

Beat: Politics

## **NATO's strength deters conflict**

### **Jens Stoltenberg aboard USS George Bush**

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**USPA NEWS** - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visited the U.S. Navy aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush in the Adriatic Sea on Tuesday, October 25, 2022. The Bush currently leads a carrier strike group under NATO command, which Stoltenberg called "a demonstration of US capability and commitment to the Alliance." He added: "this carrier sends a powerful message of Allied deterrence every day."

The USS George H.W. Bush is currently leading Neptune Strike 2022, a NATO deployment testing readiness to deter and defend across the Euro-Atlantic area. It includes over 80 aircraft, 14 ships, and around 6,000 personnel from 24 NATO Allies and partners, including Finland and Sweden. The NATO Secretary General called this "a perfect example of the transatlantic bond – Europe and North America working together in NATO." He said that the deployment "demonstrates our ability to rapidly reinforce our Allies, and project power across the Alliance." Stoltenberg added that NATO's "strength helps to prevent any miscalculation by sending a clear message: NATO will protect and defend every inch of Allied territory."

The Secretary General also addressed recent claims by Moscow that Ukraine is preparing to use a radiological "dirty bomb" on its own territory, emphasising that "NATO Allies reject this transparently false allegation." He said that Russia "must not use false pretexts for further escalation." He further condemned Iran's military support to the Russian war effort, saying "no country should be helping the aggressor in an illegal war," and welcomed the sanctions that Allies and the European Union are implementing on Tehran. "Russia's brutal war and illegal war is at a pivotal moment.

President Putin is responding to his failures on the battlefield with more aggression. Strikes on civilians, on civilian energy infrastructure. And drone and missile attacks on residential areas," he added.

The Neptune Strike 2022 "keeps our sea-lanes open and secure. And contributes to NATO's increased vigilance from the Baltic to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In recent years, has also been part of our critical fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. This carrier now leads Neptune Strike 2022," said Secretary General Stoltenberg. He remembered that "just a few days ago, US Navy F-18s flew from this carrier to Lithuania. Working alongside our Allies France, Latvia and Hungary along the way. And last week, your F-18s joined Canadian fighter aircraft for patrols over Romania. Refueled in the air by a Dutch tanker aircraft."

During his visit, Stoltenberg addressed the ship's crew and met sailors and pilots, thanking them all for their service and dedication. He also met with senior military leaders including Admiral Stuart Munsch, Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples and Commander of US Naval Forces Europe-Africa; Vice-Admiral Thomas Ishee, Commander of Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO and Commander US Sixth Fleet; Rear Admiral James Morley, Deputy Commander of Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO; Rear Admiral Dennis Velez, Commander of Carrier Strike Group Ten and the George H. W. Bush Carrier Strike Group; and Captain David-Tavis Pollard, Commanding Officer of the carrier.

#### **Article online:**

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