

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood**



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NATO Warship Stops Pirates in Gulf of Aden

Turkish warship TCG Giresun, which is part of NATO's counter piracy operation *Ocean Shield*, has prevented two pirate boats, known as 'skiffs' from carrying out acts of piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

As the warship was patrolling the busy International Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC), a Japanese Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA) which was also on pirate patrol, located two suspicious vessels. A closer inspection of the vessels by the Japanese MPRA identified that they were carrying weapons and other pirate related equipment and this information was quickly passed to the Turkish ship. As TCG Giresun approached the skiffs, the suspected pirates tried to escape, but with the Turkish Navy helicopter and fast-boats bearing down on them, they soon surrendered.

An armed team from the Turkish warship boarded the pirate boats and found rounds of ammunition for assault rifles, grenade launchers and long ladders - which pirates use to scale the side of innocent merchant ships. After seizing the weapons and leaving them with only enough fuel to return to shore, the suspected pirates were allowed to proceed to the coast. The Turkish warship has now returned to her patrol area in the Gulf of Aden to help protect shipping from pirate attacks.

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

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