Catherine Ashton highlights 2011 defence and security achievements at the European Parliament

In a speech delivered before MEPs in Strasbourg on 13 December, High Representative Catherine Ashton insisted that “the demand for the EU to do more and better is getting stronger. We need to be able to respond to the complex threats of today (violent crises, cyber-threats, energy security), and assume our global responsibilities whilst showing real value for money.”

Catherine Ashton recalled that “the 1 December Foreign Affairs Council endorsed [her] call to maximise synergies and strengthen cooperation – complementing instead of duplicating each other. I am committed to ensuring that the actions by the EEAS, the Commission and the EU Member States reinforce rather than compete with each other.”

At the level of structures, the EEAS has been established and is “now equipped to deal with crises better, faster and smarter”, she said. She also welcomed the commitments made by Member States in specific projects in the area of military capabilities, as well as the “pragmatic way forward” on the issue of planning and conduct of CSDP operations, while the EU is beginning planning for the activation of the Operations Centre for the Horn of Africa operations.

She concluded by saying: “As long as we can deliver on the existing missions, I am ready to take work forward on possible new CSDP missions – in particular in regions of such strategic importance to Europe’s security as such as Sahel and Libya. CSDP can only be as effective and ambitious as we let it be. It relies on collective political will and ambition to act.” More

Fight against piracy: Council approves EU action to strengthen maritime capacities in the Horn of Africa

The Council on 12 December approved the Crisis Management Concept for a new CSDP mission to support regional maritime capacity building (RMCB) in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean states. This decision kicks off operational planning and lays the ground for a technical assessment in the region. The launch of the mission, to be decided by the Council, should translate into the deployment of personnel in the course of 2012.

RMCB will be a civilian mission augmented with military expertise. Its objective is to strengthen the capacity of states in the region to effectively govern their territorial waters and to reinforce their capacity to fight piracy. The mission is embedded in the recently adopted EU strategic framework for the Horn of Africa, setting out priority actions for the EU in that region. It is fully complementary with two other CSDP missions: EUNAVFOR Somalia - Operation Atalanta and EU Training Mission (EUTM) Somalia.

The new mission has two main tasks: strengthening the sea-going maritime capacities in the countries in the region (Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, the Seychelles, Mauritius and Yemen) and, in Somalia, the training of a coastal police force as well as the training and protection of judges. RMCB also has a pan-regional dimension to address a regional problem: the Djibouti Regional Training Centre will be strengthened and will instruct more trainees from countries other than Djibouti. Press release - Factsheet

L’UE fournit une aide supplémentaire en faveur de la sécurité et de la paix en Somalie

Le 5 décembre, la Commission européenne a décidé de fournir une aide supplémentaire de 50 millions € à la mission de l’Union africaine en Somalie (AMISOM), ce qui porte la contribution totale de l’UE à 258 millions € depuis 2007. L’AMISOM est mandatée par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies. Elle soutient la réconciliation et la stabilisation, tout en assurant la protection d’infrastructures clés des institutions fédérales de transition et en facilitant les opérations humanitaires, notamment le rapatriement des réfugiés et des déplacés.
Civilian Operations Commander Hansjörg Haber visits EUJUST LEX-Iraq

The EU Civilian Operations Commander Hansjörg Haber visited EUJUST LEX-Iraq in Baghdad in order to support the work of the mission and meet with international counterparts and Iraqi high-level officials. Mr. Haber exchanged views with the EU Heads of Missions in Baghdad, who expressed their support for an extension of the mission beyond June 2012. He then had meetings with the US Ambassador Michele Sison and with Martin Kobler, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), as well as with a number of high-level Iraqi counterparts including representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Justice.

EUNAVFOR transfers pirates’ outboard engines to Djiboutian Navy

On 7 December, EUNAVFOR - Operation Atalanta transferred six powerful outboard motors to the Djiboutian Navy. The engines were taken from small skiffs which had been stopped by EUNAVFOR units conducting counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa. They were exchanged for smaller engines which have sufficient power to get the suspected pirates back to Somalia but would not allow them to intercept and board merchant ships, thereby preventing subsequent pirate attacks. The engines have been completely overhauled and will provide a useful upgrade to the Djiboutian Navy’s rigid inflatable boats. Read further

EULEX Kosovo to President Tadic: “Progress welcome, but more needed”

On 7 December, EULEX Kosovo Head of Mission Xavier Bout de Marnhac met the President of Serbia, Boris Tadic, in Belgrade. The main issue covered was the need to significantly improve freedom of movement in northern Kosovo.

The Head of Mission reaffirmed the EU’s position that the barricades in the north should come down and that there should be permanent and unconditional access for everyone including EULEX and international organisations. Read further

EUPOL COPPS : formation de la police touristique palestinienne en Italie

Dix officiers supérieurs de la police palestinienne ont bénéficié début décembre d’une formation de deux semaines organisée par EUPOL COPPS à Rome, dans une académie de la police italienne. La délégation palestinienne a également rendu visite à l’unité de police qui opère au Vatican. Les agents ont été formés par des experts italiens à la gestion de crise et à l’organisation d’événements religieux et touristiques qui rassemblent des dizaines de milliers de visiteurs.

Ces dernières années, la police palestinienne a réalisé des progrès significatifs dans tous les domaines, y compris pour la protection du patrimoine et la sécurité touristes. Le nombre de pèlerins et de visiteurs sur les sites archéologiques et historiques a régulièrement augmenté, dégageant un revenu essentiel pour l’économie palestinienne. Plus d’infos

EUPOL Afghanistan supports “Commissar Amanullah”, a TV series about Afghan Police

On 14 December, the project for the TV series “Commissar Amanullah” has been launched between the Saba Film Production Company (SFPC) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) which finances it. The 20 episodes will be broadcast on Afghan National TV in order to promote civilian policing in Afghanistan.

EUPOL Afghanistan supports this TV series which helps to portray a community police force serving the people by fighting crime and corruption as well as domestic violence. Since 2004, SFPC has produced and broadcast several feature films focusing on violence against Afghan women and on police empowerment. Read further

Upcoming activities

10 - 11 January - First meeting of the College of Commissioners with the Danish presidency of the EU in Copenhagen
30 January - Foreign Affairs Council chaired by High Representative Catherine Ashton

© European Union 2011

EU Security and Defence on YouTube
www.esdp10years.eu
EU CSDP agencies

Les avis exprimés ne peuvent en aucun cas être considérés comme une position officielle du Service européen pour l'action extérieure.
The views expressed are not to be taken in any way to represent the official position of the European External Action Service.