



Brussels
27/10/2016 - 09:48
Press releases

EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia starts training of Libyan Navy Coast Guard and Libyan Navy

EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia started training the Libyan Navy Coast Guard and Libyan Navy this week.

The EU Naval Operation is the military contribution to the European comprehensive approach that aims at disrupting the business model of human smugglers and traffickers, and saving lives in the Southern Central Mediterranean. To further enhance the Operation's ability to disrupt the trafficking and smuggling networks, the Foreign Affairs Council decided on 20 June to add two supporting tasks to the mandate, effectively allowing it to contribute to the capacity building and training of the Libyan Navy Coast Guard and Libyan Navy and the implementation of the UN arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya.

On [30 August](#), the Political and Security Committee (PSC) formally authorised the start of the training of the Libyan personnel, and on [September 6](#) the start of the contribution to the UN arms embargo. Following a thorough and effective vetting process, the first package of the training activities started this week, and will be delivered over the next three months.

Training of the Libyan Navy Coast Guard and Libyan Navy

The legitimate Libyan authorities requested support in capacity building and training of their Coast Guard and Navy and established a dedicated committee of experts to work with EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia. The objective is to enhance their capability to disrupt smuggling and trafficking in Libya and to perform search and rescue activities which will save lives and improve security in the Libyan territorial waters. The training is taking place on board of two EUNAVFOR MED assets on the high seas for 78 embarked trainees and their mentors. The initial training package comprises various models, ranging from basic seamanship to more advanced specialist skills and includes a substantial focus on human rights and international law. This task will be financed through voluntary contributions from some EU member states managed by the Athena mechanism, and from voluntary assets and personnel contribution provided by the Member States.

EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia

EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia was launched on 22 June 2015. The operation entered its active phase in October 2015. This phase provides for the identification, capture and disposal of vessels used or suspected of being used by migrants' smugglers or traffickers. Since then, the operation has contributed to the apprehension and transfer to the Italian authorities of 96 suspected smugglers and traffickers and neutralised 337 vessels. In addition, the operation has saved more than 29 300 lives in 200 rescue operations and has supported other organisations in the rescue of more than 41 200 persons. 25 EU Member States are contributing to the Operation, that comprises 2215 personnel. Furthermore, operation SOPHIA is contributing to the UN arms embargo and has a deterrent effect to illegal arms trafficking business.

The Operation Commander is Rear Admiral (Italian Navy) Enrico Credendino. The headquarters of the operation are located in Rome.

For more information on the Operation see [here](#).

www.eeas.europa.eu

Source URL:

http://eueuropaeas.fpfis.slb.ec.europa.eu:8084/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/13195/eunavfor-med-operation-sophia-starts-training-libyan-navy-coast-guard-and-libyan-navy_en