



NEWS RELEASE
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NATO Chairs Counter Piracy Meeting in Bahrain

On 1st June, NATO acted as Chairman at the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) meeting in Bahrain for the first time. The SHADE is primarily a military meeting focussing on the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Somali Basin. Coalition Maritime Forces (CMF), European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), China, Russia, India, Japan, South Korean, Yemen, Seychelles, Egypt, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia all attend .

SHADE meetings have been conducted monthly for over one year and are also attended by nations in the region of Somalia that are impacted by the current piracy issue. The agenda for the day allowed briefs from NATO on the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden, Somali Basin operations in this current weather transition window, campaign analysis, air coordination, and an update on Best Management Practices by the merchant community represented by Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF).

Throughout the day NATO's representative and Chairman for the meeting Captain Adrian Van Der Linde (NLD N) fostered a spirit of cooperation and frank/honest discussions to allow all forces and nations to share information and work together to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. Over 100 people attended, representing 30 nations. There was excellent dialogue between NATO, CMF, EU and China, Russia

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and India. Interpol also presented and can provide support and training to all militaries on evidence control.

Chairmanship of SHADE is open to any organization or nation that provides significant forces within the IRTC and is presently rotated between CMF, EU, and NATO, with China in the foreseeable future. As NATO has extended her mandate of Operation Ocean Shield to end of 2012, the SHADE meetings are an excellent method to maintain tactical level coordination between naval forces operating in the area, educate each other on ongoing operations and maintain pressure on the Somali pirates. It is notable that since the IRTC scheme was introduced and forces have actively been working together there has been a significant reduction in hijackings in the Gulf of Aden.

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