

# THE FIGHTING 45

## Newsletter of HMS Defender

Issue 02 | November 2015



## DEFENDER STANDS WITH FRANCE

AFTER the shocking events in Paris, HMS DEFENDER took the opportunity to show her solidarity with the French Air Force.

Several hours of complex Air Defence training culminated in an impressive visual show of strength and unity as 4 Mirage 2000 jets formed up to fly past Defender. This challenging Air Command and Control exercise demonstrated our ability to work together with our French allies and, on this day of all days, our capacity to fight together in the air, from the sea and over land.

HMS DEFENDER continues her 9 month mission conducting Air Command and Control duties as well as Maritime Security Operations in the Middle East.

### CHARITY FUNDRAISING

DEFENDER is aiming to raise £10,000 for the RNRMC during deployment. So far we have held the 'Row the Suez' challenge and had a Movember beard growing competition.

**TOTAL = £260**

If you would like to get involved in our fundraising at home please contact our Charities rep RPO Murphy:

[HMSDFND-Exec-RNPoliceSectHd@mod.uk](mailto:HMSDFND-Exec-RNPoliceSectHd@mod.uk)



### A MESSAGE FROM THE CAPTAIN – Cdr Stephen Higham

**THE** horrifying terrorist attack in Paris has deeply affected us all. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, and the families of those who died.

DEFENDER was proud to show our unwavering support for our French allies in a joint exercise just days after the attack.

These awful crimes reiterate the importance of the work we are doing. There are many people, fighting for ISIS or Al Qaeda, in Iraq or Syria, who want to destroy our way of life. They want to murder innocent civilians, as they did in Paris. It is only through constant vigilance, working alongside our allies, and forging strong bonds of co-operation in the region that the UK can defeat these enemies.

We are proud to be at the forefront of British, NATO and coalition operations in the Middle East. As ever, DEFENDER is performing vital tasks which are contributing to UK and international security. We will continue to defend Britain's interests and support our allies in the region and in doing so we will show that we will not be cowed by terror.

### DUNCAN HANDS OVER

HMS DEFENDER has assumed all responsibilities as the OP KIPION Destroyer, after handing over with her sister ship, HMS DUNCAN earlier this month.

As the UK, US and NATO's principal and most capable unit deployed in the area, DEFENDER has been conducting escort duties for merchant ships carrying vital cargo through the world's most volatile region, deterring would-be attackers and reassuring the ships under her protection.



## DEFENDER HOSTS KEY ALLIES

**HMS DEFENDER paid a short visit to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia in order to strengthen the UK's relationship with the Kingdom and build co-operation with their Navy.**

Saudi Arabia remains an important ally in the Middle East and is a key part in the government's Gulf Strategy. It exercises a strong influence over other GCC states, is increasingly active militarily and diplomatically, and is key to wider regional security.

DEFENDER hosted a capability demonstration and official reception for key members of the Saudi military and diplomatic community. Also in attendance were senior officers from the US Navy based in the region, as well as leaders from the local community and representatives from Saudi and international companies.

During the evening the ship show cased her numerous capabilities, including demonstrations from the Royal Marines boarding team, tours of the Bridge and the Operations room, and a chance to admire the Lynx helicopter in the hangar.

As ever the ship's company were the stars of the show, impressing the guests with their in depth knowledge and enthusiasm. The Logistics department showed off the best of Royal Navy hospitality, providing an impressive array of canapés and drinks for the reception.

Our brief visit to Jeddah provided DEFENDER with the opportunity to play a key part in the strengthening of bilateral relationships and promoting all that is great about Britain – be it military hardware and the people that operate it.

## ROYAL MARINES TRAIN SAUDI COUNTERPARTS

The RM Boarding team provided Close Quarters Battle (CQB) instruction to a class of Saudi Naval and Special Forces Cadets onboard HMS DEFENDER.

The Saudi cadets are currently being trained by a detachment of US Naval and Coastguard forces who also attended the session to see our Royal Marines in action.

This landmark engagement further cemented our collective partnership with the Saudi Navy while emphasizing the value of military co-operation in ongoing maritime operations at a time of increasing tensions in the Middle East.

The event was a great success and demonstrated the professionalism and effectiveness of the Royal Marines and reiterated Royal Navy support to Saudi Arabia, a strategic Coalition partner in the region.



## ROW THE SUEZ

**THE 'Row the Suez' challenge is a traditional charity event for Royal Navy vessels. It requires the ship's company to complete enough individual 2000 meter rows to equal the 120 mile length of the Suez Canal.**

HMS DEFENDER raised £97 for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity and completed the distance of 81 2000m rows in 10:30.58.

The fastest row of the day was ET(ME) McNaughton who completed his 2000 km in 6 mins 52 sec. He beat the ship's physical training instructor, LPT Scrivener, into second place, as well as besting the ship's whole team of Royal Marines.

