

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood**
www.manw.nato.int



11th October 2011

NATO successfully rescues the crew of MV Montecristo

Earlier this afternoon, NATO successfully conducted a coordinated intervention to rescue the crew of MV Montecristo, some 200 Nautical miles south-east of the Omani coast. The 11 pirates who attacked the merchant vessel surrendered to the NATO boarding team with no resistance. The crew members, who had managed to confine themselves in the engine room, are all safe.

The rescue operation involved two NATO naval units contributing to NATO's counter piracy operation, RFA Fort Victoria and USS De Wert. USS De Wert was the first NATO warship to reach MV Montecristo and assessed the situation while the NATO boarding team onboard RFA Fort Victoria was getting ready to intervene.

The boarding was conducted swiftly. The 11 pirates were compliant and surrendered without showing any resistance. The crew of MV Montecristo, while still in the engine room, managed to communicate with the NATO boarding team to tell them they were all safe.

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 1 is presently 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.

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

Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

ITS Andrea Doria (Flagship) – Italy
RFA Fort Victoria - UK
USS Carney - USA
USS De Wert – USA
NRP D. Francisco De Almeida – Portugal
One Norwegian Navy Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Media Inquiries only to:

Public Affairs Officer

+44 (0)1923 956763

+44 (0) 7747 008508

<mailto:pio@manw.nato.int>

FACEBOOK Group: CTF 508 Operation OCEAN SHIELD

Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1)