

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood**



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NATO Warship, USS KAUFFMAN Disrupts Pirates in Gulf of Aden

GULF OF ADEN – Yesterday afternoon the helicopter from NATO warship USS KAUFFMAN located a suspicious skiff with five suspected pirates on board. USS KAUFFMAN is operating as part of NATO's maritime counter-piracy task force in the Gulf of Aden. As USS KAUFFMAN closed to investigate the skiff, the nearby helicopter of coalition warship ENDURANCE from the Singapore Navy, operating with Combined Task Force 151, also closed to support.

“The level of cooperation between navies is exceptional,” said Commander Dale W. Maxey, Commanding Officer aboard USS KAUFFMAN. “We may represent different nations but we all have the same goal in mind - to deter piracy in the area.”

As both helicopters approached, the pirates threw a long ladder, which they use to scale innocent merchant ships, in to the sea, together with other pirate related items. As soon as she was close enough, USS KAUFFMAN sent her boarding team to search the skiff, and so ensure the suspected pirates could no longer pose a threat to shipping.

END TEXT

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.

Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)

NATO warships currently operating in Operation Ocean Shield:

HDMS ESBERN SNARE (Flagship) - Denmark
USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America
USS LABOON – United States of America
HMS MONTROSE – United Kingdom

Media Inquiries only to:

Public Affairs Officer

+44 (0)1923 956763

+44 (0) 7747 008508

<mailto:pio@manw.nato.int>

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