

Chairman EU-Military Committee

General Patrick de Rousiers

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"Transatlantic security in 3D: from Afghanistan to Mali"

**Roundtable discussion:
Maritime Security: lessons from on-going cooperation**

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(Check against delivery)

Excellencies,
distinguished guests,
Director Simonyi
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I am the Chairman of the EU Military Committee and spokesman of and "aiguillon" to the 27 Chiefs of Defence of the EU Member States.

I have Air Force background, yet it is a pleasure to address today what could be looked at as a "maritime" topic as it is in fact a "global one".

I will address it through the current operation of Somalia noting that there are many other initiatives that the EU has taken for maritime security.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on this important issue of "maritime security and international co-operation".

It is needless to say that pirates exist and are rugged and organized: one just needs a Kalashnikov, a small boat and a ladder. We are facing piracy in the Strait of Malacca, in the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea.

Yes, the world's sea-lines of communication have become an indispensable element of international security and economic stability and growth.

However, organized crime like piracy is threatening these lifelines in various world regions like in the Horn of Africa or in the Gulf of Guinea.

EU strives to stabilize the region in the Horn of Africa in a comprehensive and multi-faceted manner: So besides financial support in order to provide **humanitarian aid, support development and foster democracy** the EU is engaged through one civilian mission and two military operations in the area:

Firstly, the **civilian mission EUCAP Nestor**, which was launched in July last year, is primarily focusing on capacity building in the domain of the Coast Guard. This mission is having an initial

geographic focus on Djibouti, Kenya, the Seychelles and Somalia and is assisting in the development of a self-sustainable capacity for continued enhancement of their maritime security, including counter-piracy, and maritime governance.

Let me continue on the military side and start with **EU Training Mission Somalia**. It was launched in 2010 and has trained approximately 3000 troops, which comprise approx. 30% of the Somali Armed Forces. Somali troops have been trained by EU trainers in Bihanga in Uganda. These trained troops have proven their combat readiness while fighting along with AMISOM troops to regain Somali territory.

The EU Training Mission Somalia will soon focus on advising in the Ministry of Defence in Somalia (Mogadishu). As soon as conditions allow it will also mentor training and conduct specialist training in Somalia. EU-US cooperation is to be noted, too. It is really a joint commitment.

After having focused on EU actions to tackle the roots of the pirate phenomena and to strengthen capabilities, I am now going to focus on the **third** EU CSDP Mission in the region, Operation **EUNAVFOR Atalanta**. **This military operation was launched** in December 2008 in order to fight piracy in the Horn of Africa.

Main mission is to **protect World Food Program and AMISOM Shipping** in the region.

Mission key elements are also the **deterrence, prevention and repression** of acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the Somali coast.

The **protection of vulnerable shipping** off the Somali coast is to be conducted on a case by case basis.

In March 2013 the EU Foreign Affairs Council extended the mandate of Operation Atalanta until December 2014.

At the same time, the Council extended the area of operation to include Somali coastal territory and internal waters. This allows the Operation Commander even to destroy Pirate Logistic Dumps along the coast line.

EUNAVFOR Atalanta is an EU success story.

EUNAVFOR **ensured protection of all WFP and AMISOM Shipping** and **approximately 140 pirates were transferred** to competent authorities with a view of their prosecution.

However this overall success also has to be seen along with efforts of various stakeholders in the region like NATO, the US, India, Russia, China and Japan who often have engaged in a coordinated way.

Let me therefore focus on **the Lessons learned on how the international community can act in this domain and in particular how the cooperation between the EU and the US might be strengthened.**

The European Union has played a significant role in establishing **intensified co-operation.**

EUNAVFOR **have engaged with the US** since the launch of the operation in 2008.

It was shortly after this that the **Chief of Staff (COS) of US lead Combined Maritime Force (CMF/CTF) and COS Atalanta together with the NATO COS met** and established what is now known as the **SHared Awareness and DEconfliction (SHADE)** mechanism.

SHADE is a **coordinating instrument for all naval forces** in the region.

Originally having representatives only from NATO, the EU, and the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) HQ in Bahrain, it now regularly attracts representatives from over 20 countries, including major actors like **India, Russia, China, Japan** and Industry Representatives..

Therefore, coordination-mechanisms are in place and are working well.

EU also continues to work with the US directly on various strands of activities. Let me provide an example:

Ahead of EUNAVFOR undertaking Disruption of Pirate Logistic Dumps (DPLDs) ashore in Somalia, the Atalanta OpCdr sought to engage with DOD and State Department to explain and dissuade any concerns such operations may entail.

This was successful and the US welcomed the action.

Moreover, information exchange between the EU in Brussels and US AFRICOM in Stuttgart has intensified. On 06 Feb this year a mutual exchange of information took place in Brussels on overall engagement in Africa. Obviously events in the SAHEL and situation in the Horn of Africa required such an exchange of views.

Let me conclude

The **big lessons that can be drawn from the counter piracy operations are:**

1. Regular and open exchange of Information on EU and US activities at all levels is a crucial element for enhanced co-ordination.

Coordination in theatre works quite well among all maritime actors involved in the fight against piracy. The established SHADE mechanism has proven to be effective.

However, all stakeholders must be encouraged to further exchange information on their comprehensive endeavour in the region.

2. Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance is another issue of major importance:

A lot of information may be collected when conducting counter piracy operations. We all should be encouraged to share it as much as possible while taking into consideration that the issue goes far beyond pure military intelligence as highlighted by EU NAVFOR' s interaction with INTERPOL.

3. Common communication tools are a prerequisite for enhanced co-operation. EUNAVFOR developed the Mercury System for this purposes and this is pro-actively used by US Forces. Also for the future we have to ensure adequate communications tools.

4. Co-ordination of future actions

- Looking to the future, all three Counter Piracy Partners (NATO, EU and the US) will be undertaking strategic reviews. Early indications are that all will look at wider maritime security and capacity building. Therefore this could provide the opportunity to highlight further possible areas of synergy and future cooperation and coordination.
- In **respect of future capabilities**, consideration will need to be given to what maritime platforms would best be suited to the changing environment, whether that be wider maritime security or capacity building efforts.

Let me finish

The fight against piracy in the Horn of Africa is a prominent success story, this assessment can also be applied to the degree of coordination and cooperation we have reached so far.

However, we should not become complacent as number of piracy attacks have dropped. There is still room for improvement in some areas of information exchange and we need to lower our guards.

In summary, the Maritime Security issue off the coast of the Horn of Africa was a real "eye opener" and led to many changes in mindsets:

- national laws to be able to convict pirates and prosecute them,
- acknowledgement of the usefulness of armed personnel on board merchant ships (civilian or military vessel protection detachments) led to many discussions and evolutions in mindsets,
- use of contracted assets such as the MPRA provided by Luxembourg brought great value. I have to stress that contractors and military operations fit well together.
- EU NAVFOR HQ in Northwood highlights that Maritime Security is not just a military issue. Thus the HQ is really a combined interagency HQ.

Increased International Cooperation will be essential or even become a prerequisite for ensuring maritime security in international waters.

Thank you very much for your attention.