

News Release



**Allied Maritime
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COUNTER PIRACY COMMANDERS MEET IN THE GULF OF ADEN

The Commanding Officers of two counter piracy Task Forces met on board the South Korean Flagship ROKS Kang Gam Chan in the Gulf of Aden on Wednesday 14 July. The main purpose of the meeting between Rear Admiral Beom Rim Lee (South Korean Navy), Commander of the Combined Task Force 151, and Commodore Michiel Hijmans (Royal Netherlands Navy), Commander of the NATO Task Force 508, was to exchange views and to strengthen the cooperation between the forces.

Both Task Forces have been operating in Somali waters and the Indian Ocean for several months now, with the mission to deter, disrupt and protect merchant traffic against pirate attacks. NATO's operations and initiatives are closely coordinated with coalition maritime forces, EU naval forces, and other non-NATO forces conducting counter piracy operations off the Horn of Africa.

Commodore Hijmans emphasized the importance of meeting with other actors in the counter piracy missions: "We are working to achieve the same goal, a secure environment for the maritime community in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Basin. Meetings with counterparts from other Task Forces allows us to better coordinate our actions and to study ways to counter piracy more efficiently. I was very impressed by the outstanding appearance and performance of the South Korean Navy."

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 2 (SNMG2)

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

The NATO Task Force consists of 3 ships from Standing NATO Maritime Group 2. These are:

HNLMS DE ZEVEN PROVINCIEËN (Flagship) – The Netherlands
USS COLE – US
TCG GELIBOLU – Turkey

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Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)