

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood**



5 November 2010

## **DUTCH SUBMARINE ZEELEEUW COMPLETES NATO COUNTER PIRACY MISSION**

For the past 2 months Dutch submarine HNLMS Zeeleeuw (Sealion) has been part of NATO's counter piracy mission, code-named Operation Ocean Shield. The submarine has been patrolling off the coast of Somalia, gathering intelligence about the modern day pirates that prowl the Indian Ocean in search of merchant ships to hijack.

Able to operate in shallow waters, Zeeleeuw has been able to monitor the pirate camps that operate along the coast and pass information to the maritime forces operating out at sea.

Speaking about Zeeleeuw's contribution to Operation Ocean Shield, Real Admiral Hank Ort, who is the Chief of Staff at NATO HQ Northwood, said "NATO's counter-piracy mission has been strengthened by the presence of a Dutch submarine. The intelligence she was able to provide contributed to the identification and suppression of known pirate groups".

As well as a submarine, NATO currently has five warships in Ocean Shield. The warships work with the other maritime forces, such as the Combined Maritime Force (CMF) and the EU's Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) to deter and disrupt acts of piracy off the Horn of Africa.

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**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
- USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America
- USS LABOON - United States of America
- HMS MONTROSE – United Kingdom
- ITS BERSAGLIERE – Italy
- HNLMS ZEELEEUW - Netherlands

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# Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)