



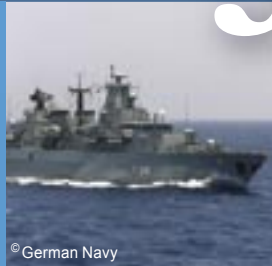
NATO  
+  
OTAN

*Active  
Endeavour*



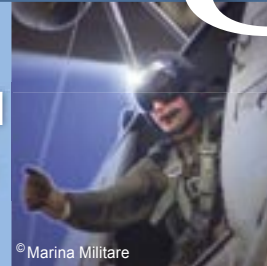
# briefing

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NATO naval  
operations



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Proliferation  
Security  
Initiative

## Combating terrorism at sea

“Active Endeavour has proved to be an effective tool in countering terrorism at and from the sea in the Mediterranean”

Vice Admiral Roberto Cesaretti,  
Commander of Operation  
Active Endeavour

**N**ATO ships are patrolling throughout the Mediterranean monitoring shipping to help detect, deter, defend, and protect against terrorist activity.

This operation, called Active Endeavour, has evolved out of NATO's immediate response to the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001. In the intervening years, the operation has developed increasingly effective intelligence-gathering and information-sharing procedures relevant to the wider struggle against international terrorism.

“Active Endeavour has proved to be an effective tool in countering terrorism at and from the sea in the Mediterranean,” says Vice Admiral Roberto Cesaretti, Commander of Active Endeavour. The operation has also helped NATO gain valuable experience of maritime interdiction operations and more broadly contributed to maintaining ►



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“The aim is to develop a much more effective information collection and analysis system and to change the character of the operation from one that is intelligence-supported to one that is intelligence-driven”

Vice Admiral Roberto Cesaretti,  
Commander of Operation  
Active Endeavour



peace, stability and security in a strategic region.

NATO initially deployed its Standing Naval Forces to the Eastern Mediterranean on 6 October 2001 in a demonstration of Alliance resolve and solidarity. That was a day before the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, the US-led campaign to oust *al Qaida* and the *Taliban* from Afghanistan.

The deployment was one of eight measures (see box on page 6) taken by NATO to support the United States in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, following the invocation of Article 5, NATO's collective-defence provision, for the first time in the Alliance's history. Its aim was to provide a deterrent presence and surveillance in strategic international waters at a key moment.

The deployment, which was formally named Operation Active Endeavour on 26 October 2001, is commanded by Allied Forces Maritime Component Command HQ Naples (CC-MAR Naples) through the Maritime Operations Centre, and represented a milestone for the Alliance. Together with the dispatch of Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) aircraft to the United States, it was the first time that NATO assets had been deployed in support of an Article 5 operation.

Keeping the Mediterranean's busy trade routes open and safe is critical to NATO's security. In terms of energy alone, some 65 per cent of the oil and natural gas consumed in Western Europe pass through the Mediterranean each year, with major pipelines connecting Libya to Italy and Morocco to Spain. For this reason, NATO ships are systematically carrying out preparatory route surveys in “choke” points as well as in important passages and harbours throughout the Mediterranean.

## Expanding the mission

In March 2003, Active Endeavour was expanded to include providing escorts through the Straits of Gibraltar to merchant ships from Allied states that requested them. This extension of the mission was designed to help prevent terrorist attacks such as those off Yemen on the USS Cole in October 2000 and on the French oil tanker Limburg two years later. This was a precautionary measure taken on the basis of intelligence indicating that ships passing through this extremely narrow passage were potential terrorist targets. Some 3,000 commercial shipments pass through the Straits every day. In May 2004 the escorts were suspended as a result of a declining number of requests. They may, however, be reactivated at any time.

In April 2003, NATO further expanded the mission and began boarding suspect ships. These boardings take place with the compliance of the ships' captains and flag states, in accordance with international law. In practice, merchant ships are hailed by patrolling NATO naval units and asked to identify themselves and their activity. This information is then reported to both CC-MAR Naples and the NATO Shipping Centre in Northwood, England. If irregularities are discovered, not necessarily related to terrorism, this information is relayed to the appropriate law-enforcement agency in the vessel's next port of call.



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The suspect vessel will then be shadowed until action is taken by a responsible agency, or until it enters a country's territorial waters on the way to a port.

In March 2004, as a result of the success of Active Endeavour in the Eastern Mediterranean, NATO extended its remit to the entire Mediterranean.

### New operational pattern

In October 2004, NATO put in place a new operational pattern. Since then, the focus has been on gathering and processing information and intelligence so as to target specific vessels of interest. In this way, it is now possible to deploy surface forces as reaction units to conduct specific tasks such as tracking and boarding of vessels. Augmentation forces, such as one of the Alliance's Standing Maritime Groups, may join the operation to provide an enhanced presence and more intensive surveillance capability.

Active Endeavour has over the years increasingly become an information and intelligence-based operation through the sharing of data gathered at sea by Allies and Mediterranean-rim countries. The level of information-sharing achieved to date provides a sound foundation upon which to build in the future. According to Vice Admiral Cesaretti: "The aim is to develop a much more effective information collection and analysis system and to change the character of the operation from one that is intelligence-supported to one that is intelligence-driven."

NATO is also developing an experimental networking system to enable all Mediterranean countries to exchange information about merchant shipping in the basin more effectively. The resulting picture of the merchant shipping traffic in the Mediterranean should assist law-enforcement agencies, as well as NATO forces in international waters, to act against these problems.

“Active Endeavour has had a visible effect on security and stability in the Mediterranean”

Secretary General  
Jaap de Hoop Scheffer



### Participation of NATO Partners

At NATO's Istanbul Summit in June 2004, the Alliance decided to enhance Active Endeavour including through the support of NATO Partner nations and Mediterranean Dialogue countries. The Mediterranean Dialogue Programme, which was set up in 1995, seeks to contribute to regional security and stability and to achieve better mutual understanding between NATO and its Mediterranean Partners.

All offers of support, including those by other interested countries, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Following offers of support by Russia and Ukraine, agreements concerning their support to

the operation were finalised in 2004. Expert NATO teams have been working with staff from both countries to prepare for the beginning of their operational contributions later in 2006 or early 2007.

Negotiations are also under way with three Mediterranean Dialogue countries – Algeria, Israel and Morocco – and two Partner countries – Georgia and Albania – which indicated a desire to support the operation.

In the words of Jaap de Hoop Scheffer: “NATO is the place where common responses are being developed to the challenges posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction and failed states and the place where common decisions are converted into common action.”

### Benefits

While the mandate of Active Endeavour is focused on deterring and detecting terrorist-related activities, the operation has had a visible effect on security and stability in the Mediterranean that is beneficial to trade and economic activity, as well as emergencies.

As of 13 July 2006, some 81,000 ships had been “hailed” and 102 boarded. In addition, 488 non-combatant escorts had been conducted through the Straits of Gibraltar.

In June 2003, a southern-region country reported that a vessel was operating in a suspicious manner. CC-MAR

Naples disseminated this information to a wider audience to increase general awareness and in preparation for any subsequent action on the part of NATO or national authorities. Subsequently, an Ally's Coast Guard was able to use the information when it spotted the same vessel operating within its territorial waters and the national authorities decided to investigate more thoroughly.

NATO ships and helicopters have also intervened on several occasions to rescue civilians on stricken oilrigs and sinking ships. This includes helping 84 workers to evacuate an oilrig in high winds and heavy seas in December 2001 and winching women and children off a sinking ship carrying some 250 refugees in January 2002 and helping to repair the damaged hull.

The experience that NATO has accrued in Active Endeavour and other maritime interdiction operations (*see box on page 5*) has given the Alliance unparalleled expertise in this field. This expertise is relevant to wider international efforts to combat terrorism and, in particular, the proliferation and smuggling of weapons of mass destruction.

Although many characteristics of Active Endeavour are essentially the same as those of earlier NATO maritime missions in terms of the equipment used and activities involved, the nature of the threat is new and has required the adoption of innovative approaches. ▶

The Alliance's two maritime high-readiness frigate forces – Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG 2, formerly STANAVFORMED) and Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG 1, formerly STANAVFORLANT) – rotate on a three-monthly basis in the Mediterranean in support of Active Endeavour. These forces include ships from many NATO nations that are also deployed on a rotational basis.

Allies also contribute additional forces on a voluntary basis and Active Endeavour relies heavily on the logistic support of Allies in the Mediterranean. In addition, submarines provide complementary surveillance by providing discreet monitoring of specific areas to

detect suspicious behaviour. Maritime patrol aircraft also provide wide area coverage across large areas, using a variety of sensors to detect and classify vessels and other objects. Spanish maritime forces play a particularly important role in escorting ships through the Straits of Gibraltar.

Regular reports on the conduct of Operation Active Endeavour are provided to the UN Security Council. ■

For more information on Active Endeavour, see [www.afsouth.nato.int/JFCN\\_Operations/ActiveEndeavour/Endeavour.htm](http://www.afsouth.nato.int/JFCN_Operations/ActiveEndeavour/Endeavour.htm)



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## NATO naval operations

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has acquired much experience and practical expertise in naval operations, whether carried out in support of individual Allies or coalitions of Allies or under the NATO banner. The longest-duration NATO maritime missions took place during the wars of Yugoslav dissolution. Between 1992 and 1996, the Alliance helped enforce both an arms embargo against the whole of the former Yugoslavia and economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, both of which were imposed by the UN

Security Council. This operation, which also involved forces from the Western European Union, was originally called Maritime Monitor and then re-named Sharp Guard as the mission was expanded from surveillance to include boarding and searching of vessels. Given the many similarities with Active Endeavour, the experience gained during these years has proved extremely useful to the current operation. ■



## Proliferation Security Initiative

The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is a response to the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems and related materials worldwide. Launched by US President George W. Bush in May 2003, it is a global partnership of countries seeking to halt the flow of dangerous technologies to and from states and non-state actors engaged in or supporting WMD proliferation programmes.

Participating countries agreed a Statement of Interdiction Principles in September 2003. These commit them to undertaking effective measures, either alone or

in concert with other states, in a number of specific areas: interdicting the transfer or transport of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern, adopting streamlined procedures for rapid exchange of relevant information concerning suspected proliferation activity; protecting the confidential character of classified information provided by other states as part of this initiative; dedicating appropriate resources and efforts to interdiction operations and capabilities and maximising coordination among participants in interdiction efforts; reviewing and working to strengthen relevant national legal authorities where necessary to accomplish these objectives and working to strengthen relevant international laws and frameworks in appropriate ways

to support these commitments; and taking specific actions in support of interdiction efforts regarding cargoes of WMD, their delivery systems, or related materials, to the extent national legal authorities permit and consistent with their obligations under international law.

At the Istanbul Summit in June 2004, the Alliance underscored its strong support for the aims of the Proliferation Security Initiative and its Statement of Interdiction Principles, and called on partners and other countries to join in supporting and implementing the objectives of the Initiative. NATO's experience of patrolling the Mediterranean to detect and deter terrorism in Active Endeavour is highly relevant in this context. ■

## Early measures to combat terrorism

Having invoked Article 5 in response to the terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September 2001, the Allies agreed on 4 October 2001 – at the request of the United States – to take eight initial measures to implement it. Specifically, they agreed to enhance intelligence sharing and cooperation, both bilaterally and in the appropriate NATO bodies, related to the threats posed by terrorism and the actions to be taken against it; to provide individually or collectively, as appropriate and according to their



capabilities, assistance to Allies and other states which are or may be subject to increased terrorist threats as a result of their support for the campaign against terrorism; and to take necessary measures to provide increased security for facilities of the United States and other Allies on their territory.

The Allies also agreed to “backfill” selected Allied assets required to support operations against terrorism; to provide blanket overflight clearances for US and

other Allied aircraft for military flights related to operations against terrorism; and to provide access for the United States and other Allies to ports and airfields on the territory of NATO nations for operations against terrorism. In addition, the Allies agreed to deploy part of NATO's Standing Naval Forces to the Eastern Mediterranean and AWACS planes to the United States to support operations against terrorism. ■