

News Release



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



7 March 2011

Successful cooperation between NATO and Combined Maritime Forces

London: This weekend a joint effort between two counter piracy task forces led to the safe recovery of the vessel, MV Guanabara.

On Saturday the MV Guanabara issued a distress call saying she was under attack by pirates. The crew retreated into the citadel or safe room and kept in contact with the counter piracy forces. The USS Bulkeley of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), was the closest naval vessel that could respond and proceeded to the scene of the incident. The NATO warship TCG Giresun was tasked to support USS Bulkeley.

The USS Bulkeley quickly arrived at the scene of the action and found the vessel with pirates on board and the crew still safely in the citadel. TCG Giresun arrived at the scene shortly after to support the recovery operation. With Giresun's helicopter providing cover, the boarding team from USS Bulkeley approached the MV GUANABARA.

The sight of two warships and the armed helicopter may have been too much for the pirates and waving a white flag they surrendered and were arrested by the USS Bulkeley's boarding team. The crew was then safely retrieved from the citadel.

Coincidentally the two taskforce commanders had spent time with each other onboard HMS Cornwall, the CMF flagship, earlier on Saturday to discuss cooperation and the approach to piracy. "This shows that the joint effort of all the forces countering piracy is paying off. The crew and vessel are safe again and 4 pirates are detained who can no longer threaten other ships." Commodore Michiel Hijmans, Commander of the NATO Task Force, said after the action.

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 2 (SNMG2) is permanently assigned to NATO. It is a multi-national Naval Group that provides the NATO Alliance with the ability to respond quickly to crisis situations

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

anywhere in the world. It is 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. These include non-combatant evacuations, consequence management, counter terrorism, crisis response and embargo operations. Its command rotates amongst the contributing nations and SNMG 2 is currently commanded by Commodore Michiel B. Hijmans, Royal Netherlands Navy.

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

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

HNLMS DE RUYTER (Flagship) - Netherlands
USS BAINBRIDGE – United States of America
USS HALYBURTON - United States of America
TCG GIRESUN – Turkey

Media Inquiries only to:

Public Affairs Officer

+44 (0)1923 956763

+44 (0) 7795 811907

mailto:pio@manw.nato.int

FACEBOOK Group: CTF 508 Operation OCEAN SHIELD

----TEXT ENDS----

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)