

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood**



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## **NATO, EU and Japanese Forces Prevent Pirate Attack off Africa.**

LONDON: Today, a Japanese Maritime Self Defence (JMSDF) maritime patrol aircraft located a pirate skiff with seven suspected pirates on board. The suspected pirates were preparing to attack merchant vessels transiting the International Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden. Within minutes a helicopter from the Danish warship ESBERN SNARE from NATO's counter-piracy task force intercepted the skiff. Subsequently the suspected pirates threw their weapons overboard and surrendered. The Italian warship ITS LIBECCIO from the EU Naval Force's counter-piracy task force sent their helicopter to provide airborne support. The American warship, USS KAUFFMAN who is also in NATO's counter-piracy operation, codenamed OCEAN SHIELD, closed and boarded the skiff and found a pirate ladder and other pirate related paraphernalia.

"Once again the cooperation between ships and aircraft from different counter-piracy forces has proven immensely valuable", Commodore Christian Rune, Royal Danish Navy, Commander of NATO counter-piracy task force said.

End text.

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

## **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  
HMS MONTROSE – United Kingdom  
USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America

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# Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)