CNO Visits Germany to Attend BALTOPS, Meets with Navy and Government Leaders



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday arrives at the BALTOPS22 closing reception aboard the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) in Kiel, Germany, June 17. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Scott Barnes*

KIEL, Germany – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday traveled to Kiel, Germany June 15-18 for the conclusion of BALTOPS 22, The CNO's Public Affairs office said June 18.

In its 51st iteration, BALTOPS is an annual coordinated exercise that reinforces interoperability with allies and partners and provides collective maritime security in the Baltic Sea.

Gilday visited the guided-missile destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) at sea during the final days of the exercise.

"Our Sailors are our asymmetric advantage against any threat,"

said Gilday. “Watching the incredible multi-domain coordination with our international partners, and seeing Sailors in action, is always inspiring.”

This year, 14 NATO allies, two NATO partner nations (Finland and Sweden), more than 45 ships, 75 aircraft, and approximately 7,000 personnel participated in BALTOPS 22.

“The United States’ strong defense relationships with our Northern European allies and partners constitute our greatest strategic advantage in the region,” said Gilday. “BALTOPS achieves a multitude of objectives by demonstrating NATO interoperability, interchangeability, and readiness.”

He added that naval forces are participating in this exercise and are focused on interoperability with Sweden and Finland, as well as the other allied nations of NATO. “We are trained, proficient and ready, BALTOPS demonstrates just that and our commitment to defending NATO is ironclad.”

While in Kiel, Gilday met with Vice Adm. Jan Kaack, chief of the German navy, as well as Vice Adm. Frank Lenski, vice chief of the German navy, to discuss operational areas of mutual interest, NATO operations, and Transatlantic security.

“I sincerely welcome the continued commitment of the U.S. Navy in Europe. Since 1972, the BALTOPS exercise has been taking place in the Baltic Sea under US leadership – this year for the 51st time,” said Lenski. “Our ties with the U.S. Navy are strong and will remain so because the Baltic Sea is part of NATO’s northern flank. It is our vital interest to guarantee freedom and security in this area.”

The trip culminated with a BALTOPS reception aboard the U.S. 6th Fleet flagship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), where Gilday met with U.S and foreign naval leadership as well as members of the local community. This was Gilday’s first visit to Germany.