



FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council

16-17 November 2015 in Brussels

Tuesday 17 November - Security and Defence

Following the meeting of Foreign Affairs ministers on Monday 16 November, the Council will continue at 10.30 the next day with the EU ministers of defence, also chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. It will be preceded by a European Defence Agency steering board meeting starting at 9:00, in which all member states except Denmark, participate.

The Council will start with a debate on **the European defence action plan**. The Commissioner for internal market, industry, entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta Bienkowska, will inform ministers on the preparation of the action plan.

Ministers will be joined by NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg for a discussion on **capacity building in support of security and development**.

Over lunch, the ministers, together with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg, will have an exchange of views on **CSDP operations**. The discussion is expected to focus on the future development of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia, in the context of possible broader security options for Libya, and EUMAM CAR with a view to initiating planning for a training operation in the Central African Republic.

Press conference: +/- 13.45

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

European Defence Agency Steering Board

Ministers of defence will meet in the European Defence Agency (EDA) steering board, under the chairmanship of Federica Mogherini as the head of the agency. All member states except Denmark participate.

Ministers of defence will discuss the three year planning framework detailing the agency's work plan and priorities for 2016-2018 as well as the resources required to support this.

The agency will update ministers on the progress achieved in the four key capability programmes: air-to-air refuelling, governmental satellite communications, cyber defence and remotely piloted aircraft systems. Furthermore, ministers of defence are expected to endorse initial roadmaps on the following potential future capability projects: biological joint deployable exploitation and analysis laboratory (Bio-JDEAL), medical evacuation and anti-tank weapons.

Ministers of defence are expected to note progress on the agency's work on defence cooperation and notably the annual assessment on pooling & sharing which analyses the overall defence capability situation in Europe as well as initial work on barter mechanisms which could facilitate the exchange or sharing of capabilities among member states without any financial transaction.

European Defence Action Plan

The Council will hold a first discussion on the European defence action plan of the European Commission.

The aim of this action plan is to ensure that the European market and industrial and skills base will be able to deliver the military capability priorities that member states may need to meet future security needs.

It is expected to include the preparatory action for CSDP related research, as well as other joint capacities and industries which are of interest to member states such as the governmental satellite communications and measures to support EU's technological independence. Greater funding of dual-use technologies through Horizon 2020 could also be promoted in this context, as well as initiatives to improve defence procurement and to support defence-related SMEs.

In June 2014, the European Commission presented a roadmap for measures to strengthen the Single Market for defence, to promote a more competitive defence industry and to foster synergies between civil and military research.

[Commission press release on industrial action plan](#)

Capacity building in support of security and development

Defence ministers will discuss efforts to enable partner countries to prevent and manage crises themselves. NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg will join ministers for this discussion.

The discussion will focus on the security development nexus. The EU has consistently underlined that security is a precondition for development and that without development and poverty eradication there will be no sustainable peace. One aspect is to formulate proposals responding to gaps in the EU's comprehensive approach; for example when training or other capacity building activities are performed by an EU mission under the Common Security and Defence Policy, but their effectiveness is hampered by a deficient training environment or lack of basic non-lethal equipment.

In their joint communication of 18 April 2015, the Commission and the High Representative underlined their commitment to enhance coherence and coordination between EU security and development actions. The joint communication called for exploring the practical feasibility of a proposal to adapt the African Peace Facility to address its limitations, the establishment of a facility linking peace, security and development in the framework of one or more existing instruments; and/or a new, dedicated financial instrument.

The Council (Conclusions of May 2015) and the European Council (June 2015) encouraged further work to implement the proposed measures, including through concrete projects of capacity building with flexible geographic coverage. As a result, the Commission work programme 2016 includes a package on capacity building in the security sector, which covers security sector reform and a possible new dedicated instrument for capacity building in support of security and development in third countries.

In this context, the Commission and the EEAS will present to ministers the tools to be assessed for capacity building in support of security and development, including a possible dedicated instrument, and outlines the planned measures to improve coherence and enhance coordination, including a new EU-wide strategic framework for security sector reform.

[European Council conclusions of 25-26 June 2015](#)

[Council conclusions on CSDP of 18 May 2015](#)

[Commission joint communication of 18 April 2015](#)

CSDP operations

Over lunch, ministers will discuss operations, in particular EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia and EUMAM RCA. NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg will also be present.

EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia

EUNAVFOR MED, the EU's military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean, was launched on 22 June 2015 in order to counter the smuggling and trafficking of migrants and to help reduce further loss of life at sea. Its aim is to undertake systematic efforts to identify, capture and dispose of vessels and enabling assets used, or suspected of being used, by migrant smugglers or traffickers.

On 28 September 2015, the Political and Security Committee agreed to start the first step of phase 2 of EUNAVFOR Med on 7 October 2015. The operation was renamed "Sophia" on 26 October 2015. During phase 2, the EUNAVFOR MED assets conduct boarding, search, seizure and diversion, on the high seas, of vessels suspected of being used for human smuggling or trafficking.

The operation is headquartered in Rome, Italy.

[Factsheet on EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia](#)

[EU NAVFOR Med Operation Sophia \(EEAS website\)](#)

[Finding solutions to migratory pressures](#)

EUMAM RCA

Ministers will discuss the EU's military advisory mission in the Central African Republic (EUMAM RCA). They will debate future challenges in the light of the upcoming election and worsening security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR).

EUMAM RCA was established on 19 January 2015 and launched by the Council on 16 March 2015. It aims to support the Central African authorities in preparing a reform of the security sector, especially regarding the management of the CAR armed forces (FACA).

EUMAM RCA replaced the EU military operation in the CAR (EUFOR RCA), which was established on 10 February 2014 in order to contribute to a secure environment in the CAR, as authorised by the UN Security Council in 2014.

EUMAM RCA is headquartered in Bangui. The budget for the preparation phase and the first year of the mission amounts to €7.9 million.

[EUMAM RCA \(EEAS website\)](#)

[Press release on the establishment of the EUMAM RCA - 19 January 2015](#)

Other items

The Council is expected to take a number of decisions without discussion ("A-items"):

Central African Republic

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on Central African Republic (CAR), reiterating its determination to support humanitarian needs in CAR and the holding of credible and transparent elections. The EU will condemn violence and destabilisation attempts that encourage intra-community divisions, and supports the UN's efforts to bring security and disarm combatants.

[Previous Council conclusions on the Central African Republic, dated 20/07/2015](#)

European Defence Agency related matters

The Council is expected to take note of the report by the head of the European Defence Agency, as well as to adopt guidelines for the work of the agency in 2016.
