

# News Release



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



21 April 2011

## NATO Warship Fires Back After Pirate Attack

**London:** Last night the boarding team of NATO warship HDMS Esbern Snare returned fire on a pirated dhow after they came under attack.

The Danish warship, which is conducting counter-piracy patrols off the Somali coast had observed the pirated dhow moving very slowly towards a known pirate anchorage, towing one skiff. As HDMS Esbern Snare approached the dhow, the Danish crew observed some of the men throwing items over the side and climbing in to the skiff.

Without provocation the suspected pirates then started to fire on the NATO boarding team. As HDMS Esbern Snare returned fire in self defence, the crew put their hands up as if they were surrendering. As the boarding team approached the dhow for the second time, some of the suspected pirates then started to fire again. Taking protective action, the Danish warship retreated her boarding team back to the ship.

The suspected pirates abandoned the dhow and fled on to the beach. A large 4x4 vehicle was seen racing over the beach in the vicinity of where the dhow had run aground. During the night HDMS Esbern Snare observed the situation, but no activity was seen on or around the dhow.

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**Background Information:**

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

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 – United States of America

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**Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)**