

EDA MARITIME SECURITY CONFERENCE

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Opening Speech

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(Check against delivery)

- Thanks to Commodore Tsogkas for his kind welcoming words.
- It is a pleasure to be here. EDA is developing close links of interaction with the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) which recently hosted also EDA's Migrant Handling course.
- I do not need to tell you that the security environment in Europe is becoming increasingly uncertain, complex and fragile. You know this all too well.
- To live up to the expectations of the European citizens, an ambitious package to reinforce European security and defence policy was launched last year, and of course I refer to the EU Global Strategy, the European Defence Action Plan and the EU/NATO Joint Declaration.
- This package was endorsed by the European Council in December 2016, based on three key interlinked elements:

(1) The implementation of EU Global Strategy in the field of security and defence, with a new level of ambition and concrete set of actions to fulfil it. So this year has seen the agreement of Defence Ministers in March to launch the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), a new, transparent and Member States-driven process, which will contribute to overcome

capability shortfalls through enhanced information-sharing and cooperation in an EDA framework. And just this week we witnessed the notification by defence ministers of an ambitious and inclusive Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence (PESCO), which could result in a real qualitative leap in European defence cooperation. EDA will certainly play an important role in its implementation, in accordance with the already existing Treaty's provisions.

(2) The second element is The European Defence Action Plan (EDAP), which led to the presentation in June of this year by the European Commission of the European Defence Fund, with new financial tools to support capability development and defence cooperation in support of European defence industry and technological innovation in two so-called windows: the research window and the capability window.

(3) The third interlinked element is the common set of proposals for strengthening EU-NATO cooperation, based on the Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016, and endorsed by both EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016. And all of us, EEAS, CION, EDA and you, the Member States, are working hard on the implementation of those proposals.

- This together is the EU's response to ensure coherence and consistency between Intergovernmental and Community actions within EU;
- Also to ensure coherence between EU and NATO on the basis of the single set of forces but also the key overarching principles applying in any sense of interaction between the two

organisations, primarily the ones of reciprocity, inclusiveness and respect to the decision making autonomy.

- EDA is in the centre of all these three important initiatives.
- This adds credits to the Agency but at the same time high responsibility to deliver towards its Member States.

- Now let's turn to Maritime.
- Maritime is a key domain with high impact on Europe's stability and security.
- Nowhere is this more evident than around the Mediterranean Sea, which has progressively returned as a region of global strategic interest.
- But not only do we need to address the Mediterranean – we will have to address all of Europe and beyond.
- Political tensions, armed conflict, economic and social instability and transnational criminal networks demand solutions that cross traditional institutional boundaries of domestic and international policymaking.
- Political leaders have to consider new strategies and tools that integrate diplomatic and economic instruments of power and military capabilities.

1. The impacts of the EU Maritime Security Strategy

- The EU Maritime Security Strategy follows this cross sectoral approach in the Maritime Domain, offering a comprehensive framework, covering both – the internal and external aspects of the Union’s maritime security.
- I would also highlight that implementation of the EUMSS Action Plan is a priority at the highest level
- Improving global maritime security is one of the strands of work in implementing the EU Global strategy. Furthermore on the 19th of June, the council adopted conclusions on global maritime security. In the conclusions the council highlighted the role of the EU as a global maritime security provider in promoting maritime multi-literalism and the rule of law at sea.
- It also encourages the continuous implementation of the EU maritime security strategy and the accompanying action plan.
- Panel 1 will discuss the impacts of the EU Maritime Security Strategy.

2. Maritime Technology and Innovation

- Just as dynamic or maybe even more dynamic than the developments in this political and strategic field are the developments in the technological domain.
- The times when military needs paced the technological development are long over. Today all public institutions, but especially armed forces are facing the challenge to integrate both new and legacy systems.

- This is particularly true for the naval environment. Ships are built for a 30 year in-service period, whilst their off the shelf IT and Communication Systems now take only five years to be completely obsolete.
- The advancement in unmanned technologies and artificial intelligence will unlock technologies, that will completely change the naval battlespace of the future.
- Their successful adoption is not dependent solely on those technologies, but rather it incorporates a corresponding change in organisation structure, doctrine and concept of operations.
- Panel 2 will analyse the success or otherwise on the incorporation of Unmanned Maritime Systems into Naval Forces.
- The role and challenges for industry will also be discussed and what opportunities exist to de-risk investments.

3. Maritime Situational Awareness – the key to Maritime Security?

- Strategic policy guidance and innovative technological approaches will of course change the operational approach to the battlefield.
- A cross-sectoral approach and the use of innovative technologies are particularly important in the domain of Maritime Situational Awareness.

- I talked about PESCO earlier. I should highlight an interesting proposal for a PESCO initiative submitted by Greece on Maritime Situational Awareness.
- The European Defence Agency is helping the Member States to link these strategic guidelines and technological trends in order to develop capabilities.
- The MARSUR Project, or the new initiative for a Maritime Situational Awareness aircraft, are only two examples, where the European Defence Agency supports capability development in the area of Maritime Security.
- A PESCO initiative on Maritime Situational Awareness could provide the necessary political commitment to projects as the ones mentioned before.
- However - today we still see different approaches to Maritime Security by different Member States, military and civilian service branches and entities.
- While concurrent efforts appear to be suited to dealing with every day challenges, there still seems to be no common view and understanding of European Maritime Situational Awareness.
- Panel 3 will discuss whether potential threats are adequately covered by existing surveillance mechanisms and networks.
- We will discuss whether there are opportunities to improve the cooperation between civilian and military led operations, e.g. Triton and Operation Sophia.

4. Conclusion

- Policy, technology, operational approach – I am looking forward to a very broad discussion on European Maritime Security.
- The EDA Maritime Security Conference has once more brought together, not only on the panels but also in the auditorium, the most relevant and experienced professionals in the Maritime Domain.
- The objective of this conference is not to leave you with a common understanding of the discussed topics – for this purpose the choice of subjects is too wide-ranging. What we want to achieve is to fertilize your professional thinking with some new ideas.
- This is not an on-off show. Such events are a value investment for the Agency.
- We need news ideas, coming from high-ranked officials as well as from experts, to test them against our ideas and work and seek for the best combination on the way ahead.
- In this context, I wish you all inspiring panel discussions and I invite you to a fruitful and open debate.