

News Release



Allied Maritime
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NATO Warship Disables Pirate Group After Attack on Merchant Ship

London: This morning NATO warship TCG Giresun disabled a pirate group that had attacked and hijacked a merchant vessel.

In the early hours the Turkish warship was hailed by the master of Motor Vessel Hanjin Tianjin - a Korean flagged vessel, who said that his ship was under attack from pirates. The crew had locked themselves away in the citadel, or strong room. TCG Giresun quickly responded by sending her helicopter ahead to render assistance. When the helicopter arrived at the scene no activity was sighted.

Whilst TCG Giresun was guarding MV Hanjin Tianjin, another distress call was made by the master of an Italian Motor Vessel, Rosalia D'Amato, who reported that his ship was under attack. As the MV Hanjin Tianjin looked stable and the ship was known to have a strong citadel, the NATO warship sailed at maximum speed toward the MV Rosalia D'Amato. Unfortunately by the time the warship arrived at the scene, the pirates had been able to gain access inside the ship and hijack the crew.

In order to prevent the pirates from attacking any more vessels their 'attack skiffs' drifting nearby were destroyed. The Turkish warship was able to contact with the master of the MV Rosalia D'Amato, who reported that everybody on board was in good health and the situation on board was stable.

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Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

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 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
USS BAINBRIDGE - United States of America
HDMS ESBERN SNARE - Denmark
TCG GIRESUN – Turkey
USS STEPHEN W GROVES – Unites States of America

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