EUROPEAN UNION NAVAL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN
Operation SOPHIA

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Operation SOPHIA: new training modules for the Libyan Coastguard and Navy arranged in Italy.

Yesterday evening, September the 17th, the Libyan Coastguard and Navy personnel, selected to attend the new training modules, arrived in the Italian Navy Petty Officer Academy (Scuola Sottufficiali della Marina - Taranto).
The competent Libyan authorities have provided EUNAVFOR Med with a total of 87 candidates (Officers and Petty Officers) to the training, among which are 3 tutors that will support the trainees during their stay in Taranto.
The selection process has encompassed the vetting of candidates, having the latter given their consent in writing. The vetting process has been thoroughly and carefully carried out in different phases, involving EUNAVFOR Med and other competent partners, such as EU Member States and international organizations.
The trainees will attend two different training modules of respectively 8 and 3 weeks (being "Patrol Boat Crew Training" and "Train the Trainers"), included in "Training Package 2", fully in respect of the *Memorandum of Understanding* signed in 2016 by the Rear Admiral (UH) Enrico Credendino, Commander of the EU-led Naval Operation "Sophia", and the Commodore Abdalh Toumia, Commander of the Libyan Coastguard.

The objective of the training is to increase the security of Libyan territorial waters, implementing the capacities of the Libyan Coastguard and Navy to perform their duties, thus enhancing the capacity in basics of maritime security skills, including search and rescue activities to save lives and to disrupt smuggling and trafficking from/to Libyan shores.
The intense lesson's program will last till the mid of next November 2017, including technical topics related to the navigation activities, International Maritime Law, Search and Rescue doctrine, International Human Rights Law, Asylum request procedure, First Aid and medical care at sea and Public Information.

The training in the Navy School will involve military trainers coming from the Italian Armed Forces and some other EU Member States, together with representatives of organizations such as UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency, FRONTEX – the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, EASO -

EU Naval Force Med
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European Asylum Support Office, CISOM - the Order of Malta Italian Relief Corp and the Francesca RAVA Foundation.

Operation SOPHIA, launched on June 2015, is an EU military operation with the core task to contribute to wider EU efforts to disrupt the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean.

Additionally, from October 2016, the EU operation is fully involved in the training of the Libyan Navy Coastguard and Navy and in the implementation of the arms embargo off the coast of Libya according to UNSCR 2292(2016).

Up to now, 136 Libyans were trained by EUNAVFOR Med at sea, in Crete, in Malta and in Rome.

Additionally, from the beginning of the operation, SOPHIA's crews have apprehended 117 suspected smugglers and traffickers and prevented 482 boats from being re-used by criminal organizations.

On 25 July 2017, the EU Council extended the mandate of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia until 31 December 2018.

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