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Frontex to expand cooperation with Operation IRINI

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Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI have agreed last Friday to expand their cooperation to address challenges and threats to EU security in the Central Mediterranean region.

Under a new working arrangement, Frontex will be supporting Operation IRINI with information gathered as part of the agency's risk analysis activities, such as tracking vessels of interests on the high seas, as well as data from its aerial surveillance in the Central Mediterranean. The agreement also foresees the exchange of experts. Currently, an EUNAVFOR MED expert is based at the Warsaw headquarters of Frontex to support information exchange and cooperation in search and rescue operations.

"Operation IRINI is a as a valuable operational partner for us. Frontex will provide information that will help tackle security challenges in the Central Mediterranean. We also work together to help save lives at sea," said Frontex Director Fabrice Leggeri.

"I am happy to sign the agreement with Frontex in order to strengthen our common action in order to ensure the security of EU borders and stem illicit traffic in the Mediterranean Sea," said Admiral Fabio Agostini, IRINI Operation Commander, during the virtual ceremony.





The working arrangement was signed during a virtual ceremony by Frontex's Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri and Rear Admiral Fabio Agostini, the Commander of Operation IRINI and attended by Director-General for Migration and Home Affairs Monique Pariat.

EUNAVFOR MED Operation IRINI is tasked with the implementation of the United Nation Security Council Resolutions on the arms embargo on Libya through the use of aerial, satellite and maritime assets.

Cooperation with EU's Common Security and Defense Policy missions is an integral part of Frontex's activities. Before the launch of IRINI, the agency worked with EUNAVFOR Med Sophia to together combat people smuggling and trafficking and helped the mission build a comprehensive picture of cross-border criminal activities in the Central Mediterranean.