

Canadian Warship to Begin Counter-Piracy Operation

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OTTAWA, ONTARIO -- (Marketwire) -- 11/21/09 -- The Government of Canada is pleased to announce that Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Fredericton has joined Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1) to conduct counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa. The deployment of the Halifax-based frigate is called Operation SAIPH.

"The Government of Canada is proud of the significant contributions to global maritime security being made by our men and women in uniform. HMCS Fredericton and her coalition partners will play a critical role in detecting, deterring and defending against piracy and terrorism," said the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway.

"The ability of the Canadian navy to participate in complex, multi-national operations with our coalition partners demonstrates the agility and professionalism of our military and Canada's determination to support maritime security and global stability," said General Walt Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff.

Acts of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa pose a significant threat to the safety of commercial maritime routes, international navigation, and humanitarian relief. NATO has conducted counter-piracy operations in the area since late 2008 to increase security and freedom of movement for international shipping. SNMG1 is a multinational, integrated fleet of NATO warships that train and operate together as a team. Since August 17, 2009, the NATO counter-piracy effort has been conducted under Operation OCEAN SHIELD.

"This is an important day for my ship and her crew" said Commander Steve Waddell, commanding officer of HMCS Fredericton, which joined SNMG1 yesterday. "We stand ready to work with our NATO partners and are more than prepared to defend against, disrupt, and deny those elements that would terrorize and threaten shipping in the region."

Canada's involvement in counter-piracy operations began in August 2008, when HMCS Ville de Quebec safely escorted World Food Programme cargo ships from Mombasa, Kenya, to Mogadishu, Somalia, through pirate laden waters. In April 2009, HMCS Winnipeg joined SNMG1 for 10 weeks of successful counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa. HMCS Fredericton and her ship's company are scheduled to return to Canada in May 2010.

Notes to editors:

For more information about Operation SAIPH, visit www.cefcom.forces.gc.ca

Still imagery of HMCS Fredericton's mission is available at: www.combatcamera.forces.gc.ca

Video b-roll can be downloaded at: <http://www.combatcamera.forces.gc.ca/common/combatcamera/news/>

For information about Standing NATO Maritime Group 1, visit www.snmg1.nato.int.

Contacts:

Information: 1-866-377-0811

After hours: 613-792-2973

www.forces.gc.ca

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