

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood**



Ref: SNMG2 2010 / 27

8 July 2010

NATO Flagship Welcomes Visit from Singapore Commander of Counter Piracy Task Force

The Commanding Officer of the Singaporean Armed Forces counter piracy Task Group, Colonel Tan Kai Cheong, today visited Dutch warship, HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën - the flagship of NATO's counter piracy mission, code-named Operation Ocean Shield. Colonel Tan is based in the Singapore Navy Landing Ship Tank, RSS Endurance operating within the multinational Combined Maritime Force, based out of Bahrain.

Speaking about the visit, Commodore Hijmans (Royal Netherlands Navy), the Commander of the NATO Task Force said "It is really important for the counter piracy commanders to meet face-to-face at sea. Good cooperation between our forces will enhance the effectiveness in keeping the shipping lanes safe from the scourge of piracy. I am very impressed by the capabilities of the Singaporean Armed Forces and I look forward to working with them more closely in counter piracy operations off the Horn of Africa."

As well as working closely with the Combined Maritime Force to combat piracy, NATO also has close cooperation with the EU Naval Force, and works in partnership with independent navies such as Japan, the Russian Federation, China and India.

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.

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

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

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

Media Inquiries only to:

Public Affairs Officer

+44 (0)1923 956763

+44 (0) 7747 008508

<mailto:pio@manw.nato.int>

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)