

April 20, 2012 - 14:39

## EU Naval Force Warship "ESPS Reina Sofía" Escorts Freed Dhow to Yemeni Coast



**On April 19, 15:00, Yemen local time, the commanding officer of Spanish warship, ESPS Reina Sofía, who is currently operating as part of the EU's counter-piracy mission off Somalia - *Operation Atalanta*, wished "*fair winds and following seas*" to the master of the freed Yemeni dhow minutes before it was escorted safely to the Yemeni authorities.**

The Yemeni dhow had been released from pirates by Spanish frigate Reina Sofia sailors on Sunday 15 April after a co-ordinated operation by a French Air Force Awacs E3F aircraft, French warship Dixmude and an Australian maritime patrol aircraft.

The dhow was accompanied by the Spanish frigate to the limits of Yemeni territorial waters and handed over to the Yemeni coastguards, who then escorted the freed fishermen in to port.

The owner of the dhow, who was present at the handover, was very pleased to have his crew and boat back safe and sound, and he reassured the happy crew that in a few days' time they could continue their fishing activities in the area.

The handover of the Yemeni dhow to the Yemeni authorities is a good example of the good cooperation and coordination of EU Naval Forces with the regional countries' navies and coast guards.



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