

Information Bulletin March 2023



March information

The European Maritime Awareness mission in the Strait of Hormuz provides a monthly overview of our activities and maritime security updates in the Gulf region. Headlines:

- The Force Commander (FCdr) Rear Admiral Renaud Flamant participated in a workshop about the Red Sea in Riyadh, where he emphasized the crucial role EMASoH has in promoting stability and security in the Gulf region in front of a wide panel of actors of the commercial shipping, local authorities, diplomats and Defence attachés.
- EMASoH Headquarters welcomed the German Ambassador to the UAE, H.E. Alexander Schönfelder. He was briefed about the efforts of operation AGENOR with a particular focus on Germany in the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf region.
- The Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) Atlantique 2 continued its support to operation AGENOR by conducting several flights, improving our maritime picture of the Gulf area.

Assets of operation AGENOR in March

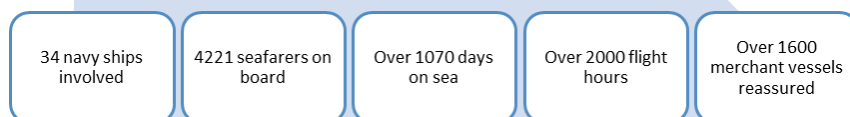
In March operation AGENOR said “fair winds and following seas” to two frigates in support of EMASoH. The French frigate *Guépratte* was in support of operation AGENOR until the first of March and the Italian frigate *Bergamini* until the 30th of March. Both ships greatly increased the Maritime Situational Awareness of operation AGENOR. They have been sailing in the Gulf region for EMASoH with the goal of reassuring merchant shipping and contributing to freedom of navigation. During its time in the mission the frigates conducted patrols and accompanied merchant vessels while transiting the Strait of Hormuz. All of this with a de-escalatory and cooperative approach.



The Maritime Patrol Aircraft covered extensive areas and engaged with shipping. The crew performed multiple reassurance calls to merchant vessels, which greatly increased our situational awareness. With this gained situational awareness, EMASoH is able to assess the security situation in the region and reassure shipping.

EMASoH: facts and figures

During the three years that operation AGENOR is fully operational, 34 naval assets, multiple French Atlantique 2 surveillance aircrafts and Italian MQ-9 drones have been part of the operation. In total, these assets have conducted more than 2000 flight hours, spent over 1070 days at sea and reassured more than 1600 merchant vessels.



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Key Leader Engagements in Riyadh and Bahrain



Figure 1: RIYADH (Saudi-Arabia) L-R; H.E. Ambassador to EMASoH, H.E. Ambassador from Denmark to Saudi Arabia, H.E. and Dr. Aluwaisheg of the GCC.

In Riyadh, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Senior Civil Representative of EMASoH, Jacob Brix Tange, Ambassador of Denmark, H.E. Liselotte Plesner and the FCdr, discussed EMASoH's contribution to Gulf maritime security with Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg, Assistant Secretary General for Political Negotiations and Affairs at the headquarters of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). They had a fruitful discussion about stability and security in the Gulf region. The Danish Ambassadors and the FCdr also participated in the *Maritime Security in the Red Sea Workshop*.

Next to his visit to Riyadh the FCdr travelled to Bahrain, where he met various high-ranking officials within US 5th Fleet (NAVCENT), the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC – operation Sentinel) and UKMCC. Within the 5th Fleet and CMF, the Force Commander paid visits to the Deputy Commander of the 5th Fleet, the Commander of Combined Task Force 151, staff members of Combined Task Force 150 and the Commander of Task Force 59.

The Korean Commander of TF 151 and the Force Commander AGENOR both expressed their willingness for further cooperation between their HQ's and the assets at sea. With the GCC Assistant to the Commander of CMF for Regional Integration, Captain Mubarak Ali Al Sabah (Kuwait), the Force Commander spoke about the shared aim of regional maritime security and the freedom of navigation, from where the Captain highlighted the GCC approach to this.

These visits gave the opportunity to better understand maritime security synergies and explore the possible potential for EMASoH to develop its maritime regional awareness. One of the aims of EMASoH is to promote the dialogue among the entire maritime cluster and keep an inclusive approach towards all actors in the region. The successful visits in Riyadh and Bahrain demonstrate these aims once again.



Figure 2: MANAMA (Bahrain) L-R visits to; CO of TF 59, Kuwait Assistant to the CO of CMF for regional integration, Korean Commander of TF151.

German Ambassador visit Force Headquarters

His Excellency the Ambassador of Germany to United Arab Emirates Alexander Schönfelder and the German Defence Attaché Lieutenant Colonel Christoph Schumann visited the Force Headquarters of EMASoH. H.E. the Ambassador was briefed by the staff about the efforts of operation AGENOR and the importance of maritime security for Germany in the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf region. Germany is one of the nine EMASoH countries. Maritime safety is of great importance to Germany because of its high economic interaction with the Gulf states.



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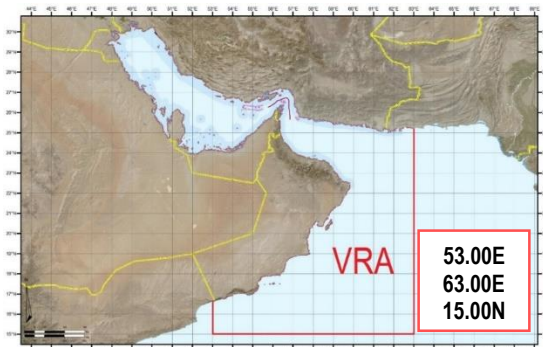
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Voluntary Reporting Scheme

Shipping operators are invited to participate to a Voluntary Reporting Scheme. Voluntary reporting improves the cooperation and guidance EMASoH can provide to ships on the basis of informing, reassuring, and promoting the freedom of navigation. Voluntary reported ships are also prioritised for possible accompaniments with EMASoH's naval assets and reassuring calls with naval and aerial assets. Before entering the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA), 48 hours in advance, or as soon as possible:



- ✓ **Inform** EMASoH about the timing of your intended entry and exit of the VRA;
- ✓ **Confirm** the planning 6 hours before entering and share possible changes to the journey planning;
- ✓ **Report** any suspicious behaviour to the coast guard of the coastal state and to EMASoH.

Voluntary reporting to EMASoH via ctf474-emasoh.vra.fct@def.gouv.fr or phone +971 265 74 278.