



# BXL BULLETIN

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## Editorial

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN-EU joint declaration on crisis management – a document that set out practical steps to enable both organisations to work together on crisis management files and peace and security matters more broadly. Much has been achieved in operational and policy terms since the first joint UN-EU declaration and subsequent updated iterations, including good examples of UN and EU operations working in parallel on the ground in support of UN mandates in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Mali and elsewhere. Much of this work has been supported through the establishment of an UN liaison office in Brussels in 2011 working on behalf of the UN secretariat with the EU and member state representations in Brussels on political, peace and security matters, as well as cooperating with NATO headquarters.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the joint declaration offers a moment to reflect on the future of the partnership in a world that has changed considerably, notably in terms of global geopolitical tensions, new threats, and some new opportunities, including linked to youth, technology and innovation. The New Agenda for Peace requested by Secretary-General Guterres due out later this year will provide an important roadmap, which can help reinvigorate the partnerships agenda in line with the ethos of ‘networked multilateralism’ espoused by the Secretary-General. Critical watchwords to look out for in the New Agenda for Peace include how to reduce strategic risks, how to strengthen foresight, invest in regional prevention and how to successfully support peace.

In line with chapter VIII of the UN charter, the EU can and will have an important role to play in the coming period in the context of supporting rules-based multilateralism with the UN at its core, including in practical terms through innovations in the EU toolbox. In this regard the EU Strategic Compass adopted on 21 March 2022 can be beneficial in supporting peace and security efforts under a UN framework, including relating to capabilities, planning and expertise. There is also room for collaboration within the framework of the new EU civilian compact, as well as ongoing collaboration between CSDP missions and operations and UN peacekeeping operations and UN special political missions, alongside exchanges on conflict prevention, security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demilitarization and reintegration (DDR), preventing violent extremism (PVE), climate-security, women peace and security and peacebuilding more broadly.

Despite today’s choppy geopolitical headwinds, the Brussels practice of working in partnership in line with UN mandates remains resilient and tangibly demonstrates through concrete results the logic of investing in partnerships over time.

This latest edition to the UNLOPS bulletin provides a flavour of UN partnership work in Brussels in recent months relating to peace and security files, including updates on UN visitors to Brussels, dialogues exchanges and samples of outreach activities.

*Rory Keane*

*Head of the UN Liaison Office for Peace and Security, Brussels*

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## UN-EU Institutional Dialogue on Peace and Security



*USG Lacroix and the Swedish Defence Minister Jonson at the informal EU Defence Ministerial meeting in Stockholm on 7 March 2023*

### USG Lacroix joins informal EU Defence Ministerials

On 7-8 March 2023, USG for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, travelled to Stockholm to attend the first informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers of the year in order to engage on UN peacekeeping files. Mr Lacroix addressed the issue of mis-/dis-information in mission settings, and held a range of bilateral meetings with Defence Ministers. He also discussed EU Member States support for the UN's Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) priorities.

Previously, on 29-30 August 2022, the USG travelled to Prague under the Czech EU Presidency to attend the sec-

ond informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers of 2022, which provided an excellent opportunity to update on UN peacekeeping developments and discuss the challenges faced by UN peacekeeping missions on the ground, as well as the measures being taken to enhance mandate delivery, with a strong focus on Mali and the Sahel region.

In addition, on 12-13 January 2022, EU Defence Ministers gathered in Brest for an informal ministerial meeting. The six-monthly informal meeting hosted by then French Presidency of the Council of the EU enabled USG Lacroix to participate virtually in a session on operational matters. ❖

### UN-EU Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) co-convened the Fourth UN-EU High level Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism in New York on 8 April 2022. During the Dialogue, the new "UN-EU Global Terrorism Threats Facility", which aims to provide rapid response support to Member States facing an evolving terrorist threat or situation, was launched.

The talks focused on current terrorism trends in West Africa/Sahel, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Participants also addressed other areas of common concern, such as

emerging threats related to new technologies, including how they affect youth as a particular target group.

UN and EU representatives actively participated in the event, including USG for UNOCT Vladimir Voronkov, DUSG and Director for UNOCT Raffi Gregorian, Director for Security and Defence Policy at the EEAS Joanneke Balfourt, Deputy DG in the European Commission Olivier Onidi, and EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator Ilkka Salmi. ❖



Picture: European Council

*Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the President of the European Council Charles Michel on 23 March 2023*

## Visit of the Secretary-General to EU Headquarters

### Fostering Multilateral Cooperation

**The Secretary-General visited Brussels on 23 March 2023 upon invitation from the European Union (EU) to address the European Council, the body comprising EU heads of state and government.**

The Secretary-General addressed the European Council seeking support for action on climate change, sustainable development, and addressing the ongoing challenges linked to the war in Ukraine. Mr. Guterres noted, “the excellent cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations” and appealed for EU leaders to help the world “get back on track” towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a time when progress in so many parts of the world has been reversed. Secretary-General Guterres also highlighted the need for reforms of the international financial institutions (IFIs) and urgent climate action. He lamented that the invasion of Ukraine is causing “tremendous suffering” to the Ukrainian people, but also having a “huge impact” around the world.

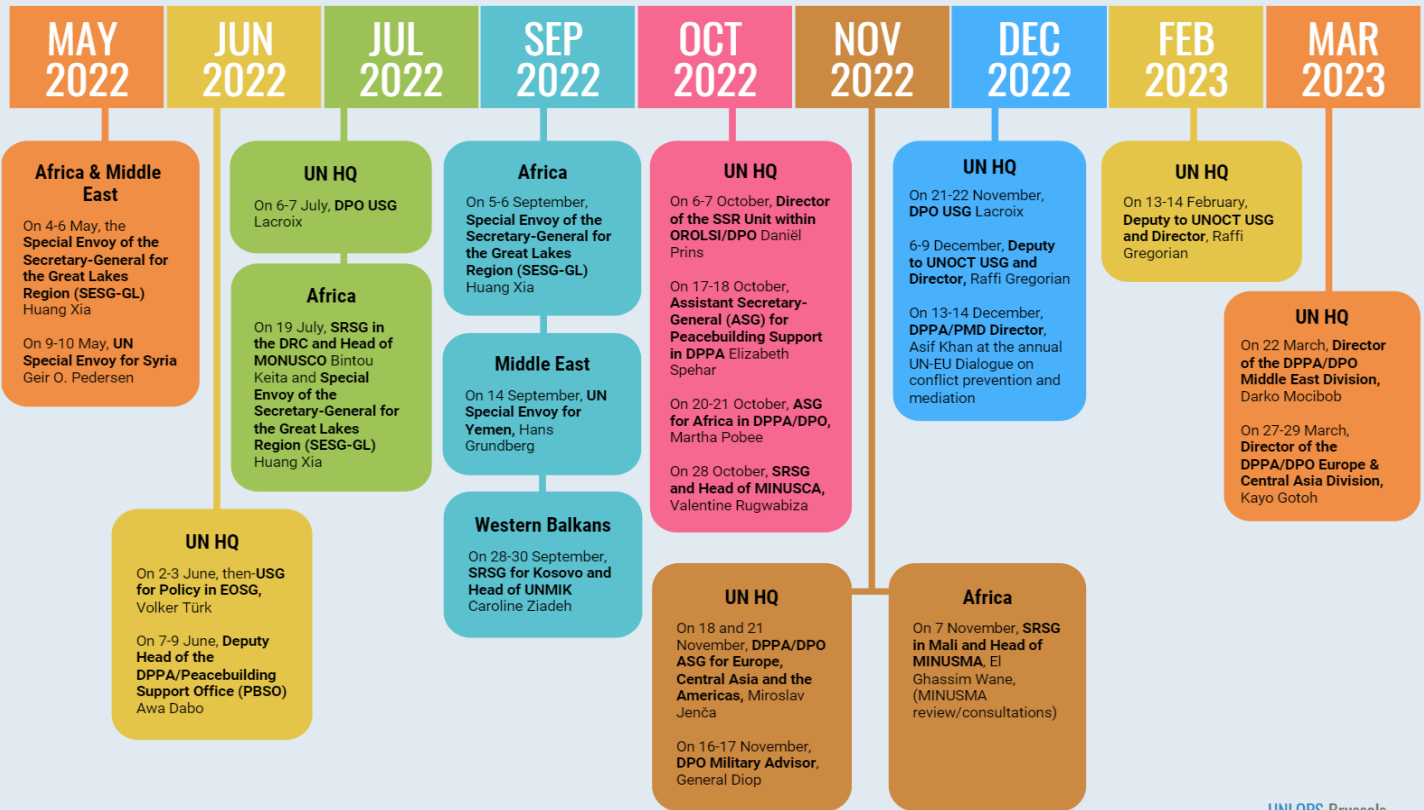
Mr. Guterres thanked the European Union for its strong support for the UN and multilateralism overall, calling for greater cooperation in taking forward ‘Our Common Agenda’ blueprint, and next year’s Summit of the Future.

On Ukraine, he stressed the need for a “just peace” in line with the UN Charter, international law, and the General Assembly’s resolutions. He provided an update on enhancing global food security through the Black Sea Grain Initiative and commended all EU citizens who had shown solidarity with the millions of Ukrainian refugees who have left the war zone.

On climate change, the Secretary-General welcomed the European Green Deal as a significant step and encouraged the EU to scale up its financial and technological cooperation with emerging and developing economies to close the emissions gap and deliver climate justice in the form of green jobs, strengthening adaptation, implementing the loss and damage fund, and protecting vulnerable communities everywhere.

The Secretary-General also expressed concerns about the “perfect storm” facing many developing countries from the COVID crisis, the cost of living challenges and accelerating climate change. He underlined the importance of putting in place measures for a more equitable economic and financial system, including through reform of IFIs, more effective debt relief, and an SDG stimulus. ❖

# Sample of UN visitors to Brussels during the reporting period



UNLOPS Brussels

## Reflections on departing UNLOPS



Picture: Lena Hillmeier

As my two and a half year stay at UNLOPS ends, I can say that working as part of the UNLOPS team has been an immense pleasure and privilege, while the subject matter and obstacles faced have been challenging in many ways. Over the past two and a half years, the world has experienced a series of tectonic shifts, including a global pandemic and war in Ukraine.

The pandemic presented fundamental challenges to UNLOPS as an office that relies on regular direct contact with its closest partners. However, it also gave a heartening proof of the adaptability and tenacity of the UN's partnerships, as institutional dialogue fora on political, peace and security matters with the EU and NATO shifted online en-

suring the continuation of fruitful and substantive exchanges.

A worrisome trend has been the intensifying fire under which the multilateralism has found itself over the past years. Geopolitics have made a reappearance as a defining factor governing international relations – a context which has forced international partnerships to shift and adapt to meet new challenges and more complex threats. I would like to sincerely thank all UN colleagues in Brussels and headquarters for the collaboration over the past years and for continuing to bring partnership to life in these challenging times.

*Lena Hillmeier*

## NATO Update

During the reporting period, the UN has engaged with NATO on a range of technical matters based on the UN-NATO 2018 joint statement. On 21-22 November 2022, USG Lacroix and ASG Jenča held meetings with senior NATO interlocutors in Brussels, where NATO expressed support for Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+), while the UN military advisor Gen. Diop addressed the NATO Military Committee on 16 November 2022 on UN peacekeeping matters.

At the NATO Summit in Madrid on 28-30 June 2022, NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept “NATO 2022” for the Alliance. It outlines NATO’s core tasks — deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. With regard to UN-NATO cooperation, the Strategic Concept reaffirms the alliance’s commitment to the UN Charter and expresses interest in joint work on counter-terrorism, as well as crisis prevention and management.

NATO is strengthening relations with its partners in the Indo-Pacific region — Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand. For example, these partner countries participated in the NATO Madrid Summit in June 2022, as well as in the NATO Foreign Ministers’ meeting in April 2023.

On 10 January 2023, the EU and NATO signed a joint declaration in Brussels. The declaration sets out a shared

vision of how the two organizations will act together against common security threats. They will expand and deepen their cooperation on areas, such as growing geo-strategic competition, resilience of critical infrastructure, foreign information interference, space, and climate change, amongst others.



Picture: NATO

*The President of the European Council Michel (left), NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg (middle) and European Commission President von der Leyen at the Signing Ceremony on 10 January*

On 18 May 2022, Finland and Sweden simultaneously applied for NATO membership. On 5 April 2023, Finland officially joined NATO and became the 31st member state of the alliance. The Vilnius Summit on 11-12 July 2023 marks the next big event on the NATO calendar. ❖



Picture: NATO

*Ceremony marking the accession of Finland to NATO on 5 April 2023 (NATO HQ in Brussels)*

## EU Policy Development: Peace and Security

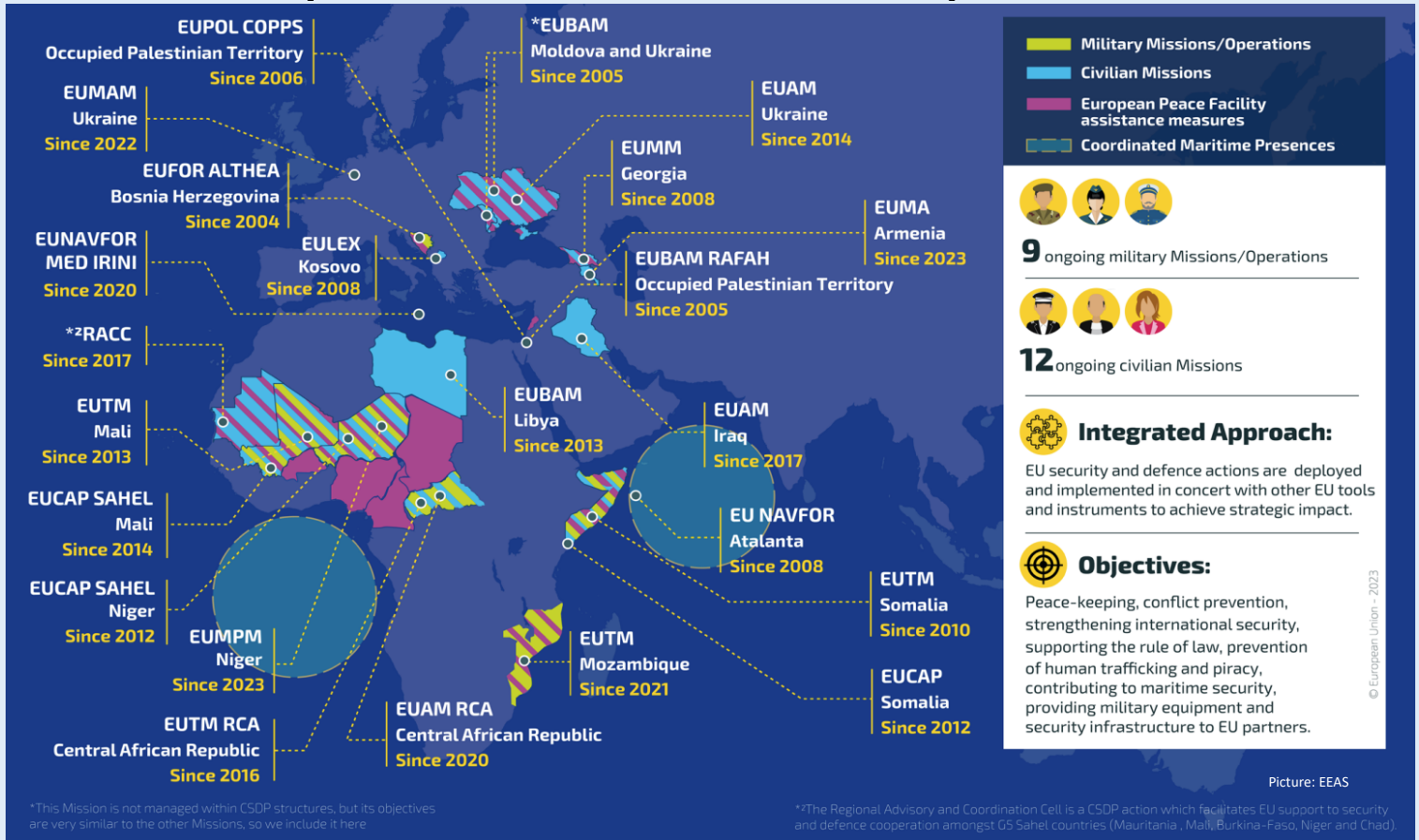
- On 17-18 February 2022, the AU and the EU met for the sixth EU-AU summit in Brussels. EU and AU leaders agreed on a joint vision for renewed partnership, with the aim of solidarity, security, peace and sustainable economic development for both sides. They expressed commitment in support of African defence and security forces, including through EU missions and operations; and supporting law-enforcement capacity-building.
- On 21 March 2022, the Council adopted the Strategic Compass. It gives the EU an ambitious plan of action to strengthen the EU's security and defence policy by 2030. With the Strategic Compass, EU Member States agreed a common strategic vision for the EU's role in security and defence. The Compass covers all aspects of security and defence policy and is structured around four pillars: to act, secure, invest, and partner.
- On 29 June 2022, the Commission published its 2022 Strategic Foresight Report. The report, among other issues, brings a forward-looking and comprehensive perspective on the interplay between the green and digital transitions towards 2050.
- On 9 November 2022, the Commission and HR/VP Borrell launched a new Security and Defence Package. It focuses on reinforcing Cyber Defence with the EU Policy on Cyber Defence (EPCD), and Military Mobility with the Action Plan on Military Mobility 2.0.
- On 25 November, the Commission and HR/VP Borrell presented the EU's third Gender Action Plan (GAPIII): "An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action." GAP III aims to provide an operational roadmap to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through all external actions of the EU. On 16 December, the EU Council Presidency issued conclusions on behalf of EU Member States welcoming GAP III.
- On 12 December 2022, the Council adopted conclusions on the Civilian CSDP Compact, highlighting the significant contribution of the civilian CSDP to international peace and stability. The Council reaffirmed its full commitment to strengthening civilian CSDP through a new Civilian CSDP Compact to be adopted by mid-2023. The new compact will also include a dimension on UN-EU partnership.
- On 20-21 March 2023, the EU hosted the first edition of the Schuman Security and Defence Forum (Schuman Forum) in Brussels, bringing together Ministers and Chiefs of Defence from the EU 27 Member States and over 50 partner countries and organisations. On this occasion, HR/VP Borrell presented the first annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Compass.



HR/VP Borrell at the EEAS Schuman Security and Defence Partnership Forum on 21 March 2023

Picture: European Council

# Update: EU CSDP Missions and Operations



Overview of EU CSDP missions and operations (as of March 2023)

There are currently 21 EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, 5 of which are deployed in parallel with UN missions. Approximately 4,000 personnel are currently deployed in the 12 civilian and 9 military missions.

**Horn of Africa:** The mandates of EUCAP Somalia, EUTM Somalia, and Operation ATALANTA have been extended until December 2024. The decision was taken following the holistic strategic review of the three CSDP missions. EUCAP and EUTM Somalia support the development of Somali capacities and capabilities through strategic advice, mentoring and training, accompanied with support from the European Peace Facility (EPF).

**Central Africa:** The Council extended the mandates of EUAM RCA and EUTM RCA until August 2024 and September 2023, respectively. The updated mandates include activities in support of strategic communication efforts to foster EU values and expose violations of human rights. However, the EU has suspended a large part of EUTM RCA's training mandate since December 2021.

**Sahel:** The mandates of EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUCAP Sahel Niger have been extended until January 2025 and September 2024, respectively, as part of the Holistic Strategic Review of the missions. However, the EU has suspended many operational training elements of EUTM Mali since April 2022. EUCAP

Sahel Niger is now mandated to exchange EU classified information with the EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies. In addition, an EU Military Partnership Mission in Niger (EUMPM Niger) was launched in February 2023 for a period of 3 years. EUMPM Niger aims to enhance the military capacity of the Nigerian Armed forces in order to support Niger in its fight against terrorist armed groups in compliance with human rights.

**Mediterranean & North Africa:** The Council has extended the mandate of Operation IRINI until March 2025.

**Eastern Europe & Caucasus:** The Council extended EUMM Georgia until December 2024. In addition, an EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA Armenia) was launched in February 2023 for a period of 2 years. The primary task of EUMA Armenia is to observe and report on the security situation along the Armenian side of the international border with Azerbaijan. The Council also launched an EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) in November 2022 for a period of 2 years. EUMAM Ukraine is aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

A new CSDP mission in Moldova is expected to be established soon, with a focus on enhancing resilience of Moldova's security sector in the area of crisis management, as well as resilience to hybrid threats, including cybersecurity.



Picture: European Council

Visit by attachés to the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CivCom) in Sweden on 23-24 February 2023

## EU Council Presidencies

### A closer look at the Presidencies' priorities on peace and security matters

**The Swedish Presidency:** Sweden has been hosting the EU Presidency in the first half of 2023, assuming this role for the third time after fourteen years. The priorities of the presidency include (1) security; (2) competitiveness; (3) green & energy transitions; and (4) democratic values and the rule of law.

On 1 January 2023, Sweden took over the Council presidency from the Czech Republic. On peace and security matters, the presidency is working on continuing political, humanitarian and military support for Ukraine. The presidency seeks to bring Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia closer to the EU, while also accelerating the accession process for the Western Balkans. The Indo-Pacific region is also a focus. EU-Africa relations are also among the priorities, with Sweden hoping to regain the momentum following the AU-EU summit. The UN-EU partnership is also high on the agenda.

#### **The Czech Presidency:**



Picture: European Council

European Commission President von der Leyen (right) and Czech Prime Minister Fiala (left) at the Prague Summit 6 October 2022

The Czech Republic held the EU Council Presidency from 1 July to 31 December 2022. The Presidency continued providing strong support for Ukraine; and held the first meeting of the European Political Community on the occasion of the Prague Summit.

#### **The French Presidency:**



Picture: European Council

Informal meeting of heads of state or government in Versailles on 11 March 2022

France held the EU Council Presidency from 1 January to 30 June 2022. The Presidency was marked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In order to organise a European Response, several summits and ministerial meetings were organised in France, Brussels, and Luxembourg. Especially the Versailles Summit on 10-11 March 2022 allowed coordination regarding the adoption of sanctions against Russia and for the coordination of a shared response.

**Next EU Presidencies:** Spain will hold the EU Council Presidency from 1 July to 31 December 2023. EU-Latin American relations would be high on agenda. Spain will commence a new presidency trio (T12), with Belgium and Hungary to follow. ❖



## Sample of Visits and Meetings

Several UN visits and meetings related to peace and security took place in Brussels during the reporting period (see Infographic on page 4):

- On 4-6 May, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (SESG-GL), Huang Xia, met with senior EEAS officials and Belgian Foreign Ministry officials.
- On 9-10 May, UN Special Envoy for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen, participated in the 6th Brussels Conference on “Supporting the future of Syria and the region” hosted by the EU.
- On 2-3 June, then-USG for Policy in the EOSG, Volker Türk, met with key EU interlocutors, including EEAS Secretary General Sannino, Commission Representatives and EU member states.
- On 7-9 June, Deputy Head of the DPPA/Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), Awa Dabo, participated in the 2nd UN-EU Dialogue on Prevention, Peacebuilding and Stabilisation.
- On 20-22 June, Giuseppe Cafiero and Eun Ah Sim from the UN HQ Department of Operational Support (DOS) Partnership Team met with key EU and NATO interlocutors.
- On 6-7 July, USG Lacroix met with key EU interlocutors, including PSC Ambassadors.
- On 19 July, SRSG in the DRC and Head of MONUSCO, Bintou Keita, and SESG-GL Xia met with Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib (see picture below).
- On 5-6 September, SESG-GL Xia and the Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Joao Samuel Caholo, jointly held meetings with key EU and Belgian interlocutors.
- On 28-30 September, SRSG for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK, Caroline Ziadeh, met with key EU and NATO interlocutors, including Miroslav Lajčák, EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue.
- On 6-7 October, Director of the SSR Unit within OROLSI/DPO, Daniël Prins, met with key senior EEAS interlocutors.
- On 17-18 October, ASG for Peacebuilding Support in DPPA, Elizabeth Spehar, met with key EU interlocutors, including EU member states.
- On 20-21 October, ASG for Africa in DPPA/DPO, Martha Pobeë, met with key EU and NATO interlocutors, as well as EU PSC Ambassadors.
- On 28 October, SRSG and Head of MINUSCA, Valentine Rugwabiza, met with EU senior officials and PSC Ambassadors.
- On 7 November, SRSG in Mali and Head of MINUSMA, El Ghassim Wane, held a range of meetings with the EEAS and EU member states as part of the consultation process for the MINUSMA review.
- On 18 and 21 November, DPPA/DPO ASG for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, Miroslav Jenča, met with key EU and NATO interlocutors and EU member states.
- On 16-17 November, DPO Military Advisor, General Diop, briefed the EU Military Committee and the NATO Military Committee (see picture below of Gen. Diop (left) with the Chair of the EU Military Committee Gen. Brieger).
- On 21-22 November, USG Lacroix met with key EU and NATO interlocutors as well as Belgian Defence Minister, Ludivine Dedonder.



- On 6-9 December, Deputy to UNOCT USG and Director, Raffi Gregorian, met with COTER, as well as key EU and NATO interlocutors.
- On 13-14 December, the annual UN-EU Dialogue on conflict prevention and mediation was hosted by the EEAS. The UN delegation was led by DPPA/PMD Director, Asif Khan.
- On 22 March, Darko Mocibob, Director of the DPPA/DPO Middle East Division, met with key EU interlocutors.
- On 27-29 March, Kayo Gotoh, Director of the DPPA/DPO Europe & Central Asia Division, met with key EU and NATO interlocutors.
- On 27-29 March, SESG-GL Xia met with EU and Belgian interlocutors. The Special Envoy also held consultations with donors at an event hosted by Belgium and linked to the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region.

## New Team Member



Picture: Anne Viken

In December 2022, Ms. Anne Viken joined UNLOPS as a Political Affairs Officer. Prior to this assignment, Anne worked in the DPPA/DPO Europe and Central Asia Division and previous to that, in the Security Council Affairs Division at UN Headquarters in New York. Before joining the UN, she was an adviser at the Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva, focusing on humanitarian affairs, and before that worked on human rights issues as Special Assistant to the President of the UN Human Rights Council and at the Permanent Mission of Norway in Geneva.

## Examples of UNLOPS Outreach Activities

- On 23 February 2022, UNLOPS addressed EU Member States in the EU's UN Working Party (CONUN). Cooperation on the New Agenda for Peace was high on the agenda.
- On 6 July 2022, Halil Kosumi from UNLOPS presented the 2022-2024 UN-EU priorities on peace operations and crisis management at the pre-deployment training for CSDP missions and operations organized by the ESDC/EEAS.
- On 15 March 2023, Rory Keane provided a lecture on UN-EU cooperation in the areas of peace and security at the EU Diplomatic Academy, together with the UN/UNDP Director and UN DCO Representative in Brussels.
- On 15-16 March 2023, Carole Magnaschi, UNOCT Rep. at UNLOPS, participated in the UN Workshop for Civil Aviation Security, co-organised by UNOCT, NATO, EUROCONTROL, and NEASCOG.



Picture: UNLOPS

Halil Kosumi (left) from UNLOPS lecturing at the pre-deployment training for CSDP missions and operations

- On 15 November 2022, UNLOPS represented UN DPPA at a workshop on EU Peace Mediation organized by the Czech EU Council Presidency.
- On 10 March 2023, UNLOPS represented HQ at an EU seminar on “Integrating a Gender Perspective into EU CSDP Missions and Operations” where Head of UNLOPS Rory Keane introduced UN's commitments relating to WPS.
- On 21 March 2023, Rory Keane represented DPO/DPET at a session on “Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination” at the European Humanitarian Forum.
- On 4 April 2023, Rory Keane provided reflections at the “Pathways for Peace 5th Anniversary European Consultation” co-organised by DPPA/PBSO, the World Bank Group, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norwegian Institute of Internal Affairs.



Picture: Carole Magnaschi

Carole Magnaschi (left), UNOCT Rep. at UNLOPS, participated in the UN Workshop for Civil Aviation Security in Brussels

## Outlook

### Upcoming meetings and milestones in the Brussels context



*Official flags of the UN and the EU*

- An informal meeting of EU Foreign Affairs Ministers (Gymnich) will take place in Stockholm on 11 and 12 May.
- EU Foreign Ministers will meet for the next Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels on 22 May.
- An EU Foreign Affairs Council with Defence Ministers will take place in Brussels on 23 May.
- An informal meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs will take place in Oslo on 31 May.
- An EU Foreign Affairs Council focusing on development related affairs will take place in Brussels on 4 May.
- The 2nd European Political Community Summit is planned to take place in Chisinau on 1 June, when security and defence may be high on the agenda.
- EU PSC's trip to UNHQ is scheduled on 6-7 June.
- The 7th Brussels conference on the Future of Syria and the Region is planned to take place on 14-15 June.
- An European Council is planned for 29 and 30 June and will formally end the Swedish EU Council Presidency.
- Spain will hold the EU Council Presidency between 1 July and 31 December.
- A NATO Summit is planned to take place in Vilnius on 11 and 12 July.
- An EU-CELAC Summit is planned to take place in Brussels on 17 and 18 July.



UNITED NATIONS LIAISON OFFICE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

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