

# Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE



Gen. Claudio Graziano

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Strategic Autonomy is one of the topics which is increasingly being mentioned in relevant discussions, particularly those concerning the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. With this in mind, it is therefore only logical to further our understanding of the term Strategic Autonomy and outline some perspectives that might be connected to it. In this respect, a key reference for discussion is, undoubtedly, the EU Global Strategy as the starting point for many of the current defence initiatives. In her foreword to the Global Strategy, the High Representative, Ms Federica Mogherini, stresses on the fact that "The Strategy nurtures the ambition of strategic autonomy for the European Union. This is necessary to promote the common interests of our citizens, as well as our principles and values." This overall concept raises different considerations. Among them, I would like to focus on two, in particular.

First of all, the Global Strategy points to the need for Strategic Autonomy in three interlinked areas: the ability to take independent decisions ("political autonomy"), the need to have the necessary capacities to act in accordance with the agreed level of ambition ("operational autonomy"), and the need to have a defence industry able to deliver those capabilities ("industrial autonomy"). Looking closer at the three areas, "political autonomy" is probably the last contested. The EU is a well-established and independent organisation with the capacity to make decisions as defined by its Member States. "Operational autonomy" is closely linked to the Common Security and Defence Policy and is broadly defined as the ability to handle crises management but not in the form of territorial defence. Linked to this, it has been agreed that necessary assets and capabilities should be available to the EU to independently conduct a number of Missions and Operations, without unnecessary duplications of NATO roles. The third area, "industrial autonomy" is more complex to define. The Global Strategy states that it is also necessary for Europe to be able to research, develop and produce such capabilities in order to be autonomous; "the EU will systematically encourage defence cooperation and strive to create a solid European defence industry, which is critical for Europe's autonomy of decision and action" and "a sustainable, innovative and competitive European defence industry is essential for Europe's strategic autonomy and for a credible CSDP".

As a second observation, it goes without saying that such Strategic Autonomy for the European Union must also take into account certain sensitiveness regarding, in particular, the transatlantic relationship and the partnership with NATO. Without any prejudice to the NATO membership of the majority of the EU Member States and to the joint effort to deepen the cooperation between the two organisations, it is evident that the EU has started a process of identifying its own strategic goals and act towards their achievement. This process, however, is not meant to compete with NATO but rather seeks for complementarity with the alliance. Strengthening the European pillar is in fact also a NATO's strategic goal, and a long-lasting demand by the US.

Drawing some conclusions, we can say that, thanks to the EU Global Strategy, the concept of Strategic Autonomy is getting more and more meaningful for the European Union. Taking into consideration the high relevance of the topic, I hope that appropriate discussions will follow and continue to aid further reflection about what the EU should be autonomous from as well as whether Strategic Autonomy should be seen as relative object (to increase the degree of Strategic Autonomy) or an absolute objective (to create full autonomy). In this respect, the EU Military Committee stands ready to provide its inputs from a military perspective.

## LATEST EVENTS



Boston (USA), 9-11 Mar.: Harvard Kennedy School - "European Conference 2019"



Rome (IT), 16-18 Mar.: Tor Vergata University - Conference "Lezioni aperte sull'Europa"



La Valletta, 21-22 Mar.: on the occasion of his first Official visit to Malta, General Graziano meets Hon. Michael Farrugia, the Maltese Minister for Home Affairs and National Security



## ***“Cohesion, a Common European Value”***

*by Lieutenant General Dumitru Scarlat, Romanian Military Representative to NATO and the EU*

The **motto** of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union recalls the principle of unity of the EU and outlines the importance of reducing economic and social disparities among its Member States, regions and citizens. At the core of the Romanian Presidency there will be the European Citizens' aspirations and concerns. The general priorities of the Romanian Presidency could be grouped under four pillars:

### ***Europe of convergence***

The Romanian Presidency of the Council will aim at promoting economic and social upwards convergence, in order to achieve sustainable and equal development opportunities for all Member States and, importantly, for all EU citizens.

### ***A safer Europe***

The Romanian Presidency will contribute to further strengthening of the EU's internal security and combating crime and terrorism. A more effective management of external borders, a well-functioning Schengen Area and an enhanced cyber security are, inter alia, Presidency's priorities.

### ***Europe a stronger global actor***

Romania is committed to work closely with the other EU Member States in order to ensure the advancing of the enlargement policy in the Western Balkans. We are looking for greater consistency and effectiveness of actions in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood.

### ***Europe of common values***

Romania considers that all EU policies and actions should be underpinned by European values and principles, as provided by the EU Treaties.

### **Romanian Presidency Priorities in CSDP Domain**

The EU Global Strategy and its implementation plan in security and de-

fense areas will continue to be the guiding framework during the Romanian Presidency. In this respect, Romania will actively pursue the following **CSDP priorities**:

### ***Consolidating the functional profile of CSDP***

Romanian Presidency supports the further development of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the Coordinated Annual Review of Defense (CARD) and the European Defense Fund (EDF). For the EDF, specifically, Romania strives to reach an agreement as early as possible in 2019, considering that the negotiations at the technical level have already been concluded. The EDF file is likely to be approved at the level of the European Parliament by the end of this month.

### ***Optimizing the EU's operational engagement***

Romania supports the process of developing the civil-military synergy, with a particular view to the relationship between the Military Planning and Conduct Capability and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability. Regarding the European Peace Facility initiative, Romanian Presidency facilitates the assistance provided by the Special Committee Athena to the negotiations to be carried out in the agreed forum.

### ***Enhancing the CSDP partnership and cooperation agenda, including the Transatlantic bond***

The EU-NATO cooperation and the Transatlantic bond have been provided a special focus. Romania particularly focuses on the cyber security and defense, hybrid threats, countering terrorism and military mobility. At the same time, Romania strongly backs the High Representative's strategic approach towards partner countries that are able and willing to engage in CSDP



**Lieutenant General Dumitru Scarlat**  
*Romanian Military Representative*

activities.

### **Way Ahead**

In order to support all these actions, the Romanian Ministry of National Defence and the Defence Staff have planned a number of events - conferences, seminars and workshops. Some of these activities have already taken place, some others are expected to take place both in Romania, and Brussels as follows:

- 30-31 January** - Informal Meeting of EU Defence Ministers, Bucharest;
- 06 March** - EUMC Working Lunch, Brussels;
- 07-08 March** - Special Committee Athena Meeting, Bucharest;
- 19 March** - Workshop on CARD Methodology, Bucharest;
- 18-20 March** - Workshop on CARD Methodology;
- 25-27 March** - Scientific Defence Research Conference, Bucharest;
- 10-12 April** - EUMC Away Days;
- 27-29 May** - EUMC WG and EUMC WG/HTF Away Days.

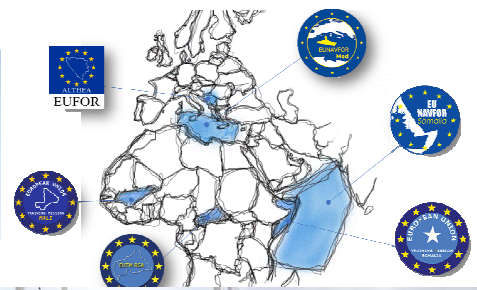
### **Key Take-Away**

Romania appreciates the key role that structural funds and cohesion policy have played in boosting economic growth across Europe's territories over the past 20 years.

Romania recognizes the need for a reinvigorated, more ambitious Europe, which places social, economic and territorial cohesion at the heart of the European project. That is why we promote **cohesion as a common European value**.



# News from our Operations & Missions



## EUFOR ALTHEA

On 29th March, SHAPE Vice Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Olivier RITTIMANN (FR), took over command of EUFOR ALTHEA from General Sir James Everard.



On 27th March, in Camp Butmir, an official flag-raising ceremony marked the occasion of Portugal re-joining EUFOR Althea. In attendance were members of the EUFOR mission representing all 20 troop contributing countries, COMEUFOR, Major General Martin Dorfer, and Chief of Staff NHQSa, Colonel Tibor Papp. Bringing the ceremony to a close, COMEUFOR stressed: "I look forward to Portugal adding to the significant contribution that all Troop Con-



## EUNAVFOR ATALANTA

On 29th March, a ceremony took place in Rota Naval Base, Cadiz, Spain, to mark the transfer of command from Major General Charlie Stickland, UK Royal Marines, to Vice Admiral Antonio Martorell Lacave, Spanish Navy, and the relocation of the operation Headquarters of EU NAVFOR Atalanta.

The relocation of the Headquarters of the Operation has no precedent in the history of the EU and includes the transfer to Brest (FR) of the Maritime Security Centre for the Horn of Africa, as part of the Operational Headquarters.



## EU NAVFORMED Sophia

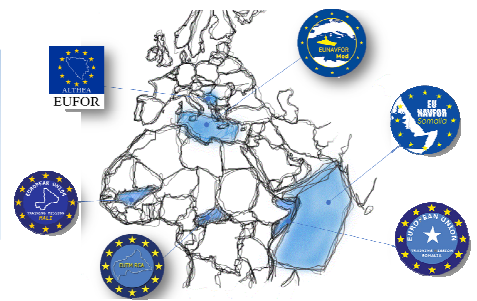
On 29th March, three Libyan Coastguard and another three Libyan Navy attendees satisfactory completed the curriculum of the five-week Basic Ship's Diver Course, managed by EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia.

The course, hosted by the Croatian Navy, focused on diving procedures and techniques in order to be able to conduct vessel underwater maintenance operations. The course also included topics regarding Human Rights, First Aid and Gender Policy.

After completion of this course, the total number of Libyan Coastguard and Navy trained by EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia reached 355 personnel.



# News from our Operations & Missions



## EUTM Mali

On International Women's Day, the female soldiers of EUTM MALI Headquarters came together to symbolize the stability they bring to the mission. In total there are 30 international female soldiers in EUTM Mali, whose mission is to support the FAMa in their military training and education. On this special day, very warm greetings were sent to Malian female comrades.



## EUTM Somalia

On 24th March, a joint medal parade with the EU Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (EUCAP Somalia) was held at the European Union Training Mission Somalia (EUTM-S) compound in Mogadishu, to recognize the service of the mission's personnel.

EUTM Somalia Mission Force Commander, Brigadier General Matteo Spreafico, and EUCAP Somalia Deputy Head of Mission, Chris Reynolds, on behalf of the Head of Mission Maria-Cristina Stepanescu, congratulated their staff who received CSDP medals, underlining that, despite the challenging environment, the activities performed by the two Missions to build the Somali capacity in the security field are a key part of the European integrated approach to Somalia.

EUTM Somalia contributes to the development of federal defence and security institutions in Somalia, using a three-pillar approach of training, mentoring and advising.



## EUTM RCA

On 18th March, the 1st Degree Technical Certificate – Administration was opened by the Head of Education Pillar of EUTM – RCA, in Kassai Training Camp.

EUTM RCA is part of the EU's integrated approach in the Central African Republic. This approach led by the European Union Delegation in CAR aims to contribute to the African and wider international efforts to restore sustainable stability, to support the political transition process in the country and to enhance the Development.



## News from the Committee



### **The Minister of Defence of the Central Africa Republic addresses the EU Military Committee**

On 6th March, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, welcomed the Minister of Defence of the Central Africa Republic, Ms. Marie-Noëlle Koyara, who addressed the EU Military Committee.

Exchanging views with the EU Military Representatives, Ms. Koyara highlighted, in particular, the crucial role of the EUTM RCA, in training local forces.

### **General Sir James Everard awarded in front of the EU Military Committee**

On 20th March, on behalf of the HR/VP, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee (EUMC), General Claudio Graziano awarded General Sir James Everard with a medal in recognition of distinguished service and outstanding leadership as Operation Commander of EUFOR ALTHEA, and his invaluable contribution in enhancing cooperation between the EU and NATO.

On 29th March, General Sir James Everard handed over command of EUFOR ALTHEA to the SHAPE Vice Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Olivier RITTIMANN (FR).



### **Move of the EU NAVFOR Somalia Operational Head Quarters (OHQ)**

On 25th March, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Claudio Graziano, attended the ceremony to commemorate the imminent move of the EU NAVFOR OHQ from Northwood and the Transfer of Authority to OHQ Rota.

Both General Graziano and the UK Chief of Defence Staff, General Sir Nicholas Carter, recognized in their speeches the sterling performance of the UK in its' Framework Nation role, during the last 10 years of Operation Atalanta, in accordance with EU Common Security and Defence Policy.