

# Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE



Gen. Claudio Graziano

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As many of you know, Mr. Josep Borrell, former Spanish Foreign Minister, took over the responsibilities as the new High Representative for the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice president of the European Commission (HR/VP), at the end of 2019.

During the previous period, under the leadership of Ms. Federica Mogherini, the EU witnessed unprecedented steps forward in the Security and Defence field, starting from the drafting of the EU Global Strategy. Launched in 2016, the document still represents the shooting ramp - more than just the framework - for a diverse array of initiatives in the specific field, aimed at shaping a new role for the EU, the one of a global and reliable security provider.

Being the EU approach “integrated” by definition, the shift in business management introduced by the Global Strategy has touched upon all different aspects related to Security and Defence for the EU: investments and research for capabilities, industry cooperation, training, partnerships, missions and operations have all been thoroughly reviewed under a more ambitious lens, hunting - first time in EU’s history - for a strategic autonomy, for an EU able and capable to act not only in cooperation with partners, but also alone, if necessary. In particular, acknowledging the role played in the euro-atlantic region by its major security partner, NATO, the EU has identified its own peculiar autonomous space in the context of building security capacities of countries in need, a fundamental strategy to contribute to a proper security burden sharing, complementing other efforts in the international context.

The EU of Defence inherited by Mr Borrell at the end of last year is definitely on the right track. True is that a lot remains to be done, by the Institutions and the Member States, if the organization really wants to assert itself as a genuine geopolitical player, demonstrating with facts that it is learning “to use the language of power”. In fact, while we have clearly identified our roadmap to success, we have also recognised our obstacles, which reside mainly in the concrete capability for the EU to speak with a single voice: the unique and invaluable toolbox at disposal of the EU Institutions - made of political, diplomatic, military and economical instruments - becomes of great significance only if all Member States reach coherent consensus in its role and decide to fully implement it.

As easily understandable, the convergence of national point of views may not be always easy to reach, at some stages or for specific issues. But the priority to guide us in our choices must be kept with the fundamental narrative at the core of our Union, based on essential principles like free and safe democracy, rule of law and security of our citizens. Additionally, reaching the capacity to speak with a single voice will provide the EU with more credibility at global level, but also with a unique, more recognizable and attractive identity, showing an organization with a single entry-point, at political and military level, to those seeking for assistance, but also to those willing to support,

From my position of Chairman of the Military Committee, I cannot but warmly welcome the determination by Mr Borrell and the rest of the new EU’s leadership to carry on with such an ambitious but also necessary project in the security and defence domain, as I am firmly convinced that our security, as EU citizens, is strictly intertwined with the one of our neighbours, and beyond. As EUMC, we will continue to provide the HR/VP with our unfettered and proactive military advice, keeping full involvement in all initiatives, since the final success will definitely depend on the enthusiasm and active engagement by all stakeholders, political and military, both at EU and Member States’ level.

Good luck to Mr. Borrell for a successful start in this new endeavour!



*The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not represent the official position of the European Union Military Committee or the single Member States’ Chiefs of Defence*

**LATEST EVENTS**



Brussels, 15 Jan: NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE CHODs Session



New Delhi, 16-18 Jan: RAISINA DIALOGUE



Rome, 30-31 Jan: Hearing in the Italian Parliament



Athens, 6-7 February: Official visit to Greece

## **“A strong Europe in a world of challenges!”**

*by Rear Admiral Predrag Stipanović, Croatian Military Representative (MILREP)*

The first Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union is taking place from January to June 2020, under a motto „**A strong Europe in a world of challenges**“. The motto reflects current situation facing Europe, as well as Croatian aspiration for the European future. Uneven economic development, climate change, disinformation, dissemination and growing populism are some of the challenges of today’s world. Only strong Europe can face those challenges.

For the Europe to be able to face security challenges of today’s world we intend to focus on four key priorities: strengthening European defense cooperation, stronger EU – NATO cooperation, defense industry and research domain and strengthening EU efforts in South East Europe. Taken as a whole first three priorities are building upon already laid foundations, strengthening current efforts in increasing efficiencies and capabilities. The first priority is **“Strengthening European Defense cooperation, continuation of the implementation, consolidation and coherence of defense initiatives with special emphasis on building and maintaining defense capabilities”**. The aim of this priority is to ensure substantial and credible European cooperation in the area of defense with considerations of future steps regarding the role of the EU in this area. This priority includes the credible implementation, consolidation and ensuring the coherence of defense initiatives – PESCO, CARD, military mobility, and EDF.

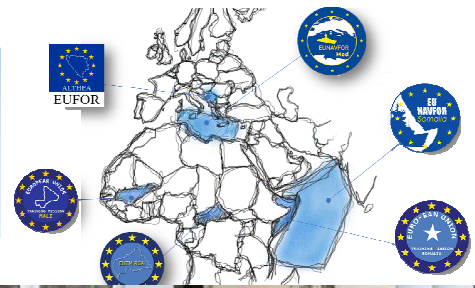
In this regard, the Presidency will promote continuation of the strategic debate on further development and modalities for enhancing European defense cooperation. **“Stronger EU – NATO cooperation, including transatlantic relations”** is the second priority. The objective of this priority is to continue working on close and concrete cooperation between the EU and NATO, as two key components in the context of European security, and to provide a meaningful contribution to transatlantic relations. In addition, it is to ensure the continuity of cooperation and action between EU and NATO, as one way of retaining credible transatlantic and European security and defense guarantees. The third priority is **“Industrial and research domain – enhancing defense industry competitiveness, role of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and research capacities”**. This priority is to further development of the European defense industry and defense research capacities through the EDF, whilst ensuring sufficient resources in the upcoming Multi-annual Financial Framework. A special emphasis will be given to SMEs and their access to cross border supply chains, while keeping in mind the affirmation of national capacities, an even and fair development of the defense industry in Europe.



*Rear Admiral Predrag Stipanović*

The impact of climate change on security will also be highlighted, as well as themes of energy efficiency, and the application of new technologies in the area of security and defense. The final fourth priority is **“Strengthening EU efforts in Southeast Europe”**. The main objective of this priority is to maintain focus of the EU on SEE, ensuring support to stabilization and security. This in particular refers to building partners’ capacities in dealing with security challenges, such as countering hybrid and cyber threats. In addition, this objective supports the PRES priority related to merit-based enlargement policy.

# News from our Operations & Missions



## EUFOR ALTHEA

On 21 February 2020, COMEUFOR, Major General Reinhard Trischak, visited three EUFOR Liaison Observation Team (LOT) houses in the area of Central Bosnia and Herzegovina. He spent time with soldiers who man the LOT houses in Zavidovići, Zenica and Travnik, manned by Turkish troops, receiving briefings on the local area and any issues of concern to the local community. There are 17 Liaison Observation Team houses located throughout BiH. They are EUFOR's link to local communities and authorities, allowing EUFOR to stay in contact with the citizens of BiH. LOT teams also conduct other tasks, such as delivering essential Mine Risk Education to more than 15,000 individuals per year; including vulnerable and at-risk groups such as farmers, forestry companies, hunting clubs and school children of all ages.



## EU NAVFOR Atalanta

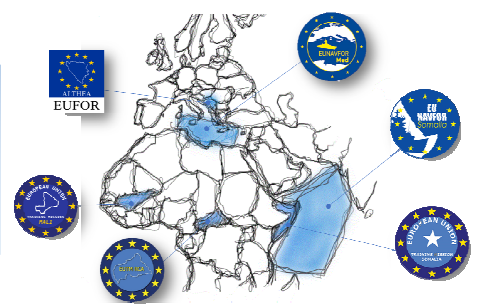
During the period 7th – 9th Feb EU NAVFOR Somalia and Combined Task Force-151 (CTF-151) conducted focused counter-piracy operation IKARUS around the Somali Coast, the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden. The primary mission was to deter and when required, disrupt piracy. Improving coordination and information sharing between CTF 151, EU NAVFOR Somalia and adjacent actors in the area of operations was also an important aspect. ESPS VICTORIA, Japanese Ship HARUSAME, Japanese and Spanish maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters monitored merchant shipping's adherence to Best Management Practices (BMP5), skiff movements in the area and worked to identify patterns of life. Additional training, combined helicopter and boat operations and intelligence sharing activities were also carried out. EU NAVFOR and CMF frequently work together, to protect vulnerable shipping and deter piracy. Focused Operations, exercises and activities planned with counter-piracy partners are very important in improving Operation ATALANTA's presence in the high-risk area off the Horn of Africa.



## EU NAVFORMED Sophia

On 21 February 2020, the farewell ceremony for Italian Navy Vice Admiral Enrico Credendino, was held at the Operational Headquarter in Rome. Vice Admiral Credendino, has been the Commander of Operation Sophia since it was established on 18 May 2015. In his farewell speech, Vice Admiral Credendino commented that the number of migrants leaving Libya to reach Europe had fallen by 90% compared to 2016 and that thanks to the training provided by Operation Sophia, the Libyan Coast Guard is now able to meet its functions, demonstrated by the fact that in 2019 about 50% of the rescues in the SAR area of Libya were successfully conducted by them. The Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Claudio Graziano, presided over the ceremony. In his speech, Gen Graziano emphasized the importance of the EU having a military operation in the Mediterranean with the necessary assets, including naval vessels. He thanked Vice Admiral Credendino and wished the incoming commander, Rear Admiral Fabio Agostini, success.

# News from our Operations & Missions



## EUTM Mali

Combined Mobile Advisory Training Team (CMATT) activity is one of the training activity types conducted by EUTM Mali, comprising staff and unit training courses. The latest CMATT ran from the 27th January until the 24th February 2020. This CMATT employed 123 military personnel, including Advisory (ATF) and Education and Training (ETTF) instructors, Force Protection, Medical Teams, Communications and other support. Usually located in BAMAKO and KOULIKORO, the personnel composing the CMATT unit, moved to MOPTI-SEVARÉ. Onsite coordination meetings took place with the 6th Military Region Commander, to settle the final conditions to deliver the courses



## EUTM Somalia

On 19 February 2020, the inauguration ceremony of the new Headquarters of the European Union Training Mission Somalia was held in the international Campus of Mogadishu. The ceremony was attended by the Director of the EU Military Planning and Conduct Capability, Lieutenant General Esa PULKKINEN and representatives of prominent stakeholders, notably the Somali Minister of Defence H.E. Hassan Ali MOHAMED amongst other dignitaries. During his speech, Lt. General PULKKINEN congratulated the EUTM-S Contingent for its exceptional work, highlighting that the new HQ represents a sign of the EU willingness to support the Somali Defence institutions. EUTM Somalia aims at contributing to strengthening the Federal Government and Defence and Security institutions in Somalia, following a three-pillar approach: training, mentoring and advising.



## EUTM RCA

Between January and February 2020, Information and Communication Systems advisors, conducted the first test phases for the opening of a network between the FACA General Headquarters and the Béal and Kassai camps in Bangui. Since 2014, the Central African Republic's army no longer has the communication networks essential for the coordination of the various units with a view to operational redeployment. The EUTM-RCA's mission is to support the operationalization of the Central African Republic's army. The soldiers of the strategic pillar of the EUTM-RCA first of all supported the FACA specialists in the installation and testing phase of a communication network. The first tests took place from February 10 to 12 and were positive.

# News from the Committee

## Meeting with the Italian Under Secretary of Defence

On 21st January, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, met in Brussels with the Italian Defence Under Secretary, Angello Tofalo. The meeting was a precious occasion for an interesting and fruitful exchange of views on security and defence matters. In the occasion, General Graziano underlined the importance of "an urgent and common answer" in this sensitive domain.



## Meeting with the members of the Sub Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)

On 23rd January, by invitation of the Chair, Ms. Nathalie Loiseau, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, had an exchange of views with members of the Sub Committee for Security and Defence (SEDE) at the European Parliament. General Graziano briefed them on the role of the EU Military Committee in the current evolution of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).



## VTC of the HR/VP with Missions and Operations

On 23rd January, the Chairman, General Claudio Graziano, attended, in Brussels, the annual VTC of the High Representative/Vice President, Mr. Josep Borrell, with EU CSDP Missions and Operations. The HR/VP together with the Chairman of the EU Military Committee took the opportunity to speak to the staff in Missions and Operations via video link, receive and pass some key messages and wish all a prosperous new year. "I've been many times in operations - General Graziano said - I know the feeling of being away from home. But I also know that it's because of your presence there, that your loved ones can enjoy peace".



## Meeting with the Swedish State Secretary for Defence

On 18th February, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano met with the Swedish State Secretary for Defence, Mr. Jan-Olof Lind. The occasion paved the way for a very frank discussion about capabilities, issues and operational matters "both highly relevant for a stronger EU in the field of Security and Defence", General Graziano underlined.

