

Task force to fight Somali pirates

ANSA) - Nairobi, October 21 - An Italian-led NATO task force is sailing into place to stop pirates off Somalia, military sources told ANSA Tuesday.

The seven warships have reached Djibuti and are gearing to move against the pirates who have made Somali waters the most dangerous in the world.

More than 60 ships have been hijacked by pirates off Somalia this year, more than double last year's total.

The mission is under the command of Italian Admiral Giovanni Gumiero on board his flagship, the destroyer Durand de la Penne.

There are six other ships: two German, one American, one British, one Greek and one Turkish.

As well as fighting pirates the task force will escort cargo ships carrying United Nations food to the starving population of Somalia, wracked by a seemingly endless civil war.