

U.S. Sixth Fleet Conducts Bilateral, Dual-Carrier Operations in Eastern Mediterranean Sea



[Release from Carrier Strike Group 12 Public Affairs and Carrier Strike Group 2 Public Affairs](#)

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The ships and aircraft of two U.S. Navy aircraft carrier strike groups conducted joint exercises over the last three days.

Sailors and naval aviators from the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Carrier Strike Group (CSG 12) and those of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) Carrier Strike Group (CSG 2) trained on high-value unit defense, ballistic missile defense, replenishments-at-sea, cross-deck flight operations, and maritime security operations.

They were joined by USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) – the U.S. Sixth Fleet Command and Control ship – and the Italian Navy frigates ITS Virginio Fasan (F 591) and ITS Carlo Margottini (F 592).

“Operating and training alongside each other demonstrates the U.S. Navy’s ability to seamlessly accomplish multiple missions, deter aggression and support our allies and partners,” said Rear Adm. Erik Eslich, Commander of CSG 12.

More than 11,000 U.S. personnel participated in the three-day exercises.

“The seamless integration of naval and air commands between us

and our partners helps build a theater-wide common tactical picture to make us a more ready and postured force,” said Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, Commander of CSG 2. “Our focus on teamwork and dual-carrier operations provide us the ability to train like we fight.”

The Italian ships Fasan and Margottini joined the two carrier strike groups to exercise NATO alliance integration. Fasan also participated in Composite Unit Training Exercise with the Eisenhower strike group earlier this year.

“Operating dual carrier strike groups alongside Allies and Partners in a dynamic environment demonstrates our capability and capacity to respond with agility decisively to any contingency,” said Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. “Our presence sends a clear signal about our commitment to deter aggression and promote stability throughout the region.”

The ships of the Gerald R. Ford strike group have participated in multiple operations and exercises throughout the Sixth Fleet area of responsibility, including Sage Wolverine, Baltic Operations 2023, exercise Air Defender 2023, and NATO enhanced vigilance activity Neptune Strike, as well as operations with 17 countries in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations.

The Gerald R. Ford strike group is comprised of the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2, the Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60).

The ships of DESRON-2 are the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS Bulkeley (DDG 84), and USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117).

The Dwight D. Eisenhower strike group is comprised of the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN69), the guided-

missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), the guided-missile destroyers USS Mason (DDG 87) and USS Gravelly (DDG 107) of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 22, and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 with its nine squadrons.

U.S. Sixth Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allies and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability throughout Europe and Africa.