

# Chairman's Newsletter

EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

@Kostarakos

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## Message from the Chairman



Gen. Mikhail Kostarakos

Few weeks ago and right 10 years after the signing of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union took the most significant step ever taken in the field of security and defence.

On December the 8th, in fact, the Council adopted the decision to establish the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), an open, voluntary based, ambitious and inclusive cooperation among 25 (so far) Member States who have agreed to make binding legal commitments to one another with a view to the most demanding European Missions and Operations. In other words, these countries have expressed the willingness to jointly develop defence capabilities and make them available to EU, in the framework of common European projects.

Under this light, PESCO stands out as a real historic decision and, eventually, allows building on a vision set forth long ago when, back in the fifties, the Treaty of Rome was signed. This vision was further delineated with the Lisbon Treaty and now one of its most important outcomes, PESCO, is a reality.

However, such a cornerstone, is rather a starting than an arrival point, and asks to move forward from vision to action. In fact, as the HR/VP Ms. Mogherini recently said, "the real work is just about to begin" and crucial challenges lies ahead. Yet, sharing Ms. Mogherini's considerations, we need, first and foremost, to take action. All the collective capabilities and new tools we have developed have a meaning only if providing effective contribution to security, peace and stability. We should be ready to make good use and put all of them at service of peace and development. In addition, the new level of ambition set in the field of security and defence, asks to equip ourselves with effective means and resources. Further, partnerships are crucial, with NATO first of all, but also with the United Nations and all the other regional organisations, like African Union. Furthermore, taking into consideration the complex initiatives we have recently launched, a higher level of coherence and coordination as well as effective synergies are needed in the area of security and defence. Finally, a common strategic culture as well as European military training and education is becoming more and more essential. Important initiatives are ongoing in this respect, like the European Military Erasmus and the Advanced Modular Training for military and civilian personnel (AMT).

Definitely an exciting year, leaving the room to a new one, rich of promising expectations. Allow me, then, to wish you all a great, prosperous and rewarding 2018!



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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

**Hanoi 04-06/12: CEUMC visit to Vietnam**



**Riga 10-12/12: CEUMC visit to Latvia**



**Wiesbaden 15/12: US Army Commander EU relinquishment of Command Ceremony**



**Brussels 18/12: End of the year videoconference with Commanders and Heads of EU operations and missions**



# New EU defence initiatives must lead to capabilities that fit operational needs

by Jorge Domecq\*, Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency (EDA)

Behind us lies a remarkable year for European defence. Bold and truly unprecedented initiatives were launched to boost EU defence cooperation through improved joint planning and prioritisation, development, procurement and operation of capabilities among Member States. The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund (EDF) are all central pieces of a new political and institutional puzzle in the making which, if correctly assembled, can provide EU nations with better and more interoperable defence capabilities.

Inventing new tools alone will not suffice. Equally important is how they are used and implemented. In other words: while CARD, PESCO and EDF are separate initiatives spearheaded by different actors, they must be used together in a coherent and coordinated manner. Ultimately, they must lead to collaborative projects and outputs which genuinely respond to Member States' commonly identified capability priorities and are deployable in CSDP missions and operations. The ambition cannot be to cooperate just for the sake of it, but to fill existing critical defence

capability gaps in Europe and produce tangible, operational outcome in the form of improved ready-to-use assets for our armed forces.

This is where the European Defence Agency (EDA) comes into play. As the secretariat for both CARD and PESCO (together with the EU Military Staff) as well as a central operator in EU-funded defence activities, the Agency will leverage its expertise, knowledge and networks to ensure coherence, efficiency and a steady focus on capability priorities. The Agency's close cooperation with the EU Military Committee (EUMC) will help make this endeavor a success.

The CARD's trial run is underway. Its ambition is to foster a gradual synchronisation and mutual adaptation of Member States' national defence planning cycles and capability development practices, in the hope this will lead to more systematic defence cooperation in Europe. For CARD to provide real added value, it's crucial to have the most up-to-date and detailed information possible collected from national MoDs on defence plans, including spending. The responsibility for the information gathering lies in the EDA as the CARD secretariat with support from the EUMC and the



EUMS. Once collected, the information will be assessed by the Agency in a comprehensive CARD analysis report to be discussed with Member States, followed by a final report to Ministers. The EUMC will be closely associated throughout the whole process. Lessons learned from the trial run will be incorporated into the first full CARD cycle scheduled to take place from 2019 to 2020.

Directly linked to CARD is PESCO. On 11 December, 25 EU Member States decided to participate which is an unprecedented and historic step forward towards European defence. Here too, the EDA is to act as a secretariat with a supporting role at various levels. First, in close cooperation with the EUMS, it serves as a platform where PESCO nations can identify, assess and consolidate possible projects. The Agency notably provides a view on contemplated projects' impact on the capability landscape while

the EUMS addresses the operational dimension in terms of usability for CSDP missions and operational benefits. Second, the EDA will support the practical PESCO project implementation. This role is particularly well suited to the Agency as the two-layer approach envisaged for PESCO is similar to the project governance structure in the EDA: Member States have full control of the project content, with the Agency serving participating nations as a facilitator and service provider. Thirdly: the EDA will contribute to the regular assessment of PESCO nations' contributions and respect of the binding commitments undertaken. A third cornerstone of the future of European defence is the European Defence Fund (EDF). Closely intertwined with CARD and PESCO, the practical implementation of the EDF also relies to a large extent on the EDA, both in the research and capability domains. The 'research window' of the Fund will use the lessons learnt from the ongoing Pilot Project and the Preparatory Action on Defence Research, both managed and implemented by the Agency (with a European Commission mandate). As regards the Fund's 'capability window', the EDA is already called to play a key upstream role in programming the work plan of the European Defence

Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP). The role will involve strong synergies with the Agency's prioritisation support role in PESCO and CARD, closing the circle. Making full use of the EDA is indispensable, as called for in the EU Global Strategy, to carrying forward all three initiatives (CARD, PESCO, EDF). This was recognized by EU Defence Ministers at their Council meeting on 13 November 2017 when they explicitly encouraged the Agency "to further support the coherent development of the European capability landscape, considering also the link between CARD, PESCO and the European Defence Fund". In their 2018 guidelines for the EDA, adopted on the same day, Ministers also supported "the reinforcement of the Agency as the intergovernmental platform of choice within the EU institutional framework, supporting Member States in capability development serving the EU level of ambition". Let me conclude by highlighting the importance of another key instrument up for revision in spring 2018: the Capability Development Plan (CDP). The revised CDP will provide a new set of priorities serving the EU level of ambition. The EDA works hand-in-hand with the EUMC in this revision, in support of Member States' capability needs. Here too, good



and close cooperation is a prerequisite for success.

*\*Jorge Domecq, a senior Spanish diplomat, became the EDA's Chief Executive in February 2015. He previously served as an Ambassador of Spain to the OSCE and the Philippines and held several positions within the Spanish Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence as well as at NATO.*

*The European Defence Agency (EDA) is an intergovernmental agency of the EU Council set up in 2004 to support Member States developing European defence capabilities and military cooperation, to stimulate defence Research and Technology (R&T) and to strengthen the European defence industry. The agency is based in Brussels, Belgium.*

# News from our Operations and Missions



## EUFOR Althea

On December the 14th, EUFOR Chief of Staff Brigadier General József Szpisják and the Deputy Chief of Joint Operations of the Armed Forces of BiH (AFBiH), Major General Mirko Tepšić, signed the Joint Integrated Capacity Building and Training (CB&T) Plan 2018. This was to confirm the planned CB&T activities EUFOR will provide to the AFBiH throughout the next year. EUFOR has in the past enabled a significant range of capability-enhancing training events.



## EUNAVFORMED Sophia

On December the 14th, onboard the Spanish ship Cantabria moored in Taranto Italian Naval base, the SOPHIA Task Force change of command ceremony was carried out and Spain has passed the duty of Force Commander to Italy. On the occasion, the Spanish Navy Rear Admiral (Lower Half) Javier MORENO has given the duty to the new Deputy Force Commander, the Italian Navy Rear Admiral (Lower Half) Giuseppe Berutti Bergotto. The Ceremony was hosted by EUNAVFOR MED Operation Commander, Rear Admiral (Upper Half) Enrico Credendino, at the presence of civil and military authorities.

## EUTM Mali

On December the 26th, the European Union Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali) organized its last Combined Mobile Advice and Training Team (CMATT) of 2017 in Sévare. This CMATT aimed at strengthening the capabilities of the officers of the 6th Military Region in order to manage military operations as efficiently as possible. Thus, they received courses on modules such as international humanitarian law (IHL), tactics, humanitarian law and armed conflicts.



## EUNAVFOR Atalanta

On December the 22nd, Major General Charlie Stickland, EU NAVFOR Operation Commander recently visited His Excellency (H.E) Adam Kulach, Head of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Djibouti and H.E Mahmoud Ali Youssuf, Djiboutian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Djibouti. During the meetings the General raised the importance of the continued effort to suppress and deter piracy through the Gulf of Aden and Bab-el-Mandeb straits. In the discussions, the General thanked the Djibouti government for the support provided to EU.

## EUTM RCA

On December the 15th, at the Kassaï camp in Bangui, a ceremony led by Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Colonel Yacoub, marked the ending of the training of the 1st Territorial Infantry Battalion (BIT 1) of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) by the instructors of the European Union Training Mission in Central African Republic (EUTM RCA). The military ceremony was honoured by the presence of the highest political authorities in the Central African Republic (CAR), headed by the President, Mr Faustin-Archange Touadéra, together with all government ministers, led by the Prime Minister, Mr. Sarandji.



## EUTM Somalia

On December the 28th, the 2nd "Flame" Infantry Company Course Closing Ceremony was held in "General Dhagabadan Training Centre", in Mogadishu. The Somali Chief of Defence Forces, Maj General Abdiweli Jama Hussein, the Ministry of Defence Director General, Mr. Sonkor Jama Geyre and Generals from Somali National Army as well as other representatives from the International Community attended the Ceremony. The new 2nd FLAME company finished successfully the fourth-month course and it is now ready to be employed and contribute to providing peace and security for its Country.

# News from the Committee

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## EU Military Committee

On December the 13th, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Mikhail Kostarakos, invited Brigadier General Paris KAPRAVELOS and Brigadier General Gerard KOOT, respectively Force Commanders of the HELBROC and NL-led EU Battlegroups (EUBGs), on stand-by during the first semester of 2018, to brief EU

Military Committee on the preparatory activities and exercises undergone in the light of the upcoming operational assignment under the flag of the EU.



## Farewell to the Austrian Milrep

On December the 13th, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Mikhail Kostarakos, bid farewell to the Military Representative of Austria to the European Union, Lieutenant General Günter HÖFLER, and thanked him for his exemplary representation.



## Farewell to the Croatian Milrep

On December the 13th, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General Mikhail Kostarakos, outgoing Military Representative of Croatia to the European Union and NATO, Major General Mate PAĐEN, and priced his outstanding service.



## Farewell to the Belgian Milrep

On the 29th of November, the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC) General Mikhail Kostarakos, bid farewell to Lieutenant General Philippe GROSDENT, outgoing Military Representative of Belgium to the European Union, and thanked him for his remarkable tenure.