

# NATO Concludes Vigilance Activity Neptune Shield 22



An F/A-18E Super Hornet, attached to the “Fighting Checkmates” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 211, refuels a Spanish air force AV-8B II+ Harrier in support of Neptune Shield 22, May 21. *U.S. NAVY / Strike Fighter Squadron 11*

OEIRAS, Portugal – Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO) and U.S. 6th Fleet concluded the NATO-led Vigilance Activity Neptune Shield 2022 from STRIKFORNATO’s Joint Operations Centre in Oeiras, Portugal, May 31, STRIKFORNATO said June 3.

The two-week vigilance activity demonstrated NATO’s ability to integrate the command and control of multiple carrier strike groups, an amphibious ready group and a Marine expeditionary unit, involving the participation of 25 NATO allied and partner nations.

Neptune Shield kicked off May 17 from the Baltic, Adriatic, Ionian and Mediterranean Seas, and involved missions at sea, in the air and on the ground across Europe, supporting both Allied Joint Force Command Naples and Joint Force Command Brunssum.

“Credible force projection to defend the alliance has to be integrated across multiple domains; sea, air, land as well as space and cyberspace. NESH22 further integrated those domains, and was an essential step in the progression of the Neptune series to demonstrate NATO’s ability to defend against any threat from any direction,” said Adm. Robert P. Burke, commander, JFC Naples.

While STRIKFORNATO executed command and control of the USS Harry S. Truman CSG, the ITS CAVOUR CSG and the Combined Task Force 61/2, which included the USS Kearsarge ARG and the 22nd

MEU, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe coordinated the activity, integrating NATO Allied Maritime Command and NATO Allied Air Command.

“Demonstrating and enhancing NATO’s high-end maritime warfare capabilities shows the world the true strength and teamwork of our alliance,” said Vice Adm. Gene Black, commander, STRIKFORNATO and 6th Fleet. “NATO’s capacity to conduct integrated operations in the maritime domain ensures stability and peace throughout Europe, and validates more than seven decades of alliance interoperability.”

STRIKFORNATO led and coordinated maritime and expeditionary forces composed of four carrier strike groups from three different nations, more than 30 ships and 160 aircraft, including forces from the Harry S. Truman CSG, the Kearsarge ARG-MEU, the Italian Navy CAVOUR CSG, the Spanish Navy Juan Carlos I CSG and the Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 and 2. More than 200 aircraft sorties and 80 vigilance activities were executed by more than 11,000 personnel from 25 NATO and partner countries.

Nations participating in Neptune Shield 2022 included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the U.K. and the U.S.