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THE AGENCE EUROPE BULLETIN ON CSDP AND NATO

EU/YEMEN: EU IMPLEMENTS UN SANCTIONS REGARDING YEMEN

Brussels, 08/06/2015 (EDD) – In application of United Nations Security Council Resolution No 2216, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted, on Monday 8 June, a decision relating to implementation of the arms embargo against Yemen as well as targeted sanctions (visa ban and assets freeze) against the head of the Houthi militia, Abdulmalik al-Houthi, and Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the son of the former Yemeni president. Two other members of the Houthi movement as well as the former president Saleh have been subject to restrictive measures since December 2014.

EU/MIGRANTS: EUNAVFOR MEDITERRANEAN OPERATION PLAN WILL SOON BE PUT TO PSC

Brussels, 08/06/2015 (EDD) – The commander of the future European Union naval operation in the Mediterranean (see EDD 769), Rear Admiral Enrico Credendino, presented to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) on Thursday 4 June the broad lines of a draft operations plan that is to ensure strict compliance with international law when implementing the various successive phases of the military operation aimed at paralysing the means used by migrant smugglers. He also underlined the need to develop effective strategic communication for this operation and to be able to count on a productive force generation process. While discussions seem to be making extremely slow progress regarding a possible Security Council resolution, the ambassadors reaffirmed member states' support for the operation, placing emphasis once more on how important it was for the second and third phases of the operation to have a "*sound legal base*" or, in other terms, a UN mandate together with the consent of the Libyan authorities. Many other questions of a legal nature remain outstanding such as that regarding the legal procedures applicable to smugglers if caught or the management of migrants taken in when a smuggler boat is boarded or following a distress call. The plan of operations must, in principle, be forwarded to the PSC by 15 June. It should be noted, moreover, that the G7 leaders meeting on Sunday and Monday in Elmau, Bavaria, stressed their "*commitment to prevent and combat the trafficking of migrants, and to detect, deter and disrupt human trafficking in and beyond our borders"*. The text of the joint statement that speaks of the human drama in the Mediterranean and the Andaman Sea, without specifically referring to the future European operation, calls on all nations to deal with the root causes of the crisis, mainly by contributing to the development of the countries that take in migrants and refugees.

EU/CFSP: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – Representatives of the European Union member states within the Political and Security Committee (PSC) will, on Tuesday 9 June, hold an exchange of views with the secretary general of the External Action Service, Alain Le Roy, with a view to preparing the next Council of Foreign Ministers. The main theme of the meeting, scheduled for 22 June, will be relations with Asia, mainly ASEAN and China, on the eve of a bilateral EU-China summit to be held in Brusssels on 29 June. The ministers will also exchange views with European Commissioner Maros Sefcovic on the diplomacy of energy and will evoke EU-UN cooperation with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon during a working lunch. The agenda has still to be fine-tuned in coming days.

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Carte blanche

European defence in midstream

By Frédéric Mauro (Lawyer at the Paris bar, established in Brussels, specialising in defence question

A major meeting of the European Council on European defence is to be held in Brussels at the end of June. Should one expect anything to come out of it other than one of those indigestible and repetitive texts that we are so used to see formulated by the heads of state and government? For once, the answer could be in the affirmative.

Two initiatives in particular deserve to be set out in detail regarding their content and timetable. These are the preparatory action on defence research and the drafting of a "foreign affairs and security strategy". There is a close link between the two initiatives as – unless it is simply pointless chit-chat about the world around us – by weighing up the threats, a security and hence defence strategy must enlighten military leaders about what equipment the forces will need and, consequently, make the direction of research required clear to industrialists.

Progress on this, however, remains modest and does not correspond to the security challenges being faced by the European Union. The preparatory action has given rise to great hope but the principle of that action was decided 18 months ago and will only have an effect in 10 years' time. And as for the security-defence strategy, it would be necessary for all national authorities to agree in due course to faithfully carry it out ... There is still a long way to go. European defence is still advancing only haltingly.

The reason for this is that, in every aspect of the game, the building of an authentic European defence comes up against the sovereignty of the States. In industrial matters, the principle of fair return stands in the way of making the very best of key cooperation programmes. When it comes to capabilities, the specification differences for equipment can only be resolved by a common authority – that does not exist. And, finally, in operational matters, the build-up of the Franco-German brigade, battlegroups and other Combined Joint Expeditionary Forces (CJEF) are in no way a guarantee of common intervention and more integrated and less costly defence.

With good reason. If the aim is to build an authentic European defence, it is not by the arms or the legs that one should begin - but by the brain of the strategist. To demonstrate this, let us make the assumption that France transfers its nuclear forces to the European Union. In such a case, who, in Europe, would be the head of the armed forces with legitimate responsibility to give the final order for deployment of those forces if needed? The same is true for conventional forces. What would happen for deployment of the CJEF in the event of disagreement between French and British authorities?

The fact is that European defence is in midstream where the current is the strongest and where everyone is out of depth. It is the most dangerous place to be. There is a striking similarity with the construction of monetary integration, which is hardly more advanced. It seems interesting that the German and French ministers for economic affairs, Sigmar Gabriel and Emmanuel Macron, recently called for the eurozone to be strengthened. We should all realise that there must be a move towards *"ever closer union"* or else return to the shores of sovereignism and to every man for himself.

One thing is certain: the "little step by little step" method so useful when European construction began has become ineffective in the current situation, if not counter-productive. At a time when the construction of Europe is going through a moment of truth, its Kaïros, large-scale initiatives must be taken and one should not simply be content with proclaiming "pragmatism" as an alternative to action of any kind. That, moreover, is the true meaning of the word "pragmatism". In ancient Greek, "pragma" is proof through action when "logos", or speech, is no longer enough to convince. So, if the heads of state and government truly believe in European defence, then they must go ahead and do it!

The "pragma" being proposed to them is simple. The Lisbon Treaty provides for the setting in place of permanent structured cooperation (to learn more about PSC, see: http://www.grip.org/fr/node/1751) (PSC). Let them apply it then! It is a quantitative mechanism supposed to lead to the European Union of Security and Defence (EUSD). PSC is to the EUSD what convergence criteria are to economic and monetary union; the European Defence Agency (EDA) for its part being supposed, once the necessary changes have been made, to play the same role as that of the European Central Bank (ECB).

Written into the treaty using the present indicative, which in law is tantamount to the imperative, the PSC is not an option. It is a provision that is still in force and that must now be applied. Applied with boldness and "pragmatism" as, when one is in midstream there is no point in knowing how to walk. One must know how to swim!

EU/UKRAINE: INSTABILITY CONTINUES IN EASTERN UKRAINE

Brussels, 08/06/2015 (EDD) – On Thursday 4 June, the European Union denounced the heavy fighting around the town of Marinka near Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, that it describes as *"the most serious violation of the ceasefire under the Minsk agreements since February"*. Fighting has caused at least 26 fatalities in 24 hours, including civilians.

"Renewed intense fighting risks unleashing a new spiral of violence and human suffering", said Maja Kocijancic, the spokesperson for EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. She stressed that escalation followed *"the movement of a large amount of heavy weapons towards the contact line by the Russia-backed separatists, as reported by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission"*.

In a report published during the evening of Wednesday 3 June, the OSCE mission affirmed that *"fighting erupted around the government-controlled town of Marinka"* and that it had *"observed the movement of a large amount of heavy weapons in Donetsk People's Republic (DPR)-controlled areas, generally in a westerly direction towards the contact line – close to Marinka, preceding and during the fighting"*. According to the mission, calm was restored by the early evening.

Maja Kocijancic pointed out that the ceasefire was to be fully respected and heavy weapons withdrawn from the front line and *"kept in storage sites open to regular verification by OSCE monitors"*. *"The implementation of the Minsk agreements, to which all sides have declared their commitment, can only succeed on the basis of such a ceasefire, permanent withdrawal of heavy weapons and regular monitoring and verification",* she added.

The Ukrainian ambassador to the EU, Kostiantyn Yelisieiev, called for sanctions against Russia to be strengthened. In his view, this is the first time since the Debaltseve attack that the Minsk agreements *"are on the brink of a complete breakdown"*. *"The attack on Marinka must be the trigger for the strengthening of sectoral sanctions against Moscow",* reads a statement published on the Ukrainian mission's site with the EU. The European Council of 25 and 26 June should provide an opportunity to revise or, at least, to extend sanctions until the month of December, i.e. the time when all the provisions of the Minsk agreements should have been implemented.

EU/UKRAINE: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – The Council of Ministers of the European Union decided on Friday 5 June to extend the assets freeze for three of the four pesons covered by measures relating to the misappropriation of Ukrainian state funds and applicable until 6 June 2015. The individuals in question are the former justice minister, Elena Lukash, the former minister of education, Dmytro Tabachnyk, and Serihi Kliuiev, who are still subject to investigation by the Ukrainian authorities. On the other hand, Viktor Viktorovych Yanukovych, the son of the former Ukrainian president, has been taken off the list. On 5 March 2015, European restrictive measures linked to the freeze and recovery of misappropriated assets, initially adopted on 5 March 2014, had already been extended by 12 months for 14 persons, and by three months for these four individuals. The measures for the four persons in question had therefore reached expiry. The Council decided to extend them by nine months (until 6 March 2016) for two persons and by four months (until 6 October 2015) for Serihi Kliuiev. *"This decision was taken in the light of ongoing judicial proceedings in Ukraine with regard to these persons"*, a press release states. Seventeen people are currently subject to EU restrictive mesures focusing on the freezing and recovery of misappropriated assets. The legal acts were published in the EU Official Journal on 6 June.

NATO/MOLDOVA: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – For the first time, the NATO Partnership and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) organised a meeting in the Republic of Moldova on Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 3 June, which was *"a historic and unique visit"* especially given *"today's geopolitical circumstances with an assertive Russia exerting pressure on countries in the region"*, said James Appathurai, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, who chaired the meeting. PCSC members accompanied by representatives from partner countries (Austria, Ireland, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) met with Moldovan Prime Minister, Chiril Gaburici, Defence Minister Viorel Cibotaru, Deputy Foreign Minsiter Andrei Galbur, as well as with parliamentarians and leaders of poltiical parties. After the meeting, Appathurai said: *"Our focus is now on the next steps for deepening our cooperation, namely the defence capacity building package offered to Moldova at the Wales Summit. We will go home and finalise the discussions with the June defence ministerial meeting in sight"*.

EU/BURUNDI: EU REITERATES CALL FOR VIOLENCE TO STOP AND FOR CLIMATE OF TRUST TO BE RESTORED

Brussels, 08/06/2015 (EDD) – Given the fact that there is no appeasement in Burundi, the spokesperson for EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini issued the following statement on behalf of the European Union on Friday 5 June (our translation): *"The political standoff in Burundi, as well as the worsening of the economic situation, has serious risks for the people of Burundi. All political stakeholders must realise the extent of the danger facing the country. Only inclusive and transparent dialogue will allow a solution to the current crisis to be found. The European Union fully supports the facilitator role played by the special envoy of the United Nations secretary general, Said Djinnit. It calls on all parties to work with him and the envoys of the African Union (AU) and the Community of East Africa (CEA) in order to reach consensus on the path forward. First and foremost, it is important for the violence to stop and for a climate of trust to take hold. All parties must show proof of restraint. The Burundi authorities must act in full compliance with their international human rights commitments and guarantee fundamental freedoms. The EU supports the call by the CEA summit for elections to be postponed to allow time to set the necessary conditions in place for peaceful, inclusive and credible elections. The adoption of concrete measures by the Burundi authorities is necessary in order to restore the confidence of the parties taking part in the electoral process. The European Union also calls on the region to swiftly implement all measures necessary to this end. The EU is ready to contribute to this, including through the deployment of the electoral observation mission if conditions are met. It will continue to work closely with its AU and CEA partners with a view to the next African Union summit".*

EU/ALGERIA: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – On the occasion of the 9th session of the EU/Algeria Association Council, in Brussels on Thursday 4 May, the European Union reaffirmed it was *"imperative"* to combat illegal immigration. It *"encourages Algeria to begin bilateral dialogue"* on *"legal migration and mobility, the trafficking of migrants, readmission, voluntary return, regional cooperation for border management, the processing of mixed migrant flows and international protection for those who need it, and improved contribution by Algerian citizens residing in Europe to the development of Algeria and international protection"* (our tranlsation throughout). Cooperation in the fields of security and justice is deemed *"essential"* by the EU which hopes to establish *"targeted and indepth dialogue"* with Algeria for *"combating terrorism which includes the prevention of radicalisation and the fight against violent extremism in compliance with the law"*. The EU follows with interest the dialogue that Algeria also has with NATO and the OSCE and welcomes the constructive role that Algeria plays within the African Union in terms of peace and security. The EU supports and encourages Algeria's involvement in Euro-Mediterranean consultation bodies, and primarily the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and 5+5 Dialogue with the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). As far as the Sahel is concerned, the EU *"welcomes and fully suports Algerian mediation and its efforts to find an outcome to the current crissi in Mali"*. The EU states it *"shares with Algeria the wish for greater development support in the region"*. It also reafffirms that *"the threats in our neighbourhood are a common concern for both the EU and Algeria"*. This is also true in the case of Libya. The EU *"hails the diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Algeria"*.

NATO/DEFENCE: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – The first of NATO's five unmanned air vehicles have left the production line in San Diego (USA), as part of the Alliance Ground Surveillance Programme (AGS), NATO announced on Thursday 4 June. The Global Hawk Block 40, a high altitude long endurance drone (HALE), will be used by NATO and is part of the acquisition progamme to which 15 allies contribute (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United States). AGS is scheduled to reach initial operational capability by the end of 2017.

EU/RUSSIA: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – The G7 countries are ready to *"step up sanctions"* against Russia *"if necessary"*, said German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday 8 June at the closing conference of the summit of seven industrial powers at Elmau Castle in Bavaria. French President François Hollande for his part said *"if it is shown that Russia continues to provide arms and maintain a military presence in eastern Ukraine, and also if (...) the eastern regions do not take the approach to comply with the different stages of the Minsk agreements – then this could justify stepping up sanctions"*. He went on to add that *"it is likely"* that the European Council of 25 and 26 June will take a stance in favour of extending sanctions until the end of the year. According to Kiev, there are 50,000 Ukrainian military and volunteers engaged in clashes in eastern Ukraine. They are faced by a total force of *"42,500 men"* three quarters of whom are rebels and one quarter Russian soldiers (nearly 10,000), the Ukrainian defence minister, Stepan Poltorak, said. According to the latter, those forces have 558 tanks and considerable artillery pieces.

NATO/DEFENCE: NATO TO TEST NRF "SPEARHEAD" DEPLOYMENT

Brussels, 08/06/2015 (EDD) – With Exercise *Noble Jump 15,* which is to take place in Poland from Tuesday 9 June to Friday 19 June, NATO will - for the very first time - put to the test the "spearhead" force of the NATO Response Force (NRF), the creation of which was decided at the Newport summit in September 2014 in response to the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The prerogatives of the supreme commander for allied forces in Europe (SACEUR) regarding use of this force are due to be fixed during the meeting of allied defence ministers at the end of June.

The *"spearhead"* or *"very high readiness task force"* (VJTF), a brigade-size force, some elements of which should be able to deploy in 48 hours, has already been tested on two occasions, in March and then in April (see *EDD* 784). On those occasions, however, it was only a matter of national-level testing of procedures, coordination capability of command structures and placing on standby, followed by rapid troop deployment to embarkation points.

The exercise will unfold in the south-west of Poland (near the town of Zagan), not far from the German border, and will have the particular characteristic that it will be the first effective deployment of this multinational force, for which the framework nation for 2015 is mainly Germany (for the so-called interim VJTF). The exercise involves 2100 troops, including Czech and Dutch airborne units, German and Norwegian motorised brigades, a Polish tank unit (15 Leopard 2A4), Polish and Latvian special forces, Belgian and Polish artillery units, Polish and American attack and transport helicopters, as well as two Polish F-16. One Hungarian civil-military unit will also be present. As the host nation, Poland will be entrusted with managing part of the logistics and supply.

At the level of command, there will be contribution from the Supreme Headquarters for Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE), as well as the Allied Joint Force Command Naples (JFC-Naples) and the command of the German-Dutch rapid deployment corps, the latter playing the main role during the exercises. For the first time, the new special command and control units (NATO force integration units – NFIUs) will also be tested. These are for ensuring coordination between the allies for VJTF deployments in eastern Europe (see *EDD* 766).

The exercises *"will provide an opportunity, for the first time, to hold a practical test of the NATO 'spearhead force' in conditions that are as close as possible to a theatre of operations. This will allow the Alliance to determine the strong points and the weak points (of the force). In the second part of the year 2015 and in 2016, NATO will organise further exercises allowing conclusions to be drawn and to perfect the concept of VJTF within the NRF",* the Polish defence minister stated in a press release.

The allied defence ministers who are to meet in Brussels on Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 June will review, in particular, implementation of the readiness action plan (RAP), including in respect of VJTF. On that occasion, they are expected to endorse the conclusions reached from the debate on the decision-making process for mobilisation of that force. The option presented by the SACEUR, General Philip Breedlove, for empowerment to place on standby and pre-position equipment and elements of the force before deployment is authorised by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) was not endorsed (*EDD* 796). Finally, the allies are expected to give him solely the prerogative of placing the main units that make up the VJTF on standby, deeming that this will be sufficient to ensure deployment within the timeframe imposed by the concept, namely 48 hours.

NATO/DEFENCE: *08/06/2015 (EDD)* – The setting in place of a new very high readiness force (VJTF) by NATO does not only give rise to the need to conduct command and deployment exercises (see related article) but also the need to adapt NATO's communication systems. Exercise *Steadfast Cobalt 15*, which is to be conducted in Poland during two weeks as of Sunday 7 June, aims to test and adapt communication and information systems to be employed by the VJTF, notably to counter cyber-attacks. *"With the rapid deployment of the VJTF, all communication systems must be instantly responsive, indeed in some instances operational before any task force arrives in location",* said the commander of the NATO Communication and Information Group (NCISG), General Thomas Franz, reports a press release from the Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum. This means the deployment of advanced communication assets down to the tactical level of a deployed force. One thousand allied soldiers are taking part in the exercise that unfolds in the vicinity of Walcz (north-west Poland).