

Latvia Joins International Maritime Coalition in Middle East as 11th Member



Graphic illustration of the Latvia flag and International Maritime Security Construct logo. U.S. Naval Forces Central Command welcomed Latvia, Dec. 1, as the 11th member of the multinational maritime coalition established three years ago to deter attacks on commercial shipping in the Middle East. *U.S. NAVY*

MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) welcomed Latvia, Dec. 1, as the 11th member of a multinational maritime coalition established three years ago to deter attacks on commercial shipping in the Middle East, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said in a Dec. 1 release.

Latvia has joined the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) and its operational arm, Coalition Task Force Sentinel, which are headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. 5th Fleet.

Latvia is the third nation to become a member of IMSC this year. Seychelles and Romania joined in October and March respectively.

“We are excited to strengthen and expand IMSC with Latvia’s addition,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of NAVCENT, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. Cooper also serves as IMSC’s multinational task force commander. “Latvia is already a key NATO ally, and we now welcome them to a growing international naval coalition in the Middle East, which protects some of the most important waterways in the world.”

IMSC was formed in July 2019 in response to increased threats to freedom of navigation for merchant mariners transiting international waters in the Middle East. Coalition Task Force Sentinel was established four months later to deter state-sponsored malign activity and reassure the merchant shipping industry in the Bab al-Mandeb and Strait of Hormuz.

“Our coalition continues to grow and build commercial and military partnerships,” said United Kingdom Royal Navy Commodore Ben Aldous, commander of IMSC and Coalition Task Force Sentinel. “In an international rules-based system, a shared, common voice resonates louder than a state acting on its own.”

In addition to Latvia, Seychelles and Romania, IMSC member-nations include Albania, Bahrain, Estonia, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.