



EU NAVFOR - ATALANTA

EU NAVFOR - ATALANTA FRIGATE HANDS OVER 13 SUSPECTED PIRATES TO THE KENYAN AUTHORITIES

16 May 2009

Thirteen suspected pirates detained on board an EU NAVFOR - ATALANTA vessel were handed over to the Kenyan authorities in Mombasa today, 16 May, in accordance with the agreement between the EU and Kenya enabling suspected pirates to be prosecuted in Kenya.

The Spanish warship SPS MARQUES DE LA ENSENADA transferred the pirates to the Kenyan authorities under the EU-Kenya agreement of 6 March 2009, bringing to 52 the number of suspected pirates captured by the EU taskforce patrolling the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Basin.

Rear Admiral Philip Jones, Commander of Operation EU NAVFOR - Atalanta said: "*I should like to thank the Kenyan authorities for their excellent cooperation in taking over these suspected pirates for prosecution and trial in the Kenyan courts.*"

This is the fifth transfer of pirates under the EU-Kenya agreement. The EU is the only organisation to have concluded an agreement with a country in the region allowing the prosecution and imprisonment of pirates arrested and detained by EU NAVFOR forces. The agreement is a key factor in deterring acts of piracy and the EU is exploring the possibilities of entering into similar legal agreements with other countries in the region.

Seven of the suspected pirates were captured after a foiled attempt to attack a Panamanian-registered Greek merchant ship in the Gulf of Aden on 6 May. The skiff carrying the seven pirates capsized when the Greek tanker took evasive action. The other seven suspected pirates were detained the following day, 7 May, after attacking another Greek ship, a bulk carrier flying the Maltese flag, in the Gulf of Aden. They were stopped by the helicopter of the SPS MARQUES DE LA ENSENADA which was in the vicinity. Four other groups of suspected pirates caught by EU NAVFOR - Atalanta have previously been transferred to Kenya - two groups by a German frigate and two by a French one. One of the captured pirate could not be transferred because he is recovering from his injuries in Djibuti.

Background

EU NAVFOR - Atalanta was launched on 8 December 2008 in support of UN Security Council resolutions 1814, 1816 and 1846 adopted in 2008. It is conducted under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

13 vessels, two French, four German, one Greek, one Italian, two Spanish and, since mid-May, three Swedish, and 3 Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA) are currently taking part in the EU NAVFOR - Operation Atalanta.

More information on www.consilium.europa.eu/eunavfor-somalia

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