



sa navy

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SA NAVY VESSELS RETURNS TO DURBAN AFTER MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL PATROLS ON 10 AUGUST 2018

Two SA Navy vessels, SAS PROTEA and SAS GALESHEWE, will return to Naval Base Durban on Friday 10 August 2018 at 08h00. The two vessels just completed a patrol of the Northern Mozambican Channel as part of Operation Copper.

Operation Copper came into being on 21 January 2011 to support the Mozambican Defence Force in countering piracy in the Mozambican Channel. Since then the mandate of the SA Navy during Op Copper has increased to include measures aimed against drug-, arms- and human trafficking, as well as illegal fishing. Both ships had members of the Mozambican Defence Force onboard for the duration of the patrols in order to conduct these measures.

SAS PROTEA departed Simon's Town harbor on 3 July 2018 enroute to Durban. She arrived on 8 July and proceeded to pick up stores and fuel. After conducting a range of preparatory exercises the two vessels departed together from Durban on 16 July 2018 and sailed the more than 3000km to Pemba, in Northern Mozambique. This was the first time in many years that the SA Navy deployed two ships to an Operation Copper deployment.

A unique feature of the deployment was that the two ships operated completely independent from foreign support and did not enter any harbor during the three week deployment. The ships used Pemba bay as a base from which to conduct their patrols. Once the patrols were completed the two ships laid at anchor in Pemba bay. SAS PROTEA served as the operational support vessel for SAS GALESHEWE. She supplied SAS GALESHEWE with fuel, stores (including food) and fresh water. The two ships also successfully completed several Replenishment-at-Sea (RAS) Operations during the Operation. This is a very challenging seamanship evolution where one ship tows the other ship, whilst pumping fuel.

Whilst on patrol, SAS GALESHEWE would sail close to the coastline, and SAS PROTEA would sail further out. This allowed the two ships to cover more area than a single vessel could on its own. The ship's companies of both vessels made the best of the time at sea to complete numerous training tasks. Despite the fact that no arrests were made, this operation does send a warning to any criminal element that the SA Navy is ready to protect its territorial waters, as well as those of its neighbours.

SAS PROTEA will remain in Durban for a few days to demobilize and complete any outstanding administration regarding the Operation. She is expected to arrive in Simon's Town towards the middle of August 2018.

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