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## Iran warns US carrier off Persian Gulf

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**Commander of Iran's Army Major General Ataollah Salehi has warned a US aircraft carrier not to return to the Persian Gulf, adding that the warning comes “only once.”**

On December 30, 2011 the Iranian Navy identified and recorded footage and images of the USS John C. Stennis in the area where Iran is currently holding naval military exercises.

General Salehi said on Tuesday that we recommend and warn the aircraft carrier not to return to its previous position in the Persian Gulf, “since we are not in the habit of repeating a warning and we warn only once.”

The USS John C. Stennis has left the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. It is one of the US navy's biggest warships. The nuclear-powered vessel carries around 3,300 personnel most of whom are air crew. It can also carry 50 fighter jets and 6 helicopters. The carrier passed through Forouzan oil platforms and Farsi Island.

Iran's Navy launched a massive 10-day naval exercise, codenamed “Velayat 90”, on December 24. The drill covers an area stretching from the east of the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Aden.

Major General Salehi said the experiences of Iran's Navy such as its presence in the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea have enhanced the combat power of the Iranian forces.

“Our actions in sea are neither passive nor aggressive, but are rather aimed at training in free

waters and safeguarding the interests of Iran and Islamic countries,” the Iranian commander added.

Over the past years, Iran has made important breakthroughs in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing important military equipment and systems.

The country has repeatedly clarified that its military might is merely based on the nation's defense doctrine of deterrence and poses no threat to other countries.