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Editorial

International partnerships have proven to be tenacious amid a global pandemic, not least the partnerships between the United Nations, the European Union and NATO on peace and security related work. In a world in which crises are complex, regular dialogue between key international actors remains vital to ensure effective cooperation on the ground. This 20th issue of the UNLOPS newsletter provides a snapshot of recent UN peace and security partnership activities in Brussels in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

The spirit of the UN-EU partnership was expressed on a chilly autumn evening in Brussels on 24 October when EU headquarters was lit up in blue to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, giving cause for reflection on what has been achieved and what will be required through international partnerships over the coming 75 years to advance the United Nations and ‘we the peoples of the United Nations’. The European External Action Service (EEAS) had also cause to reflect at the end of 2020, having been in existence for ten years and in that period having established itself as a central fulcrum in the international system. HR/VP Borrell has set forth a so-called Strategic Compass exercise that will help determine the EU’s security and defence culture into the future. While the work of the Conference on the Future of Europe has been pushed back, it is expected to soon commence, which will offer an opportunity to embark on a visioning exercise with European citizens. For its part NATO has also embarked on a reflection exercise, NATO2030, to chart out the trajectory of the alliance over the coming decade.

With the seminal resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 21 September 2020 - with reference to the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth

anniversary of the United Nations - there is a firm roadmap that can help inform both EU and NATO reflection exercises around a set of global common objectives, including the need to boost partnerships and to promote peace and prevent conflicts. The Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire in times of COVID-19 is equally a central component that needs to be factored into international partnerships and in this regard EU expressions of support for the ceasefire agenda is important, not least in the context of the EU’s political and programmatic priorities in the year ahead.

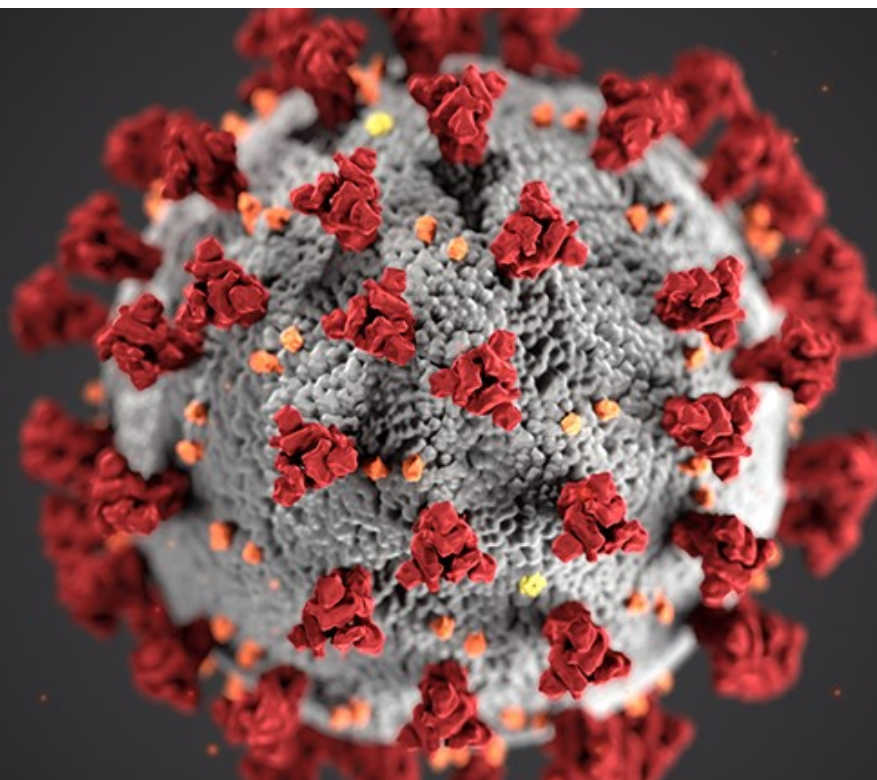
In terms of UNLOPS day to day work as set out in this newsletter, we are particularly pleased that we have been able to facilitate in recent months ‘virtual visits’ of UN Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) to Brussels to enhance the field level cooperation. It has also been reassuring that regular institutional dialogue meetings have taken place, although in virtual format, which has notably bolstered practical cooperation on the ground where the UN, the EU and NATO are deployed side by side. In December UNLOPS wished a fond farewell to Ms. Annick Hiensch, who has been rewarded with a position at United Nations headquarters. As many readers will be aware, Annick has been a gold standard in the UNLOPS office since its creation in 2011 and established the UNOCT presence in Brussels. We wish her every success in her new post.

Best wishes for the year ahead from the UNLOPS team,

Rory Keane, Head of Office

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Picture: EU Commission

Facing COVID-19

The EU and NATO continue to support the peace and security dimension

The COVID-19 pandemic risks exacerbating the root causes of conflict, such as resource scarcity, inequality and food insecurity, and therefore poses a severe challenge to peace and security around the world. It is therefore crucial for international actors, including the EU and NATO, to integrate concrete actions in support of the peace and security dimension into the response to the pandemic.

“NATO’s main responsibility is to make sure this health crisis does not become a security crisis”, NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, said during a speech at the [Riga Conference](#) on 13 November. Throughout 2020, the Alliance took concrete steps to strengthen the civilian response to the pandemic, delivering critical supplies around the world with some 350 flights and engaging approximately half a million troops in the construction of around 100 field hospitals. Utilising the NATO Pandemic Response Trust Fund as well as the stockpile for medical equipment, both established in 2020, NATO delivered vital medical supplies to members. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, NATO’s Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) has coordinated a total of 22 requests for assistance from NATO and partner countries, as well as from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

As of 1 November 2020, the EU’s Team Europe package, which was launched on 8 April to support third countries in the fight against the pandemic and its consequences, has mobilised EUR 38.5 billion. Medical supplies from a European stockpile set up as part of the rescEU facility were sent to partner countries including North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine. In addition, the EU has been active in furthering international debt relief efforts. In a [blog post](#) published on 27 November HR/VP Josep Borrell highlighted the increasing debt vulnerability in low income countries, stressing that if the issue is not addressed rapidly, it could fuel increasing poverty and global instability. On 30 November, the Council adopted [conclusions](#) underlining the EU’s support for a coordinated international approach on debt relief efforts for African countries. The EU raised the issue in a number of bilateral meetings, including during the [EU-China Leaders Meeting](#) on 30 December. Seeking to strengthen the international community’s capability to address future health crises, European Council President Michel [called](#) for the first international treaty on pandemics within the framework of the WHO during the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on 3 and 4 December. ❖

Keeping and Sustaining Peace: Institutional Dialogue

In a world in which conflicts and crises grow ever more complex, regular dialogue between key international actors in the area of peace and security remains vital, laying the foundations for close and effective cooperation on the ground. Offering platforms to build close interorganisational cooperation at the leadership level, both the EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management, the UN-EU Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism, and the UN-NATO Staff Talks remain cornerstones of the UN's engagement with key partners on peace and security matters.

UN-EU Steering Committee on Crisis Management

The Steering Committee aims to identify concrete joint actions in order to deliver on the UN-EU Strategic Partnership Priorities on Peace Operations and Crisis Management for 2019-2021, which it endorsed in 2018. The 28th semi-annual EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management took place in virtual format on 27 November, co-chaired by UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, and EEAS Deputy Secretary-General for the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and Crisis Response, Charles Fries. They were also joined by USG for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, USG for Operational Support, Atul Khare, and Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for

Africa, Bintou Keita. Discussions focused on practical cooperation between missions and operations in areas of mutual engagement. Participants also discussed new security challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, agreeing to enhance EU-UN cooperation. Participants stressed the importance of maintaining the ongoing format for informal exchanges on lessons-learned regarding the COVID-19 impact on field missions and operations. The Steering Committee also agreed on the importance of strengthening EU-UN cooperation on the integration of the women, peace and security agenda into peace processes, and of strengthening women's leadership and participation in peace and political processes. ❖



EEAS Deputy Secretary General for CSDP and Crisis Response, Charles Fries, (top left) and USG for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix (top right) co-chair the 28th UN-EU Steering Committee on Crisis Management on 27 November. Also pictured USG Khare and ASG Keita.

UN-EU Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism

On 2 December, the 3rd UN-EU Leaders' Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism took place virtually, co-chaired by USG for Counter-Terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov, and the Director for Security and Defence Policy at the EEAS, Ms Joanneke Balfoort, and with the participation of 16 UN Global Compact on Counter-Terrorism entities. Discussions focused on the upcoming review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and on the preparations for the 2021 UN Counter Terrorism Week, where the EU will be actively supporting the first ever Global Congress of

Victims of Terrorism. Highlighting that multilateral partnerships are key to address the threat of terrorism, the UN and the EU agreed to move forward on practical cooperation, for example to promote accountability and reintegration and rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families in Central Asia. Aiming to further increase exchanges and to continue to foster cooperation between the EU and the UN on counter-terrorism, the EU announced that it would deploy a dedicated counter-terrorism liaison officer to the EU Delegation to the UN in New York.

A first informal discussion between the UN and the EU on Climate Security

On 4 December 2020, a first EU-UN informal dialogue on climate security was organized by UNLOPS and the Brussels offices of UNDP and UNEP via videoconference to provide a platform for an interactive exchange between the EU and the UN on good practices to strengthen the consideration of climate-related security risks at the policy level, illustrated by concrete examples from the country/regional level. DPPA staff in the UN Climate Security Mechanism in New York held an exchange with partici-

pants from the EEAS and the Commission where they shared a common understanding of the importance of addressing the links between climate change and security, a defining issue of our time, around which there is growing political momentum. The role climate change plays as a risk multiplier was emphasised, as was the importance of integrating a climate dimension in early warning systems and prevention.

Update on UN-NATO Partnership

The UN and NATO maintain exchange through annual UN-NATO Staff Talks. In this framework, talks with the participation of NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoană and USGs Rosemary DiCarlo, Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Atul Khare took place on 29 June 2020, as reported in a previous issue of this Bulletin. In November 2020, a working level format enabled exchange on a number of technical issues relevant in both the UN and NATO work on peace and security, including countering improvised explosives devices, an ominous threat in peacekeeping and mission contexts. Other areas of discussion during the talks in November covered issues around Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and child protection in armed conflict.

On 8 June, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg launched the NATO 2030 reflection process as “an opportunity to reflect on where we see our Alliance ten years from now, and how it will continue to keep us safe in a more uncertain world.” As part of the reflection process, Secretary General Stoltenberg tasked a group of ten inde-

pendent experts with developing concrete suggestions for the future of the Alliance, in particular regarding cohesion and NATO's political role, including with regard to cooperation with international partners. To inform its work, the expert group conducted extensive consultations within and outside of NATO. USGs Rosemary DiCarlo, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Mark Lowcock, Izumi Nakamitsu and Vladimir Voronkov were consulted in the framework of the process. The results of the report, which the expert group handed over to Secretary General Stoltenberg on 25 November, will help inform further deliberations in advance of this year's NATO Summit.

On 9 December, the NATO Defence College, as part of the NATO 2030 reflection process, held a webinar on “NATO's partnerships and security networks in a contested multilateral order”. UNLOPS Head of Office, Rory Keane, gave a presentation during the event, notably addressing possible cooperation between both organisations in the area of peace operations. ❖

Spotlight on UN-EU Partnership Priorities

UN-EU Strategic Partnership Priorities on Peace Operations and Crisis Management

In 2018 the UN and EU endorsed eight joint priorities to strengthen their cooperation between 2019 and 2021:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) Women, Peace and Security | 5) Support for conflict prevention and political processes |
| 2) Cooperation between missions and operations | 6) Cooperation on policing, the rule of law and SSR |
| 3) Planning and execution of transitions | 7) Support to African-led peace operations |
| 4) Facilitate EU Member States' contributions and support to UN peace operations | 8) Cooperation on training and capacity building |

On 22 October, EEAS officials and a broad range of representatives from the UN peace and security pillar held a stock-taking exercise facilitated by UNLOPS which focused on the implementation of the UN-EU Strategic Partnership priorities for 2019-2021. Participants discussed the state of implementation of the 8 UN-EU priorities (see box above) and exchanged views on what concrete actions could be taken forward over the final year of the joint initiative. Both sides agreed to move forward

on the implementation of the UN-EU Framework Agreement for the Provision of Mutual Support signed in New York on 29 September (see below). In addition, the EU and the UN agreed to cooperate in the framework of the preparations for the UN peacekeeping ministerial in Seoul. Participants also highlighted the importance of continuing to gather and share information and lessons on the impact of Covid-19 on missions and operations on the ground.

Partnership Priority 2: Cooperation between Missions and Operations

The UN and EU signed a Framework Agreement for the Provision of Mutual Support on 29 September in New York at a signing ceremony between USG for Operational Support, Atul Khare, and the Head of the EU Delegation

to the United Nations, Ambassador Olof Skoog. The Framework Agreement aims to facilitate operational engagement between EU and UN field missions and operations in the areas of logistics, medical and security support.



USG for Operational Support, Atul Khare (right), and Head of EU Delegation to the United Nations, Ambassador Olof Skoog, after signing the Framework Agreement Between the UN and the EU for the Provision of Mutual Support in the context of UN and EU missions and operations in the field on 29 September 2020.

Partnership Priority 1: Women, Peace and Security

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), EU institutions held a number of events, highlighting the importance of moving forward on this agenda. On 27 October, the European Parliament published the [“SHEcurity Index” report](#), which takes stock of participation and representation of women in decision-making in foreign and security policy in EU and G20 countries and estimates the time needed to reach gender parity based on current progress levels. The report includes data jointly collected by the European Parliament Research Service, UN Women, NATO and others. In a [statement](#) issued on 29 October, HR/VP Josep Borrell called UNSC Resolution 1325 “a turning point in the way

the international community has approached peace and security and the impact of conflict on women and girls.”

On 29 October, USG for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo briefed the European Parliament’s committee on security and defence (SEDE) on WPS. USG DiCarlo commended those EU member states that have developed national action plans. The USG called on the EU to lead by example by nominating and appointing women to senior roles in foreign and security policy and including women in peacekeeping missions, special political missions and delegations to peace negotiations. She further stressed the importance of a holistic approach to foreign and security policy that works towards eliminating the root causes of inequality.



USG for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, briefs a virtual session of the European Parliament’s subcommittee on security and defence (SEDE) on women, peace and security.

Partnership Priority 3: Transitions

After deploying a Transitions Consultant to the UNLOPS in May 2020, the UN Transitions Project has been able to expand its ties with EU and other Brussels-based actors. UN transitions, involving the withdrawal or drawdown of UN peace operations, represent a moment of heightened risk to the host nation and the international community. As the main provider of UN-wide support to enhance the way that UN transitions are planned and managed, the Transitions Project seeks to find new ways to deepen the UN-EU strategic partnership. Through earlier and more institutionalized engagement, the UN and EU can together help strengthen and leverage their normative, political and operational support to assist host nations consolidate peacebuilding gains after mission withdrawal.

A first exchange with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI) took place in the autumn 2020 after which a joint concept note mapping out the future UN-EU partnership was designed. The EU and UN have agreed to take forward their collaboration in the domain of transitions through the Strategic Partnership on Peace Operations and Crisis Management and at a later stage will seek to broaden the scope of their engagement to include cooperation on good offices as well as through programmatic convergence in peacebuilding. ❖



EU Update

The EEAS marked its 10th anniversary on 1 December. In December, HR/VP Josep Borrell also announced that Stefano Sannino would steer the EEAS into its second decade as new Secretary General. Sannino assumed his duties on 1 January, succeeding Helga Schmid, who took up the role of Secretary General of the OSCE.

On 31 December the one-year Brexit transition period between the EU and the UK ended. After intensive and difficult negotiations, a trade and cooperation agreement was reached last-minute on 24 December. The agreement, which defines the terms of the future bilateral relations between the UK and the EU, was signed on 30 December and became effective provisionally on 1 January. The European Parliament will vote on the agreement in the coming weeks, so that it can formally enter into force. Foreign policy, external security and defence cooperation is not covered by the agreement. Therefore, as of 1 January 2021, there is no formal framework in place between the UK and the EU to develop and coordinate joint responses to foreign policy challenges. Speaking at a Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 25 January, HR/VP Borrell nevertheless stressed that the EU stands ready to engage with the UK on major global issues, including tackling climate change and the Coronavirus pandemic.

On 10 December, EU leaders signed off on the EUR 1.074 trillion long-term EU budget for 2021-27 (MFF) and the EUR 750 billion recovery fund, "Next Generation EU" (NGEU). The package was adopted after a compromise was brokered over the rule of law

mechanism linked to the budget. With the new long-term budget, the EU is set to significantly increase its defence spending in the coming years. In the framework of the MFF, EUR 7 billion have been allocated to the European Defence Fund (EDF). In addition, the European Peace Facility (EPF) was established as an off-budget instrument to finance the EU's security and defence policy. The Facility builds on the existing African Peace Facility and Athena mechanism, addressing gaps, as well as geographic and thematic limitations. In addition, the Facility will for the first time enable the EU to equip partner countries' armed forces under certain conditions and in line with specific principles. The Facility is worth EUR 5 billion and is expected to enter service by July 2021. Further, the European Parliament and EU Member States on 18 December reached a political agreement on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), worth EUR 70.8 billion (in 2018 prices). The Instrument, which forms part of the MFF, will support EU cooperation with third countries, and will cover geographic, thematic and rapid response components.

The EU is currently moving forward on its preparations for the Conference on the Future of Europe, which will aim to involve European citizens in a wide-ranging debate on Europe's future. A decision on who will chair the conference is still pending. ❖

Developments on EU Policies Relating to Peace and Security

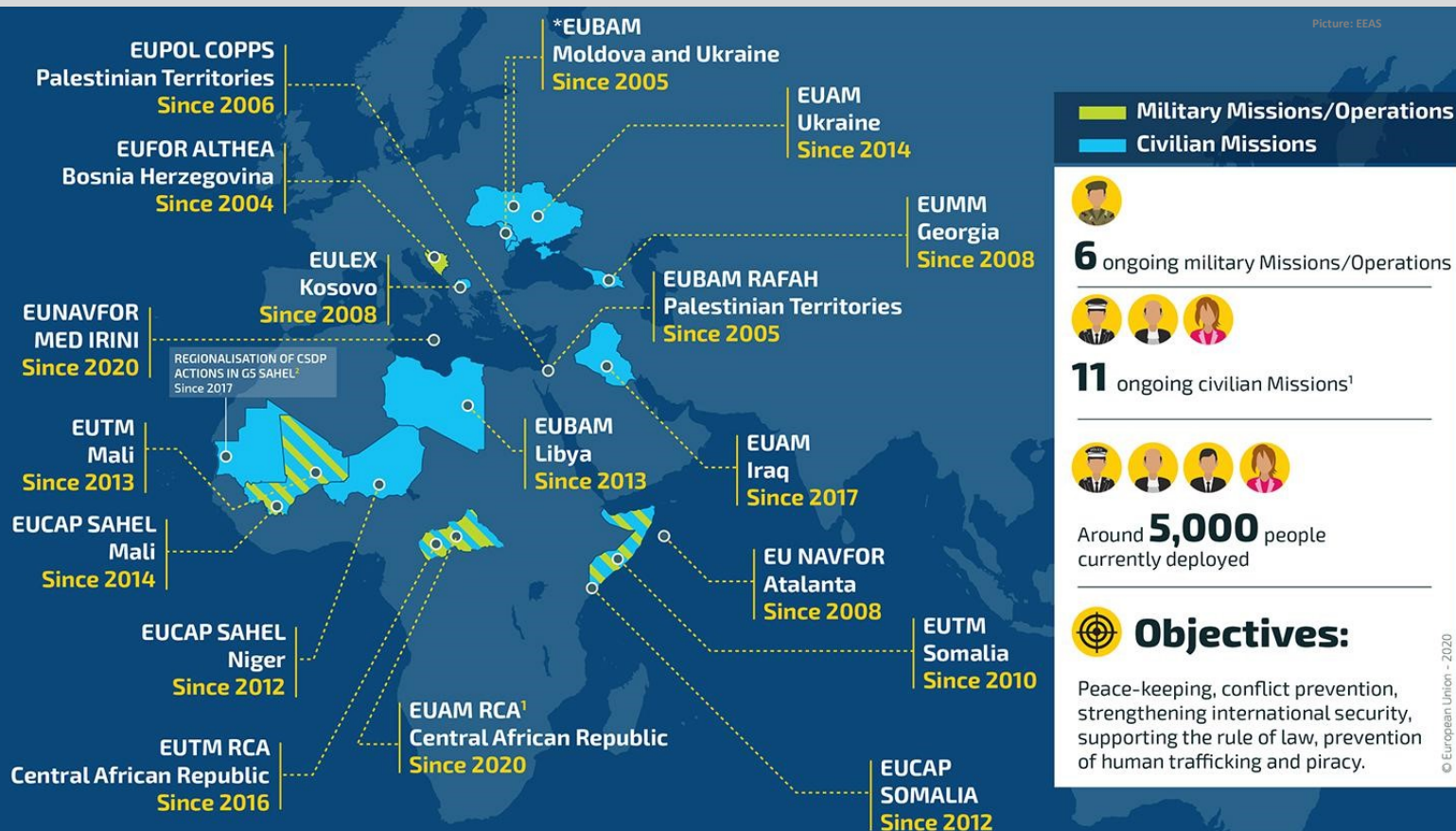
- On 20 November, EU Defence Ministers endorsed Council Conclusions finalising the 2020 strategic review of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), under which EU member states have to date initiated 46 military capability projects in various areas, including training, maritime and air systems, cyber, as well as space. 26 of these projects are expected to deliver concrete results or reach full operational capability by the end of 2025. For the years 2021-2025, Ministers agreed to put a stronger focus on operational projects that facilitate joint deployment of forces from which EU CSDP missions would benefit. On 5 November, the Council issued a decision establishing general conditions under which non-EU countries could exceptionally be invited to participate in individual PESCO projects. Amongst other conditions, the country applying for a project must share the EU's values and must not contravene the EU's security and defence interests. Project members will need to agree by unanimity on the third state's participation. The final decision is to be taken by the Council.
- Equally at the EU Defence Ministerial on 20 November, European Defence ministers took note of the EU's first ever threat analysis, which is based on inputs from member states' intelligence services. The threat analysis is part of a roadmap towards the Strategic Compass, a document that aims to strengthen a common European security and defence culture by providing the EU with a joint strategy to respond to new and increasing threats and challenges. In the first half of 2021, the 27 EU member states will engage in a strategic dialogue based on the joint threat analysis. Discussions will focus on the areas of crisis management, resilience, capabilities and partnerships.
- On 25 November, the European Commission and HR/VP Borrell presented the EU's third Gender Action Plan (GAP III): "An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action." The aim of GAP III is to provide an operational roadmap to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through all external action of the EU. On 16 December, the EU Council Presidency issued conclusions on behalf of 24 EU member states welcoming GAP III.
- On 7 December, the EU Foreign Affairs Council welcomed the new Concept on EU Peace Mediation with Council conclusions. The concept sets out an updated policy foundation for EU mediation support for the years to come and adds stronger elements on climate and women, peace and security than the previous 2009 iteration. DPPA/PMD was consulted in the preparation of the concept.
- On 19 November, the Council adopted the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, setting out the EU's level of ambition and priorities with regards to human rights in its relations with all third countries. As part of this Action Plan, the Council established a new horizontal EU global human rights sanctions regime to tackle serious human rights violations and abuses worldwide. The Action Plan also seeks to develop an EU human rights due diligence policy to ensure that EU security sector support, including in the context of CSDP missions and operations, complies with human rights law and international humanitarian law.



Picture: Council of Europe

HR/VP Borrell speaking to the press after the Foreign Affairs Council on 19 November

Update: EU CSDP Missions and Operations



There are currently seventeen EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, 13 of which are deployed in parallel with UN missions. Approximately 5,000 personnel are currently deployed in the 11 civilian and 6 military missions.

The mandates of EUCAP Somalia, EUTM Somalia, and Operation ATALANTA have been extended until December 2022. The Council decided to expand the mandate of Operation ATALANTA to include some secondary executive tasks in countering trafficking of weapons and narcotic drugs, as well as non-executive tasks related to monitoring illegal activities at sea. The Council also extended the mandate of EUCAP Sahel Niger until September 2022. With its renewed mandate, the mission will focus on empowering the internal security forces (ISF), including through delivering more regionally focused training. EUCAP Sahel Mali was extended until January 2023 and was equally equipped with an enhanced mandate. For the years to come, a stronger emphasis will be put on advising and supporting resource management of the ISF, preventing and fighting corruption and impunity, redeployment of the ISF to the centre of Mali, and support to the redeployment of the civilian administration to the centre in line with principles of good governance. In addition, the Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell will put a special focus on increasing coordination between CSDP missions in the Sahel

and on improving coordination with the G5 Sahel. The Council also extended the mandate of EUTM Mali until May 2024 and its sister mission in the Central African Republic, EUTM RCA, until September 2022. EUTM Mali was granted an enhanced mandate with a move away from a centralised training and advisory strategy in the direction of a more decentralised approach with a so-called accompaniment element.

The Council also prolonged the mandate of the EU monitoring mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia) until December 2022. On 12 October, the Council of the EU adopted [Council Conclusions](#) on Bosnia and Herzegovina and EUFOR Operation Althea. The Conclusions reaffirmed 'the EU's readiness to continue the executive mandate of the Operation to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities to maintain the safe and secure environment, under a renewed UN authorisation'. A Strategic Review of the operation will be presented in mid-2021 and will serve as a basis for discussions on EUFOR's future tasks. As the current mandate of EUNAVFOR MED IRINI expires in March, a decision on its possible extension is expected shortly. In the coming months, the Council is also expected to take decisions regarding the potential extension of five civilian CSDP missions EUBAM Libya, EUBAM Rafah, EUPOL COPPS, EULEX Kosovo and EUAM Ukraine, whose mandates equally expire in 2021.



The German EU Council Presidency

A closer look at the Presidency's priorities on peace and security matters

Ahead of the launch of the German Council Presidency, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas had announced that in order to overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, Germany would make its EU Presidency a “corona presidency”. While the pandemic certainly dominated the German presidency and dictated its agenda, contributing to a ‘strong Europe in the world’ was a key priority of Germany’s programme for the 6-month period of its Presidency, which ran from July to December 2020.

The German Presidency put a strong focus on strengthening the civilian components of CSDP. On 17 September, Germany opened a European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management in Berlin, which will assist EU member states and institutions in implementing commitments made under the Civilian CSDP Compact. Under the German Presidency, European Foreign Affairs Ministers endorsed eleven guiding principles for the implementation of the Civilian Compact in 2021. The Council equally welcomed the commitment of the second Annual Review

Conference of the Civilian Compact, which took place on 23 November, to fully deliver on the Compact by 2023 at the latest.

At the start of the Presidency, German Chancellor Angela Merkel presented EU-China relations as one of the Presidency’s top priorities in the foreign policy domain. While the EU-China Summit planned for September could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, agreement was reached on an EU-China investment deal after more than seven years of negotiations on 30 December. The Presidency’s ambitions to make a similar leap in EU-Africa relations with a new EU-Africa Strategy were not realised, as the EU-Africa Summit was cancelled last minute, with a new date yet to be agreed. The German Presidency also faced difficulties regarding migration and asylum policy. A new pact on migration and asylum, which the Commission presented in September, sparked renewed disputes amongst member states over issues such as mandatory relocation of migrants within the EU. ❖



Picture: Portuguese Council Presidency

The Portuguese EU Council Presidency

A closer look at the Presidency's priorities on peace and security matters

Promoting a 'global Europe' is one of the five overarching priorities defined in the programme of the Portuguese Presidency, spanning January to June 2021. Highlighting the strategic importance of the relationship between the EU and Africa, Portugal hopes to host the EU-Africa Summit before the end of its Presidency. In addition to the Summit, Portugal, in partnership with the European Investment Bank, plans to host a high-level EU-Africa Forum on the green economy and green investment in April. The Presidency's agenda also features an EU-India Summit, with Portugal aiming to focus on political, as well as economic and trade cooperation. Before the end of its Presidency, Portugal will also host an Eastern Partnership Summit. The Presidency will further aim to give a renewed momentum to the EU's relationship with its Southern Neighbourhood. Aiming to strengthen transatlantic relations, the Presidency proposes to focus on the areas of security and defence, strengthening multilateralism, and climate action. Regarding European security and defence policy, Portugal aims to particularly promote reflection on maritime security. ❖



Picture: Portuguese Council Presidency

The Rua Augusta Arch in Lisbon was lit up in blue and yellow to mark the beginning of Portugal's Council Presidency.

Celebrating UN75

EU and NATO commemorate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) Josep Borrell as well as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg commemorated the 75th anniversary of the United Nations on 24 October. Stoltenberg highlighted that NATO and the UN reinforce one another, being “committed to preserving peace and upholding the international rules-based order”. In his statement, Borrell said the EU and the UN are “natural partners” committed to global cooperation and

multilateral relations. The EU marked the UN’s anniversary by illuminating some of its buildings in blue. European Council President Charles Michel commemorated the anniversary in a speech at the high-level meeting on UN75 on 21 September. However, rather than looking back, Michel reflected on the challenges that the world might face 75 years from now (in 2095), looking through the eyes of his youngest daughter, who would be 76 years old at that time. ❖



Picture: UNRRC

The Berlaymont building (top), home to the European Commission, as well as the Europa building, which hosts the European Council, were lit up in blue to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations on 24 October 2020.

Visits and Meetings

Virtual Visits by SRSGs

In view of travel restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNLOPS has facilitated a number of virtual visits by SRSGs to Brussels to enable discussions with relevant EU interlocutors. Kicking off the series of visits, SRSG and Head of UNMISS, David Shearer, engaged with senior EU officials in Brussels on 29 September and spoke to EU PSC Ambassadors on 01 October. SRSG and Head of MINUSCA, Mankeur Ndiaye, discussed the UN-EU partnership in the Central African Republic at a virtual roundtable meeting with EU officials on 22 October. On 17 November, SRSG for Somalia and Head of UN-SOM, Jim Swan, meet with EU officials in advance of the Somalia Security Conference on 30 November. On 4 February, SRSG for Mali and Head of MINSUMA, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, briefed the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) on the EU-UN partnership in Mali.



SRSG for Mali and Head of MINSUMA, Mahamat Saleh Annadif engaged with EU PSC Ambassadors on 4 February.

Examples of UNLOPS Outreach Activities

- On 14 September, UNLOPS, together with other relevant stakeholders, were briefed by the EEAS on the EU's human rights dialogue with Ukraine.
- On 9 October, Head of UNLOPS Rory Keane, Associate Liaison Officer Halil Kosumi and Carlo Schmid Fellow Lena Hillmeier met with the Rapporteur for the annual European Parliament Recommendation on EU priorities in the UN, MEP Maria Soraya Rodriguez Ramos, and briefed her on UN-EU partnership matters relating to peace and security that may be of relevance for the European Parliament Recommendations.
- On 11 November, the Head of UNLOPS, Rory Keane, briefed the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) on the UN's partnership with the EU, NATO, and other international and regional partners. His presentation focused on cooperation across different thematic areas. Challenges posed to cooperation on the ground by the COVID-19 pandemic were also addressed.
- Political Affairs Officer Kamiel Mesie and Associate Liaison Officer Halil Kosumi delivered presentations on UN

Peace Operations and Special Political Missions in the field as part of the monthly pre-deployment trainings for EU staff to be deployed in CSDP missions, organized under the auspices of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).



Associate Liaison Officer Halil Kosumi provides an update on the EU-UN partnership at a CSDP training course organized by the EU Military Staff and the European Security and Defence College.

Visits and Meetings

Several UN visits and meetings related to peace and security took place in Brussels during last months:

- On 10 September, HR/VP Borrell spoke with Secretary General Guterres. Borrell and the SG exchanges views on the situation in Libya, the crisis in Belarus, as well as on the tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. The situation in the Sahel and the International Criminal Court were also amongst the topics discussed.
- On 29 September, the SSR Unit in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) participated as an observer in a meeting of the EU SSR Task Force, composed of SSR experts in the EEAS and the European Commission. Participants agreed to continue UN-EU cooperation on SSR.



Central African President Touadéra, took part in a UN meeting on CAR from the UNLOPS premises on 1 October.

- On 06 October, the AU, EU, NATO and the OSCE together with the UN held a third COVID-19 lessons learning roundtable exercise. The meeting was facilitated by DPO/DPET and put a focus on COVID-19 in mission settings.
- The third Ministerial Strategic Dialogue on UNRWA took place on 15 October. HR/VP Borrell participated in the meeting, underscoring the crucial nature of UNRWA and reaffirming the EU's strong political and financial support.
- On 20 October, European Commissioner Lenarčič (Crisis Management) participated in a Ministerial Roundtable on the Central Sahel, organised by the Government of Denmark, in partnership with the Government of Germany, the EU and the UN. The meeting focused on operational lessons learned and forward-looking plans relating to humanitarian action, development and peace efforts, and gave special attention to the impact and consequences of COVID-19.
- On 29 October, USG DiCarlo (Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) briefed the European Parliament's subcommittee on security and defence on women, peace and security.
- Between 9 and 11 November, the annual UN-NATO Staff Talks took place at the working / expert level.
- On 10 November, UNODA participated in the 16th annual NATO Arms Control, Disarmament and WMD Non-Proliferation Conference organised by Romania.
- The 28th EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management took place on 27 November, co-chaired by USG Lacroix and EEAS Deputy Secretary-General for CSDP and Crisis Response, Charles Fries.
- On 30 November, HR/VP Borrell co-chaired a high-level Somalia Security Event together with Somali Prime Minister Roble and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security Chergui. The UN was represented by SRSG for Somalia and Head of UN-SOM Jim Swan, and by senior DPPA officials. Participants discussed the implementation of the updated Somali Transition Plan as well as longer-term engagement regarding security and overall stabilisation post-2021.
- A public online conference on “climate change, defence and crisis management”, co-organised by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and the EEAS, took place on 11 December. DPET Chief of Policy and Best Practices, Rania Dagash, participated in the seminar for the UN. Her intervention focused on the role UN peace operations could play in this context and on how the environmental footprint of operations can be reduced.
- On 12 and 13 January, an EU-UN consultation exercise co-organised by UNLOPS and UNDP was held to inform EU thematic programming in the area of prevention, peace and stability.
- On 29 January, DPPA-DPO ASG Keita held a consultation with EEAS Managing Director for Africa, Rita Laranjinha on a range of Africa files.
- USG Lacroix and briefed the PSC on peacekeeping files on 4 February.
- SRSG for Mali and Head of MINSUMA Annadif briefed the PSC on the situation in Mali on 4 February.

Outlook

Upcoming meetings and milestones in the Brussels context

- The Munich Security Conference will take place from 19 to 21 February in virtual format.
- NATO Defence Ministers will meet in Brussels in late February. This will be the first NATO ministerial attended by the incoming US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd Austin.
- EU Foreign Ministers will meet for the next Foreign Affairs Council on 22 February in Brussels.
- On 2 and 3 March, an informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers will take place in Lisbon, followed by an informal Gymnich meeting on 4 and 5 March.
- The next European Council is set to take place on 25 and 26 March.
- The North Atlantic Council will meet at the level of NATO Foreign Ministers in Brussels in March.
- A European Defence Agency (EDA) High-Level Conference on the “Impact of Disruptive Technologies on Defence” is planned to take place from 19 to 21 April in Porto.
- An EU Foreign Affairs Council with Defence Ministers will take place on 4 May in Brussels.
- An EU-India Summit is planned for 8 May in Porto.
- A Ministerial Conference on migration management will take place on 10 and 11 May in Lisbon.
- From 24 to 26 May, the European Union Military Committee will meet in Lisbon.
- An EU Foreign Affairs Council focusing on development related affairs will take place on 25 May in Brussels.
- An EU-MENA High Level Cooperation Conference on Enhancing Police Cooperation is planned for 30 May and 1 June in Lisbon.
- From 22 to 24 June the Athena Committee will hold an informal meeting in Lisbon.
- The EU Politico-Military Group will hold an informal meeting from 23 to 25 June in Lisbon.
- A European Council is planned for 24 and 25 June and will formally end the Portuguese EU Council Presidency.
- A NATO Summit with Heads of State and Government is planned to take place in mid-2021.



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