

Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

@Kostarakos



Message from the Chairman



Gen. Mikhail Kostarakos

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We have just taken our first steps in a new, promising year for European security and defence.

Indeed, political conditions are now mature to look at deeper integration in the domain of security and defence and, at the same time, make full use of the potential of the Lisbon Treaty.

As our High Representative, Ms Mogherini, recently stated, 2018 will definitely be the year of "building on vision", "delivering" and "moving forward to action".

I have already had the opportunity to share with you some considerations on the recently adopted Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) and on the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), both significant examples of European Integration in the domain of security and defence.

In the EUGS implementation process, other important initiatives are underway. Currently, a trial of the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) is ongoing. Building on the policy framework for systematic and long-term Defence Cooperation, CARD will help foster capability development, deepen defence cooperation and ensure more optimal use of defence spending plans. The European Defence Action Plan (EDAP) adopted by the Commission in November 2016, includes the proposal to establish a European Defence Fund (EDF). Funding collaborative defence research and projects at the EU level, the EDF is another relevant initiative that will effectively support the joint development of defence equipment and technologies as well as investments in joint research, with positive repercussions on the effectiveness of CSDP.

This New Year also welcomes the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union! This is to me, a precious occasion to congratulate Bulgaria, wishing them an excellent Presidency under the motto "United we stay strong" and guaranteeing full support from the EUMC in fulfilling its CSDP related priorities.

Allow me, in conclusion, to sincerely offer you my best wishes for a most prosperous, rewarding and successful New Year.

LATEST EVENTS



Bruxelles 11 January: CEUMC submits new year wishes to King Philippe of Belgium



Bruxelles 15 January: CEUMC welcomes the Australian Chief of Defence



Sofia 24-26 January: CEUMC official visit to the Republic of Bulgaria



Rome 30-31 January: CEUMC intervention to the Conference "Difesa Europea: quale ruolo per l'Italia"

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



Bumpy ride for the international security

by Ms Anna Elżbieta FOTYGA
European Parliament Security and Defence Subcommittee (SEDE) Chair

The last few years have been a very bumpy ride for the international security situation and for the rules-based international order. Never since the end of the Cold War have the EU, its Member States and its allies been exposed to a similar level of threats and challenges. Be it the Russian aggression on Ukraine, including the illegal annexation of Crimea, wars in Syria and Libya, the fight against ISIS and its ideological offspring, the migration crisis, instability in Sub-Saharan Africa, the tensions in the South-China Sea or the threat emanating from the DPRK's reckless nuclear efforts... the crisis-agenda of the last years has been long, too long indeed, and there is no end in sight.

In SEDE, the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defence, my colleagues and I discuss and follow these developments very closely. Through examining carefully the developments of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), its institutions, capabilities and its operations, civilian and military, SEDE exercises essential democratic parliamentary scrutiny, holds to account CSDP decision-makers, puts forward ideas and provides important political impetus.

Following the adoption of the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) in June 2016 and the intense institutional work that followed the EU is now on the verge of major steps in the area of security and defence, some of which seemed impossible in the past. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) is about to be launched, a European Defence Fund (EDF) is being prepared and various other initiatives are under discussion or being launched, such as the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), and the legislative proposal for a European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) is already under scrutiny at the European Parliament. All these are encouraging developments if they effectively contribute to making the EU and its Member States more resilient and capable in the field of security and defence and prepare them to face the

substantial challenges of the future. The momentum must now be maintained and consistency between all these initiatives must be ensured. Also close Allies and Partners in the Balkans, Caucasus and Mediterranean have all increased their commitments and contributions to Europe's security.

In this context the quality of EU-NATO relations are of crucial importance. Both organizations currently have 22 member countries in common. Since the signature of the EU-NATO Joint Declaration at the historical 2016 NATO Warsaw Summit the two organizations have already substantially enhanced their cooperation. I am delighted at the progress already made on the 42 concrete actions in seven areas for the implementation of the Joint Declaration and look forward to further ambitious steps. I also welcome the common set of new proposals agreed recently. The goal must be that the two organizations, which are so crucial for the protection of our citizens and indeed the safety of the entire continent and beyond, work together effectively and in full complementarity. The notion of complementarity applies in particular to the capability development processes should link up and be brought into a more synchronized and coherent framework. Resulting from the NATO-EU Joint Declaration, cyber security measures have been implemented across Europe and North America to enhance the resiliency of our networks and critical infrastructure.

Much has been said about the relations with the US since the start of the Trump administration. However, we continue to share the same beliefs and values and most of the security concerns in regions ranging from the Balkans, to Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The US commitment to European security remains strong. Additional deployments have taken place or are underway in the NATO framework thus underlining the continued strong relationship. Also, on the conflict in Ukraine, the EU and the US stand to-



Ms Anna Elżbieta FOTYGA European Parliament Security and Defence Subcommittee (SEDE) Chair

gether, providing assistance to Ukraine and coordinating the imposition of sanctions.

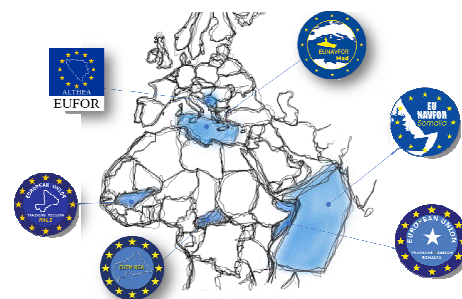
Finally, in view of Brexit, as the EU will lose an important part of its military capability continuing close defence cooperation between the EU and the UK is crucial, notably in the areas of intelligence sharing, counterterrorism and capability development. A solution should be sought whereby the post-Brexit UK could strengthen its commitment within NATO and at the same time engage as an active partner in the CSDP.

With regard to all the above issues, SEDE will continue to provide a lively forum of debate and scrutiny. SEDE will put the focus on important topics of European and global security and will ask uneasy questions, thus fulfilling its parliamentary role.



Ms Anna Elżbieta FOTYGA and General Mikhail Kostarakos

News from our Operations



EUFOR ALTHEA

On January the 30th, 83 EUFOR personnel received their European Union Common Security and Defence Policy Medal 'Althea' in recognition of their service in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Commander EUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner, presided over the parade which saw 6 nations of EUFOR represented.

EUNAVFOR ATALANTA

The Operational Commander of EU NAVFOR and the Commander of Combined Maritime Forces have agreed to promote new levels of cooperation in the international fight against piracy.

On his first visit to Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Headquarters in Bahrain on 16th Jan 2017 Major General Charlie Stickland met with Vice Admiral John C. Aquilino who is the Commander of CMF, US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the US 5th Fleet based in Bahrain. CMF works in very close cooperation with EU NAVFOR; 54 nations are involved across both organisations with the common theme of maritime security and counter-piracy.



EUFORMED Sophia

On January the 30th, the EUNAVFOR MED Sophia Operational Headquarter received the visit of the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee, General Mikhail Kostarakos. Deployed in the Southern Central Mediterranean since summer 2015, EUNAVFOR MED Sophia is one of the main points of reference in the context of EU military operations. Countering the smuggling and trafficking of migrants is more than just an effort to put an end to the human tragedy unfolding in the Mediterranean Sea; It is, also, an important contribution to restoring stability in the Region. A step forward to that direction were also the additional tasks which have been amended to the Operation's mandate in July 2017

EUTM Mali

On January the 20th, the new Malian Armed Forces Joint Operational Center (COIA) has been officially inaugurated by the 'Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Armées', Brigadier General Bemba Moussa Keita, at the presence of the Mission Force Commander of EUTM Mali, Brigadier General Bart Laurent.

The new COIA will allow the central command of the Malian Armed Forces to better coordinate and conduct its activities and operations in real time with all the Military Regions and Defense Zones.



EUTM Somalia

On January the 20th, EUTM Somalia launched the Military Engineering Course at General Dhagabadan Training Camp in Mogadishu. This four-weeks course will be attended by 24 Somali National Army (SNA) Officers and NCOs belonging to the 32nd Engineering Battalion and is aimed at giving them basic knowledge and skill on setting up defensive position, constructing obstacles for tactical maneuvers as well as basic knowledge on Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and the tactics associated to their usage and possible indicators of an IED.

EUTM RCA

On January the 11th, in "Camp UCATEX/MOANA", Bangui, at the presence of the Acting Director of the Military Planning and Conduction Capability (MPCC), Major General Daniel GRAMMATICO, Major General Fernando GARCIA BLAZQUEZ (ES) handed over the command of EUTM RCA to Brigadier General Hermínio MAIO (PT) The ceremony was honoured by the Central African Republic Defence Minister, Ms. Marie-Noëlle Koyara, and other civilian and military dignitaries.



News from the Committee



Farewell to the EUNAVFORMED Operation SOPHIA Force Commander

On January the 15th, in the occasion of the EUMC meeting, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos bid farewell to Rear Admiral Javier MORENO, outgoing EUNAVFORMED Operation SOPHIA Force Commander, and thanked him for his excellent leadership during his tenure.



NATO Chiefs of Defence meeting

On January the 16th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, participated in the NATO Chiefs of Defence meeting, taking place at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Another precious occasion to enhance the EU-NATO Cooperation.



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT's Subcommittee on Security and Defence

On January the 24th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, addressed the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT's Subcommittee on Security and Defence, on the EUMC contribution to the European CSDP. This was a great opportunity to discuss and exchange views on sensitive topic such as the EU integrated approach, the ongoing CSDP military missions and operations, the EU-NATO cooperation.



EU Military Committee

On January the 24th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, welcomed Major General Jean-Paul Deconinck, MINUSMA Force Commander and thanked him for his excellent briefing to the Committee emphasizing the importance of maintaining and enhancing the EU-UN cooperation.