

OBSERVATORY ON EUROPEAN DEFENCE

MARCH 2016

In the spotlight

6 March

NATO expands its activities in the Aegean Sea

NATO has expanded its activities in the maritime area between Turkey and Greece. The scope of the mission is to contrast the traffic of human beings and to identify criminal networks feeding the recent migration crisis. The German flagship FGS Bonn, which belongs to the Standing NATO Maritime Group Two (SNMG2), was the first ship of the Alliance to have access to Greek territorial waters during the first patrolling around the island of Lesbos.

4 March

The EU prolongs sanctions against 16 Ukrainians

The Council prolonged asset freeze for a further year against 16 Ukrainians people considered to be responsible of misappropriation of State's funds. Measures have been revoked so far for only one person since their introduction in March 2014.

11 March

Scaparrotti new Supreme Allied Commander Europe

The Atlantic Council nominated US Army General Curtis M. Scaparrotti as the new Supreme Allied Commander Europe. The General is presently Commander of the US Armed Forces in Korea (USFK) and will settle at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe in the next weeks.

12 March

EU Electoral Observation Mission in Peru

Following a formal request by the Peruvian authorities, the European Union started a mission in Peru with the objective of monitoring the presidential and parliamentary elections taking place on 10 April. The EU Chief Observer, Renate Weber, assured that the mission "will closely

follow all stages of the elections," working with transparency together with the Peruvian authorities.

14 March

EU halts consultations with Burundi

The Council concluded consultations with the Burundi Government within the framework of article 96 of the partnership agreement EU-ACP (Cotonou Agreement), suspending its financial support to the administration. However, the EU confirmed its commitment to keep open the channel of funds in favour of the population and its humanitarian assistance. The Council will review its decision every six months, being supported in its assessment by the joint monitoring missions of the European External Action Service and the Commission.

14 March

EU amends restrictive measures against Al-Qaida

The Council adopted a decision amending restrictive measures against members of Al-Qaida and other individuals, groups and entities associated with the terrorist organisation. The purpose is to interrupt the flow of economic and financial resources to individuals and entities linked to Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 2253.

15 March

Refugee crisis: the EU sets emergency support

The Council set a mechanism aimed at helping Greece and the other states involved in the management of the arrival of refugees. The new regulation follows the political agreement reached by the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee on 9 March, translating into practice EU's commitment to provide an immediate response to the complex situation. According to

the Commission, the new package should have a budget of 300 million euros for 2016 and of 200 million euros for both 2017 and 2018.

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