In the process of implementation of the EU Global Strategy, sensitive progress is ongoing in the field of Military Mobility. Military Mobility addresses a strategic need. It identifies a series of operational measures to tackle physical, procedural or regulatory barriers which currently hamper military mobility. Facilitating the movement of military troops and assets is essential for the security of European citizens. It is key to build a more effective, responsive and joined-up Union and use public money more efficiently.

Additionally, enabling swift and seamless movement of military personnel and material within and beyond the EU will result, in the short term, in increased effectiveness both in the CSDP Missions and Operations and in the national framework.

Enhancing military mobility, however, is not a simple domain and is characterised by its multi-dimensional nature. The challenge, in this respect, is to allow for a better mobility of forces throughout the EU yet assuring full respect of the sovereignty of the Member States over their national territories and their national decision making process regarding military movements.

The end of 2017 has signalled a key milestone for Military Mobility in the EU. In fact, building on the political momentum and aware of the sensitiveness of the topic, Member States decided to bring work forward on this issue. As a follow up to a European Commission and HRVP Joint Communication adopted in November 2017, Improving Military Mobility in the European Union has been included among the more binding commitments of PESCO projects. At the same time, it has become one of the actions in the implementation process of the joint EU-NATO declaration of 8 July 2016.

The Roadmap on Military Mobility developed by the European Defence Agency (EDA) and adopted by the Steering Board last February, represents a significant step forward. It identifies tasks, responsibilities and timelines for improving military mobility with particular reference to legal, customs and cross-border movement permission aspects.

Last March, the High Representative and the Commission have submitted an Action Plan on Military Mobility for Member States’ endorsement. Built upon the EDA’s Roadmap on Military Mobility, the Action Plan proposes recommended actions, implementing actors and ambitious timelines on how to address identified barriers to military mobility within the European Union.

At the moment, the military requirements for Military Mobility are being defined in coordination with other stakeholders. The EU Military Committee (EUMC) will assess those requirements as well as agree the provision of all related military aspects developed by Member States with the support of the EU Military Staff (EUMS).

I am glad to say we are looking at a new upcoming success, achieved through the positive engagement and contribution of all parties involved in the implementation of the EU Global Strategy.
General, how are you facing this mission of leading EUTM RCA? Is it a challenge to command people from so many countries?

As Mission Force Commander, it is a great honour for me to command the European Union Training Mission 2018. I take great pride in leading these outstanding Soldiers of EUTM RCA. Ten countries are contributing to the Mission: France, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden of the European Union, together with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Serbia. Ten different mode operandi and yet, one common plan, one common effort and a common goal to attain: the rebuilding of the Central African Republic Defense structures and its Armed Forces, in the framework of the Security Sector Reform led by MINUSCA. A great and enduring effort along with the CAR authorities and other countries and international organisations of the International Community.

And do you think this kind of mission is important to the European Union?

Yes, our actions in CAR are important steps in the evolution of the European Union, especially in the domain of Security and Defense and the implementation of the EU Global Strategy. Here, we are proving that we can go further working together, upholding European values and contributing to a more secure and stable environment. Our predecessors including personnel seconded from EUROCORPS by their respective states and this team led by Portugal have been working hard and proudly to ensure Europe is having a positive impact in CAR and to ensure that the mission assigned to us is entirely met, within our best military and civilizational values and traditions, as well as in the best interests of European citizens.

Through our Mission we are enabling a more secure future for the population of the CAR, the region, the continent and also to the European Union. We are making the path for a more sustainable economic and social development in this part of the world.

What other entities are engaged in this joint effort?

This is the endeavor we are facing in close coordination with the CAR authorities, the United Nations (MINUSCA) and the European Union Institutions, particularly the European Union Delegation.

Why has the Mission now decided to spread a Newsletter?

Sharing our EUTM RCA newsletter with Global and Local readers also helps to give to the citizens of CAR and Europe a better understanding of the mission’s tasks and accomplishments.
News from our Operations and Missions

**EUFOR ALTHEA**
On April the 27th, in a ceremony held at EUFOR Headquarters near Sarajevo, Brigadier General József Szpisják handed over the position of Chief of Staff EUFOR to Brigadier General Gábor Horváth (Hungarian Armed Forces).
The ceremony was honoured by delegates from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other distinguished guests, including the Principal Deputy High Representative, Mr Dennis Hearne, Brigadier General Robert Huston, Commander of NATO Headquarters Sarajevo, and Brigadier General Zsolt Sandor, Deputy Commander of Joint Force Command in Hungary.

**EUNAVFOR ATALANTA**
On April the 5th, Rear Admiral Simone Malvagna (Italian Navy) assumed the role of Force Commander of the European Union’s counter-piracy Operation Atalanta on board his flagship, ITN Carlo Margottini.
The ceremony, held in Djibouti port, was attended by Operation Atalanta’s Deputy Operation Commander (DCOM), Rear Admiral Alfonso Nanclares.

**EU NAVFORMED Sophia**
On April the 24th, following the cooperation agreement signed last 4th of July 2017, the Operation Commander, Rear Admiral Enrico Credendino, and the Italian National anti-mafia and counterterrorism Prosecutor, Federico Cafiero De Raho, met the Italian Prosecutors committed in the fight against human beings smuggling and trafficking.
The meeting, held in EUNAVFOR Med – Operation Sophia Headquarters, has been a successful model of cooperation between a military operation and law’s enforcement agencies.

**EUTM Mali**
In April, EUTM Mali has organised and conducted the 6th Company Command Course (CCC6) at the Koulikoro Training Centre (KTC).
During the almost 12 weeks course, 20 Malian Armed Forces (MaAF) junior Officers were trained, educated and prepared for their current and future duties as Company Unit Commanders.

**EUTM Somalia**
On April the 16th and 17th, the EUTM-Somalia Mission Force Commander, Brigadier General Pietro Addis, met the Somali Deputy Chief of Defence, General Abdullahi Anod, to discussed the positive results achieved by the Birjeh Battalion Light Infantry Company, recently trained by the instructors of EUTM-Somalia.
During the meeting, Gen. Anoud announced that the Somali National Army is ready to start the training of additional 120 soldiers.
Training, together with Advisory and Mentoring, is one of the of EUTM-Somalia mandate’s pillars.

**EUTM RCA**
On April the 14th, the EUTM-RCA organised and held the “Cérémonie des couleurs”. In the occasion of the meaningful event, a number of soldiers participating in the Mission were decorated.
News from the Committee

17th anniversary of the first sitting of the EUMC

On April the 11th, on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of the EUMC, the daily meeting has commenced with a short address from the 2nd Chairman of the Committee, General Rolando Mosca Moschini.

Please find his intervention at the following page.

Address in the occasion of the "European Policy on Defense and Security: Challenges and Prospects" event

On April the 19th, in Athens, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, gave a keynote in the occasion of the "European Policy on Defense and Security: Challenges and Prospects" event, co-organized by the Jean Monnet Center for Excellence "EU Multilateral Diplomacy" of Athens University of Economics and Business and the Europe Direct City of Athens.

European Union Military Committee (EUMC) Informal Meeting

On April the 26th, in Sofia, the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) had an Informal Meeting organised under the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.
Mr Chairman, dear Mikhail,

Thank you for your welcome.

I'm very grateful to you and to all the distinguished colleagues and members of the EUMC for giving me the opportunity to be here today.

My mind goes back to the wonderful professional and human experience I had as Chairman of this Committee.

We were all engaged in making significant steps in the process of developing European military capabilities, we took many initiatives and we worked with enthusiasm, optimism and determination.

The guideline of our discussions and efforts was the European Security Strategy “A Secure Europe in a Better World”.

I firmly believe that its conceptual pillars will be in line with the international scenario for many years to come:

1) The innovative concept of “inclusive security”: the more we are able to involve our neighbours in our principles, in our values, the more we guarantee our security.

2) The interconnection between security and development: Security is the precondition for development, while real and lasting security cannot be achieved without development.

This entails the need for a multidisciplinary approach to the areas of crisis.

Whenever there is a crisis we should intervene with a wide spectrum of components, military and non-military.

At the beginning, the military component should provide a minimum level of security to allow civilian interventions for institutional building and development. Then, when a reasonable level of security is achieved and, consequently, a development process is allowed, the centre of gravity of the intervention will move to the civilian side and the military component will be progressively streamlined and eventually withdrawn.

The lack of multidisciplinarity may put at risk the success of the intervention (I invite you to reflect on the situation in Afghanistan after so many years of efforts).

We were all aware in the EUMC then, and I am fully convinced that this capability of putting at work together quite diversified components into a single synergistic and synchronised effort to solve a crisis - the comprehensive crisis management – represents a decisive added value the EU can provide to overall global security.

In the EUMC we worked for the comprehensive crisis management to be effective by providing for preventive interventions or, more precisely, for the preventive management of risks in the areas and contexts where they emerge.

We did want the EU to be able to systematically analyse evolving events and situations, identify trends and anticipate possible shocks.

The “think globally and act locally” precept –as the European Security Strategy reads- envisages that, based on the so-called operational knowledge, multidisciplinary task-forces, of limited size but very capable in relation to the specific crisis to tackle, can be inserted into the crisis itself so that they can act in those places and at those times that make their action as effective as planned towards the end state of the mission.

We fully agreed that the concept of task-forces and the need for each Member State to have a single set of military capabilities should guide the ESDP and the restructuring and modernization of our Armed Forces.

After the fall of the Berlin wall, efforts have been made – in many cases are being made – to transform the Armed Forces from rigid, heavy structures linked to the national territory, to defend our geographic borders, into capabilities organized into modules of high quality, interoperable, projectable, sustainable.

Let me describe a meeting I had, as Chairman of this Committee, with the Prime Minister of a small EU Member State.
While discussing multinational operations, I was asked the following question:

“How can a small Country like mine, with a very limited defence budget, contribute, in a significant way, to an EU operation?”

My answer was the description of what I call “the basket theory”.

I said: “each Member State should organize a basket containing a certain number of modules of different nature, projectable, sustainable, of the same high quality as the modules of the other Member States, interoperable with the ones of the other Member States. If your Country is called to contribute to an EU operation, I said, you will provide, for instance, 3 or 4 modules of your small basket of capabilities whereas big Member States will provide 20-30 modules of their big baskets. The important point is that the few modules of your small basket be of the same quality of the many modules of the big basket of major Member States”.

In this way we will all be able to be relevant subjects of a flexible and effective international security system.

Whenever there is a crisis, the main subjects of the International Community should sit around a table and decide how to intervene according to the different parameters of the crisis in question (political, ethnic, religious, etc.).

Once analysed the different parameters, and the ones of the surrounding regions, one will decide whether to intervene with NATO, EU, NATO plus, EU plus, a coalition of willing, etc..

3) Another basic concept of the European Security Strategy which inspired our efforts is the need for an “effective multilateralism”, which should build on the strong potential synergies that can be developed between the EU and other International Organisations.

Co-operation with NATO is obviously the most important as the two organisations share not only most of the Member States, but also values, missions, concepts and national capabilities.

NATO and the EU are the two sides of the same medal, the medal being the Euro-Atlantic security system. Strengthening the EU means strengthening NATO and strengthening the overall international system for peace and stability.

CONCLUSIONS

My dear Colleagues, these are the principles and criteria that have guided our efforts during my period as Chairman of this Committee and that are still consolidated in my mind.

As I said, we worked with great enthusiasm and optimism, but, in my opinion, at the end of the last decade, we have suffered a period of difficulties in the process of EU military capabilities development. This impression of mine was shared by some of my successors. I could even perceive feelings of discomfort on the military side of the EU house. The situation has now fortunately changed, also as a consequence of the rapid evolving of the international scenario.

I believe that the adoption of the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) and other recent Council decisions will result in significant steps forward of the CSDP. I can also see a positive continuity with the principles of the European Security Strategy.

But it is out of the question that there is still very much to do.

We need to pursue, above all, a more substantial degree of commonality of intents and political cohesion among Member States moving away from short term pure national interests to make an investment on the future, through a more forward looking, really common approach to security and defence.

If we achieve expensive common defence capabilities without making significant progress in our political cohesion, which is the necessary basis for a rapid and effective decision-making process, we simply waste our financial resources.

Colleagues, thank you again for allowing me to attend this significant meeting and thank you all for your attention.