

PASSEX «CYP/ISR – 01/2019»

In the framework of the bilateral military agreement that signed between the Ministries of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus and Israel, the first joint Passing Exercise (PASSEX), titled «CYP/ISR-01/2019» of the Cyprus and Israeli Naval Forces, carried out in a very successful way, on Wednesday, the 29th of May 2019.

The final planning conference of the PASSEX and the pre-sail meeting, were held at the Naval Base in Mari, a day before, where the Crews of the Israeli Ships, had also the opportunity to visit the FPBs of the Cyprus Navy.

The main goal of the mutual naval exercise was to improve interoperability and synergy, at a combined force level, between Cyprus Naval Forces and the Israeli Navy, and also to foster relations between both Countries, in a way that will enhance their role as key strategic partners and security contributors to the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Specifically, on the 29th of May, in a move that demonstrates the strong partnership and close friendship of the Republic of Cyprus and Israel, the Cyprus Navy, Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) IOANNIDES and the Fast Patrol Boats (FPBs) TSOMAKIS and GEORGIU, got underway from the Naval Base in Mari to join INS HETZ and 4 FPBs DVORA class, of the Israeli Navy, which were berthed in Larnaca.

After the departure from Larnaca Port, the flotilla of the Israeli Navy joined the Ships of the Cyprus Navy and then moved in formations towards an exercise area for the conducting of a sequence of naval drills and events, such as Live-Firing with the Naval Gunnery, Security Exercises in order to confront Asymmetrical Threats in the maritime domain, Mutual Damage Control, Medical scenarios/Combat First Aid and Towing.

These exercises were of a great value for the Crews to practice together aiming to implement the set objectives by deepening and broadening training as both Navies exposed to various operating procedures and activities.

In addition, an AW-139 helicopter of the Cyprus Airforce 460 SAR SQN, took part in the joint PASSEX aiming to promote the aeronautical cooperation and to develop the knowledge and skills in hoisting procedures (WINCHEX) and MEDEVAC scenarios. After the completion of WINCHEX, a PHOTO exercise began, which gave the Cyprus and Israeli Ships, the opportunity to work together through a series of coordinated tactical maneuvers.

This sort of cooperation between the Cyprus and Israeli Navies, provided their personnel with an excellent opportunity to practice alongside, and concurrently to carry out a fruitful and beneficial training, for a first time, on various maritime issues as they both operate in the Eastern Mediterranean, with the purpose to respond better to the new challenges, facing maritime and energy security as well as to address humanitarian crisis and to support common interests.