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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER NATO MARCOM NOVEMBER 2018.

NATO MARCOM continues Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) tasks and security patrols in the NATO Area of Responsibility. In November, Exercise Trident Juncture 18, the largest NATO Live Exercise since the 1980s, concluded after 14 intensive days. Additionally, Operation Sea Guardian (OSG) concentrated maritime security efforts in the Eastern Mediterranean for Focused Operations (FOCOPS) 18-6.

Maritime Security Operations

Also in November, OSG saw significant participation from multiple NATO nations totaling 88 warships. Several NATO Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft, 80 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) provided by Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Turkey, France, and USA, and submarines under NATO and national operational command supported the operation.

FOCOPS 18-6 took place in the waters of the Eastern Mediterranean starting 23 November. Captain Deyannis of the Greek Navy led the operation on HS Navarino along with the Bulgarian BGS Drazki. This surface action group patrolled with the support of MPAs and submarines.

A total of 491 merchant vessels were hailed during the month of November. Furthermore, excellent cooperation between Israel and NATO MARCOM was demonstrated during the FOCOPS period during a Medical Evacuation Exercise, which will help improve coordination and interoperability between Israel and NATO for future support operations in the area.

OSG continues to enhance NATO MSA and increase control of the maritime domain in order to counter terrorism.

Standing Naval Maritime Groups

Standing Naval Maritime Group 2 (SNMG-2) and its tactical unit number 1 (TU 01), continue their deployment in the Aegean Sea, supporting the efforts of the EU, Greece, and Turkey to control migration. The SNMG-2 TU 01 Commander leads his units from the German frigate FGS Lubeck, supported by the Hellenic warships HS Mikonios that was relieved by HS Blesas on 26 November, as well as HS Kallisto and HS Polemistis, who relieved HS Kasos on 10 November. The Albanian warship ALS Lissus and the Turkish warship TCG Karaburun relieved TCG Karadeniz Ereğli on 9 of November and supported the deployment. SNMG-2 TU 01 patrolled

the areas assigned and sighted 5 small boats with immigrants coming from Turkey. The movements of these small boats were reported to local authorities for further action.

Standing Naval Maritime Group 2 (SNMG-2) and its tactical unit number 2 (TU 02), formed by the Dutch HNLMS De Ruyter (flagship), the Canadian HMCS Ville de Quebec, and the Spanish ESPS Cristobal Colon and ESPS Cantabria, took part in Trident Juncture 18 until 7 November. The group then initiated the transit towards the Mediterranean Sea, where the Turkish TCG Orucreis joined them to carry out training activities and MSA tasks. During the transit through the West Mediterranean, the group executed a training exercise with Algerian naval units.

SNMG-1, formed by the Danish HDMS Esbern Snare (flagship), the Norwegian HNOMS Helge Ingstad, the Belgian BMS Louise Marie, and the Portuguese NRP Corte Real, also took part in Trident Juncture 18. Following the conclusion of the exercise, the group sailed the Baltic Sea and the North Sea to carry out training activities and MSA tasks, including a training opportunity with the German Navy to increase interoperability within the Alliance. The group visited Dundee, Oslo, and Karlskrona during the month of November.

Standing Naval Mine Counter Measures Group 1 (SNMCMG-1), led by the Belgian warship BNS Godetia and consisting of the Norwegian HNOMS Maaloey, Lithuanian LNS Kursis, Latvian LVNS Ruis, German FGS Hamburg, and the Dutch HNLMS Makkum, also finished Trident Juncture 18 on 7 November. Following a brief visit to Aarhus, the group transited to the Baltic Sea to carry out counter mining training and MSA task, visiting Riga and Karlskrona. The group also took advantage of a training opportunity with the German Navy.

Standing Naval Mine Counter Measures Group 2 (SNMCMG-2), composed by German FGS Rhein (flagship), Turkish TCG Erdmeli, Spanish ESPS Turia, Bulgarian BGS Tsibar, and Romanian Nicolescu, operated in the Black Sea, carrying out training activities with the Bulgarian and Georgian Navies, to include Exercise Poseidon. The warships visited Batumi and Burgas then transited to the Aegean Sea. They proceeded to carry out MSA tasks and training activities. The group visited Erdek and Piraeus before crossing the Corinto Canal.

MARCOM Training Activities

Trident Juncture 18 finished its LIVEX phase (with participation of units at sea and troops on the ground) and started the CPX (a Synthetic exercise) for NATO HQ with a fictitious scenario in which Article 5 of the Washington Treaty was applied. The NATO Shipping Centre took part in this exercise with staff from several NATO nations.

The Naval Cooperation and Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS) community from across NATO countries executed tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) during DYNAMIC MASTER 18, hosted by the NATO Shipping Centre and NATO Maritime Command in Northwood—an exercise that moved Deployable NCAGS Elements (DNE's) to several ports in Europe to brief masters and companies about the exercise and OSG.

MARCOM engagements

Staff officers from MARCOM visited several NATO partners for expert staff meetings to discuss future cooperation and maritime engagements. These visits included Batumi from 31 Oct to 4 Nov, Algiers from 19-21 Nov, and Abu Dhabi from 27 - 30 Nov.



NATO Shipping Centre (NSC) Updates

The NSC was represented at the Maritime Engagement Forum in HMS Collingwood hosted by the Royal Navy to develop a wider relationship with the maritime industry. Additionally, a delegation from the NSC and MARCOM attended the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) meeting in Bahrain on 20-21 November to keep abreast of count-piracy and maritime security operations in the Western Indian Ocean.

The NSC, in cooperation with US MARAD, continues requesting all ships to report incidents of GPS jamming or interference in the Eastern Mediterranean in order to maintain overall awareness of issues affecting safety and security of navigation. The assessment sent with the previous newsletter remains valid and up-to-date.

Merchant ships are also encouraged to report all suspicious activity in the Mediterranean Sea and broader North Atlantic Region to the NSC.

Finally, the NSC would like to take the opportunity to wish the maritime community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, especially to all of those at sea!

Ben Lofstad

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