

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Component Command
Headquarters Northwood**



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NATO disrupts piracy in the Somali Basin

London: On Sunday 28 February 2010 the NATO flagship HDMS ABSALON undertook direct action to disrupt the piracy in the Somali Basin by scuttling a pirate mother skiff, one of the large, open boats that pirates use to transport and support their attack teams to offshore hunting areas. The ABSALON is the flagship of NATO's current counter-piracy operation Ocean Shield off the Horn of Africa.

The mother skiff was scuttled by use of specialist teams from ABSALON after it was intercepted by ABSALON's boarding team. It had been located earlier in the day having just left a well known pirate camp located on the eastern Somali coastline, fully loaded with pirate equipment and supplies.

With the north-easterly Monsoon season coming to an end, the wind and sea conditions have been growing more favourable for pirates to venture out into the Somali Basin in search of merchant ships to seize. The coming months of March, April and May have been among the most lucrative in recent years for pirates operating in the region, because of the relatively calm seas at that time of the year. NATO and its Coalition Maritime Forces and EU partners had recently received indications of forthcoming pirate attacks. They therefore positioned themselves to stop the pirates.

"This was a very well executed operation," said CDRE Christian Rune. "Disrupting the pirates' capability just off their main pirate camps sends a strong signal to the pirates that NATO and the international community do not tolerate their actions. Disposing of their

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vessels before they can head to sea hits the pirates before they can present a threat to merchant shipping,” said CDRE Rune.

Notes to editors

1. The NATO task force TF 508 is one out of three coalition task forces operating in the fight against piracy. TF 508 consists presently of three ships:
 - HDMS ABSALON (flagship, Royal Danish Navy)
 - USS BOONE (United States Navy)
 - HMS CHATHAM (Royal Navy)

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