

News Release



**Allied Maritime Command
Headquarters Northwood**



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Russian Federation and the Netherlands shake hands at sea

London: On her way to the Gulf of Aden, on 17 June, to conduct counter piracy operations the Netherlands navy ship HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën made an unexpected rendez-vous with two Russian naval vessels. Both ships, the cruiser Admiral Levchenko and the tanker Olekma, are also underway to the Gulf of Aden for counter piracy operations.

Commodore RNLN Hijmans, who will have command of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 for one year from 30th of June, visited the Division Chief of the force and the commanding officer of the Admiral Levchenko. On board they had the chance to meet and greet and spoke about possible future cooperation in the Gulf of Aden.

Commodore Hijmans said: "It was an outstanding opportunity to meet the commander of the Russian counter piracy taskforce before the start of the operation in the Gulf of Aden." A number of countries and organizations have committed themselves to counter piracy threatening sea lines of communications and economic interest.

Effectively coordinating the NATO-operation Ocean Shield with the EU-operation Atalanta, the maritime units of the Combined TaskForce (CTF-151) and maritime units of several other countries is an important part of the operation.

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

From the 30th of June HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën is the staff ship of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2). An international staff on board will lead the NATO naval Force.

Notes to editors

1. The NATO task force TF 508 is one out of three coalition task forces operating in the fight against piracy. TF 508 consists presently of three ships:
 - HMS Chatham (flagship, Royal Navy)
 - TCG Gelibolu (Turkey)
 - USS Cole (United States Navy)

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