

Royal Navy destroyer HMS Duncan in Ukraine for major multinational maritime exercise

Alongside forces from 18 other Allies and partners, the ship is contributing to the major multinational maritime training exercise featuring a combined 3,000 troops, 32 ships and 24 aircraft.

HMS Duncan is participating in the exercise as part of the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 and has received support on Sea Breeze 19 from their colleagues deployed on Operation Orbital – the UK's training mission to Ukraine.

On Sunday HMS Duncan also hosted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during his visit to the Port of Odesa as part of Ukraine Navy Day.

Commodore Michael Utley, Commander of the United Kingdom Carrier Strike Group (COMUKCSG), met with Navy personnel aboard HMS Duncan as part of a visit to the exercise.

COMUKCSG Commodore Michael Utley said:

With a multitude of nations combining a wealth of maritime assets, Exercise Sea Breeze 2019 demonstrates the strength of solidarity between Ukraine and its international partners.

From crucial training exercises to long-term political reform – the UK is committed to standing by Ukraine, whilst Russia maintains its illegal annexation of Crimea.

Since 2015 the UK has helped build the resilience and capacity of the Ukrainian Armed Forces through Operation Orbital, providing training to over 16,000 personnel so far.

Earlier this year the operation expanded to include maritime training, including seamanship, sea survival and maritime tactical training courses.

The UK also supports Ukraine in its institutional reforms of the defence and security sector, helping to drive more effective governance and will soon introduce a permanent Naval Attaché to the UK Defence Section in Kyiv to help build Ukrainian naval capability.