

# News Release



Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood  
[www.manw.nato.int](http://www.manw.nato.int)



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## **HMS Montrose heads home after 100 days in NATO counter piracy mission**

**LONDON:** Yesterday, UK warship HMS MONTROSE left NATO's Operation Ocean Shield after conducting 3 months of counter piracy operations. She is now making her way back to her homeport of Plymouth and a well deserved Christmas leave.

During her deployment, MONTROSE disrupted several piracy attacks and disarmed many suspected pirates. One such incident took place on 25 October.

Pirates had attacked and boarded the MV BELUGA FORTUNE as the crew escaped into a safe room where they hid from the pirates. MONTROSE, being the closest warship, sailed more than 700 nautical miles for more than 24 hours to assist. When they arrived at the Beluga Fortune's position, MONTROSE dispatched a boarding team to search the vessel. After verifying that there were no pirates onboard the vessel was declared safe for the crew to leave the safe room to recommence their voyage.

As part of NATO's counter piracy operation, MONTROSE worked together with the first ever submarine to conduct counter piracy operations, the Dutch submarine ZEELEEUW. The cooperation resulted in a successful disruption of a pirate action group leaving the Somalia coast.

"The crew of MONTROSE certainly deserves a well-earned Christmas at home with their families and friends. It has been a great pleasure to work with Commander Jonathan Lett and his crew

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who have shown remarkable professionalism and adaptability in this ever changing operation. MONTROSE has had a significant effect in the fight against piracy.” Commodore Christian Rune, Royal Danish Navy, Commander of NATO’s counter-piracy Task Force said.

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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 1 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 recently announced its continuing commitment to counter-piracy by extending Operation Ocean Shield to December 2012.

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

HDMS ESBERN SNARE (Flagship) - Denmark  
USS KAUFFMAN – United States of America  
USS LABOON - United States of America  
RFA FORT VICTORIA (With a Royal Marines boarding team embarked) – United Kingdom  
ITS BERSAGLIERE – Italy  
HNLMS AMSTERDAM - Netherlands

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