

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
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NATO counter-piracy commander meets with Combined Maritime Forces' counterpart

London – Yesterday, Commodore Michiel Hijmans, Commander of NATO's counter piracy mission, Operation Ocean Shield, met with his CMF counterpart Commodore Abdul Aleem.

The two commanders met on board HNLMS De Ruyter (Royal Netherlands Navy) in the Gulf of Aden to discuss matters of mutual concern, including cooperation in the deployment of ships and aircraft in the Gulf of Aden and Somali Basin.

SNMG2 commanded by Commodore Hijmans has recently taken over from SNMG1 and is now in the area with ships from Denmark, The Netherlands, Turkey and the U.S. The commodore and his staff were very pleased to meet some of their CMF counterparts.

"Piracy is a common problem that directly effects the world economy, to counter it international cooperation is essential. In maritime cooperation personal relations have proven one of the keys to success. The visit of commodore Abdul Aleem SI(M) was therefore very useful and appreciated. It strengthens our relationship and allows us to counter piracy to the maximum of our abilities as naval forces" stated Commodore Hijmans.

Speaking after the three hour meeting, Commodore Aleem said: "Today was a chance to renew the mutually beneficial and productive relationship between Combined Maritime Forces and NATO. Our area of operation is simply huge, so by coordinating the activities of our warships and aircraft, we can ensure they are deployed in the most effective way. The pirates are resourceful and capable of adapting their behaviour. Therefore it is essential that counter-piracy operations share their intelligence and develop their strategies in order to remain one step ahead".

The Pakistan Navy has been in command of CTF 151 since the end of November, when Commodore Aleem relieved Rear Admiral Sinan Ertugrul of the Turkish Navy. In recent months the multi-national force has included ships from Australia, Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Thailand, Turkey, UK and U.S. In addition to Pakistan, the command team includes staff from Canada, Netherlands and U.S.

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

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Background Information:

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.

CMF's counter-piracy mission is known as Combined Task Force 151 (CTF151) and its mission is to deter, disrupt and suppress piracy, protecting maritime vessels of any nationality and securing freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Aden and Somali Basin. In conjunction with NATO and EU Naval Force Somalia (EUNAVFOR), CTF-151 conducts patrols in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) and supports Best Management Practice (BMP) methods for piracy avoidance that are promoted to the shipping industry.

CTF 151 is one of three task forces operated by Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a 25-nation coalition based in Bahrain. Its main focus areas are defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, reducing illegal activities and promoting a safe maritime environment.

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