

News Release



Maritime
Command
Northwood
www.manw.nato.int



Ref: OOS 2012 / 42

16th December 2012

NATO Warship HDMS IVER HUITFELDT Frees Danish Ship After Pirate Attack

Late yesterday, the Danish MV Torm KRISTINA was sailing to Muscat (Oman) in order to perform a quick logistical port visit, when she was approached by 2 suspected pirate skiffs. The crew quickly assembled in the citadel and sent a mayday message out.

Meanwhile the mayday message was passed to the Commander of the NATO counter piracy task force, Rear Admiral Antonio Natale. He tasked one of the NATO warships HDMS Iver Huitfeldt, which was in Muscat for a port visit and therefore only 90 miles away, to proceed to the MV Torm Kristina and assist her.

By the time the NATO warship arrived on the scene three hours later, the pirates had left the Torm Kristina. It is believed that they saw the warship coming towards them and realised they had no realistic possibility of taking control of the Torm Kristina.

A boarding party from the Iver Huitfeldt boarded the Torm Kristina, searched the ship to ensure that no pirates were still on board and once this was established they freed the crew from the citadel.

Vice Admiral Christian Canova, Deputy Commander at Allied Maritime Command said, "Despite the winter monsoon which generates bad sea states, this incident demonstrates the pirates are still active and able to operate far away from Somalia but we are watching them and when Best Management Practices such as citadels are in effect on merchant vessels, we are able to react quickly and deter pirate actions. Once again, NATO warships have proved their ability to react

quickly and to use their speed and capabilities to deter and disrupt piracy and to free innocent merchant sailors. This incident shows that we cannot be complacent.”

MV Torm Kristina is now free to sail.

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:

- ~ **ITS SAN MARCO** – Flag Ship (ITALY)
- ~ **HDMS IVER HUITFELDT** (DENMARK)
- ~ **USS HALYBURTON** (UNITED STATES)
- ~ **TCG GOKOVA** (TURKEY)

Media Inquiries only to:

Public Affairs Officer

+44 (0)1923 956763

+44(0)7795 811907

Email: pio@manw.nato.int

Facebook: operationoceanshield

Twitter: @oceanshield