



BIOGRAPHY

VICE-ADMIRAL FERNANDO MANUEL DE MACEDO PIRES DA CUNHA

Vice Admiral Fernando Manuel de Macedo Pires da Cunha was born in Lisbon on January 18, 1956. He attended the Naval Academy course between 1974 and 1978, and was promoted to his current rank in June 2, 2014. During his several periods at sea, he served on board of several ships, namely between 1978 and 1980, on board the frigate "NRP Comandante Roberto Ivens" and the corvette "NRP General Pereira D'Eça ". In 1981, after concluding the Anti-Submarine Warfare Course (ASW), he was assigned to the frigate "NRP Almirante Magalhães Corrêa" where he served the ASW Officer for more than four years, during which he participated in various national, multinational and NATO exercises, including the Joint Maritime Course Series (JMC), OPEN GATE, and OCEAN SAFARI. During this period the ship was assigned to the Standing Naval Force Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT-SNFL) for a period of more than six months in the year of 1982.

He had his first command at sea between 1985 and 1987, aboard the "NRP Zaire" a ship normally assigned to fishing protection and Search And Rescue (SAR) missions, however during that period and under his command, the ship also participated in several national and NATO exercises, and accomplished a 4 month mission in Madeira Island, between October 1985 and February 1986. On completion of this command tour, he was assigned as Executive Officer (XO) of the corvette "NRP Jacinto Cândido" during a period when the ship was on mission in the Azores archipelago.

He had a second command tour at sea onboard the frigate "NRP Comandante Hermenegildo Capelo" from mid-1999 until the end of 2001. Under his command the ship performed several deployments and missions, and participated in national, NATO and multinational exercises, and having incorporated a tour in the European Maritime Force (EUROMARFOR). Among those various missions, operations and exercises, that his ship was involved in, the ship's participation between January and July 2000 in the Peace Support Mission in East Timor (Timor Lorosae) during this country built of independence process was a highlight.

In the beginning of 2002, he was appointed Chief of Staff (CSO) of the Portuguese National Task Group (POTG), and in July he was selected to be SNFL's CSO for the period of one year. During this period SNFL was involved in the Operation Active Endeavour, the NATO operation in support of the international terrorism combat and the Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation deterrence. Ashore, he served in the Naval Academy between 1987 and 1988, where he was Navigation instructor, and Cadets' company commander. Later he was placed at the Fleet Command (COMNAV), where he served between 1988 and 1991 as the Above Water and Amphibious Operations Officer.

From 1991 to 1995 he served in the Command-In-Chief Iberian Atlantic Area (CINCIBERLANT) in Oeiras-Portugal, where he was the Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) and Electronic Warfare (EW) Officer, as well as the assistant-Projecting

Officer for Operations and Exercises in IBERLANT area of responsibility (AOR), being the genesis and the development of the concept for the new NATO Maritime Exercises (LINKED SEAS) requirement decided by NATO as a consequence of the end of the Cold War. In 1995 he was positioned as harbour master of Vila Real de Santo António and Tavira, where he served until 1999. Later on, between 2003 and 2007 he was posted at the Navy General Staff (MAIORMAR), first as Deputy Division Head in the Operations Division and as the Training and Exercises Officer, and later as Division Head.

Between July and October 2008, he was appointed as 2nd Flotilla Commander. After ascending to the Admiralty, Vice Admiral Pires da Cunha was chosen to command the Portuguese Flotilla and to be simultaneously the Deputy Fleet Commander (2008-09).

In December 2009 as it was Portugal's turn to assume the Chief of Staff post in Joint Force Command Lisbon (JFCLB) in Oeiras, VADM Pires da Cunha was selected to perform these important functions in one of the three NATO Joint Operational Commands, post he held until its close in January 1, 2013.

In January 10, 2013 he assumed the Command of the Azores Maritime Zone Command, the job of Chief of the Azores Maritime Department as well as the Command as the Maritime Police Regional Command for the Azores, jobs he held until July 7, 2014.

On July 8, 2014 he assumed the Command of the Joint Operation Command of the Portuguese Armed Forces General Staff. Throughout his career he attended several courses in Portugal, namely in 1981 the ASW Officers course, in 1983 the Drug Control course, in 1984 the EW course, in 1988 the Naval Tactical and Operations Officer, in 1991 the Naval War College course for Junior Officers, in 2004 the Complementary Naval War College course, and in 2008 the Flag Officers Promotion course.

Abroad he attended in 1989 the Amphibious Operations Officers Course in Pool, in 2002 the Maritime Warfare Course (MWC) in HMS Dryad - UK. In 1991 the Advanced EW course and in 1992 the Analysis and EW Planning course, both in Oberammergau - Germany. In NATO he also attended several courses directed for the planning and conducting of Joint Operations at the Strategic and Operational level.

Vice Admiral Fernando Manuel M. Pires da Cunha has many letters of commendation and appreciation as well as he bears the following medals: three silver medals for Distinguished Services, two Military Merit medals (1st and 2nd class), two Navy Cross medals (1st and third classes), a Medal of Exemplary Behavior (gold), a campaign commemorative medal with the legend "Timor 2000", a Salvage and Rescue medal, and an Article 5 NATO medal (two participations). In 2000 on completion his mission in Timor Lorosae, the Oeiras Mayor awarded him the Municipal Merit Medal (gold), "for acts and services of particular importance performed either within the country or for International Solidarity".