

# U.S. Navy Destroyer Detaches from U.K. Carrier Strike Group



After nearly 13 months of training alongside the United Kingdom's Carrier Strike Group 21, USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) detached from the Strike Group in the Arabian Sea Oct. 19.

*THIRD MARINE AIRCRAFT WING / 1st Lt. Zachary Bodner*

LONDON – The USS The Sullivans, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, has departed the U.K. Carrier Strike Group after a five-month contribution to the global deployment, the U.K. Ministry of Defence said Oct. 26.

Having worked with the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) for the last 13 months, USS The Sullivans has departed from the group after seven months deployed alongside Royal Navy vessels.

The destroyer and its 280-strong crew have made a significant contribution, both in the pre-deployment exercising off the coast of Scotland last spring and throughout the CSG's deployment since May.

USS The Sullivans played a key role in numerous exercises from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and back, including countries like Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore, as well as NATO. Such exercises develop interoperability between militaries, enhancing regional stability and security.

"The Sullivans' ship's motto says everything about the special relationship between the U.K. and U.S. navies: 'We stick together,'" said Minister for the Armed Forces James Heapey. "I'd like to thank all of her ship's company for their outstanding contribution to the Carrier Strike Group deployment."

Commissioned in 1997 and named after the five Sullivans brothers who tragically lost their lives when their ship was sunk in World War II, USS The Sullivans is one of the escort ships providing air defense to aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth during its inaugural global deployment.

“USS The Sullivans have been tremendous representatives of the United States during Carrier Strike Group 21,” said Brig. Gen. Simon Doran, U.S. senior national representative for the CSG. “From the North Sea to the South China Sea, from supporting combat operations in Operation Inherent Resolve to more than a dozen exercises with foreign Navies, the sailors on The Sullivans embodied their ship’s namesake – we stick together.”

In a tangible demonstration of the United Kingdom’s closest defense and security relationship, U.S. involvement in this deployment has significantly contributed to development of the UK carrier strike capability. In June, the UK CSG operated alongside French carrier Charles De Gaulle in a landmark moment for NATO.

“I am immensely proud of every Sailor on The Sullivans for consistently providing an integrated multi-domain capability to Carrier Strike Group 21 in support of HMS Queen Elizabeth’s maiden deployment,” said Cmdr. James R. Diefenderfer Jr., commanding officer of USS The Sullivans. “We gained a tremendous amount of respect for our CSG21 counterparts as we sailed together across the globe demonstrating our shared commitment to uphold freedom of navigation of our seas, and it was impressive to be a part of their seamless integration with many other allies and partners along the way.”

“We could not have operated as well as we did without the genuine support of Commodore Moorhouse, Brig. Gen. Doran, and the ship’s crews and squadron personnel that made up CSG21,” the CO said. “Everyone was exceedingly welcoming every step of the way, and all were true partners in every theatre of

operation going all the way back to our first operation together in the North Sea in the fall of 2020.”

The CSG has covered over 40,000 nautical miles through the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Philippine Sea. The main body of the group is currently visiting India in a powerful demonstration of the U.K.-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

USS The Sullivans will return to national tasking in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean over the coming weeks.