

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood**



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## **NATO / Japan cooperation in Gulf of Aden disrupts pirate attack**

**LONDON** – The NATO warship HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCÏEN, working in conjunction with a Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) helicopter disrupted a single skiff pirate attack on MV ANANGAL INNOVATION this morning. MV ANANGAL INNOVATION, a Greek-flagged ship, reported being approached by a small skiff while transiting eastbound in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden.

Commodore Christian Rune, Royal Danish Navy, Commander, Task Force 508, stated: “The helo and ship crews from JMSDF MURASAME and HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCÏEN responded magnificently in disrupting another piracy attack in the IRTC. The cooperation between Japanese Maritime Self Defence Forces and NATO is proof of the commitment by the international community to establish a secure maritime environment in the Horn of Africa region”.

The helicopter from Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) ship MURASAME quickly responded to the call from the merchant ship. As the JMSDF helicopter approached the skiff, the suspected pirates broke off the attack and the crew of the helicopter observed the suspected pirates throwing their weapons and other pirate related paraphernalia overboard.

NATO warship HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCÏEN was dispatched by Commander, Task Force 508 to intercept skiff. After relieving the JMSDF helicopter following the skiff, a helicopter from the HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCÏEN unsuccessfully attempted to stop the skiff. The skiff refused to stop even after warning shots were fired from the helicopter. The skiff was finally stopped after warning shots were fired from DE ZEVEN PROVINCÏEN upon arriving on scene. A team from DE

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ZEVEN PROVINCIEËN boarded the skiff revealing that the suspected pirates had thrown, not only their weapons, but also ladders and other pirating materials overboard.

*Ends*

### **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 and 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.

Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 is permanently assigned to NATO. It 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 and 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.

NATO has recently announced its continuing commitment to counter-piracy by extending Operation Ocean Shield to December 2012.

NATO Task Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

HDMS ESBERN SNARE (Flagship) - Denmark  
HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCIEËN – The Netherlands  
USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America

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