

U.S. to Increase International Coordination, Presence in Strait of Hormuz



Photo By [Petty Officer 2nd Class Elliot Schaudt](#) | 230509-N-NH267-1023 ARABIAN GULF (May 9, 2023) Ensign Gordon Kitchener looks out from the bridge of the guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), May 9, 2023 in the Arabian Gulf. Paul Hamilton is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations to help ensure maritime security and stability in the Middle East region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elliot Schaudt) [see less](#) | [View Image Page](#)
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U.S. 5th Fleet is working with regional allies and partners to increase the rotation of ships and aircraft patrolling in and around the Strait of Hormuz following Iran's recent unlawful merchant vessel seizures.

The increased force presence supports multinational efforts to deter threats to commercial shipping and reassure regional mariners. In addition to heightened patrols, U.S. 5th Fleet is bolstering international maritime security collaboration among the International Maritime Security Construct and European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz.

"Iran's unwarranted, irresponsible and unlawful seizure and harassment of merchant vessels must stop," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. "U.S. 5th Fleet and our partners are committed to protecting navigational rights in these critical waters."

Iran has harassed, attacked or interfered with the navigational rights of 15 internationally flagged merchant vessels over the past two years. This pattern of destabilizing behavior is contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security.