

USS Chung-Hoon Conducts Second Drug Bust in a Month

GULF OF ADEN – While conducting maritime security operations in the international waters of the Gulf of Aden, the guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon interdicted a shipment of illicit narcotics aboard a stateless vessel on Jan. 24, the U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

Chung-Hoon's visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) team seized 4,700 kilograms of hashish while conducting a flag verification boarding. This is the second such interdiction within a month. The Chung-Hoon seized over 5,000 kilograms of hashish while patrolling the Gulf of Aden on Dec. 27.

"What I'm most proud of is the synergy between our information, operations and boarding teams that allowed us to complete the mission," said Cmdr. Brent Jackson, commanding officer of Chung-Hoon. "Teamwork is the key enabler, and this crew was on station, ready to roll at sunrise to complete the task of interdicting contraband.

The vessel was determined to be stateless following a flag verification boarding conducted in accordance with customary international law. The vessel and its crew were allowed to depart once the narcotics were seized.

Chung-Hoon is serving as the surface action group commander, leading the Whidbey Island-class amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry, during maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden. Both ships are operating under Task Force 55.

Chung-Hoon is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and the Pacific through the western Indian Ocean and three strategic choke points.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses nearly 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. The region is comprised of 20 countries and includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab-al-Mandeb at the southern tip of Yemen.