



Directorate of Inquiries

Mr Gabriele Visentin  
Head of Division  
EEAS SG.AFFGEN.2 "Parliamentary Affairs"  
European External Action Service

ombudsman@eeas.europa.eu

Strasbourg, 20/08/2021

**Subject: Request for public access to documents held by Operation EUNAVFOR MED Iriini**

Dear Mr Visentin,

I am writing to you in relation to a letter we have received from Mr Arne Semsrott concerning a request for public access to documents submitted to Operation EUNAVFOR MED Iriini on 26 April 2021.

In his request, Mr Semsrott asked for access to *“all training material used in EUNAVFOR MED’s training of the Libyan Navy and Coast Guard in the years 2019 and 2020, especially, but not limited to presentations, handouts and background material”*. The request can be found on the third party website Fragdenstaat.<sup>1</sup>

During the Ombudsman’s inquiry into the handling of requests for public access to documents held by EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia<sup>2</sup>, we understood that Operation Sophia was developing a policy for dealing with public access requests. The Ombudsman very much welcomed this initiative and considered that other civilian and military missions and operations should follow this example. Consequently, the Ombudsman made the following suggestion to the EEAS: *“The EEAS should communicate Operation Sophia’s draft policy on dealing with requests for public access to documents to other civilian and military missions and operations and encourage them to adopt similar rules. The Ombudsman asks the EEAS to inform her about the follow-up measures taken by these missions and operations within six months”*.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://fragdenstaat.de/anfrage/training-of-libyan-coastguard/>.

<sup>2</sup> Decision in case 935/2018/EA on the handling of requests for public access to EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia’s documents, available at: <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/decision/en/116931>.



We have no record of having received a reply from the EEAS to that suggestion. If there is any information you are in a position to share on this matter, we would welcome it.

In addition, it would be helpful if you could inform Operation Irini about the approach taken by Operation Sophia in case 935/2018/EA and, specifically, about the public access request submitted by Mr Semsrott so that it can provide a reply. This could help avoid any further action on the part of the Ombudsman in relation to the matter.

I remain at your disposal in case of any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Hickey', written over a faint, light-colored oval shape that serves as a guide for the signature's placement.

Rosita Hickey  
Director of Inquiries

Enclosure: Letter of 6 July 2021 from Mr Arne Semsrott

CC: Arne Semsrott