

Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE



Gen. Claudio Graziano

In this issue:

Message from the Chairman

p. 1

"The European Union Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia)"

by BG Antonello De Sio

p. 2

CSDP in action:

New from our Operations and Missions

p. 3

News from the Com-

On 13 May, for the first time in its history, the EU Military Committee held a "virtual" meeting in Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) format.

I chaired the meeting from Council premises, with the support of the EU Military Representatives based in Brussels. The Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach joined us. He stressed that cooperation and coherence between EU and NATO is more important than ever, in these times of uncertainty. This was the first time for the HR/VP Mr. Josep Borrell to address the EU CHODs since he took up his appointment. He underlined his strong determination to keep Europe safe and secure, he put the emphasis on the fact that "COVID19 is a factor of change which will have far-reaching implications for global security", and he made it clear that "We cannot afford to lower our level of ambition for EU Security and Defence".

The EU CHODs elaborated on the extensive engagement of Member States' Armed Forces in dealing with the impact of COVID-19 outbreak. They provided details on the military activities that are supporting efforts to tackle the crises at national and EU level, which have proven to be critical for successfully dealing with this unexpected and unpredictable challenge. In this respect, the COVID-19 Information Platform, established in the EU Military Staff (EUMS) in Brussels in order to facilitate an EU-wide information exchange, was widely appreciated.

The CHODs acknowledged that the military CSDP missions and operations Commanders have adapted their activities effectively, ensuring safe and secure conditions for personnel while fulfilling their mandates to the maximum extent possible. This has enabled the EU to maintain a security presence where needed in these difficult circumstances. The resumption of the full spectrum of activities remains a priority and Commanders have put in place the necessary preparations in order to be ready to launch the full range of operations, as soon as conditions allow. The outcome of the discussion made ONE point clear: we must continue to be active, visible and operational, and the presence of CSDP military missions and operations is now required more than ever.

EU CHODs also discussed the implications that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have for the security domain. The future possible security and defence environment, in the aftermath of the crises, presents even more risks and challenges than that pertaining before. We should realistically expect new threats, adding to or magnifying the old ones and, therefore more efforts must be made to enhance coordination and cooperation at the international level, in particular with the UN and NATO.

Finally, the EU CHODs commended the "virtual" format of the meeting, which provided a great opportunity to maintain business continuity, reinforcing networking and enhancing the credibility of the work of the EUMC.

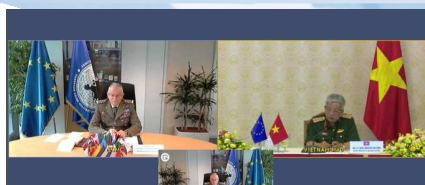


The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not represent the official position of the European Union Military Committee or the single Member States' Chiefs of Defence

LATEST EVENTS



13 May: "virtual" meeting in Chiefs of Defence (CHODs)



11 June: "virtual" meeting with Gen. Nguyen Chi Vinh, Vietnamese Dep. Min of Defence



16 June: Video conference of EU Ministers of Defence

“The European Union Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia)”

by Mission Force Commander, Brigadier General Antonello De Sio

The European Union Training Mission in Somalia is a non-executive military CSDP Mission deployed in Mogadishu under the Command and Control of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability.

After approximately 25 years of civil war following the overthrow of the military regime of Siad Barre, during which rival warlords tore the country apart into clan-based fiefdoms, in 2012 an internationally-backed government was installed in the long-suffering Somalia. However the new authorities and the Somali National Army are today still confronted by a challenge from Al-Qaeda aligned Al-Shabaab insurgents who seek to seize power and implement Islamic Sharia law over Somali citizens.

In this challenging background, since April 7, 2010 the European Union has deployed a Military Training Mission, with the objective of strengthening the Somali Federal Defence Institutions.

Now in its 6th Mandate, the Mission acts as Organisational Lead Partner for the Somali National Armed Forces General Staff (SNAF GS) within the Comprehensive Approach to Security Strand 2A forum. The latter provides the conceptual framework for the international commitments under the supervision of the United Nation in Somalia (UNSOM). To achieve its objectives, the Mission employs a three-pillar approach: Advising, Mentoring and Training. The Advisory pillar is the main effort of the Mission. The EUTM-S Advisory Team (AT) is tasked to provide support on the build-up of inclusive, effective and efficient Somali Defence Institutions, helping the SNAF Headquarters and the Somali Ministry of Defence (MoD) to work together, promoting political oversight and assisting with the development of key policy and legislative developments and documents.

The Training Team (TT) plays a crucial role in supporting the Somali National Army (SNA) at the tactical level, instructing Light Infantry Companies

(integrated and multi-clan) and providing specialised courses based on requests received from the Somali leadership. In addition to that, the TT has the pivotal function of conducting Train the Trainers Courses; the first step in the implementation of a Somali-Owned Training System. The latter is supported by the EUTM-S Mentoring’s activities in the development of the SNAF GS J7 Training Department, in order that they can deliver the policies, procedures, expertise and experience to manage their own Force Generation. In order to enhance the aforementioned process, EUTM-S will soon double its efforts through the concurrent training of two Light Infantry Companies, in synergy with the already EUTM-S qualified SNA Trainers. In this way, the trained Companies will constitute readily deployable Battalions, thanks also to the support of the first EU-fund non-lethal equipping programme.

To date, over SNA 6700 soldiers have been trained by EUTM Somalia. The SNA companies trained by EUTM-S personnel are a professional and reliable “tool” at the disposal of the Somali Authorities, both for combatting Al-Shabaab and the commencement, in a concrete manner, of the transitional process for the gradual takeover by Somali Security Forces of responsibility for their own security and the withdrawal of AMISOM troops.

In this context and in a significant manifestation of the EU’s Integrated Approach in the Horn of Africa, EUTM Somalia in Jan 2020 also sup-

ported EUCAP Somalia in advising three Companies of the DARWISH Federal Police on “Field Awareness” and “Interoperability with the Somali National Army”, in order to ensure a smooth “military to police” transition in the areas liberated from al-Shabaab occupancy.

The COVID-19 crisis is also affecting Somalia. For this reason, a key concern has been to ensure the overall safety of both EUTM-S and MoD/SNAF personnel. Consequently, a gradual and temporary reduction of EUTM-S members was adopted in our Mission HQ. Critical capabilities are being maintained as well as the three-pillar approach, using multimedia tools. A concrete example has been the recent conclusion of the 5th Light Infantry Company course, in which EUTM-S’ instructors ‘remotely’ supported the SNA Trainers. Furthermore, the EUTM-S Medical Advisor has drafted a document in support of the SNAF GS Health Department Head, which can be used as a ‘template’ to develop the “Emergency Containment Plan” against COVID-19 for all SNA military installations. The content of the document has been translated into the Somali language by the EUTM-S Field Language Assistants, and it will be synergised with the additional guidance provided by the Somali Chief of Defence Forces for a broader and more coherent response to COVID-19.

Once it is deemed safe to do so, the Mission will return to its original configuration and resume its mandated activities as before.



ET Training Mission-SOMALIA

News from our Operations & Missions



EUFOR ALTHEA

In June, medical facilities in Bihać, Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla were pleased to host two EUFOR doctors and share their experience of treating COVID-19. Major Pasquale Giannelli and Major Marino Trivisani both have extensive first-hand knowledge of dealing with the Corona Virus back in their native country, in Italian hospitals, where the pandemic has sadly claimed many lives. In Bihać, Dr Aida Mataruga showed the two EUFOR doctors how they worked under isolation conditions. This is working well as no staff there have been infected by the virus.



EU NAVFOR Atalanta

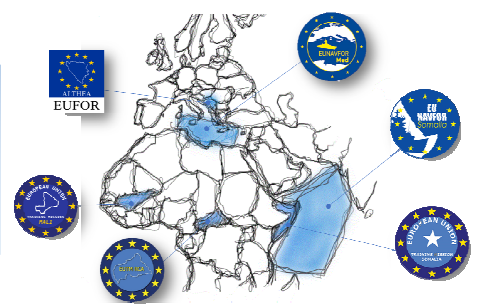
On 17 June, operation Atalanta EASP Numancia provided support to UN FAO's fish aggregating devices to boost local fisheries and fight underlying causes of piracy. One of the underlying causes of piracy in Somalia is its very fragile economy. Somalia has the longest coastline in Africa and some of the world's most untapped marine resources. The 3300 km of fertile fishing grounds could be the key to transform the economy of this otherwise arid country. But the infrastructure of the fishing industry is largely underdeveloped, making it hard for local fishermen to catch larger fish near their shores. In an effort to turn this situation around, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization with the support of its donors and the protection of the EU, launched an initiative in 2015 to deploy 25 Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) to attract high value fish to the Somali shores. Besides protection, EU NAVFOR Somalia provided security and logistical support using their equipment and know-how to properly position these FADs.



EU NAVFORMED Operation Irini

On 22 June, Heiko Maas, German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Luigi Di Maio, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, visited Operation Irini's headquarters hosted within the Italian Armed Forces' Joint Operation Headquarters in Centocelle, Rome. Mr Maas was accompanied by the German Ambassador to Italy, Viktor Ebling. The Ministers and the Ambassador were welcomed by General Luciano Portolano, Commander of Italian Joint Operation Headquarters and Rear Admiral Fabio Agostini, Irini's Operation Commander. They received a detailed update on the Operation and its results. During the visit the Ministers took the opportunity to witness how and where the operational activities are planned and directed. Finally, the German Federal Minister, Heiko Maas, had the chance to meet the German National Contingent in the OHQ staff. The OHQ staff is composed of representatives from more than 20 Member States.

News from our Operations & Missions



EUTM Mali

On 18 June, EUTM Mali paid tribute to the memory of the OR7 Gil Fernando Paiva Benido, member of EUTM Mali who died in Bamako on 18th June 2017, during a terrorist attack. Always in our memory!



EUTM Somalia

The closing ceremony of the 6th Platoon and Company Commander (PCC) course took place in Mogadishu on 11 June, at the General Dhagabadan Training Center 2 (GDTC-2). The 6th PCC trained about 30 Officers of the Somali National Army (SNA) in the ranks of Lieutenant and Captain. It started on February 10 and was concluded, despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, through video lessons and using multimedia equipment. The course was performed to provide full preparation for future commanders regarding the planning of tactical activities. Among the subjects, the students learnt the Military Decision Making Process, the offensive/defensive operations planning process, movement planning procedures in an IED environment and the Code of Conduct on the protection of women and minors.



EUTM RCA

Deployed as part of the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM-RCA) as LEGAD (Legal Advisor), Lieutenant Alice is integrated into the General Staff as advisor to the MFCDR (Mission Force Commander). She is involved in all aspects of the mission by providing its legal expertise, and ensuring that the mission respects international commitments in the conduct of operations. Deployed in the Central African Republic since April 2020, she has made her skills available for this training and advisory mission to the Central African Armed Forces. At the heart of the planning and conduct of force actions, she also brings her expertise in the establishment of each contract and agreement that the EUTM-RCA signs with its various partners. In addition, she contributes directly to the restructuring of the Central African Republic's army by supporting the strategic pillar on questions of military justice and the employment of the armed forces on the national territory.

News from the Committee

Meeting with the newly appointed EEAS DSG-CSDP CR

On 8th May, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, welcomed the newly appointed Deputy Secretary General for Common Security and Defence Policy and Crisis Response, Mr Charles Fries. They had a fruitful discussion on the main ongoing CSDP activities, with a particular focus on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on EU CSDP Missions and Operations.



Meeting with the newly appointed EDA CEO

On 18th May, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, welcomed the newly appointed EDA Chief Executive, Mr. Jiří Šedivý. In their first bilateral meeting. They agreed on the need to strengthen both coherence and cooperation following the COVID-19 Pandemic, and its expected impact on funding for the Security and Defence Sector. They also agreed to continue to work closely together towards supporting European Union Member States in developing capabilities.



Meeting with Commissioner Breton

On 4th June, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, had a virtual meeting with Commissioner Thierry Breton. After the meeting General Graziano stated that *"I had a fruitful exchange with Commissioner Breton on the importance of cooperation in ensuring a strong EU Common Security and Defence Policy and an adequate budget for the European Defence Fund, which is one of the most concrete tools to make EU Defence more and more credible"*.



Farewell to the EL MILREP

On 24th June, the Chairman, General Claudio Graziano, bid farewell to the EL MILREP at the European Union Military Committee (EUMC).

General Graziano acknowledged the Mil Rep's contribution, *"On behalf of the EU Military Committee and personally, I thank Vice Admiral Karageorgis for his frank and extremely valid support"*.



The CSDP Medal for Extraordinary Meritorious Service to DG EUMS/MPCC Director

On 24th June, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Claudio Graziano, presented the DG EUMS and MPCC Director, Lieutenant General Esa Pulkkinen, with the CSDP Medal for Extraordinary Meritorious Service in recognition of his commitment towards the EU Training Missions in Mali, the Central Africa Republic and Somalia.

