MIGRATION PHENOMENA TOWARDS EU: JOINT OPERATIONS IN THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Vytautas Lukas, Sea Borders Sector, JOU

12-05-2016, Rome
Frontex role and origins of operational coordination

- Frontex- dedicated EU-Agency “for the management of operational cooperation at the EU External borders” since its establishment in 2005 is implementing various Law enforcement activities.

- Frontex has profound expertise for more than 10 years in joint maritime operations and the successful cooperation with all relevant actors.

- Frontex is the mandated EU-Agency and acknowledged by MS in providing effective and successful support to fight cross-border crime detected by border control means.

- All joint maritime operations are implemented under the Concept European Patrols Network (EPN).
The **European Patrols Network (EPN)** is an international maritime cooperation platform integrating:

- **Joint Maritime Operations** (e.g. EPN Triton, EPN Poseidon Sea)
- **Innovative services** (e.g. Frontex Compatible Operational Image, Positioning System, Staff Exchange, Yellow Pages)
- **Networking of specialists** in the maritime domain (EPN General meetings and dedicated workshops)
- **Shared surveillance** of neighbouring patrolling areas (EPN Common Patrols)
On 14-15 December 2006 the European Council invited FRONTEX to establish, together with the Member States, a permanent Coastal Patrols Network at their southern maritime borders - EPN.

This call followed the 'MEDSEA' technical feasibility study on a Mediterranean Coastal Patrol Network carried out by Frontex.

FRONTEX provided also support to MS by implementing joint maritime operations coordinated by Frontex since 2006 (e.g. Hera, Nautilus, Hermes, Poseidon, Zeus were hosted by ES, IT, MT and GR).
EPN platform for interagency cooperation at sea

- Frontex has focused on strengthening cooperation with relevant EU Agencies/Bodies working in the field of maritime security and safety.

- EPN platform has served to gather the main authorities operating at sea carrying out coastguard functions at national level.

- EPN platform - providing opportunities for cross-sectoral operational approach when acting at maritime domain.

- Frontex has developed EPN also towards implementation of European Coast Guard Functions.
JORA - common platform for Information exchange

- JORA is operated by Frontex starting January 2011 in order to provide a comprehensive situational picture using a secure platform for MS in reporting incidents/events in JO’s.

- Frontex was tasked “to provide the necessary assistance to the development and operation of a European border surveillance system, and (...) to the development of a common information sharing environment.

- JORA was further developed, EPN was correlated with EUROSUR and all EPN actions have been interlinked with EUROSUR and included in to the EUROSUR Handbook.

- Frontex supports the MS to better control the irregular migration towards the EU by improving situational awareness and increasing the reaction capability.
EUROSUR framework concept

- The European Surveillance System Eurosur is a framework concept for situational awareness and systematic operational reaction on national and EU level.

- The respective EU regulation (EU 1052/2013) is in force since December 2013.

- EUROSUR works by improving information management and sharing of information, also providing additional products and services by Frontex.

- The Eurosur framework serves the 3 important objectives – to tackle illegal migration toward EU, to help saving more lives at sea, and to combat cross-border crime.

- The coherent situational picture is as an enabler for an enhanced situational monitoring and situational awareness.
Interagency cooperation is well developed and recognised

- The need to enhance collaboration and co-ordination between authorities carrying out CG functions has been acknowledged in the EU MSS with an Action Plan adopted in 2014 and in the European Agenda on Migration adopted in 2015.

- Frontex is constantly and persistently implementing cross-sectorial approach in the form of multipurpose operations with active inter-agency cooperation arrangements foreseen in the OPLANs of JO’s.

- Frontex is one of the biggest and sustainable actor at maritime domain uniting various authorities (Border guards, Coast Guards, Navies, Customs, SAR, Fisheries control, etc.) operating at sea for a common goal.
Multipurpose joint operations - results of 2015

- 1,166 suspected facilitators apprehended
- 254,693 persons rescued
- 106 tonnes of hashish worth more than 160 million EUR plus 10.3 kg of cocaine, 11.3 kg of heroin and 5.4 kg marijuana seized worth 1.3 million EUR
- 336 million cigarettes worth in total ca. 38 million EUR
- 7 cases of possible illegal fishing and some case of sea pollution reported
EURTF Catania and Piraeus are additional pillars of Frontex.

Regional operational coordination and information exchange
Liaison officers from relevant partners; liaison with other organizations

Operational coordination in border management; return assistance

Risk assessment and debriefing

Investigation and prosecution

Asylum

Horizontal services
Administrative, logistical and ICT support for all partners
Support of organization of official visits, media coverage and briefings
Civil - military cooperation linked to the border control

Military & law enforcement cooperation

EUNAFOR MED – EPN Triton

- Cooperation based on SOP
- Exchange of information with EUNAVFOR MED established via LOs
Civil - military cooperation linked to the border control

Operational cooperation is based on exchange of letters (ED-NATO):

- Coordination of the operational planning and deployment, including with a view to guarantee the safety of the assets;

- Real-time exchange of Information classified up to and including “NATO RESTRICTED releasable to FRONTEX” and "EU RESTRICTED releasable to MARCOM" aiming to enrich situational awareness with focus on the pre-frontier situation (Aegean Sea);

- Exchange of Liaison Officers.

Navies have been accommodated into Frontex existing operational structures and vice versa in order to ensure smooth information exchange.

Frontex remains the main actor at maritime domain for border control and fight against cross border crime at EU level.
The Agency as important supporter to ECGFF

- Frontex hosted the first Conference of European Coast Guard Functions Forum in 2009
- Activities based on Co-operation Plan between Frontex and chairing MS (on rotation basis)
Currently the Frontex regulation is subject to considerable changes, and a new Regulation on Border and Coast Guard Agency is expected to be adopted in 2016.

This new regulation is aimed even more also to straighten interagency cooperation as well as support to MS by Frontex, EMSA and EFCA while implementing CG functions.

As a first step the aforementioned agencies are currently preparing the ground to implement changes in their mandates by carrying out a Pilot Project.
Operational Activities 2016

FOCAL POINTS (Land, Sea and Air) Concept

VEGA CHILDREN (Air, Land, Sea)

PULSAR Concept (ALEXIS, PEGASUS)

Flexible Operational Activities

Coordination Points

EPN Concept

EPN MINERVA

EPN INDALO

EPN HERA

EPN TRITON

Source: JORA data from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2015
Frontex comprehensive approach

1. Detection and interception at sea

2. Disembarkation at place of safety (first profiling and debriefing)

3. Identification process (pre-identification and screening)

4. Registration process (fingerprinting)
Migratory flows to Italy

The following map shows the volume of the migratory flows by country of departure since the beginning of 2016:

In the North Coast, 310 were arrested attempting to migrate to Europe via the Mediterranean, while 115 were detained in the Western desert in attempts to enter Libya illegally (The Cairo Post: May. 10, 2016)
Migratory flows to Italy

The following diagram shows the volume of the migratory pressure in one week:

Nationalities claimed of migrants within JO EN Triton since 2015: Nigeria, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Somalia, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Eritrea, Sudan and Morocco.
EPN Triton 2016: deployment overview


- **5** Aircraft
- **5** Offshore Patrol Vessels
- **3** Helicopter
- **5** Coastal Patrol Boats
- **449** Personnel
  - 35 Fingerprinting and registration officers
  - 27 Debriefing experts
  - 27 Screening experts
  - 13 Team Leaders
  - 26 Interpreters
  - 1 Advanced level document expert
  - 6 Frontex Support Officers
  - 33 Coordination staff
  - 1/1 Field press officer / Third country observer
  - 275 Border Surveillance Officers / crew members

EU MS / SAC take part in operation
Central Mediterranean: main concerns

- Many SAR cases just after departure from LYB
- Security at sea for EU seaborne means remaining persistent
- Cooperation among many actors operating for various tasks (functions) at sea
- Implementation of the hotspots concept
- Collection of information/evidences for law enforcement purposes

12 April 2016: Suspicious boat nearby FX deployed OPV during SAR event
Can we do more at sea?

- Enhanced interagency cooperation within EU Coast Guard Functions Pilot Project
- SOP has been developed
- Other types of cooperation is being tested in real operational scenario
- Many quick wins already achieved
Poseidon Rapid Intervention 2015

Migrants previous 7 days Eastern Mediterranean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04/05/2016</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/05/2016</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/05/2016</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/05/2016</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/05/2016</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/05/2016</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/05/2016</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main nationalities:
- SYR 49%
- AFG 25%
- IRQ 15%
- Other 7%

Additional information:
- 2016-05-13
- Poseidon Rapid Intervention 2015

Map showing the Eastern Mediterranean region.
Poseidon Rapid Intervention (Incl. Readmission Activities)

Updated: Week 19: 9-15 May 2016

3 Offshore Patrol Vessels
2 Coastal Patrol Boats

1/2 Airplane/Helicopter

25 Patrol cars/Buses
6 Thermovision Vans
26 EU MS / SAC take part in operation Poseidon Rapid Intervention

933 Personnel
- 157 Fingerprinting and registration officers
- 15 Debriefing experts
- 43 Screening experts
- 24 Advanced documentation officers
- 45 Interpreters
- 31 Team Leaders
- 7/1 Frontex Support Officer
- 1 Frontex Field Press Officer
- 366 Border Surveillance Officers / crew members
- 62 Coordination staff
- 15 Readmission experts
- 167 Police escorts
Eastern Mediterranean: main concerns

- Intensified patrolling by EU technical means increases detections and self-caused SAR cases
- Reception capacities on islands are limited to host migrants for longer periods
- Arrivals depend on actions taken by departure/transit country to prevent massive arrivals
Conclusion

- Frontex is ready to be part of pragmatic civil military cooperation if the mandates and competencies of all respective actors will be respected.

- Frontex would like to welcome continuation of well-balanced cooperation among security related actors at sea, but at the same time duplication of efforts should be avoided and already existing platforms/structures as regards migratory control at sea should be exploited as the first instance.
Joint maritime operations coordinated by Frontex

Vytautas Lukas, Sea Borders Sector, JOU

12-05-2016, Rome