

# NATO Holds Drills with Three Carrier Strike Groups, Seven Interceptor Warships in Eastern Mediterranean

By [Rick Rozoff](#)

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*Near the entrance to the Black Sea.*

*Charles de Gaulle is the only nuclear aircraft in the world aside from the U.S.’s eleven.*

*The USS Bainbridge, USS Gonzalez, USS Gravely and USS Ross are Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers designed to fire Standard Missile 3 anti-ballistic missiles of the sort stationed in their so-called Aegis Ashore version in Romania and Poland. The USS Cole, USS Jason Dunham and USS San Jacinto are Ticonderoga-class cruisers are also equipped for Standard Missile 3 interceptors.*

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Below is an excerpt from the following article:

[American, French, Italian Carrier Strike Groups Sail Together in the Mediterranean Sea](#)

By U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs

February 7, 2022

Naval forces from France, Italy and the U.S. sailed together while conducting naval training in the Mediterranean Sea, Feb. 6-7.

The *Harry S. Truman* Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG) integrated with the French carrier *Charles de Gaulle*’s Task Force 473 and Italian carrier *Cavour* strike groups....

“The capabilities of a US aircraft carrier strike group are made stronger by operating alongside our allies and partners; and adding the French and Italian carrier teams provides an exciting chance to strengthen our interoperability together.”

The HSTCSG completed participation in the NATO-led activity Neptune Strike 22, Feb. 4, 2022. This activity involved the handover of the HSTCSG to NATO command and control, highlighting the natural evolution of NATO's ability to integrate the high-end maritime warfare capabilities of a carrier strike group to support the defense of the Alliance.

The Italian aircraft carrier *Cavour* and elements of its associated carrier strike group also participated in Neptune Strike 22, strengthening their maritime partnership with both the U.S. and NATO. This partnership has shone through in other activities in recent months as well, as SIXTHFLT units participated in Italy's Mare Aperto exercise in October 2021 and as American and Italian naval units continue to operate alongside one another bilaterally and through the NATO alliance on a routine basis.

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"There are few nations that are able to operate carrier strike groups and this was a great opportunity to confirm the high level of integration."

The *Charles de Gaulle* CSG departed Toulon, France, to begin its 14th deployment in the Mediterranean, Feb. 1. This deployment, named Clemenceau 22, brings together a variety of allied resources, including the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer *USS Ross*.

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The convergence of three allied aircraft carrier strike groups strengthens maritime integration by allowing naval crews and aircraft to operate in relatively close water and airspace.....

Elements of the strike group include the staff of Carrier Strike Group 8; flagship *USS Harry S. Truman*; the nine squadrons of Carrier Air Wing 1; the staff and guided-missile destroyers of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 28, which include: *USS Gonzalez*, *USS Bainbridge*, *USS Gravely*; the Royal Norwegian Navy's Fridtjof-Nansen class frigate *HNoMS Fridtjof Nansen* deployed as part of the Cooperative Deployment Program; and the Ticonderoga-class cruiser *USS San Jacinto*. *USS Cole* and *USS Jason Dunham* are also part of the carrier strike group and currently supporting U.S. Fifth Fleet Area of Operations....

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