

3,000 Sailors and Marines Arrive in Middle East aboard USS Bataan, USS Carter Hall



A U.S. Navy sailor from USS Bataan (LHD 5) stands watch as the amphibious assault ship transits the Suez Canal with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Aug. 6, 2023.

[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs](#)

From U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs

MANAMA, Bahrain – More than 3,000 U.S. Sailors and Marines of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) arrived in the Middle East, Aug. 6, as part of a pre-announced Department of Defense deployment.

Amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 50) and dock landing

ship USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) entered the Red Sea after transiting from the Mediterranean Sea through the Suez Canal. Bataan ARG/26th MEU units bring to the region additional aviation and naval assets, as well as more U.S. Marines and Sailors, providing greater flexibility and maritime capability to U.S. 5th Fleet.

An amphibious assault ship can carry more than two dozen rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft, including MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and AV-8B Harrier attack jets in addition to several amphibious landing craft. A dock landing ship also supports operations for various rotary-wing aircraft, tactical vehicles and amphibious landing craft.

The Bataan ARG departed Norfolk, Virginia on July 10 with Amphibious Squadron 8, Fleet Surgical Team 8, Tactical Air Control Squadron 21, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 26, Assault Craft Unit 4, Beach Master Unit 2 and the 26th MEU.

The 26th MEU, based in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, is capable of conducting amphibious missions, crisis response and limited contingency operations to include enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses approximately 2.5 million square miles of water space and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Strait of Bab al-Mandeb.