

Content



Page 2 **Special Editions, Interview with Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE, Operation Commander of the EU Naval Force Somalia Operation Atalanta.**

Page 6 **Japan's Foreign Policy –in cooperation with the Mission of Japan to European Union**

Page 9 **U.S-NATO members, partner nations' Armed Forces in Defender Europe 2021**

Page 10 **Inspirational speech and Acknowledgments**

Website: U.S. Europe World Affairs.com

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/USEUWAffairs>

Contact us: Contact@useuworldaffairs.com

Special Edition, Interview with Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE, Operation Commander of the EU Naval Force Somalia, Operation Atalanta, conducted by Editor in Chief

Vice Admiral, we are tremendously honored to have this interview with you. Thank you very much indeed for your time sir.

Q 1: In December 2020 the EU NAVFOR celebrated its 12 years of Operation Atalanta. Could you please briefly outline the main achieved success of this operation in the last ten years.

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: When EU member states launched Operation Atalanta in December 2008, piracy in Somali waters was increasing dramatically. Container ships plying the east-west trade routes between Europe and Asia were under constant and very real threat.

Over the past 12 years, EU NAVFOR has managed to work hand in hand not only with other multinational naval forces operating in this region, such as the US-led CMF, and NATO until 2016, which is one of our most important partners in the region, but also with the navies of independently deployed nations such as Japan and South Korea, all of which have significant maritime interests present. As a result, piracy has been drastically suppressed, with the last confirmed act of piracy taking place in April 2019.

This significant success does not mean, however, that piracy has been eradicated. Operation ATALANTA has forced criminal networks associated with piracy to diversify their activities and engage in other illicit maritime crimes, keeping piracy as a dormant activity waiting for the right opportunity to reemerge.

This extremely complicated context has led to the modifications in Operation ATALANTA's new mandate, approved in December 2020 to enable the Operation to strengthen maritime situational awareness and counter maritime threats beyond piracy.

Q 2: In January 2021 the Operation Atlanta received its new mandate. With this new mandate how long the Operation Atalanta has been further extended in time and expanded in its mission?

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: First of all, I must say that due to the success of Operation Atalanta and other international initiatives, the situation today is very different. The last incident of piracy in our area of operations was in April 2019. However, it must always emphasize that although piracy is contained, it has not been eradicated. Incidents that we can classify as “suspicious approaches” continue to occur in the area of operations and the networks that were engaged in piracy have adapted their activities to other illegal activities with less risk, retaining their ability to carry out acts of piracy, as soon as the situation is favorable to them.

This is the main reason why the mandate of Operation ATALANTA has been extended every two years, and why the last extension in December 2020 for another two years included additional tasks. Now, besides combating piracy and protecting UN World Food Program (WFP) ships and other vulnerable vessels in the area of operations, which has been and is our main mission, we also contribute to eradicating other illegal activities, such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling and illegal charcoal trafficking, activities in which these pirate networks are becoming involved due to the presence of anti-piracy naval forces in the area.

Q 3: Air assets have been recognized highly valuable in Operation Atalanta from its start. Could you please speak about the EU NAVFOR and its Air operations (Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance)?

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: The air assets make an essential contribution with their specific capabilities, adding range and flexibility to the joint effort. They are mainly used to carry out Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance, as you said, and collect data which is processed by our analysts. This contributes to all aspects of **Op ATALANTA** and supports the full spectrum of maritime operations, especially those related to maritime security.

Additionally, we have to highlight that they can be tasked for other activities, such as SAR (Search and Rescue) missions, in response to an emergency or other situation’s demanding immediate assistance.

Fortunately, we can count not only on our own resources but also on the MPRA of our partners in the area of operations, sharing information and distributing action zones to guarantee the maximum effectiveness and efficiency of our resources.

- **Have there been any upgrades in EU NAVFOR's Air resources in the recent years?**

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: Since the beginning of the Operation, the number of deployed MPRA during rotations has been the same with the P-3 ORION as core asset. These assets are one of the reasons for our success, together with the deployed Air Detachments supporting their every need, every step of the way. The means and characteristics of the P-3 ORION offer us a wide range of capabilities that cover all operational requirements.

Unmanned aerial vehicles like the embarked Scan Eagle also reinforce our ISR capabilities. Therefore, we are more than pleased to continue with this outstanding asset as part of our operation and, at the same time, be able to offer its capabilities to those of our partners who may need them.

Q 4: The United States Navy has been the supporting partner for the EU NAVFOR in Operation Atalanta from the beginning of this Operation. Could you please comment on the significance of this partnership.

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: As we have been already saying, trying to make the best use of the maritime assets already present in the area, **EU NAVFOR ATALANTA** has created a specific framework, the Cooperation Concept of Operation ATALANTA (COCOA), which provides for enhanced cooperation in our area of operations and foresees various types and durations to contribute and support the Operation. Currently, we are cooperating with **the U.S. Navy** in several different frameworks.

An example could be the increased coordination between Operation EU NAVFOR ATALANTA and Combined Task Forces 150 and 151 of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) under command of a Vice Admiral of the U.S. Navy and a considerable U.S. participation in means and capabilities. As already mentioned in the first question, we maintain the best of relations with both of them and we can coordinate our efforts, if necessary for maximum effectiveness and efficiency with our available assets.

On the other hand, **the U.S. Navy** has regularly supported the assets of Operation ATALANTA. As an example, we could mention the Replenishment at Sea (RAS) operations that, on recent occasions, ATALANTA naval assets have carried out with the USNS Big Horn of the U.S. Sixth Fleet.

Q 5: Please tell us about the crucial role that the Spanish Naval Force is playing in the Operation Atalanta.

Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE: **Spain** is fully committed to the EU's external action. We understand that EU NAVFOR Somalia Operation ATALANTA is a tool that offers a vital service to Member States by providing maritime security and sending a message of protection, stability and support to both WFP vessels and the maritime community. At the same time, we support different institutions in Somalia, together with our two EU sister missions: **EUCAP** Somalia and **EUTM** Somalia within the EU framework of the "Integrated Approach" for Somalia, in order to reach the desired situation that will allow local authorities to take responsibility for sustainable development and security in the area, as soon as possible.

In this vein, Spain is making a great effort to lead the Operation by dedicating means and permanent personnel out of our strong commitment to those principles of security, stability and support to Somalia.

Additional news: [Spain's contributions and leadership in EU NAVFOR](#)

Japan's Foreign Policy –in cooperation with the Mission of Japan to European Union, conducted by Editor in Chief

Mission of Japan to EU, we are very grateful for this occasion. Thank you very much indeed for accepting our invitation.

Q 1: Japan has been one of the closest partners to European Union. Could you please give us an overall view of this partnership.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: The EU is an important partner for Japan, sharing fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and respect for international law. As like-minded partners, the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) are the foundation for cooperation between the two sides.

Please view the link for further information [here](#). And also please see [Free and Open Indo Pacific](#)

In May 2021, Mr. SUGA Yoshihide, Prime Minister of Japan, held the 27th Japan-European Union (EU) Summit (virtual format) with H.E.Mr. Charles Michel, President of the European Council and H.E. Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission.

Japan-EU Summit 2021 Joint Statement: “We, the leaders of Japan and the European Union (EU), convened to take forward our close and comprehensive partnership, grounded in common interests and shared values of freedom, respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, free and fair trade, effective multilateralism and the rules-based international order. Two years after the start of their implementation, the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement and Strategic Partnership Agreement are strengthening our ability to bring tangible benefits to our citizens.” ©MOFA Japan/EU Council May 2021

Also European Union and Japan in that summit finalized an agreement on [Japan-EU Green Alliance: Towards a Green Alliance](#) to protect our environment, stop climate change and achieve green growth.

Q 2: In February 2019 the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Japan and EU has entered into effect. Please tell us what areas of trade this agreement covers.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: The EU and Japan's Economic Partnership Agreement came into effect in February 2019. The facts are available from the links:

- **The EU-Japan Economic Partnership agreement entered into force on 1 February 2019.**
- **The EU has negotiated a trade agreement with Japan.**

Japan and the EU hold an annual EPA Joint Committee meeting to assess progress made in the implementation of the agreement. At this year's meeting in February 2021, **28 new protected Geographical Indications (GIs) were added to the list** while wine and vehicle trade between the two sides will become even easier than before.

Q 3: Please specify what products are currently exported from Japan to EU and vice versa.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: Japanese exports to the EU are dominated by machinery, motor vehicles, chemicals, optical and medical instruments, and plastics while EU exports to Japan are dominated by these sectors as well as food and drink. You can find a comprehensive statistic trade report of the **European Union, Trade in goods with Japan.**

And see also the entire EPA and its chapters covering various sectors at: **Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)**

Q 4: Japan and EU have also signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). Could you please tell us about the significance of this agreement.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: Please find the full SPA text **here** and the outline of the SPA under: **Japan and EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA).**

Q 5: In the context of carbon emission. Japan has pledged to reduce the carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. What measures Japan is taking in order to reach this goal.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: In 2020, Prime Minister SUGA announced that Japan plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero and to realize a carbon-neutral, decarbonized society by 2050. In that direction the “*Green Growth Strategy towards 2050 Carbon Neutrality*” a comprehensive set of policies and actions was created covering the areas and priority sectors in that regard. For comprehensive view please see the text of “**Overview of Japan’s Green Growth Strategy Through Achieving Carbon Neutrality in 2050**”.

Q 6: The last question is about Japan and its humanitarian contributions. Could you please elaborate on the engagements of Japan in this filed.

Mission of Japan to the European Union: The Mission is currently publishing a series of tweets showcasing examples of Japan’s overseas development aid based on the latest government white paper on the topic which you can find in full **here**:

And view **the statement by Permanent Representative of Japan to UN Security Council** Open Debate on Mine Action and Sustaining Peace April 2021.

Additional news: **EU-Japan summit via video conference, 27 May 2021**

U.S-NATO members, partner nations' Armed Forces in Defender Europe 2021

28,000 Multinational Participants of 26 Nations' Armed Forces from:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States with **the U.S Army, U.S Navy, U.S Air Force** in: **Defender Europe 2021.**

There are also participants of 2,100 National Guard from: Alabama, Florida, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia added with 800 Army Reserve joining in this **U.S-led military** exercise from March until mid-June when Defender 21 finalizes its activities and training.



As the continuation of the previous year, Defender Europe 2021 is to emphasize **NATO's** Collective Defense. **Its objectives underline:**

- To train and exercise together for establishing the much higher scope of readiness;
- To fortify the synchronous interoperability of U.S-NATO member and partner nations' Armed-Forces.

Announced by the Army earlier this March, Defender 2021 also incorporates several linked exercises including: **Swift Response, Immediate Response, Saber Guardian, and Command Post Exercise.**

Sources: U.S Army Europe and Africa

By Editor in Chief

Inspirational speech

Excerpt from 'Quitting is not an option' by Joyce Meyer 2020

Never stop dreaming. No matter how old you are don't stop dreaming.

I want to encourage you to dream again. We are created goal oriented people. We need to look forward to something; we need to have something that we are working toward.

Being a person who has a dream and being goal orientated is very important thing. But it is kind of hard, as you know you will have to wait longer than you would. Things can be harder than you thought they would be. It seems they have been costing you more than what you thought you could ever bear. And things can just keep going on and on.....

**But people who refuse to quit,
people who won't give up,
I can tell you I promise you, you will make it.... to the finish line.**

Acknowledgments:

Image 1: Hon. VICE ADMIRAL JOSÉ M. NÚÑEZ TORRENTE, Operation Commander of the European Union Naval Force Somalia Operation ATALANTA, April 2021©EUNAVFOR.

Image 2: DEFENDER-Europe 21. Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division conduct static-line training with Royal Army soldiers from 2nd Battalion, Parachute Regiment. May 6, 2021 ©U.S Army Europe and Africa/ Staff Sgt. Christopher S. Muncy. Excerpt from inspirational speech by Joyce Meyer 2020 ©Amazing Grace.

All Rights Reserved