U.S., Egypt Enhance Maritime Partnership with Patrol Craft Transfer



ARABIAN GULF (March 9, 2020) The coastal patrol ship USS Monsoon (PC 4) transits the Arabian Gulf after completing a joint underway with Mark VI patrol boats attached to Commander, Task Force 56 March 9. This event highlights one of many core competencies that the Coastal Riverine Force provides in support of U.S. 5th Fleet operations. CTF 56 is responsible for the planning and execution of expeditionary missions including coastal riverine operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kory Alsberry)
Release from U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs

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MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) transferred three patrol craft to the Egyptian Navy, March 21, during a formal ceremony in Alexandria, Egypt.

The transfer ceremony represents the culmination of weeks of preparation, training and professional exchanges between Egyptian and U.S. Navy Sailors. The U.S. Navy turned over former patrol coastal ships USS Hurricane (PC 3), USS Sirocco (PC 6), and USS Thunderbolt (PC 12) after sailing from Bahrain to Egypt during a month-long journey around the Arabian Peninsula, January through February.

“The Egypt-U.S. maritime partnership has been a fundamental pillar of our bilateral defense cooperation for decades,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of NAVCENT, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. “This transfer is yet another major milestone in our strong relationship that will enhance regional maritime security for years to come.”

During the 4,000-mile transit to Alexandria, U.S. and Egyptian crewmembers worked side-by-side safely navigating the three ships on a voyage that included port visits to Jebel Ali in the United Arab Emirates; Duqm, Oman; Djibouti; and Berenice, Egypt.

U.S. and Egyptian service members continued training after the ships arrived in Alexandria, Feb. 12. Classroom lessons included discussions on engineering, search and rescue, damage control and weapons handling.

“This transfer process was an incredible opportunity for our crews. It enabled us to strengthen our bilateral ties while enhancing our interoperability with a highly capable regional maritime partner,” said Capt. Anthony Webber, commander of Task Force 55, which oversees operations for U.S. 5th Fleet’s surface forces.

The Egyptian Navy currently commands Combined Task Force 153, one of four multinational task forces organized under U.S.-led

Combined Maritime Forces (CMF). The task force coordinates multinational maritime security efforts in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb and Gulf of Aden.

NAVCENT and CMF are headquartered in Manama, Bahrain. They include maritime forces operating in 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 Bab al-Mandeb.