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## **Force Commander Visits ESPS Relampago Whilst Conducting Counter Piracy Operations In Gulf Of Aden**



On 16th March the Force Commander of EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Somalia Operation Atalanta, Rear Admiral Hervé Bléjean visited the Spanish Offshore Patrol Vessel, ESPS Relampago for the first time since the ship arrived in the piracy high risk area.

ESPS Relampago joined Operation Atalanta, the EU's counter piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden and Horn of Africa region on 13th March, after taking over from the Spanish Navy sister ship, ESPS Tornado.

The Force Commander flew to ESPS Relampago from the EU Naval Force Flagship FS Siroco in the Spanish Navy SH 60 Helicopter.

The visit gave the Force Commander the opportunity to be briefed on the full capabilities of the Relampago and discuss operational matters with the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Isidoro Jungito Carrion.

Rear Admiral Bléjean commented following the visit, "I have been very impressed with the capabilities of Relampago and the motivation and professionalism of her ship's company, I am sure she will prove a highly effective asset to EU Naval Force."

FS Siroco joined the operation and assumed the role of EU Flagship in December 2013. EU Naval Force Somalia Operation Atalanta is the European Union's counter piracy mission in the Horn of Africa region. Its mission is to



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protect the vessels of the World Food Programme and AMISOM; deter and disrupt piracy; protect vulnerable shipping and monitor fishing activities off the coast of Somalia.



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