

News Release



Maritime
Command
Northwood
www.manw.nato.int



Ref: OOS 2012 / 32

23rd October 2012

NATO Flagship Assists Ship Freed By Pirates

The MV Orna was released by Somali pirates on Saturday (20th) after being held captive for almost 2 years. As the NATO flagship HNLMS Rotterdam was close by she rendezvoused with the Orna and was able to provide humanitarian support in the shape of medical assistance, food and water to the freed crew.

The doctor on board HNLMS Rotterdam, Lieutenant Commander Rijkers, stated afterwards: "The crew was very relieved to see us. Being there when the morning broke, being able to talk to other people, it all meant a lot to the crew of Orna. We conducted a medical check, provided food and water and in general lent a listening ear. Fortunately, the crew are in relatively good physical health. By helping each other, they managed to find a way to cope with the difficult circumstances they lived in."

HNLMS Rotterdam is now continuing her patrol as part of Operation Ocean Shield, NATO's contribution to the international anti-piracy effort in the waters around the Horn of Africa. On board there are approximately 350 sailors, soldiers and airmen from all three armed services and an international staff from seven NATO countries.

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.

NATO Allies agreed on 19 March 2012 to extend Operation Ocean Shield for a further two years until the end of 2014.

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:
HNLMS Rotterdam (flagship) The Netherlands
USS Halyburton (United States of America)

Media Inquiries only to:
Public Affairs Officer
+44 (0)1923 956763

Email: pio@manw.nato.int
Facebook: operationoceanshield
Twitter: @oceanshield