
NATO WARSHIPS VISIT MONTENEGRIN PORT OF BAR

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Three NATO ships under the command of Standing NATO Response Force Mine Countermeasure Group, SNMCMG-2, will visit the Montenegrin port of Bar on Friday, the country's Defence Ministry announced.

Under the command of Turkish captain Ramazan Kesgin, the fleet consists of the Turkish flagship Sokollu Mehmet Pasha, as well as two minesweepers, the Spanish ship Tambre and Turkish ship, Edremit.

The Ministry said the aim of the visit was to highlight the importance of NATO operations in the fight against terrorism, as well as foster cooperation between NATO Allied Naval Command and Montenegro, one of the countries involved in NATO's Partnership for Peace program, PfP.

"This group of ships, as a unique unit, operates mainly in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and specializes in mine clearance operations and other ordnance left over from the wars in the 20th century," the ministry said on Thursday

Under Active Endeavour, NATO ships are patrolling the Mediterranean and monitoring shipping to deter, disrupt and protect against terrorist activity.

The operation evolved out of NATO's response to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001.

Montenegro's government wants to join NATO as soon as possible, although the issue remains controversial among the country's 600,000 inhabitants.

Members of the large Serbian community still resent NATO for its role in bombing Serbia in the late 1990s.

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