

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command
Northwood**



12 December 2011

NATO Warship Disrupts Suspected Pirate Activities

On 10 December, the NATO warship USS De Wert prevented a suspected pirate dhow from engaging in acts of piracy and forced it back to the Somali coast making further acts of piracy impossible at this time.

While engaged in a replenishment at sea, USS De Wert received intelligence reports that a dhow acting suspiciously was in the vicinity and looked to be preparing to conduct acts of piracy. USS De Wert was tasked with locating and tracking the dhow while being prepared to conduct a boarding the following morning. At first light, USS De Wert closed the range to the dhow in preparation to board the vessel, but a high sea state was not conducive for a safe boarding.

USS De Wert continued to follow the vessel at close range as it proceeded back to the Somali coast, where it could be contained and prevented from patrolling the sea for victims. This disruption will cost the suspected pirates valuable lost time, and assets from unsuccessfully deploying an action group.

“Although no suspected pirates have been taken into custody at this time, the outcome is equally successful. USS De Wert was able to intercept the suspected pirates and disrupt their actions before they were able to locate and hijack any merchant vessels transiting the seas. Furthermore, it demonstrates NATO’s ability to coordinate multiple assets in locating, identifying and disrupting the threat at sea. USS De Wert has done an excellent job.” Rear Admiral (LH) Sinan Azmi TOSUN, Commander of the NATO counter piracy mission Operation Ocean Shield, commented on the action.

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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 multi-national Naval Group that provides the NATO Alliance with the ability to respond quickly to crisis situations 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 Rear Admiral (LH) Sinan Azmi TOSUN, Turkish Navy.

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

TCG GIRESUN (flagship)– Turkey
HDMS ABSALON – Denmark
ITS GRECALE – Italy
RFA FORT VICTORIA – United Kingdom
USS DEWERT - United States of America
USS CARNEY - United States of America

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