

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Component Command  
Headquarters Northwood**



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## **NATO COMMANDER HOSTS NUGAL AUTHORITIES OFF EYL**

Yesterday representatives from the town of Eyl and the Nugal region of Puntland visited the flagship of the NATO task force that is patrolling the waters off Somalia.

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the representatives about the counter piracy activities that are being conducted by NATO and other international forces in the region. It also provided opportunities for the local leaders to inform NATO of the actions that they have taken ashore to reduce the incidence of piracy along the East coast of Puntland.

Building on regular contacts between NATO and the Puntland authorities off Boosaaso, this was the first occasion that regional leaders have been invited to participate in meetings. Amongst those present were Suldan Said M. Garase, one of the 2 traditional leaders of the Nugal region, Khalif Aw Ali, traditional Chief and Spiritual leader and Abdi Hersi Ali, the Governor of Nugal region,

Speaking after the meeting, the Chief of Staff of the NATO Task Force, Commander Ricardo A Hernandez, Spanish Navy said:

'NATO and other forces have seen significant successes at sea in recent weeks, with many pirate groups being put out of action and a number of hijacked ships being released. It is however only through the sustained actions of the authorities ashore that a long term solution to the problem of piracy can be found. Strong support from the authorities in Eyl and indeed the whole of the Nugal region is important if pirates are to be prevented from operating in this part of Puntland.'

The meeting was all the more relevant given the recent success by the Puntland authorities to force the hijacked vessel TALCA out of its anchorage in Bargaal in the north of the Puntland.

**Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)**

## **Background Information:**

NATO has contributed to the international counter piracy effort off the Horn of Africa since December 2008. The mission has expanded from escorting UN and World Food Programme Shipping under Operation Allied Provider to protecting merchant traffic in the Gulf of Aden under Operation Allied Protector. In addition to these activities and as part of the latest mission, Operation Ocean Shield, NATO is working with other international bodies to help develop capacity of countries in the region to tackle piracy on their own.

NATO has recently announced its commitment to Operation Ocean Shield has been extended to December 2012.

The NATO Task Force consists of 5 ships from Standing NATO Maritime Group 2. These are:

HMS CHATHAM (Flagship) – UK  
USS COLE – US  
TCG GELIBOLU – Turkey  
HS LIMNOS - Greece  
ITS SCIROCCO – Italy

The following representatives from Nugal and Eyl attended the meeting:

- Suldan Said M. Garase, a traditional leader of the Nugal region.
- Mohamed Abshir Nur, an elder and traditional Chief.
- Khalif Aw Ali, traditional Chief and Spiritual leader.
- Abdi Hersi Ali, the Governor of Nugal region.
- Abdirahman Haji Abshir, the Police Commander for Nugal division.
- Musse Osman Yusuf, the Mayor of Eyl District
- Faysal Khalif Wa'ays, Deputy Mayor of Eyl District, and
- Abdirizak M. Ahmed, Puntland Minister for Diaspora Affairs

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