

GREECE: VALUED ALLY. STRATEGIC PARTNER.

Advancing U.S. Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean

Southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean combine to form an important geopolitical region to the United States due to the significant energy, commercial and communications resources that transit the region. The recent discovery of hydrocarbon reserves in the eastern Mediterranean reinforces this position. ISIS's emerging presence on the Mediterranean coastline is a security threat to the region. Therefore, it is in the United States' best interest that the region is politically, economically, and socially stable and democratic principles flourish, including adherence to the rule of law. Greece is a pivotal ally to advance these interests.

Greece Contributes Significantly to NATO, U.S. Missions

- Greece is only one of five NATO countries to maintain the 2% minimum standard for military expenditures: 2.38%¹ **This is second—only behind the U.S.**
- **US NSA Souda Bay, Crete**, successfully implemented joint USN/USAF reconnaissance missions and air refueling support for **Operations Desert Shield/Storm, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.**²
- **Libya:** 400 U.S. Marines deployed at US NSA Souda Bay, Crete, were “part of contingency planning to provide the president flexibility on full range of option regarding Libya” along with the amphibious assault ships USS Kearsarge and USS Ponce.³ Tens of thousands of civilians were also evacuated to Athens.
- **Afghanistan:** Tens of thousands aircraft use Greek airspace, including 30,000 allied flights during one, two-year period. Greece offered personnel for training and security purposes and donated equipment, transportation services, and millions of Euros.
- **Egypt:** American citizens evacuated to Athens during Arab Spring.
- **Noble Dina Trilateral Exercise:** Held between U.S., Greece & Israel
- **Operation Active Endeavor and Ocean Shield:** counterterrorism and counter-piracy missions in the Mediterranean Sea and off the Horn of Africa.
- **Peacekeeping Operations:** Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.
- **Greece:** NATO ally since 1952.

America Values Alliance with Greece

U.S. Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt: “We also benefit from a strong bilateral defense relationship with Greece. Particularly noteworthy has been our long-standing military presence at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay on the island of Crete, from which we conduct around 5,000 flights and hundreds of ship visits annually. As the only place between Norfolk and Dubai where an aircraft carrier can pull up pier-side and replenish, and with Greece being the closest European ally to the seamline between EUCOM, CENTCOM, and AFRICOM, Souda Bay’s strategic location has made it an important location for these combatant and strategic commands. Greece has been a steady NATO Ally since 1952, and has participated in missions in Korea, the Balkans, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Through NATO we have reinforced our bilateral defense relationship...” – June 21, 2016, Senate Nomination Hearing

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: “We thank you for all the contributions you make to our shared security. This commitment has been sustained despite difficult times. Throughout, Greece has remained an active and effective member of our Alliance and for over 60 years, NATO has been committed to keeping Greece safe.” – October 30, 2014

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GREECE:

1 of 3

Countries Allied with the U.S. in Every Major International Conflict of 20th Century

“I feel strongly about the strategic value of Greece today and in the future... Greece is the finest strategic partner the U.S. could ever have... Greece stands beside it [the United States] even when it hurts [Greece].”

--Capt. J. Stephen Hoefel, U.S. Navy (ret.), former Commanding Officer at US NSA Souda Bay (2000 – 2003), May 3, 2011, AHI Policy Forum

US NSA Souda Bay

Activity in 2015:

- **2,830+** U.S. & NATO planes utilize 115th Combat Wing
- **70+** U.S. & NATO ships visit

¹ http://www.nato.int/nato_static_#2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_07/20160704_160704-pr2016-116.pdf

² <http://www.cnicy.navy.mil/SoudaBay/About/MissionAndVision/index.htm>

³ “U.S. troops arrive in Greece in Libya buildup,” USA Today as reported by the Associated Press, March 3, 2011.

⁴ http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_114242.htm

From U.S. and NATO Missions to International Peacekeeping: *Greece Contributes to American National Security and Interests*

OPERATION **NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC)**

WHERE *Souda Bay Naval Base, Crete*

APPLICATIONS **Maritime Interdiction Training**



NMIOTC opened in 2008. Funded by Greece, NMIOTC provides training for allies and partners of NATO, enabling them to better execute maritime interdiction operations. Greece also lends its maritime expertise which includes extensive experience with commercial shipping and port security.

- 30 percent of global maritime traffic passes through waters adjacent to NMIOTC, including 27 percent of oil shipments, making it an ideal locale.

NMIOTC is a cutting-edge training center, improving skills, interoperability, and cooperation among naval units through sea training and simulations. Fifty training modules are designed for a whole crew of modern naval vessels from the commanding officer down to the members of the boarding crew.

NMIOTC offers practical training in:

- Container inspection,
- Small arms handling,
- Suspect and small-boat handling,
- Boarding team tactical sweeps,
- Rigid-hull inflatable boat inspection,
- Fast rope insertion, and
- Operations under multiple-threat conditions.

To reach a broader audience, NMIOTC also deploys Mobile Training Teams (MTT) worldwide to share knowledge and expertise with member nations. As a result, NATO forces are better prepared for counter-piracy, counter-WMD proliferation, counter-illegal trafficking, counterterrorism, and enforcing law at sea,

- **In 2015, more than 65 U.S. ships and 1,200 trainees utilized NMIOTC**

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OPERATION **U.S. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay**

WHERE *Souda Bay Naval and Air Base, Crete*

APPLICATIONS **Operational Support, Forward Logistical Site**



U.S. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay provides operational support to U.S. and allied and coalition forces deployed within the European Command, Central Command, and African Command's areas of responsibility.

NSA Souda Bay successfully implemented joint USN/USAF reconnaissance missions and air refueling support for **Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom**, and additional joint and multinational operations.

OPERATION **NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI)**

WHERE *Souda Naval and Air Base, Crete*

APPLICATIONS **Tactical Firing Range for Air Defense Systems**



NAMFI is the only ground-to-air/surface missile firing range in Europe that provides missile training for NATO forces. This missile firing station is equipped with large scale firing systems for practicing the use of surface-to-air missiles (SAM), short-range air defense missiles (SHORADS), surface-to-surface missiles, and other systems.