

USS Hershel 'Woody' Williams Shifts Homeport to Greece



The Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) arrives at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility in Souda Bay, Greece, August 18, 2020. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kelly M. Agee

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY SOUDA BAY, Greece – The Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4), shifted its homeport from Norfolk, Va., to Souda Bay, Greece, effective Oct. 1, 2020, the U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs said in an Oct. 2 release.

Hershel 'Woody' Williams conducts U.S. Africa Command missions in the Mediterranean, and the waters around East, South and West Africa, to include the Gulf of Guinea operating with regional partners.

"Hershel 'Woody' Williams provides a new capability in the theater, which enhances our interoperability with our partners across the spectrum of maritime operations," said Vice Adm. Gene Black, commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet. "The unique design of the ship fosters inter-service operations with our U.S. Marine Corps and Special Operations communities, which improves our ability to ensure maritime security and stability."

Due to the ship's extended overseas assignment, Military Sealift Command (MSC) will conduct her routine maintenance in existing facilities at NSA Souda Bay and other overseas ports.

"The ship truly demonstrates the U.S. Navy's incomparable maritime flexibility and professionalism," said Capt. David Gray, Hershel "Woody" Williams' commanding officer, blue crew. "We operate with a crew of Sailors and civilians who, since our arrival in Sixth Fleet have supported U.S. Marine Corps

and Special Operations training, as well as partner nation missions from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Gulf of Guinea.”

The ship’s two-fold mission provides the U.S. a forward deployed naval presence in Africa, as well as increased naval power through Navy and Marine Corps integrated operations, including Marine aviation and support to amphibious operations. Other operations and training capabilities the ship performs include support to special operations, command and control, and staging of equipment.

NSA Souda Bay serves as a naval logistics hub for U.S. 6th Fleet, providing support to U.S. warships and logistics ships in the region.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conduct the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.