

**UN Peacekeeping Ministerial (Accra, Ghana; 5-6 December 2023)**

**Remarks by**

**Helena König,  
Deputy Secretary General for Economic and Global Issues,  
European External Action Service**

**Session 3: Conditions for Success (incl. Host Government Support,  
Inclusion, Conduct and Strategic Communication**

**Wednesday, 6 December 2023**

- Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), including disinformation is a growing political and security challenges for the EU, its Member States and international partners. It presents a global problem that threatens the functioning of democracies and the well-being of societies around the world.
- It is also a direct security threat to the EU's foreign and security policy objectives, including in EU Missions and Operations; It has impacted the effectiveness of our missions and operations particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa but elsewhere as well. We need to respond to such threats, we need to ensure that missions and operations are more resilient at local level, in theatres;
- In this context, the EU has been continuously enhancing its efforts in identifying, preventing and countering FIMI and disinformation with a multi-layered approach, notably by developing an EU FIMI Toolbox. This FIMI Toolbox puts forward a more systematic use of the full range of available tools including situational awareness, resilience and capacity building, disruption and regulation as well as EU external action.
- UN Peace keeping missions are being contested in some areas just as the CSDP missions are, the most critical example being Mali. Our credibility is being challenged and the need to team up against FIMI targeting our presence has never been so relevant.

- In line with our FIMI toolbox, over the last 18 months we considerably strengthened our missions and operations' capacity to detect and analyse disinformation and information manipulation conducted by hostile actors in their areas of operations. We have a dedicated team to support CSDP missions and operations on FIMI analysis but also on responses to FIMI attacks. We are currently drafting guidelines in this respect to hand out to all our CSDP missions.
- Lessons identified however proved that there is no one size fits all approach and there is a crucial need of expertise on the information environment of the area of deployment of our missions.
- On the response front, while debunking/exposing is as of paramount importance, we know it is not sufficient to counter the long-term effects of FIMI.
- We are currently building a capacity in our newly created Task Force working on Africa which will be dedicated Strategic Communications including resilience building in the media community and raising awareness on the impact of FIMI.
- The way our CSDP missions are organised doesn't allow this type of long term approach which is why we are increasing our cooperation with EUDELS on this aspect.
- We are facing similar challenges and I believe there are many windows opportunity to work together against this threat. We would be very eager to learn more about your experiences and lessons learned around the withdrawal of MONUSCO and MINUSMA for example. We would be delighted to discuss the implementation of our FIMI toolbox and share best practices.
- We are committed to work in a coordinated manner at global level to prevent, deter and respond to this substantial and fast evolving threat.