Bonino briefs Senate on missions – 23.6 million in aid for crisis areas

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In a government briefing of the Senate joint foreign and defence commissions on the status of missions under way and development cooperation and peace and stabilisation interventions, Minister Emma Bonino announced that 23.6 million euro had been earmarked for humanitarian missions on the basis of Enrico Letta's announcement at the St. Petersburg G20; she added that "another 10 million will be made available at the end of December". The head of Italian diplomacy joined defence minister Mario Mauro in addressing international concerns ranging from the migration emergency in the Mediterranean to the dismantling of chemical weapons in Syria and Iran's more open nuclear stance.

Immigration, Libyan coasts a point of departure

Regarding the migration emergency, Minister Bonino admitted that the unpatrolled coasts of Libya had become a point of departure for the migration flows out of Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Minister Bonino, Libya's delicate stability and security framework suffered an ulterior blow last week with the short-lived "flash abduction" of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, which she described as conceivably associated with a "political maneuver aimed at forcing his resignation", remarking that "next week it will be clear what type of transition" is under way and that, for that reason "the Italian government insists that an inclusive process be launched", since the current situation is untenable – a situation linked more than ever to the European problem of migration toward the Mediterranean. "There are divergent and opposing interests in the Mediterranean. This is the difficulty" of "having a common European foreign policy", Bonino admitted, adding that it was no "mystery" that "some European capitals not only think that foreign policy should come from the UN Security Council, but also have interests that differ from ours".

Syria, Damascus collaborating with OPCW missions

The minister then confronted the Syrian crisis, pointing out that "the information we are getting from the OPCW" (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) describe a "positive" process of chemical weapons arsenal verification and the "positive collaboration of the Syrian government". On the Iranian front, regarding the more open stance expressed by Teheran in the 5+1 meetings in Geneva on the nuclear question, the minister warned that "It

is not the case to be overly optimistic. A certain degree of caution must be based on the facts and not solely on statements”.

Egypt, not to the green light on tourism in the Sinai

Finally, on the question of security in Egypt, in light of the clashes with the authorities and demonstrations in various of the country’s cities, Bonino cited the “lack of any tangible evolution in the new Egyptian administration” and its “entirely disproportionate reaction” that have resulted in 50 victims over recent weeks. Speaking to Italians intending to travel to Sinai tourist resorts, the minister specified: “I reconfirm that our services advise against it and have not given the green light” with regard to “the security of tourists” in Sharm el Sheik and along the Sinai peninsula.

Source :
https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/approfondimenti/2013/10/20131017_bonsenmissioni/