High Representative Catherine Ashton visited EUNAVFOR HQ in Northwood

On 19 April, the High Representative visited the headquarters of the EU’s anti-piracy operation, EUNAVFOR Somalia, in Northwood (UK). She met Rear Admiral Peter Hudson, Commander of the Operation, and his staff. Catherine Ashton assured Rear Admiral Hudson of her full backing in his task and said: “Operation EUNAVFOR-Atalanta is a flagship of excellence in EU cooperation in security and defence. The operation has been a major success in the fight against piracy and has played a key role in providing much-needed stability in the region.” She added that she planned to visit the region soon to see the operation at first hand.

EUNAVFOR is a crucial contribution by the Union to efforts to stabilise the region and to the protection of vulnerable ships against acts of piracy in the waters off Somalia, including World Food Programme vessels and ships supplying the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The EU will continue to help stabilise Somalia by providing support to vital and priority areas such as the security sector and through the EU contribution in the area of training of Somali security forces (EUTM Somalia), development, assistance to the population and capacity-building support and humanitarian assistance.

www.eunavfor.eu
www.youtube.com/EUSecurityandDefence

Foreign Affairs Council on 26 April focuses on CSDP

The Foreign Affairs Council will meet in Luxembourg on Monday 26 April under the chairmanship of HR Ashton. Discussions will cover Sudan, Burma/Myanmar and Kyrgyzstan, among other issues. It will have a strong CSDP focus, in the presence of defence ministers, who will also discuss EU response to natural disasters (following the earthquake in Haiti) and EU CSDP operations, in particular EUNAVFOR Somalia, EUTM Somalia and Althea. They will join the Foreign ministers for a discussion on Afghanistan. Ministers will also discuss the establishment of the European External Action Service.

The European Defence Agency Steering Board

The European Defence Agency (EDA) will have its steering board on Monday 26 April, in the margins of the Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg. The EDA steering board is composed of the Defence Ministers of the 26 participating Member States (all except Denmark) and is chaired by the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton.

The EDA will hold a press conference, given by EDA’s Chief Executive Alexander Weis, around this meeting.

The agenda will cover a wide range of the Agency’s activities. Ministers are expected to launch a project on Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) and a new programme on Chemical, Biological, Nuclear and Radiological (CBRN) Protection as the Agency’s first contribution to the European Framework Cooperation. Ministers will also discuss “Defence Research under the Lisbon Treaty”. Furthermore, the Wise Pen Team will present its Report on “Maritime Surveillance in Support of CSDP”.

High Representative Catherine Ashton welcomed the new Handbook on CSDP

High Representative Catherine Ashton welcomed the new Handbook on CSDP, published for the European Security and Defence College (ESDC). The Handbook on CSDP aims at supporting the trainers and trainees of the College in the preparation for and the conduct of the ESDC courses. For course participants, more than 2500 since 2005, it will also serve as a reference book after they complete the courses.

“The handbook provides a good overview of the Common Security and Defence Policy and underlines the EU’s comprehensive civilian and military approach in this field,” said HR Ashton. “The European Security and Defence College provides the training for personnel in the member states and the handbook will help to accomplish this task.”

The ESDC is a network College and relies on the contribution of Member States and their national institutes. Following this basic functioning principle, the Handbook on CSDP was prepared together with the Ministry of Defence and Sports of the Republic of Austria. The content of the handbook mirrors the content of a CSDP Orientation Course, the most popular course provided by the ESDC, targeting in particular “newcomers” in the field of CSDP.

Handbook on CSDP
EUPOL COPPS is providing logistics support to the Palestinian Civil Police

EUPOL COPPS is providing logistics advice to the Logistics Offices of the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) at both District and HQ levels with the aim of helping to build up sustainable logistics and financial managerial capabilities.

EUPOL COPPS is coordinating the construction of three logistics compounds for the PCP in Ramallah, Nablus and Hebron. Every logistics compound will include a light vehicle maintenance workshop, one IT and Communication workshop and one central warehouse. This project is funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development.

EUPOL helps improving safety at Kabul Airport

To improve safety at Kabul International Airport, EUPOL Afghanistan, in cooperation with the German Police Project Team, organised an airside driving course at Kabul Airport, that was completed on 11 April. Sixteen Afghan Border Police personnel passed the course tests and were granted the vehicles and driver permissions to carry out mobile patrols on aprons, taxiways and runways according to International Civilian Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and regulations. Furthermore six of the Afghan Border Police Officers passed the instructor level and can now teach the Flight Line Driving Course, as it is called, to their staff.

Read the EUPOL newsletter

EUPM supports a civil society forum in Sarajevo

Last week, the three-day forum "Let us build a joint civil society" was held in Sarajevo, gathering more than a hundred participants from NGOs, from the Balkans and the EU who share the same values and commitment to a civic-oriented Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

EUPM, the European Union Police Mission in BiH, financially supported the forum aiming to broaden the visibility of civil society actors committed to a citizen-based BiH. This is another example of EUPM’s commitment to the European integration of BiH and to strengthening the idea of active citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

More on this forum

EUMM chief sees no immediate prospect of renewed conflict

On 15 April, the head of the EU monitoring mission in Georgia (EUMM), gave at an interview to the Georgian International Media Centre at EUMM’s headquarters in Tbilisi.

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EUPHRAHAF reçoit la presse dans le cadre de la politique européenne de voisinage

Le 13 avril dernier, la mission de l’UE d’assistance à la frontière au point de passage de Rafah (EUBAM Rafah) a reçu 25 journalistes de Géorgie, d’Arménie et d’Azerbaïdjan afin de leur présenter la mission.

Depuis 2005, EUBAM Rafah assure la présence d’une tierce partie au point de passage de Rafah afin de contribuer à son ouverture, en coordination avec les efforts de renforcement des institutions déployés par l’UE et d’instaurer la confiance entre le gouvernement israélien et l’Autorité palestinienne. Malgré la fermeture du point de passage en janvier 2006 et la suspension temporaire de la mission en juin 2007, près de 500 000 personnes ont pu franchir le point de passage de Rafah. Dans l’attente d’une solution politique, des efforts considérables ont été déployés pour obtenir la reprise des opérations normales et garantir l’ouverture du point de passage le plus souvent possible.

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Head of EULEX Kosovo met new Ministers

Last week, the Head of EULEX Kosovo, Yves de Kermabon met the newly appointed Minister of Internal Affairs, Bajram Rexhepi, and Minister of Justice, Haki Demolli. With the new Interior Minister, Yves de Kermabon discussed the challenges that Kosovo is facing in the area of asylum seekers and false documents. Mr. Rexhepi expressed his willingness to work hard to battle those issues as a way to move things forward on Kosovo’s European integration path.

Upcoming activities

26 April - Foreign Affairs Council (with defence ministers) chaired by HR Catherine Ashton
- European Defence Agency Steering Board

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PRESS - EU Council Secretariat Tel: +32 (0)2 281 7640 / 6319 - presse.pscd@consilium.europa.eu
EU external action web site: efas.europa.eu - For information on the EU CSDP agencies, click here

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