

**THE SIRENS OF OIL  
AND GAS IN THE AGE  
OF CLIMATE CRISIS:  
EUROPE'S MILITARY  
MISSIONS TO PROTECT  
FOSSIL FUEL  
INTERESTS**



**GREENPEACE**

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# INTRODUCTION

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The member states of the European Union are dependent on fossil fuel energy imports. Almost 90 % of their oil and 70 % of their fossil gas requirements are currently imported. The European Union is therefore also dependent on ensuring secure trade routes and stable conditions in its respective supplier countries. Few EU citizens are aware that the European Union and its member states secure these imports militarily by deploying their armed forces around the world. These deployments add billions of euros to the already high costs of energy and are also paid for by European citizens.

This study aims, as a first step, to identify the military missions conducted by the EU, Italy, Spain and Germany to protect imports of the fossil climate killers oil and gas and to determine their costs. It also takes a brief look at uranium since energy production from this material is just as backward-looking as that from fossil fuels. The report has been written as a collective effort by Greenpeace experts from the "Climate for Peace" team in Greenpeace Germany, Italy and Spain. Thanks for the research are due to Sofia Basso, Research Lead and also responsible for the Italian chapter of the report, Fabian Schwalm for the German chapter, Jordi Calvo, Alejandro Pozo, Benjamin Steinmer, Iris Blay and Javier García Raboso for the EU / Nato and Spanish chapters. They are all to be thanked for their work, which represents pioneering work in rough terrain. Much of the data on military operations, especially the costs, is not publicly available, and governments tend to hide expenditure on oil and gas interests behind other, more benign motives. The work on the various individual studies in the respective chapters was thus extremely time-consuming. However, the results have been worth the effort.

With almost unchecked CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, humanity is on the road to a climate catastrophe. In 2021, risking the lives of civilians and soldiers and spending scarce financial resources on the provision of military protection for oil and gas imports is reminiscent of a wrong-way driver who, despite all warnings, not only stubbornly stays in his lane, but accelerates. Fortunately, the comparison with a wrong-way driver is flawed in one key respect. In the case of military missions on behalf of oil and gas interests, public pressure can put a stop to this misguided practice.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The member states of the European Union are highly dependent on imports of fossil fuel energy. Almost 90 % of their oil and 70 % of their fossil gas requirements are currently imported. It is an open secret that governments in Western capitals pursue their oil and gas interests in a variety of ways and the general public vaguely perceives that military forces may be used for this purpose. However, the EU member states are skilled in concealing the billions of euros they additionally spend on providing military protection for fossil fuels, such as oil and fossil gas. Even though oil and gas – as well as coal – are ruining the climate. This study has set itself the goal of gathering the facts and figures required to shed light on these activities and raise public awareness. Here are the key findings:

- › Almost two thirds of EU military missions are linked to fossil fuels;
- › In 2021, Italy is allocating approx. 797 million euros to fossil fuel missions, Spain almost 274 million euros and Germany no less than 161 million euros. Their combined expenditure is over 1,2 billion euros;
- › In the last four years (2018 – 2021), Italy, Spain and Germany have spent more than 4 billion euros on missions which serve primarily or to a significant extent the purpose of militarily securing imports of crude oil and gas;
- › “Atalanta” (EU anti-piracy mission at the Horn of Africa), “Irinì” and “Mare Sicuro” (respectively EU and Italian missions in the waters off the Libyan coast), “Sea Guardian” (NATO mission in the Eastern Mediterranean), the Italian and Spanish anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Guinea, the NATO and “Global Coalition Against Daesh” operations in Iraq and Syria and “EMASoH” (European Mission at the Strait of Hormuz) are missions with the purpose of securing the flow of oil and gas;
- › Italy is engaged in two operations explicitly aimed at protecting the assets of Eni, the main national energy company. The Defence Minister’s parliamentary hearings revealed that energy interests are a massive driving force behind Italy’s military mission policy;
- › Germany participates in fossil fuel missions. Other interests, such as keeping sea routes open, are generally at the centre of German policy. Nevertheless, the importance of fossil fuel imports is explicitly laid down in the White Book of Germany’s Ministry of Defence;

- › Spain does not pursue its energy interests as openly as Italy. However, the deployment of warships to the Gulf of Guinea is explicitly justified by Spanish oil and gas interests;
- › NATO expects that “the competition for scarce energy resources will only increase in the next decade”. While the end of the fossil age must begin as soon as possible to stop global warming, the world’s most powerful military alliance is preparing for the next decade of energy imports.

Greenpeace demands an immediate end to military protection of oil and gas imports. In the age of the climate crisis, such a policy is doubly dangerous. Apart from the fact that the deployment of the military always involves a considerable risk to the lives of civilians as well as soldiers, and that such operations are associated with enormous costs, the military missions examined in this study also militarily secure the import of those resources that destroy the livelihoods of Europeans and people around the world. Turning away from oil and gas (and thus expanding renewable energies) will have a triple-positive effect: it will reduce the risk of military confrontation, protect the climate and save financial resources for urgent matters, such as a stronger and more just ecological transition.

# 1. EU AND NATO

## 1.1 ENERGY AS A SECURITY ISSUE

Both the EU and NATO talk a great deal about the green transition but many of their military missions are related to protecting fossil fuels. Although it is hard to find an explicit mention of this goal in their official mandates, EU and NATO documents often refer to “energy security”, a concept that is becoming increasingly relevant for Brussels. In reality, most European countries are becoming more and more “heavily reliant upon imported energy”.<sup>1</sup> As the European Council put it in 2008: “Concerns about energy dependence have increased over the last five years. Declining production inside Europe means that by 2030 up to 75 % of our oil and gas will have to be imported. This will come from a limited number of countries, many of which face threats to stability”.<sup>2</sup> According to a 2020 EU Parliament study, “at present, nearly 90 % of the EU’s oil needs and 70 % of gas have to be covered by imports”.<sup>3</sup> In fact, when Brussels speaks about energy security, it mainly refers to its vulnerability in fossil supplies.

In one of the most important EU documents on foreign and security policy – the “EU Global Strategy” published in 2016 that aims to improve the effectiveness of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) – Brussels warns that “energy insecurity endangers our people and territory”<sup>4</sup> and specifies that “through our energy diplomacy, we will strengthen relations worldwide with reliable energy-producing and transit countries and support the establishment of infrastructure to allow diversified sources to reach European markets”.<sup>5</sup> When presenting the EU Maritime Security Strategy (2014), the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki, stressed that her goal was to “rekindle the maritime economy” – a target that she stated, “goes hand in hand with security: no businessman will invest in a maritime activity if off-shore installations are not safe or trade routes are not secure”.<sup>6</sup>

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is quite explicit on the need to protect fossil fuel assets. Its starting point in a 2020 document is that “Allies recognize energy security as part of their common security”.<sup>7</sup> In previous documents, NATO has stated that “disruptions to energy and maritime supply lines” will be among the most probable threats to allies in the coming decade.<sup>8</sup> NATO makes it also clear that “any substantial or sudden interruption of supplies to an ally would be of concern, especially if the interruption were caused by the sabotage of energy infrastructure or by unlawful interference with maritime commerce”.<sup>9</sup> Its conclusions, in the very latest document on the issue, are unequivocal: as “power infrastructure security is becoming the cornerstone of energy security”, NATO is seeking “to increase its competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure”.<sup>10</sup>

Despite countless scientific publications<sup>11</sup> identifying fossil fuels as the root cause of climate change, the military commitment to supporting “energy security” may even grow in future because, as highlighted by a NATO document, “the competition for scarce energy resources will only increase in the next decade. In light of the potential implications of this reality for Allies, energy security should be a constant item to be monitored, assessed, and consulted among Allies, as necessary”.<sup>12</sup> The Reflection Group appointed in 2020 by the NATO Secretary General with the aim of strengthening the political dimension of the Alliance thus recommended, among other measures, that the Alliance “should ensure that energy security becomes a major focus of engagement with partners who are either energy producers or transit countries”.<sup>13</sup> In short: “NATO should remain seized of the importance of ensuring uninterrupted supply of the requisite energy resources and availability of infrastructure”.<sup>14</sup>

Even if the EU emphasizes the role of “energy diplomacy”, its security policy is invariably influenced by NATO’s military approach. As stated in the EU “Global Strategy” document, “when it comes to collective defence, NATO remains the primary framework for most Member States”.<sup>15</sup> After all, 21 of the 27 EU states are also NATO members. The EU explains that it “will deepen cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance in complementarity, synergy, and full respect for the institutional framework, inclusiveness and decision-making autonomy of the two”.<sup>16</sup> The European Parliament also passed a resolution stressing “that energy security is an important component in achieving strategic autonomy” and that the Union “strongly believes that European strategic autonomy should include the capacity to deploy military forces on the EU’s periphery”.<sup>17</sup>

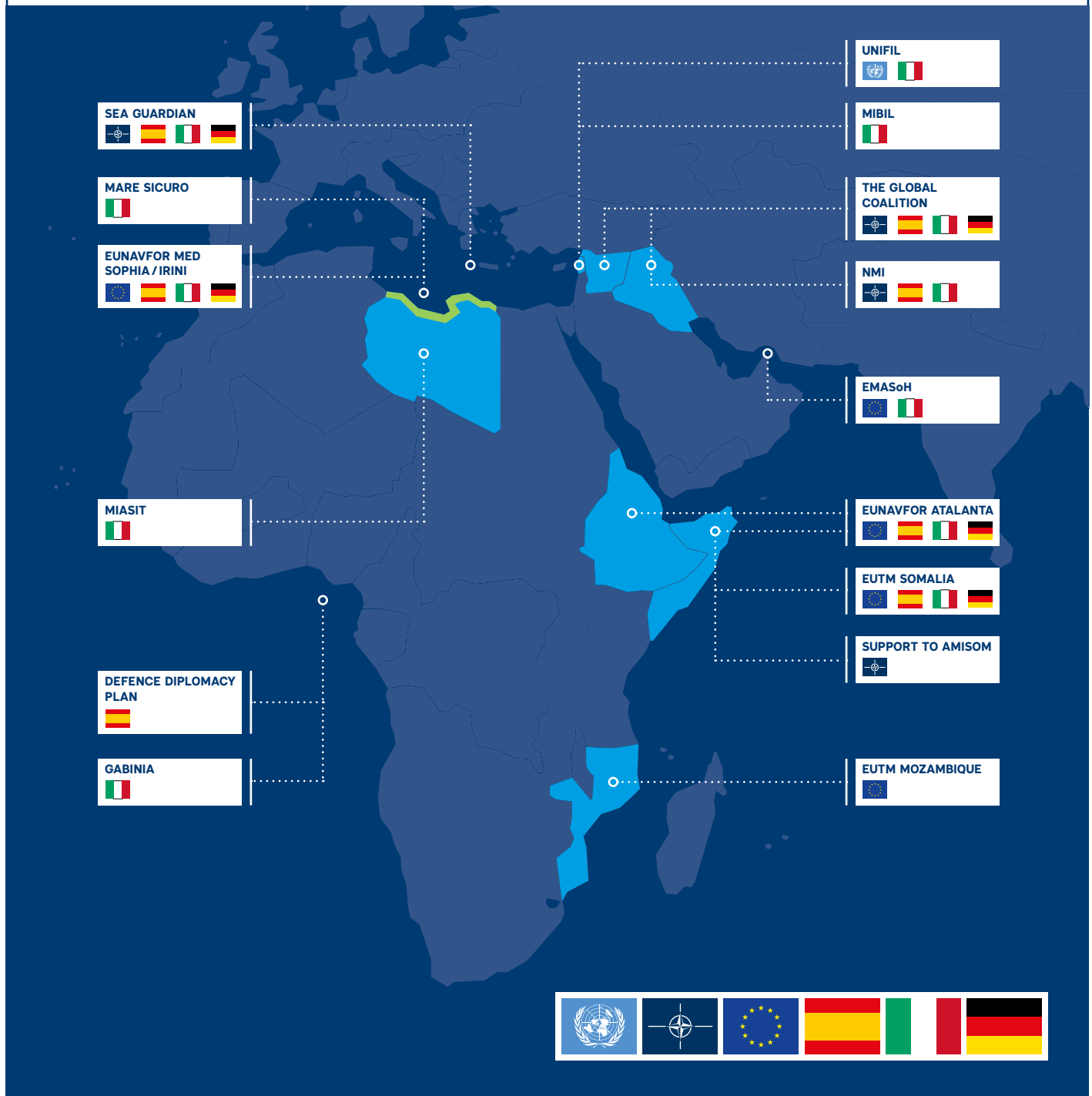
## 1.2 EU / NATO FOSSIL FUELS AND URANIUM MILITARY MISSIONS

The EU has 7 military missions that are currently in operation, plus the “European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz” (EMASoH) military initiative launched by France and supported by 7 other member states. To find out which missions could be linked to fossil fuels, we have examined the official mandates and the main political statements around them (from European and national members of parliament or government representatives). Despite the lack of transparency on the issue, we identified 5 out of the 8 European deployments as being related to fossil fuels, which means that almost two thirds of EU military operations are linked to fossil energy supplies. In short, despite agreements and commitments to stop the climate crisis, Brussels still looks at oil and gas as assets to be protected, both in terms of their extraction and transportation.

NATO also is committed to protecting oil and gas interests: we identified 4 NATO fossil missions in two different regions of the world (Middle East and Mediterranean Sea).

We looked at operations to protect uranium as well and singled out 1 EU mission in the Sahel (EUTM Mali).

## EUROPEAN FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS



**SEA GUARDIAN:** NATO Operation Sea Guardian; **MARE SICURO:** Operation Mare Sicuro; **EUNAVFOR MED SOPHIA / IRINI:** EU Naval Force Mediterranean – Operation Sophia/Irini; **MIASIT:** Bilateral Mission of Assistance and Support in Libya; **DEFENCE DIPLOMACY PLAN:** Maritime Security in waters of the Gulf of Guinea; **GABINIA:** Operation Gabinia; **UNIFIL:** United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (Maritime Task Force); **MIBIL:** Bilateral Training Mission of the Lebanese Armed Forces; **THE GLOBAL COALISATION:** The Global Coalition against Daesh/ISIS; **NMI:** NATO Mission Iraq; **EMASoH:** European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz; **EUNAVFOR ATALANTA:** EU Naval Force Somalia – Operation Atalanta; **EUTM SOMALIA:** EU Training Mission Somalia; **SUPPORT TO AMISON:** Support to African Union Mission to Somalia; **EUTM MOZAMBIQUE:** EU Training Mission Mozambique

### **1.3 THE NEWLY APPROVED EUROPEAN MILITARY "FOSSIL" MISSIONS (EUROPEAN MARITIME AWARENESS MISSION IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ [EMASoH], EU TRAINING MISSION IN MOZAMBIQUE [EUTM MOZAMBIQUE])**

At the beginning of 2020, France – with the political support of other EU countries – launched the "European Maritime Awareness Mission in the Strait of Hormuz" (EMASoH), aimed at promoting the freedom of navigation in one of the world's most strategically important maritime passages. As stated by the joint communication, "the initiative is crucial to enhancing European cooperation and coordination on issues of common interests, including economic interests in the region".<sup>18</sup> The official statement explains that "rising insecurity and instability have been witnessed in the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz in 2019 with multiple maritime and non-maritime incidents"<sup>19</sup> and that "this situation has affected the freedom of navigation and the security of European and non-European vessels and crews in the area. It has also jeopardized trade and energy supplies with potential worldwide economic consequences".<sup>20</sup>

The "energy" relevance of the mission is also highlighted by the basic data. As a French Armed Forces Ministry publication points out, the Strait of Hormuz is the "main oil transit point (21 million barrels / day, 1/3 of the oil transported by sea annually, 20 % of world consumption), located in a chronically unstable region".<sup>21</sup> The same report goes on, clearly linking maritime security as a whole to fossil fuels security: "More than 60 % of the world's oil trade is by sea and the LNG market, also by sea, is booming. It is therefore a strategic challenge to secure maritime routes".

In July 2021, the EU Foreign Affairs Council set up an "EU Military Training Mission in Mozambique" (EUTM Mozambique) with the aim of training and supporting the Mozambican armed forces in protecting the civilian population and restoring safety and security in the Cabo Delgado province".<sup>22</sup> A few months earlier, the EU Council stressed that "Mozambique has the potential to become one of the world's major producers" in the gas sector.<sup>23</sup>

The close connection between the ongoing violence and gas extraction was highlighted by Colonel Loïc, of the French armed forces staff: "This country [Mozambique] has discovered a gas deposit, which is going to be operated largely by Total and which will give rise to the largest industrial financial investment in the history of the African continent. In the last few months, a movement has broken out in the province of Cabo Delgado, with highway robbers, terrorists (...). A whole series of phenomena that we are trying to define; but there is no doubt about the match between wealth and conflict".<sup>24</sup> In April 2021, Total left the country claiming security reasons: "Considering the evolution of the security situation in the north of the Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique, Total confirms the withdrawal of all Mozambique LNG project

personnel from the Afungi site," the company stated in a press release. Total also mentioned the role of international forces, expressing its wish that "the actions carried out by the government of Mozambique and its regional and international partners will enable the restoration of security and stability in Cabo Delgado province in a sustained manner".<sup>25</sup>

The mandate of the EU mission in Cabo Delgado will initially last two years. During this period, its strategic objective will be to support the building of capacity in the units of the Mozambican armed forces that will form part of a future Quick Reaction Force.<sup>26</sup>

In January 2021, the European Council launched "the first case of the Coordinated Maritime Presences (CMP)" in the Gulf of Guinea. The CMP mechanism "aims to increase the EU's capacity as a reliable partner and maritime security provider, offering greater European operational engagement, ensuring a permanent maritime presence and outreach in the Maritime Areas of interest as established by the Council".<sup>27</sup> An EU Parliament briefing detailing this pilot project case stressed that the Gulf of Guinea is "a strategic hub in global and regional energy trade, plagued by piracy and illegal fishing".<sup>28</sup>

### **1.4 PROTECTING OIL TANKERS IN THE OCEANS (EU TRAINING MISSION SOMALIA [EUTM SOMALIA], EU NAVAL FORCE SOMALIA [EU NAVFOR] – OPERATION ATALANTA, NATO SUPPORT TO AFRICAN UNION MISSION TO SOMALIA [AMISOM])**

The Horn of Africa has been one of the most militarized zones in the world for many years, with EU, NATO and national missions being closely coordinated. The main European mission in the area is the "EU Naval Force Operation Atalanta", launched in 2008 with "the core effort to deter, prevent and repress piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, in order to ensure the freedom of navigation and the protection of World Food Programme and other vulnerable shipping to Somalia".<sup>29</sup> In December 2020, its mandate was expanded to the "non-executive tasks of monitoring illegal activities at sea" in order to further build "the wider regional maritime security architecture stretching now from the Red Sea through Bab el Mandeb to the Western Indian Ocean".<sup>30</sup>

When speaking about "counter-piracy operations", NATO itself has made it clear that "by protecting important sea lanes" these missions also contribute "to energy security".<sup>31</sup> A strong tie connecting "Operation Atalanta" and fossil fuels has also come from a former Commandant General of the UK Royal Marines, Charles Stickland, who stressed the profound "linkage" of the mission to the UK's national security objectives, because it contributes to "the safety and security of offshore installations" and to "the security of vital maritime trade and energy transportation routes".<sup>32</sup>



"Operation Atalanta's" EU "sister" military mission – the "EU Training Mission in Somalia" (EUTM Somalia) – is also related to fossil fuels, being "part of the EU's comprehensive approach to the Horn of Africa, which included EUCAP Somalia (editor's note: civil mission "EU Capacity Building Mission in Somalia") and 'Operation Atalanta'".<sup>33</sup> As Filip Ejdus, an expert in International Relations, put it: the United Kingdom should be interested in continuing to participate in the civil EU mission EUCAP in Somalia "not least because 65 % of UK gas and oil supplies pass through the Gulf of Aden". According to Ejdus, British participation would help to "protect this strategic line of communication for the UK".<sup>34</sup> The EU is one of the main financial contributors to the "African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia" (AMISOM), "having committed more than €1,73 billion for AMISOM over the period March 2007 to December 2018".<sup>35</sup>

In addition, NATO assists the AMISOM mission, by providing air- and sealift support for AU troops. As pointed out by NATO itself: "85 % of all international trade in raw material and manufactured goods travels by sea, and tankers carry more than half of the world's oil".<sup>36</sup> Currently, NATO is "reinforcing its maritime posture" and "taking concrete steps to improve the Alliance's overall maritime situational awareness". A 2019 document from the US Energy Information Administration underlined the link between fossil fuels and Somalia missions when it raised the alarm on the choke point between the Horn of Africa and the Middle East: "Closure of Bab el-Mandeb Strait could keep tankers originating in the Persian Gulf from transiting the Suez Canal or reaching the Sumed Pipeline, forcing them to divert around the southern tip of Africa, which would increase transit time and shipping costs".<sup>37</sup> We can thus find energy concerns behind many EU and NATO African missions.

### **1.5 MEDITERRANEAN MISSIONS WITH AN EYE TO PROTECT FOSSIL FUELS (NATO OPERATION SEA GUARDIAN, EU UNION NAVAL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN OPERATION IRINI [EUNAVFOR MED IRINI])**

The Mediterranean Sea is a transit route not only for flows of migrants, but also of fossil fuel resources. The main NATO mission in the area is "Sea Guardian", which aims to support maritime situational awareness and counter-terrorism at sea. It contributes to the building of maritime security capacity in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. Both these regions are characterised by oil and gas resources. NATO itself links the "Sea Guardian" operation to fossil fuels when, in the mission's own description, it specifies that "in terms of energy alone, some 65 percent of the oil and natural gas consumed in Western Europe pass through the Mediterranean each year".<sup>38</sup>

Its mission tasks also include providing assistance in situational awareness and logistical support to "Operation Sophia", the EU

operation to combat migrant smuggling in the Mediterranean Sea. In 2020, "Sophia" was renamed "Eunavfor Med Irini" and its focus switched to enforcing the arms embargo imposed on Libya by the United Nations through the use of aerial, satellite and maritime assets. The "European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation Irini" (EUNAVFOR MED Irini) was launched on March 31, 2020 with the primary task of enforcing the United Nations arms embargo to Libya that was imposed due to the Second Libyan Civil War. "Operation Irini" is a European Union military operation under the umbrella of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). Despite having a primary mandate that has nothing to do with energy ("contribute to the implementation of the arms embargo imposed by the UN against Libya"), "Irini" has the secondary mandate of "control and surveillance of illegal oil exports from Libya, including crude oil and refined oil products".<sup>39</sup> The war on oil smuggling is not only aimed at crushing any illegal activity, but also at protecting the legal fossil fuel sector. Not surprisingly, the UN Resolution underlying the mandate expressed concern that illegal exportation would weaken the Government of National Accord (GNA), the local oil company (National Oil Corporation)<sup>40</sup> and, of course, the interests of other oil and gas corporations.<sup>41</sup> "Irini" is led by Italy. 24 EU countries participate in the mission, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta and Poland initially provided assets for the Operation while Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden provided staff employed in the mission.<sup>42</sup>

After stressing that "around 90 % of global goods are traded via maritime routes" and that freedom of navigation and security are "crucial for the EU", a 2021 European Parliament briefing explained that the EU's missions and operations abroad are "the most visible manifestation of its maritime actorness". The document pointed out that two EU missions "are naval military operations" (EUNAVFOR Somalia Atalanta and EUNAVFOR MED Irini) and that EU Member States also participate in "NATO's own maritime operation, Sea Guardian, patrolling the entire Mediterranean Sea".<sup>43</sup>

The "oil connection" often arises in discussions of Libyan missions. One of the more outspoken contributors on the issue is the British Labour member of parliament, Fabian Hamilton, who in October 2016 said: "Only 200.000 barrels of oil per day are being produced. The UK is assisting Libya, I understand, in attempting to bring that number up to 700.000 barrels a day".<sup>44</sup> During a hearing at the US Senate prior to his confirmation as US Secretary of Defense, Mark T. Esper also stressed the role of oil when focusing on Libya. According to him, the US goal for the country "is a stable, unified, and democratic Libya, able to deliver security and prosperity, including a stable oil production".<sup>45</sup>





Flames emerge from flare stacks at oilfields, Kirkuk, Iraq

### 1.6 OIL BEHIND THE WAR ON TERROR (NATO MISSION IRAQ (NMI), GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST DAESH / ISIS)

Iraq is among the countries that have witnessed more intense military operations, with the most relevant being the US-led invasion and the Global Coalition Against Daesh/Islamic State (ISIS). Despite the significant presence of oil fields in the country, there are few official declarations linking Iraqi missions to oil interests. Quite the contrary, the two main players – US and UK – tend to reject any motivation related to the enormous oil reserves.

Time has revealed that the rationale for the intervention in Iraq was much more related to oil than initially admitted. While publishing the findings of over 1,000 documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, The Independent newspaper went straight to the point: "Plans to exploit Iraq's oil reserves were discussed by government ministers and the world's largest oil companies the year before Britain took a leading role in invading Iraq".<sup>46</sup> According to Downing Street's documents, in fact, the UK Trade Minister at the time, Baroness Symons, told the UK oil giant BP that "the government believed British energy firms should be given a share of Iraq's enormous oil and gas reserves as a reward for Tony Blair's military commitment to US plans for regime change". The details can be found in the minutes of a meeting between the British Foreign Office and BP, a few months before the invasion of Iraq: "Iraq is the great oil prospect. BP is desperate to get in there and anxious that the political deals don't deny them the opportunity". As The Independent pointed out: "Whereas BP was insisting in

public that it had 'no strategic interest' in Iraq, in private it told the Foreign Office that Iraq was 'more important than anything we've seen for a long time'".<sup>47</sup>

Some of these behind-the-scenes talks also went public in the UK Parliament. In fact, in March 2018, Lord Dykes, member of the House of Lords, stated that "the Americans and the British decided that they could continue their historical primordial right of having a presence in those areas – mainly for oil, of course, in the case of the United States, but for other reasons too".<sup>48</sup> As the UK Secretary of State pointed out while debating military operations in Syria and Iraq, "the end state is a situation in the Middle East where these countries are stable again and we can rely on the trade routes, the energy supplies and the partnerships we need to keep this country safe".<sup>49</sup>

The debate on "oil motivations" also took place in other countries involved in the US-led invasion, launched in March 2003 with the official goal of eliminating Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. In 2017, Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the US Federal Reserve for almost two decades, wrote in his memoirs that he is "saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what all the world knows: the war in Iraq has to do mainly with oil".<sup>50</sup> A similar gear shift in recognizing the real motive for the Iraq war happened in Australia: in 2003 the Prime Minister, John Howard, "pointedly rejected oil as being a reason for joining the US invasion", but in July 2007 the press reported that "the Howard government has surprised many by not only vowing to keep Australian troops in Iraq for years to come but by declaring that one of the key goals is the protection of the world's oil supply".<sup>51</sup>

In Iraq, as well as in Syria, NATO is also supporting the Global Coalition Against Daesh / ISIS. In addition to the military campaign, the Coalition is committed to "tackling Daesh's financing and economic infrastructure", including revenues from oil smuggling<sup>52</sup>: a task intended not only to block ISIS, but also to protect legal fossil interests. As the Iraq Oil Ministry report on "Smuggling Crude Oil and Oil Products" put it: "Diversion activities lead to the scarcity of oil products offered through the supply and distribution outlets; this impedes the supply lines to citizens and legitimate business people".<sup>53</sup>

In 2018, NATO launched its own mission in the country ("NATO Mission Iraq, NMI").<sup>54</sup>

The military mission in Syria is also linked to fossil fuels, with the US Pentagon, a member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh / ISIS, connecting the US military presence with the protection of oilfields: "The US is committed to reinforcing our position, in coordination with our SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) partners, in Northeast Syria with additional military assets to prevent these oilfields from falling back into the hands of ISIS or other destabilizing actors".<sup>55</sup> Even clearer was then US President Donald Trump who, despite a military pullback from Northeast Syria, in December 2020 stated that American forces would remain "where they have oil".<sup>56</sup> In addition, the Middle East has by far the world's greatest number of recorded oil disruptions.<sup>57</sup> In 2006, NATO members "discussed a range of potential actions in the event of future disruption of oil supplies caused by military action. Some member states reportedly raised the possibility of protecting tanker traffic and oil platforms in periods of conflict and using satellites to monitor developments in areas where energy resources come under threat".<sup>58</sup>

### **1.7 SAHEL, URANIUM AND PIPELINES (EU TRAINING MISSION IN MALI [EUTM MALI], EU SUPPORT TO THE G5 SAHEL JOINT FORCE)**

Niger, one of the most impoverished countries in the world, is rich in uranium, an essential mineral for the nuclear industry (and weaponry). The energy interests of the European Union in the Sahel were clearly detailed on the first page of the Common Security and Defence Policy in the Sahel (2012): "Europe has multiple interests in the region, including the fight against insecurity and organized crime, energy security and illegal immigration".<sup>59</sup> According to a European Parliament's report, Niger provided 12 % of the uranium consumed in the EU.<sup>60</sup>

The most influential EU actor in the Sahel is France, which derives about 70 % of its electrical energy from its 58 nuclear reactors. As detailed in a 2013 French Senate report, the Sahel had "unique strategic resources such as uranium from Niger, which covers 30 % of our civilian needs and 100 % of our military

needs".<sup>61</sup> This percentage is quite stable, as confirmed in 2019 by news reports.<sup>62</sup> It is thus hardly surprising that the EU's political, military and police activities in Sahel have been promoted and led by France.

Until 2021, "Orano" – the French multinational group specialized in nuclear fuel cycle products and services – operated two large uranium mines in the northwest of the Niger through two subsidiaries "while mining at a third site, Imouraren, which is one of the world's largest uranium deposits, will get underway as soon as market conditions permit".<sup>63</sup> One of the two mines ceased its production in March 2021.<sup>64</sup> As the French White Paper on Defence and National Security pointed out, the issue of natural resource management "is too often approached from the point of view of protecting supplies", whereas a "sensible defence and national security policy should take into account the reduction in our supplies of raw materials".<sup>65</sup> The document noted that the same problem arises with regard to the French uranium supply, which is greatly influenced by "the internal conflict in Niger between Tuareg rebels and Nigerians".<sup>66</sup>

In January 2013, some French newspapers exposed that Paris deployed "special forces to protect uranium mines belonging to French nuclear energy giant Areva in Niger". The media specify that it was "the first time government troops will be sent overseas to protect a facility owned by a private French company, although French marines are already deployed on cargo ships travelling through the pirate-infested waters of the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea".<sup>67</sup>

France is not alone in its dependence on uranium from Niger. The Spanish Government gives top priority to the Sahel, where French interests are also relevant to Spain. Paris, after all, is an important supplier for Spanish nuclear plants. According to data from Foro Nuclear, 15 % of the uranium consumed in Spanish nuclear power plants is sourced from Niger and sold also by "Orano".<sup>68</sup> France sells some of the electricity it generates from nuclear power to Germany and Italy as well. Although France has taken a leading – political and military – role in the region, Spain and Germany also stand out among the top European contributors to military missions in the Sahel. The main EU military mission in the region is the "EU Training Mission Mali" (EUTM Mali). Brussels also contributes funds to the G5 Sahel Joint Force – made up of forces provided by Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania and Burkina Faso who are seeking to "tackle the deterioration of the security environment in the region, and to cooperate against transnational threats"<sup>69</sup> – and to the "Multinational Joint Task Force" (MNJTF) against Boko Haram in Lake Chad Basin.

## 1.8 THE BILL FOR EUROPEAN TAXPAYERS

For the countries covered in this report (Italy, Spain and Germany, as well as EU-common costs within the Athena mechanism – see box: A difficult estimate), we estimated that taxpayers paid at least 428 million euros for the EU military missions linked to fossil fuels in 2020. This amount was similar in 2019 (437 million) and slightly higher in 2018 (519 million). Despite the slight decrease from 2018 to 2020, it is clear that instead of phasing out oil and gas, the EU is still focusing on protecting fossil energy sources. The total spent for the three-year period (2018 – 2020) was almost 1,4 billion euros.

For fossil fuel NATO operations, the three member states (Italy, Spain and Germany) – plus France, UK, Canada and US for Iraq and

Syria related missions only – paid almost 8 billion euros last year: a total of 33 billion euros over the three years considered.

Summing up the EU and NATO costs, we roughly estimate that almost 35 billion euros, which could have been used to fight climate change and improve the living conditions of people, were instead used to ensure continued access to polluting energy sources.

Almost all of these costs are borne by national budgets because, as explained by an European Parliament briefing, “the financing of military operations under the CSDP [the Common Security and Defense Policy] takes place outside of the EU budget, as per the Lisbon treaty prohibition on funding actions with military and defence implications”.<sup>70</sup>

## 1.9 EU AND NATO FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS COSTS, 2018–2020

EU FOSSIL FUELS MISSION COSTS 2018 – 2020						
NATO UN EU National	Military Missions Name	Country / Area of Operation	2020	2019	2018	Costs 2018 – 2020
EU	EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta	Horn of Africa	Common costs M€ 5,89	Common costs M€ 5,89	Common costs M€ 4,71	449.790.000 €
			Member States Contributions M€ IT: 26,7; ES: 79,2; DE: 39,6	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 26,8; ES: 73,8; DE: 39	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 27; ES: 73,1; DE: 48,1	
			Total: 151.390.000 €	Total: 145.490.000 €	Total: 152.910.000 €	
EU	EU Training Mission Somalia – EUTM Somalia	Somalia	Common costs M€ 12,61	Common costs M€ 11,49	Common costs M€ 13,5	89.170.000 €
			Member States Contributions M€ IT: 13,77; ES: 2,8	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 12,3; ES: 3	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 12,3; ES: 6,4; DE:1	
			Total: 29.180.000 €	Total: 26.790.000 €	Total: 33.200.000 €	
EU	EU funding to African Union Mission in Somalia – AMISOM	Somalia	Common costs M€ 145,6	Common costs M€ 145,6	Common costs M€ 145,6	436.800.000 €
			Member States Contributions M€ –	Member States Contributions M€ –	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 26,7; ES: 79,2; DE: 39,6	
		Med sea – off the Libyan coast	Total: 145.600.000 €	Total: 145.600.000 €	Total: 145.600.000 €	
EU	EUNAVFOR MED Sophia/Irini	Med sea – off the Libyan coast	Common costs M€ 3,1	Common costs M€ 3,9	Common costs M€ 6	410.110.000 €
			Member States Contributions M€ IT: 24,9; ES:44,2; DE: 30,4	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 41,26; ES: 62,8; DE: 11,8	Member States Contributions M€ IT: 42,55; ES: 107,3; DE: 30,9	
			Total: 102.600.000 €	Total: 119.760.000 €	Total: 187.750.000 €	
Total Costs 3 Y. 2018 – 2020						
			428.770.000 €	437.640.000 €	519.460.000 €	1.385.870.000 €

Source: Own elaboration from official EU budgets as well as national military budgets both annual or mission specific.

NATO FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS COSTS 2018 – 2020						
NATO UN EU National	Military Missions Name	Country / Area of Operation	2020	2019	2018	Costs 2018 – 2020
NATO	Operation Sea Guardian	Central and Eastern Medi- terranean	Common costs M € Still unpublished	Common costs M € 0,1	Common costs M € 0,2	130.210.000 €
			Member States Contributions M € IT: 15; ES: 25,11; DE: 3,1	Member States Contributions M € IT: 6,4; ES: 28,4; DE: 3,8	Member States Contributions M € IT: 17,6; ES: 24; DE: 6,5	
			Total: 43.210.000 €	Total: 38.700.000 €	Total: 48.300.000 €	
NATO	NATO's support to the Global Coalition against Daesh / ISIS	Iraq	Common costs M € Still unpublished	Common costs M € 14,9	Common costs M € 3,9	3.373.450.000 €
NATO	NATO Mission Iraq (NMI)		Member States Contributions M € IT: 266; ES: 98,61; DE: 69,7; rest: 725,62	Member States Contributions M € IT: 236,7; ES: 115; DE: 10,2; rest: 669,78	Member States Contributions M € IT: 270; ES: 109,59; DE: 76,4 rest: 707,05	
			Total: 1.159.930.000 €	Total: 1.046.580.000 €	Total: 1.166.940.000 €	
NATO	Iraq / Syria- related, funds combined (includes Inherent Resolve)	Iraq / Syria	Common costs M € –	Common costs M € –	Common costs M € –	29.819.370.000 €
			Member States Contributions M € UK: 169,21; FR: 205,4; CA: 466,8; US: 5.849,74	Member States Contributions M € UK: 522,81; FR: 265; CA: 466,8; US: 7.545,31	Member States Contributions M € UK: 631,34; FR: 259; CA: 466,8; US: 12.971,16	
			Total: 6.691.150.000 €	Total: 8.799.920.000 €	Total: 14.328.300.000 €	
Total Costs 3 Y. 2018 – 2020						
			7.894.290.000 €	9.885.200.000 €	15.543.540.000 €	33.323.030.000 €

Source: Own elaboration from official NATO budgets as well as national military budgets both annual or mission specific.

**Box: A difficult estimate**

*Our calculations are based on estimates because it was not possible to obtain the official breakdowns nor the overall costs, including member states' contributions for EU and NATO military missions. Only common costs are generally available, but they cover only a small portion of total expenditure. The main problem we encountered is that some EU and NATO members do not break down costs per mission and others do not provide figures at all. The reporting timeframes differ by contributing countries, too. Many NATO and EU country members only count a small fraction of the real spending as costs. For instance, the UK clearly states that "these costs cover the net additional costs (both direct and indirect) incurred by the Department as a result of major military operations: that is, the costs that the Department would have incurred had the operation not been undertaken. For example, payroll expenditure or training costs are deducted from the total cost of the operation".<sup>A1</sup> For Germany, official national costs for each mission already include the common costs such as those contributed to EU and NATO. Furthermore, they are individually approved and published in advance of each period.*

*This was a major obstacle because the main economic contributions come from the participating states, not from*

*the EU or NATO budgets. In Europe, in fact, the cost of each EU military mission is governed by a funding mechanism called "Athena"<sup>A2</sup>, which works on the basis of a country's contribution relative to its gross domestic product. This means that a mission is largely funded by the economically "stronger" countries. It should be noted that this mechanism represents only a small part of the mission's budget. According to the French Defence Minister, the Athena mechanism would only cover about 10 % of the budget.<sup>A3</sup> The participating countries finance the rest of the mission.*

*We have primarily considered the three countries covered by this report. Since it was not possible to get the share of costs devoted to "fossil" tasks, we took into account all the available costs of each military operation. To balance this overcalculation, we considered only the military missions directly linked to energy security. On the contrary, we did not include missions in which fossil fuels are somehow related to the operation but very much a secondary factor, as in the case of "Resolute Support Afghanistan". Furthermore, we have not taken into account all the Russia-related missions despite the strong energy dependence of European countries on Moscow. Ultimately, it must be assumed that the real costs paid by European taxpayers to protect polluting energy sources are much higher.*

## 2. ITALY

### 2.1 IN THE NAME OF THE FOSSIL FUELS

No one in Italy denies the need for an ecological transition. Yet, the majority of the Italian spending on military missions is on operations still linked to fossil fuels, including two national missions explicitly aimed at protecting the assets of Eni, the national energy company. This choice is not only harmful to the health of people and the environment, but also costly for the state budget and taxpayers: in 2021, missions to protect Italian "energy security" will amount to approx. 797 million euros, equal to 64 % of the military missions budget. Overall, the Italian Ministry of Defence has spent approx. 2,4 billion euros on "fossil" missions over the last four years. And the trend shows no sign of abating. On the contrary, this year there has been a surge in military operations to protect polluting energy sources – always without any public debate on the interests that the Italian Armed Forces are called to defend.

Obviously, no military mission has the exclusive goal of protecting the platforms of an Italian company or the country's energy security. However, in some instances, this is the first task

mentioned in the official papers. The most striking cases are the "Mare Sicuro" mission, off the Libyan coast, and the "Gabinia Operation", in the Gulf of Guinea. If we look at the mission mandates sent by the Government to the Italian Parliament, we discover that the first official activity of "Mare Sicuro" is precisely the "surveillance and protection of the Eni platforms located in international waters off the Libyan coast".<sup>71</sup> Even the anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Guinea, launched in 2020 and confirmed this year with a double financial commitment, has the "protection of Eni extractive assets" as its first task.<sup>72</sup> Again, with an explicit mandate.

Moreover, the Italian missions in Iraq, in the Gulf of Aden, in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Strait of Hormuz are also closely linked to fossil resources. The link is not always written in black and white in the mission mandate: in some cases, the "energy connection" is revealed by parliamentary hearings of the Minister of Defence. In the coming months, Italy will also join the European mission in the province of Cape Delgado (Mozambique), where the escalation of violence is putting the exploitation of fossil fuels at risk.





## 2.2 LIBYA, AN ARMY TO PROTECT ENI'S ASSETS (OPERATION MARE SICURO, EU NAVAL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN OPERATION IRINI [EUNAVFOR MED IRINI], BILATERAL MISSION OF ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT IN LIBYA [MIASIT])

For 2021, Italy has approved 40 military missions at a cost of approx. 1,2 billion euros.<sup>73</sup> The focus of Rome's commitment is the so-called "wider Mediterranean", with Iraq and Libya the most heavily patrolled areas: these two countries account for about one third of Italy's oil imports.<sup>74</sup> Despite the enduring civil conflict, Eni – the former state-owned oil company (now 70 % privately owned) – extracted 61 million barrels of oil equivalent (boe) from the Libyan fields last year.<sup>75</sup> The close link between military deployments and the oil company's interests is particularly striking in the case of the "Mare Sicuro" mission: although the name may evoke the rescue of migrants, the first official activity of the operation is the "surveillance and protection of Eni's platforms located in international waters off the Libyan coast".<sup>76</sup>

This task was confirmed through a parliamentary question submitted by the Five Stars Movement (M5S) in 2016. At the time in opposition to the government, M5S also asked about "the costs that the Italian State incurs for the protection of energy infrastructure".<sup>77</sup> In its answer, the government specified that, "given the operational modalities of the aeronautical missions", it is possible to give only "the total programmatic costs of the operation Mare Sicuro".<sup>78</sup> These amount to almost 96 million euros for 2021 (345 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021). The mission employs 754 military personnel, six ships and eight aircraft.<sup>79</sup> The Member

of Parliament (MP) presenting the query complained that his movement "wanted to have knowledge and transparency on costs borne by all Italians, but for the benefit of very few subjects. You continue to be permeated with secrecy or, better, not to adequately disclose these data, which are simply hidden costs that are not included in the bills, but that all Italians pay".<sup>80</sup> The indignation of the MP and his colleagues, however, was short-lived, since when the M5S became a governing party, the operation "Mare Sicuro" continued to have the protection of Eni assets as its first task.

The "fossil" bill of the Italian military commitment in Libya is not limited to "Mare Sicuro". There is also the EU mission "Irinì", which has the secondary task of "control and surveillance of illegal oil exports from Libya".<sup>81</sup> Led by Italy, the mission had to restructure itself in response to widespread doubts about its actual ability to carry out its primary task, because its monitoring of arms trafficking was limited to flows "arriving by sea, so in fact only Turkish flows in support of the GNA (Government of National Accord)".<sup>82</sup> This year, "Irinì" will cost the Italian budget almost 40 million euros. In the period 2018 – 2021, operation "Sophia" – being replaced by operation "Irinì" in March 2020 – cost 148 million euros. The second most expensive "Libyan" operation (the first being "Mare Sicuro") is "MIASIT", the bilateral "Mission of Assistance and Support for Local Security Forces": costing 47 million euros in 2021 (192 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021) for the deployment of 400 military personnel, 69 land vehicles and 2 aircraft.<sup>83</sup> Presenting it to the Parliament in June 2020, Defence Minister Lorenzo Guerini specified that it is "as important and necessary as ever to maintain our presence on the ground, to be

ready, in case the situation precipitates, to protect our interests and the Italian personnel variously present in the country".<sup>84</sup> Interests that think tanks identify in the "management of migratory flows and access to energy markets".<sup>85</sup> Although the primary objective of the bilateral operation remains providing support to the Libyan government, through health care, training of security forces, assistance in the control of illegal immigration, restoration of the efficiency of land, naval and air assets, and capacity building activities, the mission can thus be linked to energy access. In addition, the Italian Foreign Minister, Luigi Di Maio, stressed the importance of oil in the national approach to the African country, when he expressed "extreme concern" regarding "the continuing interruption, almost total, of oil production and trade".<sup>86</sup>

### **2.3 THE NAVY, ENI AND THE PIRATES (OPERATION GABINIA, EU NAVAL FORCE SOMALIA [EU NAVFOR] – OPERATION ATALANTA, EUTM SOMALIA)**

In 2020, Italy launched a new mission in the Gulf of Guinea, described in the governmental files as a "deployment of a national air and sea force for presence, surveillance and security activities in the Gulf of Guinea". The operation, later called "Gabinia", was confirmed for 2021, with the financial commitment doubled compared to the previous year. Although the waters in question are infested with pirates, the mission's first stated task is to "protect Eni's extractive assets, operating in international waters".<sup>87</sup> The need to protect Italy's merchant ships from pirate attacks only comes in second place. As highlighted by a Senate publication, Eni has offshore installations both in Nigeria and Ghana.<sup>88</sup>

Describing the new and "strongly desired"<sup>89</sup> mission to Parliament, Defence Minister Guerini explained that "from the point of view of national interests, this maritime area has a significant strategic imprint. In fact, trade with the countries in the region is based almost exclusively (around 95 %) on the transport of oil products, raw materials and other goods by sea".<sup>90</sup> He also stressed Eni's role in the area.<sup>91</sup> In governmental statements on the mission, there are further references to the "growing national interest in terms of supply of energy resources"<sup>92</sup> in the area. "Gabinia" operates within the UN and EU legal frameworks and deploys about 400 military personnel, two frigates and four aircraft.<sup>93</sup>

While the budget of the Italian mission in the Gulf of Guinea for 2020 was estimated at 9,8 million euros (for 4 months of operations of the Martinengo frigate), this year's budget exceeds 23 million.<sup>94</sup> In March 2020, prior to the official approval of the mission, Italy sent the frigate Luigi Rizzo to those waters to participate in multilateral exercises. Having noted "the need for a dedicated and more persistent presence, in line with insistent requests to this effect from national operators", Minister Guerini decided to strengthen the commitment that had "also allowed for

collaborative activities with the offshore platforms where Eni operates".<sup>95</sup> The collaboration with the oil company became the mission's primary task.

The first phase of the "Gabinia" 2021 operation ended in mid-June, with the return to Italy of the navy ship Luigi Rizzo after 116 days of activities at sea. On 3 September, the frigate Marcegaglia left the port of La Spezia to reach the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>96</sup> As stated in a press release, "as part of the ongoing support activities for the national maritime cluster operating in the area, the Rizzo conducted joint exercises with Assarmatori, Confitarma, Eni and Saipem in order to verify the national alert chain and confirm the perfect union between the national maritime cluster and the Navy".<sup>97</sup> Such a "perfect union" that on 6 July the Navy's Chief of Staff, Admiral Cavo Dragone, and Eni's CEO, Claudio Descalzi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to guarantee "maritime security" and strengthen "energy security to protect national interests in the maritime field".<sup>98</sup> Greenpeace Italy filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to access the MoU, but this was rejected on the basis that the Memorandum "contains aspects relating" to defence issues not accessible to the public.

Eni's production in the Gulf of Guinea region is very significant, totalling more than 60 million barrels of oil from Angola,<sup>99</sup> Nigeria<sup>100</sup> and Ghana<sup>101</sup> and billions of cubic metres of gas per year. All this has a very high environmental cost, especially in the Niger Delta region. In August 2011, researchers from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) found that "pollution from over 50 years of oil operations in the region has penetrated further and deeper than many may have supposed", contaminating "drinking water, land, creeks and important ecosystems such as mangroves".<sup>102</sup> Eni as well is involved in the disaster.<sup>103</sup> In 2012, Altreconomia and the Campaign for the Reform of the World Bank demanded that "the Government and Parliament review the company's actions, asking it to remedy the impact of its operations by cleaning up polluted sites, compensating communities and immediately stopping gas flaring in Nigeria and other countries where it works".<sup>104</sup> For now, however, the Government and Parliament have moved in the opposite direction, sending the military to protect Eni assets.

"Gabinia" is not the only anti-piracy mission in which Italy participates. The country is also involved in "Atalanta", the EU anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia, with an area of operations that extends from the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea, to the Somali basin and the Indian Ocean. One of the most dangerous places in the world until a few years ago, it is still considered an area at risk.<sup>105</sup> The mission was set up by the European Union in 2008, at a time when – as a study by the Military Centre for Strategic Studies (Ce.Mi.S.S.) published by the Ministry of Defence website points out – 24 percent of pirate targets were oil, gas and coal tankers or other ships with "energy" cargos (2007 data).<sup>106</sup> This is a very high percentage, considering that this type of



vessel represents only 3 % of the total in circulation. It is no coincidence that the Ce.Mi.S.S. study concluded by reiterating that the "energy goods sector appears to be one of the sectors increasingly affected by pirate attacks, since it is on the ships engaged in their transport that the most exorbitant ransom demands can be made".<sup>107</sup> This statement makes clear the link between the "Atalanta" operation and fossil energy resources, even though it is not made explicit in the official tasks of the mission, which instead focus on the protection "of the World Food Programme ships" and "vulnerable ships sailing off the Somali coast" as well as the "deterrence, prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery". This year (2021), Italy deployed 407 military personnel, two ships and two aircraft in the operation, at a cost of 26,5 million euros<sup>108</sup> (107 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

Closely connected with Operation Atalanta is its "sister mission", the EU Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia), also under the European Union aegis. Speaking about Italy's commitment to "stabilizing Somalia in support of local institutions", Defence Minister Guerini explained that it is "an overall presence that should be interpreted from the standpoint of contributing to the stabilization of the Horn of Africa region and protecting maritime traffic, on which our country is heavily dependent".<sup>109</sup> The minister clarified the nature of "maritime traffic" to be protected when he stressed the "energy security question" linked to the "wider Mediterranean".<sup>110</sup> In 2021, the Italian financial commitment for EUTM Somalia is 12,7 million euros (51 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

The total costs of these two missions should also take into account the budget of the military base in the Republic of Djibouti, the first permanent Italian base outside national borders. Since 2012, the base has been providing logistical support to national military operations taking place in the Horn of Africa, Gulf of Aden, Somali Basin and Indian Ocean, as well as to Italian personnel in transit through the territory of the Republic of Djibouti or employed in Somalia. In the government files, it is specified that "the base has regularly ensured the support to the Navy units operating in the Indian Ocean (Op. Atalanta)".<sup>111</sup> In 2021, the financial requirements for the employment of military personnel at the base "for the needs connected with international missions in the Horn of Africa and neighbouring areas" amount to 11 million euros (41,6 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

## **2.4 IRAQ AND ITALIAN ENERGY SECURITY (NATO MISSION IRAQ [NMI], GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST DAESH / ISIS, EUROPEAN MARITIME AWARENESS IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ [EMASOH])**

No conspiracy theorists are needed to link Italy's intervention in Iraq to oil. It was the Defence Minister himself who clearly

established such a link in his statements on the military missions to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate: "The collapse of Iraq, from a security point of view, would have the potential to involve and overwhelm the entire Middle East," Guerini explained in June 2020. "For Italy, this scenario would jeopardise our energy security, since Iraq (2019 data) is our main supplier of crude oil and thus – in 'geo-energy' terms – a partner of strategic importance for our supplies. In this sense, our significant military presence is also a fundamental element of a strategy of rapprochement between Rome and Baghdad, aimed at establishing solid and deeper relations in all areas".<sup>112</sup> The Defence Minister presented the Italian commitment in Iraq with explicitly energy-related arguments in 2021 as well: "In the Middle East quadrant, our commitment in Iraq is confirmed, a country of high strategic priority, both in terms of regional balances and to protect our national interests, starting from the priority theme of energy supplies".<sup>113</sup> This point has also been amplified by the Italian government's report on military missions.<sup>114</sup>

Italy's presence in the Middle East is not limited to the 280 military personnel deployed in the "NATO Mission Iraq" (NMI) at a cost of 15,5 million euros in 2021 – a sharp increase from the 3 million euros in 2020. The country also participates in the "Global Coalition Against Daesh / ISIS" with a very high financial cost: 231 million euros in 2021 (almost a billion euros in the period 2018 – 2021). A military commitment that, as the Defence Minister points out, is always in order "to protect our national interests, starting with the priority issue of energy supplies".<sup>115</sup>

The European multinational initiative "European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz" (EMASoH) has particularly close links to Iraq's role in the energy sector and is aimed at protecting the security of the waterway that connects the Persian Gulf to Asian, European and American markets. The Italian resolution launching the new international missions defines the Strait of Hormuz as an "important maritime artery for oil transit, with a consequent intensification of regional tensions".<sup>116</sup> The government document goes on to explain that "this situation has affected freedom of navigation and the safety of European and non-European ships and crews, and has also jeopardised commercial and energy supplies with potential economic consequences worldwide".<sup>117</sup>

The growing hostilities between Iran, the United States and other Gulf countries – and the numerous accidents involving oil tankers of different nationalities – have prompted Washington and Paris to deploy two separate naval operations to ensure the safety of shipping lanes in that sea area. The EMASoH mission was launched by France on the same day as the EU Council meeting of 20 January 2020. Italy had initially joined only at a political level, without contributing to the military effort, causing some discontent among centre-right parliamentarians. Operational participation was deliberated only in 2021, with "a national air and sea force for

presence, surveillance and security activities" aimed at "protecting national merchant shipping" (at a cost of approx. 9 million euros).<sup>118</sup> The link with oil also emerges unequivocally from the words of the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister Luigi Di Maio, who pointed out that "a third of our energy requirements passes through the Strait".<sup>119</sup>

## **2.5 EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, A SEA OF GAS (NATO OPERATION SEA GUARDIAN, MARITIME TASK FORCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL), BILATERAL TRAINING MISSION OF THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES (MIBIL))**

As early as October 2019, Defence Minister Lorenzo Guerini announced his plans to intensify Italy's military commitment in the Eastern Mediterranean, exactly because of the area's energy potential and the country's strategic interests in the region's stability: "I also consider it necessary for us to have a more regular presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the possibility of exploiting energy resources is strongly conditioned by the ongoing maritime dispute between Cyprus and Turkey".<sup>120</sup> In short, the tension between Istanbul and Nicosia seems to worry the Defence Minister mainly because it undermines the possibility of gas exploitation. The "national interests in the area" can be precisely addressed: "Specifically, in agreement with Eni, the government is constantly monitoring exploration activities in coordination with Cyprus and France, which is a co-licensee in some blocks through Total".<sup>121</sup>

Guerini referred to the importance of the Eastern Mediterranean to the energy sector again this year: "The Mare Nostrum is today the stage for a territorialisation process aimed at gaining control of the considerable energy resources present, through increasingly fierce competition between regional players and external powers".<sup>122</sup> Italy wants to play a role in this competition. As already announced in 2020, "in order to ensure a greater presence, periodic deployments in the area by national maritime assets have already been planned as part of ongoing operations and exercises".<sup>123</sup> One of the military operations with Italian participation in the area is the NATO "Sea Guardian" mission, which "essentially carries out surveillance activities of the maritime spaces of interest in the Mediterranean Sea".<sup>124</sup> For 2020 and 2021, the national contribution to the operation has been increased by "a naval asset for data collection activities and naval presence and surveillance in the Eastern Mediterranean area".<sup>125</sup> Two years previously, in February 2018, Eni announced that it had made a "promising discovery" in the Cyprus Offshore.<sup>126</sup> Italy is participating with 240 military personnel, two naval units and two aircraft at a cost of 14 million euros (53 million euros in the period 2018–2021).<sup>127</sup>

In the summer of 2020, after years of tensions and incursions – including the blockade of an Italian drillship directed to an Eni's

field<sup>128</sup> – a Turkish reconnaissance ship escorting a gas exploration vessel and a Greek warship clashed, risking military escalation. To soothe tempers, in late August 2020, France, Greece, Cyprus and Italy conducted a joint military exercise dubbed Eumonia<sup>129</sup> in the south of the island. But the energy game is still open. Between 2019 and 2020, the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) was launched. This instrument, already being described as the "Opec of Mediterranean Gas", should ensure the "maximum economic benefit from the gas fields" for the member countries,<sup>130</sup> namely: Italy, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. Turkey is the great excluded. The stand-out project in the Forum's portfolio is the Eastmed pipeline: a mega-project intended to transport gas from the Mediterranean to Europe, including Italy, it has been denounced by environmentalists as a "real climate bomb".<sup>131</sup> The Forum is technically supported by a working group made up of the major companies of the seven countries involved, including the Italian giants Eni, Saipem and Snam.<sup>132</sup>

Against this background, it is not surprising that Italy has applied to take part in the "Maritime Task Force of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon" (UNIFIL), the UN mission that has been operating in Lebanon since 1978, following the Israeli invasion of the southern part of the country. Illustrating his department's guidelines, immediately after being reappointed as Defence Minister by the Draghi government, Guerini explicitly framed the Italian offer in terms of strengthening "our presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, in response to the growing projection of old and new players, who threaten, among other things, the legitimate prerogatives to exploit energy resources".<sup>133</sup> In July he was even more explicit on the underlying motivations of this candidacy: "We have offered a naval unit for aggregation to the mission's maritime apparatus, a contribution that would allow us to strengthen our national presence in the Eastern Mediterranean basin, which is the object of an increasingly marked competition for the exploitation of the resources available in the area and where important national interests are known to reside".<sup>134</sup> This argument has nothing to do with the mandate of the UNIFIL mission – which monitors the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon – nor with the main function of its naval component ("to support the Lebanese Navy in the activities of monitoring territorial waters, securing the coast and preventing the unauthorised entry of arms into Lebanon by sea").<sup>135</sup> Although Italy's participation in the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force has not yet been formalised by the United Nations, it is already in black and white in the mission statement: "In the course of 2021, the national contribution foresees the use of a naval asset in the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force".<sup>136</sup>

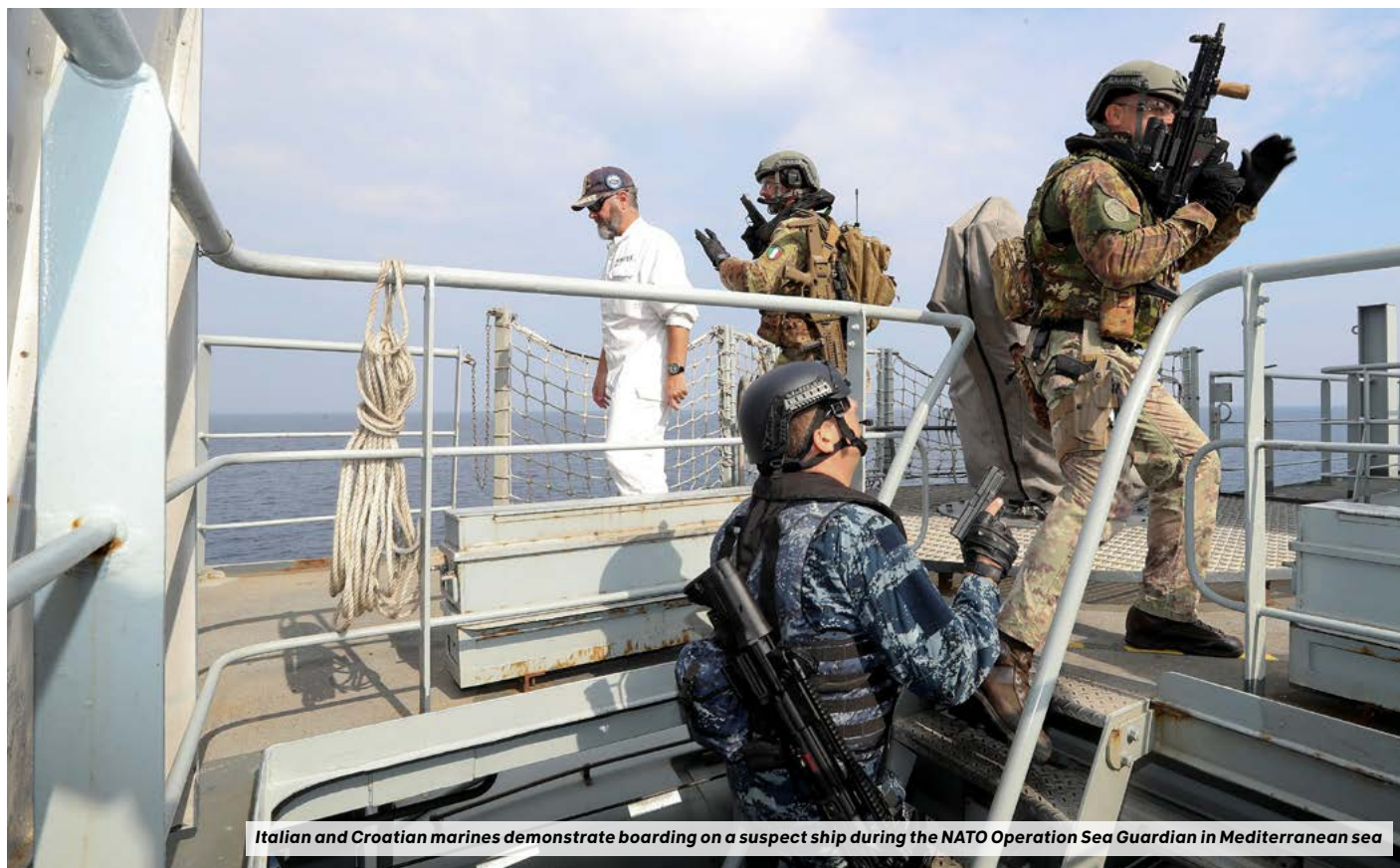
As long ago as November 2019, actually responding to those who raised doubts about the need to reconfirm the 40-year Italian participation in the mission in Lebanon, Guerini stressed that "now and more than ever it is important to remain in the country, both in support of the institutions and in aid to the population, without

losing sight, in any case, of our strategic interests in that area, especially energy and industry".<sup>137</sup> In February of the previous year, Eni had signed two exploration and production contracts with the Republic of Lebanon for two blocks located in the deep waters of the Lebanese Offshore. As announced in a press release issued by the oil company: "The agreements open the way for the exploration of the Offshore of Lebanon and further strengthen the Company's presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the Company operates exploration and production activities in Egypt and exploration activities in Cyprus".<sup>138</sup> Since the government only provides the aggregate costs of the missions and not the financial commitments of the individual activities, we added the costs of the UNIFIL mission (181 million euros in 2021) entirely in the "fossil" account.

As noted in a study by the Centre for International Studies (CeSI), in collaboration with the Defence General Staff, "establishing a privileged relationship with an Armed Force operating within one of

the most important crossroads in the entire Middle East (...) assumes particular importance in the light (...) of the possible developments of the offshore energy panorama of the Eastern Mediterranean and within Lebanese waters, where Eni plays a very important role".<sup>139</sup> The study also underlined how the question of the demarcation of the maritime boundary between Lebanon and Israel has returned "to close relevance in recent years, with the discovery in the Eastern Mediterranean of huge gas deposits in Cypriot, Israeli and Egyptian waters. This has increased the likelihood that Lebanese waters may also contain commercially significant quantities of energy resources".<sup>140</sup>

By 2020, the naval set-up of another mission in the area, the "Bilateral Training Mission of the Lebanese Armed Forces" (MIBIL), was already operating in the Eastern Mediterranean. An extension has also been confirmed for 2021. This year, the financial commitment for MIBIL increased sharply, from 6,7 million euros in 2020 to 21 million in 2021.<sup>141</sup>



Italian and Croatian marines demonstrate boarding on a suspect ship during the NATO Operation Sea Guardian in Mediterranean sea

## 2.6 ITALY'S FOSSIL ENERGY SECURITY BILL

Adding up all the "fossil" missions mentioned above, we calculated an expenditure of 749 million euros in 2021, 523 million in 2020, 489 million in 2019 and 529 million in 2018, respectively accounting for 64 % of the total military missions budget in 2021, 50 % in 2020,

47,6 % in 2019 and 51 % in 2018. To these figures, we must add the respective share of support costs for Italian military operations abroad, recorded under the item "stipulation of contracts for personnel insurance, transport of personnel, vehicles and materials and implementation of infrastructure and works related to the organisational and security needs of military contingents in

areas where international missions are carried out" (amounting to 76 million euros per year).<sup>142</sup> We can therefore conclude that the missions to protect Italy's oil and gas supply, hence its fossil energy security, cost the public budget approx. 797 million euros in 2021, 560 million in 2020, 525 million in 2019 and 568 million in 2018.

The fossil commitment of the Italian armed forces may not end here. In summer 2021, Minister Guerini instructed the Defence Staff to "initiate an assessment of possible Italian contributions" to the "EU military training mission in Mozambique", established on 12 July 2021 by the Council of the European Union to train and support local armed forces in protecting the civilian population and restoring security in the country's northernmost province, Cabo Delgado.<sup>143</sup> Speaking publicly about the planned mission before the Italian Parliament, the Defence Minister said that the province of Cabo Delgado is "an area also characterised by the presence of energy resources". He then added that "the clashes between the local insurgency, infiltrated by jihadist movements, and the local security forces have caused an immediate humanitarian crisis and the interruption of mining activities".<sup>144</sup> A synthesis that almost equates the tragedy of the civilian population, massacred and forced to flee from the escalating violence, with the difficulties of the oil companies – without even considering the potential relationships between exploration activities and the escalation of violence. The official factsheet of "EUTM Mozambique", released by the EU Council in October 2021, identified Italy as one of the ten "troop contributing nations".<sup>145</sup>

Italian interests in the province consist mainly of the activities of Eni, which not surprisingly on its website defines Mozambique as "one of the most promising countries on the African continent for the energy sector".<sup>146</sup> As *Rivista Italiana Difesa* – a magazine with insights from the industry and the defence sector – puts it: "The province of Cabo Delgado is strategic because it is rich in recently developed gas resources, with the large offshore basin of Rovuma at its centre. Eni owns 34 % of the Coral South block, which belongs to the mentioned basin, and is significantly involved in the development plan of the Mamba complex".<sup>147</sup> The exploitation of gas reserves in the province has come under the spotlight of NGOs which claim that the "projects currently under construction would result in the release of 49 times more carbon dioxide emissions" than the annual emissions of the whole of Mozambique.<sup>148</sup>

Apart from the mission in Cabo Delgado, the other missions are fully confirmed, having already received approval from Parliament. Italian taxpayers are thus paying for a share of the security of Eni's infrastructure and operations, despite the company's own declaration to its shareholders that "protecting the safety of people and assets is a corporate responsibility".<sup>149</sup> In 2019, the Italian oil & gas major budgeted 240 million euros for security (of which about 175 million was for non-European countries). Obviously, as the company points out, the use of private security providers to watch over personnel and installations does not

cancel out the "exclusive prerogatives of the competent local authorities in terms of security and public order". And where the company believes the setting is not sufficiently secure, it has implemented "collaboration agreements with partners and local authorities, including for example Libya, Egypt and Mozambique".<sup>150</sup> In addition to hiring private guards to protect its assets, Eni signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mozambique's Ministries of Defence and Interior in 2019. According to a report published by the environmental organization Friends of the Earth, this provides for the deployment of local special forces to protect oil operators' installations in exchange for the payment of a portion of their allowances.<sup>151</sup> On the other hand, it is not clear why the protection of Eni platforms in international waters ceases to be a "corporate responsibility" and suddenly becomes a matter of State, paid for by the Ministry of Defence and Italian taxpayers.

To balance the overcalculation of counting the entire mission budgets, we have not included among fossil missions the operations that, while not having a direct link to energy security per se, are nevertheless aimed at stabilizing a macro-area of explicit Italian energy interest. In particular, speaking of the Middle East, North Africa and Sahel, the Minister of Defence stressed that, "beyond the significant issue of immigration, there is a question of energy security and supplies of raw materials essential for our changing economy that we cannot ignore. In this sense, the stability of the wider Mediterranean is a vital need".<sup>152</sup> During a 2020 hearing before Parliament, Guerini again referred to the "macro-region that underpins our energy security interests",<sup>153</sup> including countries such as Libya, Lebanon, Afghanistan and Iraq. If all the missions operating in the "wider Mediterranean" – such as "Task Force Takuba Sahel", the "Bilateral Mission in Niger" or "Resolute Support" – were counted under the heading "protection of fossil fuels", in 2021 the percentage of Italian military operations' budget dedicated to this objective would rise from 64 % to 88 %, for a total of over one billion euros.

This expenditure represents a huge amount of taxpayers' money and military effort without a public debate on the interests at stake. Rather than guaranteeing a flow of gas and oil – unlikely to be seriously interrupted by foreign exporters – these military missions seem to play a role in determining who will get their hands on local fossil fuel deposits: Eni – the national company – or foreign competitors. The doubt remains that the ultimate objective of the Italian "fossil" missions is more to secure contracts and protection for Eni rather than energy security for Italians. And while organizations are asking the Government and Parliament to monitor the actions of the national oil giant abroad, the Government and Parliament are sending the armed forces to support the company's profits and fueling the climate crisis.



## 2.7 ITALIAN FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS COSTS, 2018 – 2021

NATO UN EU National	Military Missions Name	Country / Area of Operation	Costs 2021	Costs 2020	Costs 2019	Costs 2018	Costs 2018 – 2021
National	Operation Mare Sicuro – OMS	Med sea – off the Libyan coast	95.998.399 €	79.000.552 €	85.191.012 €	84.672.609 €	344.862.572 €
EU	EUNAVFOR MED Sophia / Irini	Med sea – off the Libyan coast	39.717.055 €	24.900.164 €	41.265.060 €	42.551.698 €	148.433.977 €
National	Assistance and Support Bilateral Mission – MIASIT	Libya	46.752.400 €	47.856.596 €	49.012.962 €	49.053.443 €	192.675.401 €
Coalition	Global coalition against DAESH	Iraq	230.932.129 €	262.946.003 €	235.245.605 €	269.967.037 €	999.090.774 €
NATO	NATO Mission Iraq – NMI	Iraq	15.560.317 €	2.999.189 €	1.452.033 €	–	20.011.539 €
NATO	Operation Sea Guardian	Central and Eastern Mediterranean	13.958.616 €	15.008.293 €	6.395.561 €	17.695.388 €	53.057.858 €
National	Operation Gabinia	Gulf of Guinea	23.306.130 €	9.810.838 €	–	–	33.116.968 €
EU	EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta	Horn of Africa	26.556.699 €	26.720.982 €	26.835.950 €	27.034.329 €	107.147.960 €
EU	EU Training Mission Somalia – EUTM Somalia	Somalia	12.756.754 €	13.771.135 €	12.285.743 €	12.386.583 €	51.200.215 €
European	European Maritime Awareness Strait of Hormuz – EMASoH	Strait of Hormuz	9.032.736 €	–	–	–	9.032.736 €
UN	UN Interim Force in Lebanon – UNIFIL	Lebanon / Eastern Mediterranean	181.376.609 €	–	–	–	181.376.609 €
National	Italian Bilateral Military Mission in Lebanon – MIBIL	Lebanon / Eastern Mediterranean	20.756.137 €	6.704.811 €	–	–	27.460.948 €
National	Italian Military Base in Djibouti	Support to missions in the Horn of Africa	10.993.755 €	11.155.888 €	9.819.344 €	9.685.415 €	41.654.402 €
	Military personnel deployment in EAU, Bahrain, Qatar, Tampa	Supporto to missions in Middle East	21.167.043 €	22.029.474 €	21.261.200 €	15.995.377 €	80.453.094 €
<b>Total Costs 4 Years 2018 – 2021</b>							
<b>"Fossil missions" cost of operations</b>			<b>748.864.779 €</b>	<b>522.903.925 €</b>	<b>488.764.470 €</b>	<b>529.041.879 €</b>	<b>2.289.575.053 €</b>
Total expenditure for military missions (support costs excluded)			1.167.320.530 €	1.053.436.366 €	1.026.908.336 €	1.031.800.156 €	4.279.465.388 €
<b>"Fossil missions" percentage of costs</b>			<b>64,15 %</b>	<b>50 %</b>	<b>47,60 %</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>53,50 %</b>
General military missions support costs per year			76.000.000 €	76.000.000 €	76.000.000 €	76.000.000 €	<b>304.000.000 €</b>
Fossil Support costs: annual % of general military missions support costs per year			48.754.000 €	38.000.000 €	36.176.000 €	38.760.000 €	<b>161.690.000 €</b>
<b>TOTAL FOSSIL MISSIONS COSTS (incl. support costs)</b>			<b>797.618.799 €</b>	<b>560.903.925 €</b>	<b>524.940.470 €</b>	<b>567.801.879 €</b>	<b>2.451.265.053 €</b>

Source: Own elaboration from Camera dei Deputati – Italian Parliament. "Relazione analitica sulle missioni internazionali in corso e sullo stato degli interventi di cooperazione allo sviluppo a sostegno dei processi di pace e di stabilizzazione", at

[https://www.camera.it/leg18/494?idLegislatura=18&categoria=026&tipologiaDoc=elenco\\_categoria](https://www.camera.it/leg18/494?idLegislatura=18&categoria=026&tipologiaDoc=elenco_categoria)

### 3. SPAIN

#### 3.1 SPANISH RESISTANCE TO TRANSPARENCY

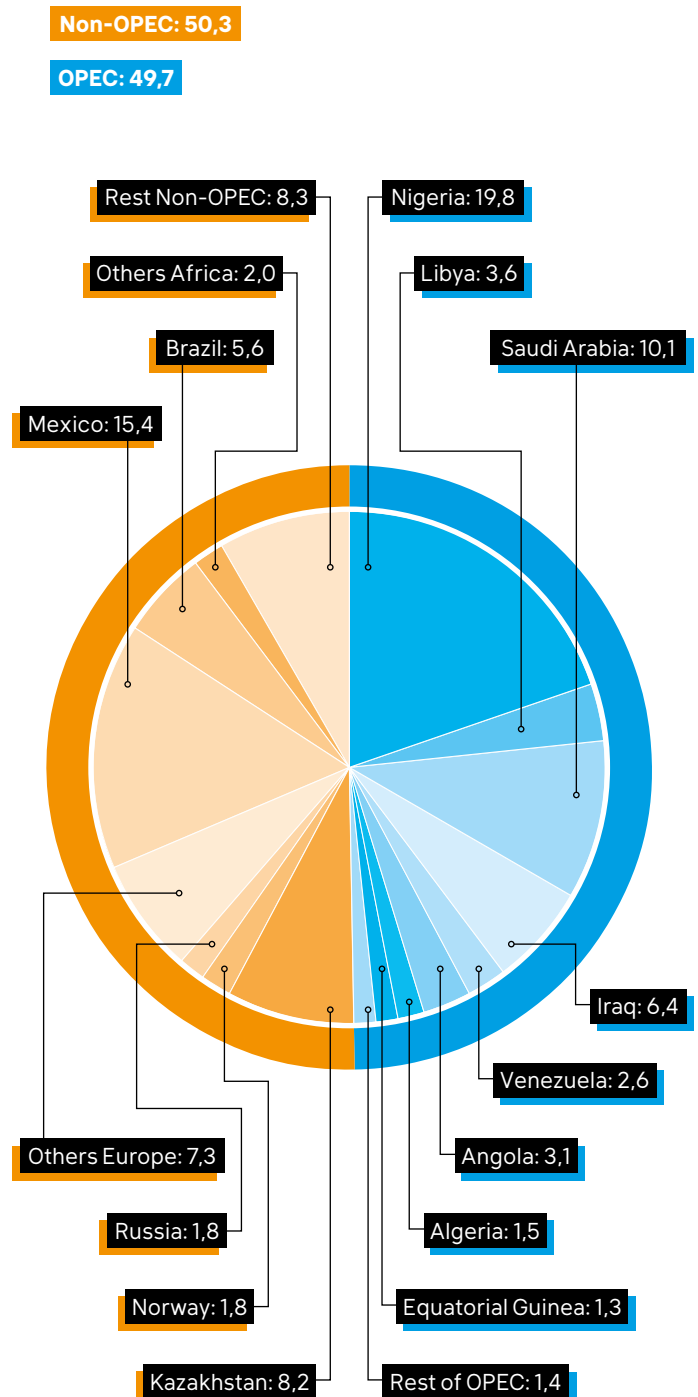
Investigation of the arms trade and military operations is highly difficult in Spain, mainly due to a long-standing cultural lack of transparency and accountability from public institutions. Too often, requests from organizations and civil society for information in these areas are rejected on the grounds of "national security". This has been the case in relation to our requests for information about Spanish military missions as we attempt to investigate their links to fossil fuels and energy security. Recently, Greenpeace Spain has taken the Government to the Supreme Court due to its refusal to disclose information on the export of arms to countries in conflict. The legal basis for this refusal is the Official Secrets Law, enacted in the era of the dictatorship and still in force today.<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, it should be noted that in Spain, military missions abroad are frequently announced as "peace operations". This helps to create a positive public perception and makes it more difficult to express critical views of this kind of military intervention. Thus, the information presented in this chapter regarding military missions to secure the supply of fossil fuels is based on cross-referenced evidence regarding the country's energy geopolitics.

#### 3.2 THE SPANISH ENERGY FACTOR

There are currently 16 Spanish military missions abroad: 7 under a NATO mandate, 6 under EU control, 2 with the UN and one further national mission. These operations have a combined estimated budget of around 1 billion euros for 2021 and 26 % percent of this cost can be linked to the protection of fossil fuels. The "energy connection" is not usually stated in their official mandates, but comes from political and military sources. The most authoritative link to fossil fuel objectives can be attributed to the former Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, who stated that "Spain's maritime vocation" stems, among other things, from "our dependence on maritime transport for energy supplies".<sup>155</sup> That is: Spain is a naval power because it relies on fossil fuels traveling by sea.

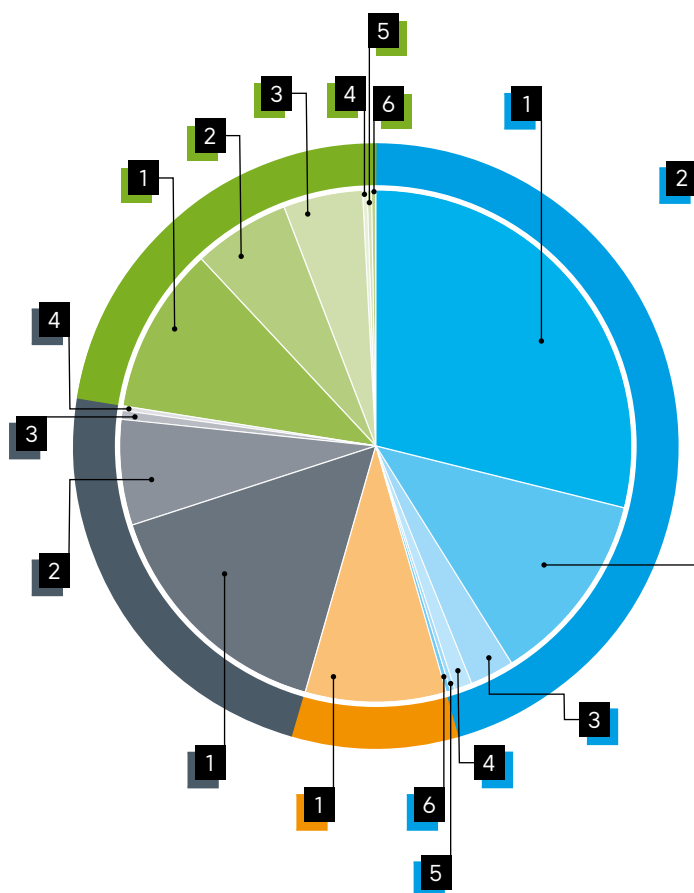
The country imports around 73 % of its fossil energy resources and derives them mainly from unstable countries. As stated by the 2017 National Security Strategy: "Energy supply is key for a country like Spain, which depends largely on areas such as North Africa or the Gulf of Guinea for its supply". The government document goes on to warn that "increased geopolitical instability in the main producing areas directly jeopardizes the supply of products and can lead to an escalation in oil and gas prices". That is why "the security of installations is an important factor for energy security".<sup>156</sup>

#### SPANISH OIL IMPORTS BY COUNTRIES AND ECONOMIC ZONES, 2020 (%)



Source: CORES annual statistical report 2020 – published in July 2021, at <https://www.cores.es/en/publicaciones>

### SPANISH GAS IMPORTS BY COUNTRIES AND AREAS, 2020 (%)



Africa		45,7
1	Algeria	29,1
2	Nigeria	12,1
3	Equatorial Guinea	2,9
4	Angola	1,1
5	Egypt	0,3
6	Cameroon	0,3

America		23,2
1	United States	15,6
2	Trinidad and Tobago	6,6
3	Ecuador	0,5
4	Argentina	0,1

Middle East		8,8
1	Qatar	8,8

Europe		22,3
1	Russia	10,4
2	France	6,1
3	Norway	5,0
4	Portugal	0,5
5	Belgium	0,2
6	Gibraltar	0,1

It also spells out the relevance of military intervention in securing energy supplies: "The waters adjacent to the Horn of Africa concentrate a large part of the trade between Asia and Europe, as well as the traffic of oil coming from the Middle East. This is a region rife with such challenges as fragile States, and threats including terrorism and piracy. Therefore, it is essential for Spain to participate in protecting the maritime routes criss-crossing this region, and to strengthen its relations with coastal countries".<sup>157</sup>

### 3.3 FOSSIL AND URANIUM MISSIONS (DEFENSE DIPLOMACY PLAN [MARITIME SECURITY IN WATERS OF THE GULF OF GUINEA], EU NAVAL FORCE [EU NAVFOR] ATALANTA, EU NAVAL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN OPERATION SOPHIA [EUNAVFOR MED SOPHIA], NATO OPERATION SEA GUARDIAN, NATO MISSION IRAQ, GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST DAESH / ISIS, EU TRAINING MISSION IN MALI [EUTM MALI], EU TRAINING MISSION IN SOMALIA [EUTM SOMALIA])

The 2017 National Security Strategy mentions the "EU Naval Force Atalanta" as a "substantive example" of such a combination of energy traffic and military protection – an operation "against piracy in the Western Indian Ocean and the Horn of Africa, in which Spain has stood out for years as one of the countries that contribute the most forces and resources".<sup>158</sup>

Speaking about this mission, Officer of the Deck (OOD) Valentín Calvar Cerecedo made it clear that "at sea, we plan patrols taking into account the presence and routes of ships under the Spanish flag and with Spanish interests in the area".<sup>159</sup> The "Atalanta" mission supports other EU missions and international organizations working to strengthen maritime security and capacity in the region.<sup>160</sup> In 2021, the country spent 109 million euros on its participation in the operation (335 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

Another anti-piracy mission strongly connected to fossil fuel supplies is the deployment of Spanish Navy offshore patrol vessels in the Gulf of Guinea and in West Africa, an area rich in oil reserves and natural gas. While presenting its objectives for the 2021 operation, the Spanish Navy made an explicit reference "to the defense of our maritime interests such as fishing or the traffic of oil and gas supplies in a particularly sensitive region".<sup>161</sup> The Spanish Navy also confirmed that Spain's most modern offshore patrol vessel 'Furor', which left the country in March 2021 to carry out maritime security tasks in the waters of the Gulf of Guinea, "will conduct maritime security operations and defense diplomacy missions".<sup>162</sup>

Speaking along the same lines, two years earlier, the Director of the Division for Security and Studies of the Ministry of Defence, Colonel José Luis Calvo stated: "The Spanish presence in the Gulf



of Guinea follows the traditional lines of the strategy of our country [...] to ensure security of supply of raw materials and energy products".<sup>163</sup> His statements were echoed by Captain Pita de Veiga, who raised concerns about the growing phenomenon of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea area: "More instability in the Gulf of Guinea implies energy insecurity for the rest of the world. 15 – 20 % of the hydrocarbons imported into Europe come from the Gulf of Guinea. If there were a supply disruption due to attacks on oil tankers, it would obviously have a major impact not only in terms of energy, but also economically".<sup>164</sup>

Speaking about the Spanish military mission in Western Africa, Lieutenant Commander Santiago Santamaría stated that "our aim is to contribute to increasing maritime security in the areas we transit and to secure our own interests in fishing, energy transport and the transport of other goods".<sup>165</sup> As ABC Spain put it: "The ship Audaz will travel the west coast of this continent where it will carry out defensive cooperation missions with the navies of nine other countries and defend Spanish interests in an area which supplies 20,8 % of Spain's oil imports". The news story underlined that the Spanish Navy has also to deal with "piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, off the coast of Nigeria near energy supply platforms".<sup>166</sup> The operation will cost 5,9 million euros in 2021 (12,2 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

The main Mediterranean mission with Spanish participation is the "European Union Naval Force Mediterranean Operation "Sophia", which was operational until March 2020. This EU military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean sought to combat people smuggling networks, provide training for the Libyan coast guard and navy and implement the United Nations arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya.<sup>167</sup> The mission had the secondary task of stopping illicit oil smuggling, which officially links the mission to fossil fuel protection. In the period 2018 – 2020, the Spanish participation in "Sophia" cost 107,3 million euros.

Libya is a strategic supplier for Spain and Repsol, the Spanish oil and gas multinational. According to data provided by Cores – a non-profit public corporation which plays a role in ensuring the security of hydrocarbon supplies in Spain<sup>168</sup> under the aegis of the Spanish Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge – Libya supplied 12,8 % of Spain's imported oil in 2019. This was a year of greater stability in the North African country and represented an increase of 20 % compared to 2018, due to the role of the Al Sharara deposit, with the participation of Spanish Repsol (together with Total and Eni), and the Zawiya refinery.<sup>169</sup>

Nearby, the NATO "Sea Guardian" operation (since November 2016) has been building maritime security capacity, providing support to maritime situational awareness and maritime counter-terrorism as well as contributing to the maintenance of a secure and safe maritime environment in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>170</sup> The region has become very attractive due to the recent

discoveries of new gas fields. In 2021 the operation cost Spain 37 million euros (115 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

Spain has maintained important trade relations in the Horn of Africa, not only for fisheries purposes "but also due to the geostrategic importance of the area, as it is a common route for the transport of fossil fuels from the Persian Gulf".<sup>171</sup> As the online newspaper *elDiario* explains, the Horn of Africa "is a tremendously important region for our country: its waters connect Europe and Asia via one of the busiest shipping lanes through which a considerable number of merchant ships, oil tankers and gas tankers pass".<sup>172</sup> In the area, Spain participates in the European operation "EUTM Somalia" that aims to strengthen Somali federal defence institutions.<sup>173</sup> In 2021 the Spanish participation cost 6,4 million euros (15 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

Though rarely acknowledged at the political level, the missions in Iraq have always had a direct relation to oil, due to the country's extraordinary reserves and its location in the main region of oil production. In fact, Rodríguez Zapatero, at the time leader of the opposition, then Spanish President, said that the war in Iraq would be known as "the war of lies".<sup>174</sup> But there was some truth: four days after the invasion, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ana Palacio, stressed that the price of oil had fallen since the beginning of the war: "The stock markets have risen and oil has fallen. Citizens are already paying a few cents less for petrol and diesel. These are data".<sup>175</sup> Just a year later, in 2004, Repsol and Cepsa, the two main Spanish energy companies, signed several contracts with the Iraqi State Oil Marketing Organization (SOMO) for a total of 23 million barrels of oil.<sup>176</sup>

Spain participates in both the "Global Coalition Against Daesh / ISIS" (Operation Inherent Resolve), aimed at strengthening the Iraqi armed forces within a joint multinational force, and the "NATO Mission Iraq" (NMI), which provides "expertise and best practice in the reform of security structures, defence institution building, and training and education".<sup>177</sup> In 2021 the two missions cost Spanish taxpayers 115 million euros (438 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).

The most important Spanish military mission in Africa "EU Training Mission in Mali" (EUTM Mali) is taking place in the Sahel, the troubled strip that extends south of the Sahara Desert where the main threats to national security are brewing.<sup>178</sup> Besides the importance of uranium mines in Niger, directly related to EU interests as 12 % of its uranium needs are supplied by the African country, there are also two pipeline projects linked to Spanish energy security: the Nigeria-Morocco Gas Pipeline project, with a possible extension to Europe through Spain<sup>179</sup>, and the capacity expansion of the Medgaz Gas Pipeline, operated by the Spanish company Naturgy and Algeria's Sonatrach. Nigeria is becoming an alternative for Repsol and Cepsa, due to possible supply complications from Saudi Arabia and the whole Middle East region.

Algeria, the main gas supplier to Spain, has experienced several attacks against pipelines on the mainland. Between 2000 and 2010, there were 17 terrorist incidents in the Algerian maritime area and some of them were apparently attacks on oil tankers.<sup>180</sup>

All Spanish operations in the area, including those supporting the French military presence in the Sahel, may be counted as energy-related missions, namely: "EUTM Mali" (since January 2013), the military pillar of the EU strategy in the country and support to G5 Sahel, with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation to address common security threats.<sup>181</sup> Spain is also involved in the region in "Operation Support to Mali" (Barkhane) "Marfil Detachment" (since January 2013), that facilitates the French deployment and aerial operations, covering 19 countries.<sup>182</sup> Spain has around 400 military personnel in the field.

According to a 2019 government document, Mozambique – a country recently targeted by the EU mission "EU Military Training Mission in Mozambique" – has become "a priority country for Spanish cooperation" because of "its potential natural gas discoveries and the expectation of possible development of major projects related to the exploitation of this resource".<sup>183</sup> In December 2020, the Spanish Ambassador in Mozambique stated that Madrid is willing to provide all the necessary support to fight the terrorism that is currently affecting the province of Cabo Delgado, including military support.<sup>184</sup> No wonder that, according to the official mission factsheet, Spain is among the "troop contribution nations" to the EUTM Mozambique. It is further confirmation that Spain's dependence on oil and gas imports from unstable countries has prompted the country to participate in many "fossil fuel" missions.

### 3.4 SPANISH FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS COSTS, 2018 – 2021

NATO UN EU National	Military Missions Name	Country / Area of Operation	Costs 2021	Costs 2020	Costs 2019	Costs 2018	Costs 2018 – 2021
EU	EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta	Horn of Africa	108.700.000 €	79.200.000 €	73.800.000 €	73.100.000 €	344.800.000 €
EU	EU Training Mission Somalia - EUTM Somalia	Somalia	6.400.000 €	2.800.000 €	3.000.000 €	2.600.000 €	14.800.000 €
NATO + Coalition	Global Coalition against DAESH (Operation Inherent Resolve), Support to Iraq – NATO Mission Iraq – NMI	Iraq / Syria / Middle East	115.400.000 €	98.600.000 €	115.000.000 €	109.600.000 €	438.600.000 €
EU	Eunavfor Med Sophia	Med sea – off the Libyan coast	-	300.000 €	44.200.000 €	62.800.000 €	107.300.000 €
NATO	Operation Sea Guardian	Central and Eastern Mediterranean	37.400.000 €	25.100.000 €	28.400.000 €	24.000.000 €	114.900.000 €
National	Defense Diplomacy and Cooperative Security	Guinea Gulf	5.900.000 €	2.100.000 €	2.100.000 €	2.100.000 €	12.200.000 €
							<b>Total Costs 4 Years 2018 – 2021</b>
<b>Total Fossil missions costs per year and costs per 4 years (last cell)</b>			<b>273.800.000 €</b>	<b>208.100.000 €</b>	<b>266.500.000 €</b>	<b>274.200.000 €</b>	<b>1.022.600.000 €</b>
Total cost for all Spanish military missions per year and costs for 4 years (last cell)			1.038.000.530 €	969.000.000 €	1.071.000.000 €	969.000.000 €	4.047.000.000 €
<b>% of the yearly cost of military missions, and % for 4 years / last cell</b>			<b>26,38 %</b>	<b>21,48 %</b>	<b>24,88 %</b>	<b>28,30 %</b>	<b>25,27 %</b>

Source: Own elaboration from the Spanish Ministry of Defence, Office of the Spanish President, Diary of Sessions from Spanish Parliament, Spanish defence magazines, Defense news from Spanish press and Military Balance.

## 4. GERMANY

### 4.1 DEFENCE AND ENERGY SECURITY

With no relevant state-owned oil company, the German role in protecting fossil fuel resources is less direct than that of other countries. In 2021, however, Berlin committed more than 20 percent of its expenditure on military missions to operations somehow linked to fossil fuels. Even if these missions also have other tasks or focuses, German taxpayers will spend more than 160 million euros on military missions related to fossil fuels in 2021 – out of a total of approximately 800 million.<sup>186</sup> In addition to that, Germany will also spend a further 449 million euros on missions with a link to uranium in the Sahel region. When the costs for missions with a link to uranium are included, missions linked to energy supplies make up more than 75 % of total mission costs.

German politicians rarely spell out the place of fossil fuels in German military missions. We can find some references in the "Whitebook of the German Army", published in 2016 under the then Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen.<sup>187</sup> The document highlights the relevance of resource security and energy supplies, arguing that instability in neighbouring countries may negatively impact global energy and resource supplies as well as international trade routes.<sup>188</sup> This is stressed even more when stating that "the prosperity of Germany is based on an unobstructed [...] energy supply as well as transportation system". According to the document, disruptions of supply chains are mainly caused by terrorist attacks and piracy, but also by political, economic or military decisions and regional crises. In short, any risk to the German energy supply or trade routes is considered a risk to the overall security of Germany. According to the Defence Ministry and other German institutions, this is a strategic priority: "Our economy relies on secure supplies of resources and trade routes. The security of maritime supply chains and the freedom of the sea is of central importance for Germany".<sup>189</sup>

The EU Maritime Security Strategy complements the German strategies. It argues that energy security is highly dependent on naval trade and infrastructure, relying on open and secure seas and thereby once more illustrating the connection between energy security and trade routes.<sup>190</sup> What should be stressed is that when official documents talk about energy security and securing trade routes for energy sources, they are talking about securing fossil fuels – not about renewable energies. It is fossil fuels that are transported by sea over long distances to the European Union. It is fossil fuels which are safeguarded, not renewable energies.

Germany almost entirely participates in military missions under the umbrella of international organizations (EU, UN and NATO), rather than setting up its own bilateral missions. In general, peacekeeping missions are aimed at stabilizing conflict-torn countries and lay the

foundation for recovery. While they can contribute to such goals, other tasks and intentions may come into play which are not inherently connected to the stabilization of affected regions and therefore lead to a spread of the mission's mandate.

The EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), in fact, connects its civil and military capacities with – among other things – diplomatic, economic, energy and development politics. Accordingly, the EU has been setting up military missions during the last few years with a focus on Africa and Eastern Europe: both regions play an important role in the security of European energy supplies<sup>191</sup>. The authors of this report examined official and unofficial statements and tasks of missions involving German forces.

### 4.2 MILITARY MISSIONS WITH LINKS TO FOSSIL FUELS AND URANIUM SUPPLY (EU NAVAL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN OPERATION IRINI [EUNAVFOR MED IRINI], NATO OPERATION SEA GUARDIAN, COUNTER DAESH / CAPACITY BUILDING IRAQ [CD / CBI – THE GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST DAESH/ISIS], EUNAVFOR SOMALIA OPERATION ATALANTA, EU TRAINING MISSION SOMALIA (EUTM SOMALIA), UN MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN MALI [MINUSMA], EU TRAINING MISSION IN MALI [EUTM MALI])

The wider Mediterranean area is an important supplier of fossil fuels to EU countries.<sup>192 193</sup> The main European mission with German participation in this area is the EU's CSDP mission in the Mediterranean Sea, known as "EUNAVFOR MED Operation Irini". It takes place in the Southern Mediterranean, off the coast of Libya, which is still an important supplier of oil and gas to the European Union, despite the collapse of the Gaddafi regime in 2011 and the ongoing civil war.<sup>194</sup> The German mission mandate is connected to energy supplies in the sense that the German Forces are tasked with the surveillance of illegal exports of oil from Libya.<sup>195</sup> A similar task existed for "Irini's" predecessor, "EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia", which included a remit to fight smuggling of petrochemical products, i. e. fossil fuels.<sup>196</sup> The official mandate of the European Union is even more explicit: directly after the main task – i. e. ensuring that the United Nations' arms embargo on Libya is respected – it states: "Furthermore, the operation shall contribute to the implementation of UN measures to prevent the illicit export of petroleum from Libya in accordance with UNSCR 2146 (2014) and subsequent Resolutions".<sup>197 198</sup> By preventing illegal exports of petroleum, legal exports from Libya are secured and promoted. For this specific mission, the German government expects to pay 36,3 million euros in 2021 (109,4 million for operation "Sophia" and "Irini" in the period 2018 – 2021).<sup>199 200</sup>



Italy's vessel *Espero* during the NATO Operation Sea Guardian, Taranto, Italy

Germany's second military involvement in the Mediterranean Sea is the NATO Operation "Sea Guardian". According to the Alliance, the operation is "carrying out maritime security capacity" and it is also tasked to "uphold freedom of navigation, conduct maritime interdiction, fight the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and protect critical infrastructure".<sup>201</sup> What might be meant by "critical maritime infrastructure" is laid out in the EU's Maritime Security Strategy: ports, off-shore installations, energy supply, pipelines, cables, and scientific projects.<sup>202</sup> However, it is known that large deposits of natural gas have been discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean during the last few years – particularly around Greece and Turkey, but also in the waters of Israel, Cyprus and Lebanon. Alongside the growing importance of gas deposits in the Eastern Med, the region is also important for relevant trade routes. According to NATO, in "terms of energy alone, some 65 percent of the oil and natural gas consumed in Western Europe pass through the Mediterranean each year".<sup>203</sup> In 2021, the German government expects to spend 3,2 million euros for its participation in "Sea Guardian" (16,6 million euros in the period 2018 – 2021).<sup>204 205</sup>

Another area well known for its fossil fuel interests is the Middle East. While Germany abstained from sending large contingents of soldiers to Iraq as part of the US-led intervention starting in 2003, it still participates in military missions there – particularly the anti-ISIS coalition with its mission "Counter Daesh / Capacity Building Iraq" (CD / CBI). The mission was set up to stabilize the region formerly held by the Islamic State in the core area of Iraq and Syria. While the protection of energy supplies for Europe has not been explicitly mentioned in the mission's mandate, Iraq remains an important supplier of fossil fuels for Western countries.<sup>206</sup> Fossil fuel supplies still play a major role for Western economies. The stabilization of Iraq will therefore inherently lead to the protection of fossil fuels and their subsequent export to Europe. Germany has

allocated 94,8 million euros for costs related to this mission in 2021 (358,7 million in the period 2018 – 2021).<sup>207</sup>

At the Horn of Africa, the EU and other institutions have set up a number of interrelated missions. Germany particularly participates in the EU's mission "EUNAVFOR Somalia Operation Atalanta", a naval mission with the primary task of protecting ships of the World Food Programme (WFP) and other vessels off the coast of Somalia.<sup>208</sup> Its objectives are to fight and prevent piracy, especially in the international waters around Somalia, contribute to maritime security and protect European interests in the region.<sup>209</sup> What is likely meant by "European interests" is spelled out in the EU's Maritime Security Strategy, which clearly defines safe naval trade routes as essential for energy security.<sup>210</sup> That energy security is of relevance for "Operation Atalanta" becomes more apparent from an analysis of the most endangered vessels. When the mission was established, energy vessels were at particular risk and attacks on this type of ship have been disproportionately high compared to the size of the global tanker fleet.<sup>211 212</sup> Atalanta's sister mission onshore is called EUTM Somalia. While not having an executive mandate, it is tasked to train, educate, and advise the Somali military. Thus, it cooperates with the remaining military missions in Somalia, especially Operation Atalanta. Since EUTM Somalia is part of the EU's "comprehensive approach" at the Horn of Africa, it is also considered as part of the protection of fossil fuels in the region.<sup>213</sup> However, Germany ended its direct participation in March 2018. For its ongoing mission in Somalia, Germany expects to pay 26,9 million euros in 2021 (154,6 million for the period 2018 – 2021).<sup>214</sup>

Further missions also have some links to fossil fuels, such as the military operations in the Sahel region, namely the UN-led "Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali MINUSMA" and "EU Training Mission in Mali EUTM". The United

Nations mission "MINUSMA" in Mali operates in a region which is important for its supply of uranium ore, but also for its fossil fuel deposits. On the one hand, its neighbour Niger is one of the largest suppliers of uranium ore to the EU.<sup>215</sup> On the other hand, Libya and Algeria are relevant exporters of fossil gas and oil. Their resource fields are mostly located south of their congested areas and also border the Sahel region.<sup>216 217</sup> A destabilization in Mali will inevitably affect neighbouring countries and their production of raw materials. Instability and economic costs, especially the supply of uranium in Niger, might therefore have "encouraged unprecedented [international] actions".<sup>218</sup>

Regarding the specific mission mandates, it must be said that the German mission statements prominently highlight their supporting, advisory or educational roles for other missions and military personnel: "EUTM Mali" is not only tasked to advise and educate the Malian forces but also those of the remaining G5-Sahel states, i. e. Niger, Tschad, Burkina Faso, and Mauretania.<sup>219</sup> Similarly, "MINUSMA" is entitled to actively support the G5-Sahel forces as well as the stationed French forces as part of "Operation Barkhane".<sup>220</sup> The latter mission has been connected by observers to the Nigerian uranium mines on many occasions.<sup>221</sup> Ultimately, both missions – "MINUSMA" and "EUTM Mali" – are not limited to the

territory of Mali but rather related to the wider Sahel region. Furthermore, from a German perspective, both are closely interlinked.<sup>222</sup>

This brief discussion highlights the fact that the focus of energy supply security operations inherently lies on fossil fuels. It is fossil fuels rather than renewable energies that are imported into the EU and transported over long distances. "While much of [Germany's] conventional energy (specifically oil, gas, uranium, and coal), must be imported, a large part of renewable energies can be produced domestically" and thereby reduce energy dependency.<sup>203</sup> Documents also show that the protection of energy supplies is a relevant aspect in the remit of military missions. Yet, it cannot be argued that this task is the sole or major aspect. However, it is clear that in certain instances the costs arising from executing the task of supporting fossil fuels are externalized. Financially, they are not effectively represented in the costs for the consumption of fossil fuels. Even worse, such missions reinforce the exploitation of fossil fuels rather than facilitating the urgently needed energy transition – i. e. ending fossil fuels and supporting renewable energies. In contrast, renewable energies have no need for protection by military missions.

### 4.3 GERMAN FOSSIL FUEL MISSIONS COSTS, 2018 – 2021

NATO UN EU National	Military Missions Name	Country / Area of Operation	Costs 2021	Costs 2020	Costs 2019	Costs 2018	Costs 2018 – 2021
EU	Eunavfor Med Sophia / Irini	Med sea – off the Libyan coast	36.300.000 €	30.400.000 €	11.800.000 €	30.900.000 €	109.400.000 €
Coalition	Counter Daesh / Capacity Building Iraq (CD/CBI) (The Global Coalition against Daesh / ISIS)	Iraq / Syria	94.800.000 €	69.700.000 €	99.900.000 €	94.300.000 €	358.700.000 €
NATO	Nato Sea Guardian	Central and Eastern Mediterranean Sea	3.200.000 €	3.100.000 €	3.800.000 €	6.500.000 €	16.600.000 €
EU	EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta	Horn of Africa	26.900.000 €	39.600.000 €	39.000.000 €	48.100.000 €	153.600.000 €
EU	EUTM Somalia	Horn of Africa	–	–	–	1.000.000 €	1.000.000 €
							<b>Total Costs 4 Years 2018 – 2021</b>
<b>Total Fossil missions costs per year and costs per 4 years (last cell)</b>			<b>161.200.000 €</b>	<b>142.800.000 €</b>	<b>154.500.000 €</b>	<b>180.800.000 €</b>	<b>639.300.000 €</b>
Total cost (including common EU / NATO costs)			800.192.000 €	770.000.000 €	770.000.000 €	730.000.000 €	3.070.192.000 €
<b>% of the yearly cost of military missions, and % for 4 years / last cell</b>			<b>20,15 %</b>	<b>18,55 %</b>	<b>20,06 %</b>	<b>24,77 %</b>	<b>20,82 %</b>

Source: Own elaboration based on official approvals in advance - from Deutscher Bundestag, at

<https://dserver.bundestag.de> and Bundesministerium der Finanzen (BMF), at <https://www.bundeshaushalt.de>

## CONCLUSIONS

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Fossil fuel interests lie behind many European military missions. Despite climate agreements and commitments on the ecological transition, the EU, NATO and the three countries covered by this report (Italy, Spain and Germany) continue to use their military forces to protect the extraction, transportation and import of fossil fuels. Almost always without stating this goal explicitly. In fact, apart from a few striking cases, it is difficult to find “fossil” objectives in the mandates of these operations. More frequently, these aims emerge from official statements issued by politicians or military personnel or from the countries’ energy security strategies.

This report has calculated that almost two thirds of EU military missions are linked to fossil fuels. The three countries featured in the report are not exceptional. For 2021, Italy is allocating 64 percent of its budget for military missions to operations aimed at protecting the country’s “energy security” for a total of approx. 797 million euros; Spain is allocating more than 26 percent or almost 274 million euros; Germany 20 per cent, for a cost of no less than 161 million euros. In 2021, total expenditure on “fossil” missions by these three countries will exceed 1,2 billion euros – a total of more than 4 billion euros in the last four years (2018 – 2021). The missions that have been spotlighted by the authors vary from state to state, but the operational areas are always the same, namely those with a greater presence of fossil fuel resources: the Horn of Africa (where the EU anti-piracy mission “Atalanta” stands out), the waters off the Libyan coast (with the EU mission “Irin” and the Italian “Mare Sicuro”), the Eastern Mediterranean (with the NATO operation “Sea Guardian”), the Gulf of Guinea (with both Italian and Spanish missions) and the Middle East (in particular Iraq, where both NATO and the Global Coalition Against Daesh operate, and the Strait of Hormuz, where the European mission “EMASoH” was launched in 2020).

The stances on energy security taken by the EU, NATO and the three countries covered by this report are very explicit, with Brussels making it clear that “energy insecurity endangers our people and territory”, and NATO stressing that “by protecting important sea lanes”, counter-piracy operations contribute “to energy security”.

The research findings were affected by varying levels of transparency. In terms of frankness, the case of Italy stands out: the country even admits to being engaged in two missions explicitly aimed at protecting the assets of Eni, the main national energy company. The Italian Defence Minister, moreover, in his parliamentary hearings has never failed to underline the “energy” relevance of the country’s main military missions, whether it be Iraq (whose collapse “would jeopardise our energy security”), or the “growing national interest in terms of supply of energy resources”

in the Gulf of Guinea, as well as the need to “have a more regular presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the possibility of exploiting energy resources is strongly conditioned by the ongoing maritime dispute”. The minister also pointed out that “the clashes” in the northern province of Mozambique – where the EU has recently approved a new mission – have caused “the interruption of mining activities”.

Spain and Germany are essentially silent on the issue, but even there some admissions have emerged. When explaining the deployment of Spanish Navy offshore patrol vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, for example, the Spanish Ministry of Defence made explicit reference to “the defence of our maritime interests such as fishing or the traffic of oil and gas supplies in a particularly sensitive region”. Similarly, the German Ministry of Defence stressed that “the prosperity of Germany is based on an unobstructed [...] energy supply as well as transportation system”, making it clear that any risk to the German energy supply or trade routes is considered a risk to the country’s security as a whole.

What is worse, there are no signs of a reversal in the European approach to energy security, relentlessly understood as access to fossil sources. On the contrary, since NATO stresses that “the competition for scarce energy resources will only increase in the next decade”, the military commitment to supporting energy security may even increase in the coming years.

Greenpeace calls for an immediate end to the military protection of oil and gas assets. In the age of the climate crisis, such a policy not only endangers the lives of civilians and soldiers and wastes public money – like any military operations – but also threatens human health by supporting the consumption of resources that pose a clear and present danger to the planet.

Turning away from oil and gas (and thus expanding renewable energies) has a triple-positive effect: it will reduce the risk of military confrontation, protect the climate and save financial resources for urgent matters, such as a stronger and more just ecological transition.



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## **APPENDIX:**

### **METHODOLOGICAL NOTE**

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To establish the links between fossil fuels/uranium and military missions, the mandate, tasks and activities of each EU, NATO, Italian, Spanish and German operation were analysed. Official statements by political and military sources were also considered. Since it was not possible to obtain the exact cost share of the military tasks to protect fossil fuel and uranium, the whole mission cost was considered, although it is clear that all the missions also have other tasks and objectives, and their relationship with energy may be more or less strong.

The EU / NATO and Spain chapters considered as related to fossil fuels or uranium all the missions in which 1) the logic is overwhelmingly related to fossil fuels or uranium, and other logics can be downplayed; 2) fossil fuels or uranium are key in their logic, whilst other aspects that are not more important may apply; 3) fossil fuels or uranium are an important factor explaining the mission, whilst other aspects may be equally or even more important. Missions where fossil fuels or uranium are somehow related, whilst being very much a secondary factor, were not taken into consideration.

For the Italian chapter, all missions with an explicit role in the defence of energy assets or in combating oil smuggling were considered as "fossil", including those in countries of strong "energy security" interest, according to the Defence Minister's parliamentary hearings or official data. As former Undersecretary of Defence, Domenico Rossi told the Chamber on 14 September 2016, "given the operational modalities specific to air-sea missions, it is possible to provide the overall programmatic costs", not the individual costs for each task. Support costs of military missions (such as insurance, transport, information services, etc.), instead, have been allocated on the basis of the percentage of "fossil" missions out of the total. In order to compensate for the overcalculation that led us to take into account the overall cost of each mission, the Italian percentage devoted to fossil protection does not include all those missions which, although not having any explicit connection with hydrocarbons, nevertheless are aimed at stabilizing macro-areas that the Defence Minister has indicated are of interest to Italy's energy needs.

Since the German Ministry of Defence only deals with "energy security" in generic terms, for the German chapter all the missions that allies consider energy-related were taken into account if they included German military participation.

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