

# OBSERVATORY ON EUROPEAN DEFENCE

## MAY 2015

### In the spotlight

**18 May**

#### **EU operation against human smugglers in the Mediterranean**

The Council of the EU established EUNAVFOR Med, a naval military operation to fight the illegal trafficking of human beings in the Mediterranean. The mission will start with an initial phase aimed at the surveillance of the routes in Central and Southern Mediterranean. The second and the third phases will focus on the research, seizure and dismantling of the means used by smugglers, in collaboration with the Libyan authorities. The command of the operation will be entrusted to Admiral Enrico Credendino, and the operational headquarters will be placed in Rome. EUNAVFOR Med has an estimated cost of 11.82 million euros. The launch of the operation will be on the political agenda in June.

**4 May**

#### **NATO Dynamic Mongoose exercise starts in Norwegian waters**

NATO began the annual exercise to test its skills in anti-submarine warfare in the North Sea. Sweden took part to the exercise for the first time. The Dynamic Mongoose exercise allowed the Alliance's ships to practice in a complex and challenging environment. The Dynamic Mongoose saw the participation of 4 submarines – German, Norwegian, Swedish and US ones – together with 13 surface ships and 2 research vessels, plus the patrol aircrafts provided by Germany and France.

**8 May**

#### **More ambition for the EU Common Security and Defense Policy**

Two reports, one issued by the EU Commission and the other one by the High Representative, gave new impetus to the EU Common Security and Defense Policy. The reports, sent to the President of the European Council Donald Tusk, summarise the progress made in the key areas of security and defense policy, highlighting the role of facilitator played by the EU in defense matters and proposing, at the same time, a series of initiatives to stimulate the debate in view of the next European Council to be held on 25th of June.

**13 May**

#### **NATO will remain in Afghanistan**

NATO foreign ministers decided that the Alliance will remain in Afghanistan even after the end of the Resolute Support Mission. This time the operation will be civilian in nature, although it will retain a military component. Next autumn NATO authorities will develop a plan to structure the new operation, whose main objective will be to train the Afghan security institutions in order to make them fully self-sufficient.

**17 May**

#### **EUCAP Sahel Niger strengthened to contain illegal immigration**

The Council of the EU has decided to strengthen the civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Niger, which provides advices and training to the Nigerian security authorities in order to prevent illegal immigration. In particular, the mission promotes

the interoperability of national security forces, the development of the capacity to conduct criminal investigations, as well as the coordination of the struggle against terrorism and organised crime. Niger is located in a crucial position for the migration flows towards Europe: indeed 90% of migrants coming from West Africa travels through Niger before reaching Libya.

#### 26 May

##### **EU increases support to the Central African Republic**

The EU has increased its financial support to the Central African Republic, a country that is still recovering from the recent conflict. The EU Commission has allocated a further 72 million euros for humanitarian aid (10 million), budget support (40 million) and a new contribution to the EU Trust Fund for the Central African Republic (22 million).

#### 28 May

##### **Syria: EU extends sanctions against the regime and its supporters**

The Council of the EU has extended the restrictive measures against the Syrian regime for another year. Another senior military officer, considered responsible for repressions and abuses against the civilian population of Damascus, was added to the list. Today the sanctions target more than 200 individuals and 70 entities. Moreover, the Council further extended the measures already in place, including the oil embargo as well as the restrictions on certain investments, until 1st June 2016.

#### 29 May

##### **EU Trust Fund: 40 million for Syrian refugees**

The new EU regional Trust Fund will support the first European programs to face the Syrian crisis for an overall amount of 40 million euros. The fund will provide assistance to 400 thousand Syrian refugees and to the host states – Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. The resources will be primarily used for education, livelihoods and food security, with special attention to young people and children. The funds come from both the EU budget and Italy's contribution, while Germany has

pledged an additional 5 million, still pending approval by the German parliament. Further contributions are expected later by the end of 2015.

#### 29 May

##### **Poland hosts the exercise Puma 2015**

The Puma exercise, held in western Poland, engaged Polish, American and French forces, with the aim to test the responsiveness and interoperability of the Allied armed forces. The exercise saw small and medium size armored vehicles acting on the ground, in particular the American tanks M1A2 Abrams and the French tanks AMX-56 Leclerc. The exercise included advanced maneuvers in realistic scenarios and shooting drills, involving helicopters, aircrafts, tanks and artillery.