

PRESS RELEASE

346/20

28/05/2020

Operation IRINI: Council appoints new Force Commanders

The Council today decided to appoint as EU Force Commander for the EU military naval operation in the Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED IRINI) **Rear Admiral Ettore Socci** from Italy, from 6 May 2020 **until 18 October 2020**. He will be followed by **Commodore Theodoros Mikropoulos** from Greece from 19 October 2020 **until 31 March 2021**.

Rear Admiral Socci was the Force Commander of Operation SOPHIA since June 2019. He served as operational officer on board several warships of the Italian Navy. Commodore Theodoros Mikropoulos has been the Commander of the Hellenic naval base in Souda Bay (Crete), and before that held senior positions in the Hellenic Navy.

Background

On 31 March 2020 the Council **launched Operation IRINI** with the primary purpose of enforcing the UN arms embargo in Libya, and appointed **Rear Admiral Fabio Agostini** from Italy as its Operation Commander.

The EU Force Commander acts under the authority of the Operation Commander. The Operation Headquarters are based in Rome, Italy.

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