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**THE 21<sup>ST</sup> EUROPEAN NAVAL ACADEMIES' SUPERINTENDENTS CONFERENCE**  
**(ENASC 2018) May 29<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup> 2018**



**MEMORANDUM**

**From:** *LTC Cătălin POPA, Vice-rector for International Programmes, "Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy, Constanța, Romania*

**Subject:** *AFTER ACTION MEMORANDUM FOR 21<sup>st</sup> EUROPEAN NAVAL ACADEMIES' SUPERINTENDENTS CONFERENCE, 29<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY – 1<sup>ST</sup> OF JUNE 2018*

**Conference issued documents:**

(Posted at: <https://www.anmb.ro/enasc/>)

- (1) Participating Superintendents and Points of contact;
- (2) Schedule of Events, Principals and Spouses;
- (3) CVs of participants;
- (4) One page descriptions of participating commands;
- (5) Roundtable topics;
- (6) History of ENASC events (for official records).

**1. Executive Summary**

"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy had hosted the 21<sup>st</sup> convening of the European Naval Academies' Superintendents Conference (ENASC), from 29<sup>th</sup> of May to 1<sup>st</sup> of June. All ENASC members, counting twenty countries, had participated, by nominated delegations, as following: Bulgaria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy,

Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States. As basic historic milestones to be reminded, the first conference was hosted by Italy in 1974 and the previous latest one was held in Annapolis, organized by the United States Naval Academy. This year the event has been hosted, for the first time, in Romania by the "Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy, in Constanta, Romania.

Following up the decision adopted on the 2017 pre-conference, the main theme of this conference was "Naval Education and Training Management – Current Status and Challenges for the future", aiming the following objectives:

- a. Broaden a better understanding of best knowledge and practices in naval education and training, to developing future leaders in our respective navies;
- b. Exchange ideas for collaboration and best practices sharing, on current basis, in the areas of academics, leadership and professional training;
- c. Enhance relationships among the training and leadership experts of our allied navies;
- d. Establish and enrich functional relationships among the Naval Academies, in field of education and training, in order to enhance the cooperation among the EU and NATO institutional members;
- e. To interact with the midshipmen, faculty and staff at "Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy, through a combination of formal and informal activities.

## **2. Agenda**

Annexes (1) – (6) were forwarded in support of the carried out agenda and topics at the time – all the documents issued for Conference proceedings have been posted on the ENASC website: <https://www.anmb.ro/enasc/>. The Conference agenda had been focused on the same topics as in previous meeting, namely on academics, leadership and professional training. These topics were agreed upon during the working group hosted at the National Maritime College of Ireland, in August 2017. Moreover, owed to the same pre-conference conclusions, the format applied in USNA on 2016 had been kept for this conference as well, meaning specifically the following settlements:

- a. for each topic, specific questions were formulated and the partners were acknowledged about the planned debating issues;
- b. for each topic, there were five roundtables of participants – these roundtables rotated participants for each topic, such that no participant was seated together with a previous roundtable partner;
- c. the roundtable topics were facilitated by a MBNA faculty expert in that topic (for approximately 60-90 minutes);
- d. the roundtables were brought together for 30 minutes to discuss best practices discussed at each of the five roundtables.

Beside the agenda topics, the Superintendents were offered for short presentations on particular chosen subjects and the plenary section has counted several valuable allocutions/presentations, apart to the host representative, as following:

- Vice Admiral Walter E. Carter, the Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy had welcome the partner delegations as the former organizing Academy of this forum, underlining the active role of ENASC for future development of the naval education and training system;

- Rear Admiral Pierpaolo Ribuffo, the Superintendent of the Italian Naval Academy – delivered a presentation regarding the potential value of a common semester implemented in the Naval Academies, advancing a proposal of common courses that could be considered;

- Flotilla Admiral Boyan Kirilow Mednikarov, the Superintendent of the "Nikola Vaptsarov" Naval Academy has presented the potential of DEEP program for the partner countries in order to support the Ukrainian military and naval education and training.

### **3. General Takeaways from Roundtable discussions**

#### **a. Academic**

✓ To establish a common statement regarding the forth legally settlement of an Association of the EU and NATO Naval Academies;

✓ To increase the exchange of teachers/instructors and students at least during the practice and training periods (i.e. focused on training stages at sea, leadership modules, summer camps);

✓ Applying or implementing the Erasmus+ programme for enhancing the academic/training/teaching mobilities, by sharing the partners' cumulated experiences;

✓ Changes should be applied in the curriculum to comply with the 21<sup>st</sup> century security and defence challenges, but without affecting the national particularities and the tradition - courses like Celestial navigation should be studied further and harmonized, as new ones should be introduced (e.g. cyber-defence);

✓ New study programs (specializations) must priory comply in its development with the size/technical features of both NATO and national fleet (e.g. good example on best practices for USNA implementing the Cyber-defence specialty);

✓ The future of the Naval Academies as academic institutions depends on Navy requirements but also with the request of fulfilling, totally or partially, national and international higher education regulations and quality standards – sharing good practices on this matter become an imperative within the network cooperation;

✓ Way of learning should be changed or improved, to less time in classroom and more time spent on project-based learning, problem solving approach, game playing, simulating or other interactive teaching/instructing methods;

✓ Access to internet on any device from any point of the military campus, despite specific security protocols, will encourage the education and research processes;

✓ In regard of foreign languages instructing, it has been iterated that, although English is the commonly used language, courses of French, German or Russian language courses should be also considered and encouraged, for enhancing the cooperation potential among the partners;

✓ Time is a restraint in planning activities (education and training) for cadets – sharing details about the structure of the academic year among the partners would be a valuable planning tool looking for harmonized time slots in the effort of setting common activities;

✓ Correction in curriculum should be applied yearly, mostly based on the employer (Navy) feedback and needs;

✓ Two models of the Naval Academies were depicted: the academic model and the operational model of the curriculum development. Denmark model has been exemplified as a featured system – it consists in two years of studies – the applicants must have by the joining moment the bachelor degree level six, without any age limitation; as a major result they reduced total costs of the graduates' educational process by 50%;

✓ Scientific research should be enforced by applying in partnership on different programmes (i.e. EDA calls for proposals, EEA Norway grants, Erasmus+ KA1, KA2, KA3) – a good point will be to prior connecting of scientific research offices and structures, specialists and researchers and the programme/project experts within a network;

✓ Educational resources developed in English language, on different ADL platforms (as MOODLE, Google Classroom, ILIAS etc) may be shared among the partners, to facilitate the access to the international online resources and to start connecting the faculty members to the partners good practices in teaching different courses (i.e. easiest available for courses as leadership, navigation, IMO modules, CSDP modules etc).

## **b. Leadership**

✓ The Naval Academies should increase the exchange of cadets for leadership courses, using, if applicable, the Erasmus+ programme funding resources. In any case, beside exploiting the EMYLIO and ESDC resources, the online courses in leadership offered by the partners for all members, could be a facile solution for a larger cooperation;

✓ Thinking about improvement solutions in graduates' profile development, leadership for the future graduates can be improved by rotating them (every 6 months) on command of the plutons;

✓ Efforts but must be made during education and training to develop ethics of future Navy officers – in this respect, would be a great advantage if implementing on common basis, a course of “Ethics in leadership”;

✓ Recruiting – military high schools are very important in recruiting cadets for Naval Academies and good practices exchanges among the partners could be settled;

✓ Mainly for Navy cadets within the Academy, there are leadership programs led by the cadet's commanding staff as a more practical approach for leadership doctrine;

✓ Cadets get low responsibilities and expertise and they are asked for higher accountability – measures should be taken by staffs of Naval Academies;

✓ Leadership is a culturally, politically and environmentally dependant variable and the operational concept should be assimilated in all its dimensions (i.e. leadership means also being a patriot, social responsible individual and public responsible servant);

✓ In order to improve the leadership side of the graduates, several new courses were suggested as being recommended to be included in the curriculum, as "Critical thinking", "Decision theory", "European Security and Defence Policies" – these courses could provide good premises for implementing a common semester for the Naval Academies, as Rear Admiral Pierpaolo Ribuffo, the Superintendent of Italian Naval Academy, had priory suggested during the plenary session;

✓ In regard of Ethics it has been stated that there are no general problems related to it, because these are ussaly solved during the first two months of military training; the US Naval Academy model for ethical behaviour of the cadets and good practices implementation could be a good example on this matter;

✓ Military career is not so attractive nowadays because of the economic reasons and due to the poorer physical training of the candidates; more and more money, resources and time should be invested in order to recruit valuable students for the Naval Academies;

✓ As example of enlarging the candidates base, the applicants for Danish Naval Academy must not be Danish citizen, the only rule being to know Danish language

✓ Regarding the human resources involved in education or training, the partners have admitted that there is a "competition" between Naval Academies and Navy structures (fleet or headquarters) for deploying good staff (instructors, teachers etc).

### **c. Professional Development**

✓ Common curriculum development has been suggested right from the plenary session by Rear Admiral Pierpaolo Ribuffo during the plenary session – as a good practice exchange, the efforts made in DECOMAR project, carried during 2014-2016, in partnership by the Bulgarian, Romanian and Polish Naval Academies, should continue and could be enlarged (<https://marplat.eu/decomar/about-the-project.html>);

✓ A common statement should be agreed by all participants of the conference, in order to support and represent the naval education and training network at the *European Military Academies Commandants' Seminar (EMACS)*, Vienna, 24.10-27.10.2018;

✓ A permanent board of Naval Academies Association is required as an operational requirement for network effectiveness, consisting in selected members from all the Academies;

✓ Visits between members of Association should be more frequent and not only at the superintendents' level;

✓ Academic and training exchanges – to organize every year common activities (like International Week), but depending on each Academy annual agenda outlines;

✓ Common platform and a common website for ENASC – someone has to run this platform which has to be dedicated for different purposes of the network as: disseminating forum ideas, planning the international activities and common modules on common basis, sharing the online courses. A suggestion was referring to use the MARINE/DECOMAR platform administrated by the Romanian partners (<https://marplat.eu/elearning/>). Another suggestion about using the EDA resources came up from Cdr Steve Walsh, from National Maritime College of

Ireland, (to be considered in the future). As first step the Romanian Naval Academy has open a link on its local server for sharing the resources on this stage (<https://www.anmb.ro/enasc/>);

✓ Points of contact between all departments of the Naval Academies should be available, in order to identify domain of expertise and possible collaboration on research or training projects.

#### **4. Conclusions**

a. The event agenda and the Conference format, had allowed for strong participant interaction and idea exchange. Many collaborative activities were discussed to be conducted upon return to home base. Following up the proposal advanced by Rear Admiral Pierpaolo Ribuffo, the workshop format should be revised in order to assure an increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the Conference, combining both round tables model and the plenary session on particular topics proposed by the partners. This new format should be approached in the upcoming working conference, planned for Varna, 2019.

b. The participants had encouraged the common planning actioning settlement, based on future common online platform. Romanian Naval Academy has offered itself as host institution, to promote a common database of the contact details about each Academy, on its own website (<https://www.anmb.ro/enasc/>), as first practical step forward on this matter.

c. Participants were able to focus on areas of emphasis and good ideas for their own institution. Points of contact were established for follow on dialog.

d. The next conference will be hosted by the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, United Kingdom, in 2020 – details to follow. “Nikola Y. Vaptsarov” Naval Academy volunteered to host the next working conference in Varna, in 2019.