

U.S. Navy DDG Seizes \$39 Million in Drugs in Middle East



An MH-60R Seahawk from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 35, Detachment 1, provides aerial support to an interdiction team from guided-missile destroyer USS Momsen (DDG 92) approaching a fishing vessel May 16. The vessel was seized while transiting international waters in the Gulf of Oman. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Lily Gebauer*

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer seized 640 kilograms of methamphetamine worth \$39 million from a fishing vessel while patrolling international waters in the Gulf of Oman, May 15-16, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet public affairs said May 17.

A U.S. Coast Guard interdiction team from USS Momsen (DDG 92) discovered the illegal narcotics during a flag verification boarding in accordance with international law. The confiscated drugs and fishing vessel remain in U.S. custody.

The vessel's nine crew members identified themselves as Iranian nationals and will be transferred to a regional nation for repatriation.

Momsen was operating in support of Combined Task Force 150, one of four task forces under the Combined Maritime Forces. The international naval force has increased regional patrols to locate and disrupt unlawful maritime activity.

The vessel was interdicted while transiting international waters along a route historically used by criminal organizations to smuggle people, weapons, narcotics and

charcoal. Crew members attempted to discard more than 60 bales of the seized drugs as Momsen approached.

CTF 150 has conducted nine successful drug seizures in 2022, resulting in the confiscation of heroin, methamphetamine, amphetamine pills and hashish worth a combined value of \$130 million.

Combined Maritime Forces is the largest multinational naval partnership in the world. The organization includes 34 nations and is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and U.S. 5th Fleet.