



*Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer*

## USS Wasp, Marines Arrive in the Philippines for Balikatan Exercise



Story Number: NNS190331-01Release Date: 3/31/2019 12:28:00 PM

From USS Wasp Public Affairs

SUBIC BAY, Philippines (NNS) -- The amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1), with embarked Marines from Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) 4, led by 4th Marine Regiment, arrived in Subic Bay, March 30, in preparation for exercise Balikatan.

Balikatan is an exercise between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States, and also features participation from Australia. Balikatan is a Tagalog phrase for "shoulder-to-shoulder," which characterizes the spirit of the exercise and represents the partnership between the U.S. and the Philippines.



USS Wasp with MV-22 Osprey in the Gulf of Aqaba on 4 October 2007

Balikatan 2019 will bring together ASEAN members for an International Observers Program. The program aims to promote greater defense cooperation with ASEAN and other key allies and partners; show multinational coordination where the observers can mutually exchange meaningful ideas and best practices; and showcase the joint and combined air, sea and ground operation of the AFP-U.S. armed forces.

This year's Balikatan focuses on maritime security and amphibious capabilities, as well as multinational interoperability through military exchanges. Exercises like Balikatan strengthen international partnerships and the participating militaries' abilities to rapidly respond in unison to crises throughout the Indo-Pacific region. USS Wasp is the flagship for the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group and is currently forward deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations to provide a ready-response force for any type of contingency.

For more on the exercise, visit the [Balikatan DVIDS feature page](#).

**Webmaster's Note:** **USS Wasp (LHD-1)** is a United States Navy multipurpose amphibious assault ship, and the lead ship of her class. She is the tenth USN vessel to bear the name since 1775, with the last two ships named *Wasp* being aircraft carriers.