

Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

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@Kostarakos



Gen. Mikhail Kostarakos

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News from the Com-

Two years ago the **EU Global Strategy (GS)** was launched. Since then, the global system has definitely become less stable and more uncertain.

Against this scenario, the EU has a duty to take greater responsibility to keep our citizens safe and contribute to global peace and security.

With particular reference to **Security and Defence**, new tools have been created to allow Member States and the EU to plan together and effectively face both current and future challenges. Among others, the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation on Defence (PESCO) stands out as a key success. This treaty-based process aims at deepening defence cooperation amongst EU Member States. Twenty-five of them have already committed to jointly develop defence capabilities and make them available for EU CSDP missions and operations. In this framework, seventeen concrete projects have been launched covering various areas, from maritime security to cyber rapid response teams.

The Military Planning Conduct Capability (MPCC), the new control centre for non-executive (training and advisory) EU CSDP Missions, is another outcome which will significantly improve the level of our effectiveness in the field. In parallel, we have deepened our partnership with NATO. The presence of the highest leadership of NATO at the latest EU Chiefs of Defence (CHODS) Conferences is clear evidence of ongoing successful EU-NATO cooperation at the military level. In fact, common work is ongoing on various fronts such as capabilities and Military Mobility.

Strengthening Cooperative regional orders and a rules-based global governance is another key priority set by the EU GS. In this context, the western Balkans remains an area of high interest as well as our partnership with Africa. The EU's support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force is a significant example of the importance of investing in global-regional security partnership. As part of the European Union's Integrated Approach, the three EU-led military training missions deployed in Africa, aim at setting the ground for sustainable locally-owned security.

I would like to conclude underlining how this second year of implementation of the EU Global Strategy has been a time of delivery and important achievements. The challenge, now, is to push the implementation process forward while consolidating our achievements and ensuring coherence and credibility. Let's take on this responsibility together, making these times not only interesting but also constructive for a safer, more secure and prosperous Europe!



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, 7 June: Symposium on Military Mobility



Beijing, 15-20 June: CEUMC's Official Visit to China



Luxembourg, 25 June: Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)

ATALANTA: An insight into EU NAVFOR Somalia.

By Major General (UK) Charlie Stickland OBE, Operational Commander of EU NAVFOR Somalia

Do you think that Atlanta is still relevant?

Absolutely. Our assessment remains that both the intent and capability still exists to conduct piracy. Op ATALANTA's deterrence and influence along with other partners continues to suppress piracy, and as such, existing pirate networks have diversified into other areas of criminality; weapons and people smuggling, the facilitation of terrorism and illegal immigration to name but a few. This is a team effort and Op ATALANTA seeks to act as a catalyst to encourage cooperation, coordination and collaboration with all maritime agencies and partners to work together to render piracy irrelevant and tackle broader maritime security issues.

How is Atalanta taking things forwards?

We regard Op ATALANTA as more than just hardware, our ships and aircraft sit at the heart of a network of local and international actors, coalition allies and independent nations; our presence and activity delivers deterrence but this is magnified and complemented by this network. We work hard alongside the Combined Maritime Forces, our key partner based in Bahrain, through our co-chaired Shared Awareness and De-confliction (SHADE) conferences, bringing multiple players together to encourage information sharing and a collaborative approach to both counter-piracy and broader maritime security. From Suez to Socotra and on to the Seychelles, this is a strategi-

cally important region; it is Europe's near abroad and, recognizing this, Op ATALANTA uses its pivotal relationship with the maritime industry to provide and manage convoy protection, promote Best Management Practice and deliver vulnerability assessments as to emerging threat and developing security situations. It does this all to ensure the free flow of trade and humanitarian supplies.

What is the future for Atalanta?

We hope to see the mandate for Op ATALANTA extended until the end of 2020, and our focus will remain to *Protect World Food Programme and other vulnerable shipping and to deter, prevent and repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea*. EU NAVFOR's protection of World Food Programme shipping has acted as an economic multiplier; destination ports often benefit from the 'bubble of protection' that can help broader trade and economic activity. Set against this back drop of continued delivery, the Operational Headquarters team, made up of 21 nations, is wrestling with the process of a Strategic Review and the potential transfer of Command & Control (C2) to another member state. Under the Strategic Review, we are trying to reflect the reality of constrained resources and the evolving security architecture of the region seeking to drive an 'effects based' approach rather than an asset based one.

As to C2 Transfer we see our role as delivering now, design-



Major General Charlie Stickland

ing for the future and, once announced, setting our successors up for success. Crucial for me is that the brilliant men and women of the ATALANTA are ever vigilant, innovative in their future thinking, and remain focused, unfettered by the politics that surround us. This is all about taking Op ALANATA and EUNAVFOR Somalia forward for the future.



Major General Charlie Stickland

News from our Operations & Missions



EUFOR ALTHEA

From June the 18th to June the 20th, the Multinational Battalion (MNBN) conducted their forward command post exercise ZENITH. A very realistic overall scenario was chosen and the exercise provided a good opportunity to train the troops at every level. The main effort was to exercise with the whole battalion and improve the cooperation within the EUFOR Headquarters, Battalion Headquarters and the Companies. Commander EUFOR, Major General Martin Dorfer, did an inspection on spot to get an authentic picture of the exercise.



EUNAVFOR ATALANTA

On June the 16th, in the spirit of fostering continued cooperation between international partners, and in order to support counter-piracy operations in the region, US tanker USNS Bighorn conducted a Replenishment At Sea with EU NAVFOR Spanish warship ESPS Meteoro. Replenishment at Sea (RAS) is the most efficient way of fuelling warships, and removes the need for them to enter a port in order to take on fuel. This increases the time that a vessel can remain at sea and patrol the area of operations, thereby allowing warships to maintain a continued deterrence to would-be pirates.



EU NAVFORMED Sophia

On June the 19th and 20th, the 6th edition of Shared Awareness and De-confliction for the Mediterranean Sea (SHADE MED) was held in Rome at the "Francesco Baracca" Italian airbase. The event was co-chaired with NATO Maritime Command (MARCOM). SHADE MED is a forum where military and civilian representatives from both nations and organizations interested in or impacted by the migratory phenomenon in the Mediterranean Sea, can meet to discuss and share knowledge, de-conflict and coordinate their activities. The final goal is to achieve the maximum efficiency and effectiveness in managing objectives relating the migratory phenomenon at sea.

News from the Committee



The Commanding General of Headquarters Eurocorps (COMEC)ATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defence Session visits the EUMC

On June the 13th, in the occasion of the EUMC meeting, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, welcomed the Commanding General of Headquarters Eurocorps (COMEC), Lieutenant General Jürgen Weigt, who gave a briefing on Eurocorps' main activities and organisation.



Meeting with the Head of the Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the European Union

On June the 20th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, met Ambassador H.E.M. Saad Mohammed ALARIFY, Head of the Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the European Union, accompanied by a number of senior Officials from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence. This was a fruitful occasion for exchanging views on the situation in Yemen.



Meeting with Colonel Pham Manh Thang, Defence Attache of Vietnam in Belgium

On June the 26th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, met Colonel Pham Manh Thang, Defence Attache of Vietnam in Belgium.

This was a precious occasion for fruitful discussion on issues of mutual interest.



Meeting with a delegation of foreign and security experts from India

On June the 26th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, met with a delegation of high-ranking foreign and security experts from India.

The meeting provided a great opportunity to brief Indian officials on EU CSDP military operations and missions, and foster the dialogue between EU and India, on security issues.