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### NATO EXERCISE LINKED SEAS 2000

1 At the request of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the attached information on a NATO exercise, LINKED SEAS 2000, which will be conducted from 02 to 15 May 2000, is brought to the attention of Member Governments.

2 Member Governments are requested to bring the attached information to the attention of shipowners, ship operators, shipping companies, shipmasters and all others concerned.

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**ANNEX****EXERCISE LINKED SEAS 2000 - UNCLASSIFIED BRIEFING**

1 Exercise LINKED SEAS 2000 is a NATO Live Exercise which will run from 02 to 15 May 2000. The Exercise will be conducted by Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic (CINSOUTHLANT) based in Oeiras, Portugal. The exercise aims include the formation and work-up of a NATO-led multinational force with maritime, air, amphibious and land forces suitable to deploy to a crisis area for peace support and peace enforcement operations.

2 The exercise scenario calls for a UN-mandated joint operation which will be carried out in generic geography, including the Bay of Biscay, Quiberon Bay, the Iberian Peninsula and Madeira Archipelago. Maritime operations during a crisis scenario involving embargo operations and maritime interdiction operations always have a major impact on commercial shipping operations within or transiting through the area of operations. It is essential that this commercial traffic is considered when planning and executing maritime operations. It is equally important that the merchant shipping community be kept informed of developments in order that masters and owners may make appropriate decisions concerning ship safety and their commercial interests.

3 The concept of "Regional Naval Control and Protection of Shipping" (RNCS) has been developed to support these essential requirements, and will be exercised during Linked Seas 2000. In this exercise the emphasis is firmly on voluntary co-operation between the commercial and military communities. Vessels will be free to participate in or withdraw from the exercise at their discretion. However, in order to ensure that our procedures and systems for liaison with merchant shipping are fully tested during this exercise, we ask for your support. Our requirements are straightforward. In order to maintain a current plot of ships in the area we need positional information from vessels; in turn we must communicate with ships to provide information and advice. Any support you give will be on a no cost, no delay basis. For example, we are setting up a free phone number so ships can talk to us at no cost. Any information provided to us will be treated in strictest confidence.

4 The mission of the RNCS organisation during the exercise will be to:

- .1 provide participating merchant shipping with relevant information of the maritime operations and provide advice to limit the impact to their merchant ship movements;
- .2 provide participating merchant ships with additional individual information and advice so that areas of major maritime activities and concentration of maritime forces can be avoided; and
- .3 provide maritime commanders with a current merchant ship plot as a component of the overall recognized maritime picture.

5 The exercise will be conducted by Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic based in Oeiras, Portugal. RNCS command will be delegated to a commander established in Glücksburg, Germany and a Shipping Centre will be established there, which will be the focal point for all merchant ship contact and reporting during the exercise.

6 During the exercise all participating nations will receive a daily RNCS situation report and

detailed information of all ships they have reported for participation. Ships in the area will receive periodic general information via an Enhanced Group Call.

7 In order to further develop and improve the concept of RNCS, Merchant Shipping is strongly encouraged to participate in the exercise. More information will be forthcoming via an Enhanced Group Call shortly before the start of the exercise.

8 A web site is established at [www.southlant.nato.int/ncs/index.htm](http://www.southlant.nato.int/ncs/index.htm) which will be updated both prior to and during the exercise. During the exercise the site will enable authorities, owners and masters to forward positional information direct to the Shipping Centre.

9 The point of contact for further information prior to the exercise is:

Staff Officer Shipping  
SJ3135  
RHQ SOUTHLANT  
0035 121 440 4379  
e-mail [athompson@southlant.nato.int](mailto:athompson@southlant.nato.int)

10 Contact details for use during the exercise will be promulgated by letter, internet and Enhanced Group Call.

#### **Position reporting by Format Alfa in Linked Seas 2000**

The position and movement information referred to elsewhere in this briefing may conveniently be reported using the formatted message known as Format ALFA, which may be forwarded by any means possible (FAX, E-Mail, Mobile Phone, Inmarsat, Telegram, Telex etc.).

During Exercise LINKED SEAS 2000 only certain information will be requested, enabling us to abbreviate the standard Format Alfa to the following fields:

#### **Section A - Ship Data**

- 1 Ship's name
- 2 International call sign:
- 3 Type of vessel: (Plain text, e.g. tanker, container ship)
- 4 Flag of registry:
- 5 IMO number
- 7 Length overall:
- 10 Vessels gross tonnage:
- 11 Intended speed of advance for present voyage (in knots)
- 13 Inmarsat/selective call number:
- 16 FAX number:
- 17 E-mail address or Telex number:

**Section B - Voyage Data**

- 20 Date/time and position on entering the NCS region  
a.-x. Waypoints of intended track through NCS region (Date/Time-Lat./Long.):
- 21 Last port of call and ATD (Actual Time of Departure):
- 22 Next port of call and ETA: (if within the NCS region)
- 23 Current position (Latitude/Longitude):
- 24 Date/time and position on leaving the region:

[All times to be expressed in UTC/GMT, length/width in METRES, size of vessel in GROSS TONNAGE (GT)]

Contact details including telephone & fax numbers, telex address and e-mail address will be promulgated prior to the exercise. The point of contact for further information prior to the exercise is:

Staff Officer Shipping  
SJ3135  
RHQ SOUTHLANT  
0035 121 440 4379  
e-mail [athompson@nato.southlant.int](mailto:athompson@nato.southlant.int)

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