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News stories

Busy days for operation SOPHIA force Commander



The [training](#) of the Libyan Navy Coast Guard and Libyan Navy has just restarted and the 78 Libyan trainees returned from Libya for the second cycle of theoretical and practical activities.

They embarked, as during the first cycle, onboard the two EUNAVFOR MED operation SOPHIA training vessels, ITS San Giorgio and HNLMS Rotterdam.

Yesterday, the EU force commander, wanted to welcome them again with their mentors

The 36 Libyan trainees are now on board the Dutch ship Rotterdam, whilst the rest of them are on board the Italian ship San Giorgio.

"I'm happy to see you on board our ships – said the Force Commander – and I am glad of the efforts you are all making".

The lessons were immediately resumed for the second cycle of the training package one.

[Last 20 June 2016](#), the Council extended until 27 July 2017 operation Sophia's mandate reinforcing it by adding two supporting tasks, the training of the Libyan Navy Coast Guard and the Libyan Navy, and the contribution to the implementation of the UN arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya, in accordance with the UNSCR 2292 (2016). On [30 August](#) and on [6 September](#), the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) formally authorized EUNAVFOR MED to commence the two supporting tasks.

Thus far, following [EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia](#)'s activities, 101-suspected smugglers and traffickers have been prosecuted by the Italian authorities and 345 boats were removed from the criminal organization availability. Nonetheless, more than 29500 lives were saved at sea.

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