

IA OBSERVATORY ON **EUROPEAN DEFENCE**

DECEMBER 2011

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

THE EU COUNCIL APPROVES THE CONCEPT FOR THE NEW EUROPEAN UNION MISSION FOR THE HORN OF AFRICA

DECEMBER 12

The EU Council has approved the “Crisis Management Concept” for the new mission Regional Maritime Capacity Building (RMCB), aimed at supporting the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean states: the approval gave the green light to the operational planning. The goal of the mission is to strengthen the capacities of the states of the region to control their territorial waters and to fight piracy. In particular, the efforts are directed to Gibuti, Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, the Seychelles and to Somalia, specifically to the regions of Puntland, Somaliland and Galmudug. The mission is part of the Common Defence and Security Policy of the European Union and its first mandate is biennial. At the end of the first year, a strategic evaluation will take place in order to assess the achievements. The mission includes different activities: training of the local coast police and, in Somalia, of magistrates, as well; technical, legal and operational assistance for the maritime security; supply of the necessary equipment to the States of that region. The training activities will take place in the regional training centre of Djibouti and other countries. The mission RMCB is complementary to the already-deployed mission EUNAVFOR Atalanta and EUTM Somalia and it is coherent with the European Council Conclusions about Horn of Africa, adopted on 14th November 2011. Moreover, the approval of the mission follows the appointment of the new European Special Representative in the region, Alexander Rondos, on 8th December.

DECEMBER 1

THE EU COUNCIL FURTHER STRENGTHENS RESTRICTIVE MEASURES AGAINST SYRIA

The EU Council has decided to further strengthen the restrictive measures against Syria. In particular, it decided to ban Syrian banks to establish banking relations with European institutions or to create new branches in the EU; any Member States can issue new loans to the Syrian regime; exports of equipment and technologies directed to the Syrian oil sector are prohibited; Member States cannot participate in the building of new power plants, including investments, financial and technical assistance; long term financial commitments to the Syrian regime are banned; in conclusion, 11 entities have been added to those affected by the asset freeze and 12 persons to the ban visa, as well.

DECEMBER 2

SERBIAN AND KOSOVO SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE BORDER POINTS

Serbia and Kosovo signed an agreement for the joint management of the border points, thanks to the intermediation of EULEX Kosovo mission. The aim of the mission is to make the borders secure, since there are often conflicts between NATO KFOR officials and Serbian citizens, who do not recognize the new State. The agreement includes the decrease of KFOR presence in behalf of EULEX officials. Serbian government underlines that the signature of the agreement does not mean the recognition of Kosovo, even if it represents an important step towards the normalization of the relations between Pristina and Belgrade.

DECEMBER 9

CROATIA SIGNS THE ACCESSION TREATY

Due to the signature of the Accession Treaty, on 9th November 2011 Croatia is now going to

become the 28th Member State of the European Union from July 2013. Croatia has now the right to participate as observer to the working meeting of the European Union. The negotiations lasted from 2005 until the previous 30th June 2011. Croatian accession is fundamental for the stabilization of the Western Balkans area.

DECEMBER 13-15

NATO TESTS ITS NEW CYBER DEFENCE SYSTEM

NATO carried out a new test, Cyber Coalition 2011 Exercise, in order to verify the cyber defence capabilities of its Member States. The nations were supposed to face a simulation of a cyber attack. Around 100 experts took part in the test both from Brussels and Mons Headquarters and from national cyber defence facilities. The number of participants, 23 Member States and 6 partner Nations, demonstrated the increasing attention to these new kinds of threats. The European Union took part in the simulation as observer. The exercise follows the adoption on June 2011 of a Policy on Cyber Defence by NATO.