

News Release



**Headquarters Allied Maritime
Command Northwood**



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ROYAL NAVY WARSHIP BEGINS NATO COUNTER PIRACY OPERATION

London: Royal Navy warship HMS Montrose has arrived in the Gulf of Aden to take part in Operation Ocean Shield - NATO's counter piracy mission off the Horn of Africa.

As part of the NATO Task Force, HMS Montrose is patrolling the busy shipping lanes in the Gulf of Aden, with the ship's crew constantly on the look-out for pirates who prey on the merchant ships that transit the area. As 95% of the world's trade goes by sea it is crucial that NATO naval forces help to keep the seas safe from acts of piracy.

Speaking about HMS Montrose's counter piracy mission, the ship's Commanding Officer, Commander Jonathan Lett said "HMS Montrose has been training and preparing for this mission since early April and having now arrived in the Gulf of Aden we are very keen to work together with the other naval forces operating in the area to deter and disrupt acts of piracy".

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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.

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

Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)

NATO Task Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

HDMS ESBERN SNARE - Denmark
USS LABOON – United States of America
USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America

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