

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Component Command  
Headquarters Northwood**



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## **Denmark Assumes Command of NATO's Counter Piracy Mission "Ocean Shield"**

**London:** The Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) operational handover took place this afternoon in Muscat (Oman), where the outgoing Commander, Rear Admiral Pereira da Cunha, Portuguese Navy handed over Command to Commodore Christian Rune, Royal Danish Navy. Today's handover also marked the change of command for NATO's counter piracy operation Ocean Shield from Portugal to Denmark.

The operational handover and the military of command ceremony were held on board of the Portuguese flagship *Álvares Cabral*. The ceremony was presided over by Vice Admiral Hans-Jochen Witthauer, German Navy, Deputy Commander of Allied Maritime Component Commander Northwood.

Addressing the parade after assuming command of the SNMG1, Commodore Christian Rune, stated: "This force has been permanently active for well over forty years. Not only has it been participating in NATO operations, but just as important, it has been at the forefront of what NATO is all about: solidarity, flexibility, development of interoperability and innovation of procedures and doctrine. It is with great honour and pride that I have now assumed duty as COMSNMG1 – and to also take over as CTF 508 in the counter piracy operation makes it even greater."

"Global security and piracy off the Horn of Africa are issues that affect all NATO nations and the sailors of SNMG1 are very proud to have the opportunity to travel beyond NATO's

## **Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)**

traditional areas of responsibility and improve our situational awareness in these critical regions, while contributing to the international community efforts fighting against piracy”, said Rear Admiral Pereira da Cunha in his farewell remarks

During his year in Command, Admiral da Cunha spent 6 months in the Gulf of Aden in charge of NATO’s counter piracy missions, Operations Allied Protector and Ocean Shield.

Each year the command of SNMG1 is rotated and Denmark will have command throughout 2010 when the Group will be involved in the counter piracy mission, Operation Ocean Shield in the Gulf of Aden.

### **Notes to editors**

1. Permanently assigned to NATO, SNMG1 is a multi-national Naval Group that provides the NATO Alliance with the ability to quickly respond to crisis situations anywhere in the world. A capable, stand-alone task group, SNMG1 is one of four standing maritime elements that form a flexible core around which NATO can build a larger force to meet a wide range of missions that will include non-combatant evacuations, consequence management, counter terrorism, crisis response, embargo operations, etc.
  
1. The five ships comprising SNMG1 are:
  - NRP Álvares Cabral (outgoing flagship, Portugal)
  - HDMS Absalon (Incoming flagship, Denmark)
  - HMCS Fredericton (Canada)
  - USS Boone (United States of America)
  - HMS Chatham (United Kingdom)
  
2. Photographs of the ceremony can be downloaded from MCC Northwood’s website [www.manw.nato.int](http://www.manw.nato.int)

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# Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)