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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Multinational Militaries Train Aboard Mauritian Coast Guard Vessel for Africa Partnership Station

By Lt. Aaron Bedy/Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

Port Louis, Mauritius - Sailors from multinational militaries trained today aboard two Mauritian Coast Guard vessels as part of their involvement in Africa Partnership Station (APS) East.

The training focused on vessel boarding search and seizure (VBSS), a procedure used by military and law enforcement agencies to combat piracy, human trafficking, and smuggling of illicit drugs and weapons. Students were taught procedures for vessel boarding, questioning and the searching vessels and their occupants.

“This has been a wonderful opportunity for both the United States and our African partners to enhance our abilities to combat piracy and smuggling,” said Chief Petty Officer Select Matthew Gonter, one of the course’s instructors. “Protection of national borders and exclusive economic zones is vitally important to African nations and one of our goals with these courses is to help improve the capability of these countries to defend their interests on the high seas.”

Today’s training included approximately 20 students from Tanzania, Kenya, Mauritius and the Seychelles. There are a total of approximately 40 students from these countries training together during the Mauritius APS hub to develop enhanced skills for intelligence, anti-piracy, non-commissioned officer (NCO) leadership and other subjects.

This week’s training is the first part of the hub that will also include a visit from the USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) in early Sept.

APS is an international security cooperation initiative, facilitated by Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, aimed at strengthening global maritime partnerships through training and collaborative activities in order to improve maritime safety and security in Africa.

The strategic program is designed to build the skills, expertise and professionalism of African militaries, coast guards and merchant mariners with the goal of improving their ability to extend the rule of law within their territorial waters and exclusive economic zones as well as combat illegal fishing practices, human trafficking, piracy, oil theft and illegal drug trade.

The maritime partnership, started four years ago, has brought together 34 African, European and South American countries.