to secure energy infrastructure through talks with oil companies and energy-exporting countries.

Many of the military options available are multi-purpose, which means that they can be used to provide energy infrastructure security, improve the security of the transatlantic homeland and meet international crisis management demands. The following military capabilities are most important:

- **Intelligence** is indispensable to identify domestic and international risks. Energy infrastructure security would benefit from situational awareness along the energy supply chain. This requires more advanced intelligence sharing between civil and military agencies and between public and private actors.
- **Surveillance** of energy infrastructure could improve through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, networked sensors or radar systems. Many of these tools are unavailable to civil emergency responders.
- **Protection** of critical infrastructure could include controlling perimeters, establishing checkpoints, using advanced electronic warfare capabilities to protect information and communications technology and conducting operations to secure uninterrupted energy flows. Given the increasing importance of liquefied natural gas, for example, maritime transportation security will become a key task in the future. That's why NATO is considering using its maritime resources in cooperation with energy companies.

### How the EU and NATO Could Join Forces

We suggest three areas where Europe and the United States could use NATO and the EU in tandem to advance their common interests in energy infrastructure:

- **Security and defense science and technology (S&T) programs**, such as the NATO Science for Peace and Security Committee or the EU 7th Framework Research Program, should be brought together. Joint S&T approaches could be useful for information and communication technology security, situational awareness, command and control, human factors, detection and protection technologies, material sciences or modeling and simulation. The EU and NATO should also study how energy-relevant countries could be integrated into existing S&T programs. One of the most obvious candidates is Europe's Galileo program, which could provide satellite-based energy infrastructure surveillance in Algeria, Russia or Central Asia.
- **Military cooperation on energy infrastructure security with key energy partners**

should be established according to the Mediterranean dialogue initiatives from the EU and NATO. For example, the EU and NATO should review how to bolster Africa's local security and military capabilities to address the security of the continent's energy infrastructure. The EU has promised to help develop infrastructure as part of the [EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure](#) and should not let China do the job.

- **Using lessons learned and conducting combined exercises in energy infrastructure security** could stimulate mutual education. European experience shows a significant lack of adequate cross-border infrastructure-related emergency management capabilities. These capabilities are exactly what the global energy supply chain requires. As an example, existing shortfalls could be overcome by pooling the efforts of the [Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center](#), which helps coordinate disaster relief for instance in vital energy supply regions such as the Caucasus and Central Asia, and civil protection agencies of the EU. Outreach programs of the EU and NATO could also be used to advance joint exercises with Mediterranean dialogue partners.

*Dr Heiko Borchert is a member of the advisory board of IPA Network International Public Affairs, Berlin, managed by Karina Forster. This commentary was extracted from their study on energy infrastructure security commissioned the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the Swiss government. Both parts of this article have also been published in the [Middle East Survey, VOL. XLIX, No 21](#) on May 21, 2007. The authors can be reached at [contact@ipa-international.org](mailto:contact@ipa-international.org).*

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