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News stories

## Operation SOPHIA crews act again to implement UN arms embargo



On Monday, 19 June 2017, whilst conducting patrols in the international waters off the coast of Libya, the French Frigate Commandant Blaison, operating as part of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia, carried out an inspection on a motor vessel suspected of smuggling arms in contravention of the UN Arms Embargo on Libya. The French boarding team discovered some light weapons and ammunition, which it confiscated in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 2357(2017). The Arms were subsequently transferred on board the French ship and will be disposed of in due course in accordance with the Resolution.

The activity was successfully carried out in close coordination with Italian “Operation Mare Sicuro” assets, which had made initial contact with the suspected boat. “Mare Sicuro” was launched in 2015 following the worsening of the Libyan crisis, and aims to protecting shipping in the area and to counter any possible terrorist threats. Cooperation between the Italian Navy operation and the European Union’s Military operation is another example of how military and security actors in the Mediterranean can work effectively together and coordinate their activity. This was the theme of the recent SHADE MED forum held in Rome on 8 – 9 June 2017, which promoted coordination between all those with an interest in the Central Mediterranean.

EUNAVFOR MED operation SOPHIA was launched on 22 June 2015 as part of the European Union’s Comprehensive approach to disrupt the business model of human trafficking and migrant smuggling networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean. The following year, the EU added the additional tasks of the training of the Libyan Navy and Coast Guard and the implementation of the arms embargo off the coast of Libya to the Operation’s Mandate. At present EUNAVFOR MED is the only organisation implementing the UN Arms Embargo on Libya.

Following EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia’s activities, 110-suspected smugglers and traffickers have been apprehended and 452 boats have been removed from criminal organisations’ availability. As contribution to the enforcement of the UN arms embargo, the operation carried out 657 events in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution and among them, 50 friendly approaches, 7 flag enquiries and 3 inspections.

## **Photo Galleries - Operation SOPHIA crews act again to implement UN arms embargo**



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