

Truman Strike Group Concludes High-North Operations with Strait of Gibraltar Transit



Caption: USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) transits the Strait of Gibraltar. (MC3 Logan McGuire)

From Story by Lt.Cmdr. Courtney Callaghan, Lt. Brandon Dedmon and Lt. Camila Healey, Nov. 27, 2024

MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG), including Italian Navy Carlo Bergamini-class frigate Carabiniere (F 593), and the Spanish Navy Álvaro de Bazán-class frigate Méndez Núñez (F-104) transited the Strait of Gibraltar for the Mediterranean Sea, Nov. 25, following over a month of operations with Allies and partners in the North and Norwegian Seas.

“Two months into deployment, and the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group has experienced an unprecedented amount of operations with our NATO Allies and partners,” said Rear Adm. Sean Bailey, commander of the HSTCSG. “It is truly impressive to watch the seamless integration of the armed forces of so many countries and multitude of ships and aircraft all operating as a unified fighting force. It is an absolute testament to the strength and versatility of the NATO Alliance.”

HSTCSG arrived in the North Sea on Oct. 15, immediately engaging with Allies and partners, starting with the Portuguese Navy Frigate NRP Francisco De Almeida (F 333) and Royal Norwegian Navy replenishment oiler HNoMS Maud (A-530). Almeida seamlessly integrated into the carrier strike group as an immediate force multiplier, where the ship served as a horizon reference unit for the carrier and conducted

Helicopter, Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (HVBSS) operations.

During that time, Maud provided the needed fuel for the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109) and USS Stout (DDG 55) to detach as a surface action group to conduct maritime operations in the Barents Sea, where the ships enhanced domain awareness, deterred adversaries, and practiced campaigning in the Arctic. On the way back, both ships pulled into Tromsø, Norway, for fuel, supplies, and rest and relaxation for the crew.

“It is important that U.S. naval forces demonstrate a calibrated presence in the Arctic by conducting routine operations in the region,” said Cmdr. Desmond Walker, commander officer of Stout. “We must take on all opportunities to enhance our capabilities toward potential campaigns around the world.”

In a display of transatlantic military cooperation and power projection, HSTCSG units conducted dual carrier strike group operations with the United Kingdom Royal Navy’s aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09) for the 7-day NATO-led maritime vigilance activity Neptune Strike (NEST) 24.2, Oct. 24-31. The two carrier strike groups transferred operational authorities to NATO to conduct coordinated surface and air operations, including complex air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime strike operations.

Vigilance activity provides an example of the long-standing strategic partnership between the United States and its NATO Allies over the last 80 years. Today, upholding the international, rules-based order is more important than ever. Harry S. Truman participated in the first Neptune Strike vigilance activity, then called Neptune Shield, in Feb. 2022, shortly after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine; marking the first time the United States placed a carrier strike group under

NATO's control since the Cold War.

Before and during NEST, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1 squadrons flew a multitude of missions with several countries to include Czech and Swedish Air Force JAS-39 Gripens, Danish F-16 Fighting Falcons, Royal Navy and Royal Norwegian Air Force F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, Finish F/A-18C Hornets. The ability to plan and fly tactical missions with Allies and partners explicitly demonstrates NATO's combat credibility in the air, expanding the striking range of any carrier strike group.

Following NEST, the strike group disaggregated to conduct port visits across the region. Harry S. Truman and Carabiniere navigated the Oslofjord with the Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen-class frigate Thor Heyerdahl (F 314) to visit Oslo, Norway. At the same time, the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg went to Helsinki, Finland, and Stout went to Gothenburg, Sweden.

While at anchor in Norway, Harry S. Truman, Vice Adm. Jeffrey Anderson, commander of U.S. 6th Fleet, and Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Eric Meyer of the U.S. Embassy to Norway, hosted a 700-person reception featuring Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre as the distinguished visitor. Gettysburg and Stout also hosted receptions and office calls with host nation civilian and military leaders.

At the conclusion of their port visit, Harry S. Truman and the Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen-class frigate Roald Amundsen (F 311) headed north into the Norwegian Sea to operate above the Arctic Circle, echoing the 2024 Department of Defense Arctic Strategy's "Enhance, Engage, and Exercise" tenants by enhancing our ability to campaign in the Arctic, engaging with Allies, and exercising with calibrated presence.

"Operating in the Arctic requires comprehensive coordination

and adaptability,” said Capt. Dave Snowden, commanding officer, USS Harry S. Truman. “Our ship is no stranger to these waters and, while these conditions are a proving ground that tested the ship, crew, and air wing, Team Truman and Tarbox demonstrated that we are capable of operating anywhere and anytime as a combat ready team.”

In an increasingly dynamic region, Harry S. Truman’s integration and collaboration with Allies and partners is a testament to NATO’s combined force interoperability, combat-credible collective defense, and flexibility of threat response in a region seeing increased strategic importance due to climate shifts and global competition.

The carrier strike group consists of the flagship USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75); Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1 with nine embarked aviation squadrons; staffs from CSG-8, CVW-1, and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 28; the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg (CG 64); and two Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers, USS Stout (DDG 55) and USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109).

HSTCSG’s mission is to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations at sea and remain the cornerstone of the Navy’s forward presence through sea control and power projection capabilities. You can find them on DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/CVN75>.