

# U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Danish Defense Forces Train on SM-6 Missile Launcher Together



ATLANTIC OCEAN (May 26, 2021) The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) launches an SM-3 missile during exercise At-Sea Demo/Formidable Shield, May 26, 2021. Exercise At-Sea Demo/Formidable Shield, conducted by Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO on behalf of U.S. 6th Fleet, is a live-fire integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) exercise that improves Allied interoperability using NATO command and control reporting structures. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nathan T. Beard)

[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa / U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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BORNHOLM, Denmark –

In a demonstration of ongoing commitment to transatlantic security and defense interoperability, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, in conjunction with the Danish Defense Forces, will be conducting advanced convoy protection drills using the state-of-the-art, modular SM-6 missile launcher beginning the week of Sept. 18 in Bornholm, Denmark.

The SM-6 missile system stands as a testament to advanced defense technology. It possesses the capability to intercept airborne threats, including the critical interception of ballistic missiles during their terminal phase of flight. The missile's dual-capability design ensures precision engagement of both stationary terrestrial targets and dynamic maritime adversaries. The containerized configuration of the SM-6 launcher augments the U.S. Navy's operational flexibility, facilitating rapid deployment and utilization in diverse theaters of operation, thereby underlining the commitment of the United States to ensure the security interests of itself and its allies.

By conducting these operations from Danish soil, the United States reaffirms the strategic importance of Denmark as a key ally in ensuring regional stability. This exercise further solidifies the enduring defense partnership between the U.S. and Denmark, emphasizing our joint dedication to mutual security objectives and cooperative defense efforts.

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**BALTOPS            22:            A            Perfect**

# Opportunity for Research and Resting New Technology



Lt. j.g. Chris Bianchi, assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 8, prepares mock explosives for a pierside training event during exercise BALTOPS 22, June 10. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Daniel James Lanari*

BALTIC SEA – A significant focus of BALTOPS every year is the demonstration of NATO mine hunting capabilities, and this year the U.S. Navy continues to use the exercise as an opportunity to test emerging technology, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Public Affairs said June 14.

In support of BALTOPS, U.S. Navy 6th Fleet partnered with U.S. Navy research and warfare centers to bring the latest advancements in unmanned underwater vehicle mine hunting technology to the Baltic Sea to demonstrate the vehicle's effectiveness in operational scenarios.

Experimentation was conducted off the coast of Bornholm, Denmark, with participants from Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific, Naval Undersea Warfare Center Newport, and Mine Warfare Readiness and Effectiveness Measuring all under the direction of U.S. 6th Fleet Task Force 68.

BALTOPS is an ideal location for conducting mine hunting experimentation due to the region's unique environmental conditions such as low salinity and varying bottom types. It is also critical to evaluate emerging mine hunting UUV technology in the Baltic due to its applicability with allied and partner nations. This year experimentation was focused on UUV navigation, teaming operations, and improvements in acoustic communications all while collecting critical environmental data sets to advance the automatic target recognition algorithms for mine detection.

"In prior BALTOPS we demonstrated advanced capabilities to detect, reacquire and collect images of mine contacts, and transfer those images in near real-time to operators through the use of a specialized Office of Naval Research UUV," said Anthony Constable, Office of Naval Research science advisor to U.S. 6th Fleet. "This year, through the work of NIWC Pacific and NUWC Newport, we are showing that this capability can be integrated into programs of record by executing complex multi-vehicle UUV missions with modified U.S. Navy fleet assets."

An additional critical objective was to continue to increase the communication range and data transfer capability to give the operators more flexibility in mine hunting operations. Advancements in communication technology, demonstrated this year, have shown a significant improvement in operating ranges over currently used systems. This provides additional standoff flexibility to the U.S. Navy in conducting safe mine hunting operations.

BALTOPS also provides a unique opportunity for the U.S.

research, development and acquisition communities to exercise the current and emerging UUV technology in real-world operational environments. This year featured the current and future programs of record for mine hunting UUVs in the Mk18 and Lionfish systems. Both systems were put through the paces over 10 days of mine-hunting operations, collecting over 200 hours of undersea data.

“The major benefit of the BALTOPS experimentation is to provide advanced mine hunting capabilities to the operator in the field. By exercising the future capabilities, U.S. 6th Fleet can provide valuable feedback to help guide the Navy acquisition community responsible for mine hunting UUV development and procurement,” said Lt. Joshua Lynn, U.S. 6th Fleet experimental lead for BALTOPS. “This year we have seen the near- and long-term future in mine hunting UUV technology and we are excited to see how quickly the technology and capabilities are improving.”