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November 3, 2005



### Germany Commissions the World's Most Modern Conventional Subs

U 212: This cutting-edge propulsion system enables the U212A submarines to move virtually noiselessly underwater, thus making them very difficult to detect.

In the presence of Defense Minister Dr. Peter Struck, fleet commander Vice Admiral Wolfgang Nolting placed into service the newest generation of German submarines in Eckernförde on October 19.

"They represent a milestone in the transformation of our armed forces," Struck said, with an eye to the two submarines docked at Kranzfeld port in Eckernförde. The services are jointly planning to better equip the German Armed Forces for the security challenges of the future. The special capability of the submarines to conduct surveillance in coastal waters illustrates this approach.

The two 212 A submarines are currently the most modern conventional subs in the world. As the only sub type that is not nuclear powered, this class of submarines is driven by air-independent propulsion. The use of fuel cells markedly increases the sub's radius of action. Hydrogen and oxygen combine in the fuel-cell module and are converted into electricity. Water is the only waste product that remains. This cutting-edge propulsion system enables the U212A submarines to move virtually noiselessly underwater, thus making them very difficult to detect.

The new subs in future will come under the First Submarine Squadron and thus, starting in 2006, under Operational Flotilla 1 and will be stationed in Eckernförde. Calling on the crew of the submarines, Minister Struck said, "In future, it will largely depend on you to use the full capabilities of these modern, high-tech submarines." The service men and one service woman would thus become important players in the transformation of the German Armed Forces. "Use this opportunity and be proud of it!" the Minister concluded.