

COMUNICATO STAMPA

267/16
23.5.2016

Council conclusions on EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia

1. Recalling its conclusions on Libya of 18 April and also in the light of the ministerial meeting on Libya in Vienna on 16 May, the Council underlines the need to enhance the capacity of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia to disrupt the business model of human smugglers and trafficking networks and to contribute to broader security in support of the legitimate Libyan authorities. In this regard, the Council welcomes the expressed readiness of the President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, Mr Serraj, to cooperate with the EU on the basis of these conclusions.
2. To that end, the Council agrees to extend the mandate of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia by one year and, while retaining the focus on its core mandate, to add two further supporting tasks:
 - capacity building and training of, and information sharing with, the Libyan Coastguard and Navy, based on a request by the legitimate Libyan authorities taking into account the need for Libyan ownership;
 - contributing to information sharing, as well as implementation of the UN arms embargo on the High Seas off the coast of Libya on the basis of a new UNSC Resolution.
3. The Council underlines the need for preparatory work, including on planning, to continue without delay. On the basis of this work, it will then take a Council Decision to extend and amend EUNAVFORMED's mandate and start the implementation of the new tasks. The Council stresses the importance of continuing coordination with international partners such as UN and NATO.
4. The Council underlines the urgency regarding the situation in Libya and human smuggling and trafficking in the Central Mediterranean and will work on timely EU action in response. It deplores the loss of so many lives at sea and commends the role the operation and the Member States played in saving tens of thousands of human lives.

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