

News Release



Allied Maritime
Command Headquarters
Northwood
www.manw.nato.int



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HDMS Absalon back for more counter piracy work with NATO

London: The Danish frigate, HDMS Absalon today joins the NATO counter piracy task force (TF508) for a second period of duty.

HDMS Absalon was NATO's counter-piracy flagship between January and March 2010 when she spent a busy 3 months in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean.

On 5th February 2010, it was Absalon who saved the MV Ariella from pirate attack. The master of the MV Ariella sent out a may-day call stating that pirates armed with guns had boarded his vessel and requesting help. The Ariella crew had locked themselves in a safe room enabling the Absalon to send a specially trained force to board the ship and regain control.

On the night of 1st and 2nd March 2010, Absalon located and disposed of two "whalers", the so called mother ships used by pirates as logistic platforms to transport their pirate groups offshore.

HDMS Absalon and her sister ship HDMS Esbern Snare are part of the Absalon class flexible support ships. They are the first in a series of Royal Danish Navy vessels tasked with carrying out new types of missions. They are used in strategic international operations which the Danish navy is focussing on more and more.

Rear Admiral Gualtiero Mattesi, Commander of NATO's counter piracy Task Force said " I'm very pleased to welcome HDMS Absalon back into NATO's counter piracy work and look forward to working with her and her crew. The Absalon is equipped and has the resources necessary to enhance our mission."

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.

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

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

- ITS Andrea Doria (Flagship) - Italy
- USS Carney - USA
- USS De Wert – USA
- RFA Fort Victoria – UK
- HDMS Absalon – Denmark
- P3 Aircraft - Norway

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