

News Release



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



12 April 2011

NATO Warship Helps IRENE SL After Release

London: Early on 8th April, the NATO warship USS Bainbridge received a call from the Master of MV Irene SL asking for medical assistance. The pirates had released Irene SL after receiving a ransom from the vessel's owner.

A team from USS Bainbridge went on board Irene early the next morning to verify the crew was safe and give any assistance needed. The boarding team took food, water, milk, medical supplies, and cleaning supplies for the crew.

"This was a great opportunity for NATO and our crew to render assistance to fellow seamen who had been held against their will by pirates. Team Bainbridge performed this mission to the best of our abilities with great support and guidance from the rest of the NATO task force. From the feedback I received, the Master and Crew of Irene SL were most grateful," said CDR Daniel D. Sunvold, Bainbridge Commanding Officer.

The boarding team found the motor vessel full of pirate equipment including magazines and ammunition for AK47s.

----TEXT ENDS----

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

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

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 is permanently 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.

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

HNLMS TROMP (Flagship) - Netherlands
HDMS ESBERN SNARE - Denmark
TCG GIRESUN – Turkey
USS BAINBRIDGE - United States of America
USS HALYBURTON – United States of America

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 2 (SNMG2)