

# OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD

## Mission

Since August 2009, NATO warships and aircraft have been patrolling the waters off the Horn of Africa as part of Operation Ocean Shield. Their mission is to contribute to international efforts to counter maritime piracy while participating in capacity building efforts with regional governments. Operation Ocean Shield cooperates closely with other naval forces including US-led maritime forces, EU naval forces and national actors operating against the threat of piracy in the region. On 19 March 2012, the North Atlantic Council extended the operation until the end of 2014. During NATO Defence Ministers held on 3rd June 2014, Operation Ocean Shield was extended until the end of 2016.

## Legal Mandate

NATO mission is in full accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions relating to Somali-based piracy. UNSC Resolution 2020 (November 2011) renewed the call on states and regional organizations to take active part in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia. With the consent of Somali authorities, the resolution also mandates taking "all necessary means to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery within the territorial waters of Somalia".

## Command and Control

NATO's highest decision making body, the North Atlantic Council provides political guidance for the operation. Command and Control is exercised by the NATO military chain of command, with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe having delegated operational command to Maritime Command Headquarters in Northwood in the United Kingdom.

Participating Nation: All Allies contribute to the mission, either directly or indirectly, through NATO's command structures and common funding. NATO Allies provide ships and maritime patrol aircraft to NATO Standing Maritime Groups, which in turn assigns a number of ships, on a rotational basis, to Ocean Shield.

## Area of Operation

NATO naval forces operate off the Horn of Africa, including the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean up to the Strait of Hormuz. An area greater than 2 million square miles or approximately the size of Western Europe. With the consent of Somali authorities, NATO vessels may enter the territorial waters of Somalia. Operations on Somali land are not part of the NATO mandate.



## Process

NATO vessels conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions to verify the activity of shipping off the coast of Somalia, separating out legitimate maritime traffic from suspected pirate vessels. Commercial ships that are transiting the area are monitored and in many cases escorted to ensure their safe passage. The shipping industry is in regular contact with NATO and the other counter piracy operations through the NATO Shipping Centre, where pirate activity can be reported and shared to prevent attacks and enhance situational awareness of the maritime environment. NATO ships also actively pursue suspected pirate ships to prevent them from staging attacks. NATO boarding teams can board a suspect vessel to determine if pirates are on board. NATO vessels can also use force to stop a pirate vessel or intervene in a hijacking. Any detained pirates will be transferred as soon as possible to designated national law enforcement agencies. In addition NATO, along with its partners, has been working with the maritime community to ensure that both merchant ships and crews are aware of Best Management Practices 4 (BMP 4) which gives advice on how to protect vessels against pirate attack.

## Deterrence and Disruption

In January 2013 there were no attacks, approaches or disruptions in the area. In comparison, in January 2012 there were four pirate attacks all of which were unsuccessful and 80 suspected pirates were captured by counter piracy forces of which 59 were captured by NATO ships. In January 2011 there were 29 attacks and six ships were pirated.

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
attacks	11	58	68	52	5	5		
disruptions	N/A	15	88	52	16	6		
Gulf of Aden (incl. IRTC)	hijacks	33	18	12	1	0		
	attacks	42	67	33	29	7	1	
	disruptions	N/A	47	56	21	7	2	
attacks	N/A	5	31	48	10	0		

disruptions	N/A	N/A	3	23	14	0
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## Current rotation:

Danish Frigate HDMS ABSALON has recently completed its contribution to Operation Ocean Shield

## Previous rotations:

<b>September - December 2015</b>	
	HDMS ABSALON (Denmark)
<b>Apr 2015</b>	
	TCG GEDIZ (Turkey)
<b>Mar-Apr 2015</b>	
	HMAS SUCCESS(Australia) TCG BUYUKADA (Turkey)
<b>Feb 2015</b>	
	TCG BUYUKADA (Turkey)
<b>Jun-Dec 2014 SNMG1</b>	
Commodore Aage Buur Jensen (Royal Danish Navy)	HDMS ESBERNE SNARE (Flagship-Denmark);
<b>Dec 2013-Jun 2014 SNMG2</b>	
Rear Admiral Eugenio Diaz Del Rio (Spanish Navy)	ESPS ALVARO DE BAZAN (Flagship-Spain); ESPS CRISTOBOL COLON (Flagship-Spain); TCG GELIBOLU (Turkey); TCG GOKCEADA (Turkey); HNLMS EVERTSEN (The Netherlands); ITS MIMBELLI; New Zealand HMNZS TE MANA (second time a NATO partner at part of CTF-508);
<b>June 2013-Dec 2013 SNMG1</b>	
Commodore Henning Amundsen (Royal Norwegian Navy)	HNoMS FRIDTJOF NANSEN (Flagship-Norway); HNLMS VAN SPEIJK (Netherlands); USS TAYLOR(USA); HDMS ESBERN SNARE (Denmark); USS DE WERT (USA); Ukrainian UPS HETMAN SAGAIACHNY (the first ever non-NATO CTF-508 warship);
<b>Dec 2012-June 2013 SNMG2</b>	
Rear Admiral Antonio Natale (Italian Navy)	ITS San Marco (Flagship - Italy); TCG GOKOVA (Turkey); USS HALYBURTON (U.S.); HDMS IVER HUITFELDT (Denmark); USS NICHOLAS (U.S.); HNLMS VAN SPEIJK (The Netherlands);
<b>June- Dec. 2012 SNMG1</b>	
Commodore Ben Bekkering (Royal Netherlands Navy)	HLNMS Evertsen (Flagship – the Netherlands) USS Taylor (United States)
<b>January-June 2012 SNMG2</b>	
Rear Admiral Sinan Azmi Tosun (Turkish Navy)	TCG GİRESUN (Flagship – Turkey); HDMS Absalon (Denmark); ITS Grecale (Italy); RFA Fort Victoria (United Kingdom);

	USS Dewert (United States); USS Carney (United States).*  <i>* Ships initially assigned to the rotation.</i>
<b>June 2011-Dec. 2011 SNMG1</b>	
Rear Admiral Gualtiero Mattesi (Italian Navy)	ITS Andrea Doria (Flagship – Italy); USS Carney (United States); USS De Wert (United States); NRP D. Francisco De Almeida (Portugal).
<b>Dec. 2010- June 2011 SNMG2</b>	
Commodore Michiel Hijmans (Royal Netherlands Navy)	HMNLS De Ruyter (Flagship - Netherlands); HDMS Esbern Snare (Denmark) TCG Gaziantep (Turkey); and USS Laboon (United States).
<b>Aug. – early Dec. 2010 SNMG1</b>	
Commodore Christian Rune (Denmark)	HDMS Esbern Snare (Flagship, Denmark); HMS Montrose and FTVR (United kingdom); USS Kauffman and Laboon (United States); ITS Bersagliere (Italy); and Zeeleeuw (NL submarine).
<b>March-August 2010 SNMG2</b>	
12 March-30 June: Commodore Steve Chick (UK)	HMS Chatham (Flagship, United Kingdom) HS LIMNOS (Greece)-under national control from 30 May ITS SCIROCCO (Italy)-under national control from 5 June TCG Gelibolu (Turkey) USS Cole (United States)
1st July-6 August: Commodore Michiel Hijmans (Royal Netherlands Navy)	HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën (Flagship, The Netherlands) TCG Gelibolu (Turkey) USS Cole (United States)
<b>Nov. 2009-March 2010 SNMG1</b>	
Commodore Christian Rune (succeeded Rear Admiral Jose Pereira de Cunha (PO) from 25 January 2010).	NRP Álvares Cabral (outgoing flagship, Portugal) HDMS Absalon (incoming flagship, Denmark) HMS Fredericton (Canada) USS Boone (United States) HMS Chatham (United Kingdom)
<b>Aug. – Nov. 2009 SNMG2</b>	
Commodore Steve Chick (UK)	HS Navarinon (Greece) ITS Libeccio (Italy) TCG Gediz (Turkey) HMS Cornwall (United Kingdom) USS Donald Cook (United States)