

EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia: mandate extended until 31 December 2018

On 25 July 2017, the Council extended the mandate of the **EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia** until **31 December 2018**.

EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia is the EU naval operation disrupting the business model of migrant smugglers and human traffickers in the Southern Central Mediterranean. The operation has two supporting tasks: training the Libyan Coastguard and Navy and contributing to the implementation of the UN arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya in accordance with UNSCR 2292 (2016) and 2357 (2017).

The Council also amended the operation's mandate to:

- set up a **monitoring mechanism of trainees** to ensure the long-term efficiency of the training of the Libyan Coastguard;
- conduct **new surveillance activities** and gather information on **illegal trafficking of oil exports from Libya** in accordance with UNSCR 2146 (2014) and 2362 (2017);
- enhance the possibilities for **sharing information on human trafficking** with member states' law enforcement agencies, FRONTEX and EUROPOL.

"Two years ago, the European Union's member states decided unanimously to tackle together one of the most despicable crimes of our times - the trafficking of human beings - by establishing EUNAVFOR Med - Operation Sophia. Many suspected smugglers have been apprehended and many lives saved in the Mediterranean Sea, and since last year our women and men serving under the European flag have been also training the Libyan Coastguard and enforcing the arms embargo on the high seas off the coasts of Libya. Today, I'm particularly proud to announce that the mandate of Operation Sophia has been unanimously renewed and again with additional tasks", said Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. "As a matter of priority, we will start in the coming days the revision of the operational plan in order to include the new tasks, such as the mechanism for monitoring the Libyan Coastguard and Navy activities post training, and to strengthen the effectiveness of the mission and the shared responsibility among member states", she added.

Background

EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia was launched on 22 June 2015, as part of the EU's comprehensive approach to help better manage irregular migration and disrupt traffickers and smugglers' networks.

The operation entered its active phase in October 2015 enabling the identification, capture and disposal of vessels used or suspected of being used by migrant smugglers or traffickers. Since then, the operation has contributed to the arrest and transfer to the Italian authorities of 110 suspected smugglers and traffickers, and has neutralised 470 vessels. In addition, the operation has helped rescue close to 40 000 lives.

The Council added the two supporting tasks to the operation's mandate on 20 June 2016. Since then, the operation has trained 136 Libyan Coastguard and Navy personnel. It has also hailed over 650 ships, carried out 51 friendly approaches, 7 flag enquiries and 3 inspections within the framework of its contribution to the implementation of the UN arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya.

EUNAVFOR MED's Operation Commander is Rear Admiral Credendino, from Italy. The headquarters of the mission are located in Rome.

- [EU NAVFOR MED operation Sophia](#)
- [Finding solutions to migratory pressures \(background information\)](#)

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