



Churchill crew members aboard M/V Belde (right) prepare injured man for transport on one of Churchill's Sea Hawk helicopters.



## Churchill performs rescue at sea

**NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, Bahrain** -- Guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) rendered medical assistance to Panamanian-flagged, bulk carrier M/V Belde, Aug. 20, approximately 110 miles North of Socotra Island, Oman. At approximately 1:10 p.m. local time, Winston S. Churchill responded to a distress call following a cargo-handling accident aboard Belde.

After arriving on-scene, Winston S. Churchill dispatched two rigid-hull inflatable boats, transporting the ship's hospital corpsman and the visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) team to assess the injured personnel.

One Belde crew member was killed in the accident and another required advanced medical care for injuries sustained. Winston S. Churchill conducted a medical evacuation, transporting the injured crew member by an SH-60B helicopter attached to Helicopter Squadron Light 42, Detachment 8, to an Oman medical facility for treatment. No further assistance was required.

"There are a multitude of hazards in the maritime domain. As such, we are always ready to assist," said Cmdr. Christopher D. Stone, Churchill Commanding Officer. "Our sympathies go out to those affected by this tragic incident. We, as partners in the maritime commons, are always ready and willing to help, and are glad that we were in the right place at the right time to lend a hand."

Stone added that he was proud of his crew for successfully completing a rescue mission in "incredibly complex" conditions.

"The personal and professional satisfaction of knowing that the outstanding efforts of this ship and this crew saved another mariner's life is second to none," said Stone. "It is days like today that makes me proud to be a member of the United States Navy and this coalition."

Winston S. Churchill is assigned to Commander, Task Force 150 as part of Combined Maritime Forces, conducting counter-terrorism and maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and Indian Ocean.