

News Release



**Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood**



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NATO WARSHIP RESCUES 2 SEAMEN AFTER PIRATE ATTACK

Danish warship HDMS Esbern Snare - part of the NATO's counter piracy mission - Operation Ocean Shield, today rescued 2 men from a life boat after they had fled from their ship, Motor Vessel (MV) Beluga Nomination after an attack by armed pirates on Monday 24 January.

Upon hearing that the MV Beluga Nomination had been attacked by pirates the NATO warship raced to the scene. Upon arrival, the master of MV Beluga Nomination requested that HDMS Esbern Snare stay at a distance to ease the increasing tension on board.

After 2 days the crew of MV Beluga Nomination attempted to overwhelm the pirates, and some managed to escape in one of the ship's life boats. HDMS Esbern Snare, together with Maritime Patrol Aircraft from Spain and the US, immediately started a full scale search for the life boat and at 4 o'clock this afternoon the NATO warship found the relieved men safe and well.

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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. Its command rotates amongst the contributing countries and is currently commanded by Commodore Michiel B. Hijmans, Royal Netherlands Navy

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

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

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